

"THE SPYING FORM-MASTER!" Thrilling Adventure Story of . . . **HARRY WHARTON & Co.**

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*Bunter
the Basher!*



THE SPYING FORM-MASTER!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Making It Hot For Quelch!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. So did five other fellows. Bunter was amused. So were Harry Wharton & Co. Probably Billy Bunter would not have been amused had he been aware that five pairs of eyes were fixed upon him, watching his proceedings. But Billy Bunter was not aware of that. Bunter's range of vision was limited, even with the aid of his big spectacles. Moreover, the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove was deeply intent on the business in hand.

Bunter was busy!

Under a shady tree on the lawn at Wharton Lodge stood a little table, with a wicker chair beside it. In the seat of the chair lay an open book, left by the person lately sitting there. As the book was in Greek, it evidently did not form part of the holiday reading of the chums of the Remove. On the table was a glass nearly full of lemonade. Into that glass Billy Bunter was pouring the contents of a paper packet of pepper!

There was another table with a jug and glasses on it at a little distance. Towards that table the Famous Five were sauntering on the lawn when they sighted Bunter and his weird occupation. They stopped—and stared—and grinned. It was a very warm afternoon for April; and Harry Wharton & Co. were going to refresh themselves with lemonade—but they forgot that they were thirsty as they watched Bunter.

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"He, he, he!" came from the fat junior.

Bunter was not only grinning! He was chuckling! Evidently he was frightfully amused.

Suddenly his fat chuckle changed to a sneeze! He had caught a whiff of the pepper!

"Oooogh! Atchooh-chooop!" sneezed Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That sudden outburst of merriment apprised Billy Bunter that he was not, as he had supposed, alone on the lawn.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

He spun round towards the Famous Five hastily shoving the empty pepper packet into his pocket. He blinked at the five juniors through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—atchooh-chooh-choop!"

"Caught a cold, old fat man?" asked Bob Cherry, with a chuckle.

"No! I mean, yes! Atchooh! Woogh! I say, you fellows, you made me jump! I thought for a tick it was Quelch! Atchooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I—atchooooooop!" Billy Bunter sneezed and gasped. "I've caught a cold—these April winds, you know—I haven't been handling pepper or anything."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five. As they had been watching Billy Bunter's weird proceedings with the pepper they were not likely to believe that statement. Billy Bunter was never at a loss for a fib; but there was one

drawback to Bunter's fibs—they never found credence.

"So you're larking with Quelch again!" said Harry Wharton.

"Oh! No! I didn't know that that was Quelch's chair, and I never noticed that he had gone in and left his book—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Besides, I haven't done anything!" added Bunter. "If there's anything in Quelch's lemonade, I don't know anything about it. There isn't anything, either! It's all right, you fellows."

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at the fat Owl! They were far from thinking that it was "all right."

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Greyfriars Remove, was staying at Wharton Lodge, the guest of the old colonel. Bunter did not like it!

Probably the other fellows did not exactly enjoy the company of a Form-master in holiday-time. Still, Quelch had recently been ill, and it was hoped that the healthy air of the Surrey downs would do him good, and brace him for the coming term at Greyfriars. Certainly the other fellows would never have dreamed of taking any measures to cut Quelch's visit short. That bright idea could only have occurred to Billy Bunter's remarkable brain.

More than once the fat Owl of the Remove had been spotted in his fatuous attempts to make Mr. Quelch fed-up with Wharton Lodge as a holiday residence. Now, evidently, he was at it again!

Undoubtedly Henry Samuel Quelch would have had a startling and far from

agreeable surprise had he consumed that glass of lemonade after Bunter had doctored it with hot pepper!

Billy Bunter blinked anxiously at the Famous Five, through his big spectacles. He was not sure whether they had observed him. He hoped for the best.

"You blithering, blithering ass——" began Harry Wharton.

Bob Cherry touched his arm.

"Hold on!" he whispered. "Leave it to me! It's a wheeze!"

"But we can't let——"

"Cheese it, I tell you! Leave it to me."

"Oh, all right!"

"I say, you fellows, what are you whispering about?" demanded Bunter uneasily. He rolled towards the Famous Five, blinking suspiciously. "I say, if you think I've been playing any jape on Quelch, you're quite mistaken, you know."

"The mistakefulness is probably terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I think it's pretty thick, having a beak here in the hols," said Bunter. "It was rather inconsiderate of your uncle to ask him, Wharton! He might have known that I shouldn't like it! Still, I'm not trying to make Quelch fed-up with the place! Don't you fellows fancy anything of that sort?"

"Isn't he a coughdrop?" remarked Johnny Bull. "What is he doing outside a home for idiots?"

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"What a brain!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

"The brainfulness is truly terrific."

"If you fellows had half my brains, you'd do!" said Billy Bunter disdainfully. "I hope I've got more brains in my little finger than you've got in your nappers. If we get rid of Quelch, it will be entirely due to me—you fellows can't think of anything! Not that I've done anything, you know! Of course, I wouldn't!"

"Let's go for a walk!" suggested Bunter. "I'd rather be gone when Quelch comes back—he's only gone in to answer a telephone call. We can watch him from a distance."

"What will there be to watch?" inquired Nugent.

"Oh! Nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "Nothing at all, old chap! Still, we may as well keep an eye on him, from a safe distance, you know! It will be funny! He, he, he!"

Bob Cherry whispered to Johnny Bull. That youth grinned, and nodded, and stepped towards Bunter. Suddenly, grasping the fat junior by the back of his collar, Johnny jerked him over, burying his face in the grass of the lawn.

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter. "Wharrer you mean, you idiot? Leggo! Wharrer you barging me over for, you silly ass! Urrrgh!"

"What the dickens——" exclaimed Wharton.

"Johnny!" gasped Nugent.

Unheeding, Johnny Bull grasped the back of Bunter's head with both hands, keeping his fat face in the grass. Bunter wriggled and squirmed and gurgled frantically. While Wharton and Nugent and Hurree Singh stared blankly, Bob Cherry poured lemonade from the jug into a glass on the larger table. Swiftly he carried it across to Mr. Quelch's table under the shady tree and placed it there; picking up the doctored glass and carrying it back to the larger table.

Three fellows watched him in wonder—but Billy Bunter could not watch him, his face being deep in grass. Billy Bunter remained in happy ignorance of the fact that there was now a glass of

perfectly harmless lemonade standing on Mr. Quelch's table and that the peppery one stood on the juniors' table.

"All serene, Johnny!" murmured Bob. "Just in time, too!"

It was only just in time; for the rather angular figure of Mr. Quelch appeared in sight from the house. The Remove master was coming back to his chair and his book.

"Urrrgh!" gurgled Billy Bunter, kicking up his fat little legs in a frantic effort to escape from Johnny Bull's grasp. "Wurrgh! Beast! Leggo! What do you think you're doing, you silly ass? I'll jolly well lick you! Leggo! Urrgh!"

Johnny Bull, grinning, released him. Billy Bunter struggled to his feet, his face crimson with wrath. He set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and gave Johnny Bull a glare that almost cracked them.

"Beast!" he roared. "Think that's a joke barging a fellow over? You silly, fatheaded, dunderheaded, blithering idiot——"

"Bunter!" It was Mr. Quelch's voice. Bunter's roar reached him as he came across the lawn, and his face expressed grim disapproval. Billy Bunter blinked round at him. "Please moderate your expressions, Bunter."

It was, in Billy Bunter's opinion, sheer cheek for Quelch to "come the beak"

By hook or crook the villainous Form-master of the Remove is determined to bring disgrace upon the Bounder of Greyfriars, for if he succeeds he will inherit the Vernon-Smith millions. But the Bounder is a wily bird to ensnare, and his luck holds good against his enemy's scheming!

in holiday-time. He had a jolly good mind to tell Quelch so! But he didn't!

Mr. Quelch gave Bunter a frown. He had given Bunter a good many frowns since he had found that bright member of his Form a fellow-guest at Wharton Lodge. Probably he was not unaware of Bunter's inhospitable feelings towards him; and certainly he was aware of at least one of the fat Owl's egregious tricks. Had they been at school Quelch would have caned Bunter before this. Fortunately they weren't; but Bunter had a feeling all the time that Quelch might forget that they weren't at Greyfriars and hard out a whopping any minute. Perhaps he was conscious of deserving one.

"Oh, really, sir!" gasped Bunter. "That silly idiot Bull——"

"Do not use such expressions, Bunter! You should behave yourself in a more gentlemanly manner while you are a guest in Colonel Wharton's house," said Mr. Quelch severely.

Billy Bunter suppressed, with difficulty, a desire to tell Mr. Quelch what he thought of him.

Mr. Quelch sat down in his chair, under the shady tree, picking up his Greek book and giving it his attention. As his head was bent, Billy Bunter ventured to give him a scowl—a dark, portentous, ferocious scowl—which, however, did no damage to the top of Quelch's head. But the scowl changed to a grin as Bunter reflected that he was going to have his

revenge—as soon as Quelch drank his lemonade.

Bob Cherry was busy at the juniors' table, pouring out glasses of lemonade. He was careful to keep the doctored glass separate from the rest. There was nothing in its appearance to distinguish it from the others, and he did not want to get them mixed! Billy Bunter had doctored that lemonade with pepper, to cause internal convulsions in the person who disposed of it. He was not yet aware in whose inside the convulsions were going to take place! But the other fellows had guessed Bob Cherry's wheeze by this time, and there was a cheery grin of anticipation on every face.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Not a Gnat!

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

"Have some lemonade, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry blandly.

"Eh! Oh! Yes! But look——"

"Look at what?"

"Quelch!" breathed Bunter.

Where the juniors stood was not more than fifteen feet or so from the shady oak under which Mr. Quelch sat. So even the Owl of the Remove could see him with perfect distinctness. And Bunter watched him as if fascinated as he laid his book on his knees and stretched out a hand to the glass of lemonade on the little table beside him.

Bunter's little round eyes almost popped through his big, round spectacles as he looked. Quelch was just going to drink the lemonade. It was, so far as Bunter knew, the glass into which he had mixed several ounces of hot pepper. He expected surprising results when Quelch took a drink. It was quite warm weather, and cool lemonade was grateful and comforting. But Quelch was not going to find this particular drink grateful and comforting, Bunter considered.

The Famous Five exchanged a grin. They did not expect the results that Bunter expected.

Mr. Quelch raised the glass to his lips and drank. Bunter gave a gurgle of suppressed excitement. Apparently, Quelch did not notice the pepper as he drank. He seemed to find the lemonade all right. He drank more than half of what was in the glass and set the glass back on the little table, and then resumed his book. That drink had had absolutely no effect on Quelch. Bunter wondered dizzily whether his inside was lined with zinc!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He still gazed at Quelch. Surely the pepper would work now that it was safely inside! Surely Quelch would begin spluttering, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, choking, or something.

But he didn't. With perfect calmness, Mr. Quelch perused the entrancing pages of Thucydides.

Thucydides was the cheery author whom Quelch took with him for holiday reading. That bright and merry author chained Quelch's attention to such an extent that he forgot the existence of the juniors! With his eyes fixed on the Greek, Quelch read on, entranced!

"Oh scissors!" gasped Bunter.

It hadn't worked! That was only too clear now! He had had all his trouble for nothing!

He turned to the grinning five.

"I say, you fellows, Quelch must have an inside of cast iron!" said Bunter.

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"By gum, you know, I'll jolly well give him half a pound next time and see if that will make him sit up!"

"Half a pound of what?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "Blessed if I know what you fellows are grinning at! I say, I'll have some of that lemonade!"

Bob had filled five glasses from the jug on the juniors' table. They stood in a row, with the doctored glass, annexed from Quelch's table, at the end.

Bob lifted that particular one to Bunter.

"Here you are, old fat bean!" he said.

Billy Bunter took the glass. The Famous Five watched him almost breathlessly. Bunter, evidently, had not the remotest suspicion that that was the glass he had peppered for Quelch. He was going to take his own medicine—which, in the opinion of the Famous Five, was a just punishment for his trickery, and a necessary warning not to do it again! They hardly breathed as the fat junior raised the glass.

"Beast!" said Bunter, lowering it again. "There's a fly in it!"

"Fathead!" said Bob. "There isn't!"

"Well, it's a gnat, then!" growled Bunter.

"Rot!"

As a matter of fact it was a fraction of the pepper afloat. Billy Bunter's spectacles failed to spot exactly what was the fragment floating on the surface of the lemonade, but he saw that it was something, and certainly he did not want to swallow a gnat, if it was a gnat!

"Go it, fatty!" said Johnny Bull anxiously.

Bunter, of course, was thirsty that warm April afternoon. He was always hungry or thirsty—generally both. He wanted a nice, cool, summer drink! Still, he did not want one with a gnat in it.

"Well, look here, if that isn't a gnat—" said Bunter peevishly.

"It isn't," said Bob, glancing at it.

"Well, change your glass for mine, then," said Bunter.

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

Considering that he had landed Bunter with the peppery lemonade he was not prepared to do that.

"Hand it over!" said Bunter, setting his glass on the table.

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "That's all right! You've got no gnats in your lemonade, though you've got bees in your bonnet!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Let us dispose of the esteemed lemonade and proceed walkfully," suggested Hurree Janset Ram Singh. It began to look as if Bunter was not going to drink his peppery lemonade, in which case Bob's little joke seemed likely to fall rather flat. "We are going to meet the esteemed Smithy at Wimford, my ridiculous chums!"

Billy Bunter blinked suspiciously at the juniors. He had no suspicion that pepper—his own pepper—was in that glass. But he fancied that there was a gnat in it, and that that was the cause of the general grin that surrounded him.

Bunter had an inspiration—quite a brain-wave! He suddenly turned towards the house, stared at the facade of Wharton Lodge through his big spectacles, and ejaculated:

"Oh lor! The house is on fire!"

The Famous Five fairly bounded at that startling news. All five of them

spun round as if moved by the same spring and stared at the house.

Their backs were turned on Bunter, and on the glasses of lemonade, as they stared at Wharton Lodge, looking for the fire!

With amazing celerity Bunter set down his own glass on the table behind Bob and picked up Bob Cherry's glass.

It occupied Bunter only a second.

Another second and he also turned, a glass of lemonade in his fat hand, though not the one that fat hand had held before.

"Where's the fire, you howling ass?" exclaimed Harry Wharton blankly. "I can't see any sign of a fire!"

"Look at that chimney!" said Bunter, pointing with his disengaged hand. "See the smoke pouring out of it!"

"You footling fathead! Haven't you ever seen smoke coming out of a chimney?" exclaimed the captain of the Greyfriars Remove.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"What do you mean, blitherer?" demanded Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"If that's Bunter's idea of a joke—" grunted Johnny Bull.

"The jokefulness is not terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"All right, you fellows—only making you jump!" said Bunter cheerfully. "Easy enough to pull your leg, isn't it? He, he, he!"

"You howling ass!"

Startling fellows, by telling that the house was on fire, did not seem much of a joke to the Famous Five. But Bunter seemed amused. He grinned and chuckled. He had played that trick in order to land on Bob Cherry the glass Bob had given him, and which he fancied had a gnat in it! He had succeeded! Bob had no suspicion that the trick he had played in changing the glasses had been played a second time, and that he himself was the victim.

Bunter lifted his glass to his lips. The Famous Five watched him, as he drank, with a fascinated gaze—just as Bunter had watched Quelch! But they had the same surprising disappointment as Bunter! The fat junior gulped, taking in the lemonade in bulk, as was his way; but he did not choke, or splutter, or sneeze, or gurgle—he just drank the lemonade till the glass was empty, and clattered it down on the table again.

"That's good!" he remarked.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

"I'll have some more!" said Bunter, reaching for the jug.

"Like it?" gasped Wharton.

"Fine!" said Bunter. "Not so good as our home-made lemonade at Bunter Court, of course—but quite good! As good as I expect here, anyhow."

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. He was accustomed to this sort of polished politeness from that very peculiar guest, William George Bunter.

"Was—was—was it cool?" gasped Bob.

"Eh? Yes. Why shouldn't it be?" asked Bunter, blinking at him.

"Lemonade's supposed to be a cool drink, isn't it?"

"It mayn't be always what it's supposed to be," grinned Frank Nugent. "I fancied that glass wasn't."

"You don't feel any burning, or anything?" asked the amazed Bob.

"Eh? No! Why should I?"

"Blessed if I can make it out, unless you're lined with reinforced concrete!" growled Bob. "You couldn't have put in so much pepper as I thought—or you

made a mistake and put in something else, you footling frump!"

"Eh? What? Wharrer you mean?"

"Oh, rats!" grunted Bob, quite disconcerted at his joke on Bunter falling so flat. "Here, mop up your liquor, you men! We've got to get off, or we shall miss Smithy."

And the Famous Five took up their glasses and drank off the lemonade. Four of them finished it. One didn't! That one was Bob Cherry!

Bob had swallowed about half when the glass dropped from his hand and smashed on the ground. He gave a gurgling roar, clasped both hands to his mouth, yelled, howled, roared, and danced.

"Ow! Wow! I'm burnt! Wow!"

"What the thump—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Yaroooh! I'm scalded—burnt—peppered—yaroooh—whoooco!"

"What the—"

"My esteemed Bob—"

"Yurrrggggghhh!" spluttered the hapless Bob. "Gurrrggh! Wurrrggh!"

Mr. Quelch looked up from his book, fifteen feet away, and frowned. The Co. stared at Bob in utter wonder. Bunter blinked at him in astonishment.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "It's all right, Cherry—only that gnat—"

"Gurrrggh! That what? Wurrrggh!"

"A gnat won't hurt you!" said Bunter.

"Gnat!" gasped Wharton. "What gnat, you fat chump?"

Bunter grinned.

"You see, Bob said there wasn't a gnat in the glass, so I changed glasses with him when I made you look round!" he explained cheerfully. "I thought he could have the gnat, if he liked gnats in his lemonade. I don't!"

"What!" yelled Wharton.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Nugent. "Then Bob got the pepper!"

The juniors stared at Bunter—and at Bob. Evidently it was something more severe than a gnat that was troubling Bob Cherry! He had got the pepper—which Bunter had intended for Quelch, and which Bob had intended for Bunter! He had got it, and he found it hot!

"B-b-bob's got the pi-pip-pepper!" stammered Johnny Bull. "Oh, my hat! Oh crumbs! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrrggh! Urrggh! You—you fat villain!" shrieked Bob. "You changed the—urrrggh!—glasses—the gig-gig-glasses—wurrrggh!—same as I did—gurrrggh!—you fat scoundrel—yurrrgghh!"

"Well, you said there wasn't a gnat—" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled four juniors in chorus. They were sorry for poor Bob—awfully sorry—but the thing struck them as having its funny side, all the same. They yelled—they could not help it!

"You cackling—gurrrggh!—asses!" roared Bob. "Urrgh! What is there to chortle at, I'd like to know? I'll burst that villain! Wurrrggh!"

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

"Gurrrggh!" Bob, his face red as a flame, his eyes streaming water, gasping and spluttering and gurgling, made a jump at Bunter. "I'll squash him—I'll burst him—I'll—"

Bunter promptly dodged round the Co

"I say, you fellows keep him off!" he yelled. "I say—yaroooh! Keep off, you beast! You said there wasn't a gnat—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll burst him all over the shop I'll—"
 "Cherry!" hooted Mr. Quelch, rising to his feet. "Cherry! I insist upon better behaviour! I insist—"
 "Oh!" gasped Bob. In another second his clutch would have been on Bunter. For the first time that Easter, Bunter was glad that Mr. Quelch was there!
 The respite was enough for the fat Owl! He tore away at top speed, and vanished off the lawn!
 Wharton caught Bob by the arm.
 "Come and wash out your mouth, old chap—"
 "Gurrrrghh!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Shadowed by Two!

"SMITHY!" murmured Billy Bunter.
 Bunter sat up and took notice.

The fat Owl of the Remove had intended to go for quite a long walk, to give Bob Cherry time to recover his usual good-temper. But Bunter's fat little legs were not planned by Nature for long walks. After covering about a quarter of a mile, on a footpath in the wood that bordered the Wimford road, Bunter sat down to rest.

He selected a spot under a big beech

suspicion that he was not enjoying his holiday there to any great extent. The grub was good, and there was plenty of it, so Bunter did not see why a fellow shouldn't! But Smithy, no doubt, gave less attention to that important detail than Bunter.

At Wharton Lodge the Bounder of Greyfriars had to be on good behaviour. No doubt good behaviour, for any length of time, rather irked the scape-grace of the school.

Certainly he was not looking merry or bright as Bunter glimpsed him through the hawthorns.

He was walking slowly, his hands driven deep into his pockets, a frown



"Oh lor!" ejaculated Bunter, suddenly turning towards Wharton Lodge and staring through his big spectacles. "The house is on fire!" The Famous Five spun round and stared at the house. As their backs were turned, Bunter set down his own glass on the table and exchanged it with Bob Cherry's.

"If you fellows don't leave off cackling—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry dashed away to the house.

His mouth needed washing with cold water—very cold water; he would have been glad to bite a piece off an iceberg in his present state. His friends followed him—still chortling. Mr. Quelch, frowning, sat down to his book again, little dreaming of his narrow escape from peppery lemonade, which he owed to the suffering Bob.

