

AMAZING School Story : THRILLING 'Tec Story : HUMOROUS Greyfriars Supplement INSIDE!

The MAGNET 2^D

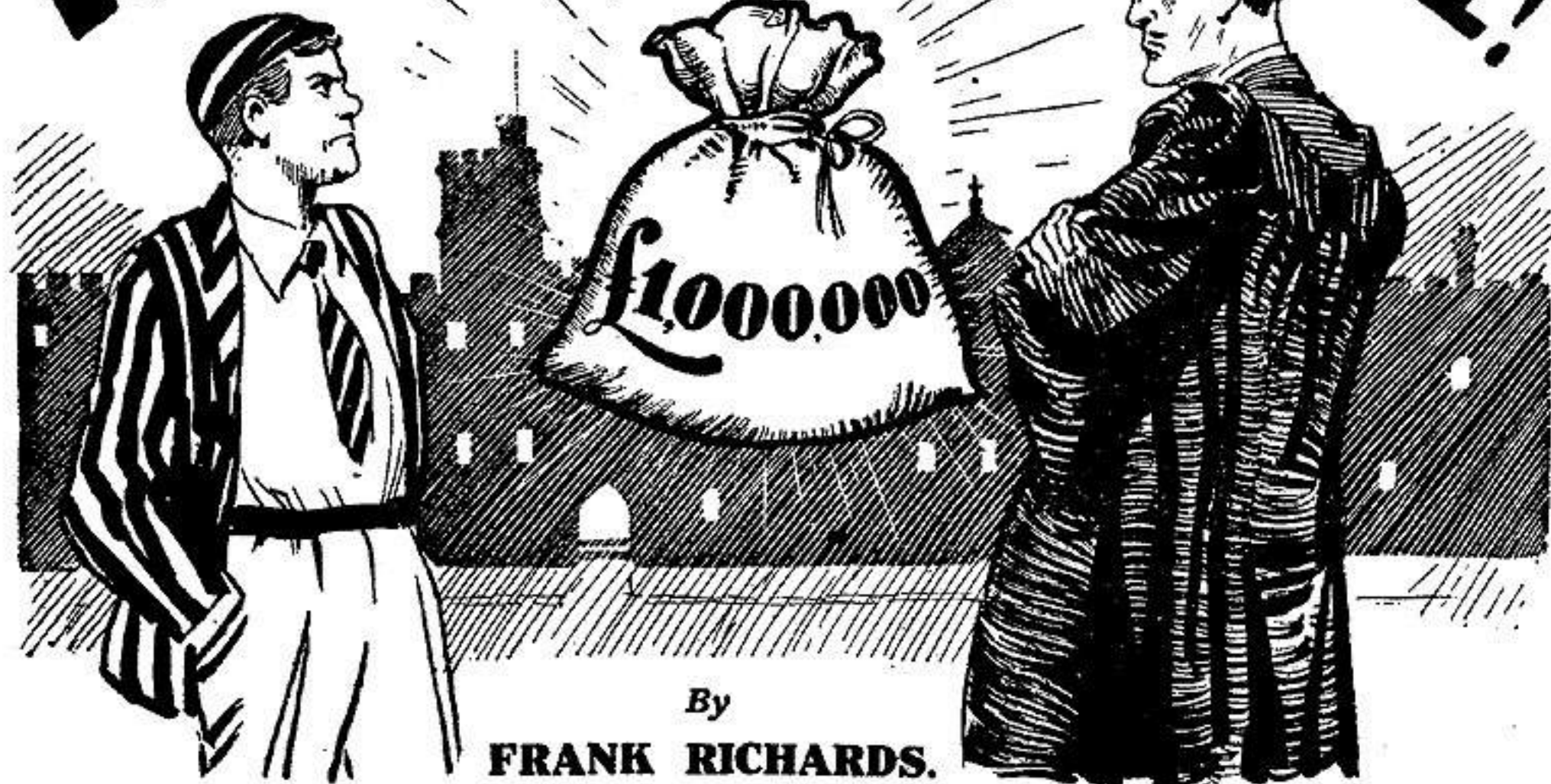
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EVERY SATURDAY.

Week Ending June 9th, 1934.



RIVALRY FOR A FORTUNE!



By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Wet!

"I SAY, Smithy!" yelled Billy Bunter.

Smithy did not trouble to answer, or to turn his head. He was sliding a light skiff from the Greyfriars raft into the river when the fat Owl of the Remove came rolling down past the boathouse. Billy Bunter blinked this way and that way through his big spectacles, spotted Herbert Vernon-Smith, and yelled. But the Bounder of Greyfriars heeded him no more than he heeded the insects that buzzed and circled over the shining surface of the Sark.

Bunter came panting across the raft. "Hold on, Smithy!" he gasped.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars—a glorious afternoon in early June. There were crowds of Greyfriars fellows along the river. Harry Wharton & Co. were pushing out their old boat for a pull up to Popper's Island. When they sighted Billy Bunter in the offing the Famous Five rather feared that they were to be honoured with the fat Owl's fascinating society. But Bunter did not give them a glance; his little, round eyes and his big, round spectacles were fixed on the Bounder.

"I say, Smithy, old fellow—" panted Bunter. He had nearly reached Smithy when Smithy stepped into the skiff and picked up the sculls. "I say, hold on! I'm coming!"

"Blow away, you fat wasp!" grunted the Bounder.

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Oh, rats!"

"But, I say—"

Vernon-Smith pushed off. Apparently

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he did not want Billy Bunter's company that sunny afternoon. Bunter, gasping for breath on the edge of the raft, glared after him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, old fat man!" called out Bob Cherry, from the Famous Five's boat. "If you want a run up the river, hop in here."

Sheer good nature dictated that offer, for neither Bob nor his chums had any yearning for Bunter's distinguished company.

"Come on, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton.

"Shan't!" answered Bunter, over a fat shoulder.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Shan't! Don't bother! I say, Smithy, hold on, you beast!" howled Bunter.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob.

Evidently, Billy Bunter wanted Smithy, and nobody else would do. Which was rather surprising, for certainly the Bounder of Greyfriars was not such good company as the chums of the Remove. Likewise, there was a picnic basket in the Famous Five's boat, and nothing of an étable nature in Smithy's. So it was not merely surprising—it was astonishing.

Six feet from the raft the Bounder sat and looked back, and grinned.

"Jump!" he said.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"If you're comin'—jump!"

Six feet was not much of a jump for any fellow in the Greyfriars Remove, excepting Billy Bunter. But Billy Bunter had rather too much weight to lift even that short distance. He hesitated.

"Go it, Bunter!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "You'll get a wash—and you've needed one all this term."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Comin'!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"I—I say, Smithy, come in a bit nearer!" urged Bunter. "I could jump it, of course, but I—I'm rather afraid of upsetting you."

"I'll risk it!"

"Well, look here, I jolly well won't!" roared Bunter. "And I can tell you, you'd better pull in, see? I jolly well know where you're going! How would you like Smedley to know? Or a prefect?"

The Bounder's brow darkened. He was not a fellow to be threatened, especially by such a fat and fatuous duffer as William George Bunter. The glint that came into his eyes might have scared Bunter if the fat Owl had not been too short-sighted to observe it.

"Shut up, you fathead!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, hastily.

A dozen fellows on the raft had heard Bunter's words, and they all looked round at the Bounder. If the scapegrace of the school was bound on one of his shady excursions that afternoon, it was not a matter to be shouted out for any ear to hear.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter. "You mind your own bizney, Wharton! Look here, Smithy, if you don't jolly well pull in—"

"I'm comin'," answered Smithy quietly.

He dipped the sculls, and the skiff rocked into the raft. Billy Bunter grinned with satisfaction.

His impression was that the Bounder realised that he had better mind his p's and q's. That impression, however, was not going to last long.

"Keep her steady!" he said.

With one scull resting on the edge of

the raft the Bounder kept her steady for Bunter to jump.

Bunter jumped.

At the same moment Vernon-Smith pushed off—as any fellow but Bunter would have guessed that he was going to do.

The skiff shot far out of Bunter's reach.

Splash!

The fat Owl of the Remove landed in the Sark, with a tremendous splash, sending up almost a waterspout.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar from the bank.

Vernon-Smith sculled away up the Sark, leaving the fat Owl to get out of the water the best he could. He was done with Bunter.

A fat face and a pair of dripping spectacles glimmered in the sunshine on the Sark.

"Urrrrrgh!" remarked Bunter, as he came up.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrgh!"

A shove of Bob Cherry's oar, and the Famous Five's boat was at hand. Johnny Bull leaned over and grasped Bunter by the collar.

"Wurrgh!" gurgled Bunter.

"Lend a hand here!" gasped Johnny Bull. "I can't land this whale!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Nugent and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh lent a hand each. Billy Bunter was hooked, dripping, into the Remove boat. He sat in a pool of water, drenched, dripping, and gurgling.

"Oooogh! I say, you fellows—woogh!" gurgled Bunter. "I say—urrgh! I'm drowned—I mean nearly drowned! Urrgh! I'm all wet! Wet through!"

"You've got that wash!" remarked Bob Cherry. "You can do with it, old fat man!"

"Beast! Urrgh! I'm soaked!" gasped Bunter. "I say, you fellows, that beast Smithy did that on purpose."

"Go hon!" grinned Nugent.

"I've a jolly good mind to tell Smedley where he's gone!" gasped Bunter. "I jolly well know he's gone up to the Three Fishers, to meet those Highliffe cads there! I knew he'd go first chance, now he's got a tenner—"

"What rot!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Smithy's got no tenners these days! His pater keeps him jolly short of money since he nearly got sacked for playing the giddy goat."

"Urrgh! That's all you know!" gasped Bunter. "His father was here on St. Jim's day, and he tipped Smithy a tenner—I jolly well saw him! And I jolly well know how Smithy's going to spend it! And—"

"And you were going to help him—what?" grinned Bob. "You fat, frowsy, frabjous fozler—"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Roll him out!" grunted Johnny Bull, in disgust.

Billy Bunter's keen anxiety to join the Bounder was explained now—if he knew that Mr. Vernon-Smith had, for once, relaxed his grim severity to the extent of tipping his scapegrace son a tenner. Every fellow who knew the black sheep of the Remove could have guessed where that tenner was likely to be spent, and Bunter, evidently, wanted to join Smithy in playing the giddy goat. Instead of which, he had got a ducking, which was certainly no more than he deserved.

The boat bumped on the raft, and Bunter rolled out. He wiped his spectacles, set them on his fat little nose,

and blinked up the river. The Bounder, in his skiff, was almost out of sight.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter. "He's gone! I say, you fellows, I'll come with you instead—wait for me! I shall have to go in and change—I won't keep you waiting more than half an hour."

"You won't!" agreed Bob Cherry. "Not so much, in fact."

And Bunter didn't keep the chums of the Remove waiting half an hour. He did not keep them waiting half a minute! As he rolled away, squelching water, the Remove boat pushed off from the raft, and Harry Wharton & Co. pulled away up the river and forgot his fat existence.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

All Right For Bunter!

"HAD a swim?" grinned Skinner. "With your clobber on?"

chuckled Snoop.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner and Snoop seemed amused. Billy Bunter gave them an indignant blink through his big spectacles.

The fat Owl looked rather a deplorable object as he rolled into the quad in the bright June sunshine. Sympathy, Bunter considered, ought to have been any fellow's feeling at the sight of him. Dripping with water, squelching it from his shoes, his cap a wet rag on a drenched head, Bunter looked on the situation as rather tragic than comic. Other fellows, however, seemed to see something comic in it. Smiles on all

The Form-master who came to Greyfriars to ruin the "Bounder of the Remove" and win for himself a fortune of a million pounds!

sides greeted the appearance of the limp and dripping Owl.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at, you fellows!" snorted Bunter. "I've been in the river—"

"Was it wet?" asked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm soaked!" groaned Bunter. "And that beast Smithy got off without me, after all! I thought he'd like me to go with him, you know. Since he rowed with Redwing he hasn't got a pal—and I was willing to be pally. I'm sorry now I took the fellow up!"

"He seems to have taken you down in return!" chuckled Skinner. "Did Smithy drop you in the river?"

"Yes, he jolly well did! And I've a jolly good mind to make him sit up for it!" grunted Bunter. "If Smedley knew where he was going in that boat—"

"Shut up, ass!" whispered Skinner, with a gesture towards a tall figure walking by the elms at a little distance.

