

"THE SHADOWED SCHOOLBOY!" This Week's Thrilling School Story
of the CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS.

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*Billy Bunter's
Bath!*



THE SHADOWED SCHOOLBOY!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Putting Paid to Quelch!

B UZZZZ!
Billy Bunter jumped. It was enough to make any fellow jump.

There was nothing surprising, of course, in the telephone bell buzzing at Wharton Lodge. Telephone bells were made to buzz. Still, it was rather startling, when a fellow was just bending over the instrument, hooking off the receiver. Billy Bunter had rolled into the telephone cabinet in the hall to phone, and he was just about to begin when that sudden raucous buzz, announcing that somebody was ringing up, made him jump.

"Beast!" grunted Bunter. Not only had it made him jump, but it was irritating and annoying. For Bunter was in a hurry to phone.

Harry Wharton & Co. were going to the pictures at Wimford that afternoon. So was Bunter. The Co. were going to walk. Bunter wasn't.

Bunter did not see why he should walk a mile to save a taxi fare. He would not have to pay the fare, so why should he?

So Bunter had rolled down to phone for a taxi. Once the taxi was phoned for, the beasts who wanted him to walk would have to make up their minds to it. He would present them with what diplomatic gentlemen call a "fait accompli"—an accomplished fact which could not be got out of. But he had to put that phone call through before the Greyfriars fellows spotted him, otherwise he was liable to be jerked away from the instrument by his back hair,

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and there would be no taxi for him. And the beasts might come down from Harry Wharton's den any minute. There was no time to waste.

Obviously, whoever was ringing up Wharton Lodge had to be got rid of—quick! If somebody came to take the call it was all up with Billy Bunter's little game, and all up with the taxi. Having jumped, as the sudden ring startled him, Billy Bunter jerked off the receiver, and applied a large mouth to the mouthpiece.

"Hallo!" he squeaked. "Wrong number! Good-bye!"

For whom that call had come Bunter neither knew nor cared. All he knew and cared about was that the caller had to be got rid of, quick! He couldn't phone for a taxi while some bothering ass was talking on the line, so the bothering ass had to cut off.

"What?" came a clear, sharp voice over the wires. "Is not that Wimford one-double-O?"

Bunter jumped—for the second time! That sharp voice was more startling than the sudden buzz of the bell had been. For Bunter knew that voice! It was the voice of Mr. Quelch, his Form-master at Greyfriars School. What the thump was Quelch phoning Harry Wharton's home for in the Easter holidays? Even a beak, in Bunter's opinion, ought to have sense enough to know that fellows had enough of him at school, and didn't want to hear from him in the hols.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"What? Mr. Quelch speaking!" came the sharp voice. "Is that Colonel Wharton? I did not catch what you said. Please call Colonel Wharton to the telephone!"

That Billy Bunter had not the slightest intention of doing.

For one thing, Colonel Wharton had gone out in the car that afternoon, so he couldn't. For another, he wanted the phone himself!

Holding the receiver in his fat hand, the Owl of Greyfriars glared at the instrument through his big spectacles. It was useless to cut off. Quelch knew that he had the right number, and would only ring again. Bunter had shut off the first ring very quickly, but another ring would bring Wells, the butler, to the telephone.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

"Eh? Who is speaking? Is that Colonel Wharton?" came Mr. Quelch's voice, in puzzled tones.

Bunter had a brainwave. By answering as Colonel Wharton it was easy enough to get rid of Quelch. Making his voice as deep and gruff as possible, he grunted into the transmitter.

"Yes!"

"Colonel Wharton speaking?"

"Yes. What do you want?" grunted Bunter.

"Eh?"

"I asked you what you wanted."

"Really, Colonel Wharton—"

"I'm in a hurry!"

"I regret, Colonel Wharton, if I have telephoned at an inconvenient moment," came the voice of the Remove master of Greyfriars, in tones of polite sarcasm.

"All right! Good-bye!"

"Colonel Wharton, I scarcely understand this! I was ringing up to tell you that my health is now sufficiently restored for me to make a journey, and that I intended to accept your kind invitation to pass a few days at Wharton Lodge—"

"What?" howled Bunter.

For the third time Bunter jumped. Quelch, his "beak" at Greyfriars, coming to Wharton Lodge in the holidays! That would not have mattered had not Billy Bunter been honouring the Lodge with his own fat presence for Easter. But in the circumstances it mattered very much—very much indeed!

Bunter had enough, more than enough, of beaks in term time. Beaks in the hols! Quelch had been ill, too. For the latter part of last term his place at Greyfriars had been taken by a temporary beak. Tarter-tempered than ever, very likely, and his temper was always tart enough. It was altogether too thick.

"Did you speak, Colonel Wharton?"

"Look here—" gasped Bunter.

"Let us have this clear, sir!" came the sharp voice, rather sharper now. "It was my intention to arrive by the six o'clock train at Wimford. If, however, my visit is in any way inconvenient—"

"Oh, yes!"

"Did you say yes, Colonel Wharton?" came in freezing tones over the wires.

"Yes—yes, rather! The fact is, it would be frightfully inconvenient at the present time!" gasped Bunter.

"That is enough, sir!"

There was quite a whirr on the wires as Mr. Quelch, at the other end, rang off.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter. He grinned.

Quelch evidently believed that it was Colonel Wharton who had been speaking at the Wharton Lodge end. He would not come now. Billy Bunter had effectually put paid to Quelch!

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar from the hall. "Here he is!"

The telephone cabinet in the hall of Wharton Lodge had a half-glass door. Bunter blinked round in alarm as he heard Bob Cherry's powerful voice, and sighted five faces looking at him through the glass. Harry Wharton jerked the door open.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter. "Don't interrupt me! I—I—I'm just phoning to—to a dying relative!"

"What?" gasped Wharton.

"I'm not ringing up a taxi, old chap!" assured Bunter. "You fellows clear off and wait. I shan't be a minute."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Clear off while I speak to Quelch—I—I mean, my dying relative—"

Bob Cherry took hold of a fat ear. "Kim on!" he remarked.

"Yaroooh!"

"Come on, you fat ass!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We're not going in a taxi; we're walking!"

"I tell you—yaroooh! Leggo my ear, you beast!" shrieked Bunter. "You're pip-pip-pulling it off! Whoooooop!"

"Aren't you coming?" demanded Bob.

"No, you rotter! Wow!"

"Well, your ear is," said Bob Cherry cheerily. "You can please yourself whether you come with it or not."

"Yaroooooooh!"

Billy Bunter decided to come with his ear. A parting would have been altogether too painful. He rolled out of the telephone cabinet, roaring.

"Beast!" he hooted. "I say, you fellows, I'm jolly well not going to walk, so there! If we were at Bunter Court we could have the choice of half a dozen cars!"

"Let's see Bunter off for Bunter Court while we're in Wimford this afternoon!" suggested Frank Nugent.

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull heartily.

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurrce Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky nabob of Bhanipur.

"Beast! Leggo my ear!" howled Bunter. "I'll walk!"

He rubbed a red fat ear, and blinked wrathfully through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, come on!" said Harry Wharton. "But I say, isn't Smithy coming?"

asked Bunter. Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was also a guest at Wharton Lodge that Easter—a rather unusual guest.

"No, he doesn't want to come," answered Harry. "He's got a book he won't leave."

"Well, look here, I wouldn't leave Smithy behind!" urged Bunter. "You fellows go and tell him it's a jolly good picture at Wimford. I'll wait for you."

"Fathead!"

"I'm not going to phone for a taxi while you're gone to speak to Smithy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're jolly well not!" agreed Bob, and he made a grab at Bunter's fat ear.

The Owl of the Remove jumped away. "Beast! I'm coming!"

And Bunter came. Harry Wharton & Co started cheerfully, in the bright spring sunshine, to walk to Wimford.

The "Bounder of Greyfriars" is on holiday, but he daren't enjoy himself in the way he likes, for everywhere he goes his Form-master goes, too—spying on his every movement. Read how the "Bounder" retaliates and schemes to make a fool of his "nosey-parker" Form-master!

Bunter grunted and rolled after them. Still, he reflected that he had "put paid" to Quelch! Had he not intercepted that telephone call, Quelch would certainly have come to stay at Wharton Lodge! Now certainly he wouldn't! And that happy certainty almost consoled Billy Bunter for having to walk to Wimford.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

An Unexpected Meeting!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH stood at an upper window, watching the juniors as they disappeared below. He had declined to join the party for the cinema at Wimford, on account of a book he was reading and did not want to leave. But when Harry Wharton & Co. left him, that book was very soon thrown aside.

The chums of the Remove were not suspicious, or they might have suspected that that book was only an excuse for staying behind.

The Bounder had a faint sneer on his face as he watched from the window. At the same time, he was feeling a little remorseful and uncomfortable. He had a slight feeling of contempt for fellows who were so easily taken in; at the same time, he rather envied them for it. And he was not quite satisfied with himself and his intentions for that afternoon.

He stood for quite a long time at the window after the juniors had gone, with a clouded brow, uncertain in his mind.

The Bounder had been a week at Wharton Lodge, the guest of the captain of the Remove. Naturally, the scapegrace of the school had to be on his good behaviour there. It was pleasant enough—the chums of the Remove were agreeable fellows, and they made it a point to be as agreeable as possible to Smithy, who was down on his luck these days.

There were plenty of occupations to fill up a fellow's time—so long as his tastes were healthy and wholesome. That, really, was the trouble. Smithy had some tastes that were not shared, by the cheery Co., and after a few days he was hopelessly bored.

"Rotten!" he grunted, as he turned from the window at last.

He went downstairs, put on his straw hat, and strolled out of the house. He went slowly down the drive to the gate.

It was not often that the Bounder of Greyfriars felt ashamed of himself—it was a new and uncomfortable feeling. He tried to shake it off, but not quite successfully.

His lip curled at the thought of walking to Wimford, seeing the pictures, teasing at the teashop, and walking home. That made quite a pleasant afternoon for the other fellows. The black sheep of Greyfriars wanted something more exciting than that.

There were races at Elmbridge, a few miles away. Harry Wharton & Co. were not even aware of that; it was a matter of no interest to them. It was very interesting indeed to the Bounder.

He walked slowly down the leafy lane towards Elmdale, where he was going to take the train for Elmbridge. His mind was not fully made up—which was unusual for Smithy, who generally knew very decidedly what he was going to do.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated suddenly.

He stared at a figure coming up the lane. It was that of a rather tall young man, with a short, dark moustache over a hard, tight-lipped mouth, and a pair of brown eyes that were as keen as a hawk's. The Bounder knew him at a glance.

It was Mr. Smedley, the temporary master who had taken the place of Mr. Quelch at Greyfriars last term.

"The Creeper and Crawler!" muttered Vernon-Smith. "What the thump is he doin' here?"

Mr. Smedley sighted him the next moment.

He paused for a second in his walk, and the Bounder felt, rather than observed, that Mr. Smedley was a little disconcerted at meeting him face to face. But he came on after that almost imperceptible pause, and the Bounder smiled sarcastically as he raised his hat. At Greyfriars school, last term, the new master of the Remove had had a very distinct "down" on the black sheep of the Form, and had watched him like a cat. It seemed wildly improbable, yet the suspicion shot into Smithy's mind, that it was on his account that Mr. Smedley was here in Surrey.

"Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Smedley, with a nod, as he came up.

"Yes, sir! Fancy meetin' you here!" said Smithy. His eyes glimmered with sardonic amusement. "I'm staying' at Wharton's place, near here, for the hols, sir. Perhaps you were comin' to see me there, sir?"

"Certainly not," said Mr. Smedley. "Why should you suppose so?"

"You've taken such an interest in me, sir, since the school broke up for Easter," said the Bounder blandly.

The hard, sharp eyes glinted at him. "I do not quite understand you, Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Smedley. "What do you mean?"

"You see, sir, I really owe it to you that I'm gettin' this holiday with Wharton! My father sent me to a tutor's place for the holidays, and I cleared off instead of goin' there—"

"Indeed!"

"And the pater dropped in at the place and found it all out," said Vernon-Smith. "It seems that you phoned to him, sir, and that made him a bit suspicious."

"It was my duty to warn your father, Vernon-Smith, that I had reason to believe that you were disobeying his commands."

"Oh, quite, sir! And my father was very grateful; and I'm sure I am," said the Bounder meekly. "Some masters forget all about their Form, sir, in the holidays, and it's very kind of you to remember me like this!"

Mr. Smedley looked at him, long and hard. The Bounder's manner was quite meek and respectful; but Mr. Smedley was quite aware that the young rascal was laughing in his sleeve.

"The pater was rather shirty about it," went on the Bounder. "But, owing to some circumstances, he came round and gave me permission to spend the holidays with Wharton, instead of goin' back to the tutor's. It's rather an improvement, and I feel that I owe it to you in a way, sir, and that I ought to thank you for your kind interest in me."

Mr. Smedley breathed rather hard. There was nothing in the Bounder's words to which he could take exception; but the mocking glimmer in his eyes was very irritating.

"That's why I thought you might be comin' along to see me here, sir!" added the Bounder pleasantly. "As you take such an interest in me, sir, I thought you might want to be satisfied that I really was staying with Wharton, and not goin' off on my own, as I did before."

"If that is intended for impertinence, Vernon-Smith—"

"Oh, sir! Not at all! Didn't you know that I was staying with Wharton, sir?" asked Smithy.

Mr. Smedley did not answer that question. But the Bounder was quite well aware that he had known.

He had no doubt that Smedley had been on the phone again to his father to learn the result of the millionaire's visit to the tutor's. If so, it was very probable that Mr. Vernon-Smith had told his son's Form-master how matters stood.

The Bounder barely suppressed a grin. He was quite certain in his mind that the Creeper and Crawler, as the Remove fellows had nicknamed Mr. Smedley, was there to see how he was behaving himself. But the Creeper and Crawler had not caught him out this time!

"You are not with your friends this afternoon," remarked Mr. Smedley.

"No, sir. They've gone to the pictures in town. I'm takin' a stroll to admire the beauties of Nature! Have you noticed the primroses along the lane, sir?" asked the Bounder.

Mr. Smedley's eyes glinted. The Bounder was well aware that, at that moment, Mr. Smedley would have been very glad to box his ears. However, he could scarcely do so. But he had had enough of the Bounder's scarcely veiled cheek: and he gave the junior a curt nod, and walked on his way.

Vernon-Smith grinned, as he also went his way. He was assured that Smedley was there on his account, in

the hope, or, rather, the expectation, of discovering something to his discredit. Why the man was so keen on his trail he could not guess, and he was very far from even dreaming of the true reason.

But about the fact itself there was no doubt. The Bounder was glad that unexpected meeting had taken place at a safe distance from his intended destination that afternoon.

He walked on a little distance, and then turned his head and glanced back. Mr. Smedley was not to be seen in the winding lane.

But the Bounder's keen eye scanned the hedgerows and the meadows behind him, and he glimpsed a grey soft hat showing over the hawthorns near the lane. Mr. Smedley was wearing a soft grey hat!

The Bounder gave a low whistle. He knew, in a flash, that Mr. Smedley had drawn his own conclusions from seeing him without his friends that afternoon. He guessed—correctly—that Vernon-Smith was engaged upon some shady escapade.

The Bounder walked on. The man was keeping an eye on him—to ascertain where he went, and what he was up to!

Smithy grinned. Probably Mr. Smedley expected to see him disappear into the billiards-room at a "pub," or something of the kind. Or perhaps he knew that there were races at Elmbridge, and suspected his destination.

Quite entertained by the idea of the Creeper and Crawler "shadowing" him, Smithy walked on to the village station, and took his ticket for Elmbridge. He went to the train, and entered a carriage. It was some minutes before the train started, and he kept an eye on the platform; but, rather to his disappointment, Mr. Smedley did not appear there.

Was the man, after all, following him? Upon the answer to that question, depended whether Smithy carried out his plans for that afternoon.

The whistle shrieked, and the train moved. It was in motion when a tall figure suddenly crossed the platform, and was just in time to jump into the guard's van.

Had not the Bounder been keenly on the watch, certainly he would not have observed it; and, as it was, he could not have said for certain that that figure was Mr. Smedley's.

But he knew that it was! The train rolled out of the station, and the Bounder laughed. Smedley was on the same train—he had no doubt of that—and his plans for the afternoon were changed! He had been half-ashamed of his intention, anyway, and was not wholly sorry to "chuck" it. And he had found an entertainment at least as amusing as going to the races—which was pulling the leg of the man who was shadowing him.

More over, he had more to carry than the other fellows! His circumference was at least twice as large, likewise his diameter. And he had packed away at least twice as much

at lunch as any other fellow in the party. And the April afternoon was warm! For these reasons, and the still more important reason that he was slack and lazy, Bunter refused to buck up.

He slowed down more and more, in fact.

"Is this a funeral march?" Johnny Bull inquired, with sarcasm.

"Beast!"

"For goodness' sake get a move on, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "Shall we tip you over and roll you along like a barrel?"

"If that's your manners to a guest, Wharton—"

Harry Wharton laughed. Bunter was a guest, it was true; but there was no doubt that he was a rather peculiar guest, with manners and customs all his own.

"Look here, I'm going on!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Who's stopping you?" growled Billy Bunter. "You'll improve the landscape by taking your face away!"

"You cheeky fat snail!" roared Johnny.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

"My esteemed and idiotic fat Bunter—" murmured Harroo Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter came to a halt. There was a stile by the wayside, and the fat Owl of the Remove proceeded to rest his weary fat limbs on it. Johnny Bull gave a snort and marched on. He was fed-up, for one! The other fellows rather shared his feelings, but they paused.

"Buck up, old fat man!" urged Bob Cherry.

"I'm tired!" said Bunter, with dignity. "I say, you fellows, let's wait here. We can get a lift if we wait. Might pick up an empty taxi going back to Wimford."

"I couldn't pick up a taxi!" answered Bob, shaking his head.

"Why not?" demanded Bunter.

"Too heavy!" explained Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"I'm not asking you for any rotten jokes. After all I've done for you, I think you fellows might stand me—"

"We're standing you!" said Bob.

"You're not easy to stand; but we're standing you!"

"You silly fathead! I mean, stand me a taxi! Let's wait here for one! After all I've done for you—"

"The donefulness is not terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"That's all you know!" said Bunter. "How would you like Quelch here in the holidays?"

"Quelch!" repeated Harry Wharton.

"What about Quelch?"

"Oh! Nothing!" said Bunter hastily.

"Can't say I should like a beak about in the hols," said Bob Cherry. "Is Quelch coming here, Harry?"

"I believe my uncle's asked him," answered Wharton. "He's at Bournemouth now—you remember he was seedy, and was away in the term—we had the Creeper and Crawler in his place. I don't exactly yearn for his jolly old society; but I should be rather glad to see him, all the same."

"Glad!" snorted Bunter.

"Well, yes; because if he's well enough to come here, he'll be well enough to come back to Greyfriars next term. And that means that Smedley won't come back."

"Oh!" said Bunter. "That's all right, of course. Quelch is a beast, but not such a beast as Smedley. I'd

THE THIRDS CHAPTER.

Keeping it Dark!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Buck up, Bunter!"

"Shan't!"

Bunter was tired.

He had walked nearly half a mile! Half a furlong was enough for Bunter—in fact, too much!

Moreover, he had more to carry than the other fellows! His circumference was at least twice as large, likewise his diameter. And he had packed away at least twice as much

rather have him than the Creeper and Crawler next term. I'm glad he's got well, so far as that goes."

"Has he got well?" asked Nugent. "How do you know?"

"Oh, I don't know!" Billy Bunter was not a bright youth. But he was bright enough to know that he had better keep dark that little trick he had played on the telephone at Wharton Lodge. At the same time, Bunter had his own inimitable way of keeping anything dark.

"Then what do you mean, fathead?" asked Frank.

"Oh, nothing, old chap! All the same, you fellows have had a jolly narrow escape of having Quelch here!"

for my presence of mind. Considering what I've done for you, you might stand a fellow a taxi. But for me, you'd find Quelch there when you got back from the pictures! How would you like that?"

The juniors stared at Bunter, and then exchanged glances. There was something rather mysterious in this.

It was true that none of them felt exactly overjoyed at the idea of their Form-master paying Wharton Lodge a visit. They had a great respect for Henry Samuel Quelch, the Remove-master of Greyfriars; but they did not revel in his society. Still, as Wharton pointed out, if he was well enough to visit Wharton Lodge, it showed that

"I don't know anything about him, of course! Nothing at all!"

"Then how do you know he won't come?"

"Well, he couldn't very well, if he was told that it was frightfully inconvenient—"

"What!" gasped Wharton.

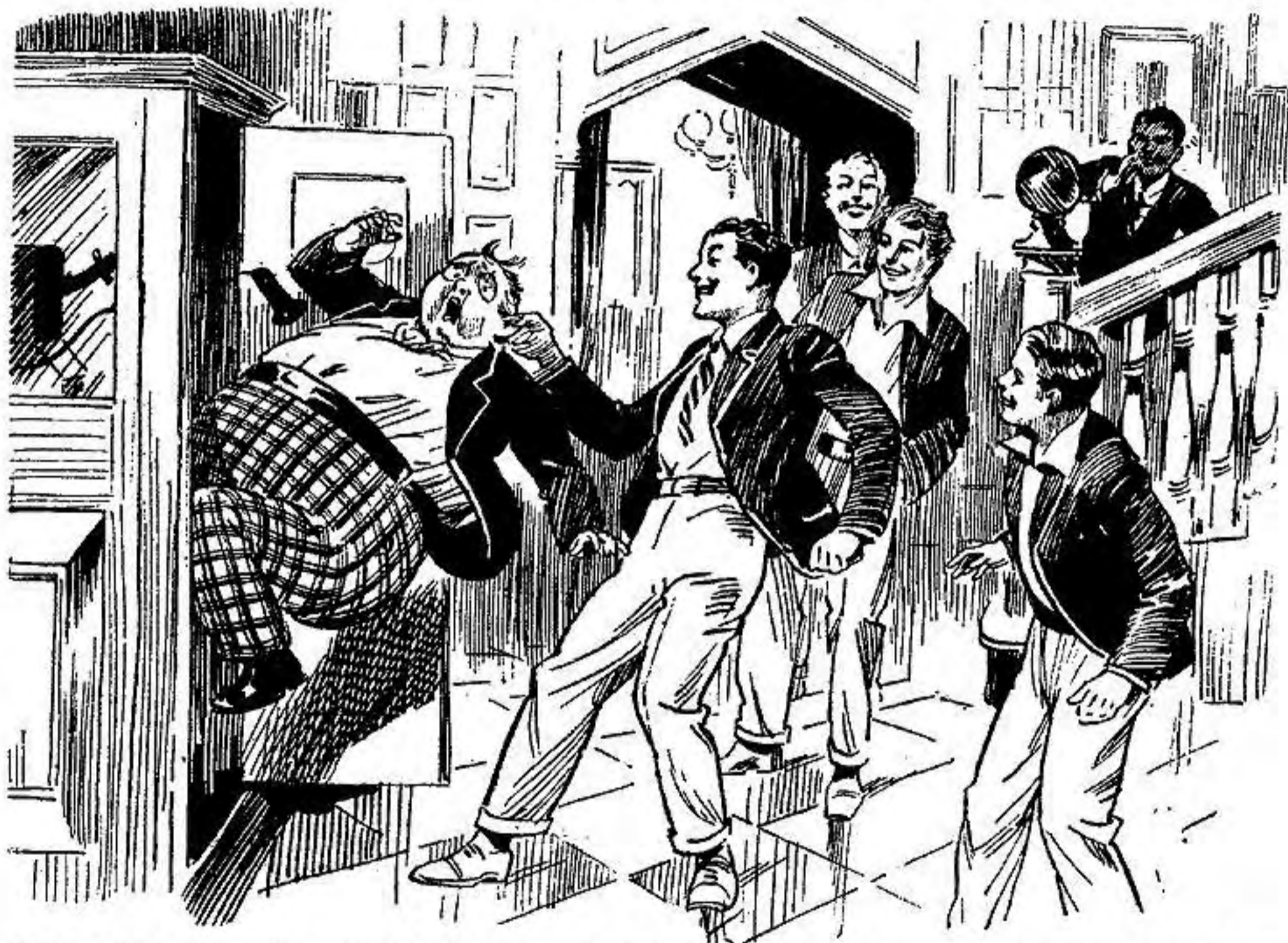
"Not that I told him!" said Bunter hastily. "I haven't spoken to him on the telephone at all."