And Billy Bunter—on whose fat and obtuse brain the facts dawned at long last—made it a point to keep well away from Bob Cherry. He sagely considered that Bob had better be given ample time to get over the pepper! While Bob was washing away the pepper, and his oohs—though with irrepressible smiles—were offering their sympathetic condolences, Billy Bunter went for a walk, to give Bob a wide berth, till the next meal-time called him back to Wharton Lodge!

a little off the footpath, where there was a soft, grassy bank and a fellow could make himself comfortable. That, of course, was important.

Hawthorn-bushes screened him from the footpath. Lying in a comfortable, if not graceful, attitude in the thick grass, Billy Bunter disposed, slowly and methodically, of a packet of toffee that he had luckily found in Johnny Bull's room that morning. It came in quite useful now, to help the Owl of the Remove to keep going till tea-time. He had been about a quarter of an hour there, and had disposed of most of the toffee, and was feeling happy and sticky, when there were footsteps on the path, and through the openings of the hawthorns he recognised the newcomer as Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter blinked at him very curiously through his big spectacles as he passed.

Smithy was a guest at Wharton Lodge that Easter, and Bunter had a strong

on his brow, his rather hard face deeply clouded.

Billy Bunter grinned, as he wondered what Wharton would have thought had he seen the Bounder at that moment.

Harry Wharton & Co. were doing all they could to make the holiday a cheerful one for Smithy; but their tastes and his were as wide as the poles asunder. Wharton, if he had seen Smithy now, could hardly have supposed that he was enjoying himself at Wharton Lodge.

The footsteps passed on, and the Bounder disappeared from Bunter's sight. But a moment or two later they ceased. Vernon-Smith had stopped under the branches of the big beech.

Billy Bunter's eyes glimmered behind his spectacles. Inquisitiveness was Bunter's besetting sin; and he was very curious now.

Smithy had gone to Wimford that afternoon, by himself—a guest at Wharton Lodge was allowed to do as

he liked, and the Bounder often liked to go off by himself.

The Famous Five did not mind in the very least; in fact, willing as they were to be pleasant and agreeable to Smithy, he was not often a member of their happy circle, and they could not be quite so careless and easy with him as they were accustomed to be with one another. If Smithy had some business in the shops at Wimford, and did not ask any of the other fellows to go with him, the Co. were quite prepared to dispense with his company while he went on his own. They were going to stroll along the Wimford road before tea and meet him on his way back.

Certainly, they were not going to suspect that Smithy had any secret or surreptitious reason for wanting to be alone. That he was a black sheep in the flock at Greyfriars, they could not help knowing; but it was not likely to cross their minds that he would carry on any shady game while he was a guest under Harry Wharton's roof.

Indeed, it was because his father felt that he could trust him there, that he had let Smithy off passing the vacation under the eye of a tutor. Smithy was in his father's black books these days—chiefly due to his own faults.

Billy Bunter grinned as he heard the Bounder come to a halt under the beech. Bunter was discovering something—and the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars loved to discover things!

If Smithy had gone shopping at Wimford, as the Co. supposed, what was he doing hanging about the wood, only a quarter of a mile from Wharton Lodge? Perhaps he did not know that his friends intended to stroll out and

meet him on his way home, so he was not responsible if he missed them on the road. But what was he up to?

Obviously, to Bunter, he was up to something!

A fellow might feel bored and sulky and slouch off by himself—but he must have some reason for sticking under a tree in a wood and waiting there.

Peering through the hawthorns, Bunter spotted the Bounder again, leaning on the thick trunk of the big beech, his hands still in his pockets, staring before him moodily. He saw Vernon-Smith glance at his wrist-watch impatiently. But he hardly needed that to tell him that Smithy was waiting for somebody to join him.

Whatever Herbert Vernon-Smith was "up to," it was no business of Billy Bunter's. Chiefly for that reason it interested Bunter intensely.

He grinned, and watched to see who was going to join the Bounder. That big beech, which overtopped the wood, was called the Hunter's Beech, and was a well-known landmark. Evidently the Bounder had made some appointment there. It was a spot easy to find, and yet secluded from observation.

Bunter had no intention of betraying his presence. Bunter, as usual, was prying! Keeping in cover of the hawthorns, he blinked along the footpath the way Smithy had come, expecting to see Smithy's unknown friend, if he came that way—though it was, of course, possible that the man might come from the other direction. Smithy, in fact, was looking in the other direction, as he leaned on the beech, and his back was partly turned towards Bunter.

Bunter, listening for a footstep, heard nothing; but he suddenly became aware of a man on the footpath. It was a grassy path; but Bunter had heard Smithy's footsteps as he passed. He did not hear those of the newcomer, and he gave quite a start, as the man passed in his view.

It was a rather tall young man, with a hard face, and a small, dark moustache over a mouth that shut like a vice.

Billy Bunter knew him at once. It was Mr. Smedley, the new master who had taken Mr. Quelch's place at Greyfriars while the Remove beak was away last term.

No wonder Bunter had not heard him coming! In the Remove, at Greyfriars, Smedley had been nicknamed the "Creep and Crawler," on account of his stealthy ways.

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bunter. He saw Mr. Smedley stop and stare at the figure of the schoolboy under the Hunter's Beech.

But for the fact that Smithy was looking in the opposite direction, he must have seen Smedley at that moment. But the next moment it would have been too late; for the Creep and Crawler backed swiftly into the thickets beside the path, and disappeared from view.

Bunter barely repressed a gasp. For Mr. Smedley, certainly not suspecting that anyone was hidden behind the hawthorns, had backed into them, hardly six or seven feet from Bunter! Bunter's fat heart thumped.

He knew that Smedley was watching the Bounder! He knew that he must have been following him by the footpath through the wood with silent footsteps; and as the Bounder had halted, Smedley had had a narrow escape of actually running into him! But he had seen him in time, leaning on the beech, and taken cover.

"Sneaking beast!" Bunter said to himself.

He was strongly inclined to give Smithy a warning call. That would have meant that he would never have seen the person for whom Smithy was waiting, and his keen curiosity would have remained unsatisfied. To do Bunter justice, he would have made that sacrifice—quite a heavy one, to the Paul Pry and Peeping Tom of Greyfriars! But he was almost in Smedley's reach—and he dared not!

He had had experience of Smedley's bitter temper and heavy hand, and though Bunter was not very bright, he was bright enough to realise how enraged the spy would be if he was shown up in his spying!

If Bunter could warn Smithy, without revealing himself, Bunter would. But the most important consideration in the wide universe was Bunter's own fat skin! The fat Owl of the Remove, like Brer Fox in the story, "lay low and said nuffin'."

An angry, impatient exclamation from the junior under the Hunter's Beech reached Bunter's ears, and doubtless Smedley's also.

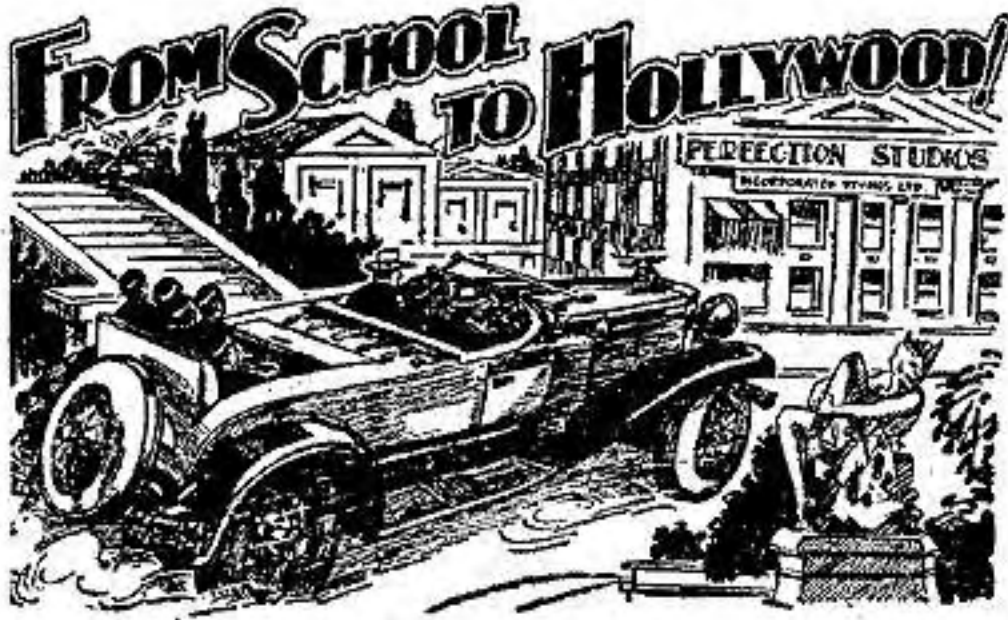
"Hang the man! How long is he going to be? Can't he find the place, bother him? Can't he ask somebody? Confound the man!"

Evidently, Vernon-Smith was getting impatient.

He moved away from the beech-trunk and sauntered up and down the footpath that ran by the great tree.

Several times Bunter glimpsed his angry, clouded face, and he had no doubt that Smedley's eyes were on it also.

But Smithy had no suspicion that



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either of them was there. Smedley was completely out of sight from the path, though Bunter, farther back in the hawthorns, had glimpses of him from behind. Bunter was farther out of sight than Smedley.

Once the Bounder, in his uneasy pacing, passed the very spot, but he did not even glance at the bushes beside the path. He returned to the big beech, and stood staring up the path in the direction of Wimford, obviously growing more and more angry and impatient with every passing moment. And still, like Sister Anne, he watched in vain for anyone coming.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
An Old Acquaintance!**

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Know that sportsman?"

Bob was in his usual cheery spirits and good temper once more, and Bunter would have found him quite safe at close quarters. He was sauntering up the Wimford road, with his hands in his pockets, his school cap on the back of his mop of flaxen hair, whistling cheerily, if not musically, when he spotted a squat figure coming from the direction of the town. The Co. glanced at that squat figure as Bob drew their attention to it, and Harry Wharton frowned a little.

"Seen him before?" grinned Bob. "The scenfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram-Singh. The man who was coming from Wimford was short and squat, horsey-looking, with a bowler hat cocked over one ear, and a cigar sticking out of the corner of a wide mouth.

He looked like what he was—a hanger-on of the races; and, as it happened, the juniors knew him by sight.

His name was Banks; and they had seen him a good many times near Greyfriars School, where most of the Remove knew that he was an acquaintance of Herbert Vernon-Smith. Mr. Banks was the medium by which the reckless Bounder had "backed his fancy," when the spirit moved him to throw away his too-ample cash in spotting winners.

"What the thump is that dingy rotter doing here?" grunted Wharton.

Mr. Banks was glancing about him, from side to side of the road, as he came along from Wimford. Apparently he was looking for something or somebody. Wharton's brow darkened more and more.

The bookmaker was not a pleasant object to the view. He was dingy, he was beery, and he was smoky. But what Wharton was thinking of was the fact that, far away at Greyfriars in term time, he had had dealings with the Bounder. Wharton was not a suspicious fellow: but he could not help putting two and two together.

"There's racing going on at Elmbridge, a few miles from here!" said Frank Nugent. "I dare say that's why Banky is about."

"This isn't the road to Elmbridge!" muttered Wharton. "And he's looking for somebody."

"Oh!" said Bob, and his cheery face became rather serious.

The squat man spotted the juniors and stared at them. Then he came on towards them, touching the brim of his bowler in civil salute.

"Arternoon, young gentlemen!" said Mr. Banks affably. "P'r'aps you could give a covey his direction in this here place?"

"Looking for your way?" asked Harry.

He did not want to speak to the man, but he did not want to be uncivil.

"That's it," said Mr. Banks, with a nod. "I dessay you live about 'ere

RHYMES OF THE REMOVE.

No. 14.



This week our clever Greyfriars rhymester gives you a vivid description of the trials and tribulations of a schoolboy theatrical producer in the following witty verses, entitled:

"THE TAMING OF THE CREW!"

The Remove have a rehearsal
Of "The Taming of the Shrew!"
All the actors in the cast
Are arriving thick and fast,
Then old Wibley, who is last,
Tells the fellows what to do:
"Wharton, stop that silly chatter!
Now then, Smithy, what's the matter?
Nugent, will you learn your patter
For 'The Taming of the Shrew'?"

If they're late for a rehearsal,
Wibley gets into a stew;
Flies into a fearful bate,
Says he's dashed if he will wait;
Wib. himself comes rather late:
But then he's entitled to.
"Kipps, you dunderheaded duffer!
Do you want the play to suffer?
We've done nothing that is tougher
Than 'The Taming of the Shrew'!"

There is fun at the rehearsal,
It is very sad, but true!
Harold Skinner for a joke
Brings a fat cigar to smoke,
Until he begins to choke
And the atmosphere turns blue!
Johnny Bull is calmly reading
From the "Ranger," quite unheeding
William Wibley's frantic pleading
For "The Taming of the Shrew!"

There are larks at the rehearsal,
Jolly good ones—quite a few!
Poor old Wibley shouts and thumps
While a dozen cheerful chumps
Have a fencing match with stumps!
Never mind a bruise or two!
While Bianca (Rake's the fellow!)
Plays with Russell (Biondello),
Inky cries: "Let's do 'Othello,'
Not 'The Taming of the Shrew'!"

Wibley glares at the rehearsal,
Waves his script and runs it through.
And, my word, if looks could kill,
Wibley's fiery glance would fill
Courtfield churchyard, on the hill,
With that gay and careless crew!
Then he bellows: "Stop these ructions
Or I'll out the whole productions!"
After which, he gives instructions,
For "The Taming of the Shrew!"

Silence falls on the rehearsal,
Now that Wib's applied the screw!
Cherry murmurs: "All serene!
Put a jerk in it, old bean!
When do I come on the scene?
Tell me what I say and do!"
Bob is very tactful, knowing
Wib. is nearly overflowing;
So at last they all get going,
On "The Taming of the Shrew!"

somewhere, Master Wharton, as I see you 'ere in the 'olidays."

"Yes," answered Harry. "I can tell you anything you want to know about this quarter."

"'Ear, 'ear!" said Mr. Banks, relieved. "Ever 'eard of a spot called the 'Unter's Beech?"

"The Hunter's Beech? Yes. It's a big tree on the left, a little way back in the wood, some distance farther, on the way you're going," said Harry. "You'll see it from the road."

"Good!" said Mr. Banks.

"There's a footpath runs past it in the wood. Take the first footpath you come to."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Mr. Banks. "'Ot, ain't it? And dusty! Well, I'll be jogging on and looking for that there footpath what you mention."

And, touching his bowler again, Mr. Banks jogged on.

Harry Wharton glanced after him.

It was not difficult to guess that Mr. Banks had an appointment to keep at the Hunter's Beech. Obviously, it was not to admire that ancient tree that he was seeking it.

Wharton compressed his lips as he walked on with his friends.

"Dash it all, Harry!" murmured Bob. "I can see what you've got in your mind—but Smithy wouldn't."

"Smithy's a bit of a blighter at Greyfriars, but he wouldn't carry on that game here," said Frank. "He couldn't!"

"I—I hope not!" said Harry. "We took him on trust, and his father takes it for granted that he will be all right here. That's why he let him off staying at the tutor's in the vac. My uncle's taken my word for him. But if it turned out—"

The juniors were silent as they walked on. Some of them, perhaps, had not been quite blind to the fact that the Bounder found things rather "tame" at Wharton Lodge, in comparison with the high old time he had anticipated for the holidays. His father had put a very stern and heavy foot down on that, and the Bounder's restless nature did not take restraint patiently. But if he was dabbling in dingy black-guardism while he was under Colonel Wharton's roof it was the limit, even for the reckless Bounder. And the effect on the old colonel, if it came out, would hardly bear thinking of.

"He can't be such a fool!" said Bob Cherry at last. "With Quelch staying in the same place, too! And Quelch will be back at Greyfriars next term—we're not having the Creeper and Crawler next term, thank goodness! If Quelch spotted him— He can't be such an ass!"

"It's rotten to distrust a chap," said Wharton, colouring. "I—I dare say it's only a coincidence, Banks being around here. Most likely we shall meet Smithy before we get to Wimford. Of course, we never arranged to come to meet him, but if he's going to be back for tea we can hardly miss him."

"May spot him any minute!" said Bob cheerily.

But when the Famous Five came in sight of the town, across the old bridge on the Wyme, they had not spotted Vernon-Smith. If he was in Wimford he had not started for home yet.

Meanwhile, Mr. Banks had jogged on, with his beery eyes watching for the footpath, and found it. He jogged along the footpath, under the shady trees, and arrived at long last at the tall beech.

Under the spreading branches of the Hunter's Beech an impatient junior was

acing to and fro. His eyes were on the racing man at once, and he uttered an angry greeting.

"So you've come at last, Banks!"

"Ere I am, sir!" said Mr. Banks, taking off his bowler hat and mopping his perspiring brow with a red handkerchief. "'Ot, ain't it?"

"I've waited jolly near half an hour for you!" growled the Bounder.

"Not my fault," said Mr. Banks. "I come by the train from Elmbridge, and I ain't such a walker as I was when I was younger. And I got to find the place—which ain't easy!"

"Easy enough to spot. I couldn't come over to Elmbridge to see you. I daren't go near the place."

"And why not?" asked Mr. Banks.

"Because the races are on there," growled the Bounder.

Mr. Banks stared at him.

"I'd have thought they'd rather attract you there, Master Vernon-Smith, in 'oliday-time, if you ain't changed your ways more'n you can expect a covey to believe."

And Mr. Banks chuckled.

"Well, I have changed them!" growled the Bounder. "It's not a matter of choice, but necessity. How did you get my address? It made me jump when I got your letter at Wharton Lodge. How did you know—?"

"Young Vavasour, of Highcliffe, let on that you was here for the Elmbridge races."

"The silly ass! I had a letter from him about it. He can't get anythin' but horses into his silly head. I'm not here for anythin' of the kind! I'm here because I'm in my father's black books, and I've got to toe the line and behave myself!" said the Bounder bitterly. "You reminded me in your letter that I owed you five pounds—"

"Jest a matter of form, sir," said Mr. Banks apologetically. "I thought you might have forgot it, sir. You didn't give a covey time to speak when you was on the phone to the Red Cow at Elmbridge. You cut off so sharp—"

"You silly ass!" snarled the Bounder. "Do you think I dared risk bein' caught phoning to you from Wharton Lodge? I tell you I'm on a new tack now, and I've got to mind my step. Nothin' in your line for me. I want to warn you to keep away from this quarter, and if you happen to come across me, take care not to recognise me. I've got your fiver. Here it is. Take it! Now we're done, and the sooner we're at a safe distance from one another the better."

Mr. Banks stared at him.

He took the collection of currency notes that the Bounder impatiently handed to him, counted them, to ascertain the total, and then trust the money into his pocket. The Bounder watched him moodily.

"Don't waste time!" he grunted.

He waited for Banks to go.

Mr. Banks, however, did not go. Having stacked the money away, he gave his perspiring brow another mop with the handkerchief and stacked that away, also. Then, standing very firmly on his stocky legs, facing the Bounder of Greyfriars, Mr. Banks gave him a very unpleasant look and said, slowly and very distinctly.

"This 'ere won't do!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Smithy Loses His Temper!

BILLY BUNTER suppressed a chuckle.

He could not see the Bounder and his dingy companion from where he crouched in the hawthorns, but he could hear their voices distinctly in the silence of the wood.

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He could also see a section of Mr. Smedley's tweed jacket through the hawthorn boughs, and he knew that the Creeper and Crawler was both watching and listening.

It rather amused Bunter.

Having heard the Bounder utter the name of Banks, Bunter guessed who his companion was. Smedley might or might not have heard that name before, but if he could see the man he could have no doubt as to his character.

Bunter knew, as Harry Wharton & Co. also knew, that the Creeper and Crawler was keeping an eye on Smithy in the holidays, hoping to catch him out in something discreditable. He must have fancied that he had made a "catch" when he saw the dingy Banks join the schoolboy, under the beech. And his disappointment must have been in proportion when he heard what the Bounder had to say, and learned that the scapegrace had come unwillingly to see the man, and was only anxious to be rid of him. In that there was not much for the Creeper and Crawler to make a song about.

Bunter could imagine the spy's feelings when Smithy gave the bookmaker that curt dismissal. Once more he had had all his trouble for nothing, and had shadowed Herbert Vernon-Smith in vain. It really looked as if the Creeper and Crawler was destined never to make a "catch." Whereat Billy Bunter was disposed to chuckle, though he was careful not to do so, in terror of the spy discovering him there.

A short silence followed Mr. Banks' answer to the Bounder. Herbert Vernon-Smith stared him in the face, with a grim expression on his own, and a dangerous glint in his eyes. Mr. Banks' stubbly countenance was sullen, and a trifle threatening. The Bounder was rather a dangerous fellow to threaten.

"What do you mean, Banks?" The Bounder broke the silence, speaking in cool, suppressed tones. "I've paid you. I couldn't before the end of the term. I was short of money. I've had to scrape it together since. But you're paid—and that's that!"

"You short of money," said Mr. Banks, with a derisive grin. "Come—come, Master Vernon-Smith, that chicken won't fight! Money's the last thing you'd ever be short of—and you the son of a millionaire! Think I don't know all about your father—the biggest gun in the city? More 'undred-pound notes than I've ever had tanners—I'll lay to that!"

"Very likely," said the Bounder contemptuously. "But I never see any of them these days. I've told you I'm in the pater's black books."