It was that of Mr. Smedley, the temporary master of the Remove. He was glancing towards Bunter, perhaps surprised to see a member of his Form in such a moulting state.

"Rats!" grunted Bunter, who did not see Smedley. "I jolly well know where Smithy was going—up the river to the Three Fishers—"

"You blithering Owl, Smedley's listening to you!" breathed Skinner, and he walked hastily away with Snoop.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter. "Oh crikey!"

He blinked round through his big spectacles.

Mr. Smedley was coming towards him,

and Bunter decided not to see him and to make for the House at once. He had a good excuse for hurry, being wet to his fat skin.

In spite of his intense desire to make the Bounder "sit up" for giving him that ducking, Bunter had no idea of sneaking to the beaks on the subject. Bunter had plenty of faults—indeed, their name was legion!—but he was no sneak. Moreover, the consequences of sneaking in the Greyfriars Remove were likely to be painful. Hardly a fellow in the Form approved of the Bounder's shady ways, but all the fellows would have agreed to make a sneak feel that life in the Remove was not worth living. So Bunter headed for the House at a trot and affected not to hear a sharp voice that barked after him.

There was a rapid footstep on his trail, and a hand grasped him by the shoulder and spun him round.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

"How dare you not stop when I call to you, Bunter!" snapped Mr. Smedley.

"I—I'm wet, sir!" mumbled Bunter.

"I—I—I fell in the river, sir! I—I've got to change—"

"Did Vernon-Smith cause the accident?"

"Oh! Yes! No!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I missed the boat when I jumped, sir—"

"You were going with Vernon-Smith, then?"

"Oh, no, sir! I wouldn't go to such a place!" gasped Bunter.

"What place?"

"Oh, nowhere, sir! I—I don't think Smithy was—was going anywhere, sir!" stammered the hapless Owl. "I mean it wasn't Smithy at all! It was—was Redwing, sir—"

"What do you mean, Bunter? Redwing is in the House."

"Oh lor! I—I mean it was Toddy, sir—Peter Todd! I—I haven't seen Smithy at all, and he never went up the river in his skiff, sir, and I hadn't the faintest idea where he was going, and I never even thought of going with him, sir—I wouldn't!"

Mr. Smedley gazed at that bright member of his Form.

Billy Bunter's usual resource in times of difficulty was fibbing. But it was not really much of a resource, for Bunter's fibs could hardly have been swallowed by the most trustful of human beings. Mr. Smedley, whom the juniors called the "Creeper and Crawler," was probably one of the least trustful.

"You may go in and change, Bunter," said Mr. Smedley grimly. "And you will remain within gates for the rest of the afternoon."

"Oh, really, sir, I haven't done anything!" gasped Bunter in dismay. "And some of the fellows are going on a picnic up the river, sir, and they want me—they won't enjoy it if I'm not there, sir—"

"If you go out of gates again this afternoon, Bunter, I shall cane you with the utmost severity."

"Oh lor!"

"Go into the House at once and dry yourself."

Bunter rolled on towards the House. Mr. Smedley turned and walked away to the gates. Until Bunter came in, the Remove-master had been walking by the elms idly; now, however, he seemed imbued with sudden activity. He walked down to the gates with long and rapid strides and went out.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

He made his way wearily to the Remove dormitory, when he dried his fat

person and changed his clothes; then he came down to the Remove passage.

It was frightfully unjust, in Bunter's opinion, for a fellow to be gated for having fallen into the river. But there it was—he was gated, and he dared not risk going out again after what Smedley had said. Evidently he was going to miss that picnic up the river with the Famous Five.

He could have found comfort in the school shop, but for the unfortunate circumstance that a postal order which he had been long expecting had not yet arrived. Bunter was in his usual stony state.

But there were other resources—and the fat Owl headed for Study No. 4 in the Remove in search of them.

Study No. 4 was the Bounder's study—and the Bounder was far away. Since his narrow escape from the "sack" Smithy had been kept short of money by his father, but Bunter knew that his credit at the school shop was unlimited. His study cupboard was still the most lavishly supplied in the Remove.

Smithy having done him out of a picnic, Bunter felt that he was justified in getting compensation from that well supplied study cupboard. He had the opportunity now that Smithy was out. And, in point of fact, Billy Bunter thought more of the opportunity than of the justification. Opportunity was essential, and he could have done without the justification at a pinch.

He opened the door of Study No. 4 and rolled in.

A junior seated at the study table, pen in hand, glanced round. It was Tom Redwing, the Bounder's study-mate—no longer his chum. Bunter gave him a startled blink through his big spectacles.

He had not expected to find Redwing there. Tom was an open-air fellow, very unlikely to be sticking in a study on a bright summer's afternoon. But there he was!

"Want anything?" asked Redwing.

"Eh? Oh! Yes! No!" stammered Bunter. "I—I say, what are you sticking indoors for, Redwing?"

"Lines," answered Tom briefly. "I had two hundred from Smedley this morning."

"I say, I wouldn't do them now, old chap!" said Bunter. "You're wasting a beautiful afternoon. Leave them till after tea."

"They've got to be handed in by tea-time. I'm nearly finished, too. Cut off, and don't interrupt."

Bunter did not cut off.

He blinked morosely at Redwing as that junior resumed writing lines. Redwing was in the way—and had to be got out of the way somehow. Although the Bounder had rowed with him, and they were no longer pals, it was fairly certain that he would not allow Bunter to raid Smithy's tuck under his eyes.

"I—I—I say, I hate to see a fellow like you sticking indoors on a day like this," said Bunter at last. "Look here, I'll finish your lines for you, old chap!"

Redwing stared at him. Such an offer from the fat and lazy Owl was really startling.

"I mean it," said Bunter. "Leave it to me, old fellow."

Redwing laughed.

"I hardly think Smedley would be satisfied," he remarked. "Thanks all the same, Bunter—nothing doing."

"Oh, Smedley hardly looks at the lines!" urged Bunter. "He isn't like old Queich. Lot he cares how a fellow does his lines! He doesn't care a rap for anything, except trying to catch Smithy out. If it was Smithy it

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.

wouldn't do, but it's all right with your lines. Leave them to me."

Redwing shook his head and went on writing.

Bunter scowled ferociously at the top of his bent head. How was he going to get rid of the beast?

"I—I say, Redwing." He tried again. "I say, Wharton told me to tell you he wanted you in his boat. They're waiting for you at the raft."

Redwing looked up again.

"What are you trying to get me out of the study for?" he asked.

"Eh?" Bunter blinked at him, quite astonished that his fatuous manoeuvres had been seen through. "Oh, really, Redwing—"

"If you're after Smithy's tuck, you fat duffer—"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Get out, and let me finish these lines."

"Shan't!" hooted Bunter. "That rotter Smithy has done me out of a picnic. Serve him jolly well right if Smedley catches him! Anyhow, he won't want the tuck when he comes in!" added Bunter thoughtfully. "If Smedley catches him at the Three Fishers, he will be up for the sack, and he won't feel much like a study spread."

Redwing started. He dropped his pen and rose to his feet. As he was no longer Smithy's pal, it might have been supposed that he would take no interest in the proceedings of the scapegrace of Greyfriars, or in the danger that accrued therefrom. But it seemed that he did! He fixed his startled eyes on Bunter's fat face.

"Has Smithy gone up to that den on the river?" he snapped.

"Yes, he has!" granted Bunter. "I heard him talking it over with Skinner in break. Skinner wouldn't go—"

"How can Smedley know anything about it?"

"He happened to hear me speaking—"

"Has he gone after him?"

"Well, he went out of gates jolly quick," said Bunter. "I fancy he's after Smithy! Come to think of it, I dare say that's why he gated me—he fancied I might go and give Smithy the tip. He, he, he! I'd watch it!"

"How long ago was it?" panted Redwing.

"Eh! I forget— Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as Redwing grabbed him by a fat shoulder and shook him. "Wharrer you up to? Leggo, you beast! If you make my specs fall off—wow—and they get broken—ow—you'll have to—yow-ow—p-p-pay for them! Beast!"

"Tell me how long it is since Smedley went, you fat fool?" hissed Redwing.

"Ow! Leggo! About half an hour!" gasped Bunter. "Leggo! Wharrer you shaking me for, you silly ass? Oh, lor! Whooop!"

Redwing spun him away and ran out of the study. Bunter sat down on the floor with a heavy bump, and roared.

"Ow! Beast! Wow! Yooop! Ow!"

The fat Owl picked himself up. He blinked out of the study doorway, and had a glimpse of Tom Redwing, vanishing down the Remove staircase.

"Well, my hat!" gasped Bunter.

He grinned.

Why Redwing had cut off so suddenly, leaving his lines unfinished, and Smithy's tuck at the fat Owl's mercy, Bunter did not know. Neither did he care! For some mysterious reason, Redwing had gone. What Bunter wanted to happen had happened! He shut the door of the study and opened that of the cupboard. For a moment

or two he feasted his eyes and his spectacles on the tuck within. Then Bunter got busy!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Helping Hand!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

He gave a nod towards a tall figure coming up the towpath along the green bank of the Sark, and the other fellows in the Remove boat glanced at it.

"The Creeper and Crawler!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Lucky we're not out of bounds yet!" grinned Bob. "He's got his jolly old eye on us."

Vernon-Smith, in his light, swift skiff, had long since vanished up the river. But the rather heavy old boat belonging to the Co. was making slower progress. There was a strong current on the Sark, fed by recent rain, and the juniors were pulling against it. Likewise, they were in no hurry, but were taking things quite easily. So they were still at a good distance from Popper's Island when Mr. Smedley came in sight on the towpath.

Popper's Island was out of bounds—which did not prevent fellows from landing on it for picnics. But it meant lines, or a gating, if a "beak" spotted them doing so. So all the Famous Five were glad that they were still on the safe side of their destination when they spotted the tall figure of Smedley on the bank.

Mr. Smedley had been nicknamed the Creeper and Crawler by his Form, but at the moment he was certainly neither creeping nor crawling—he was striding up the towpath at a very good rate of speed.

He had sighted the boat, and his eyes were on it as he came. But as the juniors were still well within school bounds, they did not mind.

"Better keep clear of the island while Smedley's in the offing," remarked Harry Wharton. "He would be glad to give us lines."

"The gladfulness would probably be terrific," agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and disgusting Smedley does not like our honourable and ridiculous selves."

"Hallo hallo, hallo! He's bailing us!"

Mr. Smedley came down to the margin of the river, and waved his hand to the juniors in the boat.

"Wharton!" he called.

"Better pull in!" grunted Johnny Bull. And the Remove boat drew into the steep, grassy bank, and Wharton stood up.

"Did you call me, sir?" he asked politely.

"I did, Wharton! Have you seen Vernon-Smith on the river, or on the towpath?"

"Vernon-Smith?" repeated the captain of the Remove.

He realised at once that Smedley was not there on the Co.'s account. Probably he did not care two straws whether they broke bounds or not; he was not a dutiful Form-master. Indeed, had the juniors only known it, he was not a schoolmaster at all, but something very different. Of that, however, there was as yet no suspicion at Greyfriars.

Smedley was after the Bounder! From what they had heard from Bunter, the Famous Five could guess where Smithy was. Apparently Smedley guessed it, too—or, at least, suspected.

"Answer me, Wharton!" rapped Mr. Smedley, as Wharton hesitated.

"Oh, certainly, sir! We've seen Vernon-Smith," answered Harry. "I—I think he was in his skiff."

Faces in the boat were grave now. The juniors were not a quarter of a mile from that exceedingly disreputable resort, the Three Fishers, which had a gate on the towpath. If the Bounder was there—and they had no doubt that he was—he was fairly caught, if Smedley looked for him.

"Did you see him land?"

"No, sir."

"He is ahead of you on the river?"

"Yes, sir."

"Might be miles ahead, sir!" said Bob Cherry. "He was going great

"Under Courtfield Bridge, and past the town—it's only a few miles. Smithy has done it often enough."

"He was talking this morning about seeing Ponsonby," remarked Frank Nugent. "Ponsonby's a Highcliffe fellow, sir."

"You may go!" snapped Mr. Smedley.

"Thank you, sir."

The juniors pushed off again, and pulled on slowly. They were rather curious, and a little anxious, to see what Smedley would do.

He stood on the bank with a knitted brow for some minutes, and then resumed his walk up the river.

In a few minutes he was ahead of the boat.

"That blithering idiot Smithy!"

a few minutes, the master of the Remove went in, and disappeared from sight.