"On the telephone?"

"Not at all, old chap! He wasn't just ringing up when I went to the phone to call a taxi—"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"The crumbliness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.



"Kim on!" said Bob Cherry, taking hold of one of Bunter's fat ears. "We're not going in a taxi—we're walking!"

"I tell you—yaroooh! Leggo my ear, you beast!" shrieked Bunter. "You're pip-pip-pulling it off! Whooooop!"

"Your ear's coming!" said Bob. "You can please yourself whether you come with it or not!"

said Bunter. "It was a bit inconsiderate of your uncle to ask him, Wharton, while I'm staying with you."

"What?"

"Well, he might have known that I shouldn't care for a beak about in the hols. But people are so selfish. If there's anything I can't stand, it's selfishness."

"Fan me!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Still, he won't come now, so it's all right!"

"How do you know he won't come?" asked Wharton, puzzled.

"That's telling!" grinned Bunter.

"You blithering ass!" said Bob.

"Why can't you tell us?"

"Well, least said soonest mended," said Bunter astutely. "Wharton's fat-headed old uncle would be waxy, if he knew."

"If he knew what?"

"Oh, nothing!" said the Owl of the Remove. "Still, you'd be jolly well landed with Quelch, I can tell you, but

he would be well enough to come back next term; which meant seeing no more of the temporary master, Smedley—which was a consummation devoutly to be wished! But how Billy Bunter could possibly know anything about his intentions was a mystery—which had to be solved. Wharton's face was growing rather grim. It was obvious that the fat Owl had been "up" to something.

"What have you been doing, Bunter?" asked Wharton quietly.

"Nothing, old chap."

"Have you been prying into the letters?" demanded Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton! I hope I'm not the fellow to pry into letters!" said Bunter warmly. "I opened that one for Smithy the other day by mistake, as I told Smithy! As if I wanted to know what Vavasour had to say. The beast kicked me—"

"How do you know anything about Quelch, then?"

"You—you—you unspeakable idiot!" gasped Wharton in dismay. "What have you been doing? What did you say to Quelch on the phone?"

"Nothing, old fellow! Not a word! He wasn't there! It was somebody else rang up—my brother Sammy, to be exact. I mean, nobody at all rang up! That's what I really meant to say. As for letting Quelch think that it was the stuffy old colonel speaking, the idea never entered my head at all. Still, I'm pretty certain that he won't come now. I could tell that by the way he snorted."

"Snorted?"

"Like a rhinoceros!" said Bunter. "Frightfully offended, you know! Serve him jolly well right! It's a bit thick, having a Form-master barging in in the hols. Not that I spoke to Quelch, you know! He wasn't on the phone! I haven't heard anything about him since Greyfriars broke up! May be

dead and buried, for all I know! Still, you've got out of having him here owing to my presence of mind, and I think you might stand a fellow a taxi. I really think that!"

The juniors gazed at Bunter.

"Well, my hat!" said Wharton at last. "You howling, footling, frabjous idiot! You dangerous maniac—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Luckily, I know Quelch's number at Bournemouth—my uncle wrote it down in the telephone directory. Come on!"

"I say—yarrooop!" roared Bunter, as Wharton grasped his collar and jerked him off the stile.

He landed in the road, with a bump and a roar.

"Whoop! Beast!"

"You fellows go after Johnny," said Wharton. "I'll join you later. I've got to take Bunter back first—"

"What for, you beast?" yelled Bunter.

"To phone Quelch—"

"Wha-a-at!"

"And tell him you've been pulling his leg!"

"Why, you—you—you idiot!" gasped Bunter. "He would be fearfully waxy—"

"Buck up!"

"Shan't!" roared Bunter, in alarm and wrath. "I tell you I never spoke to Quelch on the phone—and he didn't think it was your uncle speaking—and I never said it would be frightfully inconvenient for him to come—and I never said— Whoop! Yarrooop! Oh crikey!"

"You blithering, blothering owl!" roared Wharton. "You've got to set this right before my uncle comes in. I'm going to kick you all the way back."

"Yaroo! If that's the—wow—way

you treat a guest—yarcop—I shall jolly well clear off—"

"Get going!"

"Beast! Leave off kicking me," yelled Bunter, hopping wildly. "I'm going, ain't I? I—I want to go—I—I— Yarroooooop!"

And Bunter went!

He started back for Wharton Lodge at a rapid run, with Harry Wharton behind him letting out a foot whenever Bunter slacked down. Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh and Frank Nugent, grinning, walked on after Johnny Bull. Bunter had got out of that walk to Wimford! He had got a run instead of a walk! It was a rapid run, too! Certainly this was not the way that guests were treated as a rule, in the best circles. But Billy Bunter was so very extraordinary a guest, that there was no help for it.

Hopping, skipping, and jumping, gasping and gurgling and spluttering, Billy Bunter bounded away on the home trail; with an active foot behind him helping him on his way. From the bottom of his fat heart the Owl of the Remove wished that he hadn't displayed that wonderful presence of mind in dealing with Quelch on the telephone!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Spoofing the Shadower!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH strolled out of the station at Elmbridge in the bright April sunshine with his hands in his pockets, his straw hat on the back of his head, whistling. He looked like a fellow carelessly at his ease, bent on enjoying himself that sunny spring afternoon. He was very careful not to glance round

or glance back! He was perfectly well aware that Mr. Smedley had been in his train, and got out at the same station, and was somewhere in the offing, keeping an eye on him. And the Bounder was cheerfully prepared to let him get on with it.

There were plenty of people coming out of the station, the races, though only a small country meeting, attracted the usual crowd. With so many people about a shadower's task was not difficult, and Smithy made it as easy as possible. Outside the station there were a number of taxicabs, but there were plenty of people wanting them, as the racecourse was a mile out of the town. Smithy was in no hurry—he stood and waited for one to come back, his chief object being to give Mr. Smedley plenty of time to spot him. While he was waiting he dropped the light cane he carried, and in stooping to pick it up, surreptitiously glanced back under his arm. He had a glimpse of a soft grey hat among the crowd of people in the station entrance, which was quite enough for him.

He waited about five minutes till an empty taxi came back, and then signalled to the driver and bagged a taxi. Standing with his hand on the open door, he spoke to the driver in quite a loud voice, as if he did not care if all the world heard him. As a matter of fact, he wanted Smedley to hear.

"How far is it to the race ground?" he inquired.

"About a mile, sir!" answered the taxi-man.

"Have they started?"

"Oh, yes, sir; the first race was at two-thirty. Get you there in a few minutes, sir."

"Right-ho!" said the Bounder, and he stepped into the cab and slammed the door. The taxi buzzed away out of Elmbridge.

It took a road that was followed by a good many other vehicles. Looking through the little window at the back, Vernon-Smith saw another taxi buzzing out of Elmbridge behind him. He could not see who was in it, but he guessed—and grinned! He called to his driver.

"Is this a straight road for the races?"

"Straight as a string, sir."

"Well, look here, go round a bit—take the first lane."

The driver stared at him for a moment. Then he nodded.

"Right!" he answered.

And leaving the stream of vehicles that were bound for the races, Smithy's cab turned into a leafy lane and buzzed on under the branches of spreading trees.

The Bounder looked back again through the little window, and grinned. Another taxi had turned from the road after him.

He needed no more proof that the Creeper and Crawler was in that taxi, keeping him in sight. He could not see the occupant, but he knew that it was Smedley. He spoke to his driver again.

"Go round about a mile, and then get back to the road."

"Right!"

Probably the driver was puzzled by those instructions, but it was no concern of his. He drove on, through winding lanes; and emerged into the main road at last. All the time the second taxi remained at the same distance in the rear. It had passed a dozen turnings or more, taking none of them, and if Smithy had doubted before, he could not have doubted now that he was being followed.

He sat grinning.

Certainly he was not going to the

The

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races with the Creeper and Crawler watching him! As a matter of fact, his mind had not been quite made up. His father had let him off that dreary vacation at the tutor's, trusting him to behave himself in good company. Harry Wharton & Co. had given him a friendly welcome; but it was, of course, on the unspoken understanding that he played the game while he was at Wharton Lodge. Colonel Wharton had been very kind to him, certainly never dreaming that a schoolboy under his roof would think of going "blagging."

The Bounder's conscience had been far from easy, and it was rather a relief to him than otherwise to be prevented from carrying out his disreputable plans. And there was no doubt that he derived entertainment and satisfaction from pulling the leg of the man who was shadowing him, hoping to "catch him out."

The racecourse was in sight in the distance when Vernon-Smith spoke to his driver again.

"Take the next turning," he said, "and then stop!"

"Right, sir!"

No doubt the man was puzzled by the vagaries of his passenger. But he did as he was told. The taxi whirled off the road again into a shady lane. The Bounder had a minute before his pursuer also turned the corner. A minute was more than enough for him.

He jumped out and shoved a ten-shilling note into the surprised driver's hand.

"Keep on to the races," he said swiftly. "That's twice your fare! I'm not going, after all; but I want you to drive up to the entrance! Catch on?"

"Blowed if I do, sir!" answered the taxi-driver. "But I'll do as you say."

"Quick, then! It's a bit of a joke on a chap who's following me—I'm pulling his leg!" said Smithy. "Buzz off!"

"Right!"

The taxi buzzed on again. Vernon-Smith leaped into the trees beside the lane. Behind a beech trunk there, screened by a mass of brambles, he watched the lane; and a few moments later grinned at the sight of the second taxi coming round the corner.

Keeping carefully in cover, he watched it; and as it passed he had a plain view of the man sitting inside—a tall man with hard features under a soft grey hat! It was Mr. Smedley!

The taxi was gone in a few moments, buzzing on after the now empty vehicle that was going to the race ground.

The Bounder chuckled. Emerging from the trees, he walked back the way he had come to Elmbridge.

Mr. Smedley had gone on, nothing doubting that the scapegrace of the school was ahead of him in the first taxi; nothing doubting that he would run the young rascal down.

The Bounder could imagine him rooting through the crowd among the spectators and punters and bookmakers, looking for a fellow who was not there, and he chuckled with amusement.

But he lost no time! Smedley could have only one object in what he was doing—to inform Mr. Vernon-Smith of the behaviour of his son at Wharton Lodge. It was a puzzle to the Bounder that the man should be so keen on nailing him, but there was no doubt about that keenness. And it was necessary for the Bounder to prove an "alibi." If a report was sent to his father that he had been at Elmbridge races that afternoon, it was essential

for him to be able to prove that he had been somewhere else at the time.

He did not waste a minute. He kept on the trot back to Elmbridge, and bagged another taxi without delay. Money was not so plentiful with Smithy as it had been at one time, but he did not think of that now, or care about it. He jumped into the taxi.

"The picture palace at Wimford, as fast as you can go!" he said. "Make her move!"

The taxi cut away by lanes, across country to Wimford. The driver "made her move," as Smithy directed, and the ground was covered fast. It was not much after four o'clock when the Bounder stepped out of the taxi at the

RHYMES OF THE REMOVE.

No. 13.



This week's "snazzy" poem by the Greyfriars rhymester tells of the delights — "Sez you!" — of compulsory "prep."

The bell for prep is ringing out
Its beastly horrid din,
Its clashing tones are singing out
That prep must now begin;
Farewell to evening freedom now,
Get out the pen and ink,
The class-books, too—we need 'em now!
An awful fag, we think!

There's very little sound about
While fellows are at work,
For Loder's prowling round about
To see we do not shirk!
The whole Remove is busy now
With Loder on the spot!
He's not good-tempered—is he, now?
You've said it! He is not!

When Loder walks the corridor
With swift and silent step,
He either comes down horrid, or
He sees we stick to prep!
At times, when he a rag has seen,
Or finds some chap asleep,
Or reading from a magazine—
He fairly makes us creep!

Sometimes our master barges on
The scene (complete with cane!);
He whacks us, and enlarges on
The moral good of pain!
But when he goes downstairs again
We softly shout, "Hooray!"
Then leap-frog over chairs again
To pass the time away!

We know the coast is clear again—
Bob Cherry gaily sings:
"Oh, happy days are here again,
Hand out the supper things!"
Then Bunter comes with speed in sight
And starts to grunt and cough,
For when there is a feed in sight,
Then Bunter's not far off.

Then Loder creeps (and slyly, too)
Upstairs to catch us out!
But we are rather wily, too:
Of that there is no doubt!
The word is swiftly passed along
That Loder's on the way,
And when he comes, at last, along
You bet it's all O.K.!

cinema in Wimford, where he knew he would find the chums of the Remove—impeccable witnesses that he had not been at the races that afternoon.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, feeling a tap on his shoulder as the lights went up after a picture.

"Here you are, what?" drawled the Bounder.

"Smithy! You came after all, then?"

"Yes, here I am!"

"The gladfulness to see your ridiculous countenance is terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Isn't Wharton here?"

"He went back with Bunter," said Frank Nugent. "Haven't you seen him?"

"No; I went for a run round the country before comin' here! What's the time?"

"Quarter past four!" said Johnny Bull.

"Good! You fellows will remember that I was here with you, just after four, if necessary."

"Eh! Why?" asked Bob, in astonishment.

"Here comes the giddy picture!" said the Bounder. And he sat down without answering Bob's question.

It was quite a good British picture, and the juniors enjoyed it. But the Bounder did not give it a lot of attention. He was thinking of Mr. Smedley, probably still rooting after him on the racecourse at Elmbridge; and he found that mental picture more entertaining than the one of the screen.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Own Up!

"BEAST!"

"This way!"
"Yah! Rotter! Wow!"
Billy Bunter did not want to enter the telephone cabinet in the hall at Wharton Lodge. But he had to. A hefty shove from a foot landed him there with a roar.

"Wells!" called out Harry Wharton. Wells, the butler, was a grave and well-trained gentleman of middle age. Seldom did Wells' composed face express emotion of any sort. But it registered a startled surprise now, as the colonel's nephew helped his extraordinary guest to the telephone with his foot.

"Oh! Yes, Master Harry!" gasped Wells.

"Has my uncle come in yet?"

"Not yet, Master Harry!"

"Right! You've got time, Bunter—buck up!"

"Shan't!" gasped Bunter.

"I'll get the number!"

"Beast!"

Harry Wharton opened the telephone directory. It was a local volume, but on the page assigned for that purpose, various numbers have been written, in among them Mr. Quelch's number at Bournemouth. Having found the number, Harry rang up the exchange. As he did so, the fat Owl of the Remove made a strategic movement to retreat.

The bare idea of telling Mr. Quelch that he had "spoofed" him on the phone, made Bunter cringe with terror.

But there was no retreat for the hapless Owl. Holding the receiver with one hand, Harry Wharton grabbed Bunter's neck with the other.

"Leggo!" howled Bunter.

From the hall, Wells gazed at the scene in amazement from a little distance. Had Colonel Wharton been

there, he certainly would have wanted to know what it meant. Fortunately, the old colonel was still out in the car.

"Take the receiver, you fat chump!" snapped Wharton.

"Shan't!" gasped Bunter. "Think I'm going to tell Quelch? Why, you silly ass, he might whop a fellow—"

"All the better!"

"Beast! If he didn't whop me here he would take it out of me at Greyfriars next term. You jolly well know he would!" gasped Bunter.

"Shouldn't wonder!" said Harry. "Will you take the receiver? If my uncle comes in it will be too late! I shall have to tell him what you've done so that he could ring up Quelch and explain. And he will kick you out of the house for playing such a potty trick—"

"Oh lor'! I—I say, why not keep it dark?" groaned Bunter. "You don't want Quelch here, any more than I do! Let him rip, old chap! See?"

"They've answered," said Harry. "Take the receiver and explain. If you don't, you've got to deal with my uncle!"

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter. He took the receiver and put it to his fat ear. Why Wharton couldn't let well alone, Bunter did not understand. But it was clear that Wharton couldn't, or wouldn't, and anything was better than dealing with the grim-visaged old colonel. Colonel Wharton often gave the fat Owl rather grim looks; he was no admirer of Billy Bunter's manners and customs. If he found out that Bunter had used his name on the phone and insulted an invited guest, there was really no telling what the colonel might do. Not only was he fairly certain to kick Bunter out, but it was very probable that he might thrash him first.

"Who is speaking?" came a sharp voice on the wires. It was Mr. Quelch at the other end.

"Me, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"What? Who?"

"Bib-bib-bib—"

"What?"

"Bib-bib-bib-Bunter!" stuttered the fat Owl.

"Bunter! Indeed! Why have you rung me up, Bunter?" Mr. Quelch's tone was politely inquiring. He did not seem particularly joyful at being rung up by William George Bunter in the holidays.

"I—I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"What?"

"It—it was me, sir!"

"What do you mean, Bunter? I do not understand you. Make yourself clear."

"Oh lor'!"

"What did you say?"

"I—I—I hope you're better, sir. Hope you're quite well, sir!" Bunter felt that this was a diplomatic beginning. "I—I hope you'll be able to come back to Greyfriars next term, sir."

"I have every hope of doing so, Bunter. Is that all?"

"Oh! No. That—that's good news, sir. We—we loathe that man, Smedley. He's an awful worm, sir—"

"Are you speaking of the gentleman who has temporarily taken my place at Greyfriars, Bunter?" came in freezing tones.

"Yes, sir; and—"

"Then kindly speak of him more respectfully. Or, rather, do not speak of him at all. Have you anything else to say?"

Bunter gave Wharton an imploring blink. Wharton gave him a glare in return. The fat Owl squeaked into the mouthpiece.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,367.

"Oh! Yes, sir. It was me, sir!"

"What was you, Bunter. I fail to understand you."

"Me that spoke on the telephone about an hour ago, sir," groaned Bunter. "It—it wasn't Colonel Wharton at all, sir."

"What?" came in a formidable roar over the wires.

As he heard it Bunter was glad that there was the length of a telephone wire between him and Henry Samuel Quelch.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter.

"Bunter! About an hour ago I telephoned to Wharton Lodge. Are you speaking from Wharton Lodge?"

"Oh dear! Yes, sir. I'm staying here with Wharton, sir. He was so pressing about it. I gave up a lot of engagements and—"

"Did you take the call I supposed was taken by Colonel Wharton?"

"That's it, sir. You see, the old fossil—"

"What?"

"I mean the old colonel, sir, was out, so I—I took the call, sir. And—and somehow you—you fancied it was him speaking."

"You told me so!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"D-d-did I, sir? What I meant was, that it—it wasn't, sir. That's what I really meant, sir!"

"You young rascal! You dared to—to—to—" Mr. Quelch seemed choking. "Then I have not spoken to Colonel Wharton at all?"

"Nunno."

"You dared to tell me, in his name, that it would be inconvenient for me to accept his invitation!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"That was only a—a joke, sir!" groaned Bunter. "J-j-just one of my little j-j-jokes, sir."

"Upon my word!"

"I—I didn't want to keep you away, sir. I—I don't hate having beaks about in the holidays!"

"You young rascal! I shall request Colonel Wharton's permission to chastise you when I arrive."

"Oh lor'!"

"How dare you play such a trick?"

"I—I didn't; I—I mean— Oh crikey!"

"That will do, you fat chump!" said Harry, and he took the receiver from Bunter, who staggered away, gasping.

"Mr. Quelch! Harry Wharton speaking! I hope you will forgive Bunter that silly trick, sir. He told me what he had done, and came back at once to telephone and explain to you—"

This was putting it rather favourably for Bunter.

"A most unfeeling and stupid trick, Wharton. I supposed that it was your uncle speaking, and—and—"

"Bunter's a silly ass, sir, and he's tried to set it right after I—I pointed out to him what a fathead he was. Can I give my uncle a message, sir? He will be delighted to hear that you are coming. He's out now—"

"Oh, certainly, Wharton! I rang up this afternoon to say that I should arrive by the six o'clock train at Wimford. But—" Mr. Quelch seemed to hesitate. He knew now that it was not his intended host who had told him that his visit would be frightfully inconvenient. But some disagreeable impression, perhaps, lingered in his mind. "But perhaps I had better ring up later, and speak to Colonel Wharton."

There was a sound of a car on the drive.

"My uncle's just coming in, sir," said Harry. "Hold the line!"

"Oh, very well, Wharton!"

"And—and—and if you'd be so awfully good, sir, as not to—to mention

Bunter's silly trick to him, sir—" ventured Wharton.

"Very well, Wharton! If the foolish boy is staying with you I certainly do not desire to cause any unpleasantness."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" said Harry gratefully. "I've jolly well kicked him, sir—I mean he's sorry he played that silly trick. I suppose you will be coming back to Greyfriars next term, sir?"

"Yes, Wharton. My health is sufficiently restored."

"That's jolly good news, sir!" said Harry, so heartily that there was no mistaking his sincerity, though it was true that his satisfaction was largely founded on the unpopularity of the Creeper and Crawler. Mr. Quelch gave a little, gratified cough.

"I am glad that you are pleased, Wharton, my boy!"

"We shall all be jolly pleased, sir. Here's my uncle! Uncle, it's Mr. Quelch on the phone!"

Colonel Wharton took the receiver, and Harry left him to it. In the hall Billy Bunter gave him an uneasy blink.