"You can tell me as often as you like," grinned Mr. Banks, evidently implying that any number of repetitions would not make him believe the statement.

Smithy looked at him hard. He could understand, of course, that the dingy sharper was unwilling to lose his hold on a millionaire's son, whose over-indulgent father had supplied him lavishly—too lavishly—with cash, until a quite recent date.

He was strongly tempted to plant a clenched fist in the leering face; but he kept his temper. In his present rather precarious position he did not want to make an enemy of Mr. Banks, and certainly he did not want trouble with such a character within so short a distance of Wharton Lodge and his Form-master. He breathed hard, but he answered the racing man quietly.

"You don't know how the matter stands now, Banks. Last term I came a mucker at school, and was sacked.

I'd had some jolly narrow escapes before, and my father was fed-up. He warned me that if I was expelled I should be thrown over—disinherited. He kept his word when the Head bunked me, and it was only because of that that Dr. Locke let me stay on, and gave me another chance. And—"

"You pulled through all right," grinned Mr. Banks.

"Only by the Head's kindness," said Vernon-Smith quietly. "And if I'm sacked again, my pater will keep his word as he was ready to do before. I tell you he's picked out a nephew—a cousin of mine whom I've never seen—a rotter named Lucius Teggers—and he's going to adopt him, and leave his fortune to him, and throw me right over if I'm expelled from school. That's the position I'm in now. Can't you understand that I've got to toe the line?"

Mr. Banks looked at him very curiously.

"You're fur enough from the school now, sir," he remarked; "and you never used to be easy scared."

The Bounder's eyes glittered.

"I'm not scared; but I've got to be careful. As it happens, my Form-master, Quelch, is staying at the very place I'm stopping at—Wharton Lodge. And that's not all. I'm being watched."

"Watched!" ejaculated Mr. Banks.

"There's a cur named Smedley—a temporary master who took Quelch's place at Greyfriars while he was away ill. He's got some sort of a down on me, and watches me like a cat—for some reason or other, he's fearfully keen on ruining me with my father."

"Well, you won't see 'im in the 'olidays."

"That's where you're mistaken. He's been practically shadowing me all through the holidays," said the Bounder savagely. "My father sent me to a tutor's, and I bolted, and he found it out by that cur spying and phoning him. Then he let me come here for the rest of the hols. And Smedley turned up. He very nearly caught me at Elmbridge a few days ago—thinking that I was going to the races."

"And you wasn't," said Mr. Banks, with a hoarse chuckle.

"I pulled his leg and made a fool of him, when I spotted him watching me," went on the Bounder, unheeding the sharper's question. "That made him more vicious than ever. He's staying somewhere in this neighbourhood. I've spotted him since, though I haven't seen him for some days now. But I never step outside the gates of Wharton Lodge without thinking that his spying eyes may be on me, the sneaking cur!"

Billy Bunter was powerfully tempted to chuckle again. He wondered how Smedley liked that.

"That's a queer yarn, that is," said Mr. Banks. "I've never 'eard of a schoolmaster awatching of a covey in the 'olidays before. What's his game?"

"He dislikes me, I suppose. I can't see any other reason. Anyhow, that's the fact. Now you can see that I've got to be careful. Whether I'd like to kick over the traces or not doesn't matter much—I can't afford to. It gave me a fearful start when I saw your fist on a letter for me at Wharton Lodge."

"I s'pose your friends don't open your blooming letters and read 'em?"

"There's one fellow there who might—a prying, fat fool. He did open the letter that Highcliffe ass, Vavasour, wrote to me. I can't afford to keep in touch with you, Banks."

Mr. Banks grunted.

"I'm running a lot of risk, seeing you at all!" snapped the Bounder. "I picked out this lonely spot because it's



Mr. Banks took the currency notes that Vernon-Smith impatiently handed to him and counted them to ascertain the total. Billy Bunter, crouching in the hawthorns, guessed that the "Creep and Crawler" was both watching and listening, too!

safe. But no place is safe with that spying cur Smedley in the offing. He sticks to me like a leech."

"Dunno why he should," grunted Mr. Banks—a remark that hinted that he did not place complete faith in what the Bounder was telling him.

One thing, certainly, was clear to Mr. Banks—Vernon-Smith wanted to get shut of him, and keep shut of him. And that roused the dingy rascal's sullen resentment. Mr. Banks was one of those persons whose acquaintance it is easy to make, but not easy to drop.

"Well, that's that!" grunted the Bounder. "You've got to get your train at Wimford, Banks."

"I ain't in such a blooming 'urry for that train," sneered Mr. Banks. "I come 'ere with a special snip for you—never s'posing that you was thinking of throwing a bloke over. If you 'appened to be short of money, as any young gentleman might be, Bill Banks is your friend, and he'd lend you the needful. And I'm telling you, Master Vernon-Smith, that there's a big thing on to-morrow, an 'ardly a man knows. I got it straight from the stable."

The Bounder's expression changed. He was tempted. "Straight from the 'orse's mouth, in a manner of speakin'," said Mr. Banks. "And a four-to-one chance!"

The Bounder stood silent. It was fear of the consequences, more than anything else, if he made a slip, that was keeping the Bounder of Greyfriars to the straight and narrow path. His reform, such as it was, was hardly more than skin-deep. He breathed quickly, the gleam in his eyes telling that the gambling instinct was roused again. Mr. Banks saw his advantage and pushed it.

"You never was a scared 'un, Master Vernon-Smith. You've always 'ad lots of nerve. And who's to know if a covey backs his fancy?"

Herbert Vernon-Smith drew a deep, deep breath. He shook his head.

"I'm not riskin' it. Nothin' doin'."

"Look 'ere—" "Oh, don't be a fool!" snapped the Bounder irritably. "If I lost I couldn't pay you. I've told you my father keeps me short of money now."

"I'll take my chance o' that," grinned Mr. Banks, his grin revealing very plainly that he did not believe a word of it. He simply could not get it into his head that the millionaire's son, once rolling in money, was now severely short of that necessary article.

"Oh, rats! For goodness' sake leave me alone!" snarled Vernon-Smith. Perhaps he was afraid of his own resolution weakening. "Leave me alone, hang you! You go your way, and I'll go mine!"

Mr. Banks' little piggy eyes gleamed under his stubby brows.

"That won't do," he answered. "You ain't throwing over a man like that—and you can lay to it! Treat me fair and Bill Banks is your friend, and ready to lend a 'elping 'and to a friend what's temporary 'ard 'it. But don't tell me a parcel of lies! I wasn't born yesterday! And don't think you can throw a man over like he was dirt. I ain't standing for it, young feller-melad! Keep my distance, says you!"

"Yes," said Vernon-Smith, between his teeth. "You'd better!"

"And who's going to make me?" demanded Mr. Banks, in his most bullying tone. "Who's going to prevent me from giving a feller I know a nod when he's with his friends? Who's going to

prevent me from walking into the place you're staying at, if you come to that, and passing the time of day—hey?"

The Bounder's eyes burned.

He had feared something of this kind, and he had done his best to placate the rascal. That had failed. But the Bounder was the man for rough measures if they were needed. If Mr. Banks supposed that he was a scared schoolboy who could be bullied and frightened, Mr. Banks was making a very big mistake.

"Who's to prevent you?" said Vernon-Smith, gritting his teeth. "I'll let you know. Come anywhere near me when I'm with my friends, and I'll knock you spinning! Come anywhere near Whar-ton Lodge, and I'll kick you all the way back to Wimford! Got that?"

"And what'll I be doing?" said Mr. Banks derisively.

"You smoky, beery, whisky-soaked slug, I could handle two of you!" said the Bounder, with savage contempt. "Get going! Do you hear? Get going!"

He almost shouted the words, and gave Mr. Banks a violent push at the same time, causing him to stagger and almost fall.

Mr. Banks had a temper of his own, and it blazed up. He recovered his balance, and struck at the Bounder's furious face with his grubby hand.

Smack! "There!" gasped Mr. Banks. "Now—oh, jiminy! Ow!" The Bounder was on him like a tiger.

Crash, crash! came Vernon-Smith's fists, clenched and as hard as iron, full in the beery face.

Mr. Banks staggered and fell with a heavy bump in the grassy path.

The Bouncer's eyes blazed down at him.

"Get going!" he shouted. "By gum, I'll kick you back to the road! You hound, do you think you can threaten me—do you imagine that I'm afraid of a boozy waster of your sort? By gad, I'll give you a sample of what you'll get if you won't leave me alone."

Mr. Banks was staggering up, dizzily! A crashing right-hander sent him spinning again.

"Keep orf!" yelled Banks. "Oh, lor'! Keep orf, I tell you! Leave a covey alone! Oh gum! Keep orf!"

He scrambled away, and started at a clumsy run for the road. The Bouncer rushed after him, and kicked him as he went—once, twice, thrice, his boot landed crashing on the squat figure, and Mr. Banks yelled and put on speed.

Leaving the path, the dingy rascal dodged away into the wood, in frantic flight, realising that he had no chance against the muscular, iron-limbed Bouncer, and almost terrified by the savage fierceness in Vernon-Smith's face. It was well for him that he escaped, for the Bouncer was in a mood to give him a much severer lesson. It was a relief to him to punch somebody, and Mr. Banks had unintentionally come in quite useful for that purpose!

As the bookmaker disappeared in the wood, Vernon-Smith turned, and came striding back along the footpath, past the Hunter's Beech. He passed the spot where Smedley and Billy Bunter were in ambush, and both of them glimpsed his black scowl. But he was gone in a moment, striding away savagely in the direction of Wharton Lodge.

Billy Bunter did not stir. He was wondering what Smedley was going to do.

That was soon settled. When the Bouncer's footsteps had died away, the Creeper and Crawler stepped out from the hawthorns into the footpath, and went in the same direction.

His footsteps also died away in the distance.

Then, and not till then, Billy Bunter emerged from his cover! He blinked along the footpath in the direction in which Vernon-Smith and the Creeper and Crawler had disappeared, and ejaculated:

"Oh crikey!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Schemer's Cross Roads!

MR. QUELCH raised his eyebrows, stared, and frowned.

Thucydides, entrancing as he was, failed to hold Quelch's attention, as he sighted a rather tall figure coming up the drive at Wharton Lodge.

It was the figure of Mr. Smedley, Quelch's substitute at Greyfriars School last term.

Mr. Smedley, tall, slim, well-groomed, was good-looking enough; though on a close inspection one might not have liked the somewhat shifty gleam in his eyes, or the hard lines of a ruthless mouth.

But to Quelch's eyes, he seemed a very unwelcome object, judging by Quelch's inimical stare.

"That young man again!" murmured Quelch. And he frowned portentously.

He had met Smedley only once, a few days ago, at Wharton Lodge. He had not liked him. That Herbert Vernon-Smith, of the Remove, was a fellow who would bear watching, nobody knew better than Quelch! But he had his own opinion—a strong

opinion—of a master who set himself to watch a schoolboy in the holidays!

Smedley, at a distance, did not observe Mr. Quelch, on the lawn, for the moment. He seemed deep in thought as he came slowly up the drive.

The fact was, that the Creeper and Crawler had food for thought of a rather painful and disturbing nature.

Mr. Lucius Teggers, junior partner in the scholastic firm of Leggett & Teggers, was not, in his own opinion, a rascal!

He had borrowed the name and identity of the young tutor, Mr. Eustace Smedley, to wedge in at Greyfriars School, and he had to admit that that was a rather shady proceeding. But his object was, to his own mind, justifiable. He was going to show up a young rascal, who was deceiving his

that he had the young rascal in the hollow of his hand.

He had fully expected to overhear enough to condemn Smithy a dozen times over. Instead of which, there had been another disappointment! Instead of entering into gambling transactions with Mr. Banks, the Bouncer had knocked him down, as a warning to keep his distance!

Had it been possible for Mr. Smedley, alias Teggers, to return to Greyfriars next term, and take up the trail again at the school, he would have let the matter drop till Easter was over.

But that was not possible! Quelch, now almost restored to health, was going back to his old post, and Mr. Smedley would not be wanted at Greyfriars again!

It was now or never, with the schemer. That was why Mr. Smedley was now so deep in troubled thought. He was at the cross-roads!

Hitherto, he had kept within the bounds of a rather elastic conscience. Like many rascals, he was unwilling to realise that he was one! But if he misrepresented that interview under the Hunter's Beech, he could not possibly fail to admit that that was an act of rascality. And unless he misrepresented it, it was no use to him—and his game was up!

To do the Creeper and Crawler justice, he had a struggle before he made up his mind. He wanted the fruits of roguery, without becoming a regue—a rather difficult proposition.

He clung to one rag of justification. It was only fear of the consequences that was keeping the Bouncer straight. He was, at heart, the same young black-guard as ever. Was he to be spared because he had added cunning caution to his other bad qualities?

Even the Creeper and Crawler was aware that this was rather a rotten reed for his conscience to lean upon! But there was no other support available, and his conscience had to make the best of it!

"Mr. Smedley!" Quelch's sudden bark startled him out of deep thought, as he came by the edge of the lawn.

He started and looked up. Mr. Quelch was regarding him with a far from friendly eye.

He collected himself at once, turned off the drive, and came across the lawn to the shady tree under which the Remove master sat. He lifted his hat and bowed politely to the rather grim gentleman sitting there.

"I was coming to call upon you. Mr. Quelch!" he said.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch icily. He did not ask Mr. Smedley to sit down, though there were plenty of garden chairs at hand. The young man coloured a little.

"I trust, Mr. Smedley, that your visit has no connection with the boy Vernon-Smith, like your last!" said the Remove master.

"I regret to say that it has, Mr. Quelch."

"In that case, sir, the sooner it terminates the better! I am bound to point out, sir, that a schoolmaster—more especially a temporary master engaged for a short time—has no concern with a boy when he is away from school, in charge of his parents and friends."

Mr. Smedley breathed hard. The Remove master disliked him, and the Creeper and Crawler returned that feeling with interest. The Oriental proverb says that contempt will penetrate even the shell of the tortoise. And Lucius Teggers was not quite so thick-

GOT A POSTCARD?

Then write on it that funny yarn you know and send it along to me. It may win

A USEFUL PRIZE!

Miss Phyllis McBeath, of 3, Oldstead Avenue, Inglemire Lane, Hull, scores a bull's-eye with her effort this week. Here it is:



Mr. Quelch: "No more cake now, Bunter. Don't you know that it is unhealthy to sleep on a full stomach?"

Bunter: "Oh, that's all right, sir; I always sleep on my back!"

Now get busy and see what you can do!

—EDITOR.

headmaster and his father, and get him expelled as he richly deserved.

Certainly, Mr. Teggers would never have bothered about Vernon-Smith, but for the fact that he was his rival for an immense fortune. Still, he considered that he was entitled to bring facts to light! So far, his conscience did not trouble him. It was, perhaps, a little elastic.

But there was a rub! The scapegrace of the school had been scared into good behaviour by his father's menace of disinheritance.

In the term at school there had been nothing doing, though Mr. Teggers, in his character of temporary Form-master, had watched the Bouncer like a cat watching a mouse.

That was why he shadowed the schoolboy in the holidays, and when he had seen the Bouncer meet the dingy racing man under the Hunter's Beech, he felt

skinned as a tortoise. But he remained calm and cool.

"I do not think, sir, that the boy's father would quite agree with you in this particular instance!" he remarked. "He has trusted the boy here, believing that he will behave himself in good surroundings. If he knew that only an hour ago his son was meeting a disreputable racing man in the wood near this house—"

"Nonsense, sir!" barked Quelch.

"I hardly think that the boy will deny it!" said Mr. Smedley dryly.

Mr. Quelch sat bolt upright. Thucydides dropped unheeded on to the grass. The Remove master stared at the Creeper and Crawler.

"If that is true, Mr. Smedley—"

"I am sorry that you regard my word as unreliable, sir!" said Mr. Smedley. "But the matter is easy of proof."

"I should not care to say that I distrust your word, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "But your whole line of conduct is so very unusual, I may say, extraordinary, that I certainly should not accept such a statement without impeccable proof."

He gave an angry snort.

"If your statement is correct, sir, if the boy is deceiving his host here, taking unscrupulous advantage of the confidence of his schoolfellows who have welcomed him to this house, he will be dealt with very sharply. I have no authority over him in the holidays, but I shall certainly place the matter before Dr. Locke, and he will not be allowed to return to Greyfriars at the new term."

Mr. Smedley's eyes glimmered.

That was exactly what he wanted.

He had powerful reasons for not wanting to deal personally with Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith in this matter—that was impossible, for Mr. Vernon-Smith knew him as Lucius Teggers!

He had to act through others—and Mr. Quelch, little as he guessed it, was a tool in his hands! It was, in fact, rather fortunate for his schemes that the Remove master was a guest at Wharton Lodge that Easter.

Mr. Quelch snorted again.

"But, sir," he went on acidly, "your last accusation against this boy fell to the ground. I shall certainly not believe anything of the kind unless I am compelled to do so!"

"Send for the boy!" suggested Mr. Smedley.

Mr. Quelch snorted again. Half an hour ago he had seen the Bounder come in—slouching up the drive with a black brow, looking certainly quite unlike a schoolboy enjoying his holidays. He remembered that now. It gave colour to what Mr. Smedley said.

"I will send for him!" he rapped.

He jangled a bell on the table, and Thomas came out of the house to see what was wanted. Thomas was sent to fetch Vernon-Smith. Still unasked to sit down, Mr. Smedley stood waiting for the Bounder to appear—and Mr. Quelch sat irritably, in an exceedingly bad temper, looking rather as if he was understudying Roderick Dhu—on the occasion when dark lightnings flashed from Roderick's eye!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Down and Out!

"Oh, rats!" grunted Vernon-Smith.

Thomas grinned.

"What the thump does he want?" growled the Bounder. "Does he think we're still at school?"

"Dunno, sir!" said Thomas.

"Go and tell him to wait till we get back to Greyfriars, if he wants to jaw me!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, sir!" murmured Thomas.

And he retreated, grinning, certainly not with the intention of taking that answer back to Mr. Quelch.

The Bounder grunted angrily, and swung himself out of his chair. He was alone in the hall. The Famous Five had gone off somewhere. Smithy did not know that they had walked to Wimford to meet him. Even Billy Bunter was not to be seen—not that Smithy wanted to see him.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was not feeling happy after his surreptitious interview with Mr. Banks—though he felt a certain savage satisfaction in remembering the lesson he had given that weedy, seedy, needy sharper, who persisted in hanging on where he was not wanted. Certainly he did not want a talk with Mr. Quelch, and he considered that it was like Quelch's cheek to send for him, just as if they were still at Greyfriars. However, he felt that he had better go, and he went.

Why Quelch wanted him he did not know; but he knew as soon as he saw the tall, well-groomed figure standing by the Remove master's chair on the lawn. It was the Creeper and Crawler again.

The Bounder gritted his teeth. His face was savage and sulky as he came up.

"I'm told that you want to speak to me, sir!" he said abruptly.

"That is the case, Vernon-Smith. Mr. Smedley tells me—"

The Bounder interrupted him.

"I've no wish to hear what that man says, sir!"

"Vernon-Smith!"

"We're not at school now, sir," said the Bounder doggedly, "and, even if we were, Mr. Smedley has nothing to do with me, as his engagement at Greyfriars ends when you go back. It's like the man's cheek to meddle!"

The Creeper and Crawler's eyes burned. Mr. Quelch coughed. The Bounder's words were not civil or polite, but there was certainly something in what he said. Smedley was, in fact, meddling, even if his motives were good.

"Certainly, we are not at Greyfriars now, Vernon-Smith," said the Remove master, "and in the vacation I claim no more authority over you than Mr. Smedley has. Nevertheless, if you have acted as Mr. Smedley states, you will not be allowed to go back to Greyfriars next term, and if you refuse to answer me, I shall have to conclude that you have no defence to make, and the matter will be placed before Dr. Locke and your father."

The Bounder felt a chill. The shadow of disinheritance was over him. If it came to that, his father would be implacable.

"You may, therefore, please yourself, Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Quelch coldly.

"I've done nothing, sir!" muttered the dismayed Bounder. "Let the man say what he likes."

"I am unaware," said Mr. Quelch, with a faint curl of the lip "how Mr. Smedley came by his knowledge—"

That is immaterial, sir!" said Mr. Smedley.

"No doubt, no doubt!" said Mr. Quelch dryly. "The question is whether it is accurate, or whether you have made another mistake, as I hope and believe."

"Thank you, sir," said the Bounder, with a real touch of gratitude. Tough old bean as Quelch was, he was justice personified. Any fellow could always depend on fair play from Quelch.

"Let the boy answer me," said Mr. Smedley.

"I'm ready to do that!" said the Bounder scornfully. "Mr. Quelch knows that you are my enemy, though I've never given you cause that I know of."

"I hope," said the Creeper and Crawler smoothly, "that I am no one's enemy. I admit my strong opinion that you are unfit to associate with well-conducted boys like Wharton and his friends; unfit to remain at a school like Greyfriars."

"No business of yours, that I can see," said the Bounder coolly. "You've got nothing to do with Greyfriars now!"

Mr. Smedley set his lips.

"Restrain your language, Vernon-Smith!" said Mr. Quelch sharply. "You are speaking to a gentleman trusted and respected by your headmaster!"

"Oh, let him get on with it!" said the Bounder.