"That tears it!" murmured Bob. "Well, Smithy has asked for it often enough, and he will get it this time—right in the neck!"

"The neckfulness will be terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Look at that, my esteemed chums!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur pointed with a dusky hand at a skiff tied up under the hawthorn bushes on the edge of the towpath.

"Smithy's boat!" breathed Bob.

Under the high bank the skiff had been invisible to the Form-master. But it was plain enough to the view from the river.



There was a rapid footstep on Bunter's trail, and a hand grasped him by the shoulder, and spun him round. "Ow!" he gasped. "How dare you not stop when I call you, Bunter?" snapped Mr. Smedley. "I—I'm wet, sir—" mumbled the fat Removeite. "I—I—I fell in the river, sir!" "Did Vernon-Smith cause the accident?" "Oh, yes! No!" gasped Bunter.

guns in his skiff. Might be at Highcliffe by this time."

Bob had not the faintest belief that Vernon-Smith had gone on a long, long pull up the river, past the town of Courtfield, as far as Highcliffe School. But he thought it rather a useful suggestion to throw out. Smithy had friends at Highcliffe, and might very likely pay them a visit on a half-holiday. The Famous Five had their own opinion of Smithy's dingy rascalities, and it was a strong opinion. Nevertheless, they would have saved him from the spying eyes of the Creeper and Crawler if they could.

"Highcliffe!" repeated Mr. Smedley, staring at Bob. "Can one get to Highcliffe by the river?" Mr. Smedley had not been long at Greyfriars, and was not fully acquainted with the local topography.

"Oh, yes, sir!" answered Bob.

murmured Bob. "Isn't he the man to ask for trouble? Smedley's got wind of something—but he's not sure, or he wouldn't be stopping fellows to ask for information. If he goes into that den he will nail the howling ass on the spot."

"Well, Smithy's a wary bird," remarked Nugent. "He will have his eyes open. Hallo, there he goes!"

The Famous Five were pulling to keep pace with Smedley, to see where he went. They saw him halt at the gateway of the riverside inn. He stood looking in at the gateway, his back to the boat.

The Three Fishers was not a place that a Greyfriars master could enter, except for a very powerful reason. But the chance of catching the Bounder in the very act of breaking all the rules of the school was too good to be lost, and, after scanning the place for

Harry Wharton caught his breath Reckless as the Bounder was, such recklessness as this was really the limit.

"The ass!" breathed Wharton. "The utter ass! Anybody coming along the river might see that skiff, and know it was Smithy's. And—if Smedley misses him there, he will think of it and look for it—and—" He broke off. "Pull in, you men!"

The boat slanted to the bank, and Wharton reached over the skiff, untied the painter, and pulled it away.

Johnny Bull gave a grunt. "Look here, I don't see chipping in!" he growled. "A dingy rotter who goes blagging ought to be jolly well sacked!"

"My esteemed Johnny," murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh, "the helpfulness of a lame dog over a stile is

a stitch in time that saves the cracked pitcher from going longest to the well, as the English proverb remarks."

"Some proverb!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," said Wharton rather gruffly, "Smithy's a bad hat, but nobody wants to see him sacked. And Smedley isn't after him because he's a bad hat, but because he dislikes him for some reason or other. If he looks for Smithy's boat, he's jolly well not going to find it, and that's that."

Johnny Bull grunted again, but he made no further demur. The Famous Five pulled on up the Sark, with Smithy's skiff in tow. They pulled fast enough now, anxious to be out of sight before Smedley emerged into view again. But they saw no more of the Creeper and Crawler, and the Three Fishers was soon out of view beyond a bend of the river.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Redwing Takes the Risk!

TOM REDWING ran his bike down to the road, and threw a leg over the machine. He jammed at the pedals, and started almost like an arrow up the Courtfield road.

According to Bunter, it was half an hour since Smedley had gone out; but he had gone on foot. It was possible to get ahead of him on a bike—there was, at least, a chance. It depended a good deal on which way the Creeper and Crawler went, and at what rate of speed. The way by the towpath was much longer than the way by the road—and it was by the latter that Redwing went on his bike.

His pedals fairly flashed round as he drove at them.

For two or three weeks the Bounder and his former chum had exchanged hardly a word. The hot-headed scape-grace had resented Tom's efforts to prevent him from making a fool of himself, to the extent of breaking off the friendship. And Tom, on his side, had been angry and fed-up. But he forgot that now.

He knew, what was known to few in the Remove, that it was not only the "sack" that impended over Smithy. It was the sack, if he was spotted at a dingy den out of bounds—and the sack meant that he would be disinherited by his father!

That was what he was risking now, in his unthinking folly; and from that Tom was going to save him, if he could. It was no time to remember that they were no longer pals; he could remember that later. At the present moment he was only thinking of Smithy and his danger.

He did not even think of his own danger. He was going to warn Smithy in time if he could; but he could not do so without entering the precincts of the Three Fishers—which meant expulsion from Greyfriars if he was found out. He was running the same risk as the Bounder, though from very different motives.

Heedless of traffic on the road, Redwing raced on his machine, and in a very short time he reached the spot where a signboard showing over a fence announced that he was near his destination. The gate, however, was round the corner in Oak Lane, and Redwing whizzed round the corner into the shady lane.

Generally that lane was rather lonely. But it was not lonely now.

Plenty of people were to be seen in it, in twos and threes, all heading in the same direction.

Redwing slowed down, setting his lips.

He remembered that he had heard some talk about a glove-fight at the Three Fishers that afternoon—a scrapping contest that was barely within the limits of the law. Choice spirits like Skinner of the Remove, and Angel of the Fourth, and Price of the Fifth, discussed the affair, but did not venture to attend it; they lacked the Bounder's reckless hardihood and nerve.

The beery-looking crowd under Redwing's eyes was evidently attracted by the coming contest between the Lantham Pet and the Game Chicken. Among them Redwing recognised the squat figure and red face of Mr. Banks, the bookmaker—going there on business! He slowed down and jumped off his machine.

He could not go in with that crowd! The sight of a Greyfriars fellow among them would draw too much attention.

But delay was dangerous! Already, as likely as not, he was too late. Probably Smedley had gone by the towpath, as no doubt he was aware that Smithy had started out in a boat. Still, he had had time to get to the place by the river.

Redwing's heart was heavy with anxiety.

He dismounted, and wheeled his bike into a clump of bushes on the common beside the lane. Then he crossed the lane again, to the high wooden fence of the Three Fishers.

He had to wait a few minutes till the lane was clear; he could hardly climb the fence with eyes upon him, even the eyes of strangers.

A bunch of horsey-looking men passed him, and as soon as they were gone, and before others came in sight, the Greyfriars junior made a jump and caught the top of the fence with his hands.

Almost in a twinkling, he swung himself over, and dropped on the inner side.

He was out of sight from the road now, as the fence was over six feet high. He stood for a moment or two, panting for breath, his heart throbbing painfully.

So far he had thought only of Smithy, and the fact that the Creeper and Crawler was on his trail. Now it came into his mind, with a shock, that he was out of school bounds, and within the precincts of the most disreputable den in the vicinity; and that he was booked for the sack if that fact came to the knowledge of his headmaster.

Redwing had no trace of the Bounder's recklessness, or of his black-guardism; he did not think that there was anything clever in "fooling the beaks." The thought of facing his headmaster on a charge of having done exactly what he was doing now, brought a flush of shame to his cheek.

But he did not hesitate.

Smithy might be a "bad hat"—there might be in him a kind of black-guardism that seemed ineradicable. But he had been Redwing's pal—and a good pal, when his headstrong and unreasonable temper was not in the ascendant. And the man who was tracking him down was not a Form-master doing his duty, but a man who, for some unknown reason, was the Bounder's enemy. That made a difference.

Leaving the fence, he ran by weedy paths through ill-kept shrubberies,

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till he sighted the red-tiled building of the inn near the river.

At a little distance from the inn there was a large barn, and towards that a number of people were heading, among them Mr. Banks and a bunch of his beery friends from the Cross Keys.

Redwing could guess that it was in the barn that the fight was to take place, and he pictured the Bounder, crammed among the watching crowd there, as likely as not making bets on the result of the scrap.

He felt a throb of disgust, but that made no difference to his purpose.

Standing among the shrubberies, he watched the passing faces, in the hope of spotting the fellow of whom he had come in search.

His only thought, when he had left Bunter in Study No. 4, and rushed away for his bike, had been to get to the Three Fishers, find Smithy, and warn him to get clear. Now that he was on the spot, however, he realised that the task was more difficult than he had foreseen.

Where was Smithy?

Somewhere among the dingy mob in the grounds of the Three Fishers; but there were several hundred people about, at least, and picking him out was no easy task.

As he stood watching, Redwing suddenly sighted a tall figure, head and shoulders above most of the crowd.

Instantly he dropped out of sight in the shrubberies.

It was Mr. Smedley, and in another moment the master of the Remove would have seen him!

Redwing's heart thumped.

The Creeper and Crawler was there! He was looking for Smithy, that was certain; but evidently he had not yet spotted him, or he would not have been still there!

Watching the tall figure, through the interstices of the shrubbery, Redwing saw Mr. Smedley arrive at the big open doorway of the barn and pass in.

He could have groaned.

The barn was already filling, and a buzz of voices proceeded from it. If Smithy was already there his game was up.

In bitter anxiety Redwing watched, more than half-expecting to see Smedley emerge from the barn again, with his hand gripping the collar of the Bounder of Greyfriars.

But he did not come out.

Five minutes passed—ten minutes—and still Smedley remained in the barn. Redwing breathed more freely.

Smithy was not there yet. Had he been there Smedley would have spotted him by this time.

But he was going there—that was why he was at the Three Fishers that afternoon. And unless he was warned he would walk in, right under the cold, hard, watching eyes of the Creeper and Crawler.

How was Redwing to find him and tip him in time? He clenched his hands desperately as he tried to think.

A drawing voice that he knew fell on his ears. It was the voice of Cecil Ponsonby, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.

"You're an ass, Smithy! I'm tellin' you that the Chicken is goin' to win, and I've got money on him with Banks."

Redwing stared round, his heart leaping.

Three well dressed fellows were coming up the path by the shrubbery. Ponsonby and Vavasour, of Highcliffe, and Herbert Vernon-Smith.

The Bounder was strolling along with his Highcliffe friends, his hands in his

pockets. Evidently no thought of danger was in his mind. He had been careful enough getting into the forbidden precincts; but once within the walls of the Three Fishers, Smithy did not expect any eye that knew him to fall on him. There was an unlighted cigarette sticking out of the corner of his mouth. Pon and Vavasour were smoking. All three seemed to be in high spirits.

They came abreast of the spot where Redwing stood—a spot within sight of the barn, if Smedley happened to look out of the doorway.

HAROLD SKINNER BURSTS INTO THE LIMELIGHT!

Harold Skinner, of the Greyfriars Remove, is not only a gifted cartoonist, but he knows how to string a rhyme together. We hope readers will be as pleased with Harold Skinner's unique efforts, featuring Greyfriars celebrities, as Harold Skinner is.—Ed.



No. 1.

PAUL PONTIFEX PROUT, M.A. (Master of the Fifth Form.)

Old Prout in eighteen-ninety-eight
Shot bears and sent them to their doom,
Or so he's often heard to state
Within the Masters' Common-room.

The happiest moment of his day
Is when the Form-room work is done,
And he can slowly plod away
To fondle his beloved gun.

Redwing made a sudden leap, grabbed the Bounder by the collar, and dragged him headlong into the shrubbery.

The action was so sudden and so swift that Vernon-Smith was taken completely by surprise. Before he knew what was happening he was sprawling in the shrubbery, gasping and bewildered, at full length on the ground, and with Tom Redwing's strong grip holding him there.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Friend or Foe!

"KEEP down——"
"What the thump——"
"Keep down! You'll be seen!" panted Redwing.
Vernon-Smith did not heed. He

wrenched himself loose from Redwing's grasp and staggered to his feet.

His hat had fallen off, his tie streamed out, his cigarette had slipped into his mouth. He spat it out savagely. His eyes glinted with rage at Redwing and he clenched his hands.

"You—Redwing—you cheeky, meddlin' fool!" he panted, choking with rage. "What the thump do you mean, layin' your cheeky hands on me——"

He advanced on Redwing, his clenched hands up, his eyes blazing over them. Redwing backed away.

"Hold on, Smithy!" he panted.