"I say," he mumbled. "If that old beast tells the other beast— Wow! Leggo my ear, you rotter! Wow!"

Harry Wharton went out to join his friends at Wimford. Billy Bunter was left rubbing his ear, and to his own devices. His host had had enough of that peculiar guest, for the present.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Smedley Blows In!

BILLY BUNTER stared.

Or, to put it more correctly, he glared!

His glare might almost have cracked his spectacles!

"Is it going to rain beaks?" Bunter demanded of space.

Bunter could not help thinking that it was altogether too thick, as he stared, and glared at the tall figure coming up the drive at Wharton Lodge.

Left on his own, after Wharton had gone to join his friends at the cinema, Billy Bunter had first gone up to Wharton's den, where the Bounder had been left with the book he professed to be unable to leave when the other fellows went out.

Bunter was a gregarious animal, and, fascinating as his company was, he never liked being left to it. But he found Wharton's rooms deserted. The Bounder had evidently changed his mind and gone off somewhere.

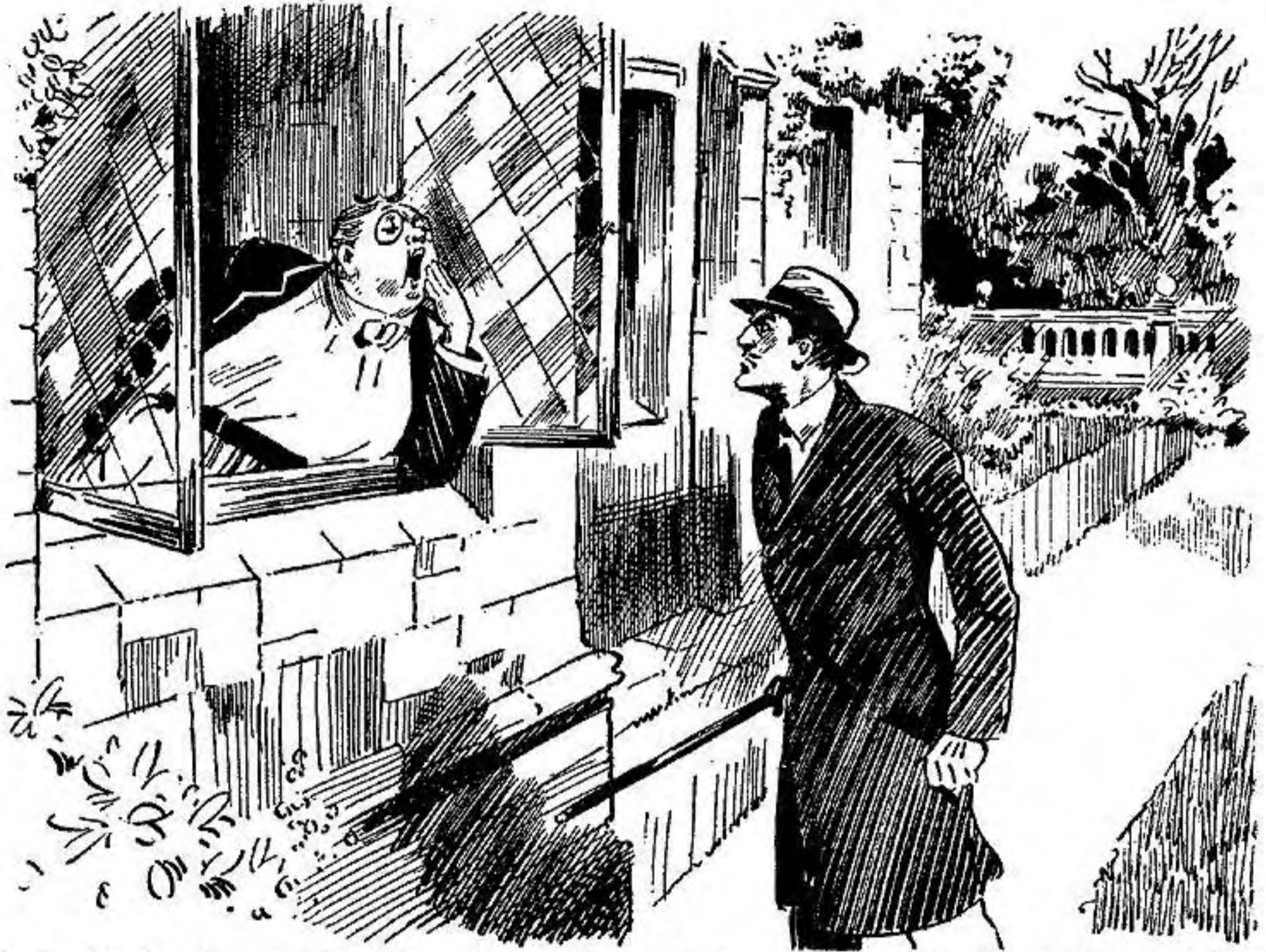
"Beast!" remarked Bunter, and rolled away in search of some other victim. He was feeling less disposed than ever to walk to Wimford.

Now that he was on his own there was nothing to prevent him from ringing up a taxi, except the circumstance that, being on his own, he would have to pay the fare! That was a lion in the path, so he did not think of a taxi!

Fortunately, it was not very far from tea-time, and Miss Amy Wharton, the colonel's sister, graciously—though, perhaps not very enthusiastically—welcomed the fat Owl to tea.

The juniors were teeing at the cinema, and Miss Wharton's company, though gracious and pleasant, was not exactly exhilarating to Bunter. However, the cakes were good, and there were plenty of them; and Bunter told Miss Wharton about his school life—how popular he was, and how all the fellows were deeply attached to him, to the extent of almost scrapping with one another in their rivalry to bag him for the "hols." Perhaps Miss Wharton, on her side, did not find the company exhilarating, for, after tea, she disappeared, and Bunter was on his own again.

He drifted into the hall, where he



Mr. Smedley stepped towards the window where Bunter was leaning a fat elbow on the sill and grinning out at him. "Possibly, Bunter, you fancy that you may venture to be impertinent, now that you are not at school!" said the Form-master quietly. Bunter yawned. "I shall have to teach you better manners next term, Bunter!" said Mr. Smedley, his hard eyes glinting.

found Thomas, a youth in buttons. He entertained Thomas, for want of a better listener, with a description of the glories of Bunter Court, till Thomas, answering an imaginary call from Wells, dodged down the service staircase and escaped.

After which Billy Bunter posted himself at the tall hall window and watched the drive, wondering when the beasts were coming in. Colonel Wharton came through the hall and went round to the garage, and Bunter guessed that he was going to take the car to the station for Mr. Quelch, whose train was soon due. He would have offered to go with him, but for his dislike of the idea of meeting Quelch. That meeting, Bunter felt, could not be postponed too long. After the colonel had driven away, the fat junior stood blinking at the window, reflecting how bitterly, how rottenly, he was treated by fellows he had done so much for. And then, to cap and crown his utter disgust, he sighted a tall figure coming up the drive, and recognised Mr. Smedley, the temporary master of the Remove at Greyfriars.

Really, it seemed as if it was going to rain hoaks!

Not only was Quelch coming, but here was Quelch's substitute coming, also! As he was walking, and had no bag, it did not look as if he was coming to stay, which was something to be thankful for. Still, there he was, and Bunter blinked at him mimically from the hall window, mindful of several whoopings that Mr. Smedley had given him last term at school—though not so many, probably, as he had deserved!

Mr. Smedley, as he came up the steps, noted the fat face and glimmering

spectacles at the hall window, which was open.

Bunter stared at him, not at all respectfully.

At Greyfriars he trembled at Smedley's frown. But matters were quite altered now.

The news from Quelch showed that he was coming back to Greyfriars next term. So there would be no more Smedley there! The temporary master's engagement, of course, terminated, when the permanent master came back.

If Smedley wasn't going to be at the school any more—as obviously, now, he wasn't, Bunter had nothing to fear from him. When Bunter had nothing to fear he was as bold as a lion.

So he stared at Mr. Smedley from the window, rather as if that gentleman was a stray dog that had wandered on the premises.

"Oh! You are here, Bunter!" remarked Mr. Smedley, glancing at him.

"Looks like it!" said Bunter carelessly. He was not going to waste a "sir" on a man who could no longer cane him!

Mr. Smedley looked at him rather hard.

Bunter stared back coolly. He wanted to make it quite clear that he wasn't afraid of Smedley. Who was Smedley, anyhow?

"If you're after Smithy—" went on Bunter, with a grin.

"What?"

"He's gone out!" grinned Bunter. "Nothing doing."

Mr. Smedley had been about to ring the bell. He paused, and stepped along a pace or two, towards the big window

where Bunter was leaning his fat elbows on the sill and grinning out at him.

"Possibly, Bunter, you fancy that you may venture to be impertinent, now that you are not at school," he said quietly.

Bunter yawned.

Yawning, in the face of a Form-master was a thing that a fellow never ventured to do at Greyfriars. It was rather an agreeable thing to think of doing; but not a thing that a fellow could actually do. Now Bunter could do it, if he liked—and he did!

Mr. Smedley's cold hard eyes glinted.

"I think I shall have to teach you better manners next term, Bunter," he said, in the same quiet tone.

"He, he, he!" Bunter changed his yawn into a fat chuckle. "I fancy not! You see, you won't be there!"

Mr. Smedley started.

"What? What do you mean?" he exclaimed sharply.

Bunter grinned cheerfully. Smedley's return to the school depended on whether Mr. Quelch was sufficiently recovered to resume his duties there. Evidently the headmaster had not yet notified Smedley. Bunter knew the facts, as it happened—and Smedley didn't.

No doubt the fellow was keen enough to hang on to his temporary job, if he could. He was only one of those dashed tutors, supplied by the scholastic firm of Leggett & Teggars, and if he wasn't wanted at Greyfriars next term he would be looking for another job. That was quite an amusing thought to Billy Bunter.

"I happen to know, you see," drawled Bunter. "Quelch is coming back next

term, see? So you won't be there, Smedley." In the circumstances Bunter considered that he could venture to call the man Smedley, and he did.

Mr. Smedley compressed his lips hard. He was a sharp-tempered man; but even a good-tempered man might have been annoyed by Bunter's impertinence. But he remained calm. Perhaps he was after information.

"Indeed," he said. "You seem to be well-informed, Bunter."

"Not much goes on without my getting on to it, you know," said Bunter complacently. "The fact is, I've had a talk with Quelch on the telephone. He told me all about it."

"Indeed!"

"We shall be jolly glad to have him back," remarked Bunter. "He's got his faults; but there's nothing creepy or crawley about him. Not the sort of man the fellows would call the Creeper and Crawler! He, he, he!"

Mr. Smedley started again. Possibly this was his first intimation of the name by which he was called in the Greyfriars Remove.

"Not the sort of man to go prying after a fellow in the hols," went on Bunter, who was beginning to enjoy this peculiar conversation. "If he comes here, it won't be to see what Smithy's up to. He wouldn't phone to a fellow's pater in the holidays. He, he, he!"

Mr. Smedley's eyes glittered.

"Sneaking, I call it!" went on Bunter. Having "got away" with his cheek, so far, it was like Billy Bunter to go right over the limit. "Mean! If you've come here nosing after Smithy, I can jolly well say—Yaroooh!"

Smack!

If ever a fellow had asked to have his head smacked, it was Bunter! But he did not seem to expect it. Smedley's snite took him quite by surprise.

"Yaroooh! Whoop! Wow!" roared Bunter, as he staggered back from the window, slipped on the polished oak floor of the hall, and sat down with a mighty bump. "Yow-ow-ow! Beast! Whoooooo!"

Mr. Smedley rang the bell.

"Ow! Wow!" Bunter sat and rubbed his head, as Wells came across the hall to the door. "Beast! Wow!"

Wells glanced at him. Then he opened the door. Billy Bunter staggered to his feet, as Mr. Smedley was let in.

"Is Colonel Wharton at home?"

"No, sir; the master's gone to the station in the car. Miss Wharton is at home."

"I will wait till Colonel Wharton returns. Please give him my card."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Very well, sir!" Wells took the card, which bore the style and title of Eustace Smedley, M.A., Oxon. Wells had heard the juniors speaking of their temporary "beak" at school, so he knew who Mr. Smedley was. "Please come in, sir."

He showed Mr. Smedley to the library.

Billy Bunter blinked after them, through his big spectacles, in wrath and indignation. His head was singing from that hefty smack.

"Beast!" he roared.

Mr. Smedley glanced round. Wells stared.

"If you jolly well think you can smack a fellow's head, you're jolly well mistaken, see!" roared Bunter. "You're not at Greyfriars now, you beast, and you're jolly well not going there any more! Who's afraid of you, I'd like to know? Yah! You're sacked, you are!"

"Master Bunter—" gasped Wells.

Mr. Smedley made a stride towards Bunter. Bunter made a bound for the stairs. He had stated that he was not

afraid of Smedley. But that hurried bound, as Smedley came towards him, looked as if he was, after all.

Stairs, as a rule, presented difficulties to Bunter. He had so much weight to carry up a staircase. But on this occasion he did the stairs at about sixty m.p.h. He fairly flew.

Mr. Smedley stopped.

Bunter reached the landing, and blinked over the banisters at him. Wells stood horrified.

"Yah!" roared Bunter, over the banisters. As Mr. Smedley had not pursued him up the stairs, the fat Owl of the Remove felt safe in hurling defiance down at him, ready to run at a sign of further chase. "Yah! You're sacked, Smedley. You ain't coming back to Greyfriars any more! I can jolly well tell you you ain't wanted! We don't want a Creeper and Crawler there, I can jolly well tell you! Yah!"

RAISE A LAUGH
and
WIN A POCKET-KNIFE!

The following rib-tickler was sent in by H. Lee, of Council House, Sefton Road, Litherland, Liverpool. He's more than pleased with the penknife he's won!



Redwing: "Why not give up smoking? You know how it changes your colour."
Smith (coolly): "Yes, I'm always tanned when I'm caught!"

And having delivered that Parthian shot, Bunter disappeared up the staircase. Wells had to make strenuous efforts to conceal a grin, as he showed Mr. Smedley into the library, there to await the colonel's return.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Shock for the Colonel!

MR. LUCIUS TEGGERS—alias Eustace Smedley—listened, as he heard the sound of footsteps and voices in the hall. He had waited about a quarter of an hour, when he heard the sound of the car arriving.

Colonel Wharton had returned, apparently not alone. Who his companion was Mr. Smedley did not know, or care; certainly never guessing that it was Mr. Quelch, the Form-master whose place he had taken at Greyfriars, and whom he had never seen. A few minutes later the door of the library opened, and a tall, bronze-complexioned old gentleman

came in, with a card in his hand. Mr. Smedley rose.

"Colonel Wharton?"

"Yes, sir!" said the colonel. "You are Mr. Smedley—my nephew's Form-master at Greyfriars, I think?"

"His temporary Form-master, sir!" answered Mr. Smedley, with a smile, as he shook hands with the colonel.

The old military gentleman's keen eyes were rather scrutinising. He had heard some talk among the juniors on the subject of their temporary beak, and was aware that they did not like him. He had heard some reference to a Creeper and Crawler. So he had rather wondered what the man was like.

"Please sit down, sir!" said Colonel Wharton. "I am very glad to make your acquaintance. The boys are all out of doors at present—"

He was courteous, but a little puzzled to know why Mr. Smedley had called at Wharton Lodge. Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, was an old friend; but Mr. Quelch's substitute he had never met before, or heard of till the boys came in the Easter holidays. And though he was not a man to be prejudiced by careless remarks made by schoolboys, such a name as the Creeper and Crawler could hardly fail to make an unfavourable impression.

Still, he found Mr. Smedley to be a well-groomed and well-mannered young man, and certainly he would never have dreamed of suspecting that Mr. Smedley had no right to that name at all.

Lucius Teggars had got away with his borrowed name at Greyfriars. Even Herbert Vernon-Smith had not the remotest suspicion that Eustace Smedley, master of the Remove, was in reality, his own cousin Lucius Teggars, junior partner in the firm of Leggott & Teggars. Had the Bounder suspected that, he might have suspected, too, why Mr. Smedley was so keen to land him into trouble with his father; for he knew that Lucius Teggars was his rival for the millionaire's millions.

Well-groomed and well-mannered as Mr. Smedley was, there was something in his hard mouth, and sharp wary eyes, that the colonel did not like. That uncomplimentary nickname, the Creeper and Crawler, was in his mind.

"I must beg you to excuse this intrusion, sir!" said Mr. Smedley.

"Not at all, sir!"

"In fact, it is a somewhat unpleasant duty that has called me here, Colonel Wharton, I am sorry to say."

The colonel's grizzled eyebrows lifted.

"My nephew—" he began.

"Your nephew, sir, is my head boy in the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars, and a credit to the Form, and the school, in every way!" Mr. Smedley hastened to say.

"I am glad to hear that, sir!" said the colonel, smiling. "I rather feared from what you said, that Harry had been giving you some trouble."

"Not in the least! If all schoolboys were like your nephew, sir, a school-master's task would be an easy one. But I am given to understand that another Remove boy is staying with him over the holidays—"

"Half-a-dozen, sir!" said the colonel. "Cherry, Nugent, Hurrce Singh, Bull, Bunter, and Vernon-Smith."

"I refer to Vernon-Smith."

"Oh!" said Colonel Wharton rather grimly.

"Probably you are aware, sir, that this boy, Vernon-Smith, was expelled from school last term—"

"I have heard something of it," said the colonel briefly. "But as Dr. Locke decided to allow him to remain—"

"That was not because the Head excused his disgraceful conduct in any way, sir. His father—"

"I have heard something of this, Mr. Smedley," said the colonel, a little restively. "It seems that his father resolved to disinherit him, if he was expelled from school, and he was given a chance to amend his conduct. From what I have heard, he has done so, or certainly he would never have been allowed to stay here with my nephew and his friends."

"I have only too much reason to think, sir, that he has not done so," said Mr. Smedley.

"My nephew thinks so, sir, or he would not have asked him here. At all events, I must point out that I have no concern with the conduct of Mr. Vernon-Smith's son at school."

"I am not referring to his conduct at school, sir, which is in my province, as his Form-master. I am referring to his conduct here."

"Here!" ejaculated the colonel. "Precisely."

"Mr. Smedley! You are not suggesting that a schoolboy, staying under my roof, and for whom I am therefore responsible, would be allowed to act in any way of which his headmaster would not approve."

"Without your knowledge, sir."

"Good gad! Let us be plain, sir! You have come here to tell me that this boy, whom I trust, and whom my nephew trusts, is deceiving both of us?"

"I am sorry to say, yes."

"If that is correct, sir, the boy leaves this house immediately. But I hope, and believe, that there is some mistake. I really fail to see how you can be aware of what he is doing, either good or bad."

"I will be frank, sir! I regard the boy as a disgrace to his school, a danger to the other boys in his Form, and for that reason I should be glad if he did not return to Greyfriars next term."

"I understand that! But how—"

"For that reason, sir, I have considered it my duty to keep some observation on him during the holidays."

The colonel grunted.

"That is not usually considered a Form-master's duty, Mr. Smedley."

"The circumstances are unusual, sir!"

"Possibly—possibly—but—"

"I came here this afternoon, sir, with the intention of ascertaining whether Vernon-Smith really was here, or whether he had taken French leave, as he did earlier in the holidays when sent to a tutor's—"

"You may be satisfied on that point, Mr. Smedley! The boy certainly is at Wharton Lodge."

"I met him as I was coming here—he was alone, without any of his friends."

"They are generally together," said the colonel. "But if Vernon-Smith was taking a walk by himself, I see no harm in it."

"You will alter your opinion, sir, when I tell you that he took the train to Elmbridge, and engaged a taxi to drive him to the races there!"

"Impossible!"

"As I have said, sir, I consider it my duty to keep this incorrigible young rascal under observation. I therefore followed him this afternoon—"

"Followed him!" ejaculated the colonel.

"Yes, sir, and was in the same train going to Elmbridge. At that place, I heard him inquire of a taxi-driver about the races, and engage the man to drive him there."

"Good gad!"

"I followed him in another taxi, to

make absolutely sure. I arrived at the entrance to the race ground, just as his taxi was coming empty away."

"Good gad!" repeated the colonel blankly.

"I entered the place, sir, but failed to find him in the crowd there," went on Mr. Smedley, "I then decided to come here and acquaint you with the facts. That you would not approve of—"

"Approve, sir!" roared Colonel Wharton. "By Jove, sir, if the young rascal has done anything of the kind, I shall kick him out of this house, sir, and send a letter to his father acquainting him with the reason! By Jove, sir!"

Mr. Smedley's eyes glimmered.

"I am sorry to say, sir, that there is no doubt on the subject. If the boy has returned, you will no doubt question him. If he has the effrontery to make denials, apart from what I have seen with my own eyes, it would be easy to identify his taxi-driver at Elmbridge—I made a note of the number of the taxi so—"

The colonel gave a grunt. Mr. Smedley, doubtless had given good reasons for his conduct, but it seemed to the colonel a good deal more like that of a detective than a schoolmaster.

"This is a painful matter, sir!" said Mr. Smedley. "But I felt bound to apprise you—allowing the boy, as you do, to associate with your nephew—"

"Certainly, certainly! But—good gad! One moment!" The colonel rang the bell, and Wells appeared at the door. "Is Master Vernon-Smith in the house, Wells?"

"No, sir, he went out early in the afternoon."

"Not with his friends?"

"No, sir! Some time after them."

"Have any of them returned?"

"Only Master Bunter, sir."

"Ask him to come here."

"Very good, sir!"

The butler withdrew, leaving the colonel in a rather fuming state, and Mr. Smedley with a grave and composed expression, that gave no clue to the bitter satisfaction in his heart. He had no doubt that he had landed his fish at last—and it was Colonel Wharton who was going to pass on the necessary information to Mr. Vernon-Smith! Which exactly suited Mr. Lucius Teggars!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Does His Best!

"SHAN'T!"

That was Billy Bunter's answer.

He blinked at Wells, through his big spectacles, in alarm.

The butler coughed.

"The master desires you to go to the library, sir!" he murmured.

"Shan't!" repeated Bunter.

"Not till that beast Smedley is gone!"

Just like him to tell the old fossil that I checked him!

I say, is the old bean waxy?"

"If you are referring to Colonel Wharton, sir—"

"You know I am!" roared Bunter.

"Is the old fossil shirty?"

"What?"

"Really, sir—"

"I jolly well shan't go!" growled Bunter.

"Very well, sir!" said the butler. "I will tell the master so."

"Hold on!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I'll go!" Really, it was impossible to let Wells return to the master of Wharton Lodge with such a message. Even the Owl of the Remove realised that.

And Bunter went.

He was feeling extremely uneasy as he entered the library. He had no doubt that Smedley had complained of his impudence, and that was why he was sent for.