"Very well," said the Creeper and Crawler. Any remorse he might have felt was banished by his bitter dislike of the scowling fellow who insulted him to his face. "Did you receive a letter here, at this house, yesterday, from a disreputable bookmaker named Banks, whom you knew when you were at Greyfriars?"

The Bounder started violently.

His eyes bulged at Mr. Smedley.

If he had thought of denying it, it would not have been of much use, his amazed and disconcerted face completely gave him away.

"You received such a letter, Vernon-Smith?" barked Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes!" gasped the Bounder.

"Did you," pursued Smedley, "ring up the man, at the Red Cow, at Elmbridge, and make an appointment to meet him at a certain spot not far away from Colonel Wharton's residence?"

The Bounder could only stare. How did Smedley know this? It seemed like black magic to the hapless scapegrace.

"You did this, Vernon-Smith?" asked Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

It was hardly necessary for the Bounder to answer. His startled and dismayed face answered for him.

"Did you," went on the smooth voice of the Creeper and Crawler, "meet the man, as arranged, hardly an hour ago?"

The Bounder stood dumb.

"Did you hand him money?"

(Continued on next page.)

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Smithy was still dumb.

"Answer!" barked Mr. Quelch.

"Yes," stammered the Bounder confusedly—"yes! I don't know how that man knows—"

"That matters little. You admit—"

"He must have been watching—listening—spying—"

The Bounder choked. "Watching a fellow like a sneaking spy—"

"We are not discussing Mr. Smedley's methods!" said the Remove master grimly. "But your conduct, Vernon-Smith."

"But—but, sir—if he was watching me—and he must have been—he knows that it's not like he says!" panted the Bounder. "I owed Banks money from a long time ago, and paid him. I warned him to leave me alone. I only saw him, to make him leave me alone! I knocked him down when he refused to keep clear of me. Mr. Smedley knows that, if he was there!"

"That, certainly, would alter the matter very materially, if true!" said the Remove master dryly. "If you witnessed this, Mr. Smedley—"

The Creeper and Crawler breathed hard for a moment. But his purpose was fixed. Conscience had to take care of itself now!

"I saw nothing of the kind!" he said deliberately. "I have told you what I saw—what I have learned—I have no more to add."

"If you watched us all the time—"

panted the Bounder. "You know—you must know—"

"I came on you in the wood by chance, and saw and heard what I have stated," said Mr. Smedley calmly. "I last saw you in friendly conversation with the racing man. If you quarrelled afterwards, I know nothing of it—and I certainly do not believe it." The Creeper and Crawler was going the whole hog now!

"Will the man Banks, if we can find him, bear out your statement, Vernon-Smith?" asked Mr. Quelch icily.

"Banks!" repeated the Bounder. A momentary smile flitted over Mr. Smedley's face. He knew how little the Bounder had to hope from the testimony of a man he had knocked down and kicked along the footpath. The Bounder knew it, too. Banks, if found, was not likely to say anything in favour of the fellow who had thrown him over and punched his beery face.

"Well?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"I—I don't know! More likely he'd do me all the harm he could after the way I handled him!" muttered Vernon-Smith. "But I tell you, sir, it's as I say. I—I—I never wanted to see the man; I had to get rid of the brute. And I tell you—"

"Do you deny what Mr. Smedley has stated?"

"No! But—"

"That is sufficient! Mr. Smedley, I cannot approve of your methods, and I feel bound to say so; but I must also say that I thank you for having brought this boy's conduct to my knowledge. The matter will be placed before his headmaster for decision, and I have not the slightest doubt that Dr. Locke will refuse to allow him to return to Greyfriars at the new term. And I regret, Vernon-Smith, that I have no choice but to acquaint Colonel Wharton with your conduct. You must prepare to leave this house; and I have no doubt that Colonel Wharton will write to your father and explain."

The Bounder stood as if rooted to the ground.

He was absolutely overwhelmed. The Creeper and Crawler could almost

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have pitied him at that moment. He had won his crooked game; on the last lap, as it were, he had beaten his rival for a fortune.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Funny Story!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

A fat voice hailed the Famous Five from a stile by the roadside as they walked back from Wimford.

They had seen nothing of the Bounder there, and Wharton could not help feeling worried and uneasy.

It was quite possible, of course, that Vernon-Smith had gone back by one of the footpaths through the woodlands. But Wharton could not help thinking of the squat figure and beery face of Mr. Banks.

Billy Bunter, sitting on the stile, blinked at the five juniors through his big spectacles and waved a fat hand. He slipped from the stile and joined them in the road—with a wary eye on Bob Cherry.

Bob, however, had almost forgotten the incident of the peppery lemonade by that time. The sun had never been known to go down on his wrath.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Been playing any more tricks on Quelch, you fat, frabjous, frumptious footler?" he inquired.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I never played any tricks on Quelch!" said Bunter. "I told you so. Besides, it was your fault if you got the pepper—changing the glasses like that! Rotten trick, I call it! Wasn't it lucky I thought there was a gnat in it and landed it on you?"

"The luckfulness was terrific," chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Wharton, old bean, do you mind if I chuck this distinguished visitor of yours into the ditch?" inquired Bob.

"Don't mind me!" said Harry, laughing.

"I say, no larks, you fellows!" said Bunter. "If you're going back to tea, I'll come back with you. Don't race! I say, I'll bet you never met Smithy at Wimford!" Bunter chortled.

"How do you know?" demanded Wharton.

"He, he, he! I've seen him!"

"Seen Smithy?"

"Yes, rather! Quite by chance, you know," said Bunter. "You needn't mention it to Smithy, as he might think I'd been spying on him, like that cad Smedley. As a matter of fact, it was absolute chance; I couldn't help it if he met Banks right under my nose, could I?"

Harry Wharton came to a dead stop. "Met Banks?" he repeated.

"He, he, he! 'Member that man Banks—a bookie who hangs about at the Three Fishers and the Cross Keys, near Greyfriars? He's over here for the races at Elmbridge—"

The Famous Five stood in a group looking at Bunter. The fat junior was grinning from ear to ear.

"You fellows will laugh!" he said.

"Laugh?" repeated Wharton.

"Well, it was funny," grinned Bunter. "Funniest thing I've ever struck! Smedley must have been fearfully disappointed."

"Smedley? Have you seen Smedley?"

"What-ho!" chortled Bunter. "Spying, as usual—hiding in the hawthorns, watching and listening while Smithy was talking to Banks! He never saw me; you can bet that I kept out of sight when I spotted the Creeper and Crawler sneaking up! What?"

"Well, my only hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"I saw his face as he went, after Smithy was gone. He, he, he! Frightfully disappointed. He, he, he! Serve the beast right! Spying on a fellow, you know," said Bunter, with ineffable contempt. "Fancy that!" It did not seem to occur to the Owl of the Remove that he had been spying also. Whatever Billy Bunter did was right, in the eyes of William George Bunter.

"I shouldn't think he was disappointed if he spotted Smithy with a bookmaker," said Johnny Bull. "That's what he wants."

"He, he, he! I'll bet he never expected it to turn out like it did," chortled Bunter. "Of course, when I saw them together I thought Smithy was up to his old game. But—"

"But what?" asked Harry quietly.

"He, he, he! You should have seen Banks' face when Smithy punched him!" roared Bunter. "He, he, he!"

"He punched Banks?" gasped Nugent.

"Just a few!" chuckled Bunter. "And jolly well kicked him, too! You couldn't see Banks' heels for dust when he went! Smithy was after him, kicking him, jolly hard, too—like a jolly old football! He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter gurgled with merriment. Evidently he had had quite an entertainment that April afternoon in the wood.

Harry Wharton's face brightened. This was not what he had expected to hear—and it was much more agreeable than what he had expected.

"Well, I'm glad he kicked Banks," said Bob. "But why—"

"Well, the brute asked for it," said Bunter. "You didn't know that Smithy had a letter from him at your house yesterday, Wharton."

"No," said Harry, compressing his lips. "And I don't believe it now, you fat fraud!"

"Well, he jolly well did, because I heard him mention it," said Bunter. "So did Smedley; the mean rotter was listening! Eavesdropping, you know! Fancy a rotter being mean enough to keep out of sight and listen! He heard as much as I did! I felt frightfully contemptuous."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You fellows may not despise a sneaking eavesdropper so much as I do," said Bunter loftily. "I can tell you I felt utter contempt for a beast standing there listening to a fellow—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, do stop cackling! Mind, don't you mention to Smithy that I've told you; he would be shirty about it. You know his rotten temper! Enough to make him shirty, I admit—that brute writing to him at Wharton Lodge, and making him come and see him—and then threatening him because he told him to keep his distance! I'd have done just the same as Smithy did!" declared Bunter. "In fact, if he'd wanted any help, I'd have shown up, you know, and handled Banks myself."

"That would have done Banks a lot of damage!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Well, I'm rather a fighting-man when I get going," said Bunter. "I fancy I could handle Banks as easily as I could one of you fellows."

"Just about!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The just-aboutfulness is preposterous!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But Smithy handled him all right," said Bunter. "Fancy the Creeper and Crawler's feelings, you know! He thought he had fairly nailed Smithy with a bookmaker, and all he found out



"I say, you fellows, keep him off!" yelled Bunter, as Mr. Smedley made a stride at him. "Yaroooh!" Harry Wharton & Co. closed up grimly, between Bunter and Smedley. "He, he, he!" came from Bunter, safely enjoying himself behind the rampart of the Famous Five. "Ain't he waxy! Ain't he shirty!"

was that Smithy was trying to make the man leave him alone, and punched his face because he wouldn't. He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton & Co. laughed. Bunter had told them that they would laugh—and they did. They could picture the bitter disappointment of the Creeper and Crawler.

"Bunter, old fat bean," said Bob Cherry, "you ought to be kicked for spying, and you ought to be kicked for eavesdropping—"

"Why, you cheeky beast!"

"But I'm jolly glad to hear what happened, all the same."

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"Same here," said Harry Wharton, greatly relieved. "Of course, we knew that Smithy would play the game while he was here, whatever fatheaded stunts he might get up to at school. I wish we'd been there to lend him a hand with Banks."

"It's pretty sickening, that man Smedley shadowing him about like this!" growled Johnny Bull. "Still, the brute's got nothing against Smithy from what Bunter says."

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on in cheery mood. Billy Bunter gave a detailed description of what he had seen and heard in the wood, with many chuckles over the discomfiture of the Creeper and Crawler. Nobody approved of Bunter's method of acquiring information, but undoubtedly the Famous Five were glad to know for certain that the Bounder was not up to his old "games" under Colonel Wharton's roof.

They walked in at the gate and strolled up the drive, and Bob Cherry gave a sudden startled ejaculation.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's up?"

"I say, you fellows, there's Smedley!" exclaimed Bunter. "I say,

what is the Creeper and Crawler doing here?"

It was quite a startling tableau that met the eyes of the returning juniors. Mr. Quelch, sitting upright in his chair, had his eyes fixed sternly in grim condemnation on Herbert Vernon-Smith. The Bounder, hardly recognisable as his usual cool and cheeky self, stood before him, looking like a fellow stunned by a heavy blow. Mr. Smedley looked on with a cold, hard face. Harry Wharton & Co. stared blankly. Then Wharton left the drive and crossed towards the group on the lawn. His friends followed him slowly.

"Is anything the matter, Mr. Quelch?" asked the captain of the Greyfriars Remove quietly.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Beaten at the Finish!

"O II! Wharton!"

Mr. Quelch relaxed his stern attitude. He remembered that he was not, for the moment, a Form-master in his study at school, but a guest of Wharton's uncle in holiday-time.

The Bounder did not speak. He seemed overwhelmed. The juniors looked at him in astonishment. What was the matter with him they could not fathom. He looked as he might have looked, had he been standing before his headmaster at Greyfriars, taking a sentence of the "sack." It was, in fact, as bad as that!

Mr. Quelch coughed. He had, of course, to explain the matter to Colonel Wharton, who was not at home at the moment. But he did not want to have to explain it to the schoolboys,

"Yes, Wharton," he said, after a pause, "something very serious is the matter. Not doubt your uncle will tell you—later—"

The Bounder raised his head.

"I'll tell him now," he said. Some of his old coolness came back to him. "If I'm going to be kicked out, the fellow who asked me here is going to know what I have to say for myself."

"Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh, the game's up!" said the Bounder savagely. "The Creeper and Crawler has got me at last!"

"Vernon-Smith," exclaimed Mr. Quelch angrily, "how dare you—"

But the Bounder went on as if he had not spoken:

"I'll tell you, Wharton—and you other fellows, too! I had a letter from Banks—you've heard of Banks—yesterday; he's at Elmbridge for the races, and he got it from a Highcliff man that I was here, and he wrote. I couldn't write to him—I'm not fool enough to let a man like that have a letter in my fist. I phoned him at his den at Elmbridge; but I couldn't talk on the phone here, so I fixed it up to meet him at the Hunter's Beech this afternoon—to tell him I was done with him, pay him what I owed him from months ago, and get shut of him for good."

"Vernon-Smith—"

"He came, thinking it was the old game again, of course," said the Bounder, passing by Mr. Quelch's interruption like the idle wind which he regarded not. "He brought me a tip for the races! He cut up rusty when I turned him down, and I pitched into him! That's the truth—and I hope you

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SPYING FORM-MASTER!

(Continued from page 13.)

fellows will believe more of it than Mr. Quelch does! He's going to report to the Head just enough to get me sacked—"

"I shall report to Dr. Locke," said Mr. Quelch grimly, "what I know to have occurred."

"Do you believe me or not, Wharton?" demanded the Bounder savagely. "I'm not blaming Mr. Quelch—he knows jolly well that I don't care a straw what yarn I spin to a beak! But if you call me a liar, too—"

"Easy does it, old bean!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Vernon-Smith clenched his hands.

"Answer me, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton gave him a quiet, steady look. Then he turned to the Remove master.

"I don't understand this, sir!" he said. "Vernon-Smith has told you the truth, as every fellow here knows! I can't see that he was to blame for the man writing to him; and he made it pretty clear that he wanted nothing to do with him when he knocked him down! I don't see how he could have made it clearer."

"The clearfulness was terrific," murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh. "The knockfulness on the esteemed nose was preposterously plain English."

"Is it possible, Wharton, that you know anything about this matter?" asked Mr. Quelch, in astonishment.

"Quite, sir; and so does Mr. Smedley." Wharton gave a puzzled glance at the Creeper and Crawler. "As Mr. Smedley was watching what happened, he must have seen it all. If he has told you about it I suppose he has told you that Vernon-Smith met the man unwillingly, only to get rid of him, and knocked him down when he refused to be got rid of."

"That is Vernon-Smith's story!" said Mr. Smedley. "But as I saw nothing of the kind—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"But you saw the interview at the Hunter's Beech, sir!" exclaimed Wharton.

"I fail to see how you are aware of it, Wharton; but I certainly happened, by chance, to see Vernon-Smith meet and talk with the disreputable man Banks," said Mr. Smedley. "He has not ventured to deny it."

Wharton stared at the man.

Only very slowly did it filter into his puzzled mind that the Creeper and Crawler had related all that was to the Bounder's discredit and carefully suppressed all that told in his favour.

As he realised that, Wharton's face flushed crimson.

"Mr. Quelch," he exclaimed, "this man is deceiving you!"

"Wharton!" barked Mr. Quelch.

"The deceivefulness is outrageous and preposterous!" exclaimed the Nabob of Bhanipur indignantly.

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"You fellows believe me?" exclaimed the Bounder.

"We know it's true, old chap!" said Nugent. "Don't you worry—you've got friends here to see you through."

"Mr. Quelch"—Wharton's voice rose in his excitement—"Smithy has told you the truth, and that man knows it!"

"What-ho!" grinned Billy Bunter.

"It's true!" gasped Vernon-Smith. "But how you fellows know anythin' about it beats me! Were you anywhere near the place?"

"I was!" trilled Bunter. "He, he, he! I saw it all! He, he, he! Jolly lucky for you I did, Smithy! He, he, he!"

Mr. Smedley gave a violent start. It had never crossed his mind that he was not the only spy on the spot at the Hunter's Beech!

"Bunter," he almost panted, "what do you mean? What—"

"I jolly well mean what I jolly well say!" retorted Bunter. Safe in the certainty that Smedley was not coming back to Greyfriars next term, Bunter was quite happy to tell him what he thought of him. But he kept a wary eye on Smedley as he did so, prepared to dodge behind the other fellows, if necessary. "I saw you! He, he, he! Creeping and crawling after a fellow! He, he, he! I knew you'd be jolly disappointed when Smithy knocked that blighter down instead of laying bets with him as you expected! He, he, he! I saw your face when you went! He, he, he!" Bunter broke off with a yell of alarm as Mr. Smedley made a stride at him. "I say, you fellows, keep him off! Yarooooh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. closed up, grimly, between Bunter and Smedley. The latter checked himself—his face pale with rage.

"Hands off, sir!" said Harry Wharton, with cutting contempt. "You won't be allowed to touch Bunter."

"He, he, he!" came from Bunter, safe behind the rampart of the Famous Five. "Ain't he waxy! He, he, he! Ain't he shirty! He, he, he!" Billy Bunter was enjoying this!

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet. The expression on his face was almost terrifying. He was seeing now how matters stood.

"Mr. Smedley, do not dare to touch that boy, sir! Bunter, tell me at once what you saw of Vernon-Smith's proceedings this afternoon!"

Bunter was only too pleased to do so! Bunter was the "goods" now; and he dearly loved being the centre of the picture.

Bunter, indeed, would have liked that little scene to last, with a rapt audience hanging on his words as he held forth. But having elucidated the facts, Mr. Quelch cut him short! He had no use for Bunter's eloquence.

"That will do, Bunter—"

"Oh, really, sir! I was going to say—"

"You need say no more! Vernon-Smith, your explanation is substantiated by Bunter, and I regard you as exonerated. You have acted foolishly—you should never have met that disreputable man at all; but your statement that you did so only in order to get rid of him is fully borne out. It is your own fault if I could not accept your word, as you know very well. Fortunately, it has been proved! The matter ends here—please go to the house—I have something to say to Mr. Smedley before he goes."

The Bounder's eyes danced.

Harry Wharton slipped his arm through Smithy's—Bob slipped one

through the Bounder's other arm. They marched him off in triumph.

"Gents, chaps, and sportsmen!" murmured Bob Cherry as they went, "I shouldn't care to be in the Creeper and Crawler's shoes just now! Quelch is going to give him a royal and imperial jaw!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, ain't it lucky that—"

"Ain't it lucky that you're a prying, eavesdropping worm like Smedley?" asked Bob Cherry. "Oh, frightfully lucky!"

"Why, you beast—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter's come in jolly useful, all the same!" said the Bounder soberly. "I thought it was all U.P. this time! That rotter must have seen all that Bunter saw—"

"He jolly well did!" declared Bunter.

"And he kept it dark—to dish me!" said Vernon-Smith. "He's got a terrific down on poor little me! Thank goodness he's not coming back to Greyfriars next term."

"Hear, hear!"

In gleeful mood at the Creeper and Crawler's defeat, Harry Wharton & Co. marched Smithy into the house. Meanwhile, the hapless Creeper and Crawler was getting the Royal and Imperial Jaw.

Mr. Quelch had an acid edge to his tongue. He gave Smedley the full benefit of it. The man listened with a face white with rage.

"I repeat," he muttered thickly, "that I saw nothing of what Bunter describes! I repeat—"

"I doubt your word, sir!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "I am sorry to have to say so, but I doubt your word!"

Smedley's face was white and furious. He made a movement towards Mr. Quelch; who glared at him with overwhelming scorn.

"It is possible, barely possible, that what you say is true, but it is very improbable, sir!" hooted Quelch. "You have, for some reason, a desire to make things as bad as possible for the boy Vernon-Smith. If it is a sense of duty that actuates you, sir, it is a mistaken and distorted sense of duty! Your methods are those of a spy and eavesdropper—and to that, I greatly fear that you have added actual unscrupulousness—the deliberate suppression of facts!"

He paused for breath! He needed it!

"You had better go!" he snapped. "I shall acquaint Colonel Wharton with what has occurred, and I have no doubt that he will give orders for you to be refused admittance here again. And under no circumstances whatever will I ever listen to a word from you again, sir! Now kindly take your departure!"

Smedley's hands were clenched, his eyes glittering. But the Remove-master's overwhelming scorn daunted him; and he turned slowly away. A snort of contempt followed him as he tramped away down the drive to the gate, and disappeared.

"Pah!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

And with another snort Mr. Quelch dismissed the Creeper and Crawler and all his works from his mind; and found solace once more in the entrancing pages of Thucydides.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Wrong Address!

"GIMME a racket!"

"Fathead!"

"If you think I can't play tennis, Johnny Bull—"

"I don't think—I know!"

"Beast! Gimme a racket!"

"Oh, here you are," said Harry Wharton. "Take mine! And dry up."
"Yah!" said Bunter, by way of thanks.

It was a fine afternoon, two or three days after the episode of the Creeper and Crawler.

Smithy and Wharton, Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent were going to play tennis; Bob Cherry and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were going to watch them do it. And Mr. Quelch, with a quite cheery smile on his rather crusty face, walked along to the court to see the schoolboys playing. And Billy Bunter, having spotted Quelch there, rolled along also—for reasons of his own.

It was the first time that Bunter had demanded to play tennis, or anything else; tennis was a form of exertion, and

no form of exertion appealed to William George Bunter. Bunter's idea of the game was, in fact, rather vague, and consisted chiefly in squeaking "Fault!" whenever anybody did anything. But Bunter had reason now.