"You meddlin' fool!" shouted the Bounder. "Why, I'll smash you! I—I'll——"

"By gad!" Ponsonby and Vavasour, utterly amazed by the sudden happening, followed the Greyfriars juniors into the shrubbery, off the path. "What's the name of this game, Smithy? Who's this bargee?"

"A cheeky, meddlin' ass——"

"Absolutely!" remarked Vavasour.

"You fool, Smithy!" panted Redwing. "Smedley——"

"Hang Smedley!"

"He's after you——"

"No bizney of yours. Haven't I told you often enough what I think of your meddlin'?" snarled the Bounder. "By gun, I'll——"

"You fool, he's here!"

"Here?" The Bounder paused abruptly. "Don't talk rot! How could he be here?"

"I've seen him!"

"Rot!"

"Absolutely!" yawned Vavasour. "This isn't a resort for schoolmasters, dear boy. Never seen a beak in this jolly old place."

"Oh, come on, Smithy!" said Pon, with a sneering glance at Redwing. "We shall be late for the fight, at this rate, and I've got my money on the Chicken. We're wastin' time. Let's get on to the barn."

"I'm comin'!"

"Smithy!" panted Redwing, as the Bounder turned to follow Pon out of the shrubbery. "You're not going to the barn!"

"I am, you meddlin' ass!"

"Smedley's there!"

"Rubbish!"

"Haven't you a spark of sense, Smithy? I tell you I saw him pass this very spot not ten minutes ago, and he went into the barn—looking for you! He's waiting for you there now!"

"Good gad!"

The Bounder, angry as he was, reckless as he was, could not fail to be impressed by Redwing's earnestness. If what Redwing told him was true, another couple of minutes would have seen him going, like a lamb to the slaughter—walking into the scene of the prize-fight under Smedley's eyes, and the hand of the Creeper and Crawler falling on his shoulder. With all his nerve, the Bounder changed colour at that thought.

"Is that straight?" he muttered.

Redwing's lip curled, and he disdained to answer.

"Well, if it's straight, how did Smedley know?" snapped Vernon-Smith. "He watches me like a cat; but he can't guess that a fellow going for a pull on the river——"

"He's got the tip, anyhow, and he's here! I came to tell you—and, thank goodness, I've told you in time!"

"Oh, rot!" said Ponsonby. "You're not goin' to show the white feather now, Smithy! Come on!"

Vernon-Smith gave the dandy of Highcliffe an evil look. It was all very well for Pon to talk blantly about the

"white feather." He had nothing to fear from a Greyfriars beak. Smithy had everything to fear.

"If my beak's there, you ass——" he muttered.

"Rot! Look here, if you're funking it——" sneered Ponsonby.

The Bounder's eyes glittered. A minute ago he had been keen to dash his clenched fist into Tom Redwing's face. Now he seemed keener to dash it into Ponsonby's.

"Leave me alone, you fool!" he snarled.

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders and walked back to the path, followed by Vavasour. Both of them went on towards the barn.

The Bounder stood uncertain.

Standing in the ragged, ill-kept shrubbery, he stared after his Highcliffe friends and saw them disappear into the barn.

Evidently he was very keen to follow them. But as he stood, only half-hidden by the thicket, a well-known figure appeared in the doorway of the barn, and a well-known face, with hard features and glinting eyes, looked out.

"Smedley!" breathed the Bounder.

He dropped on his hands and knees at once, instinctively catching at Tom and dragging him down, too.

Had Smedley looked towards the shrubbery from the barn he must have seen the Bounder before he dropped into cover. But Smedley's eyes were on the people coming up the path from the inn.

Another moment, and his glance swept round. But it was too late. Less than a second was enough for the Bounder to get out of sight.

"Good gad!" breathed Smithy.

He felt almost sick at his narrow escape. The consequences of detection, dismissed from his mind in the excitement of the escapade, rushed on him now in full force. He could see himself marched back to school by the triumphant Creeper and Crawler, taken into the presence of the Head, expelled from Greyfriars, sent away—to what? To face an angry and scornful father, and to hear from his lips that he was disinherited and cast off! To see his place in his home, in his father's favour, in his father's fortune, taken by his unknown cousin, Lucius Teggars—the relative who was to be adopted in his place if he became a "mucker" at school! Crouching in the ragged shrubbery, the Bounder of Greyfriars felt sick at heart.

For two long minutes Smedley stood there, and the juniors in the shrubbery dared not stir. They could not have risen to their feet without meeting those cold, hard, searching eyes.

Peering through the thicket, they saw Smedley step back into the barn at last, and disappear.

The Bounder panted.

"He's there! Oh, what a fool I've been! I'd have walked right into his hands! Reddy, old man, let's get out of this."

"The sooner the better!" whispered Redwing. "He's getting impatient, Smithy. He must have seen Pon go in, and I dare say he expected you to be with Pon. If he guesses that you've taken the alarm——"

"Hold on—he's comin'!"

Redwing, about to rise to his feet, crouched again. Smedley had come out of the barn.

Keeping down and out of sight, the two juniors caught glimpses of his tall figure as he came along the path. The crowd had all gone in now, and the fight was about to commence. Whether Smedley suspected that the Bounder had

taken the alarm, or whether he had grown too impatient to wait longer, the juniors could not tell. At all events, he had left the barn, and was coming back along the path by the shrubbery, his sharp eyes under his lowering brows casting searching glances around him as he came.

He passed within seven or eight feet of the spot where the two juniors crouched in cover; but they were well hidden and silent as mice when the cat is near. He passed on without suspecting their presence.

His footsteps died away in the direction of the river.

He was gone at last.

"My hat!" murmured the Bounder. "My hat! This is our chance, Reddy! We can't get out by the river——"

"I've left my bike by Oak Lane."

"Let's cut."

Bending low, they ran, and reached the trees on the inner side of the fence on the lane. Not a word was spoken as they went, though several times the Bounder looked at his companion with a strange and curious expression on his face. They stopped rather breathlessly at the fence.

"Quick!" whispered Redwing.

"Hold on a tick!" The Bounder touched his arm. "Do you know what would happen to you, Reddy, if a Greyfriars beak or prefect spotted you on this side of the fence?"

"Never mind that——"

"You'd be sacked, Reddy—sacked just the same as I should—turfed out of Greyfriars in disgrace——"

"I know that! Let's cut."

"And you risked it for me!"

"Come on, I tell you."

Redwing swung himself over the fence, and the Bounder followed. Five minutes later Redwing was pedalling back to Greyfriars, the Bounder standing on the footrests. If the Creeper and Crawler was still rooting about the precincts of the Three Fishers, looking for Smithy, he was not likely to have much luck now!

— —

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Danger Ahead!

MR. SMEDLEY came out of the gate on the towpath with a black scowl on his face that contrasted with the bright June sunshine on the river.

For an hour, since the two juniors had made their escape, the Creeper and Crawler had been searching up and down and round about in vain. The fight in the barn was over—though whether it had been won by the Lantham Pet or the Game Chicken, Mr. Smedley did not take the trouble to inquire. People were coming out of the gateway on the towpath, and the Creeper and Crawler, leaning on a tree at a little distance, watched them, still in the hope of spotting the Bounder among them. There were several other exits from the Three Fishers, but if the Bounder was there he had come by boat, and was fairly certain to leave the same way.

If he was there! Smedley was beginning to doubt that now, and to wonder whether he had had all his trouble for nothing. The crowd dispersed, and there was no sign of the Bounder.

Blacker and blacker grew the brow of the watching man.

Time was getting short now for Mr. Smedley, alias Lucius Teggars! All Greyfriars knew that Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was expected back the following week. When Quelch came back Smedley's temporary engagement at the school came to an end.

Was he to go, leaving the Bounder of Greyfriars still there—his task undone? It had seemed to Lucius Teggars, when he came to the school in a borrowed name as a Form-master, that it would be easy to catch such a reckless young rascal tripping, show him up in his true colours, and see him expelled as he deserved. Yet his time at Greyfriars was almost up, and he had not succeeded. With eyes that gleamed like a hawk's, the man with a borrowed name watched the last straggler leave, and saw the gate close. He stirred from the tree at last.

Had Vernon-Smith been there at all, or had that fat, foolish, irritating young ass Bunter made a mistake and sent him on a false scent? If he had been there he must have spotted the Creeper and Crawler, taken the alarm, and escaped. But, in that case, where was his boat? Certainly he had come up the river in a boat, and if he had gone into the Three Fishers he must have left it on the river.

With that thought in his mind Mr. Smedley went to the margin of the Sark and began a search for a boat.

If the Bounder had been at the place at all, if he had escaped, he had not done so by way of the river; Smedley had been watching too keenly for that. So the boat must be still where he had left it.

If it was found it was proof enough—not so complete a proof as catching the young rascal in the act, but proof enough. And Mr. Smedley was scanning and searching along the bank in every nook and cranny for a skiff tied up out of sight.

He did not find one! That skiff was far enough away—as far as Popper's Island, as a matter of fact!

He gave it up at last.

That fatuous fool Bunter had blundered, and in his eagerness to catch the scapegrace he had blundered, too! So it seemed to Mr. Smedley, as he tramped back at last to the school by the towpath.

Anyhow, he had failed.

He was tired, savage, and irritable when he walked into the gates of Greyfriars. In the quadrangle he sighted Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form, and Prout, sighting him at the same moment, bore down on him. Smedley moved aside to avoid him.

He disliked meeting Mr. Prout who had known the genuine Smedley's uncle at Oxford, and was, therefore, a rather dangerous acquaintance for the man who had borrowed Eustace Smedley's name.

He had, in fact, made it a point to get on bad terms with the portly and pompous master of the Fifth in order to keep him safely at armslength, and in quad and Common-room they never spoke and affected an elaborate unconsciousness of one another's existence.

Now, however, it was plain that Prout intended to speak.

"One moment, Mr. Smedley!" said the master of the Fifth.

"I have little time to spare, sir!" answered the temporary master of the Remove with icy coldness.

"Possibly not, sir, possibly not!" snorted Prout. "But I am bound to mention a very strange circumstance to you, sir."

"I am not interested, sir!"

"I have received a letter from my old friend, Charles Smedley," went on Prout, unheeding.

Mr. Smedley stopped dead.

"He mentions, sir, among other matters, that his nephew Eustace has obtained a very good position in a school in Canada."

The Remove master did not speak.



"Hold on—he's comin'!" whispered Vernon-Smith. Redwing, about to rise to his feet, crouched again, as Mr. Smedley came out of the barn. The Form-master passed within seven or eight feet of the spot where the two juniors crouched in cover, without suspecting their presence. "My hat!" murmured the Bounder. "Let's out now!"

His heart almost died in his breast.

Only a few days ago he had been almost in a panic at a visit to the school by Mr. Vernon-Smith—who, of course, knew him as his nephew, Lucius Teggers! A story of an accident and a bandaged face had carried him safely through. But now—

"It seems," went on Prout, "that the firm of Leggett & Teggers obtained this post in Canada for my old friend's nephew—that is, for you, Mr. Smedley! The very strange circumstance is that Charles is under the impression that you are in Canada at the present moment. He is in complete ignorance of the fact that you are filling a temporary post at this school, sir."

Mr. Smedley breathed hard.

Prout was evidently in a state of surprise at this strange circumstance; but, equally evidently, he had no suspicion that the tall young man standing before him was not Charles Smedley's nephew.

"It was my intention, sir, when you came here to show some kindness to my old friend's nephew!" boomed Prout. "You repulsed my kindness, sir! I have no more desire, sir, for your acquaintance than you have for mine! But I felt bound to mention to you, sir, the very peculiar circumstance that your Uncle Charles believes you to be in Canada, while you are actually here at Greyfriars. I think, sir, that that circumstance should be explained."

Mr. Smedley was cool again now.

"The explanation is perfectly simple, Mr. Prout," he answered. "Mr. Teggers, the junior partner in the firm of Leggett & Teggers, offered me the post in Canada, and I accepted it and so informed my uncle. Mr. Teggers, however, had already arranged for me to take Mr. Quelch's place here during his absence, and it was decided that I should do so before going out to Canada. When I leave Greyfriars I go

at once to Canada to take up the post there."

Prout gave a ponderous nod.

"Oh, quite!" he assented. "That explains the matter, certainly. But as you have been very nearly a term here, Mr. Smedley, it seems somewhat odd that you have not informed my old friend Charles!"

"I have been very busy, Mr. Prout—and I am bound to point out that that is my affair."

Snort from Prout.