"Come here, Bunter!" rapped the colonel, as the fat junior hesitated on the threshold.

"It—it wasn't me!" gasped Bunter.

It was clear from the grim expression on the colonel's bronzed old face that he was "waxy" and "shirty."

"What?"

"I—I mean—he smacked my head!" gasped Bunter. "That's why I called him a beast! Besides, I never called him a beast."

Colonel Wharton glared at him.

"What is this stupid boy chattering about?" he snapped.

"Besides, he ain't our beak now!" gasped Bunter. "Now Quelch is coming back he ain't our beak any more. So—"

"Colonel Wharton desires to ask you some questions concerning Vernon-Smith, Bunter," said Mr. Smedley.

"Oh! I—I thought—"

"What is the matter with the boy?" snapped the colonel testily. "Bunter, come here! What are you afraid of, you young donkey? Where is Vernon-Smith?"

"Oh, Smithy!" said Bunter, greatly relieved to discover that he was not the fellow booked for trouble. It did not matter if Smithy was! "He's gone out—"

"I understood that there was a party for the cinema at Wimford this afternoon. Why did not Vernon-Smith go with the others?"

"He had a book he wouldn't leave," answered Bunter. "At least, he said so."

"But he went out afterwards?"

"I suppose so; he was gone out when I looked for him," answered Bunter, in wonder. "He hasn't come in yet."

"Do you know where he went?"


"He never told me. I thought I should find him reading when I looked for him! Of course, I might have known that he was pulling our leg! Fat lot he cares about reading!"

Mr Smedley smiled. The colonel frowned.

It was obvious to both of them that the Bounder had affected that interest in his book in order to be left behind

(Continued on next page.)

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when the other fellows went to the pictures. Evidently the book had been thrown aside after they were gone, and Smithy had gone out on his own.

Billy Bunter blinked at them. He had guessed, at the sight of Mr. Smedley that the Creeper and Crawler was after Smithy again. Now it was plain enough for even Bunter to see that Smedley was making trouble for the Bounder at Wharton Lodge.

Bunter was not the fellow to help that on. He had no great liking for Smithy, who, indeed, had kicked him for opening one of his letters by mistake—a mistake that Bunter made too often! But he was not going to help the Creeper and Crawler to nail Smithy—not if Bunter knew it!

"I say, Smithy hasn't gone to the races!" he exclaimed.

"What?" roared Colonel Wharton. "You can take that from me!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "He stayed in this afternoon to read that book—awfully interesting book! I never thought he was staying in because he wanted to get away on his own."

"Good gad!" "Nothing of the kind," said Bunter cheerfully. "I don't suppose he knew that there was any racing at Elmbridge this afternoon. I dare say he's never heard of the place at all—I know I haven't—"

"What?" "It's not Smithy's fault if a Highcliffe fellow wrote to him and told him to put his shirt on Bonny Boy at Elmbridge. Smithy can't help what a Highcliffe fellow writes to him!" argued Bunter.

"Good gad!" repeated the colonel, staring blankly at the happy Owl of the Remove. "Do you mean to say, Bunter, that you have seen a letter—in which some blackguardly young rascal advised Vernon-Smith—"

"Not at all! I hope I'm not the fellow to open a fellow's letter," said Bunter. "Besides, I opened it by mistake! I told Smithy so."

"Go, for goodness' sake!" snapped Colonel Wharton.

Bunter rolled to the door. But there he turned. He felt that it was up to him to put in another word for poor old Smithy and save him from the machinations of the Creeper and Crawler.

"I say, it's all right about Smithy," he said. "There was nothing about the races at Elmbridge in that letter from Vavasour. The fact is, he never had a letter from a Highcliffe man at all. I know that for certain, because I opened it by mistake—"

"Leave this room, you young donkey!"

Bunter rolled away satisfied that he had done his best for Smithy and put a spoke in the wheel of that beast, the Creeper and Crawler!

Colonel Wharton tugged at his grizzled moustache.

"The matter could hardly be clearer, I think, sir!" remarked Mr. Smedley.

"No!" said the colonel, with a deep breath. "No! The facts speak for themselves! The young rascal! The young scoundrel! As soon as he returns I will question him in your presence, sir, and in that of Mr. Quelch."

"Mr. Quelch!" repeated Mr. Smedley, with a start.

"It fortunately happens that his Form-master, Mr. Quelch, is in this house!" said Colonel Wharton. "No doubt you will be pleased to make his acquaintance, sir."

Mr. Smedley did not look particularly pleased. But Colonel Wharton did not notice his expression as he rang for THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,367.

Wells again, and asked the butler to request Mr. Quelch to come to the library as soon as he could.

"Fortunately Quelch is here!" said the colonel. "We shall be able to consult him in this matter. As the boy's Form-master, he has a right to be consulted."

"Oh, quite, sir!" said Mr. Smedley. Mr. Quelch entered the library.

He was duly presented to Mr. Smedley, with whom he shook hands politely. He was probably pleased to make the acquaintance of the young man who had been his substitute in the Remove Form-room at Greyfriars School, and he assumed his most agreeable smile.

But that smile faded from his face as Colonel Wharton proceeded to explain the purport of Mr. Smedley's visit.

A very cold look came over Quelch's face.

It was true that he had no high opinion of Vernon-Smith. It was true that he doubted whether the headmaster had done wisely in giving the young rascal another chance at the school. But Vernon-Smith was a member of his Form; a lamb in his flock, so to speak. And the idea of a Form-master occupying the holidays in keeping watch on a boy away from school was extremely repugnant to Mr. Quelch. He could not help thinking that such a Form-master must be actuated rather by dislike than by duty. His look became colder and colder as he listened. His feeling was that Mr. Smedley had exceeded his duty—very much exceeded it—and he had a desire to defend that member of his Form if he could.

"I am sorry, Mr. Smedley, that this boy of my Form should have given you trouble in my temporary absence!" he remarked icily. "No doubt it will be a relief to you to hear that I am returning to Greyfriars at the new term, and that Vernon-Smith will trouble you no more."

Mr. Smedley's eyes glinted. But his answer was polite.

"I am very glad to hear that your health is restored, Mr. Quelch," he answered. "There is no doubt, then, that you will return?"

"None, sir, and you will receive a communication from Dr. Locke to that effect," said Mr. Quelch. "As for Vernon-Smith, I still hope that there may be some mistake in this matter."

"There seems hardly room for a mistake, sir!" suggested Mr. Smedley.

"We have not yet questioned the boy!" said Mr. Quelch obstinately. "And I have every hope that he may be able to explain. Certainly I consider it my duty as his Form-master to see that he has ample opportunity."

"I will tell Wells to send him to us immediately he returns," said Colonel Wharton. "His return can hardly be delayed much longer."

"Probably not, sir, as the races at Elmbridge conclude at six o'clock," said Mr. Smedley.

That remark elicited an audible sniff from Quelch!

The minutes seemed very long as the three gentlemen waited for Wells to announce that the Bounder had come in.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Facing the Music!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came out of the Imperial Cinema at Wimford in the April sunset in a cheery bunch.

Wharton had been rather surprised when, on joining his friends there, he had found the Bounder with the Co.

He was rather pleased as well as surprised. Possibly he had seen signs of boredom in his guest at Wharton Lodge and wondered whether Smithy found his present company rather tame—as certainly it was in comparison with the company the Bounder had looked forward to in the hols. So he was glad to find that Smithy had joined up, after all, and seemed as merry and bright as any member of the party; in fact, the merriest and brightest. Smithy had a secret source of entertainment, which he did not confide to the other fellows.

The half-dozen juniors walked out of Wimford, sauntering along the long country road that led to the Lodge in cheery spirits. So cheery were their spirits that they were not even dashed by the knowledge that they would find their respected Form-master, Mr. Quelch, at Wharton Lodge when they arrived there. If he had come by the six train, he must have arrived there some time ago, as it was now more than half-past six. After all, as Bob Cherry remarked, beaks don't bite in the holidays; and Hurree Janset Ram Singh observed that the esteemed Quelch's barkfulness had always been worse than his bitefulness.

It was news to the Bounder that Mr. Quelch was expected, but he did not seem to mind. In fact, nothing could have dashed the Bounder's cheery spirits during that walk home, and he was so merry and bright that the Famous Five found his presence as agreeable as Billy Bunter's absence—which was saying a great deal!

Thinking of Smedley rooting over the race-ground, and sending a report to his father which could be disproved from end to end, was sheer joy to the Bounder. Never had he had such a chance of pulling the leg of the Creeper and Crawler; and the deeper Smedley went into the matter, the bigger fool he would look! Smithy hoped—and, in fact, longed—for him to take the matter before his father. Mr. Vernon-Smith, certainly, would be wrathful with his son to begin with, but his wrath would quickly be transferred to the Creeper and Crawler when Smithy proved his complete innocence.

It was rather new to Smithy to be absolutely innocent of any charge brought against him. So he only hoped that Smedley would make the most of this affair, so that his unaccustomed innocence might have a really good advertisement.

In a cheery bunch, the Famous Five and Smithy came up the drive at Wharton Lodge. Billy Bunter met them in the doorway.

He was waiting for them.

"I say, you fellows, they're here!" he stated.

"Quelch?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes—and Smedley?" grinned Bunter. "Smedley!" exclaimed the Famous Five, with one voice.

"Smedley!" yelled the Bounder.

"He's after you, Smithy!" chuckled Bunter. "The three old donkeys are in the library now, waiting for you!"

"Oh, my only summer straw!" gasped the Bounder.

His eyes danced.

If Smedley was there, it meant that he had brought his accusation to Wharton Lodge, and was going to make it in his presence! Smithy rejoiced at the coming interview.

"What on earth is Smedley doing here?" asked Bob Cherry. "Has your uncle invited the whole jolly old staff from Greyfriars, Harry?"

"Not that I know of!" said Wharton, laughing. "I knew Quelch might be



"The jolly old victim to be ducked is standing on the plank where you are, Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "Yes, old chap——"
 "Then I shove the stone with my foot—so!" "I say, don't—yaroooh! Whoop—gurrghh!" Splash! Under the hefty drive of Bob's boot the stone shifted, the plank toppled, and Bunter shot off into the water.

coming, but I certainly never thought of Smedley!"

"Sorry to have landed you with him!" said Vernon-Smith. "It's me he's after, of course. I met him this afternoon in the lane."

"Oh!" said Harry, rather uncomfortably.

"He's after Smithy all right!" grinned Bunter. "I say, you fellows, they've got an idea that Smithy's been to the races! I put in a word for you, Smithy."

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Smithy! I say——"

"Will you kindly go to the library, Master Vernon-Smith?" Wells swam up. "The master desires to see you."

"Greatest pleasure in the world!" answered Vernon-Smith. "You fellows hang on here, will you? You'll be wanted soon."

"Do you want us?" asked Nugent.

"Naturally! If Smedley's got anything against me, you're my witnesses that I've been a shinin' character ever since I came here."

"The shinefulness of your esteemed character has been preposterous, my esteemed Smithy!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "We are all terrifically idiotic witnesses of that!"

"You won't be kept waitin' long!" said the Bounder.

And he strolled to the library door and went in, leaving Harry Wharton & Co in a puzzled and rather perturbed group in the hall.

Three serious and rather grim faces were turned on Herbert Vernon-Smith as he entered the library.

Grim faces, however, had no dismaying effect on the Bounder of Greyfriars. He walked up to Mr. Quelch.

"Wharton mentioned that you might be here, sir!" he said, in his most respectful manner. "It's a great pleasure to see you looking so well, sir, after your illness!"

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"Thank you, Vernon-Smith!" he said. "I hope, sir, that you will be back next term," said the Bounder. "I'm afraid I've sometimes given you trouble in the Form, sir; but I shall be as glad as any fellow in the Remove to see you back again!"

Mr. Quelch coughed again.

"I am glad to hear it, Vernon-Smith," he said. "But Colonel Wharton desires to speak to you on a somewhat serious topic."

Smithy turned to the old colonel. He was carefully taking no notice of Mr. Smedley's presence in the room.

"Vernon-Smith," said Colonel Wharton in a deep voice, "it is disagreeable to me to have to call you, a guest under my roof, to account. But if you have acted as Mr. Smedley believes, you are no fit associate for my nephew and his friends, and it will be my duty to send you home at once, and acquaint your father with my reason for doing so!"

"Does Mr. Smedley accuse me of anything, sir?"

"Let us be brief!" grunted the colonel. "Have you been at the races at Elmbridge this afternoon?"

The Bounder raised his eyebrows.

"Certainly not, sir!"

"You deny it?" rapped Mr. Smedley.

"Oh, quite!"

"An absolute falsehood, Colonel Wharton!" said Mr. Smedley. "Bad as I know this boy to be, I am amazed at his effrontery!"

"The matter is one of proof, sir!" said Mr. Quelch, taking up the tale, as it were, as the colonel seemed rather nonplussed.

"Proof, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Smedley warmly. "I have told you what I saw with my own eyes! Is my word doubted, sir?"

"This boy in my Form, sir, will be allowed every opportunity to defend himself!" said Mr. Quelch grimly.

"What you saw may be explained. At all events, I insist upon this boy being given an opportunity to explain it!"

"Thank you, sir!" said the Bounder. "I know you'd see fair play, sir!"

"Do you dare——" exclaimed Mr. Smedley. His temper was rising.

"I will answer my Form-master, and not you, sir!" said the Bounder. "Mr. Quelch has a right to question me!"

"Please question the boy, Mr. Quelch!" said Colonel Wharton. "The matter certainly should be in your hands."

"Very well; I will do so. Vernon-Smith, Mr. Smedley saw you in a lane near this house this afternoon and followed you. He states that you took a train to Elmbridge——"

"That is correct, sir."

"That you questioned a taxi-driver with regard to the races——"

"Quite true, sir."

"And drove off in the taxi, giving the man directions to take you there."

"Exactly!"

"Then," boomed Colonel Wharton, "you admit that you went to the races, you young rascal?"

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" said the Bounder, with icy coolness. "I got out

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SHADOWED SCHOOLBOY!

(Continued from page 13.)

of the taxi before it reached the race-ground and went to the pictures."

"If that is true, Vernon-Smith, why did you act in a manner so calculated to draw suspicion upon you?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, eyeing that bright member of his Form very dubiously.

"Because I knew that Mr. Smedley was following me and watching me, sir, and I wanted to pull his leg!" said the Bounder, with perfect coolness.

"Wha-at!"

"I saw him hop into the guard's van of my train; I knew he was listening while I talked to the taxi-driver at Elmbridge, and I spotted him following me in another taxi!" said the Bounder. "The whole thing was a stunt to pull his leg and make a fool of him, and teach him not to spy on Greyfriars fellows in the holidays!"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Good gad!" murmured the colonel, tugging at his moustache.

Mr. Smedley's face was white. His eyes burned. It was not easy for him to keep his hands off the Bounder at that moment. For a long minute there was silence in the library at Wharton Lodge—a silence that might almost have been cut with a knife!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Plenty of Witnesses!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH smiled.

He was enjoying this.

He was not done yet! He

was going, if he could, to make the Creeper and Crawler fairly cringe! The witnesses to his spotless innocence were at hand—waiting outside the door to be called in. But he was not going to call them in yet. He was going to enjoy thoroughly the discomfiture of the Creeper and Crawler!

Mr. Quelch broke the silence.

"That is a somewhat extraordinary statement, Vernon-Smith," he said at last. "You deny, then, having been to the races at all?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"When Mr. Smedley reached the race-ground, he found your taxicab turning away empty. He naturally supposed that it had discharged its passengers there."

"I meant him to, sir!"

"You intended to delude him?"

"I intended to make a fool of him, to show him up for his spying!" said the Bounder, very deliberately and distinctly. "I didn't know he was coming here. I thought he would go to my father, or phone, as he did before. I wanted my father to know the kind of man he was."

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"You impertinent young scoundrel!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "You have uttered a whole tissue of falsehoods!"

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"Pray let me speak, Mr. Smedley!" said the Remove master. "You state, Vernon-Smith, that you left your taxicab before it reached the race ground."

"Yes, sir! I dodged into some trees, and saw Mr. Smedley pass in his taxi, following it," said the Bounder. "I tipped the driver to go on as far as the race ground."

"And then——"

"Then I walked back to the town, and took a taxi to a picture-house."

"The young rascal is condemned out of his own mouth!" cut in Mr. Smedley. "Give the name of the cinema you visited, Vernon-Smith."

"Yes, certainly," said Mr. Quelch. "Inquiry may be made there—someone may remember——"

"The—the name?" stammered the Bounder, with well-acted confusion.

"The name of the picture-house!" thundered Mr. Smedley.

"I—I don't seem to recall the name of the place——" said Vernon-Smith, with a hesitation that was so well acted that Mr. Smedley fell blindly into the trap at once.

"It is clear, I presume, that the boy is lying!" he snapped. "He is not likely to be able to give us the name of a non-existent cinema!"

"I am very well acquainted with Elmbridge," grunted Colonel Wharton. "There is only one cinema in the place."

"It wasn't at Elmbridge," said the Bounder. "I took a taxi some miles to another place——"

"Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Quelch warningly. That statement sounded so very improbable that it shattered his growing belief in the Bounder. Mr. Smedley almost openly gloated.

"It's true, sir!" said Vernon-Smith.

"You took a taxi to a cinema in another town, although there was one on the spot?" sneered Mr. Smedley.

"I did, sir!"

"And have you forgotten the name of the town, as well as the name of the cinema?" asked Mr. Smedley, with bitter sarcasm.

"The names of towns are not put up, like the names of streets, sir!" said the Bounder.

"Colonel Wharton, if you care to listen any further to this boy's palpable falsehoods——"

"But I can prove what I say, sir!" said the Bounder. "As it happens, some friends of mine were at the cinema, and they can bear witness that I got there soon after four o'clock."

"Friends of yours!" said Mr. Smedley bitterly. "Not such friends, I imagine, as you would dare to present to your father or your headmaster!"

"Quite decent fellows, sir!" said the Bounder meekly. "One of them is a relative of Colonel Wharton's."

"A relative of mine!" exclaimed the old, military gentleman.

"Certainly, sir!"

"I cannot think of any relative of mine who would be likely to be in a cinema!" said Colonel Wharton.

"What relative do you mean?"

"Your nephew, sir!"

"What? I have only one nephew, my nephew Harry."

"I'm speaking of him, sir."

The Colonel stared. Mr. Quelch blinked. Mr. Smedley gasped. All three were speechless. Mr. Quelch was the first to find his voice.

"Vernon-Smith, are you telling us that you have spent this afternoon in company with Colonel Wharton's nephew, Harry Wharton, when Mr. Smedley supposed that he had traced you to the races?"

"Yes, sir, and the other fellows! If you'd care to ask them, sir——"

"Good gad!" said Colonel Wharton.

The Bounder stepped to the door and opened it. The Famous Five, outside, looked at him inquiringly and rather uneasily. They had heard a murmur of voices from behind the closed door, and every passing minute had made them feel more and more perturbed.

"Will you fellows come in?" asked the Bounder blandly. "Mr. Quelch wants to ask you something."

The chums of the Remove entered.

"Harry," boomed the colonel, "do you bear out Vernon-Smith's statement that he was with you at the pictures this afternoon?"

"Eh? Yes, of course!" said Harry.

"You do?" almost stuttered Mr. Smedley.

Wharton looked at him. The pale rage and chagrin in the hard face of the Creeper and Crawler astonished him.

"Certainly, sir," he answered, "Smithy was there. I got in later than the other fellows, and he was there when I got there."

"Later!" Mr. Smedley caught at the word like a drowning man catching at a straw. "Then probably he had time to——"

"Nothing in it, Mr. Smedley!" said the Bounder, with perfect coolness. "Four of the fellows were there when I got there!"

"That's right," said Bob Cherry, in wonder, "Smithy blew in soon after four o'clock. We hadn't been there long. Where's the harm?"

"The harmfulness does not seem to my idiotic self to be terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Is Smithy supposed to have been somewhere else, or what?" asked Johnny Bull. "Can't a fellow be where he likes in the holidays?"

Colonel Wharton rose to his feet.

His brows were grimly knitted.

"Mr. Smedley," he said, "you have made a mistake—or, rather, you have allowed yourself to be made a fool of, sir, by a schoolboy whom I certainly cannot blame for having made a fool of you, sir, considering your very extraordinary methods, sir!"

"Colonel Wharton——"

"I am glad," said Mr. Quelch icily, "that Vernon-Smith is completely cleared of the charge you have brought against him, Mr. Smedley!"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"You have stated, sir, that this boy deceived his kind host, and his school boy friends, and passed the afternoon in a disreputable place. It appears that he passed the afternoon with his own friends in a place of which Colonel Wharton approves. That the boy intentionally misled you, sir, is evident—in his own words, he made a fool of you because you were spying on him. Of this I cannot approve; but I do not wonder at it, sir! I repeat, Mr. Smedley, that I do not wonder at it."

Harry Wharton & Co. could have felt sorry for the Creeper and Crawler at that moment.

If ever a man looked thoroughly sick, the Creeper and Crawler did.

Instead of having safely landed his fish, he had been the victim of a practical joke—made an utter fool of, by the young rascal he had been shadowing. He knew, now, that Vernon-Smith must have been aware of his shadowing from the very start; that he had led him into his belief that the young rascal was among the mob of bookmakers and punters at the races, and had fixed up an impeccable alibi.

Worst of all, was his certainty that the Bounder really had started to go to the races, and, but for his warning, might have been nailed there! He had been beaten—beaten to the wide!

Mr. Quelch, with a sniff, whisked out of the room. Colonel Wharton gave his visitor an expressive glance. It was time for Smedley to go!

Breathing hard, Mr. Smedley crossed to the door. The Bounder's eyes were on him with impudent mockery. Mr. Smedley clenched his hands—but he restrained his rage, and passed out into the hall. Colonel Wharton gave a grunt as he went. That was all his farewell to the unfortunate Creeper and Crawler.

"He, he, he!" Billy Bunter, blinking in at the doorway, chuckled. Bunter's private opinion was that Smithy had, as a matter of fact, been at the races. But it was a great satisfaction to him to see the Creeper and Crawler so thoroughly discomfited. "He, he, he!"

That unmusical cachinnation brought Mr. Smedley's eyes on the fat junior as he passed. Bunter grinned at him.

"He, he, he!" he squeaked. And he turned his podgy back on Smedley, and grinned at the fellows in the library.

"I say, you fellows! Lucky Smedley ain't coming back next term, what? He would jolly well take it out of you for this if he was, Smithy."

The Bounder laughed. He had no doubt about that!

"He, he, he! Jevver see a man look so sick?" chuckled Bunter. "Spying on a fellow in the hols! I'm jolly glad he's going to be sacked. Not quite Greyfriars style, what? I'm jolly glad—Ow! Wow!"