His eyes, and his spectacles were on Quelch; and there was a sly and cunning gleam in the eyes behind the spectacles!

"Where's Bunter getting all this energy from?" asked Bob Cherry, in wonder. "You have to move at tennis, Bunter. Forgotten that?"

"Like me to fetch you an armchair?" suggested Nugent. "Anybody object to Bunter sitting it out?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. I can play your heads off, at any rate," said the Owl of the Remove disdainfully.

"If we're within reach of your racket!" grinned Smithy. "I'm jolly well keeping at a safe distance."

"It's wasting time!" grunted Johnny Bull. Johnny was a practical youth, and had no desire to fool about while Bunter hopped like a kangaroo, swiped at a ball that wasn't there, and generally played the goat.

"Oh, Bunter won't last long," said Bob Cherry. "He will fall down dead in about three minutes. Then I'll roll the body away and you can get on with the game."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't jaw, you fellows," said Bunter. "You're like a sheep's head, you know, nearly all jaw! Quelch may clear off any minute."

"What does that matter?" asked
(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

CALLING OVERSEAS.

THIS week, as a change, I want to make a special point of addressing my thousands of overseas readers.

During the past few months my reader-pals in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have been steadily increasing. That's just fine, and I want the good work to go on! The fame of Harry Wharton & Co.—which means, of course, the MAGNET—is spreading to every corner of the globe. To new readers, and they are coming along every week, I wish to extend a hearty welcome to our select band of "Magnetites," and can promise them that the MAGNET will always maintain its high standard of entertainment.

For the particular benefit of "Magnetites" living overseas, I would like to remind them that they will find something of extra-special interest in the next issue of MAGNET. That's a tip! But it means this, very pointedly, don't on any account miss your copy of MAGNET dated May 12th.

THERE is quite a pile of readers' letters on my desk to be answered this week, so I had better wade into them right away. One thing I must mention, however, regarding various queries from readers. Many of my chums still ask me to reply to their letters "in next week's issue." That, I am afraid, is an impossibility, because the MAGNET goes to Press some weeks before it is actually in your hands, and, therefore, a certain amount of time must elapse before you can read my reply—even if I write it the day I receive your letter.

You must also remember that there are hundreds of other readers awaiting replies, and, therefore, I must deal with letters in strict rotation, although I always try to answer them as quickly as possible.

In cases where an urgent reply is required, I will be pleased to answer your letters by post if a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. Now for it:

Here is a letter from "P. O'D." of County Cork, who wants to know something about

THE TRAINING OF A WIRELESS OFFICER!

There are many training schools all over the British Isles, and a course in

wireless lasts from 30 to 40 weeks. The fees charged at these schools are roughly a guinea per week. Cheaper training may be had at various polytechnic and technical schools. If this reader inquires at his local educational authority, they will give him a list of suitable schools in his vicinity.

A wireless operator's pay varies according to the size of ship on which he serves. A third grade operator commences at about £7 per month, rising to £13 to £19 per month when he becomes a first grade operator. In addition, he receives free board and extra pay for prolonged service abroad. At sea a wireless operator ranks as a junior officer, is provided with good quarters, and generally dines with the passengers or the other junior officers.

The chances of employment after training are fairly good, and the training schools give advice on openings for their pupils. Some of the cable service companies accept both skilled and unskilled probationers, and information regarding their terms of services can be obtained by writing direct to their chief offices.

QUITE a number of readers have written to me asking for information on

THE CHOICE OF A CAREER!

For instance, "Regular Reader" (no address given), wants to know something concerning the British Desert Patrol in Egypt. Any recruiting office will give him information regarding British troops now serving in Egypt, and a pamphlet concerning joining the army may be obtained at any post-office.

Other readers inquire regarding the chances for emigrants in various colonies. In these cases direct application should be made to the London offices of the colonies in which they are interested. Generally, the biggest demand in the colonies is for farm workers.

To obtain expert "jobs" in the colonies it is necessary to be fully qualified in this country first. Where a qualification is held, application for particulars of vacant positions should be made to the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies, 4, Millbank, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

Applications for government positions in foreign countries should be made to the various British consulates of the countries in question. But I must warn readers that foreign countries naturally prefer their own nationals—unless it is a question of a highly specialised and expert "job."

Another bunch of letters which I have received comes from readers who want to know

MORE ABOUT FRANK RICHARDS!

"Magnetites" (no address given) suggest publishing his photograph. I will keep this suggestion in mind, but I cannot promise anything definite at present. Frank R. is really a most unassuming person, and I doubt whether I could persuade him to face the camera for this purpose.

"Hopeful," of Tolworth, also asks for a photograph—and Mr. Richards' telephone number! Sorry, "Hopeful," but what do you think would happen if I published the number? So many thousands of readers would keep ringing him up, that he would have no time for writing. What would we do for MAGNET stories then?

Anyway, all the readers who have made suggestions regarding future stories can rest assured that I will pass on their letters to Mr. Richards, and he will try to accede to their various requests.

SORRY, all you fellows, whose letters I have left unanswered. But my space is running short, so I shall have to hold over many queries until next week. I shouldn't have room to tell you what is in store for you in our next issue, otherwise.

"BUNTER, THE VENTRILOQUIST!!" By Frank Richards,

is the title of our long, complete Greyfriars yarn.

As the title suggests William George plays a very prominent part in this story as do all your favourite characters. One of my readers this week, says: "Frank Richards has a way of holding one's interest from start to finish, and his plots all seem to fit together like a jig-saw puzzle."

Well, you'll find this next story is no exception, so look out for it.

There will, of course, be another full-of-thrills instalment of our splendid serial, and a full-of-chuckles issue of the "Greyfriars Herald," with our shorter features as usual.

Au revoir until next week, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,368.

Wharton. It seemed that Bunter was keen to display his powers under the gaze of his Form-master. In that case, Quelch was really not likely to be impressed.

"Well, if he goes, that will knock the whole thing on the head," grunted Bunter. "Don't be an ass."

"What is the fat ass burbling about?" asked Bob. "I should think he was wandering in his mind, if he had one to wander in."

"Oh, really, Cherry! Look here, you serve, Smithy! And don't send it yards from me where I can't see it, see?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Smithy.

"And look here, buck up, while Quelch is looking on. He may turn away any minute!" hissed Bunter.

The juniors gazed at Bunter. Mr. Quelch was at a little distance, certainly not near enough to be handed a swipe from the racket, or they might have suspected Bunter of planning a little accident of that kind. Then, all of a sudden, it dawned on them, and there was a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunter. "If you think I'm going to buzz the ball at Quelch, you're jolly well mistaken. Of course, accidents might happen."

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

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Let him get going!" chortled Bob Cherry. "I don't think Quelch will get a fearful lot of damage! Drop him an easy one, Smithy, and see if he can whiz it within a hundred yards of Quelch."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, buck up!" growled Bunter. "You fellows are always cackling! A fellow can't speak without you fellows cackling."

"Come on," said Smithy, laughing.

Smithy and Johnny Bull went on one side of the net, Nugent and Billy Bunter on the other, Smithy with the ball. Evidently it was not going to be tennis; it was going to be another move in Billy Bunter's weird campaign against the Form-master who was staying at Wharton Lodge! Instead of returning

the ball across the net when it came to him, Billy Bunter was going to swipe it at the majestic gentleman standing looking at the court—and give Quelch the surprise of his life!

This time, however, the juniors were willing to let Bunter get on with it, for if there was one thing in the universe that was absolutely certain, it was that Billy Bunter could not land a tennis ball within ten yards of the spot where he wanted to land it. Only Bunter was unaware of that fact!

Where the ball would go when Bunter hit it—if he hit it at all—was uncertain, what was absolutely certain was that it would go nowhere near Henry Samuel Quelch. It was, in fact, rather interesting to note by how many yards, or dozens of yards, Bunter would miss that majestic gentleman.

The Bouncer served, and, taking Bob's tip, he dropped Bunter an easy one. Even Bunter was able to get that ball, and he landed out with his racket with a terrific swipe—so terrific that, after hitting the ball, the racket swept on, describing a circle, which Bunter involuntarily followed, his fat little legs getting entangled with one another and causing him to sit down suddenly on the hard surface of the court. There was a bump and a squeak!

The ball flew. All eyes were on Quelch, who smiled. Certainly Mr. Quelch never suspected that that ball was intended to land on him and make him jump. He could not possibly suspect that, as it did not come in his direction at all.

For a second it was a mystery where that ball went! Then a sudden, fearful yell from Bob Cherry announced where it had gone.

Bob was standing at least six yards from the Remove master! Bunter had gone unexpectedly near his aim! He had got Bob!

Bob Cherry was seen to leap suddenly in the air, clasping his nose with both hands, and the yell he gave might almost have been heard at Wimford.

"Yaroooooooh!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton. "Bob—"

"Whoooooop!"

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Cherry—"

"Ow! My nose! Wow! Wow!" roared Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch blinked at Bob, blinked at Bunter, and then walked away. He had been going to watch the tennis—but he did not want to watch a game in which accidents like this happened. His own majestic nose might have been in danger! Bob's roar followed him.

"Who—hooo—hooop!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Nugent. "Poor old Bob! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter scrambled up. "I say, where's that ball?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Did anybody see where that ball went?"

"I think Bob did!" chortled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow, ow! Wow!" Bob clasped his hapless nose in anguish. "Ow! Wow! The blithering—wow!—idiot! The dangerous—ow!—maniac! Wow!"

Bob's nose, like Marian's in the ballad, was red and raw. There was a pain in it! It felt as if it had been knocked through the back of his head! It hadn't—but it felt like that!

"I—I—I'll spifficate him!" roared Bob; and he rushed on the court. "Now, you dangerous lunatic—"

"Here, keep off!" yelled Bunter, in alarm. He had discerned by this time where the ball had gone. "Keep off! Yaroooooh!"

Bunter fled. Bob grabbed up his racket and jumped after him. Billy Bunter went along the court like an escaped rhinoceros. Unfortunately, he had forgotten the net. He crashed into the net and sprawled over it, gurgling.

"What the thump—gurg!—I say, you fellows—wurrgh!—I've fallen over something! Yaroooooh!"

Hanging over the net, Billy Bunter could not have been better placed for Bob Cherry's purpose. Up went the racket, and it came down with a terrific smite on a pair of tight trousers.

Bang!

"Yoooooocop!"

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Keep off! Yarooooop! Help! I say, you fellows—help! Rescue! Fire! Murder! Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. They were doubled-up with merriment, and there was no rescue for Bunter—they were laughing too much to move.

Bang! Bang!

There was a rending sound as the net went under Bunter's weight. He sprawled frantically in tangled netting, like a fat fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang!

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

Bunter got out of the net somehow. He got on his feet and ran for his life. Bob Cherry brandished the racket.

"Stop, you fat maniac! You haven't had enough yet! Stop! I'm going to give you some more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter did not stop. Panting and puffing the fat Owl of the Remove vanished over the horizon, leaving Bob Cherry brandishing the racket, and the other fellows weeping with merriment.

Read Frank Richards' Stories every week in "The Ranger"



The RANGER

THE MAN from DEVIL'S ISLAND!

Three boys and a monkey in a small boat—lost on the vast Atlantic! A sudden appeal for help—and Jim Dainty, Ginger Rawlinson, and Fritz von Spitz—not forgetting Friday, the monkey—were just in time to rescue a drowning Frenchman from the jaws of a shark! Yet that humane act was the very worst thing Jim and his friends could have done. For the rescued man was a convict—a desperate convict escaped from Devil's Island! Not a spark of gratitude did he show—his first action was to attack them with a knife when they refused to obey his commands! No "Magnet" reader should miss this wonderful story, specially written by Frank Richards.

"THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!" is a dramatic yarn of thrilling adventure in the Tropics. Read it in "The RANGER."

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Billy Bunter slipped from the edge of the high bank and shot down into the lane. "Yaroooh!" he roared, flinging out his arms to catch at any support that might be available. One fat arm was thrown round Bob Cherry's neck, the other crashed on the disguised schemer's bowler hat, fairly crunching it over his ears!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Man in Disguise!

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

There was a good deal of the firm's business for Mr. Teggars to attend to, for the senior partner left a great deal to him. And of late Mr. Teggars had been very much away from his office.

But he was not attending to it.

He had been for some time going through a little pile of papers, every one of which was a demand, more or less polite, for money due—most of them from turf accountants and other gentlemen in the sporting line.

Matters were getting rather serious for Mr. Teggars, who, outwardly, was a model and well-conducted young man of business, and inwardly was nothing of the kind.

Before long the crash had to come—Mr. Leggett would have to know the state of his affairs. The prosperous young business man would be revealed as what he really was—a desperate gambler, who had lost more than he could ever honestly pay!

His game as "Mr. Smedley" seemed to be up.

After that acid interview with Mr. Quelch on the lawn at Wharton Lodge, Mr. Smedley had given up the Bounder's trail, and returned to London. There was nothing more to be done in Surrey.

If only that irritating old fool, Quelch, had remained on the sick list all would have been well. Mr. Smedley would have gone back to Greyfriars at the new term, and with a whole term before

him to work in, surely he would have caught out the young rascal, Vernon-Smith, and won his game! He had only to show the fellow up in his true colours—no more than that!

But Greyfriars was closed to him with Quelch going back! And he knew—he had not the slightest doubt—that the Bounder's caution would not last. Sooner or later he would plunge again into reckless blackguardism. If only he could be on the spot to watch him and catch him. But now that Quelch was going back, there was nothing doing.

Mr. Teggars was in a state approaching desperation. The bait of a fortune of millions had been dangled before his eyes—and withdrawn. As he sat on his swivel chair he was thinking whether it would be possible to "touch" Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith for what he needed to keep his head above water.

The millionaire was his uncle, though certainly he had never displayed any interest whatever in Lucius' existence till the trouble with his son. He was wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice—he could spare a dozen times over, without missing it, all that Lucius needed. And he had a high opinion of the young man. He had inquired about him, investigated his record, satisfied himself that Lucius, among all his many relatives, was the one to adopt in the place of Herbert, if he was driven to disinherit his son! Surely—

But the wretched schemer shook his head.

It was because the millionaire believed him to be a young man of exemplary conduct and strict integrity that he had that high opinion of him. A whisper that he was in debt and difficulties would

banish that good opinion instantly. If Mr. Vernon-Smith even dreamed that he was what he was, he had nothing more to hope from the millionaire. At all costs, he had to keep up appearances to Mr. Vernon-Smith.

Still, what was the use, if his game was up? If only that acid, bitter-tongued schoolmaster had not recovered from his illness—Lucius Teggars' thoughts harped on that continuously. At the back of his mind was a thought from which he shrank—a thought that he hardly dared to entertain. Yet it would not leave him—it recurred and recurred.

If Quelch did not go back at the new term, Mr. Smedley's engagement at Greyfriars would be resumed. That was certain! He had not yet heard from Dr. Locke on the subject. If it chanced that Quelch could not go back, he knew that he would receive a polite note from the Head, requesting him to continue at the school. Another term at Greyfriars, and his game was won—he was assured of that! The young scoundrel's first false step would be his last!

Quelch was elderly, he had been ill. Some trifling occurrence might knock him out! Lucius' cheeks reddened when he remembered the scorn and contempt in Quelch's crusty face. He disliked the man intensely. But—but—He shivered as he realised that he was at the cross-roads again. What he was thinking of was a crime.

Mr. Teggars left his office at last. He took a taxi to his home in Bayswater, where he passed a sleepless night.

It was only a few more days now to the end of the Easter holiday. He had to make up his mind one way or the other.

He could not make it up.

Even when he went out that day, and made a round of certain shops, making certain purchases of a kind he had never made before. Mr. Teggers' mind was not made up—though he was making preparations just as if he had decided!

He shivered on the brink of a dastardly action, like a man on the edge of an icy bath.

Even when he took a train that evening for a Surrey station, he told himself that he had not made up his mind. Probably he had made it up sub-consciously.

He could not, and he would not, abandon that glittering bait of a fortune of millions. He was still on the safe side of the line that divided honest men from the outcasts of humanity. He had approached that line very, very nearly; but he had not yet crossed it! Now he was at the crossing!

From a country inn, in the sunny April morning, Mr. Teggers walked out with a suitcase in his hand. He walked by a footpath into the depths of a wood. The man who entered the wood would have been recognised by any clerk in the Regent Street office as Lucius Teggers—by any Greyfriars fellow as Eustace Smedley! But the man who left it would not have been recognised as either!

Mr. Teggers, alias Smedley, was an hour in an obscure glade in that Surrey wood, handling the recent purchases that had been packed in his suitcase.

The well-groomed young man entirely disappeared. The well-cut clothes were folded up in the suitcase, replaced on Mr. Teggers' person by a rather shabby dark suit. The grey soft hat was replaced by a shabby bowler. The handsome tan shoes had given place to heavy boots. The little dark moustache had disappeared under a thick one of a reddish colour. A pair of spectacles, with plain-glass lenses, were perched on his nose.

He looked at himself in a pocket mirror, and started. He did not know his own reflection. No clerk in the Regent Street office would have known Mr. Teggers now. No Greyfriars fellow would have known Mr. Smedley.

It was quite a different person that walked out of the wood, suitcase in hand, and followed the lane to Elmdale, near Wharton Lodge.

He stopped at the old Oak Inn, in the lane.

There he had a meal, and engaged a room, and Mr. Hodge, the landlord, never dreamed he had seen him before. Little more than a week since Mr. Smedley had put up at that inn; and now he was giving his disguise a test. His name now was Brown—and it never occurred to Mr. Hodge that he had ever seen this Mr. Brown before.

In the golden April afternoon the schemer walked out of the inn, and strolled in the direction of Wharton Lodge.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

The Creeper and Crawler gave a violent start as that familiar roar fell on his ears! He had heard it often enough in the quadrangle at Greyfriars. He stared round, his heart jumping almost into his mouth. For an instant he fancied that he was known!

A schoolboy, with dancing blue eyes and a mop of flaxen hair, was standing at a gap in the hedge. It was Bob Cherry, and his cheery roar was pealing across the adjacent field. He was not looking towards the man. Lucius Teggers realised that Bob was addressing someone else in the field.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob. "Buck up, Bunter! The other fellows are miles ahead!"

"Beast!" came a breathless gasp in response.

"You'll be late for tea, old fat man! Think of that!"

"Fat lot you care, you beast! Lot you care if I perish of hunger!" came the gasping fat voice from the other side of the hedge. "I've had nothing since lunch, except a cake, and a few biscuits, and a few oranges, and some dates, and a packet of toffee. I'm starving!"

"You must be!" said Bob Cherry sympathetically. "Well, buck up; I'm waiting for you, old podgy porker!"

"You needn't wait, blow you!" Billy Bunter's fat face and glimmering spectacles appeared at the gap in the hedge.

That fat face shone with perspiration in the bright April sun.

The hedge ran at the top of a high, steep bank beside the lane, and the fat junior's feet were almost on a level with Bob's head as he stood in the lane below. Bunter blinked down at him and snorted.

"Beast! What did you come this way for? How am I going to get down?"

"Jump!" said Bob.

"Shan't!" roared Bunter.

"Well, I'll give you a jolly old helping hand, old fat fooler—that's what I

and Crawler was rather glad of the chance meeting.

"Excuse me!" he said. He spoke in a snuffing, nasal tone, quite unlike his natural sharp voice. "I take it that you are a Greyfriars boy?"

Bob glanced round. He was surprised at the stranger's knowledge. But he answered politely.

"Yes, sir, that's right!"

"Then perhaps you can tell me whether Mr. Quelch, a Greyfriars master, is still staying at Wharton Lodge?"

"Yes," answered Bob; "he's still there."

Bob gave the man a little closer attention, wondering who was this rather shabby individual who apparently knew Quelch.

Bob was keen enough; but he never dreamed, of course, of seeing the Creeper and Crawler in disguise, and the disguise was too complete to be penetrated, in any case. Not a glimmer of recognition or suspicion came into Bob's mind.

"You might mention to Mr. Quelch that Brown—Alfred Brown—will speak to him on the telephone, my lad!" said the Creeper and Crawler.

"Certainly!" answered Bob. Then he gave a yell. "Oh! Look out—Oh, my hat—Yarooooooh!"

Billy Bunter, hesitating on the edge of the high bank, slipped! He made a wild effort to recover himself, failed, and shot down into the lane.

A wild howl rang out as he came. His fat arms were flung out, to catch at any support that might be available. One fat arm was thrown round Bob Cherry's neck, the other crashed on the disguised schemer's bowler hat, fairly crunching it over his ears.

Three figures were strewn in the dusty lane together. Bob Cherry went over, with Bunter sprawling and yelling on him; Lucius Teggers sat down with a sudden bump and a gasp, feeling for the moment as if his skull as well as his hat had been smashed.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"You blithering owl!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Gerroff!"

"Beast! Wow! Rotter! Yow-ow!"

"Gerroff!" shrieked Bob. He hurled the fat Owl off, and sat up. Mr. Teggers, spluttering, was clutching off his crushed hat. He leaped to his feet and leaped at Bunter.

Smack!

"Whoop!" roared Bunter, as he rolled over under a savage smite that made his head sing. "Who's that? What the thump—Whoop!"