"Quite your affair, sir—certainly not mine!" he snapped. "I have no desire whatever to intervene in your affairs, sir! Not the slightest! If you have acted, for any reason, in a secretive and surreptitious way, certainly it is your own affair."

"Mr. Prout!"

"But, in reply to my old friend's letter, sir, I am bound to mention your name!" snorted Prout. "If you are acting secretly, sir, I cannot follow your example. I shall certainly mention to Charles that his nephew Eustace is here filling a temporary post." He snorted again. "Have you any objection to my doing so, Mr. Smedley?"

"None in the world, sir!" drawled Mr. Smedley, and he walked on, leaving Prout snorting.

His face was cool and calm as he went into the House.

But it changed when he was in his study with the door shut. Then the mask of indifference was thrown aside. His look became almost haggard.

He had pulled through the interview with Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith by the skin of his teeth, as it were. But this danger was closer.

Prout, probably, would not be in a hurry to answer that letter from Charles Smedley; he was a slow old gentleman. But he would answer it. And what would be the outcome?

There was danger in the air for the man with a borrowed name.

Prout's answer might bring old Charles Smedley to the school to see his nephew, when he would certainly discover that the man who passed there under the name of Eustace Smedley, was not Eustace Smedley at all.

The schemer realized that it would be wise to go while the going was good!

But to go with his task undone—to leave the scapegrace safe—to give up his chance of ousting him with the millionaire! He could not make up his mind to that!

Darker and darker grew his brow as he paced his study.

Hitherto, it had only been in the plotter's thoughts to catch the Bounder in some act of delinquency, to hand him over to the punishment he richly deserved. So far, he could feel that he had some justification, and could silence the murmurs of conscience.

But there was no time for that now—no time! Quelch would be coming back in a week—and the danger from Prout was still nearer! He could not afford to wait till the scapegrace played into his hands! There were blacker thoughts now in the mind of the man who was Herbert Vernon-Smith's rival for a fortune.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

All Serene!

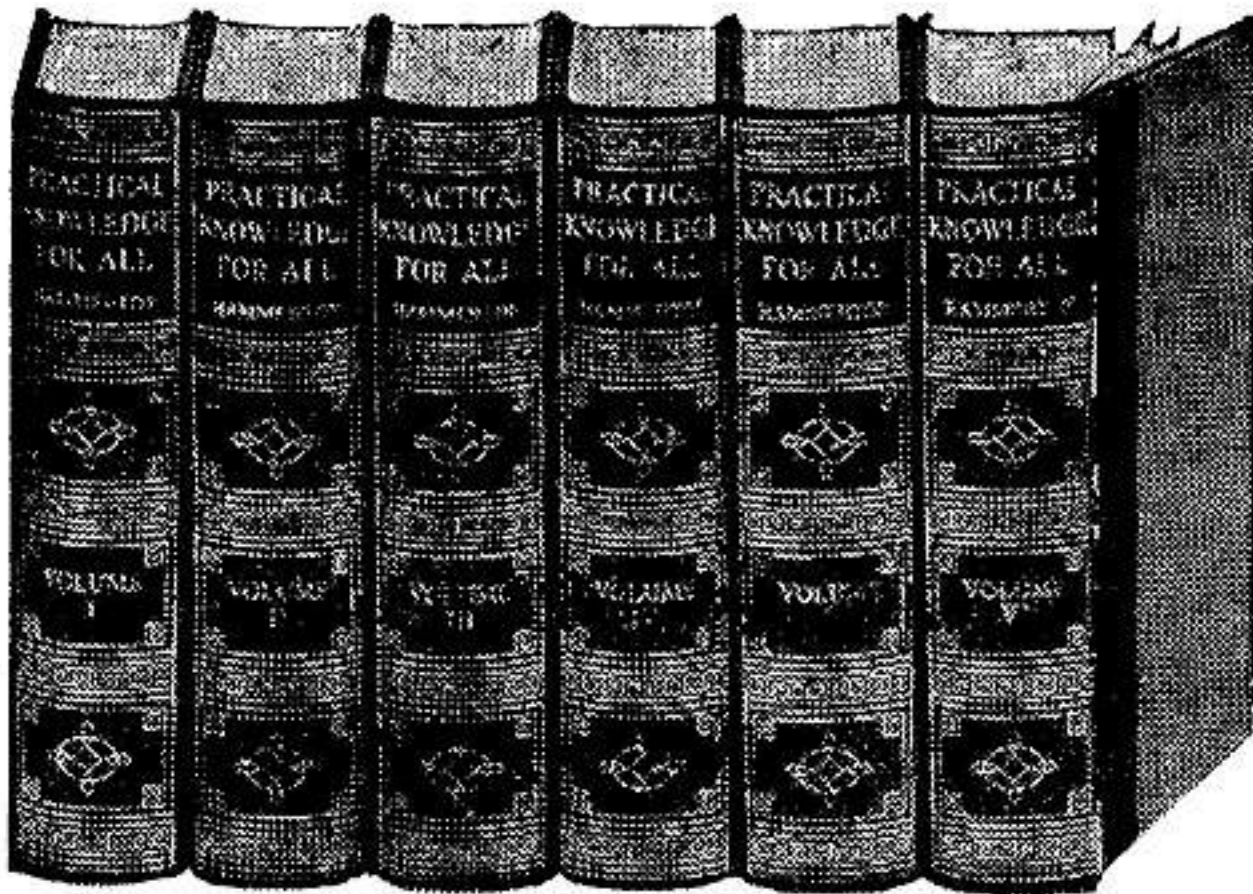
"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter sat up.

He was seated in Smithy's armchair, in Study No. 4. His fat face was shiny and sticky. There was jam round his mouth, jam on his fat fingers, jam on many places. Bunter was of the jam, jammy!

(Continued on page 11.)

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MAG. N. 1934. PLEASE FILL IN ALL PARTICULARS ASKED.

Also he was breathing hard. Bunter had been rather exerting himself. The supplies in the study cupboard had not been merely ample, but lavish.

The Bounder always "did" himself well in that line. He had intended to ask half a dozen fellows to tea that afternoon. There had been plenty of tuck on hand for the party.

Bunter had had the time of his life! It went against the grain, with William George Bunter, to leave anything uneaten. But even Bunter had not been able quite to finish. Two or three things remained in the study cupboard, when at last the fat Owl realised that he could do no more.

He sat down to rest for a few minutes in the Bounder's expensive and comfortable armchair. Now that the tuck was gone, it was only prudent for Bunter to be gone also. But he needed a rest, and, having sat down, he was disinclined to get up again.

Not till he heard footsteps coming to the study did Bunter stir. Then it was too late! As he heaved his weight out of the armchair, the door opened, and Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing came in.

Bunter blinked at them through his big spectacles in deep alarm. The Bounder had already ducked him that day. Something worse than a ducking was probable when Smithy discovered the havoc that had been wrought in his study cupboard.

Vernon-Smith stared at him in surprise, at seeing him in the study. Then, as he discerned Bunter's jammy state, he understood, and a dark look came over his face—very alarming to Bunter.

"You fat tick—" began Vernon-Smith.

"I—I say, Smithy, I—I—I haven't been to the cupboard!" said the Owl of the Remove. "I—I was just waiting here for you to come in. I—I was rather anxious about you, old chap."

"What?"

"I was afraid Smedley would nail you at the Three Fishers, old fellow," explained Bunter. "Not that he got anything from me, you know! But—but I was quite anxious, and—and I waited here to see you. I—I think I'll go now. Mauly's asked me to tea—"

Smithy slammed the door shut.

"I—I say, Smithy—"

"Keep that door shut, Reddy, while I see what the fat scoundrel has been up to!" grunted the Bounder.

"I—I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

At any other time he would have been surprised to see that the two juniors had come in on friendly terms, as it was well known that they had "rowed" and parted. But at the moment Bunter's fat thoughts were concentrated on himself, and what was going to happen when the Bounder, like Mother Hubbard, found that the cupboard was bare.

There was a roar from the Bounder, as he threw open the cupboard door and stared in.

"My hat! I—I'll—" He spun round at the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter gave a squeak of terror.

"I—I say, Smithy, it wasn't me!" he gasped. "It—it was the cat!"

"The cat?" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"Yes, old chap—the House dame's cat! I—I saw it—and—that's why I'm here! I—I came in to drive that cat away!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Redwing.

"Did the cat open jars of jam?"

"Eh? Oh! Yes!" gasped Bunter.

"That—that cat's awfully clever, you know! I—I say, I think it's still in the passage. I'll look—"

"Keep the door shut, Reddy, while I get a stump!"

"Oh, really Smithy! I've told you it was the cat! I—I hope you can take a fellow's word—"

"Wait till I get that stump!"

"Look here, you beast! It—it was some Fourth Form chaps!" gasped Bunter. Seeing that the cat would not go down, as it were, Bunter washed out the cat, and tried another tack. "Temple, Dabney, and Fry of the Fourth. I saw them raiding your tuck, Smithy! I—I'd go after them, if I were you!"

Vernon-Smith picked a cricket stump out of a corner. He came towards the fat Owl, who cast an imploring blink at Tom Redwing, on guard at the door. Smithy evidently believed in a Fourth Form raid no more than he believed in the cat, and it was the stump for Bunter.

But, to Bunter's surprise and relief, Tom Redwing suddenly opened the door, and the way was free.

"Cut!" said Redwing.

Bunter did not need telling twice.

With a single bound he was in the passage, a swipe of the stump just missing him as he bounded. In one second more he was going down the Remove passage at about 60 m.p.h.

The door slammed after him. Redwing closed it immediately he was outside.

"You silly ass!" roared the Bounder, glaring at Redwing. "What the thump do you mean?"

"Easy does it, Smithy," said Tom pacifically. "It was from Bunter I got the tip that Smedley was after you. It was worth the spread."

Vernon-Smith grunted, and threw the stump into the corner.

"You're a silly ass!" he growled. "The fat brute's cleared the study right out! You're a howling fathead!"

Tom smiled. He did not mind the Bounder "slanging" him. It was, in fact, a sign that the rift in the lute was closed. Nothing had been said on the subject; but it seemed to be tacitly understood that they were on the old footing.

"You're a blithering idiot, Reddy," went on the Bounder. "Only a blithering idiot would have come to that den to warn me, and taken the risk of getting it in the neck. What did you do it for?"

"Fathead!" said Tom, smiling.

"That fat scoundrel hasn't left us much for tea," added Smithy, glancing into the cupboard again. "I was going to ask some fellows—Skinner, Snoop, Stott, Angel, and Kenney of the Fourth." He grinned at the expression of distaste that came over Redwing's face. "All serene—I'm not askin' them, after all. I'm done with that crew!"

Redwing looked at him doubtfully.

"I mean it," said the Bounder quietly. "But never mind that now. Get your lines done, and then we'll have tea."

Tom sat down to his lines again. He had left himself barely time to get through; they had to be handed in by tea-time. Vernon-Smith went to the study window and stood looking out into the quadrangle below.

His brow was very thoughtful.

Smithy was, no doubt, a "bad hat" in many ways. But he had good qualities, as well as bad—and the good predominated. The risk that Tom Redwing had run that afternoon to save him from his own folly, had touched the Bounder's heart. He had thrown his best friend aside, rejected his friendship; yet in the moment of danger his friend had stood by him, without counting the cost, and saved him. If ever a fellow felt thoroughly ashamed of himself, and repentant

from the bottom of his heart, Herbert Vernon-Smith did.

He was thinking of it, as he stood looking from the window, while Tom ground away at his lines. But he was thinking of something else, too. In the excitement of the escape he had forgotten about the skiff he had left tied up under the bank of the Sark opposite the gate of the Three Fishers. But he remembered it now.

If Smedley found it—

There was nothing to be done. If the Creeper and Crawler was going to spot that skiff he had spotted it already, and the Bounder could only wait and wonder. It was a relief to him when, at last, he saw the tall figure of the Remove master come in at the gates. He watched him speaking with Prout in the quad, and then lost sight of him as he came to the House.

His heart beat painfully.

Redwing had saved him—risked expulsion to save him. But if the Creeper and Crawler had found his skiff where it had been left, what then? He turned his back to the window and listened—in dread of hearing the Form-master's footsteps coming up the passage.

But minute followed minute, and those footsteps did not come. The Bounder breathed more freely.

Surely, if his enemy had evidence against him he would have come for him at once to take him to the Head. Or had he gone to Dr. Locke first—and was the blow only delayed?

Redwing threw down his pen and rose from the table.

"Finished?" asked Smithy quietly.