Smack!
"Whoop!" roared Bunter.

He was unaware that Mr. Smedley had stopped in the hall till he received that hefty smack on his bullet head.

It pitched him headlong into the library, where he sprawled yelling at the feet of Colonel Wharton.

"Great gad!" ejaculated that gentleman.

"Yaroooh!"
"Mr. Smedley!" roared the colonel. The white, furious face stared after the sprawling Bunter for a second and then vanished. Mr. Smedley strode to the front door, which Wells was opening for him. A tall, angular figure loomed up, and Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes glinted at him.

"Mr. Smedley! This violence—" rapped the Remove-master.

"Mind your own business!" snapped Mr. Smedley. His temper was at boiling point, and he really looked, for the moment, inclined to handle the majestic

(Continued on next page.)



Manchester City and Portsmouth are to do battle for the most coveted trophy King Football has to offer—the F.A. Cup. Read what "Linesman" has to say about this year's Wembley Cup Final.

UNLUCKY THIRTEEN!

ON SATURDAY the biggest event on the football season calendar takes place—the Football Association Challenge Cup Final. That is the proper title, but, of course, everybody calls it the English Cup. Manchester City and Portsmouth are the teams. Who will win? I don't know; nobody knows.

What we can say is this: that Manchester City are the favourites—slightly. Perhaps that is the one thing against them winning, for it has happened very frequently in Cup Finals that the favourites have been beaten. Only a year ago—for Manchester City are in their second successive Final tie—we were finding reasons for the probable success of Manchester City. But they gave a disappointing display, and were beaten by three goals to nothing; the biggest Cup Final margin since the War! The odd goal usually decides the issue.

Maybe the whole course of this Cup Final will turn on a single simple incident. Possibly last year's Final tie was affected by an accident, very early in the game, to James McMullan, who was then the Manchester City inside-left.

Those who have superstitions in their veins—and most of us have—were not surprised when McMullan was the first player to require the attentions of the trainer. The players in last season's Final were numbered for the first time, and McMullan bore the unlucky thirteen on his back!

At this juncture I want to slip back into a bit of history concerning the Cup in order to answer a correspondent who lives at Oldham. He says that a boy friend of his has told him that on one occasion the English Cup was stolen, and he wants to know whether this boy friend was indulging in a little leg-pulling. He wasn't. In the Cup Final of 1895 Aston Villa were the winners, and while they were in possession of the trophy they lent it to a local tradesman for exhibition

in his window. One night when he locked up, the Cup was there. The following morning when he arrived at the shop the Cup was missing—stolen. Nobody—except the thief concerned—knows to this day what happened to it, and the only presumption can be that it found its way into a handy melting pot for the value of the silver.

TO ONE CUP—FIFTY POUNDS!

THE Cup which was stolen was the original one. A new one had to be made, but this is not the one for which Manchester City and Portsmouth will play at Wembley. The second Cup was won by Manchester United in 1909. They were so pleased about this victory that the idea occurred to the officials of the club that they would have a cup which should not be given up. So an exact duplicate—not a small replica—of the Cup was made, and to this very day it adorns the board-room of the Manchester United club. However, the authorities considered that it would never do to have a lot of English Cups dotted up and down the country. So they made Lord Kinnaird, then president of the Football Association, a present of the Cup, and had a new one made to copyright design.

That is the Cup for which these two teams are now playing. It cost fifty pounds. Its value to the winners, for this one match at Wembley, will be about seven thousand pounds.

It has a value, however, all apart from that. So have the gold medals which are given to the winners; the most coveted of football prizes. There are medals for the losers as well, but these are poor consolation for the disappointment which hits the fellows who finish on the wrong side in the Final tie. I have never yet been able to make up my mind whether players, as a whole, would rather have been to the Final and lost than never to have been there at all.

Manchester City have won the Cup

once before—exactly thirty years ago. That was just one of the many finals which have provided a topic for discussion for many days. Only one goal was scored—by the famous Billy Meredith—and it almost seemed as if everybody except the referee thought the scorer was offside, and that the goal should have been disallowed. But there it is. The referee's decision in the Final tie—as in all other games—is the one which counts.

IS BLUE A LUCKY COLOUR?

THE fact that the opponents on Saturday will be Manchester City and Portsmouth recalls an exciting experience which these two clubs had in the League. In 1927 they were running neck and neck for promotion from the Second to the First Division. It was all a matter of goal-average. On the last day of the season Portsmouth won their league match by five goals to one, and Manchester City triumphed by eight goals to nothing.

But the City's big victory was not big enough. When pencil and paper were brought out to work a decimal sum, it was discovered that Portsmouth's average was one two-hundredth part of a goal better than that of Manchester City. Proud "Pompey" went up into the First Division, and Manchester City had to stay in the Second Division for another spell.

Queer coincidences arise, too, concerning this Final tie. Both the clubs wear the same colour shirts in their ordinary game—blue. Shall we say blue is a lucky colour? Anyway, both the finalists of last season had blue shirts, and, of course, both of them had to play in strange colours at the Final tie. I expect that both this year's finalists will have tried out their strange colours in League games by now so that they won't feel the alteration so much on Final tie day.

There will be lucky lads after this Final tie is over; players who, only a short time back, could scarcely have dreamt the honour of playing at Wembley would come their way. Take, for example, the case of Frank Swift, the Manchester City goalkeeper. Less than eighteen months ago Alec Bell, the trainer of Manchester City, received a letter from a friend, begging the club to give a trial to a young goalkeeper who was then in the Blackpool gasworks' team. Many letters of that kind do not receive attention. This one did. The trial was arranged, and the lad showed such promise that he was signed on as an amateur. In October of the present season he was booked as a professional, and he may now be handed a winner's medal on Saturday!

"LINESMAN."

Quelch himself as he had handled Bunter.

"What?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Your hat, sir!" murmured Wolts, shocked.

Mr. Smedley almost snatched his hat from the butler, jammed it on his head, and strode out of Wharton Lodge. He deeply regretted by that time that he had ever entered it.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Obliges!

THE following day Billy Bunter had a very thoughtful expression on his fat face. Anyone who had observed that fat and fatuous youth might have been aware that deep thoughts were working in Bunter's podgy brain.

Nobody, however, observed Bunter.

Billy Bunter's unimportance was unlimited. Besides, nobody would ever have suspected Bunter of thinking! Such a process was not in his line at all!

Nevertheless, the fat Owl of the Remove was thinking hard!

He had carefully avoided Quelch so far as possible! He disliked the glint in the gimlet eyes when they turned on him.

Quelch had said nothing about the trickery on the telephone. But Bunter was well aware that it was not forgotten.

He had no doubt that, had they been at school, Quelch would have given him six! Fortunately, they were not at school!

It was awkward and disagreeable for Bunter! A fellow did not like having a grim old gargoyle glaring at him! Quelch's face at table would really have taken Bunter's appetite away—had that been possible! Luckily, it wasn't! And though Quelch had said nothing so far, that was no guarantee that he wasn't going to say anything. If he mentioned the matter to the colonel, there would be a thunderstorm. Apart from the natural unpleasantness of having a beak about in the holidays, Bunter

was uneasy and worried. Hence the deep shades of thought that corrugated his fat brow.

"I say, you fellows! Come along with me!" said Bunter, when the juniors went out after lunch that day.

"Where, and why?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I've got something on!" said Bunter mysteriously.

"I can see that!" assented Bob.

"You've got my necktie on!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"And Nugent's shoes—"

"Look here—"

"And Inky's tiepin—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fellows know I came here without any baggage," said Bunter, with dignity. "I suppose you're not going to make a fuss about my borrowing a few things. Look here. I tell you I've got something on—I've been thinking it out! Come along with me, and I'll show you."

The chums of the Remove, rather puzzled, followed Bunter. He led the way across the gardens into the park.

They had no objection to a walk in the park after lunch—though it was surprising that Bunter hadn't! Generally he curled up like a cat and went to sleep after a meal.

"What on earth has the fat duffer got in his fat head?" asked the Bounder, as he followed with the Famous Five. Smithy was carefully keeping in company with his friends, since Mr. Smedley's visit. He had a suspicion that the lynx-eyed Creeper and Crawler was not very far away from Wharton Lodge.

"Blessed if I know!" said Harry Wharton. "I know what he's got on his head—my best straw hat! But I don't know what he's got in it."

Bunter led on, and the juniors walked through the park, bright and fresh with the green of a sunny spring.

The house disappeared from their view behind. Bunter reached the bank of a little stream that meandered through the park, flowing from the Surrey downs, and murmuring on its

way to join the Wyme, which flowed past Wimford. In some places the little stream in the woodland was narrow enough to be jumped; in others it was wider, but it was nowhere more than a few feet deep. At one spot, where a path met it, it was crossed by a single plank that rested on a large stone on either side.

There Bunter halted and blinked round at the astonished juniors, with a sly gleam behind his big spectacles.

"Here's the place!" he said. Bunter stepped on the plank. It was firmly set on the stones, but it gave a creak under Bunter's weight.

"Well, what about it?" asked Wharton, in wonder.

"I've got an idea!"

"You have!" exclaimed Bob, in astonishment. "Whose is it?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Now, look here, you fellows, we don't want Quelch here, do we?" went on Bunter. "He needn't have come at all if Wharton hadn't barged in and meddled when I put paid to him on the phone! I dare say you're sorry you barged in, Wharton, now the beast's landed on us—"

"You howling ass!"

"Well, he's here now, and that's that!" said Bunter. "The question is, to get shut of him! See! That's what I've been thinking out."

"Well, my only hat!"

"Now, this is the idea," went on Bunter, while the juniors gazed at him blankly. "Suppose that plank shifted while I'm standing in the middle of it—what would happen?"

"You'd get a wash you've wanted for a long time!" said Johnny Bull.

"The washfulness would be terrific and beneficial."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle!" said Bunter impatiently. "You see that stone you're standing by, Bob! If you gave it a shove with your foot, it would shift, and then anybody standing where I'm standing now would go plop into the water and get a jolly good ducking! See?"

"You want me to shift the stone?"

"No!" roared Bunter. "Not while I'm on the plank, you fathead! When Quelch is on the plank!"

"Quelch!" yelled the juniors.

"That's the idea!" said Bunter complacently. "That's what I've been thinking out! You take him for a walk, Wharton, to show him the park—"

"Do I?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes, old chap! You lead him here, and walk across the plank first to show that it's safe—see? Quelch follows! Bob's hiding behind that tree—"

"Am I?" gurgled Bob.

"Yes, old fellow! You nip out, give that stone a shove with your foot, and what happens? Quelch takes a header! See?"

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

"Funny, what?" grinned Bunter. "Stands to reason Quelch will catch a cold—especially as he's had influenza only recently. Even if he doesn't go, he will have to stay in his room the rest of the hols, and we shall be shut of him. Either way we score—he goes, or he's laid up with a cold! See? What do you fellows think of that for a stunt?"

"My only aunt!" gasped Smithy.

Bunter blinked at the Famous Five, apparently in expectation of an outburst of enthusiasm at that remarkable stunt. They gazed at him.

"Safe as houses!" he added. "Bob waits till Quelch is in the middle of

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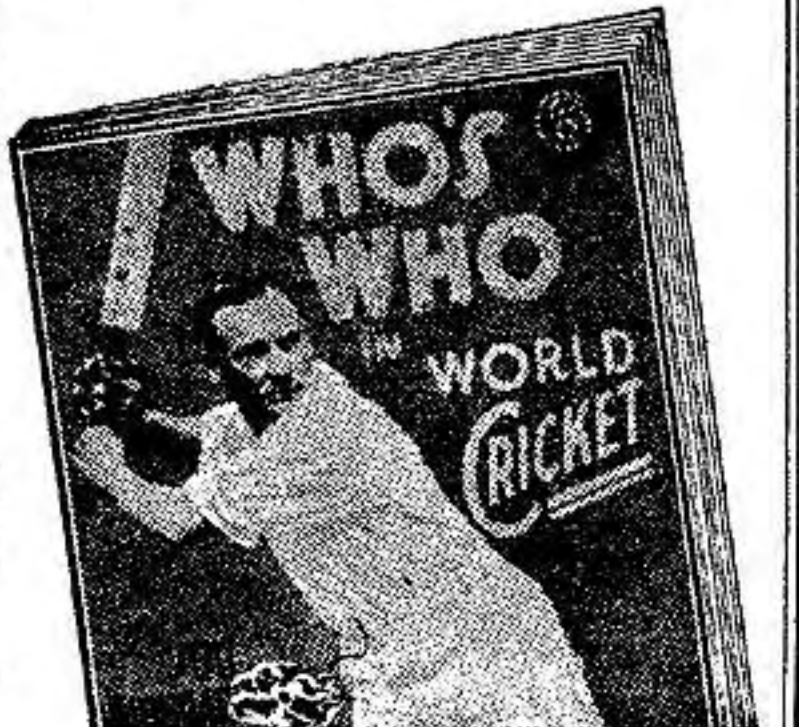
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Harry Wharton & Co. gazed in wonder mingled with merriment at the startling and extraordinary scene. Mr. Piper, stout and resolute, stood with his official grasp on the arm of Mr. Smedley, who was pale and red by turns with suppressed fury. Behind them stood Charley, with a pitchfork, watchful and wary for an attempt on the part of the "bandit" to escape!

the plank, where I am now! Then he pops out and kicks that stone away—see? Quelch, being in the water, won't spot him! Safe as houses! I thought this out entirely by myself."

"You dangerous maniac!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Hold on, though!" said Bob Cherry, with a cheery glimmer in his eyes. "If Bunter's taken the trouble to think out a stunt like this, I don't think it ought to be wasted."

"Why, you silly ass—" exclaimed Harry.

"My dear man, Bunter's stunt isn't going to be wasted," said Bob. "My belief is that it would work."

"Of course it would!" exclaimed Bunter eagerly. "Easy as falling off a form."

"Let's have it clear, though," said Bob. "The jolly old victim to be ducked is standing on the plank where you are now."

"Yes, old chap."

"And then I shove the stone with my foot."

"Yes."

"Like that!"

"I say, don't— Yarrah! Whoop! Gurrghh!"

Splash!

Under that hefty drive of Bob Cherry's boot the stone shifted, the plank toppled, and Billy Bunter shot off into the water.

There was a mighty splash as he went in.

"Grooogh! Urrgh!" gurgled Bunter, as he went under.

"Good!" exclaimed Bob Cherry heartily. "Works like a charm!"

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

"Urrgh! Gurrgh! Wurrgh!" A

fat, streaming face emerged from the water. "I say, you fellows— Yurrgh! Gurrgh! Wurrreegh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! I'm wet! I'm soaked! I'm drenched! Gurrgh!"

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

"Splendid!" said Bob Cherry. "Do it again, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts! Gurrgh! You blithering idiot, I didn't mean you to shove the plank while I was on it!" shrieked Bunter.

"I did," answered Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! I'm all wet! Wow! I'm soaked! Grooogh! Ooogh! Ugggh!"

Billy Bunter, soaked down from head to foot, was indeed a strange sight to behold as he struggled to dry land. His clobber, tight in the ordinary way, had shrunk considerably, while his straw hat, still perched on his fat head, was battered beyond repair.

"Better go in and change your clothes, Bunter," chuckled Harry Wharton.

"You're not so likely to catch a cold as poor old Quelch, but—"

"Urrrgggh!"

"Toll me your next stunt, won't you, Bunter?" urged Bob. "I'll play up just the same as this time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Urrgh! Beast! Wurrgh!"

Harry Wharton & Co., chuckling, continued their stroll in the park—what time Billy Bunter headed for the House, and a towelling, at top speed. It was probable that Bunter's next stunt for getting shut of Quelch would not be confided to the chums of the Remove; and absolutely certain that he would not request the assistance of Bob Cherry,

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Face at the Window!

"DON'T look up!" said the Bounder.

"Eh?"

"Don't look up; there's a jolly old eye on us!"

"Who—what—"

"The Creeper and Crawler—don't look up!"

"Oh!"

The Greyfriars fellows were rambling along the lane about half a mile from the gates of Wharton Lodge.

Owing to Billy Bunter's remarkable stunt they were not enjoying Bunter's company, which did not seem to have any diminishing effect on their spirits. Bunter was changing his clothes after his ducking, though whose clothes he was changing into was a question that might have interested the juniors, had they thought of it. But they were not thinking of Bunter; they were thinking chiefly of ginger-pop as they came along by the Old Oak Inn.

The old inn stood back from the road, with a sign-board creaking from the branch of an ancient oak that stood before it. Under the wide-spreading branches were a table and a bench—very inviting to the eye on a bright and sunny April day. Possibly the Bounder was thinking of Smedley, and wondering whether he was still in the neighbourhood—an idea that did not cross the minds of the other fellows. Anyhow, only the Bounder noticed a face at an upper window of the inn as the juniors came up, and caught the glint of the hard, hawkish eyes watching the party.

He was careful not to look up, and to warn his companions not to do so.

They passed under the branches of the tree, and sat in a cheery row on the bench at the table.

"Mean to say that Smedley is here?" asked Bob Cherry.

"He's in a room here, and he had his eye on us as we came up," answered Vernon-Smith. "You won't see him; he won't show up while we're around. He doesn't want to tip us that he's spying about the place."

Johnny Bull gave a grunt of disgust. "Mean cad!" he growled. "What the dickens is his game? Think he's here to keep an eye on you, Smithy?"

"I don't think he's here to admire the scenery," answered the Bounder sarcastically.

"But what on earth is the matter with the man?" exclaimed Wharton, puzzled. "Why is he so jolly keen on catching you out, Smithy?"

"He doesn't seem to like me, somehow."

"Well, I could understand it at school; but it's simply extraordinary for a beak to take this sort of thing on in the holidays."

"Beats me hollow!" said Frank Nugent.

"The hollowfulness is terrific."

The innkeeper, a stout and red-faced jovial gentleman with white whiskers, came out to attend to his customers. He brought them ginger-beer, and went back into the porch of the inn, where he gazed sleepily on the landscape. The subject of Smedley was dropped till he was out of hearing again.

"It beats me," said the Bounder slowly. "I can't make the man out. He's dead set on tripping me up—that's a cert! I don't see why he should be, but he is. I'm not exactly a popular fellow with the beaks at school. Quelch would have been rather pleased to see me go; but—but that doesn't seem to account for it. The man's got a personal down on me."

"Looks like it," said Johnny Bull. "Anyhow, he's a mean rotter to spy on a fellow like this! And I'm jolly glad he's not coming back to Greyfriars next term!"

"Same here!" assented Smithy. "It rather gets on a fellow's nerves."

"Look here, let's show him that we know he's here, and make him jolly well ashamed of himself!" said Johnny. "If he's really putting up in this quarter to watch you, Smithy, it would make him feel no end of a fool if we spotted him, and let him see that we know his game."

"Let's!" agreed Harry Wharton.

"I've got a better idea than that," answered the Bounder coolly. "I've done nothing to the brute that I know of, but he's after me like a cat after a mouse. I'm going to give him tit for tat. Leave it to me."

"Well, it's your bizney, I suppose," said Harry Wharton, a little dubiously.

Disgusted as the juniors were with the surreptitious proceedings of the Creeper and Crawler, they did not quite like the look on Smithy's face. The Bounder was a fellow to hit back hard if he was attacked, and not particularly scrupulous in the methods he used. Still, it certainly was Smithy's affair; the other fellows had to admit that.

The Bounder tapped with his glass on the table, and a fresh supply of ginger-beer was brought. This time Mr. Hodge, the innkeeper, was not allowed to depart. Vernon-Smith engaged him in conversation, and Mr. Hodge was very willing to comply. Leaning on the oak-tree the red-faced, white-whiskered, stout gentleman told them the local news.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,367.

"Have they got the bandit yet?" asked Vernon-Smith, after a while.

"Ain't heard of him," answered Mr. Hodge.

"I mean the man who held up the bank at Elmbridge this morning."

"That ain't got so far as this," said Mr. Hodge.

And the Famous Five glanced rather curiously at Smithy. They had not heard of any bank hold-up at Elmbridge.

"He's hanging about this neighbourhood somewhere," said the Bounder. "They've got his description out. You want to keep an eye open for a man like that in a lonely place like this, Mr. Hodge. He was last seen on this very road only to-day."

"You don't say!" ejaculated Mr. Hodge.

"I jolly well do!" answered the Bounder. "I read his description outside the police station at Wimford this morning."

Harry Wharton & Co. sat silent. They knew that the Bounder had not been to Wimford that morning.

"What'll he be loike, sir?" asked Mr. Hodge, with interest.

CAN YOU RHYME?

For submitting the following Greyfriars limerick, Thos. Scrivener, of 34, Essex Street, Forest Gate, E.7, has been awarded a USEFUL LEATHER POCKET WALLET.

Our Bunter gets fatter and fatter;
All he says is: "What does it matter?
I don't shirk my food,
I like plenty and good!
What's better than beef, veg., and batter?"

NOTE: All limericks and jokes should be addressed to: "Limericks and Jokes," Editor, c/o MAGNET, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

"Rather tall fellow, about five feet nine or ten, well-dressed, looks like a Londoner, clean-shaven, except for a small, dark moustache."

"Gosh!" exclaimed Mr. Hodge, startled.

"Smithy!" murmured Bob. He realised that the Bounder was giving the description of Mr. Smedley.

"Seen anybody about like that?" asked Smithy calmly, taking no notice of Bob's remark. "Brown eyes—very sharp and keen—"

"Gosh!"

"Dressed in rather well-cut grey tweeds, grey soft hat, dark tan shoes," went on the Bounder, remembering details of Mr. Smedley's outfit.

"Gosh!"

Mr. Hodge looked alarmed.

"If you see a man answering to that description, keep an eye on him, Mr. Hodge," said the Bounder casually. "Luckily, he's unarmed now—he dropped his revolver after shooting the cashier at Elmbridge—this morning—"

"Gosh!"

"You've got a pretty thick orchard at the back—a man might dodge in there to hide till dark. Might even put up at your inn!" added the Bounder. "It's a lonely spot! Well, you'll know him if you see him! Come on, you fellows, we shall be late for tea!"

Mr. Hodge was looking absolutely flabbergasted. Quite unaware that the

guest at his inn had been spotted at the window, never dreaming that the juniors were acquainted with him, the innkeeper naturally had not the slightest suspicion that the Bounder was pulling his leg—for the benefit of Mr. Smedley!

Vernon-Smith rose from the table. The Famous Five rather slowly followed his example.

"Look here, Smithy—" said Wharton uneasily.

"Come on! We'd better all keep together, with that bandit loose in the neighbourhood!" said the Bounder calmly.

"Look here—" murmured Bob.

"Oh, come on!"