"Here, chuck that!" roared Bob, as the man lifted his hand to smite again. Bob was rather damaged by the crash, but he had kept his temper. This shabby-looking stranger evidently hadn't.

Bob Cherry promptly rushed between them, and gave the man a shove back. "Hands off! Keep your temper, Mr. Brown!"

"You young fool—"

Bob stared at him, and grinned. "And stick your moustache on a little tighter," he said. "It's coming off."

The man's hand flew to his reddish moustache. It had been brushed nearly off as Bunter knocked him over. With his hand to it and a savage glare at Bob, he turned and hurried away.

"Yow-ow-ow!" came in a roar from Bunter. "Who's that cheeky beast, I'd like to know! Smacking a fellow's head! If he wasn't gone, I'd jolly well knock him down! Wow! Who is the beast?"

"Blessed if I know," said Bob, staring after the shabby Mr. Brown. "A jolly queer fish, walking around in a false

LEATHER POCKET-WALLETS FOR POETS!

Compose a Greyfriars Limerick as good as the following and you'll win one of these

USEFUL PRIZES.

Said Wharton to Ooker one day:
"I'd just like to see how you'd play

A real game of oricket.
Why, standing at wicket,
You look like an image in clay!"

The above effort was sent in by Jean Jones, of 8, Sundridge Street, Dingle, Liverpool.

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

stayed behind for," said the good-natured Bob. "Reach down that podgy paw of yours."

Mr. Teggers looked on. In the distance he spotted the other members of the Greyfriars party, their backs to him, sauntering along in the sunshine towards the gates of Wharton Lodge.

Bob, always good-natured, had stopped behind for Bunter, guessing that the fat and unwieldy Owl might have some difficulty in getting down the steep bank from the field path to the lane.

Bunter stood hesitating.

"Look here, no larks!" he said suspiciously.

"Honest Injun!" said Bob reassuringly.

"If you let me drop—"

"I wouldn't do that!" assured Bob. "If your weight dropped on the world from that height it would knock it right out of its orbit, and we might fall into the sun, or go drifting round in space!"

"You silly ass!" yelled Bunter.

Lucius Teggers stepped towards Bob, while Bunter stood hesitating. The junior had noticed him in the lane, but without any interest in him, obviously in the belief that he was a stranger. It was a reassuring test of the schemer's disguise, and now that Bob had not the remotest idea who he was, the Creeper

moustache! He says he knows Quelch! You've busted his hat."

"Bother his hat! I've a jolly good mind to go after him and wallop him!" snorted Bunter. "I jolly well would, only—only we should be late for tea."

Bunter rolled off, after Harry Wharton & Co., and Bob Cherry followed. Mr. Lucius Teggers, alias Smedley, alias Brown, punched his hat into something like shape again, and walked back to the Old Oak Inn. That chance encounter with the Greyfriars juniors had served his turn.

He knew now that Mr. Quelch was still at Wharton Lodge. He had had no doubt of it, but he had to be sure. Now he was sure! And if anything happened to Mr. Quelch during the next few days, the shabby Mr. Brown would be remembered, and doubtless looked for! But the shabby Mr. Brown would have disappeared from existence by that time, and no one would think of looking for Eustace Smedley, or Lucius Teggers! He would be doubly and trebly safe with a search going on for a non-existent Alfred Brown!

If anything happened to Mr. Quelch—anything, not too serious, but serious enough to keep him away from Greyfriars next term! If—

Lucius Teggers, shrinking on the brink of breaking the law, still told himself that he had not yet made up his mind! But he was acting as if he had!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

At It Again!

"I SAY, you fellows!"
 "Lovely night!" said Bob Cherry.
 "I spoke!" said Bunter.
 "So did I!" answered Bob. "Lovely

night! Look at the jolly old stars—all a-growing and a-blowing! Makes a fellow feel poetical! I think I could make up a poem—"

"Keep it dark, if you do!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Fathead!"

"I say, you fellows, has Quelch gone out on the terrace?" asked Bunter.

It was a balmy, starry April evening. The Famous Five had gone out into the porch after supper to have a look at it.

Vernon-Smith was with them—unconsciously feeling in his pocket for the cigarettes that were not there! But nobody expected Billy Bunter to be interested in the most beautiful night in spring, even with the dark blue heavens spangled with stars, glittering down like points of fire, and a silvery crescent of moon gleaming over the dark slopes of the downs.

But the fat Owl of the Remove, instead of coagulating, as it were, in an armchair, as was his custom after a meal, joined the chums of the Remove outside.

His question revealed to the juniors what was in his fat mind, and they grinned. The Owl of the Remove was still on the war-path!

It was Mr. Quelch's custom to take a walk on the terrace after dinner with Colonel Wharton. Not once since he had been at Wharton Lodge had the Remove-master interrupted that healthy habit. Now, while the colonel was smoking his after-dinner cigar—a much less healthy proceeding—Quelch, as usual, was walking up and down the shadowy terrace, lighted here and there from tall windows, but between the windows, deep in darkness.

"You howling ass!" said Harry Wharton. "What are you up to now?"

"Nothing, old chap!" said Bunter.

"I suppose a fellow can ask a fellow a question, can't he?"

Billy Bunter had one fat hand behind him—a circumstance which, apparently, he did not expect the other fellows to notice, but which they noticed at once. Bunter was "up" to something! Bunter, of course, had noticed that habit of Quelch's, and once he had schemed a deep scheme of dropping eggs on his head from a window above; but, fortunately, Bob Cherry had spotted him in time, and Bunter had got the eggs! Now, evidently, some new wheeze was working in the powerful intellect of the Owl of the Remove.

"He's gone out," said Wharton, "and you'd better stay in! What are you hiding behind you, you footling fat-head?"

"Eh? Nothing! I haven't got a squirt here, and there isn't any ink in it," answered Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, I'm going out for a stroll—such a lovely night! Just into the gardens, you know."

"Like us to come?" grinned the Bounder.

"Eh? Oh, no! You fellows stay here. You—you might catch cold, or something," said Bunter hastily.

"Oh, we'll come!" said Bob, with a wink at his friends. "Lovely night for a stroll in the gardens—along by the terrace!"

"Look here, I jolly well don't want your company, so, yah!" retorted Bunter, and he rolled past the Famous Five and went down the steps from the terrace into the shadowed gardens.

"Ain't he a coughdrop?" murmured Bob. "He doesn't know we've spotted

(Continued on next page.)

Hey, there!
Give us a bite!



Me too!

HE'S the man of the moment, the most popular fellow in school. And why? Monster 1d. Bars of Fry's delicious Chocolate Cream—that's the secret of his success. They're *wizards*, these new big bars of the nicest chocolate cream you ever tasted. Try a pennyworth when you want something *really* good.

FRY'S
CHOCOLATE
CREAM

NEW MONSTER 1^D BAR

his squirt, and he doesn't know that we know he's after Quelch—and he doesn't know that we're jolly well going to stop him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Famous Five, grinning, walked after Bunter. Somebody was going to get the ink from that squirt—but it was not going to be Quelch!

Unconscious, apparently, that he had awakened suspicion in the minds of the Removites, Billy Bunter rolled away, squirt in hand.

Bunter had thought this out!

Really it was quite astute! He had to get Quelch with the ink—that was the idea! But he had to remain undiscovered—that was still more urgent! That was very important indeed! So Bunter had given it quite a lot of thought, and he had worked out his plans in quite a masterly manner.

The terrace ran the whole length of the front of the house, and in several places stone steps led down into the gardens—deep in gloom. Quelch, in his slow and majestic pacing, passed the top of each in turn. One flight of steps was deeply shadowed by an oak-tree. That was the one selected by Billy Bunter.

There, in deep darkness, he was going to lie in wait—with the squirt! When Quelch paced by he was going to let fly with the ink!

Having "got" Quelch, flight was easy and simple, unseen!

Stealing along through flower-beds and shrubberies—heedless of the damage he did thereby when he missed the paths in the dark—Bunter cautiously approached that dark flight of stone steps.

Under the oak, there, it was as black as a hat.

Nothing could have suited Bunter's purpose better. He grinned as he groped for the steps and cautiously mounted them. It was then that Billy Bunter had the surprise of his life!

Bump! Clatter!

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter, in amazement and startled terror, and he dropped the squirt.

Bunter was not a cat, to see in the dark! He could not see his hand before his face! So he could not see the dark figure into which he bumped all of a sudden, and utterly unexpectedly.

Somebody was there—creeping up the dark steps to the terrace, just in front of Bunter! Bunter had bumped into his back!

"Ow! Beast! Wow!" gasped Bunter. "You startled me, you beast! Is that you, Bob Cherry, you rotter? Ow!"

Mr. Quelch, in his pacing, had reached the end of the terrace, and was at a good distance. His angular figure could, in fact, be seen in the light from the french windows of the library, which were open. Certainly it was not Quelch that Bunter had bumped into.

He concluded that it was one of the juniors, who must have cut along the terrace while he was negotiating the gardens below.

"Beast!" he hissed.

He heard a faint, suppressed gasp. But there was no reply, and his groping hands lost the unseen figure.

It was gone!

Billy Bunter stood in darkness, blinking like a startled owl. He realised that it could not have been one of the juniors larking, or he certainly would have received an answer. One of the servants, perhaps; though why one of the servants was sneaking about there in the dark was rather a mystery.

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However, whoever it was, he was gone, and Bunter heard no sound. With an angry snort, he proceeded to grope for the fallen squirt.

He had heard it clatter on the stone steps as it fell, but apparently it had rolled down, for he groped and groped after it in vain. Step below step he went till he was on the ground again, still groping.

"Wow!" he gasped, as he was suddenly grasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Got him!"

"Give him the ink!"

"Ow! I say, you fellows, wharrer you up to?" gasped Billy Bunter, wriggling like an eel in many hands in the gloom. "Leggo! I say, I've dropped that squirt—I say, I never had a squirt—I say, I wasn't after Quelch—wow! Leggo!"

"Just like you to drop it when we were going to spray it over your silly head!" said Bob Cherry. "Where did you drop it?"

"Ow! Leggo! I dropped it when I ran into that beast on the steps!" gasped Bunter.

"Eh! Who did you run into?" asked Wharton.

"How should I know, fathead? Somebody was sneaking up those steps in the dark, and I biffed into him—"

"You're dreaming, you fat ass!" said Harry. "How could anybody be there?"

"Pulling our leg," said the Bounder. "He's got the squirt all right."

"I haven't!" gasped Bunter. "I tell you I ran into somebody in the dark and dropped it. Not that I had a squirt, you know. Besides, I wasn't going to squirt Quelch. I say, you fellows, help me to look for it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle! Quelch will be coming back along the terrace. He's coming back now—not that I'm after him, you know. I think it rolled down the steps. I was startled, you know, when I ran into that beast in the dark."

"Was there really anybody?" asked Frank Nugent. "If somebody is sneaking about here in the dark, we'd better look for him."

"I've got a torch here," said Smithy.

"You fathead; don't show a light!" gasped Bunter. "Quelch would see it! He might see me, and then—"

"Hark!" exclaimed Wharton suddenly.

From the shadowed terrace there came a sudden, sharp cry. It was followed by the sound of a heavy fall.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Man in the Dark!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood for a second, transfixed.

They knew that it must have been Mr. Quelch who cried out so sharply and suddenly—that it was he who had fallen on the terrace.

What had happened?

As they stood they caught the sound of running feet. There was someone else on the terrace, as well as the Remove master, who had fallen.

The running footsteps passed the top of the steps where they stood, and an unseen figure plunged down through the trees into the blackness of the garden. He ran up the steps to the terrace, into the blackness of the garden.

"What?" gasped Wharton.

His first thought was for Mr. Quelch. He ran up the steps to the terrace, calling his name.

A beam of bright light flashed out

into the blackness. The Bounder had his pocket torch in his hand.

But for Bunter's antics the juniors would have been at a distance, in the porch, and no light would have been on the spot. As it happened, however, they were there, and the Bounder had his torch in his hand, about to turn it on to look for the lost squirt.

Someone was running; and he did not run down the steps. He had heard the juniors, and knew that they were there. Smithy's brain worked swiftly. He heard the man, whoever he was, plunging down the shrubberies on the steep edge of the terrace, and turned his light instantly in that direction.

It shone full on a shabby figure in a bowler hat, with a reddish moustache and spectacles.

All the juniors spotted that figure in the beam of the torch, and one of them knew it. Bob Cherry had seen it before.

Instantly the figure leaped on, and was lost to the light.

"After him!" yelled the Bounder. "He's hurt Quelch! After him!"

He plunged into pursuit while he shouted.

Bob Cherry, Hurree Singh, and Johnny Bull rushed after him. Nugent ran up the steps after Wharton. Billy Bunter stood gaping with amazement and alarm.

"Oh lor'!" gurgled Bunter. "What's happened? I say, you fellows— Oh lor'!"

"Mr. Quelch!" Wharton was shouting.

There was no answer to his call; but in the darkness, at a little distance from the lighted library windows, he stumbled over a still form that lay stretched on the terrace.

"Good heavens!" panted Wharton.

He halted, and dropped on his knees beside the still form. Nugent was on the spot a moment later.

"Harry, what—" he panted.

"It's Quelch! He's hurt! Call my uncle!"

Nugent ran on to the lighted library. Colonel Wharton was already standing in the french windows looking out. He had heard the cry and the fall.

"What is it?" he rapped.

"Oh, come, sir!" panted Nugent. "Mr. Quelch is hurt. He has been attacked by somebody—"

"What?" gasped the colonel. "Impossible!"

"Uncle!" called Harry.

Colonel Wharton strode rapidly along the terrace. Wharton was kneeling beside the insensible Remove master. The old military gentleman stared down at the senseless man, stupefied.

"What—what has happened?" he gasped.

"There was somebody here. Mr. Quelch is hurt!" panted Wharton. "He's stunned, I think!"

"Great gad! Wells, John, Thomas!" roared the colonel.

The servants were on the spot in a few moments, and Mr. Quelch was lifted and carried into the library. He was still unconscious.

"Come on, Frank!" muttered Wharton. "Let's get after that villain! There's a chance!"

They ran down the steps and followed the other fellows, already at a distance. The flash of the Bounder's torch guided them. They caught its gleam among the trees in the park.

Twice Vernon-Smith had glimpsed a desperate running figure in the light of the torch as he followed the fugitive. The man ran almost like a hare, heading for the park. But the Bounder was a good sprinter, and he was utterly regardless of danger.



"This way!" yelled Vernon-Smith, and the juniors behind him shouted back. The torch in the Bounder's hand had picked out a figure leaping at the high park railings. Desperate hands caught at the top of the wall; but, before the man could clamber over, Vernon-Smith sprang at him, grasped his legs, and pulled.

"This way!" he yelled, as he spotted the running figure again among the trees; and the three juniors behind him shouted back.

The torch in the Bounder's hand gleamed on a figure leaping at the high park railings. Desperate hands caught the top of the wall; but before the man could clamber over, the Bounder sprang at him, grasped his legs, and dragged him back.

There was a terrific crash as he came to the ground. The torch fell, and was extinguished.

But the Bounder had his muscular grasp on the man as they rolled on the ground in a fierce struggle in dense darkness.

"Help, here!" panted Vernon-Smith.

Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and the Nabob of Bhanipur came racing up in the dark. Wharton and Nugent were far behind, and they had lost the guidance of the torch now.

But the three would have been enough, more than enough, if they could have got their hands on the rascal.

But the Bounder, strong as he was, was not strong enough to hold a desperate man struggling for his freedom.

A crashing blow half-stunned him, and the rascal tore himself loose and leaped away, just as the three juniors came panting up.

In an instant he was running again, winding among the trees of the park in the thick darkness.

"Smithy!" panted Bob.

The Bounder struggled to his feet. His head was spinning from the savage blow he had received.

"He's got away! After him!" he panted.

The three juniors ran on, guided by a distant rustling and brushing in the

trees, and the Bounder, his senses reeling, leaned on a trunk, pressing his hand to his head.

"Bob! Smithy!" Harry Wharton's voice was calling. "Where are you?"

"Here!" called back the Bounder.

Wharton and Nugent loomed up, panting, in the dimness. The sound of flight and pursuit died away across the park.

"Where?" gasped Nugent.

"I got him, here, clambering over the wall!" breathed the Bounder. "But he got away again!"

"You're hurt—"

"He gave me a crack. The other fellows have gone after him. They won't get him in the dark. See if you can find my torch. I dropped it here."

The torch was found, but the bulb had been broken in the fall, and there was no light. The Bounder gave an angry grunt.

"Let's get on; there may be a chance of—"

"Come on!" said Harry.

But there was no chance of finding the man who had escaped in the darkness. Calling to one another the Famous Five and the Bounder hunted through the park for more than an hour; and then they gave it up. There could scarcely be a doubt that Quelch's unknown assailant was far enough away by that time.

Tired and breathless, puzzled and amazed by the strange and mysterious occurrence, they tramped back to the house at last, where Inspector Stacey, called by the colonel on the telephone, had already arrived from Wimford, and they found that official in the library.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

By Whose Hand?

COLONEL WHARTON was in the library, a sorely perplexed and distressed gentleman.

The Wimford inspector was equally perplexed—that was clear. He was questioning Billy Bunter when the Famous Five and Smithy arrived, but getting little light from the confused and bewildered Owl.

"Here are the boys, Mr. Stacey," said Colonel Wharton.

"Mr. Quelch—" exclaimed Wharton.

"Mr. Quelch has been taken to his room, Harry, and a doctor is in attendance," answered Colonel Wharton.

"Is he—is he—" panted Nugent.

"He is in no danger! He has received a very severe blow—he is suffering from a contusion, the doctor says—but there is no serious harm done, fortunately. All he needs is care and rest. Inspector Stacey is here to investigate this most extraordinary attack on a guest under my roof. You boys may be able to tell him something—"

"Yes, rather!" said Bob Cherry. "I've seen the man before—"

"You saw him?" exclaimed the Wimford inspector.

"We all saw him when Smithy turned his torch on," said Bob. "And I knew him at once. I saw him a couple of days ago in the lane, a quarter of a mile from here. He told me his name was Alfred Brown, and that he knew Quelch—at least, he told me to mention to Mr. Quelch that he might ring him on the telephone."

"Mr. Quelch cannot be questioned at
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present," said the inspector, "but if he knows the man—"

"I don't think he does, sir," answered Bob. "I gave him the message, and he seemed surprised, and said that he did not remember anyone named Alfred Brown."

"You can give me a full description of the man?"

"Easily, sir!"

And Bob did so, Mr. Stacey writing down the details of a tall man in glasses, with a reddish moustache, shabbily dressed.

"Only the moustache was a false one," added Bob.

He described the incident in the lane.

"How old did he look?"

"About forty or forty-five."

"He was younger than that," said Vernon-Smith.

"Indeed. How do you know that?" asked Mr. Stacey, staring at the Bounder, and a big bruise that was blackening on his forehead.

"Because he ran like a hare," answered Vernon-Smith. "And he handled me pretty easily when I got him at the park wall."

"You actually got hold of him?"

Smithy told his tale in his turn. The Wimford inspector rose at once.

"Take me to the spot!" he said curtly.

Several electric torches were procured, and the whole party proceeded to the spot where Smithy had dragged the escaping man down from the park wall. The others stood back while Mr. Stacey made an examination of the spot.

He picked up a reddish false moustache and a pair of spectacles, of which one lens had been broken under a foot. Evidently they had come off, in the mysterious man's struggle with the Bounder, though the juniors had not noticed them in the darkness.

Inspector Stacey examined them carefully. There was nothing else to be found except the sign of trampling feet.

"If the rascal wears glasses, and has lost them," said Colonel Wharton, "he will be at a disadvantage—"

Mr. Stacey gave a grunt.

"He does not wear glasses, sir. This lens is plain glass—it was worn only for disguise, like the moustache!"

"Then his description is of little value?"

"Very little, I fear! But no doubt Mr. Quelch, when he recovers sufficiently to speak, will be able to give us some clue—the man must have had some motive for this attack."

And they returned to the house.

Inspector Stacey was a very puzzled officer when he left. He was still more puzzled, a few days later, when he was able to have an interview with the Remove master, and learned that Mr. Quelch certainly knew nobody of the name of Alfred Brown—obviously a false name—and had not the slightest knowledge of any enemy who could possibly desire to injure him.

The whole affair was an utter mystery.

The most rigid search failed to reveal any trace of Mr. Brown. It was learned that he had stayed at the Old Oak Inn; but Mr. Hodge could only say that he had gone out one night and had not returned. At the inn he had left nothing—there was no clue.

His complete disappearance was easily accounted for—as it was known that he had been in disguise. Obviously, he had stripped off that disguise

after his escape, and resumed his own natural appearance—to which there was no clue whatever.

Harry Wharton & Co. discussed the matter again and again; but they were as utterly puzzled as Inspector Stacey and Mr. Quelch himself.

Billy Bunter evolved a theory that was worthy of his great intellectual powers.

"I say, you fellows!" said the fat Owl, when the juniors were discussing the mystery a few days after the attack on Mr. Quelch. "I say, I fancy I can put my finger on it!"

"Fathead!" said Bob Cherry.

If that strange mystery was ever elucidated, certainly nobody expected Bunter to do the elucidation.

"Oh, really, Cherry! Look at it," said Bunter. "It wasn't a burglar or a sneak-thief who ran into Quelch by accident and knocked him over to get away! Because we know that the man put up at the inn, and he was in disguise, and all that. He was after Quelch."