"Yes."

"Smedley's in—I saw him come in. Cut off—you're just time."

Redwing left the study with his lines. He knew nothing of the anxiety on his chum's mind, and Smithy did not mean to tell him. Vernon-Smith moved restlessly about the study waiting for Redwing to come back. The minutes seemed like hours to him.

But Redwing came back at last. He came cheerfully into the study, but he gave a little start as he glanced at the Bounder's face. It was pale and tense.

"What's up, Smithy?" he asked quickly.

"Was Smedley in his study?"

"Yes. He looked in rather a bad temper," said Redwing. "I fancy he hasn't enjoyed his afternoon. But what—"

"He's been in a quarter of an hour or more!" said Vernon-Smith, with a deep breath. "He would have done something by this time, if—"

"If what?"

The Bounder laughed.

"If he'd spotted the skiff I left tied up near the gate of the Three Fishers!" he answered. "Looks as if he hasn't! It's all right."

Redwing caught his breath.

"It's all right, I tell you," said the Bounder. "He wouldn't be letting me rest if he had something to put up to the Head! I can cut out later and get that dashed skiff in, before call-over. Let's have tea."

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Resolve!

BOB CHERRY lifted himself out of the grass under the big oak on Popper's Island, and began packing empty ginger-beer bottles into the basket.

"Time we were off!" he remarked. "The timefulness is preposterous!" agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh, and

he lent a hand gathering up paper bags.

It had been quite an enjoyable picnic on Popper's Island; not the less so because William George Bunter had not honoured it with his distinguished presence. It would not have been quite so enjoyable had Sir Hilton Popper happened to discover the picnickers there. Fortunately, the lord of Popper Court was away in London, and when the great man was absent, his keepers did not seem to bother themselves much about trespassers on the island in the river. So all had gone well, and now it was time to go, and having cleared up all litter from their camp under the oak, the chums of the Remove went back to their boat. It was tied up under the bushes on the bank, along with the Bounder's skiff. Harry Wharton stepped into the latter.

"I'll row this back!" he remarked. "If Smedley's still rooting about, he might notice a towed boat, and sit up and take notice."

"Ten to one he's bagged Smithy long ago!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, if he hasn't, we don't want to help him."

The captain of the Remove pushed off in the skiff, and the Co. followed in the boat. They rowed away down the Sark with the current, wondering a little what had happened to the Bounder that afternoon. If Smedley had "bagged" him, it was quite likely that he would be already gone from Greyfriars, when they got back there, and even Johnny Bull felt rather disturbed at that thought. Little as they liked Smithy's wild ways, the Famous Five knew that they would miss him if he went, and miss him sorely, especially in the cricket. But if he had, this time, got what he had asked for so often, it could not be helped.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry suddenly.

They had passed the Three Fishers on their way down-stream, when Bob lifted his oar, and pointed to a figure on the bank. It was the Bounder.

"Smithy!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"The esteemed and ridiculous Bounder!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Then there has been no sackfulness."

Vernon-Smith was coming up the towpath at a trot. But he stopped, and stared at the fellows on the river. He recognised the skiff that Harry Wharton was in—the one he was on his way to fetch. Wharton sculled in to the bank.

"What the thump are you doin' in my skiff, Wharton?" asked the Bounder in astonishment.

"Were you going back for it?"

"Yes."

"Then you got away?"

The Bounder looked at him, colouring a little.

"You seem to know all about it!" he grunted.

"We saw Smedley after you this afternoon," answered Harry quietly. "He asked us whether we'd seen you—and he went in at the Three Fishers. You were there, of course."

"I got on the Oak Lane side. The blighter cut me off from this side, and I had to let the skiff take its chance," said Smithy. "If he'd thought of lookin' for it—" He shrugged his shoulders.

"Most likely he did," answered Harry. "And in case he did, we picked it up and took it along to Popper's Island with us. I haven't much doubt that he would have looked for it and found it, if we'd left it where you tied it up."

"Oh, my hat!" The Bounder whistled. "So that was it! I wondered—" He broke off. "You've done me a good turn, old bean."

"I know that," answered Wharton, rather dryly. "I've not the slightest doubt that if Smedley missed you in that den, he looked for your skiff, knowing you came by water—and if he'd found it, your game would have been up—as you jolly well deserved."

"Thanks!" said the Bounder sarcastically.

"And it would have served you jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull, from the Remove boat. "And I think Wharton was an ass to chip in. Why shouldn't you be sacked for blagging, like any other rank outsider?"

"The whyfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The Bounder laughed. "Your bark's worse than your bite, Bull, old bean," he said. "Anyhow, I'm no end obliged to you fellows. I'll take the skiff now, Wharton!"

The captain of the Remove stepped into the boat with his friends, and Vernon-Smith into the skiff. They pulled down the stream to the school. After putting up the boats, the Bounder joined Harry Wharton.

"Look here," he said, in a low voice, "I was jolly nearly nabbed this afternoon. Redwing came and gave me the tip, and got me clear. Smedley jolly nearly got the pair of us. I've made it up with Reddy—we're friends again now."

"I'm glad of that!"

"But—Smedley might have got me, all the same, if you hadn't chipped in as you did! I've had a good many close shaves since Smedley came to Greyfriars; but this was the closest. I suppose you think I've been a frightful ass."

"A silly, reckless, blackguardly ass, if you want to know what I think," said the captain of the Remove curtly. "Redwing might have got landed, along with you—he was a fool to risk it."

"So I've told him," said the Bounder lightly, and he laughed. But he became serious again at once. "Look here, it's given me a bit of a jolt! I'd rowed with Reddy, chucked him, called him names, and he did that for me! Well, there won't be any more of it. I've told Reddy so, and I mean it! I'm chucking it up for good! I'm going to toe the line, and take you for a shinin' example to be followed."

"Oh, don't be a howling ass!" snapped Wharton.

"Honest Injun!" grinned the Bounder. "Anyhow, I'm goin' to be good! Do you know, I'm beginnin' to think that the pater was right in keepin' me short of money, though it made me feel fearfully sore. I shouldn't have been playin' the giddy ox to-day only I've money to burn. You remember my father was here the day of the St. Jim's match, and he was frightfully bucked at seeing me playin' cricket and bringin' down the house. He departed from his custom to the extent of tippin' me a ten-pound note, and it's been burnin' a hole in my pocket ever since."

"Your father can't have guessed how you were going to spend it," said Harry dryly.

"He said he'd trust me—sort of puttin' me to the test, you know."

Wharton frowned. "Dash it all, Smithy, and you were going—dash it all, you ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself!"

"Exactly what I think myself," said the Bounder unexpectedly. "So glad that you endorse my own opinion. Well,

I'm goin' to blow the tenner. I never could keep money in my pockets, likewise, you never know how long a good resolution will last with a tenner in a fellow's pocket—you never know, you know!" He chuckled. "I'm goin' to stand some sort of a big blow-out, and ask half the Remove—and you and your friends will have to come. Sort of celebration of my jolly old reform, and after that I'm going to be so good and nice that even Smedley may come to love me dearly—what?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I hope you'll stick to that, Smithy," he said.

"Like glue!" said the Bounder.

And he went into the House, whistling.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Passing the Rubicon!

LIGHTS were out in Greyfriars School.

Only from one study window a light gleamed on the dusky quad. It came from Mr. Smedley's study.

The temporary master of the Remove was up late, after the rest of the school had long been in bed.

It was not an unusual press of work that kept Mr. Smedley up to that late hour. On his table lay a pile of Form papers, waiting to be corrected; but he had not touched them.

A schoolmaster's work was irksome to the man with a borrowed name. In earlier days, before he became a partner in the firm of Leggett & Teggers, he had been a Form-master for a time, and had disliked it heartily. At Greyfriars he disliked it more than ever.

The Remove had found him a very careless master, though quick enough at handing out punishments, when his temper was irritable. Slackers in the Form, like Skinner, and Bunter, and Mauleverer, had little to fear except when Smedley was in a bad temper. Schoolmastering was simply camouflage—he was at Greyfriars to get Herbert Vernon-Smith sacked, and he had long since been fed-up with the place and everyone in it. But sick as he was of Greyfriars, and of playing the part of a Form-master there, he was fiercely determined not to go with his purpose unaccomplished.

Pacing his study in the silent, sleeping House, Lucius Teggers was wrestling with his conscience—such as it was.

He was anxious to go! In another week he had to go, whether he was anxious or not. And that day he had tried once more to "nail" the scape-grace of the school, and had failed.

The young rascal was too wary for him. He deserved expulsion a dozen times over, but he was too wary. Again and again the schemer told himself that he was striving to get a young rascal what he richly deserved. He had a conscience of sorts, and it had to be argued with.

The Bounder's own bad conduct would have been sufficient for his purpose could he but have nailed him down to it. But in that he had failed. And he could not bide his time and watch and wait—time was too short. He had to take action; but it was long before the wretched schemer could make up his mind to the only action that could serve his turn.

Lucius Teggers was far from being the sedate, model young businessman that Mr. Vernon-Smith believed him to be. He had been a secret gambler, and a



"There!" gasped Bunter, tossing the letter over. "Take it, you beast! Catch me bringing you letters again, you ungrateful rotter! Yah!" The letter whizzed past Vernon-Smith and dropped into the water. "You howling ass!" roared the Bounder. He grabbed after the letter in the water, but it was soaked, and sinking, before his fingers could touch it.

most unlucky one. Debts and difficulties were piled on him, and he had been very near the end of his tether when the millionaire sought him out. The possibility of being adopted by Mr. Vernon-Smith, of becoming heir to a fortune of millions, had come like a ray of light in the darkness of his prospects. And then had come the crushing disappointment, when he learned that the millionaire was giving his scapegrace son another chance.

But even then Lucius had never thought of a crime. He had sailed rather near the wind—he admitted that. But it was no crime to expose in his true colours a young reckless rascal who was deceiving and deluding his headmaster. But now—

Now darker and more terrible thoughts were in his mind. He had to go, and he had to succeed before he went, or give up all hope of Mr. Vernon-Smith's millions. And to that he could not make up his mind. The millionaire had dangled that glittering bait before his eyes, and he could not let it go.

The stroke of one boomed out from the clock tower.

Mr. Smedley ceased to pace his study at last.

His mind was made up.

He seated himself at the study table and drew a letter towards him. It was addressed to Herbert Vernon-Smith, in his father's hand.

In the ordinary course, it would have been placed in the rack along with other letters for the Remove, to be taken by the Bounder. Smedley had kept it back for his own reasons.

The flap of the envelope was open;

it had been opened by steam, which left no trace.

He drew out the letter within. He had read it before, but now he read it again, with a bitter brow. It was brief, like most of Mr. Vernon-Smith's epistles, but it indicated that the millionaire was less incensed against the scapegrace who had given him so much trouble.

"Dear Herbert.—I am glad, very glad, that you seem to be doing well at school now. I was not able to have a talk with your Form-master, as I wished, when I was at Greyfriars last week, but I had a few words with Dr. Locke, who spoke of you most favourably. You seem to have won his good opinion. You must try to do the same with Mr. Smedley. I need not say how glad I shall be to believe that I can trust you again, and to forget all past troubles.

"Your affectionate father,

"S. VERNON-SMITH."

The man with a borrowed name scowled over that letter. It held out hope of a complete reconciliation between the scapegrace and his father. But it held out little hope for the Bounder's rival for a fortune. Mr. Vernon-Smith seemed to have forgotten the nephew whose hopes he had raised, only to dash them to the ground again. Certainly, he had no knowledge of Lucius' desperate need to realise those hopes.

Long, long minutes the schemer sat thinking over that letter. It was a kind and conciliatory letter. The junior receiving it would not be surprised to find a tip in it.

Slowly at last the man with a borrowed name opened a drawer of his desk, and took out a crisp slip of paper—a Bank of England note for ten pounds.

He made a note of the number—000124—and wrote it down. Then, with fingers that trembled in spite of himself, he folded the banknote in the letter and replaced it in the envelope.

Carefully he sealed the envelope again, leaving no trace that it had been opened.

The letter was then placed with a little pile of others. The man with a borrowed name rose to his feet and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

He turned out the light and left his study.

With soft footsteps he went to his room—to bed, but not to sleep! He could not sleep after what he had done. His wakeful, weary eyes greeted the June sun when it glimmered in at his window in the morning.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Obliging!

"I SAY, you fellows! Is there one for me?"

Billy Bunter blinked up at the letter rack.