The juniors were in rather a difficult position. Certainly, they had no objection to any jape on the Creeper and Crawler. But Smithy's airy inventions for that purpose rather took their breath away. However, they could not very well give the Bounder away to Mr. Hodge; and in a rather uneasy frame of mind they followed him from the inn—leaving Mr. Hodge staring blankly, rather like a newly landed codfish.

"Gosh!" they heard him stutter as they went, "Gosh!" Evidently, he had fitted Smithy's description of the "bandit" to his guest at the Old Oak, and was alarmed.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Bandit!

MR. SMEDLEY glanced from the window of his room at the inn and scowled after the juniors as they walked down the lane. Mr. Smedley, alias Lucius Teggers, was not in a good temper. The sight of Herbert Vernon-Smith had rather the effect on him of a red rag on a bull, since the scene at Wharton Lodge the previous day.

Leaving the little diamond-paned window, he threw himself into a creaking easy-chair and lighted a cigarette.

He smoked, with a knitted, angry brow.

He had no idea that the juniors knew that he was there. Only the Bounder had spotted him at the window, and he had been very careful not to let the Creeper and Crawler observe that he was spotted.

Mr. Smedley was very anxious not to be spotted.

His presence in the vicinity of Wharton Lodge had to remain a secret if he was to catch the Bounder "on the hop."

His dislike of the scapegrace of Greyfriars had intensified into something like hatred. He knew there was no doubt about it—that the fellow was a shady young rascal—and could he but have proved, to Mr. Vernon-Smith's conviction, that the Bounder was the same reckless scapegrace as ever, his game was won.

But he had had no luck!

At Greyfriars, he had failed to show the young rascal up in his true colours. Next term—but there was to be no next term for him! Mr. Quelch was going back—and that settled that! Unless he succeeded in landing his fish during the Easter holidays it looked as if his game was up. Mr. Smedley had to disappear; and Lucius Teggers could go back to the office of Leggett & Teggers in Regent Street, London; and give up his hope of ousting Vernon-Smith and inheriting millions in his place.

But the rub was that he couldn't! For Lucius Teggers was by no means the model, business-like, well-conducted young man that Mr. Vernon-Smith believed him to be. He was over head and

ears in debt—and if that fact came to light it was the death-blow to all his hopes from Mr Vernon-Smith!

Somehow, he had to "nail" the scapegrace of Greyfriars before the crash came! Once he was taken up by the millionaire financier, his creditors would be willing enough to wait.

Haunting the vicinity secretly, keeping watch like a cat at a mouse-hole, surely he would catch the young scoundrel sooner or later!

He hoped so, at all events!

Meanwhile, he had to lie low! He had stayed the night at Wimford, and in the morning looked for a suitable spot within easy distance of Wharton Lodge, yet well out of the way. He had found it in that solitary wayside inn.

Having taken up his quarters there, he had remained indoors, not intending to go out again till dusk in case any of the Wharton Lodge party should be rambling about. He was glad of that precaution now, as the juniors had stopped at that very inn for ginger-beer.

Possibly Mr. Hodge, the innkeeper, was already a little puzzled by the fact that his guest, who had told him that he was on a walking tour, chose to remain indoors in his room all through a golden April afternoon.

Mr. Hodge was a slow thinker, and though he was puzzled, he did not bother his head about what was no business of his—till after that talk with the Bouncer under the oak-tree.

After that, Mr. Hodge could have little doubt why his guest chose to remain in his room on a glorious afternoon.

Mr. Smedley's desire to keep "doggo," in fact, lent colour to Smithy's extraordinary invention of a bandit. Little dreaming of what was in the innkeeper's mind, Mr. Smedley smoked his

cigarette, and thought over his problem while the sun sank lower in the west, and dusk gathered over the little inn.

Obviously, he had to keep doggo—if Vernon-Smith spotted him, the young rascal would be very careful not to kick over the traces. After all, if the young blackguard sought low haunts and bad companions, it would probably be after dark; he was not likely to risk going to the races again. After dark, the spy could watch for him and shadow him easily enough. There was a chance yet of "pulling it off."

Thinking over this pretty problem, Mr. Smedley glanced from his window from time to time. He caught sight of the stout innkeeper in earnest conversation with the ostler of the inn. A country cart came lumbering along the lane and stopped—the horse for water at the trough, the carter for ale in the bar. Landlord and ostler entered into whispered talk with the carter, who stared at what they told him and then picked his whip out of the cart. All three went into the inn.

Mr. Smedley observed all this, but without the slightest interest, or any suspicion that it had any connection with his worthy self.

As the dusk was falling, he decided to get out of doors; he was more than fed up with his room.

He took his hat and stick, walked out of the room and started to descend the dusky staircase. To his surprise, he observed the innkeeper, the ostler, and the brawny carter in a group at the foot of the stairs.

"Ere he comes, Mr. Hodge!" said the ostler.

Mr. Smedley stopped half-way down the narrow old staircase. The ostler had a pitchfork in his hands. The innkeeper had a big pewter tankard, evidently for use as a weapon. The

brawny carter had his whip with the thong wound round his hand, swinging the heavy metal butt. It was so evident that their intentions were hostile, that Mr. Smedley stared at them, hardly believing his eyes. His way out of the inn was barred by three determined men—why, he could not begin to imagine.

"Stoy where y'ar, you roog you!" said Mr. Hodge. "Don't you try to get away!"

Mr. Smedley wondered whether he was dreaming!

"He ain't getting away, he ain't, Mr. Hodge!" said the carter. "Not without his 'ead cracked, he ain't!"

"Garge ain't back yet," said Mr. Hodge. "That there boy takes his time getting to Elmdale. P'r'aps Piper wasn't at 'ome, though." Mr. Piper was the village constable at Elmdale. Apparently, "George" had been sent to fetch Mr. Piper!

"What does this mean?" exclaimed the amazed Mr. Smedley. "Are you all mad, or drunk, or what? I am going out."

"You ain't!" said Mr. Hodge stolidly. "Not till the pleccman comes, anyhow."

"The policeman!" ejaculated Mr. Smedley.

"I dessay you know what a pleccman is!" jeered Mr. Hodge. "I dessay you've had a pleccman's hand on your shoulder afore now."

"You must be mad!" said Mr. Smedley blankly.

"Mad or not, you ain't going, not till Piper comes!" said Mr. Hodge. "You try to get out, and you'll see! Stoy whurr yar! And don't think we're afraid of your gun—we know you ain't got it now."

(Continued on next page.)

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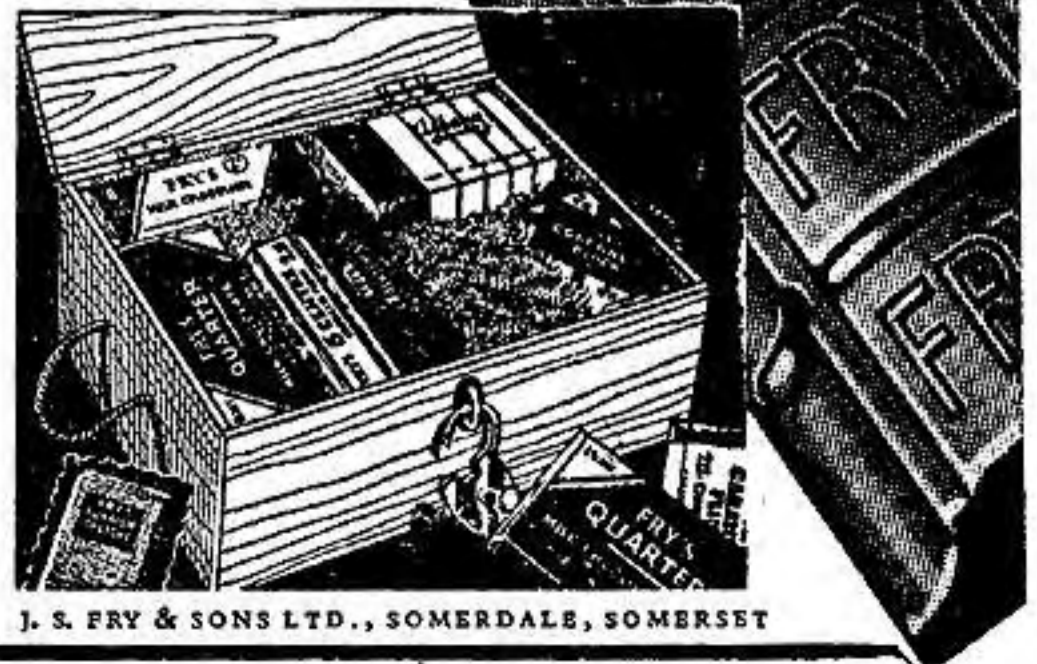
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"My—my—my gun!" said Mr. Smedley faintly.

"The same which you shot the cashier along to Elmbridge!" said Mr. Hodge. "Oh, we knows you all roight!"

"Watch him, sir!" said the ostler anxiously. "He's got a desprit look in his eyes, sir."

"I'm a-watching him, Charley!" answered Mr. Hodge. "and you watch him, too, and if he comes down, you stick that there fork into him."

"Trust me!" said Charley.

"You pack of drunken fools!" roared Mr. Smedley. "I will leave this inn at once. And if you dare to molest me—"

"You just troy it on!" said Mr. Hodge.

"For whom do you take me?" exclaimed the temporary master of the Greyfriars Remove. He realised that there must be some extraordinary mistake here. It was clear that he was supposed to be some desperate character.

"You knows well enough," said Mr. Hodge. "We've got your description—"

"My description!" gasped Mr. Smedley.

"Five feet nine or ten, dark brown eyes, very sharp," recited Mr. Hodge. "Looks like a Lunnoner; dressed in grey tweeds, soft grey 'at—dark tan shoes—oh, we knows you all roight."

"He's the man!" said the carter, with a nod. Obviously that description was Smedley's. "Looks a pretty villain, too! Look how he's clenching his 'ands! Wouldn't like to meet 'im alone on a dark night."

"I believe you!" said Mr. Hodge.

Mr. Smedley had supposed that the ale of the Old Oak was the cause of this amazing demonstration. But he could see that the three men below were not intoxicated. Neither did they seem to be mad! Apparently they took him for some desperate character, whose description—as recited by Mr. Hodge—certainly tallied remarkably with his own.

"You are making a ridiculous mistake!" he exclaimed. "My name is Smedley, as I have told you—"

"I dessay you got plenty of names, in different places!" said Mr. Hodge, with a nod. "I don't know the name of the bandit what shot the cashier at Elmbridge this morning! But I knows his description all roight."

"Good heavens!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "You must be insane! I am a schoolmaster—"

"Ear him!" said Charley, with a broad grin. "He'll say he's a Member of the 'Ouse of Commings next!"

"I tell you—" gasped Mr. Smedley, utterly confounded by this unexpected and astonishing occurrence. "I tell you—"

"P'r'aps you'll tell me why you've stoyed indoors all afternoon and a-going out at dusk!" jeered Mr. Hodge.

Mr. Smedley breathed hard! Certainly, he did not want to explain that; though the explanation was not that he was a hold-up bandit dodging the police!

"That's got him, sir!" said the ostler. "He ain't got nothing to say."

"He knows we know him all roight, Charley!" said Mr. Hodge, "and we're a-keeping of him here till Mr. Piper comes! That boy Garge is taking his time, the young limb."

Mr. Smedley gritted his teeth.

"I am going out," he said, "and if you dare to stop me—" He came striding down the stairs.

The next moment he jumped back and scrambled frantically up the narrow staircase again. The three men below

had gone into action at once! The carter made a swipe with the butt of his whip as Charley made a lunge with the pitchfork and Mr. Hodge hurled the tankard!

Mr. Smedley easily eluded the whip-butt and the pitchfork by his leap back—but he did not elude the tankard.

It crashed—landing on his chest, and he sat down on the upper stairs with a bump and a yell; and the powder pot clattered down the steps and was promptly recovered by Mr. Hodge.

"Ow!" spluttered Mr. Smedley. "Ooooh! Oh! Ah! Woooooh!"

"Stoy whurr y'ar," said Mr. Hodge, "and you won't be 'urt till Mr. Piper comes! But we ain't letting a bandit get away! Mebbe there'll be a reward! Anyhow, here you stoy till the pleecc-man comes!"

"Ow! Oh! Uurgh!" gasped the hapless Creeper and Crawler, sitting on the stairs and rubbing the spot where the tankard had landed.

A shock-headed lad came in at the door. He had a half-brick in his hand, apparently picked up for use as a weapon if there was a struggle with the bandit.

"You been a long time, young Garge!" said Mr. Hodge accusingly.

"Mr. Piper was a-planting his beans, sir!" said George. "But he's coom."

A stout constable followed the boy in. "Now," he said, "What's all this?"

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Arm of the Law!

"THERE he is, Mr. Piper!"

"That's the roog!"

"Him what shot the cashier to Elmbridge—"

"Lost his gun, from what the young gentleman said, Mr. Piper!" said the innkeeper encouragingly, "and we're all ready to help."

Mr. Smedley staggered up. He was glad, at least, to see a man in uniform—not being a bandit! Mr. Piper, the Elmdale constable, was not wholly in uniform. He had slipped on his tunic and helmet, at the call of duty; but he still wore the corduroy trousers of unofficial hours. He was not looking pleased. Planting out his beans was an important matter to Mr. Piper—and he was unaccustomed to dealing with desperadoes. Elmdale was a quiet little spot, and in point of fact, very much behind the times—it had no crime to speak of.

"Constable!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "I am glad to see you here! These stupid men appear to take me for some criminal—"

"We knows you all roight!" said Mr. Hodge. "Young gentleman comes along this afternoon and gives me the description, what he read up at the police station to Wimford."

"What's he done?" demanded Mr. Piper. "Garge 'ere tells me about a bank hold-up at Elmbridge! I ain't been notified."

"I know nothing of it!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "I am a schoolmaster, on a walking tour in the country—"

"Stoys in his room all afternoon!" said Mr. Hodge. "Starts to go out at dusk! Looks loikely, don't it?"

"I ain't been notified," said Mr. Piper. "They been talking of putting my cottage on the phone, but they been talking about it this ten year, and it ain't on the phone yet! So I ain't been notified. I ain't heard of any hold-up at Elmbridge, but if that's the man—"

"I am not!" shrieked Mr. Smedley.

"How'd you get the description, Hodge?"

"Young gent comes along and tells me the man's about," answered the innkeeper. "Gives me the description he read up at the police station to Wimford. Not knowing the man was on the premises, mind you! Knocked me as flat as a flounder, it did! So I sends Garge to fetch you, and—"

"Let's hear that description!"

Once more Mr. Hodge recited the description of Mr. Smedley. Mr. Piper's eyes were suspiciously on him, noting every detail. There was no doubt that the description fitted.

The constable's face grew more and more suspicious, as was natural in the circumstances.

"You come down 'ere," he said. "Mind, don't you try to bolt! I ain't got any 'andcuffs with me, but Mr. Hodge will lend me a cart-rope."

"Ready and willing!" said Mr. Hodge. "Garge, go round to the stables and get a rope—a good thick 'un!"

"You fool!" roared Mr. Smedley.

"Fool's better'n a roog, any day!" answered Mr. Hodge. "You coom down and give yourself up, you roog, you!"

Mr. Smedley descended the stairs. In the official presence he was safe from the whip-butt, the pitchfork, and the tankard! But his escape was cut off! All hands were ready to seize him at a sign of bolting!

"Now, I got to see into this!" said Mr. Piper. "Name?"

"Smedley!" hissed the Creeper and Crawler.

"Whurr you coom from?"

"London. I am a schoolmaster on holiday—"

"Seeing as I ain't been notified," said Mr. Piper. "I don't want to make any mistake. You got something about you to prove it?"

"He's got a bag in his room," said Mr. Hodge. "I dessay the bank's money is in it."

"Any objection to a man looking into your bag?" asked Mr. Piper. "If you're a schoolmaster, name of Smedley, you'll have something about it along of your toggery, I dessay."

Mr. Smedley caught his breath. He had plenty of proof that he was Mr. Smedley, tutor, if allowed to make his own selection. But in his bag were private papers, relating to his own personal affairs, which, if suspected, would have proved that he was not only Mr. Smedley, but also Lucius Teggers, junior partner in the firm of Leggett & Teggers, of Regent Street.

Not for worlds would he have allowed curious eyes to peer into the contents of his bag! He felt a chill at the bare thought of being identified as Lucius Teggers, nephew of Mr. Vernon-Smith, the millionaire!

He was fairly caught.

The Bounder had intended to make things extremely uncomfortable for him. But he had never dreamed how very uncomfortable he had made them, for he had not the remotest suspicion that the Creeper and Crawler had another name besides Smedley.

His hesitation and uneasiness could not possibly escape the watchful eyes on him. Suspicion in the village constable's mind crystallised at once into certainty. His hand fastened on Smedley's arm.

"You fool!" panted Mr. Smedley. "How dare you! Release me at once!"

Mr. Piper's grip tightened.

"You letting me look into that bag of yours?" he demanded.

"No! I—I refuse!"

"And whoy, if you're a schoolmaster, a-walking on a tower?" demanded Mr. Piper sarcastically.

"I—I have my reasons! I refuse to allow my bag to be opened! There is



As Billy Bunter's fat hands grasped the basket, Bob Cherry acted. A sudden hand grabbed the back of Bunter's bullet head by the hair. With the same movement the hand forced that bullet head downwards. Before Bunter knew what was happening, his fat face was driven down into the eggs! Squeleh! "Urrrgh!" gurgled Bunter, wriggling frantically. "What—ooogh—urrgh!"

nothing in it that is not my own, but—
but—

"But what?" jeered Mr. Piper grimly.

"I will have you reprimanded for this by your superiors!" howled Mr. Smedley. "If you were not a born fool you would see that you are making an idiotic mistake! Release my arm!"

"I ain't been notified, and I ain't got authority to open that there bag," said Mr. Piper. "But that there bag goes to the police station, and you goes along with it."

"I tell you—" shrieked Mr. Smedley in helpless rage.

"You can tell Inspector Stacey at Wimford!" answered Mr. Piper coolly. "You're took up on suspicion, you are."

"You fool—you idiot—you dolt!"

"Nice langwidge for a schoolmaster, I don't think!" said Charley. "He's your man all roight, Mr. Piper."

"I can prove—" howled the hapless Smedley.

"Nobody's stopping you!" answered Mr. Piper. "I ain't keen on a walk to Wimford, if you ain't the man! Prove who you are."

"I—I—I—"

Mr. Smedley stammered helplessly.

"Garge, you fetch that there bag down!" said Mr. Piper.

"'Ere's the rope, Mr. Piper! Shall I tie his 'ands?" asked Garge.

"Charley'll 'old him."

"You dare—" gasped Mr. Smedley.

"Not if he goes quiet!" said Mr. Piper. "It ain't proved yet that he's the bandit, though I ain't got any doubts about it, personal. But I ain't been notified, and if he goes quiet—"

"You dolt!" shrieked Mr. Smedley. "Do you fancy, for one moment, that I

will allow you to take me to a police-station?"

"I don't see 'ow you're going to stop me!" grinned Mr. Piper. "And if you give any trouble I'll tie up your 'ands just enough!"

"P'raps Charley'd better coom along with his pitchfork," suggested Mr. Hodge. "He's a desprit character. Shooting of a cashier in a bank—"

"P'raps he had!" said Mr. Piper thoughtfully.

Mr. Smedley almost foamed at the mouth. He was going to be marched into the market town of Wimford, with a policeman's grip on his arm and an ostler following with a pitchfork! He gurgled with rage!

"This way!" said Mr. Piper.

"Stop!" gasped Mr. Smedley. He had thought of a last and desperate resource. "I am known to people in this neighbourhood; they can identify me."

"Why couldn't you say that afore?" asked Mr. Piper suspiciously. "Who's the people you mean?"

"Colonel Wharton, at Wharton Lodge. You must know him!"

"Everybody round these parts knows Colonel Wharton," assented Mr. Piper, "but I don't fancy as he knows you."

"I will walk to Wharton Lodge, if you like!" gasped Mr. Smedley. Anything was better than being marched off to the police station with a crowd following as soon as they entered the market town. "Colonel Wharton will identify me at once."

"Well, it ain't a quarter as fur as Wimford," said Mr. Piper slowly. Perhaps he saw here a chance of getting back to his beans! "And the colonel

might lend me the car to run you in, being a magistrate himself."

"He's a-pulling of your leg, Mr. Piper," said Charley. "He's going to dodge you, going up to the lodge."

"He ain't," said Mr. Piper grimly. "I ain't letting go of his arm till we get there; likewise, you can foller on, Charley, and bring the bag in one 'and and your fork in the other."

And the procession started, Mr. Piper marching on with heavy official tread, holding Mr. Smedley's arm in a grim official grip, Charley, the ostler, following, carrying the bag—which he had little doubt was stacked with loot from the bank—in one hand, his pitchfork in the other. Mr. Hodge and the carter watched them go. Mr. Smedley was glad, at least, that the Surrey lanes were dusky and deserted. The bare thought of being walked into the town, along brightly lighted pavements, with a curious crowd staring and following, made him shudder. Fortunately it was not so bad as that. But it was bad enough, and he was pale with rage as he walked along, his arm safely hold in the arm of the law.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Funny!

"I SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter fairly shrieked. Seldom, or never, had the Owl of the Remove been so wildly excited.

"I say—he, he, he!—I say—Smedley—he, he, he! I say, you fellows! He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What's up, fathead?"

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the hall at Wharton Lodge, chatting in a cheery group before a log fire, when William George Bunter burst in on them, his little round eyes almost popping through his big, round spectacles.

"What about Smedley?" asked the Bounder. If there was news of the Creeper and Crawler, Smithy was very keen to hear it.

So were the other fellows. They had wondered a great deal what had been the outcome, if any, of the extraordinary yarn Smithy had spun to Mr. Hodge at the Old Oak Inn.

"S-Smedley!" stammered Bunter. "He, he, he! I say, you fellows, he's coming. A bobby's got him!"

"A bobby!" yelled the juniors. "Yes, rather. A bobby's got him. I say, what do you think he's done?" asked Bunter. "Think he's committed a murder or something?"

"Fathcad!" "Where is he?" asked the Bounder. "They're coming to the side door. I spotted them from a window. I say, Smedley looks in a fearful rage!"

"What on earth can have happened?" gasped Bob. "You awful ass, Smithy—"

The Bounder chuckled. "Let's go and see," he suggested.

The juniors hurried away. A ring at the door had already called Thomas there. The party that Bunter had spotted from a window had arrived.

The April evening was closing in, but the light from the windows illumined the group. Thomas stared as he opened the side door. The juniors gazed in wonder mingled with merriment. It was a startling and extraordinary scene. Mr. Piper, stout and resolute, stood there with his official grasp on the arm of Mr. Smedley, who was pale and red by turns with suppressed fury. Behind them stood Charley, with bag and pitchfork, watchful and wary for an attempt on the part of the bandit to escape.