"Have you worked that out all by yourself?" asked Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm.

"Yes, old chap—I've rather a brain for working things out," said Bunter. "He was after Quelch all right. That's why he asked Bob about him—to see whether he was still here, see?"

"Bunter can see a thing if it's as plain as a pikestaff!" remarked Bob. "A big pikestaff, of course."

"And he must have watched the place a bit, to learn Quelch's ways, and how to get at him!" pursued Bunter.

"Wonderful!" said Nugent. "Go it, Sherlock Holmes!"

"Well, I think things out, you know," said Bunter, oblivious of the fact that he was pointing out what was as clear as the sun at noonday. "I rather fancy I should have made a pretty good detective! Well, I've spotted why the man did it."

"Go it!" grinned Bob.

Harry Wharton gave the Owl of the Remove a rather startled look. At the back of Wharton's mind, half-realised, was a dark and terrible suspicion. It was so dark, and so terrible, that he hardly dared to admit its existence to himself, and he had not breathed a word to his friends. But if that suspicion had occurred to Bunter's fatuous mind—

It hadn't! Bunter rattled on cheerily:

"You fellows remember that I was after Quelch myself with that squirt. I'm glad I never got him now, as things have turned out. But that fellow got him! I've spotted the whole thing! He's some Old Boy of Greyfriars—"

"What?" yelled the juniors.

"Some fellow that Quelch has whopped when he was in the Remove," said Bunter triumphantly. "I've often thought of whopping Quelch myself when I'm an Old Boy! That's it! What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Eh! What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunter indignantly. "Isn't it perfectly clear? Nobody would want to damage Quelch, except some chap that he's whopped in the Remove! Practically every chap in the Remove would like to, as you jolly well know! Well, some Old Boy has done it! What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter had succeeded, at least, in introducing a little comic relief. Nobody but Bunter was likely to

believe that some "Old Boy" of Greyfriars, remembering ancient lickings in the Remove, had made that attack on the Remove master.

But later, when Harry Wharton was alone with Nugent, he spoke of the dark and haunting thought that was in the back of his mind.

"They haven't got the man, Frank." Wharton spoke in a low voice, though they were alone, walking in the park. "They won't get him now. Have you any idea why the brute did it?"

"Not the foggiest!" said Frank. "It beats me hollow! Quelch can't make a guess himself."

"He must have had a motive."

"I suppose so, unless he was mad."

"Quelch won't be able to go back for the new term now, Frank. He's not in any danger; but he's going to be laid up for a jolly long time. He can't even leave this house for some weeks."

"I know."

"That means having the Creeper and Crawler back next term."

"Rotten!" said Nugent. "Can't be helped, though."

Wharton looked at his chum. There was no sign of suspicion in Frank's face. He was almost ashamed of the miserable thought in his own mind. But he went on, in a still lower voice:

"Frank! The man was in disguise—all we know of him for certain is that he was tall! Smedley's tall!"

"Smedley!" Frank Nugent jumped.

"Harry! Are you dotty?"

Wharton coloured.

"You—you don't think—it's possible—"

"For goodness' sake don't get such an awful idea into your mind, old chap," said Nugent blankly. "It couldn't be possible—how could it? Smedley's a bit of a worm; but—but—for goodness' sake, Harry, don't think such a thing as that of the man! Chuck it right out of your head!"

"Well, I suppose it isn't possible," said Wharton slowly.

"Of course it isn't! It's awful rot!"

Harry Wharton nodded. He was relieved by Nugent's emphatic repudiation of the idea. He was glad to drive it out of his own mind. And yet, somehow, it would not quite leave him. He did not speak of it again, and did not even think of it; yet, somewhere at the back of his mind, it persisted in lingering.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Back to Greyfriars!

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL resounded to the tramp of feet and the buzz of voices.

The old quadrangle, so long deserted, swarmed with fellows, passages and studies hummed and buzzed. Old Gosling, the porter, grunted and groused, rather like a Polar bear waking up from his long winter sleep, facing once more the terrors of a new term after his long rest.

For the umpteenth time old Gosling confided to Mr. Mumble, the gardener, that all the boys ought to be "drowned." Mr. Mumble did not wholly endorse that sweeping verdict, still less did Mrs. Mumble, at the school shop, welcoming a rush of customers with her best smile on.

Trotter, the page, grinned and grinned, carried bags and boxes, and pocketed tips. His tips ranged from a ten-shilling note from Lord Mauleverer to a bad threepenny-bit from Skinner, and a snort from Billy Bunter.

(Continued on page 27.)

OUR NON-STOP THRILL YARN OF 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 Jules Martinez, a wealthy Argentine bookmaker, Locke accepts a big wager from the two schemers in connection with the Cup Final and wins it, despite their attempt to kidnap three star players of the team which are deemed to be favourites. With £10,000 to pay Jules Martinez, Villiers and Tankerhead are sorely troubled. How have their plans miscarried—who is the mystery man balking them at every turn, they ask themselves. (Now read on.)

The Fatal Card!

"PAY that old fool ten thousand quid? Not likely!" Mervyn Villiers chewed savagely at his cigar and glared at his partner from beneath closely knitted brows.

Julius Tankerhead fidgeted in his chair.

"We shall have to pay him, Mervyn, unless," he added sarcastically, "you are going to tell him we're broke, and plead the Gaming Act!"

"Don't be a fool!" retorted Villiers. "Why, we should be ruined everywhere if we went to him with that tale. Besides, Jules Martinez is not the nicest of men to owe money to. I've a better method."

Julius Tankerhead's eyes lifted in inquiry.

"Listen!" whispered his companion. And for the next ten minutes the arch-schemer talked with scarcely an interruption. At the end of it he received an enthusiastic grin from Tankerhead, whereupon he pressed the electric bell by the fireplace, and then sat back in his chair.

A moment or so later the door of the cosy lounge opened and Morris, the confidential manservant, appeared.

"Sit down, Morris!" invited Villiers. "This is a sort of three-corner conference. Briefly, this is the position: Things have been going badly with us lately. Just now we owe the Argentine bookie, Jules Martinez, ten thousand quid. What do you suggest we do?"

The crafty face of the manservant plainly indicated his suggestion before it was voiced.

"Don't pay the blighter!"

Mervyn Villiers smiled.

"Exactly, Morris!" he remarked.

"That is the conclusion we have arrived at. We've gone beyond that, too. We've decided to 'bump him off,' as they say in the States. Now, what's your opinion of that?"

Morris' face broke into a wide grin. The "method" was one that appealed to him in all matters of emergency.

"I'm all in favour," he announced. "Ten thousand quid better off, anyway." Then his face grew grim and somewhat threatening. "But, look here, I'm getting rather tired of being selected as the bumper-off," he added. "One of these days I shall make a slip."

Villiers waved him to silence with a podgy gesture of the hand.

"We're not putting the job on to you," he said. "We've decided to cast lots for the pleasure. The winner, shall we say, will receive our blessing and a handsome cheque."

He took from off the mantelpiece a pack of cards and began to shuffle them.

"How you going to work it, boss?" inquired Morris.

"Very simply. We each take a card from this pack"—Villiers was still carelessly shuffling the cards—"and whichever one of us draws the lowest black card—a spade or a club—will be considered the one to do the job. Are you agreed, Julius?"

"Suits me," came the reply.

"An' me!" growled Morris. "Here, I'll have first pick."

Villiers spread the cards for him fan-wise, and Morris took one. The pack was reshuffled, and Tankerhead drew his card. That done, Villiers handed the pack to Tankerhead, who held them out face downwards for Villiers to make his choice.

"Turn them up, my friends!" smiled Villiers. "Let's see who's the lucky man!"

The three cards were exposed to view. Only one black card had been drawn, and that had been selected by Morris. It did not seem to please him, somehow, but he forced a grin. All seemed fair and above board.

"Well, I suppose I mustn't grumble," he exclaimed. "After all, it might have been either one of you two."

"Exactly," purred Villiers. "We all took the same chance. Now, listen! Here are your instructions."

The plan the crafty schemer had outlined to Tankerhead was repeated to the dull-witted Morris. Gradually a smile spread over the manservant's face.

"Why, it's a corker!" he ejaculated, when his employer concluded. "Simple as A B C. An' how much do I get, boss?"

"Exactly one thousand pounds," purred Villiers. "That is, of course, when the job is done."

Morris' doubts and fears vanished on the instant, but he little knew the extent of the villainy of the man who had employed him for so many years, and now wanted to get rid of him.

"Well, we must lose no time. You'd better fix things with the agent while the going is good," said Villiers. "But you'll go in disguise, of course!"

"Trust me!" grinned Morris.

He was given a liberal glass of refreshment and dismissed. About half an hour later his footsteps echoed along the tiled hall, and the front door slammed rather noisily.

Villiers, watching the street from behind cover of the big blue curtains which draped the sides of his window, addressed his fellow conspirator.

"He's off, Julius! The fool can think only of his one thousand. But if we hadn't drawn lots he would have jibbed—I feel certain of that. The man's losing his nerve these days."

"And when a man loses his nerve he gets dangerous," added Tankerhead.

Villiers came out from his place of concealment now, for his view of the street outside was limited and the figure of Morris had passed from view. Had he lingered there a second or so longer he would have seen a youngish taxi-driver, who had frequented the vicinity rather a lot lately, follow, in his cab, in the wake of the departing manservant. As it was, Villiers sauntered across to the mantelpiece, and, with a grin, turned the pack of cards face upwards. All the black cards, despite his apparent shuffling, remained in one solid wedge.

"Gosh, I never knew you were a card-sharper, too!" conceded Tankerhead genially. "That poor fish, Morris, will

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never know that he didn't stand a chance of drawing a red card, or that we never stood a chance of drawing a black one, either."

Villiers winced at the term "card-sharper," and uttered an objection.

"That's a nasty term, Julius," he remarked. "Let's call it card manipulation. Sounds better—what?"

The two scoundrels laughed good-humouredly.

"Morris'll do the job," said Villiers, after a pause. "And, sure enough, he'll be caught. I know him so well that I know now exactly what he'll do when the police arrest him for the murder of Jules Martinez. He won't face a judge and jury—not Morris!"

There was an ugly significance about Villiers' cold-blooded remark which sent a shiver down Tankerhead's spine.

"And you're going to see that the police do catch him, eh? That's what they call killing two birds with one stone—what?" he chuckled feebly. "Mervyn, I give it to you. You've got the brains in this outfit. And once Morris is out of the way we can start afresh. Gosh, it's a great idea!"

"As are all my ideas, I would remind you," replied Villiers, boastfully.

Drake's Discovery!

JACK DRAKE was not deceived by the black wig and horn-rimmed spectacles which Morris, the manservant, had adopted as a disguise. Seated at the wheel of his taxi-cab, Jack crawled along the road in the wake of his quarry. He did not have to journey far in this fashion, for Morris suddenly looked round, spotted the taxi, and hailed it.

"Pullman & Denston, Estate Agents, Victoria Station. Quickly!" The disguised Morris hardly gave the youthful taximan a second glance.

"Yes, sir!" Drake jumped down from his seat and held open the door of the taxi, wondering what fresh villainy was afoot. Since the Cup Final at Wembley Messrs. Tankerhead & Villiers had been lying low. Filled with curiosity Drake drove his fare to the desired address, was paid off, and then stationed himself in a road near by where he could keep observation of the estate agents.

Twenty minutes elapsed before Morris came out. When he became lost to sight in the ever moving throng of people Jack Drake again got down from his cab and went across to the agents. By some means or other he was determined to find out just what business the man Morris had been up to.

Drake took the bold course. He approached the head clerk, who was gazing at his ledger and rubbing his hands in satisfaction.

"Excuse me, sir," began Drake. "My fare—he's just been here"—Drake described him in detail—"wants to know if it will be convenient for me to take some things up to his place straight away."

Drake watched the clerk's face intently. His random shot if a "loser," so to speak, would bring perplexity to the face of the clerk. Doubtless he would say "what place," and "What, young man, are you talking about?" But instead the face of the clerk beamed genially.

"Why, of course, it will be convenient," he replied.

"Mr. Tugson was assured by me personally, that he could take over the

offices right away. Does he forget, I wonder, that he took the keys away with him?"

Drake's heart beat wildly. "Well," he exclaimed indignantly, "how am I going to take his blessed things there if he's already got the keys? You see," he added, "he told me to come here and collect the keys. He's gone off on foot—shopping or somethin'. He's very forgetful, is the old boy. I've done heaps of jobs for him before, so I should know."

The clerk came to the rescue. "That's all right," he said. "You will find our caretaker on the premises. He's got a master key. Here, I'll scribble a few words for you on this card."

"Thank you, sir," smiled Drake. "Better shove the bloomin' address down, too, case I forget it."

"Certainly!" The trusting clerk who was more conscious that he had got rid of some very difficult offices for a term of three months, with a month's rent in advance, than anything else around him just then, obligingly wrote down the address, and an authority to the caretaker to admit the taximan.

Drake smiled his thanks and departed. He did not look at the card until he was sitting at the wheel of his cab, and then what he saw brought a hard glimmer of excitement to his eyes. For the address was in Pall Mall—exactly opposite the palatial offices rented by Jules Martinez!

"Phew! This is getting warm!" muttered Drake. "Wonder what the game is?"

Once again he took the bold course. He presented the card to the caretaker and followed him up the stairs to the suite of offices engaged by Morris alias Tugson. At the door which the short-winded caretaker opened with his master key Drake played his next move.

"That's a queer looking key, mate," he observed friendly. "Let's have a look—"

"Master key," grunted the caretaker, allowing Drake to handle it for a moment or so. "Opens all the doors, front an' all."

"No?" ejaculated Drake, handing it back. "Never seen one before."

The caretaker left him to his own devices when the door was open, as caretakers will. After all, the offices were empty; there was nothing to hang about for. Yet once the caretaker had shuffled off, Drake stood gazing down at a perfectly good wax impression of the master key which he now held in the palm of his hand. It was the work of a moment to stow that valuable piece of wax into an empty matchbox and put it in a safe place; then the youngster was standing by the window of the main office and staring out to the buildings directly opposite. Yes, sure enough, he was on a level with Ferrers Locke's offices, which had been rented in the name of Jules Martinez. True, the busy thoroughfare lay between them, but a watch could be kept on those offices by a keen-eyed observer.

"What's the game?" Drake asked himself that a second time. "Better let the guv'nor in on this."

He strolled round the offices, memorised their position carefully, and then walked out, closing the main door behind him. At the foot of the stairs he encountered the caretaker.

"Did you close the door, mate?" asked that tired-looking individual, and Drake replied in the affirmative.

A few moments more and Drake was driving to his secret garage, where he made a quick change to emerge now in the guise of Jules Martinez's clerk. On foot, he made his way back to the Pall Mall offices of his chief, and was soon telling Ferrers Locke the extraordinary happenings of the day.

"Is this some fresh betting trickery, guv'nor?" he asked.

Ferrers Locke did not commit himself.

"It may be just that—it may be something deeper than that. You see, my lad, our birds Villiers and Tankerhead have not yet paid me their cheque for their Cup Final losses. They owe me exactly ten thousand pounds."

"Think you'll ever get it, guv'nor?"

Locke smiled. "I am beginning to have my doubts about that, Jack. Parting with ten thousand pounds will give Villiers and Tankerhead several sorts of a shock. Somehow, I don't think they'll square up. We must keep a strict watch on the offices opposite. That wax impression of the key will probably prove invaluable."

It certainly proved all that, for during the next two days Drake, having watched Morris, alias Tugson, enter and leave his newly acquired premises, nipped in after him when the coast was clear and made the discovery of his life.

The offices meantime had been scantily furnished, and it was a small safe which caught Drake's eyes first, for he noticed that it had not been shut. Wonderingly he opened the heavy door and peered within. What he saw was the last thing in the world he expected to see; a sub-machine-gun, similar in design to those used by American gangsters.

At Four O'Clock!

"**P**HEW!" he whistled. "I'm beginning to see daylight."

Examining the ugly weapon he saw that it carried enough ammunition to kill two or three dozen people. In feverish haste Drake departed from the offices eager to tell his chief of what he had found. Locke heard him unmoved.

"I somehow guessed as much, my lad," he said calmly. "It's their amiable intention to bump me off. Better than paying me a cheque for ten thousand, what?"

Then he laughed, whereat Drake marvelled.

"I believe I can see it all now. During the next day or so I shall probably cross in front of my windows a dozen times or more. And when I present a good target friend Morris will open fire. Well, I'm not going to disappoint him. Listen."

Drake listened in rapt admiration while Ferrers Locke outlined a plan of campaign.

"By Jove, guv'nor, that sounds like a peach of an idea. It's risky, though!"

"On the contrary, it isn't risky, my lad. Just leave things to me."

Drake, with a youngster's hero worship, was prepared to do that. The offices opposite were watched with that deadly zeal with which a cat watches a suspected mousehole.

"When that window opposite is wide open, my lad," had been Locke's forecast of events, "the band will begin to play—or rather shall I say, the gun will begin to bark. The moment it is opened tell me."

Yet the actual timing of the scheme, did Ferrers Locke but know it,

depended on Villiers. Thus in the region of four o'clock in the afternoon, he received a telephone call from Mervyn Villiers. Simultaneously Drake observed that the window in the office across the street was flung up half-way. Locke heard Drake's warning, and nodded reassuringly.

"Hallo? Is that Mr. Villiers? Good afternoon, sir—"

"Oh, I phoned you up to tell you Mr. Martinez, that our cheque will be along to-morrow," came Villiers' greasy voice. "Sorry, to have kept you waiting. But it isn't always convenient to withdraw so large an amount from one's account without a slight delay."

"That's quite all right, Mr. Villiers. You need not have troubled."

Villiers prattled on, about the weather, the coming Test matches, and so on, and then suddenly changed the subject.

"I say, Mr. Martinez, what's your opinion of that new electric sign working in Batterby's, just opposite your office? Tankerhead's just wagered me that in one minute the public sees flashed before them, in attractive design, ten different advertisements. I say, there are only nine!"

"Really?"

"I say, Mr. Martinez. Just squint out of your window for me now, will you. We'll leave it to you to decide who's right."

"With pleasure—hold on!" agreed the detective with a sidelong wink at Drake, and forthwith stationed himself at the window and gazed down at the patent electric sign which flickered advertisements day and night. Within ten seconds of standing there, heard above the dull roar of the busy traffic below, came the sharp staccato rattle of machine-gun fire.

From the window of the offices taken by Morris, alias Tugson, came a sudden stab of yellow flame and a curling wreath of smoke. In the same moment Ferrers Locke clutched at his head reeled and crashed to the floor.

So real and tragic was the whole incident to Jack Drake, that he darted forward, his face white and full of concern.

"Guv'nor!" he said beseechingly, bending over his chief's prostrate form. "Guv'nor—"

Safely hidden from the view of anyone in the office across the street, for Locke still lay sprawled upon the floor, the detective turned and winked at his startled assistant.

"It's all right, my lad. I swopped all the cartridges in his machine-gun, even as I said. They were blanks—but friend Morris doesn't know that—yet!"

"Phew!" breathed Drake. "You gave me quite a scare. But aren't you going to nobble that villain before he bolts?"

Locke now sat on his haunches still keeping below the level of the window.

"No, my lad. By this time Inspector Pycroft will be jangling the bracelets around our friend Morris' wrists. You see, Pycroft has been keeping a watch on the place, at my instructions, too. And you know what a zealous police officer he is!"

"Phew!" gasped Drake again.

"Come, let's saunter over and be in at the death!"

(There's a big surprise for Locke and a surprise for you in next week's gripping chapters of this thrilling tec story! Don't miss 'em, whatever you do!)

THE SPYING FORM-MASTER!

(Continued from page 24.)

Kebble was fearfully busy in the house-keeper's room; headmaster and Form-masters were fearfully busy, and, to tell the truth, a little short of temper; gowns whisked along the passages, Prout's deep voice boomed, and little Mr. Wiggins squeaked, and Mr. Hacker snapped.

Coker of the Fifth cuffed Bolsover minor of the Third, not because that youth had done anything, but simply because he was handy—and Coker had a short way with fags. Names were called, certificates were handed in, boxes and bags bumped, and slumped, and thumped.

Fellows gathered round the notice-boards to note the names of any new prefects, and comment—generally unfavourably—on the same. Fellows bagged their old studies, or tried to bag new studies—and there were as many as three or four scraps going on at one time.

Bob Cherry, sliding down the banisters, landed in the midst of a group of great and glorious Sixth Form men, knocking Wingate in one direction and Gwynne in another, and Loder in a third, for which Bob had the distinction of capturing the first "six" of the summer term.

Which did not diminish Bob's exuberant spirits for more than a few minutes, for it was only ten minutes later that he got Coker of the Fifth with an apple in the quad, knocking off Horace Coker's hat, to his great surprise and indignation.

Fisher T. Fish, who had spent his holidays at the school, opened his transatlantic mouth wide, letting off the stream of conversation that had been bottled up for weeks. He dropped into study after study, and talked and talked till fellows put their fingers to their ears, or shoved Fishy out into the passage to seek fresh victims. Billy Bunter informed most of the Remove that he had, by a queer mischance, left his money at home, at Bunter Court—at which the Removites chortled, having heard that one before. Tom Redwing, quite bronzed, after a holiday at sea, welcomed Herbert Vernon-Smith to Study No. 4 with a very bright face, and the Bounder, tough nut as he was, did not conceal how glad he was to see his chum again.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was heard to snort, quite audibly, when a tall and well-groomed young man came in. He did not like Mr. Smedley, and had not expected to see him back that term, and was surprised to see him. Prout's inimical glance followed the young man till he disappeared into his study, and, having snorted, he grunted.