It was morning break, and a good many fellows had come along to look for letters. Among them was Billy Bunter—no doubt in the delusive hope that his celebrated postal order had arrived at last.

"Not this time, old fat bean!" said Bob Cherry. "Your jolly old rich relations have forgotten you again."

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.



(Continued from page 13.)

"The forgetfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "It is preposterously reprehensible of the esteemed nobility."

"I say, you fellows, I was expecting a postal order this morning—"

"Go hon!" remarked Skinner.

"We've heard that one, Bunter!" said Bob Cherry gravely.

"I say, that looks like a letter for me."

"Can't you read, fathead? That's for Smithy."

"Oh, blow Smithy!" said Bunter peevishly.

He blinked longingly at the letter addressed to Herbert Vernon-Smith. It was quite likely, in Bunter's opinion, that that letter contained a tip.

True, Mr Vernon-Smith had been hard as nails all that term, in the matter of cash, in dealing with the son he had once indulged so carelessly. But on the day of the St. Jim's cricket match, when the Bounder had been the hero of the hour, cheered by all the Greyfriars fellows, and carried off the cricket ground shoulder-high, the millionaire relented, for once.

Proud of his son, greatly pleased with him, Mr. Vernon-Smith had tipped him a "tenner" before he left. Bunter, who saw many things that did not concern him, had seen that, so he knew. And he sagely opined that, having once broken the ice, as it were, Mr. Vernon-Smith might keep on with the good work!

So that letter sticking in the rack was very attractive to Bunter, and he blinked at it again—as if by the sheer force of blinking he could turn the name of Herbert Vernon-Smith into that of William George Bunter!

Finally, he took the letter down.

"Smithy doesn't seem to know there's one for him," he remarked. "I fancy I'll take this to him."

Bunter rolled away, with the letter in his fat hand, looking for the Bounder.

Evidently Smithy did not know that there was a letter for him that morning; so it was only obliging to take it to him.

Bunter was not, as a rule, a very obliging fellow. But he was always prepared to oblige any fellow who had a remittance. And he considered it probable that there was a remittance in that letter.

He rolled into the quad, and blinked round through his big spectacles for the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows, seen Smithy?" he called out, addressing Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth, who were strolling in the quad.

Temple & Co grinned.

Vernon-Smith was in the quad walking under the olms with Tom Redwing, in conversation with his reconciled chum. He was visible to any fellow who looked in that direction—except Billy Bunter! But the fat Owl's range of vision was limited. If he saw the fellows by the elms he did not recognise them at the distance.

"Lookin' for Smithy?" asked Cecil

Reginald Temple, with a wink at Dabney & Fry. To Cecil Reginald, it seemed rather funny for a fellow to be inquiring for a fellow who was walking in plain view.

"Yes—seen him?" asked Bunter.

"Looked in the Cloisters?" asked Temple blandly.

"What the dickens is he in the Cloisters for?" grunted Bunter.

"Never asked him!" drawled Temple.

"Br-r-r!" grunted Bunter.

And he rolled off in the direction of the Cloisters, leaving the Fourth Form fellows grinning.

"Now, I wonder," remarked Temple thoughtfully, "whether that fat idiot fancied, from what I said, that Smithy was in the Cloisters? I never said he was, did I?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple & Co. sauntered on their way, grinning; what time Billy Bunter did the distance to the old Cloisters, and rolled into the secluded quarter. He blinked round impatiently and peevishly for the Bounder.

It was quite a probable place to find Smithy if the scapegrace of Greyfriars was smoking a surreptitious cigarette! So Bunter rolled along to the end, blinking among the old stone pillars and sniffing for a scent of tobacco.

But no scent of tobacco came to his fat, little nose, and no glimpse of the Bounder to his eyes or his spectacles!

By the time he realised that Smithy was not there and the humorous Temple had probably been pulling his leg the bell was ringing for third school.

"Beast!" growled Bunter.

And he rolled back to the House. The bell had stopped long before he reached it, and the Remove were already in their Form-room. The hapless Owl, with Smithy's letter in his pocket, rolled in late.

He blinked very uneasily at Mr. Smedley as he rolled in. It was not judicious to be late for class that day, for the Remove master had been extremely irritable all the morning, and there had been a good many punishments handed out in the Remove in first and second school.

What was the matter with Smedley the Removites did not know; but they had remarked, too, that he looked seedy. His face was rather pasty, and there were dark lines under his eyes, as if he had slept ill. They were far from guessing what was on the wretched man's mind.

Smedley's eyes glinted at the fat Owl as he rolled in several minutes late.

"Bunter!" he snapped.

"I—I say, sir, I—I'm sorry I'm late!" gasped Bunter, in alarm. "I—I never heard the bell, sir, and I was at the other end of the Cloisters when I heard it, and—"

"Take a hundred lines, Bunter."

"Oh, really, sir—"

"And stay in after class to write them out."

"But, sir—"

"Go to your place!" snapped Smedley, reaching for his cane.

And Billy Bunter went hurriedly to his place, glad to escape the cane, at all events.

The Remove were on their very best behaviour in third school that morning. They were accustomed to gusts of irritable temper from Smedley; but never had he been in such an irritable mood as he seemed to be that morning. They would have preferred their old Form-master, Quelch, even in the worst of his "tantrums."

Fellows who liked Quelch least, wished from the bottom of their hearts that he was back at Greyfriars, and that they could see the last of the Creeper and Crawler. The best news the Remove

had had that term was that Quelch was expected back.

Third school was over at last, and the Remove dismissed. Billy Bunter had to stay in his place, to write out his lines before he went.

Mr. Smedley, at his desk, fixed his eyes on the Bounder as the juniors filed out, with a strange expression in them. So far as he knew, the scapegrace had his father's letter in his pocket, with the ten-pound note, numbered 000124, in it. Naturally, it never crossed his mind that that letter was in the pocket of the fat junior blinking at him from the desks. He had observed, when he came in from third school, that it was gone from the letter-rack, so there seemed no room for doubt in the matter.

"If—if you please, sir—" squeaked Bunter, when the Form had gone out.

Mr Smedley did not even glance at him. He went out after the Form and closed the door.

"Beast!" hissed Bunter.

And he sat drearily to lines.

Smithy's letter was still in his pocket. Bunter's intention had been to oblige the Bounder by taking that letter to him, and to extract a small loan on the strength of that obligation. Instead of which he had to sit in the Form-room, grinding out lines, with the letter in his pocket, still undelivered.

Bunter was not a quick worker, as a rule. But he got through those lines at unusual speed. His paper was an interesting study in blots, smears, smudges, and mis-spellings by the time he had finished. Such as it was, it was done, and the fat Owl placed it on the master's desk, and rolled out of the Form-room at last, to look for the Bounder.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Gone for Good!

"SMITHY!"

No reply.

"Smithy!" yelled Billy Bunter.

Still the Bounder did not heed.

After morning classes Smithy and his chum had gone down to the river for a pull in the Bounder's skiff. Smithy was sitting in the stern, Redwing pulling, when the fat figure of the Owl of the Remove appeared on the bank.

Redwing glanced at his companion.

"Bunter seems to want you, Smithy," he remarked.

"Let him want."

"Shall I pull in?"

"What rot!"

Billy Bunter trotted along the bank to keep pace with the skiff. He was short of breath, and puffing and blowing. It had been extremely irritating to Bunter, when he got out of the Form-room at last, to learn that Smithy had gone on the river. It was still more irritating to be ignored in this way when he sighted the fellow of whom he was in quest.

Bunter wanted to get that letter delivered. If he was going to raise a small loan from the Bounder—a crumb that fell from the rich man's table, as it were—there was not much more time before dinner. And Bunter wanted a snack at the school shop before dinner! That was important.

So he waved a fat hand at the Bounder and roared:

"Smithy!"

"It may be a message or something, Smithy!" suggested Tom Redwing mildly.

"Rubbish! The fat ass knows I've got a tenner!" grunted Vernon-Smith. "He's offered to change it for me fifty times! This is the fifty-first, that's all!"

Tom Redwing laughed and pulled on. Bunter trotted along the bank. With his eyes on the boat, Bunter naturally did not have his eyes on the bank, with the result that he caught his feet in a trailing root, and there was a fall, a bump, and a roar.

"Yooooop!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Bounder. "Do that again, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter sat up dizzily. He grabbed at his spectacles which had slipped down his fat little nose, set them straight, and blinked wrathfully and indignantly at the Bounder.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Beast! Rotter! Yah! Catch me bringing you your letters another time! Rotter! This is what comes of obliging a fellow! Beast! Ow!"

Vernon-Smith made a sign to Redwing, who rested on his oars. If the

fat Owl had a letter for him Smithy wanted it.

"You've got a letter?" he called out.

"Beast!"
 "Look here, have you got a letter for me?" snapped the Bounder angrily. "Rotter!"

"If you have, you fat, meddlin' ass, you must have taken it out of the rack in break—I looked after class, and there wasn't one there. What have you been doing with it?"

"I've been looking for you, to give it to you, you beast!" howled Bunter indignantly. "I couldn't find you in break, and Smedley kept me in after class."

"Why couldn't you mind your own business, and leave a fellow's letters alone?" snapped the Bounder. "Chuck it over here, and shut up!"

The boat glided closer to the bank. Bunter jerked the letter from his pocket. In his righteous wrath and indignation, he was tempted to throw it at the Bounder's head. But he realised that that was not the way to get a "whack" in the remittance—if any! He controlled his just wrath.

"I say, Smithy, it's from your father," he said. "I know his fist! I say, I shouldn't wonder if he's sent you a tip, old chap—after squeezing out a tenner last week, you know. I say, my postal order hasn't come—"

"Give me my letter, you fat fool!"
 The Bounder stood up in the skiff and reached out.

"Well, look here," said Bunter, "I'm expecting a postal order for five bob, old chap, from one of my titled

(Continued on next page.)



The UMPIRE SAYS

Here's another interesting article by "Umpire," whose expert knowledge of King Cricket is at the disposal of all "MAGNET" readers. Write to him, c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and watch out for his reply in this weekly feature.

WE are all getting "worked up" for the first Test match of this season, which starts at Nottingham on the eighth. Hence it is only natural that many of the questions I have received from MAGNET readers are concerned with these affairs.

One reader, who signs himself "Extra Cover," wants to know why the names of the men who will actually take part in the game are not usually announced definitely until a few minutes before each contest starts. The general make-up of each team is known, of course, but it is the usual custom to leave a bowling vacancy open until half an hour or so before the game. The reason for this, naturally, is that the selectors try to make up their minds on what sort of pitch the match will be played. When they have made up their minds—or think they have—they decide on the last bowling place—whether to play a slow bowler or a fast one.

There is this important point to be remembered, however—and in referring to it I am replying to another question.

The actual make-up of a Test match side must be decided upon before the captains toss for the choice of innings. So—much as a skipper would like to do—it is not permissible for him to wait until he knows which side is going to bat first before he decides upon his eleven.

Prior to tossing up, the two captains exchange a list of their players with each other, and that list also has on it the name of the twelfth man, who is merely used as a fielding substitute in case of necessity.

THE CHOICE OF INNINGS!

A GREAT responsibility often rests on a captain in doubtful weather, when he has won the toss. Shall he bat first, or put the other fellows in? Even the experts find it extremely difficult to tell just how a

wicket will play under varying weather conditions. Well do I remember a Test match at Leeds in 1926 when Arthur Carr, of Notts, was the captain of England. It had rained hard during the night preceding the start of the game, but on the morning after the sun shone. Before he tossed for choice of innings the England skipper went out and "thumbed" the pitch. He took with him Herbert Sutcliffe, who had played hundreds of innings on the same Leeds ground. The groundsmen was also consulted as to how the pitch was likely to play.

It was agreed between these experts that the pitch would be tricky, and suited to slow spin bowlers. So Arthur Carr decided that if he won the toss he would put Australia in. Carr won the toss, and put Australia in.

That was the occasion on which that great Australian, Charlie Macartney, scored a century before lunch. And thereafter England had to fight with their backs to the wall.

In regard to this question of whether the opponents should be put in after the toss has been won, W. G. Grace once laid down this as a sort of guide to skippers. "There are occasions when a captain should think hard, on winning the toss, whether to put the other fellows in. But he should never do it." Well, never is a big word, and I take it that captains will continue to take their courage in both hands and put the other fellows in after winning the toss.