The Bounder laughed aloud. He had had no doubt that he had caused trouble for the spy lurking in the Old Oak Inn, but he had never dreamed of it to this extent. Unaware that the man was passing under a borrowed name, he had not supposed that Mr. Smedley would have any difficulty in proving his identity. His blow had hit harder than he had expected or supposed for a moment.

"Ask the colonel if he'll kindly see me, Thomas!" said Mr. Piper. "I got a suspicious character 'ere what says the colonel knows him."

"The master's gone out for a walk with Mr. Squelch," answered Thomas; "but Master Harry's here."

"What is it, Piper?" asked Harry, coming out of the doorway into the porch. "What's the trouble?"

"You know me, Wharton!" gasped Mr. Smedley, before the constable could speak. "Tell this fool—this dolt—who I am!"

"Better langwidge, my man!" said Mr. Piper severely. "You can't insult the law like that there!"

"Fool! Idiot! I will complain to your superiors—"

"You 'old your row, my man!" said Charley; and he gave Mr. Smedley a gentle poke with the pitchfork as a hint to be quiet. There was a fearful howl from Mr. Smedley as the sharp prong pricked him in the back.

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

"You seen this man afore, Master Harry?" asked Mr. Piper.

"Yes," gasped Wharton. "Oh, yes!"

"It's like this—" began the Elmdale constable.

"Fool! Dolt! Scoundrel! Tell this fool—"

Another poke from the pitchfork reminded Mr. Smedley that it was not his cue to speak.

"Shut it, you!" said Charley. "Don't you keep on a-interrupting of Mr. Piper, you roog!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's like this," resumed Mr. Piper, Smedley having been reduced to infuriated silence. "I was at my beans when young Gargo, the boy at the Old Oak, comes along, and he says, says he, that they've got the bandit at the inn, he says, and will I go along and take him in charge, he says. They're a-watching of him, he says, to see that he don't bolt. So I only stops to finish the row of beans, and off I goes, and I finds this here desprit-looking character. Name of Smedley, he says; but he won't open that there bag of his, and not being notified—"

"Tell this fool—"

"Mr. Hodge says, says he, the man's been keeping indoors all day, and started to go out at dusk, and they stopped him! Says he can prove who he is, but won't open his bag. You got that there bag safe, Charley?"

"I got it safe, Mr. Piper," answered Charley. "The colonel, being a justice, can 'ave it opened and see what he's got—all the bank's money—"

"So I took him up," said Mr. Piper. "But he makes out that the colonel knows him, sir, so I brings him here—"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tell this fool who I am, Wharton!" shrieked Mr. Smedley. "Tell him that I am your Form-master at Greyfriars!"

"Loikely, ain't it?" grinned Charley derisively.

"There's a man wanted, and the description fits him," said Mr. Piper. "I ain't been notified, but there's been a bank hold-up along to Elmbridge, so Mr. Hodge 'ears, and this man's description—"

"Tell this fool—"

"Oh dear!" gasped Wharton. "The—the fact is it—it's all right, Piper! I know this gentleman—he's a school-master—his name is Smedley—"

"You know him?" exclaimed Mr. Piper.

"Oh, yes! Yes! In fact, he has been a master at my school!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Piper. "You sure of that, Master Harry?"

"Oh, quite!" gasped Wharton. "All these fellows know him! Please release him, Mr. Piper! I assure you it's all right—my uncle would say so if he was here—"

Mr. Piper released Smedley's arm rather grudgingly. Charley, the ostler, looked very dubious.

"If it's all right, why can't he say so?" asked Charley. "Why can't he let a officer of the law look into that there bag if he's all right?"

"I don't know! Mr. Smedley," exclaimed Wharton, "surely you could have proved who you were by letting the constable examine your belongings—"

"I want no impudence from you, Wharton!" roared Mr. Smedley. "I will see that this man is punished for his insolence."

"I done my dooty!" said Mr. Piper stolidly. "I got the description, and you acts suspicious. Schoolmaster or not, you got something in that there bag you don't care for a officer of the law to see. But if Master Harry answers for you—"

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Wharton. "I assure you we all know him well. He

has been a temporary master at Greyfriars."

Mr. Piper still seemed to hesitate.

"We all know him well," said Nugent.

"The knowfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Well," said Mr. Piper, convinced at last, yet with a lingering doubt. "If you takes the responsibility, Master Harry—"

"Yes, yes! That's all right!"

"You can go, my man!" said Mr. Piper gruffly.

Mr. Smedley did not wait to be told twice. With a face convulsed with fury, he snatched his bag from Charley and disappeared in the dusk.

Mr. Piper and Charley departed more slowly, still in a rather dubious frame of mind. And when they got back to the Old Oak, and discussed the matter with Mr. Hodge over certain tankards of ale, the three of them continued to be rather dubious—though no doubt their minds were set at rest later when they learned that there had been no hold-up at Elmbridge at all, and that nobody was "wanted."

"It's too bad, Smithy," said Harry Wharton, laughing as the juniors went back to the hall. "It's too— Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It worked out better than I expected!" chuckled the Bounder. "What the dooce can Smedley have in that bag that he's afraid for a constable to see? His face was worth a guinea a box—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"After this he may be fed-up with hanging about here and spying on a fellow," chuckled Smithy. "He's findin' it a bit excitin'."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

When Colonel Wharton and Mr. Quelch came in they were greeted by sounds of merriment. They smiled benignantly at the group of merry juniors, who were evidently enjoying life.

It was probable that Mr. Smedley was not enjoying life that balmy April evening. It would have been difficult to find a more exasperated and enraged man than the Creeper and Crawler as he tramped round, bag in hand, looking for a lodging for the night.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Eggy!

"**H**E, he, he!" Bob Cherry started. That squeaky, unmusical cachinnation was familiar enough to his ears. But it was rather startling to hear it at that moment.

Harry Wharton & Co. were gathered in Wharton's den. Bob had left his comrades and come along to his own room, to fetch his "bolo," with which he was going to display his skill.

But he forgot all about the bolo as he opened his door, and that fat chuckle fell on his ears.

Bunter was not with the Co. Nobody knew where Bunter was; nobody, as a matter of fact, cared.

Bob Cherry, quite unexpectedly, found Bunter.

Bunter was in Bob's room. That cachinnation announced the fact. And Bob, who was about to switch on the light, refrained. He stared across the room at the window. It was open, and a fat figure was framed against the bright April starlight.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter, obviously, was up to something. And Bob, remembering his

(Continued on page 28.)

OUR NON-STOP THRILL YARN OF DARING DETECTIVE ADVENTURE!

The MAN BEHIND the SCENES!

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



BY
HEDLEY SCOTT

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

FERRERS LOCKE, detective, and his boy assistant, JACK DRAKE, are on the trail of two clever criminals—JULIUS TANKERHEAD and MERVYN VILLIERS, who have been pulling off big coups in connection with sporting events. Posing as Julius Martinez, a wealthy Argentine bookmaker, Locke wagers big odds with the two conspirators against a horse named Victory winning the Wexborough Stakes. Knowing the striking likeness between Victory and its half-brother, Desmond, a Grand National winner, Locke is not surprised when the horses are exchanged. In the nick of time, the Baker Street detective swaps the horses back, with the result that the two crooks are out of pocket to the tune of eight thousand pounds.

(Now read on.)

Fresh Villainy!

“COME on, Julius! Let's get out of this place!”

Mervyn Villiers' face was twisted into a ferocious scowl, whilst that of his companion was no whit more pleasant. The result of the Wexborough Stakes and Judd's obvious terror and flight had unnerved them, hardened criminals though they were.

“If the horses were changed back, Mervyn,” whispered Tankerhead, “who the devil could have done it?”

“You've said it!” answered Villiers savagely. “The devil! But there's one thing—no one's connected us with it, or the police would have been on our track. And, think of it, boy, we've now got to pay that fool Martinez eight thousand quid!”

“Eight thousand between us,” Tankerhead reminded him coldly. “Gosh, Mervyn, something will have to be done. I've lost a pretty packet of money on the Stock Exchange this week. Every investment I've dabbled in has dropped.”

“I've had much the same luck myself,” retorted his confederate. “Something will have to be done—that's a certainty. Still”—he broke off shortly and laughed—“there's always that fool Martinez! He's got more money than he knows what to do with. My thoughts are already running on the Wembley Cup Final next Saturday.”

Julius Tankerhead started. What fresh wild scheme was blossoming in his confederate's brain? Surely there was precious little money to be picked up over the coming Cup Final?

“What's the big idea?” he asked hoarsely.

“Tell you on the way back to town,”

replied Villiers. “That gink Martinez is just behind us.”

The two conspirators turned and bestowed friendly smiles on the bookmaker from the Argentine and his alert-looking clerk. Had either of the scoundrels been aware of the fact that Jules Martinez and his clerk were none other than Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, much that had puzzled them over the running of the Wexborough Stakes would have become absolutely clear. But both Villiers and Tankerhead were happy in the delusion that Locke and Drake were “somewhere on the Continent” taking a rest cure.

“You had bad luck, my friends!” That was Jules Martinez' opening of the brief conversation which now ensued. “Your horse Victory—he ran a bad race. You know, you shouldn't throw your money away on hopeless chances!”

Tankerhead and Villiers could have killed the smiling bookmaker with the slightly foreign accent on the spot. They suppressed their real feelings, however, and smiled in return.

“The luck of the game, Mr. Martinez,” said Mervyn Villiers. “Next time, perhaps, we shall be on a winner!”

“Of course, there is always a next time,” drawled Jules Martinez. “Perhaps it is lucky for us bookmakers that there is. Are you going? Not staying for the rest of the races?” he added inquiringly, as the two conspirators began to move off to the exit.

“Had enough for to-day,” said Villiers. “And we've got a spot of business to attend to in town. So-long! I shall want a bet on the Cup Final when I've made up my mind which team is to carry my money.”

He waved a gloved hand airily and stalked off, Tankerhead accompanying him.

“They've taken the knock, guv'nor,” whispered Drake. “Think they've rumbled it was little you who swapped the horses back?”

Jules Martinez, alias Ferrers Locke, shook his head.

“Not for one moment. Criminals of the successful type—and these birds come into that category—develop an extraordinary conceit, young 'un. These two have had a scare, but, bless you, they'll be up to their old tricks again before the week's out, mark my words!”

Drake wasn't so sure, until Locke reminded him of Villiers' parting words in reference to the Wembley Cup Final.

“They mean trying their hand at some dirty trick in that direction, unless I'm mightily mistaken,” added Ferrers Locke. “It's bound to be dirty, for Villiers and Tankerhead couldn't run straight if they tried. They're born crooks.”

Drake looked admiringly at his chief. “You're right, guv'nor,” he conceded, with some enthusiasm now. “You always are right. And, I say”—his youthful face lengthened somewhat—“I'm sorry I fell asleep and let you down last night.”

Locke patted his assistant on the shoulder.

“That's all right, young 'un,” he smiled. “We all have our little weaknesses. And, as it turned out, I was able to swap the horses back without your assistance. Expect you wondered what had become of me when you got back to the hotel and found me out—what?”

Drake grinned ruefully. “I was in an awful panic, guv'nor, until you did come in. I never expected you to arrive by the window, either.”

Locke laughed. He certainly had surprised his assistant when he had clambered in at the bed-room window of the hotel in the small hours of the morning. But, as he had explained before, that was merely cautiousness on his part, lest the plotters—Tankerhead and Villiers—should have seen him entering the hotel when they had supposed him to be in his bed-room fast asleep.

“We might as well stay and see the rest of the racing, my lad,” said the detective. “We've plenty of time—and Villiers' and Tankerhead's eight thousand quid. That is,” he added, “if the scoundrels pay up!”

Drake's young face was screwed up in deep thought.

“Guv'nor,” he said suddenly, “why don't you have these two crooks arrested now, before they do any more damage?”

“And so I would, Jack,” was the reply, “if I had sufficient evidence. At the moment you and I are convinced that the pair are low-down, cunning crooks. But it would be a deuce of a job to convince a judge and jury. No, we must bide our time, collect all the evidence we can, and try to catch them red-handed. We shan't have to wait long, you see!”

The detective proved himself right, in
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part. For next day Villiers and Tankerhead sauntered into his Pall Mall office and seated themselves. The detective knew that some fresh villainy was afoot, despite the sporting and good-natured way in which his two "clients" paid their gambling losses over the Wexborough Stakes.

"Mr. Martinez," began Villiers, after the preliminary greetings, "here's our cheque for eight thousand. Now, as a sportsman, are you prepared to give us a chance to win it back on the Cup Final?"

Jules Martinez's dusky face expanded into a happy grin.

"Of course, of course!" he exclaimed. "Have I not told you, gentlemen, that Jules Martinez will wager on anything—and for any amount! It's all the same to me!"

Tankerhead and Villiers exchanged a confident glance. Why, the poor fool was simply asking to be plundered!

"You want to back Dunstanton Rovers—the favourites, of course!" said Jules Martinez, with an understanding smile. "You know, of course, they are odds-on favourites. Three to one, in fact!"

The conspirators shook their heads.

"We want to back the outsider," explained Villiers; and added, carelessly: "It's a habit with us. If the Rovers are three-to-one favourites, the Crawmouth eleven must be three to one against." He received an affirmative nod from the smiling bookmaker. "Well, will you lay us thirty thousand pounds to ten thousand pounds?"

"A pleasure—a real pleasure!" was the reply, accompanied by an action which suggested that Jules Martinez was washing his hands with invisible soap. "You are on. If Crawmouth win the Cup you will win thirty thousand pounds—yes? And if the Rovers win the Cup I shall pick up ten thousand pounds from you? Right, gentlemen, the wager is on!"

A Clever Ruse!

VILLIERS and Tankerhead could hardly believe their good fortune. On the way back to the former's house they congratulated themselves time and time again, and Morris, the confidential man in Villiers' employ, added his congratulations. Then, for the next two hours the conspirators went over the details of as dastardly a plan as had ever been evolved in connection with the famous Wembley Cup Final.

Dunstanton Rovers had reached the final stage of the F.A. Cup-ties principally through the brilliance of their three international players; the centre-forward, the inside-right, and the goalkeeper.

Something was going to happen to these three key men of the Rovers—and that before Saturday, the twenty-eighth of April—Cup Final day!

Something did, despite Ferrers Locke's and Jack Drake's careful, almost night and day watch on Villiers and Tankerhead. Morris, the confidential man, had been rather overlooked in their calculations.

Hughie Thompson, the English international centre-forward of Dunstanton Rovers, was the first victim. In accordance with the instructions of the Rovers' trainer he, like the rest of the team, retired on the Thursday night in

the region of ten o'clock. But he had barely been between the sheets ten minutes when a furious ringing on his doorbell brought him into full wakefulness.

Slipping on a dressing-gown, he made his way downstairs and opened the door. A very agitated stranger, well-dressed, cultured, and obviously very much upset, greeted him. At the kerb, with engine running, was a blue saloon car.

"Are you Mr. Thompson? I must beg of you to come with me at once! Your brother—"

Hughie Thompson's face blanched. He grabbed the caller by the shoulder.

"What's happened to my brother?" he asked excitedly. "What's happened? Where is he?"

The stranger rocked slightly on his feet and then recovered himself.

"He's met with an accident. I—I—ran him down. They've taken him to hospital—and he's asking for you!"

"Good heavens!" Hughie's face blanched a ghastly white. He was fond of his brother, and this dreadful news knocked him all of a heap. "I'll go to him at once—where is he? What hospital?"

"I'll take you there," was the half-tearful response. "Oh heavens, I shall never forgive myself for this. If he should—"

The inference of that unfinished sentence sent Hughie rushing upstairs where he seized an overcoat and a hat and hurried down again. The stranger, still labouring under great distress of mind, helped him into the saloon of the waiting car and slammed the door.

Then, back at the driving wheel, that hypocritical expression of distress underwent a sudden change. Triumph, greed, and vanity dwelt there in hard, cruel lines. But Hughie, in the close saloon, could see only a back view of the stranger's head and the glimmering lights of the road ahead.

In a fever of impatience, he watched the road through the glass, wondered where on earth the hospital was, and then suddenly relaxed into deep and unnatural unconsciousness. He did not know that from the moment of entering the closed car he had started to inhale that same powerful gas which had been used with such good effect upon Martin, the stable lad, up at "Old Man Stafford's." Yet it was so. In a quarter of an hour the star centre-forward of the Rovers' eleven was fast asleep.

When Hughie Thompson woke up several hours later, he received the biggest shock of his life. He discovered that he was bound and gagged securely. More than that, he saw the bound and gagged forms of two very familiar figures. Pat Somerfield, the Rovers' inside-right, and Jeff Hickson, the Rovers' goalie! As yet, consciousness had not returned to these crack players. And until they did stir into fitful wakefulness, Hughie, the most surprised man on earth, began to take note of his surroundings. They did not consist of much—a small brick built room, with a fireplace and chimney, the grate carefully laid with paper and coals and wood. But for a broken chair, the room was void of all furniture. And even the small window was shuttered and padlocked.

Through the interstices of the shutter, Hughie caught a glimpse of the sun. Looking at Pat's luminous watch, for the inside-right's wrists were turned in his direction, he made out the time to be three o'clock. If that were correct time it meant that he had been a

prisoner for hours. It meant, too, that it was Friday—the day before the Cup Final! The reflection set Hughie struggling furiously with his bonds, all to no avail, however. Whoever had secured him had done his work remarkably well. He knew then that the story about his brother meeting with an accident was a despicable ruse to lure him out of his house. Likely as not the same story had drawn his team-mates into the same snare.

Two hours later, when Pat and Jeff came to, they learned that Hughie's theory was a correct one. In each case a stranger had called upon them, after they had turned in for the night, with a well-told story that a relative had been run over and was dangerously injured.

The helpless three struggled and struggled for hours to rid themselves of their bonds. The result was disappointing—and led only to exhaustion. They were prisoners still when the sun went down and darkness settled over the countryside. Yet in the interval between waking and the darkness which now almost blotted out a view of one another, they became convinced that they were somewhere on a river—an island of some sort—for plainly to their ears came the regular swishing of the ever-moving water. What river it was, and where it was, were problems that were insoluble.

Thursday night had come and gone, Friday night was fast merging into Saturday. And on Saturday, at three o'clock, these three star players were required to assist their club to victory in the all-important Cup Final!

In the meantime, the management at Dunstanton Rovers' club house and ground was in something like a panic. Their three star players, without whom it was fairly safe to say the Rovers would never win the Cup, were missing—most mysteriously missing.

Frantic search parties, sworn to secrecy, hunted high and low for the missing stars, but right up to the Saturday morning no trace of them had been found.

Ferrers Locke, still in the guise of Jules Martinez, sought an interview with Sir Jeopald Thorn, the chairman of the club, little dreaming of the bad news he was destined to hear.

"Sir Jeopald," he began, "you may not recognise me in my present role, but the last time we met, you addressed me as Mr. Locke, and thanked me for tracking down a certain light-fingered burglar who had made off with your wife's jewels."

Sir Jeopald nearly jumped out of his chair.

"You—you Ferrers Locke?" he exclaimed in amazement. "I can't believe it."

Locke convinced the chairman of his real identity by writing his signature on a piece of blank paper.

"Now compare that with the correspondence we had together," he added, "that is, if you still have that correspondence. Then I will tell why I have called."

The harassed chairman was soon convinced, he had the correspondence in his letter file. And the signatures were identical with that which his caller had just written down. Jumping suddenly up from his chair he seized Locke by the hand, in a frenzied grip.

"I don't pretend to understand why you are disguised like this, Locke," he jerked out. "But your arrival is heaven-sent."

Forthwith he poured out his troubles.

It was the detective's turn to be surprised—and alarmed.

"Good gad!" exclaimed Locke. "The object of my visit this morning was to warn you that something might happen to members of your team. Two birds I am trying to snare have laid heavy wagers against the Rovers winning. I can't go into details now, but these birds haven't been out of my sight for days. By gosh, they've been cleverer than I thought." His face hardened. "But we may beat them yet!"

He snatched up his hat and was impatient to be off; the chairman, not knowing whether he was relieved or not, told himself that Locke would ferret out his missing players, and then, in the next breath, severely censured himself for being a super optimist.

Locke did not waste time. He started inquiries at the houses of the missing players. In each instance he discovered that the landlady or servant had been called away by a mysterious message which had turned out to be a hoax, without, apparently, any explanation.

Then came a big slice of luck which set the detective on a definite trail. A nose-parker neighbour of Pat Somerfield had seen a blue saloon car draw up outside Pat's house in the region of half-past eleven. By the light of a lamp-post the same nose-parker neighbour had watched Pat hurriedly enter the car, which then drove off. And here came the definite clue—the neighbour had memorised part of the index number plate. According to her, the letters were A.P., and the numbers began with the figures 472.

Ferrers Locke, a bustling figure of activity now, fastened on to the "scent" like a bloodhound. He phoned Scotland Yard and asked for any available information on the subject of a blue saloon car with the index plate which began with A.P. and the figures 472. But something of a set-back came by way of reply. Yes, there was such a car on the books of the Yard—a car which had been stolen and afterwards found abandoned in the region of Barnes.

Within a quarter of an hour Ferrers Locke was examining the car with the eyes of a lynx. But it was his sense of smell which provided a second clue. Distinctly to his nostrils as he sat in the saloon came a trace of gas. The speaking-tube clearly indicated upon examination that the gas had been pumped through it from the driver's seat.

"That's how the victims were snared," muttered Locke. "Windows sealed—gas pumped through into the saloon. Result: victim speedily rendered unconscious. Next he is taken, possibly, to a spot near the river—the river!"

Locke decided on a course of action, prompted more by instinct than by any definite clues. In a borrowed police car the detective, with Drake at his side, was sped towards Barnes—to the very spot where the car had been found abandoned.

It was a lonely spot, a few steps from the towing-path. Bent almost double, Locke began to read the jumble of footprints in the soft mud of the path. His eyes blazed with satisfaction when one set of footprints, sunk heavily in the soft mud, led right up to the water's edge and then returned to the car, leaving a trail only half as distinct on the return journey.

"One man did this job," was Locke's conclusion. "The deep imprints of the boots he wore tell the story plainly enough—he was carrying something heavy, doubtless one of the missing men."

Locke studied the collection of footprints afresh, and by careful examination satisfied himself that three distinct journeys had been made by the one man; the jumble of footprints, sorted out, as good as told him so.

"Take a mould of these footprints, Jack," he suddenly called out to his assistant, who also had been making an investigation of his own. "They may come in useful."

And while Drake set about this task, Locke hailed a passing motor-launch.

"I want you to cruise up the river," he called out. "Name your price."