"Is not Quelch returning this term, Capper?" he asked the master of the Fourth.

"Apparently not," said Capper. "I heard that he was recovered, but I concluded that there must have been a relapse, as Smedley is here."

"Puppy!" murmured Prout; and the Fourth Form-master stared, and then, realising that Prout was alluding to Smedley, smiled.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled into Study No. 1, where Wharton and Nugent were unpacking various things, and Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh were sitting on the table. "I say—"

"How did Bunter know you fellows were unpacking a cake?" asked Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—" Bunter blinked at the cake. "I didn't know—"

I came to say—I'll have some of that cake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I came here to say"—gobble, gobble!—"to say that that beast has come back. I say"—gobble, gobble!—"we're going to have a rotten term!"

"Which beast?" asked Bob. "Talking about yourself, as usual?"

"Yah! That beast, the Creeper and Crawler! I say, you fellows, I've seen Smedley!"

"Rotten!" said Bob.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "But what cannot be cured must go longest to the well, as the English proverb remarkably observes."

"I say, you fellows, it's too jolly thick!" said Bunter, gobbling cake.

"You cut it rather thick," said Harry, laughing.

"I don't mean the cake, you ass! I mean Smedley. He will take it out of us for cheeking him at Wharton Lodge. Of course, I hadn't the faintest idea that the tick was coming back this term, or I'd have treated him a bit more carefully. Beastly luck, Quelch getting that bang on his napper!"

"I dare say Quelch thought so."

"Oh, blow Quelch! I wasn't thinking of Quelch! It's landed the Creeper and Crawler on us again," said Bunter indignantly. "Think he'll remember us cheeking him in the hols?"

"I fancy he's got a rather good memory for that kind of thing," said the captain of the Remove. "Let him, if he likes!"

"That's all very well," said Bunter, "but I don't want to be whopped, if you do. Still, it will be worse for Smithy than anybody else. Smedley's got his knife into Smithy specially. Let's hope he'll stick to Smithy and take it all out of him," said Bunter thoughtfully.

"You fat sweep!"

"I say, this isn't a bad cake! Not so good as the one I was going to bring from Bunter Court, only I forgot it! But not bad! Look here, if you fellows don't want any I'll finish it!"

"Don't mind us!" said Wharton, with deep sarcasm.

Sarcasm was a sheer waste on William George Bunter!

"Right, old fellow, I won't!" he answered.

And he didn't!

Herbert Vernon-Smith looked into the study.

"That cur's back!" he said.

"Seen Smedley?" asked Bob.

The Famous Five did not need any further description to recognise the individual to whom the Bounder alluded.

"Yes. How did you leave Quelch, Wharton?" Smithy had left Wharton Lodge a few days before the end of the holidays. "Mending?"

"As well as could be expected," answered Harry. "He's staying with my uncle till the end of May. Can't move yet. Then he's going back to Bournemouth."

"That means that we shan't see him this term!" said the Bounder, his face darkening.

"Not before half-term, at earliest! It's thoroughly rotten! We've all got Smedley down on us, from what happened in the hols. We shall have to mind our step this term."

"Specially you, Smithy!" grinned Billy Bunter. "You'll be snaffled the first time you break bounds! He, he, he!"

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Well, if he goes for me he will get as good as he hands out!" growled the

Bounder. "I've no use for a spy, and an eavesdropper, and a sneak!"

"Mind how you talk, with the door open," grinned Bob. "You never hear the Creeper and Crawler coming. Member his stealthy step?"

The Bounder gave an angry grunt. "He can hear me, if he likes. This is going to be a rotten term!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"If you've got another cake—"

"Time we got down to Hall!" said Harry Wharton, as there was a clang from a bell. "That will be second call-over. Most of the fellows have gone down."

"Look here, I believe there's another cake in that box—"

"The rotter!" the Bounder was going on angrily. "It's sickening to be landed with the man again for another term! The creeping cad—"

"Don't shout, old man!"

"Oh, rats!"

The half-open door was pushed, and Tom Redwing came into the study.

"Mind how you talk here, you fellows," he said. "Smedley's coming up the Remove staircase. And you won't hear him when he passes your door. You know his ways."

The Bounder's eyes gleamed.

"Rot!" he said. "Let's all talk about him and give the worm something to listen to. It may do him good."

"For goodness' sake, don't play the goat, old chap!" exclaimed Redwing. "You don't want to start the term with a row."

Bob Cherry slipped from the study table. His eyes were dancing.

"Shut up, Smithy! I've got a better wheeze than that!" he whispered. "Lend me your ears, my infants."

He pushed the door shut, without latching it. There was no sound in the passage. The rest of the Remove had gone down for call-over in Hall, and it was time that the fellows in Study No. 1 went. But Bob Cherry had something on hand first. If Mr. Smedley was coming along from the stairs, no sound of a footstep heralded his approach. Only too well the juniors remembered the stealthy ways of the Creeper and Crawler. Bob Cherry whispered softly.

"We shall have to rush down to Hall! All of you rush when I do! If somebody's coming along without us hearing

him, he can't blame us if we rush into him."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured the Bounder. There was a grin round the study, and a fat chuckle from Billy Bunter.

Bob stood close by the door listening with all his ears. Close behind him stood the rest of the Co. and Smithy and Redwing, all ready for a sudden rush when Bob started. There was the faintest of sounds from the Remove passage—which certainly no one in Study No. 1 would have noticed, had they not been aware that the Creeper and Crawler was coming. As it was, they detected it, and knew that the stealthy man was outside the study—doubtless with his ear strained, as usual, to pick up words not intended for his hearing.

The door was suddenly flung open. Bob Cherry rushed out.

Crash!

He knew that Smedley was there, but he did not see him till he crashed into him. It was a terrific crash! Bob's charge on the football field was a thing to be dreaded—it was rather like a battering-ram! Smedley, taken by surprise, was charged fairly off his feet.

Bump!

After Bob, in a wild rush, came the rest of the juniors.

Bob sprawled over the sprawling Smedley! The rest of the crowd sprawled over Bob.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Who's that?"

"What the thump—"

"Urrrgh!" came in suffocated tones from the Creeper and Crawler, crushed and winded under seven sturdy juniors, wildly piled. "Yrrrgh! Wurrgh!"

"He, he, he!" squeaked Billy Bunter, blinking at the scene in great amusement from the doorway of Study No. 1. Bunter did not join in the charge! He was too wary of Smedley! But he found great entertainment in watching results.

"I've fallen over somebody—"

gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yurrgh!"

"Buck up, we shall be late for Hall!"

"Urrrgh!"

The juniors scrambled up. Hands and elbows and feet were planted all over Smedley, as they scrambled. Utterly winded, able only to gasp feebly, the Creeper and Crawler lay at their feet.

"Why, it's Mr. Smedley!" exclaimed Bob, apparently in great astonishment.

"Didn't see you, sir!" said Harry Wharton.

"Didn't hear you, sir!" said the Bounder.

"Buck up—the bells stopped!" exclaimed Nugent, and the crowd of juniors rushed on down the passage, and scampered down the stairs—and did not laugh till they were safe out of range of Smedley.

"Urrrgh! Groooh! Ooooh! Woogh!" gurgled Mr. Smedley, dragging himself dizzily to his feet. "Wurrgh!"

With the help of the wall, he staggered up. He glared round. The juniors, who were in such a hurry to get down to Hall, had vanished. Only Billy Bunter remained—grinning! Really, it was injudicious of Bunter to grin, in the circumstances! What Mr. Smedley chiefly wanted, just then, was a victim! Billy Bunter came in handy!

Smack!

Bunter ceased to grin, and yelled, as Smedley smote!

Smack!

"Yaroooh! Wow! I haven't done anything!" roared Bunter. "I—"

Smack!

"Whoop!"

Smack!

Bunter fled for the stairs, yelling, Smedley made one stride after him, stopped, and leaned on the wall, gasping. He had to get his second wind before he could proceed farther. Which was very fortunate for William George Bunter.

There was going to be trouble that term! Harry Wharton & Co. had no doubt about that. Fortunately, those cheery youths were not wholly unaccustomed to trouble, and they entertained a well-founded opinion that they would be able to keep their end up.

THE END.

(Things don't look any too happy for Vernon-Smith, do they? Neither are they for the scheming Smedley, as you will learn when you read: "BUNTER, THE VENTRILOQUIST!" next week's tip-top yarn of the chums of Greyfriars! Be sure to order your copy early, chums!)

MY GREAT OFFER

Write for my free Bargain List of the best ALL-BRITISH Cycles. 14 DAYS' APPROVAL. CARRIAGE PAID. Cash price £3:10:0, or terms. All accessories FREE. Value 21/-.

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Parrier THE WOLVERHAMPTON CYCLE DEALER, 50, ST. COVENTRY.

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I promise you Robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina, and Dashing Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10, 25 lbs. to your muscular development (with 2 ins. on Chest and 1 in. on Arms), also brings an Iron Will, Perfect Self-control, Virile Manhood, Personal Magnetism. Surprise your friends! Complete Course, 5/-; Details free, privately.—**STEBBING INSTITUTE (A), 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.**

300 STAMPS FOR 6d. (Abroad 1/-), including Airpost, Barbados, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—**W. A. WHITE, Dept. H, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge.**

INCREASED my own height to 6ft. 3ins.!! T. H., age 16½, to 6ft. 1 T. F., age 21, from 5ft. 5 to 5ft. 10! **Ross System** is Genuine. Enrol and Watch Yourself Grow! Fee £2; 2s. Particulars 2½d. stamp.—**P. ROSS, Height Specialist, Scarborough.**

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BE TALL Your Height Increased in 14 days or Money Back. Amazing Course, 5/-; Send **STAMP NOW** for free book.—**STEBBING SYSTEM, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.**

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STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—**FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.**

BLUSHING, Shyness, "Nerves," Self-consciousness, Worry Habit, Unreasonable Fears, etc., cured or money back! Complete Course 5/-. Details—**L. A. STEBBING, 28, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.**

DON'T BE BULLIED! Some splendid illus. lessons in Jujitsu. Articles and full particulars Free. Better than Boxing. 2d. stamp for postage. Learn to fear no man. Or send P.O. 1/- for First Part to: "A.P." **Bienheim House, Bedford Lane, Fencham, Middx.**

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GUARANTEED FOR EVER
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All applications for Advertisement space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

DO YOU LIKE TRAGEDY?

"East Lynne" is being played at Courtfield if you do, and there's an awfully tragic picture on at the Courtfield Cinema; but if you want to go the whole hog and see something that will make you weep for a week, trot over to Little Side this evening. The Fourth are going to practise cricket!

Matinee Idol or Comedian?

As soon as it was announced that Wilby's film, "The World of Youth," was definitely going to be produced, William George Bunter rolled into the producer's headquarters at Study No. 6. He explained that he had come to offer his services as the leading actor in the piece. He added that although he was worth much more, he was willing to under-take the role for the paltry sum of twenty pounds—ten on the spot and ten when the work was done.

Bunter's Dual Role

"Suits me!" said Bunter, who was very well suited at that moment by the box of chocolates he had found on the table. "What sort of a character do I take?"

A hero, naturally," agreed Wilby. "You take the part of Willy Grunter, with a large number of titled relations who send him shoals of postal orders. But he suffers from a bitter inward sorrow—the postal orders all get lost in the post."

"My hat!" He sounds a fine type of chap," commented Bunter, a little taken aback to find his genius recognised so promptly. "To be quite frank, I didn't expect an ignorant beast like you to realise what a jolly fine actor I am. I'll take the tenner in pound notes if you don't mind."

"Sit down, old bean," Wilby said genially. "There's just a slight snag there. We can't afford to pay anybody, so there won't be any tenner. I'm quite sure, however, that a great artist like yourself will be only too willing to help us out with his talents free of charge. Of course, refreshments will be supplied."

"What ho—I mean, rely on me, old chap!" said Bunter, with a wave of his fat palm. "Anything for the cause, you know. They'll have to be jolly good refreshments, of course."

"Oh, of course!" Wilby grinned. "Now, what the intend doing, is to film the scenes in which you are featured first of all. Then we can take the rest afterwards and rearrange the shots, see?"

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on location behind the chapel soon after dinner on Wednesday. Is it a deal?"

"Done!" said Bunter. "Then we needn't detain you any longer now!"

And Bunter went—taking Wilby's box of chocolates with him!

Wilby and his helpers put in some sterling work on Wednesday afternoon. So did Bunter. Taking Wilby's tip just to be himself, Bunter acted the part of Willy Grunter just as Wilby wanted him to act it.

So well did the production proceed that by the end of the afternoon all the scenes in which Bunter figured had been "shot."

It was a marvellous afternoon's work. Bunter went away convinced that a new star had begun to shine in the firmament—that a screen hero who would put every other screen hero in the shade had "arrived!"

There is only one little mistake he has made, and now that his part of the production is over we're at liberty to put him right on that.

Bunter is NOT, as he supposed, the hero of the piece. Wilby allowed him to remain under that delusion merely to avoid argument.

As a matter of fact, he is the principal comedian!

Patrick Gwynne, Wingate's chum, is a fighting Irishman, and rather hot-tempered. His tag, Gaiety, says he is very generous in reward—his services with facts and other dainties, however!

Harroo Singh possesses a great deal of valuable Indian jewellery which he never wears. He only grinned when Bunter suggested he should pawn it to tide Bunter over till next vac!

Cecil Reginald Temple believes in keeping up appearances, even if he has lost his cunning. For something he said about Wharton in Bob's hearing. Through sunny-tempered himself, Bob is swift to hit out hard on behalf of his friends!

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MONDAY. Hoped for a day off to-day—but no luck! Coker turned up after school hours and took me for a chicken-chasing run around the lanes. Never did like chasing chickens. Bit thick to be made to do it against my will!

TUESDAY. Left on my lonesome to-day thank goodness! Bout time my achin' brakes and groaning gears had a rest! Spent the day wondering how I could bump off Coker. I mean bump him off without hurting him, of course; he's not a bad chap in the main, though the way he treats me is enough to give any self-respecting motor-bike the impression that he's a fiend in human shape.

WEDNESDAY. Something quite exciting this time! It all arose out of Coker calling on a certain Miss Phyllis Howell at Cliff House and asking her to allow him to take her for a ride. Miss Howell, who seems to be a bit of a humorist, responded to the invitation with quite a long speech, in which she thanked Coker for his kindness, stated that she was overwhelmed with it, called attention to her unworthiness of such high honours—and finally knocked Coker backwards by saying that anyway she couldn't come!

Coker, in a state of fury, drove off to Friar-dale Woods, and, leaving me at the top of a bank overlooking the lane, tramped into the wood to commune with Nature and reflect on the strangeness of the opposite sex. Seeing a chance of escape, I promptly rolled down the bank into the lane and lay there, hoping that some kind stranger would come along and ride off with me—perhaps taking me to a better home than the one I was leaving!

Eventually a tramp came along. He looked at me, looked all round him, stood me upright and then started me up. But before he could get away, a thunderbolt seemed to strike us both, and we collapsed in a heap with a loud roar.

Coker had spotted the move from the wood and had jumped down from the top of the bank right on to the back of my world-famous captor! And for several minutes after that I was in the thick of the fray, being kicked, rolled on and jumped on, until I hardly knew whether I was on my wheels or my handlebars!

The tramp fled at last, and Coker with a discoloured eye, a cut lip, and a collar less neck as souvenirs, dragged me down to the garage at Friar-dale, before returning himself to Greyfriars.

THURSDAY. A day in dock. Heard my doctor at the garage tell somebody else that I had a strong constitution, but had been badly handled all my life. I should jolly well think so, too!

FRIDAY. Back to the old routine! Coker drove me back to the school. We averaged about ten hairbreadth escapes a minute all the way. Oh, if only I could bump him off—and force him to stop riding me any more!

SATURDAY. Coker duly bumped off! It was the chance of a lifetime! The competitors for the Courfield and District Motor-cycle Cross-country Race were all lined up ready to start and all the other machines were looking ahead for the easiest route.

I was looking for the HARDEST—and when the race began, I found it! While Coker was looking round to yell to his pals, Potter and Greene: "She's going fine—I'll win the race all hands down!" I turned neatly into a fence—and the words had hardly left Coker's lips when we crashed! I collapsed. Coker flew over my handlebars and finished up on the top of a haystack!

When I came round again I heard Coker saying: "I'll get rid of the dashed thing and buy another!" Does he—he—can he, mean me?

SUNDAY. Hurrah! He can and he does! Coker says he has had his last ride in my saddle and to-morrow I'm to be taken away and sold!

Farewell, Coker—and good luck to my successor! HELL NEED IT!

Here's your chance, if you are! We've just this minute heard of an excellent opening for a slender youth and we know for a fact that the chap who gets in ought to go far. Someone's left the coalhole uncovered—and it's a ten-foot drop to the floor!

Looking out for a suitable career, is willing to train as a dictator, admiral of a fleet, telegraphic, prezident, film star or newspaper editor. Wire offers at once.

H. J. COKER, Fifth Form.

GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

Senior scholars who have in the past been in the habit of breaking bounds are likely to think twice about it in future—thanks to the main door of the School House, rang peal after peal on the bell.

In a very short time, the entire school was awakened, and Dr. Goodsmyte was opening the front door. He stared aghast at the breathless Sixth-Formers.

"Chalmers! Pray what is the meaning of this?" "The Press Gang!" "They have captured Hunt and by returning after midnight, sadder, if not wiser, men they surrendered the hired horses to mine host at the Cross Keys, and made their way back to school on Shanks' pony.

They were almost within sight of the gates when, to their surprise, and dismay, a crowd of rough fellows, whom they saw in the moonlight to be wearing seafaring clothes, rushed out from the shelter of a clump of trees and attacked them furiously.

Hunt and Chalmers, who are both fine fighters, put up a vigorous resistance and astonished their assailants by actually flooring one or two of their number. The odds, however, were far too great for them, and it was but a matter of seconds before Hunt was felled to the ground. Chalmers, realising that his wisest course was to escape and summon help, at once broke into a run. Being luckily endowed with long legs and immense energy, he found it easy to outdistance his pursuers, and reached Greyfriars before they had turned the bend of the road. To have waited at the gates while the porter

this time are doubtless taking him to sea for service aboard a merchant vessel. Let me lead a party to the rescue before it is too late!"

We need hardly say that the bare thought that a Greyfriars boy had been carried off by a Press Gang into servitude aboard a ship filled the headmaster with horror. Without wasting time in talk, he ordered all masters and senior boys to dress, while he himself did likewise. A few minutes later, no less than forty volunteers his

Having regard to the fright they received, the headmaster has let off Hunt and Chalmers with a warning as to their future conduct. Really, the warning was hardly necessary. The pair will assuredly never again break bounds at night after this adventure!

Jim: "Why is a good oarsman like a redskin?"

Ted: "Because he feathers must BETROOT-ful!"

ENGAGEMENTS CANCELLED

This is to inform the public that Wharton is going to disappear completely for several days.

To show him what I think of his decision to leave me out of the Remove Cricket Team, I'm just going to knock him right into the middle of next week!—BOLSOVER MAJOR, Study No. 10, Remove.

were marching out of the gates to the rescue of Hunt, led by Dr. Goodsmyte himself on horseback. In the meantime, the Press Gang had vanished and no trace of them was to be found in the lane. The headmaster, therefore, returned as he therefore, led the pursuers across the fields in the direction of Pegg Village, guessing that the Press Gang's ship was anchored off the coast at that point.

Sure enough, the pursuing party in due course sighted the seafaring men trudging across a footpath on the lower slopes of Black Pike, and carrying an unconscious figure in their midst! Dr. Goodsmyte instantly urged his charger into a gallop and the rescue party, cheering lustily, followed at a hot pace.

The battle which was fought 'neath Black Pike's shadow that night may well go down as the greatest in the school's annals. The seafaring men were armed with cudgels and used them freely—but not more freely than the Collegers used their staves and fists.

Eventually, the Greyfriars party put the enemy to flight and returned to the school in triumph. Many Collegers were injured in the fray, but none seriously, and the fact that they had been able to rescue their schoolfellow made their wounds seem of little account.

Mr. Prout greatly resents the insinuation that his face is the colour of a well-known edible root and asks us to deny the report.

We'd love to, sir, but we're afraid it's impossible. To preserve our reputation, we simply must BETROOT-ful!

Two umbrella-proof suits of armour. We called Coker a Silly Ass last week and his Aunt is coming to see us about it shortly! POTTER AND GREENE, Fifth Games Study.

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GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Donald Ogilvy is of a mechanical turn of mind, and has constructed a model liner which steams proudly up and down the school swimming bath! It is a scale model, made from odd scraps

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DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

The Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" is complaining that the nice strawberry-culled jam inside the doemutt that some Lady sent him tasted just like poison.

It sounds a most INK-KED-ible story!

LEARN TO SPEAK CORRECT

Spelling also taught. Why speak and rite ungrammatical when a master of the lang-widge will put you wise in a few easy lessons? Apply NUGENT MINOR, Second Form-room.

WANTED TO HIRE

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