The boatman named his price, and speedily pulled in to the bank. With a muttered farewell to Drake, Locke boarded the launch and told the boatman to get going.

Sitting in the sternsheets, the detective theorised on the lines that any kidnapper who had brought his victims up river as far as Barnes would continue, likely as not, to some selected spot higher up the river. If in the opposite direction, why had the kidnapper taken his victims out of London?

But although the motor-launch cruised up the river past Hampton Court and Sunbury, Ferrers Locke found himself no nearer to a solution of the problem. And the time, meanwhile, was speeding round rapidly to the hour of the kick-off at Wembley.

"The trail ends," muttered Locke gloomily. "The prisoners could have been dumped in a hundred and one

still a yard out from the bank and rushed towards the brick-built chalet. The door was locked—and there was no sign of a key, but a curious mumble from inside the chalet told the detective that here were the three kidnapped players.

In the circumstances he had no compunction in breaking down the door.

Immediately the door was open, volumes of smoke poured forth. Through it Locke saw the three bound figures, and beyond them the last remains of the fire.

In a few moments the three were outside in the pure air and free of their bonds.

"It was Hughie's idea," panted Pat Somerfield. "He tore his coat on a nail so as to get his box of wax vestas on the floor. Then he smashed the box and scraped the matches with his boot until he set one or two alight. By this means he was able to set the fire ablaze!"

"Good for you, Hughie," was the form of Locke's congratulations. "And how did you make your smoke signals?"

"The seat of the broken chair, sir," answered Hughie. "I sat with my back to the fire and covered the grate with the chair seat, pulling it away at intervals so as to regulate the smoke. Gosh, I'm glad you've come!"

"So am I," exclaimed Pat heartily. "We were nearly choked. But how did you find us?"

Locke hurriedly explained, then it was he who put a question.

"Who lured you into the trap?"

Each gave a different description of the man. Hughie declared he was clean-shaven, Pat stated that the man was bearded, Jeff declared that his caller was a young man in a bowler hat, with a distinguishing moustache.

Locke found himself baffled. The ingenious kidnapper had very cunningly covered up his tracks. But now the detective's main concern was to get the three star players to Wembley in time for the great game. He did the journey in record time, by motor-launch to Sunbury, and by fast car to Wembley, where a much harassed chairman of the Dunstanton Rovers, to say nothing of an outraged public, who were now in possession of the strange disappearance "story" of the Rovers' star players, gave the missing three and their unknown deliverer a joyful welcome.

Locke, for obvious reasons, preferred to remain unknown. But he stayed and watched that keenly and cleanly fought-out Cup Final, just one of ninety-odd thousand enthusiasts, and felt that his morning's work had been justified when both Hughie and Pat scored a goal each to bring the result of that stirring game to two goals to nil in favour of Dunstanton Rovers.

Locke went away pleased and yet disappointed. He had saved the day, undoubtedly, for Dunstanton Rovers, but he had no evidence—only suspicion—that Tankerhead and Villiers were behind the kidnapping. Yet had he been able to see the astonished, horrified faces of the two arch-plotters when the result of the Cup Final became known, Locke would have felt an added measure of satisfaction. For the schemers were dumbfounded. Once again their plotting had come to naught—except for a heavy deficit on their profit and loss account, so to speak. But what troubled them most was the perplexing question, to which there seemed no answer:

Who was this mysterious man who foiled all their plans? Who was this man behind the scenes?

(Watch out for further thrilling chapters of this popular detective story in next week's issue of the MAGNET, chums!)

STAR ITEMS IN NEXT WEEK'S "MAGNET."

A top-notch yarn by Frank Richards that will hold your interest to the very end, entitled: "THE SPYING FORM-MASTER!"

Then follows a sparkling edition of the

"GREYFRIARS HERALD,"

further chapters of our detective thriller, and our smaller features as usual.

places along the river, and no one would be any the wiser. It's like looking for a needle in a haystack—" He broke off suddenly, and caught his breath in his excitement.

Ahead of the boat, about a hundred yards away, was a small island, about half an acre in extent. In the centre of it was a tiny brick-built chalet or hut, from the top of which peeped a short chimney. And it was this chimney which attracted the eagle eye of the Baker Street detective. Coming from it, in peculiar unnatural spasms, were big and little blobs of blue-white smoke—with a distinct interval between each blob!

Locke gazed almost spellbound at that chimney. Then he turned briskly upon the sleepy-eyed boatman at the wheel of the launch.

"Pull in to that island—quickly as you can! Know who it belongs to?"

"Lord Lazerbrooke, sir," was the reply. "It's his river chalet. He goes there to write his books on philosophy, or something."

"Lazerbrooke?" exclaimed Locke. "Then he isn't in residence there at the moment, because I know he's gone to Naples."

"What did you say, sir?" asked the boatman.

"Nothing!" snapped Locke, his eyes never leaving the curious smoke blobs which still swirled from the chimney. "Quickly—Ah!"

He leapt ashore while the launch was

THE SHADOWED SCHOOLBOY!

(Continued from page 24.)

schemes for making Mr. Quelch tired of staying at Wharton Lodge, guessed what it was.

Bunter certainly was not at Bob's window to admire the fine April evening. He could have done that, if so inclined, from his own window. But Bob's window overlooked the terrace before the house. Bunter's didn't! And Mr. Quelch walked on the terrace after dinner. At that very moment, Bob knew, the majestic figure of Henry Samuel Quelch was pacing below.

"The fat idiot!" breathed Bob.

Bunter, leaning from the window, blinking through his big spectacles, had, of course, his back to the room. He did not see Bob, therefore, as that youth tiptoed across the room for a closer inspection of the fat Owl's proceedings.

Bob made no sound as he approached. But he very nearly betrayed himself as he looked over Bunter's shoulder.

On the broad window-sill, in front of Bunter, was a lidless rush basket, full of eggs. Evidently Bunter had "snaffed" that basket of eggs from the regions below.

There were more than a dozen eggs in the basket! And what Billy Bunter was going to do with them was fairly clear! They were intended for the benefit of Mr. Quelch!

Bob almost gasped aloud.

But he kept silent! He was standing close enough to Bunter to touch him, but the fat junior, intent on the terrace below, had no suspicion that he was not alone. There was a sound of footsteps in the dusk below.

"He, he, he!" Bunter chuckled softly. "He, he, he! Safe 'as houses! Even if he spots the window, 'tain't my window! He, he, he! Better let him have the lot all at once—and the basket, too! He, he, he!"

The footsteps on the terrace were drawing nearer as Mr. Quelch paced slowly and majestically along.

Bunter gave a final blink below to ascertain the precise position of the Remove master about to pass underneath. Then his fat hands grasped the basket to lift it from the sill.

But he did not lift it! At the

psychological moment Bob Cherry acted—swiftly!

A sudden hand grabbed the back of Bunter's bullet head by the hair!

Before Billy Bunter knew what was happening his fat face was driven down into the basket of eggs!

"Urrrrggh!" gurgled Bunter. "What the— Ooogh! Urrrrggh! Wurrghh!"

He wriggled frantically.

Heedless of his wriggling, Bob Cherry, with a heavy hand, squashed the fat face down among the eggs till the last one was cracked, and the streaming eggs and shells plastered Billy Bunter's face from his streaming hair to his sticky chin!

"Wurrghh!" came in a suffocated gurgle from the Owl of the Remove.

Bob Cherry chuckled and released the fat head. Those eggs, it was certain, would never be dropped on Quelch now! Leaving Bunter to disentangle his features from the squashed eggs, he stepped back and switched on the light.

Billy Bunter lifted a streaming, dripping, eggy, shelly face from the basket. He turned, blinking wildly through streaming eggs.

"Gurrghh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. He put his head out of the door and yelled: "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Roll up, you men! Come and look at Bunter!"

Harry Wharton's door was open. The Co. came out, followed by the Boulder. They stared along the corridor.

"What—" began Wharton.

"Come and see!" roared Bob.

"Gurrghh! Wurrghh! Urrghh!"

The juniors ran up. They stared into the lighted room at a staggering figure that clutched and grabbed and dabbed streaming eggs and broken eggshells from its sticky face. There was a roar:

"Bunter!"

"What the thump—"

"Urrghh!" Bunter gurgled and gasped and blinked wildly through eggy spectacles. "Wurrgh! I say, you fellows— Urrghh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter had a basket of eggs to drop on Quelch's napper!" exclaimed Bob. "I caught him in time, and his face seems to have got mixed up with the eggs—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The mixfulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Googgh! Groogh! I didn't—I wasn't—I—I— Oh crikey! I'm all eggy! Urrgh! I'm all sticky! Gurrgh! Look at me!" shrieked Bunter.

"We're looking!" chortled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm all eggy—I'm all sticky—"

Groogh! howled Bunter.

"You fat villain!" gasped Harry Wharton, and he strode across to the window and grabbed up the rush-basket, swimming in broken eggs. "You've got to learn not to play tricks on Quelch—"

"Gurrghh!"

"And that will be a tip for you!" added Wharton, as he up-ended the egg-basket over Bunter's head and slammed it on like a hat.

It bonneted Bunter! Egg streamed down all round him. He gave a horrible gurgle! His last state was worse than his first.

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

"Wurrghh! Gurrghh! Beast! Ooogh! Oh crikey! Ow! Urrghh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beast! Wow! I'm all sticky! I'm smothered with eggs! I—I— Gruggggggh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

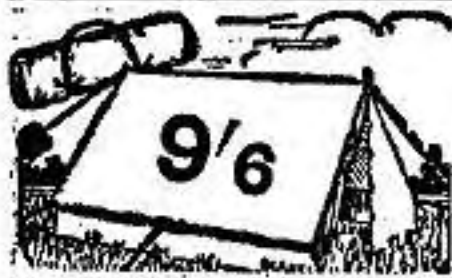
Harry Wharton & Co., yelling, left him to it. Wild howls and gurgles followed them as they went.

It was quite a long time before Bunter was seen again. He had a lot of washing to do. Washing had no genuine appeal for Bunter; but even the Owl of the Remove felt that he needed it now!

And much as Bunter objected to the presence of a beak in a spot which he honoured with his distinguished presence, in the holidays, it was unlikely that he would think of egging Quelch any more. Bunter was tired of eggs.

THE END.

(Look out for more lively fun and thrills in the next yarn in this tip-top series, featuring the Boulder of Greyfriars. It is entitled: "THE SPYING FORM-MASTER!" and you'll vote it great. Be sure and order your copy EARLY!)



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SECOND-HAND TOMAHAWK WANTED

Somebody helped himself to my tomahawker, and whoever he is, I'm going to scalp him!—TOM BROWN, Study No. 2, Remove.

SIXPENCE REWARD

To anyone who'll stand outside the Prefects' Common-room and yell "Fire!" I want to use their telephone!—Apply "JAPER," Study No. 11, Remove.

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

No. 82 (New Series). EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON April 28th, 1934.

HEAR ME HOLLER

If you guys want to save an American citizen from going loco, for Pete's sake help me to find that sixpence I dropped in the quad last week!—FISHER T. FISH, Study No. 14, Remove.

S. P. C. B.

Hilarious Scenes at First Meeting

In case you wonder what S.P.C.B. means, we hasten to explain that it means the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Beaks.

In case you're surprised at a society for the protection of masters being started by Edward Fry, of the Upper Fourth, we hasten to explain that it arose out of an incident that happened last week, when, just before giving Fry a fearful whacking, Mr. Capper remarked: "This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you!"

Fry himself was hurt so badly that he couldn't help feeling sorry for the man who had been hurt more badly still. So he started the S.P.C.B.!

He explained all this to a crowded meeting last evening. He was awfully serious about it himself; but somehow everybody else seemed to find it screamingly funny. Fry rebuked them about it.

"I'm surprised to find you laughing at the misfortunes of our dear, kind Form-masters," he said. "It is this thoughtlessness—this indifference to the sufferings of such kind-hearted old gentlemen when they're walloping us for our good—that the S.P.C.B. hopes to wipe out!"

"Fry!" rapped out a voice from the doorway just then.

The hilarity suddenly ceased. The voice was that of Mr. Capper himself!

"What does S.P.C.B. mean?" asked Mr. Capper sternly.

"Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Beaks, sir," Fry explained coolly. "It's a movement I've started myself. It encourages chaps to keep clear of trouble so that the books won't have to hurt themselves by hurting us!"

"Beaks?" boomed Mr. Capper. "Pray what are beaks, Fry?"

"Why, they're our dear, kind Form-masters—like you, sir!" Fry answered, with a look of surprise. "Didn't you know that, sir?"

"Report to my study!" barked the Upper Fourth master. "This ridiculous meeting is at an end!"

So the first and last meeting of the S.P.C.B. broke up, and the founder of the movement, smiling sardonically, proceeded to Mr. Capper's study.

He received "six"—delivered as only Capper knows how to deliver "six." And this time there was no preliminary announcement that it was going to hurt the giver more than the receiver.

On the contrary, Mr. Capper seemed positively to enjoy laying it on! In fact, there doesn't seem to be the slightest fear of his suffering much over any whacking he gives Fry in the near future!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY

WISDOM

A jeweller at Highcliffe is said to have invented ear-plugs by which he can make himself stone deaf at any time he likes. We've got a Glee Party at Greyfriars, too!

GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

A most exciting incident last Wednesday afternoon brought to a sudden end a moral lecture which the headmaster was delivering on the subject: "Why We Should Be Kind to All Men." In the middle of the lecture, Mansell, a member of the Sixth Form, to which the lecture was being given, suddenly espied through the class-room windows two coarse-looking fellows from a wagon climbing the wall into Founder's Field.

They themselves with staves, charged out of the School House toward's Founder's Field. The sheep-stealers, taken by surprise in the very act of driving several sheep towards the side gate, were overcome with fear at the unexpected appearance of the attacking force, and put up scarcely any resistance at all, so that the seniors were able to capture them without difficulty.

The thieves were quickly arraigned before the Assize sitting in Courtfield Town, and it is a testimony to Dr. Goodsmyte's generous nature



It could be seen at once that Mansell's guess was correct. The two ruffians, who were armed with cudgels and netting, were making straight towards the flock of sheep grazing in Founder's Field—the flock which, as everyone knows, provides the school with mutton throughout the year. A shout of rage went up from the seniors at the mere thought of these common thieves making away with Greyfriars' dinners!

"Pray let us apprehend them, sir!" cried Molyneux. "It will never do to allow the villains to execute their foul designs!"

Dr. Goodsmyte, whose usually benevolent face was purple with anger, at once assented to the proposal.

"Do so by all means, my boys!" he said. "Let them not escape—on pain of a flogging all round!"

The Sixth, whooping with pleasure at the prospect of a chase, promptly left the Form-room and, after arming

that he appeared at the Court especially to ask that mercy should be extended to the miscreants.

"It would seem, your lordship, that there are extenuating circumstances," he told the judge. "This being so, you may perchance in your wisdom deem it expedient to let them off with a light sentence of twenty years or so in prison."

Remarking that but for Dr. Goodsmyte's kindly plea he would have been much

LANGUID LORD'S LOVE

Courtship—la Mauuly

At this glad season of the year, Lord Mauleverer is liable to go goofy ever the bright-eyed young thing who crosses his path. So it didn't surprise us in the least when he rolled into the editorial office the other day and plaintively asked if Penfold would kindly supply him with a word to rhyme with "eyes."

Penfold obligingly suggested "pies."

Mauuly promptly gasped, "Oh, gad!" and sank into the nearest chair. Apparently "pies" was not suitable.

"Who is she?" asked Hebb Cherry. "Is it the girl at the bunshop again, old bean?"

"Yaas—I mean, not," corrected Mauuly, who, with his gift for returning to unconsciousness any time he sat down, was almost asleep. "Look here, you chappies, keep it dark, but I've got to know the most charming girl

Hair like stars an' eyes like wavin' corn—"

"My hat! Aren't you getting your similes rather mixed?" grinned Penfold. "And does she know you're writing poetry about her?"

"Not yet. Matter of fact, I'm findin' it rather hard. Poetry's a bit beyond me," confessed Lord Mauleverer.

"That's what I really came about, Penfold, to tell you the truth. How about you writin' a poem for me? She'd never know the diff, would she?"

Well, to cut a long story short, Penfold agreed to do it if Mauuly would reveal the lady's identity. Mauuly willingly revealed that she was Greta Switch, the cashier at the Courtfield Cinema, and the poem was duly composed.

"Going to hand it over now?" Penfold asked, when the taxi pulled up outside the cinema.

"Yaw-aw! Look here, ol' bean, I feel awfully tired," said Mauuly, who was beginning

(Contd. from previous col.) more severe, the judge sentenced them both to transportation for life. The thieves can certainly consider themselves lucky!

We would add that the lecture on "Why We Should Be Kind to All Men" will be concluded in the Sixth Form-room next Wednesday.

(Dr. Goodsmyte's ideas on being kind to men seem decidedly quaint after the lapse of a hundred years. But then the ideas expressed in the "Greyfriars Herald" to-day will probably seem equally quaint if they are reprinted in the year 2034—so we can't afford to laugh too much, can we?—Ed.)

* Now Dig Side.—Ed.

UNUSUAL DUMB-BELLS FOR SALE

Weigh about 20 lb. each. The ends were intended to be ruly-poly puddings, but it was my first attempt at moulding!—DICK RAKE, Study No. 6, Remove.

SOLLUM WARNING

Persons passing within a quarter of a mile of the playing-fields next week are advised to wear steel helmets. I begin krieket practice on Monday!—HORACE COKER, Fifth Form.



to notice the absence of his customary Wednesday afternoon nap. "You do it for me; give her my compliments an' all that, you know, won't you?"

"Well, of all the idiots—!" snorted Penfold.

But he obligingly got out and handed over the poem to the fluffy-haired young lady in the cashier's box.

A moment later, he got a shock. A tall, uniformed attendant, standing by, took a sideways glance at the poem then grabbed Penfold by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the trousers.

"Send sentimental verses to my girl, would yer?" he hissed, and about a second later Penfold found himself on the pavement, wondering how he had got there!

"Good old Pen!" murmured Mauuly, rousing himself out of his sleep for a moment as his ally reappeared in the taxi. "Was the poem sympathetically received, ol' bean?"

"Just about as sympathetically as this!" growled the poet.

"This" turned out to be a sort of combined boxing and wrestling movement that brought Mauuly grovelling to the dusty floor of the taxi. The course of true love never did run smooth!

REMOVE FILM PRODUCER'S LUCK

Surprising Sequel to Protest

We've often remarked in the past that it's better to be born lucky than rich. This week William Wibley, our prize actor, confirms the truth of that opinion.

Last week we reported that he had to postpone producing his intended super-film, "The World of Youth," owing to shortage of cash. Now, with a suddenness that leaves us gasping, the situation has changed entirely!

It's the cause of the change that tickles us. At the beginning of the week Wib went along to the Courtfield Cinema to see a picture called "Little Victims." This picture had been hailed as a "mighty epic of youth" and "the rising generation's bombshell" and Wib thought he might pick up a few tips from it.

But like most "mighty epics" of the screen, "Little Victims" was merely another film—and not a very good one at that! Wib came out of the cinema a disappointed man. Returning to Greyfriars, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Selew Lloyd, the celebrated film magnate who had financed the picture:

"Dear Sir,—If your film 'Little Victims' had been produced by a blind inmate of a deaf and dumb institute, I could understand why it turned out such a complete flop. As it is, there seems no excuse you can make. Why don't you employ a PRODUCER? I haven't had much experience myself, but if I couldn't produce a better film than 'Little Victims,' I'd eat my hat!—Critically yours, "WM. WIBLEY."

After morning school on the following day, a car that was pish enough to have made Lord Mauleverer's Rolls look like a kid's wheelbarrow, pulled up before the School House. Who should step out of it but the celebrated Selew Lloyd himself!

"This Greyfriars?" he asked a group of juniors who were sunning themselves on the steps. "Good! I want to see Mr. Wibley, please!"

Wibley, who was one of the group and who had already recognised the visitor, began to feel a little groggy about the knees. Visions of bowlegged judges and libel actions floated before him as he remembered what he had said in his letter.

"Pip-pip-please, sir, I—I didn't exactly mean—," he began.

"What's biting you, my boy?" asked Mr. Selew Lloyd, in surprise.

"I'm Wibley, sir, but—,"

Mr. Selew Lloyd jumped.

"You're Wibley, oh? Heck! Didn't think I was dealing with a kid of such tender years! Why, you cheeky young rascal, you're scarcely out of the cradle stage!"

Wibley's face reddened.

"Kid or not, I've produced a dozen or so plays for the Remove Dramatic Society!" he said, losing his nervousness in his indignation. "Some of them I've written myself, too!"

"You have, have you?" smiled Selew Lloyd. Then, after a keen look at Wibley, he said: "Well, I've no reason to look down on a youngster who tries. Is there anywhere where we can talk?"

They adjourned to Wib's study. The outcome of their confab is simply amazing.

Mr. Selew Lloyd has agreed to lend Wib a first-class "movie" camera, together with sound-recording apparatus—and, above all, a technical man to keep an eye on the outfit and advise Wib, where necessary!

For the time being, Wib is almost stunned by his unexpected stroke of good luck. But it won't be long before that unique juvenile production, "The World of Youth," gets well into its stride!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



In days of old, highwaymen were a source of danger to Greyfriars men who ventured into Courtfield. The nearest approach to a highwayman at Greyfriars now is Billy Bunter—who "holds up" his victims for various amounts.

David Morgan who hails from the Welsh mountains bursts into song on the slightest provocation. When singing in his bath the other morning he was stopped by a well-aimed sponge! He really has a good voice, though!

Wun Lung is an adept at preparing strange and succulent dishes beloved by his countrymen. When he "threw a party" and explained that he had included rats' tails in the pie, his guests hurried to the bath-room!

Friardate Woods, where kings hunted the wild boar Win-beloved by his countrymen, had broken detention, and them enjoying a "little game" in the ruined priory. Sanner and Co. were "for it!"

Richard Hilary welcomes bright weather so that he can play tennis. Hilary hopes some day to reach Wimbledon—he already possesses a service that even Scott, of the Fourth, a good player, cannot return!

Coker says a jutting jaw betokens character. Coker's "jaw" frequently gets him into trouble with his Form-master—but Mr. Froul calls it sheer cheek! Removites call it "lip," but who "nose"?

Explained!

There was a shortage of pen-holders in the Remove the other evening just about prep-time. Several fellows appeared in the passage simultaneously to ask: "Who's pinched my pen?" and others soon came out to join the chorus.

It was clear that an organised raid had taken place. There was scarcely a pen-holder left in the Remove!

Then Frank Nugent suddenly remembered something his minor had told him that morning—and the mystery was cleared up in a flash.

It was the night of the Second Form Herring-frying Championship—and the fags had evidently run short of toasting-forks!