One of my thoughtful readers considers this tossing business, apart from the first Test, is a mistake. He suggests that after the opening game the captain who lost the toss in the first match should have choice of innings for the second game, and so on alternately to the end of the series. There is something to be said for this, for after all the idea of leaving it to chance doesn't work out badly. The law of averages sees to that. Here is an interesting fact to prove it:

In the course of 129 Test matches which have been played between

England and Australia, the England captain has won the toss 65 times, and the Australian skipper 61 times. Not much in that, is there?

142 RUNS IN 40 MINUTES!

SIR WALTER LAWRENCE is a cricket enthusiast who thinks that the first-class game needs brightening up by faster scoring, and with a view to encouraging batsmen to hit he has offered a prize of the value of one hundred guineas to the county cricketer who scores a century in the shortest time during the present season. This fact has caused one of my readers to ask for some quick-scoring details from the past.

The fiercest hitting story to be found in the records books does not stand opposite the name of G. L. Jessop, as many people might think. The Gloucester man was, however, perhaps the best habitual fast scorer the game has ever known. But the prize bit of hitting stands to the credit of E. Alletson, a Notts player, who was not really in the side for his batting. Anyway, he was not considered to be a star in that line.

One day at Brighton in 1911, taking part in a last wicket stand for Notts against Sussex, Alletson, for some reason or other, decided to "go mad" at the expense of the Sussex bowlers. There was nothing specially out of the ordinary in his hitting before lunch. He merely scored 47 in fifty minutes.

After lunch, however, he set about the Sussex bowling without mercy and scored 142 himself in forty minutes. Meantime; his partner scored ten!

In one over from Killock—which was extended to seven balls—Alletson hit 34 runs—four fours and three sixes. I have never been able to find out what Alletson had for lunch that day on the Sussex ground, but it most certainly agreed with him!

If you get an opportunity of watching the Australians this season, I do hope that you will take a note of E. H. Bromley—especially in the field. Bromley is one of the very few players now in big cricket who seem to have given some time to practising how to throw the ball. He can throw it, too. Just before he left Australia he took part in a ball-throwing competition which he won with a throw of 125 yards. But the mere length of Bromley's throw is not the vital part of it. He has also developed an art which all cricketers should practise: that of picking up the ball in the field and throwing it with the same action. Try this.

"UMPIRE"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.

relations. What about lending me the five bob, and taking my postal order when it comes?"

Smithy did not answer that suggestion. He did not seem in the least grateful for all the trouble Bunter had taken over that letter! Instead of replying, he picked up a boathook. Bunter was out of reach of his hands, but easily within reach of the boathook.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as he received a poke on his fat waistcoat. "Ooogh! Groogh! Beast! Oh crikey! Owl!"

"Now give me that letter, you meddlin' ass, or I'll come ashore and roll you into the water!" snapped the Bounder.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

He raised his fat hand and hurled the letter at the Bounder's head. He had resisted the temptation to do so so long as there was a faint, lingering hope of a loan. Now he fell to it!

As the Bounder, standing in the boat, was hardly six feet away from him, that letter ought to have landed fairly in his face and dropped at his feet.

But it didn't!

Bunter was no marksman! The letter whizzed a foot from Smithy's head, passed him, and dropped into the Sark on the other side of the boat.

"There!" gasped Bunter. "Take it, you beast! Catch me bringing you letters again, you ungrateful rotter! Yah!"

"You howling ass!" roared the Bounder. He dropped the boathook, hung over the gunwale, and grabbed after the letter in the water.

But he was too late.

It was soaked, and sinking, before his fingers could touch it. He had a momentary glimpse of it, sinking into the depths of the Sark, and then it was gone.

That letter from Mr. Vernon-Smith, and what it contained, found a permanent resting place in the mud at the bottom of the river.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Redwing in dismay. "It's gone!"

The Bounder scrambled up, red with rage.

"I'll smash him!" he gasped.

He made a bound to the bank.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He turned to flee.

The Bounder reached him as he turned.

There was a crash of a heavy foot on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars. Bunter rolled.

"Yaroooh! Keep off, you beast!" he roared. "Oh crikey! Oh crumbs! Wow! It was your own fault, you beast—Yaroooh! Stop kicking me, you rotter—Whooop! Oh lor'! Oh crikey! Yaroooh!"

When Vernon-Smith jumped back into the skiff, the fat Owl of the Remove sat up on the grassy bank and roared.

Redwing pulled away, the Bounder sitting scowling in the stern, while Billy Bunter's dulcet tones awoke all the echoes of the river. Deep in the mud of the Sark, lost for ever to human eyes, lay the letter from Mr. Vernon-Smith—and, inside it, the £10 banknote numbered 000124!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Victory

"COME in!" said Mr. Smedley. It was the following day, after class. The Remove-master was in his study, when a tap came at his door.

Herbert Vernon-Smith entered. Mr. Smedley started a little at the sight of him. He had not expected Smithy to come to his study. Only "lines" should have brought him there, and the Bounder had no lines on hand.

During the last day or two Smedley had left him severely alone in the Form-room. The punishments that had been wont to fall thickly on the scapegrace had ceased to fall.

Perhaps it was some remaining rag of conscience that caused the man to leave him alone, now that he had planned his ruin. Or, perhaps, in view

of what was to come, he did not want any attention to be drawn to his dislike of the junior he was going to accuse. Anyhow, he left him alone, and seemed almost to overlook his presence in the Form.

"What is it, Vernon-Smith?" he asked, his eyes avoiding the Bounder's as he spoke.

"May I have leave to go down to Courtfield, sir?" asked Smithy.

Smedley looked at him.

On half-holidays the town of Courtfield was within bounds; on other days leave had to be asked to go there.

That distinction, hitherto, had never made any difference to the Bounder. It was his way to please himself, regardless of the rules, and taking his chance with the prefects and the beaks.

That the scapegrace of the school was on a new tack of reform, and that this time he was in earnest, was not likely to occur to Smedley. He gave Smithy a suspicious, searching look.

"For what reason, Vernon-Smith?" he asked.

"I'm taking a party to the Courtfield Picture Palace to-morrow afternoon, sir," answered the Bounder. "I want to book the seats. The place is in bounds," he added, with a touch of sarcasm. "The Head allows us to go there."

"I am aware of that, Vernon-Smith, but—"

Smedley paused, quite puzzled.

"I'd like to run down on my bike, sir, if you'll give me leave," said the Bounder. "There's always a bit of a crush on Saturday afternoons, and I'm taking a dozen fellows in my party. So I'd like to get the seats to-day."

The Creeper and Crawler's eyes glimmered.

Booking more than a dozen reserved seats, at the best picture house in Courtfield meant money. It was well known that Smithy's supply of cash was strictly limited these days. Obviously, this act of extravagance could not be covered by his allowance.

Obviously—to Smedley—he had received the banknote surreptitiously introduced into his father's letter, and was going, now, to change it.

Finding it in his father's letter, he had taken it for a tip from his relenting parent. How could he do otherwise?

It was clear enough to Smedley.

Of what had happened to that letter, owing to the fatuous intervention of Billy Bunter, he knew nothing. Neither did he know, or dream, that the millionaire had tipped his son a "tenner" on the day of the St. Jim's cricket match. To the mind of the Creeper and Crawler, all was working out as planned. What puzzled him was the Bounder coming to him to ask leave to go to the town, instead of taking french leave in his usual manner.

That, however, mattered little. All was going well!

"Very well, Vernon-Smith, you may have leave," said Smedley. "You must be back by tea-time."

"Certainly, sir."

"Very well, you may go."

"Thank you, sir."

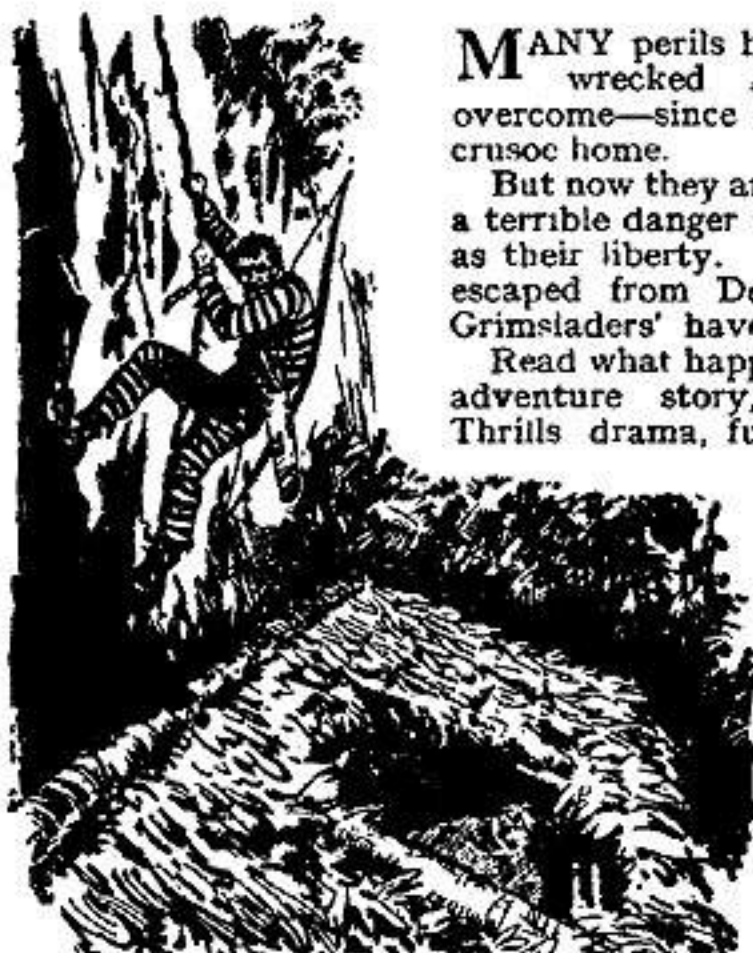
The Bounder left the study, rather surprised to get leave so easily. It seemed that the Creeper and Crawler no longer had his claws in him so bitterly as formerly.

Mr. Smedley stepped to his study window.

From that window he watched, and five or six minutes later had a glimpse of Herbert Vernon-Smith wheeling out his bicycle.

Frank Richards writes in "The Ranger" every week

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MANY perils have Jim Dainty & Co., the shipwrecked Grimsladers, encountered—and overcome—since they made Castaway Island their crusoe home.

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The expression on Mr. Smedley's face startled the juniors. "Vernon-Smith!" he barked. "What are you doing here?" "Talking to these fellows, sir!" answered the Bounder. "Why shouldn't I be in the quad, sir?" "I do not understand this, Vernon-Smith," said the Form-master sharply. "The Head is aware that you purloined a banknote from my study— Why aren't you expelled?"

He remained at the window, looking out, his thoughts busy.

Had the young rascal told the truth? Was he really going to book seats at a cinema approved by his headmaster? That was an unusually harmless sort of way for him to spend a half-holiday.

Or was that tale a flimsy pretence to cover up his real intention—something of a more disgraceful and discreditable character?

The man with a borrowed name cared little. He was assured that Smithy was going out to change a ten-pound note, and that was all that mattered. That it was not the same ten-pound note was not likely to occur to him.

He had told the scapegrace to be back by tea-time. He hardly expected to see him back so soon, but he remained watching at the window.

To his surprise, about an hour later he sighted the Bounder among a number of Removites coming up to the House for tea.

Vernon-Smith had come back.

He was walking towards the House with Redwing and Harry Wharton & Co., Lord Mauleverer and Squiff, and two or three other fellows.

Not one of them glanced at the open window where the Creeper and Crawler sat watching. They passed at a little distance, and Smedley caught a few words.

"Topping, old bean!" Bob Cherry was saying. "We'll come, of course! We can put in some cricket practice first, and then—"

They passed out of Smedley's hearing.

He remained for some minutes in thought. Apparently the scapegrace had told him the truth for once, and it was a harmless schoolboy party at the

pictures that he was arranging for Saturday afternoon. But it was easy to ascertain.

Mr. Smedley stepped to his telephone. He glanced into the local directory for a number, rang up the exchange, and asked for the Courtfield Picture Palace box-office. He was soon through to the man in charge there.

"I am a Form-master, speaking from Greyfriars School," said Mr. Smedley. "I wish to inquire whether a boy belonging to this school has booked seats for to-morrow afternoon."

"That is so, sir," came the reply: "about half an hour ago. I attended to the matter."

"Is the boy known to you?"

"Oh, quite, sir—Master Vernon-Smith! He has often been here on a half-holiday."

"He has paid for the seats?"

"Certainly!"

"I desire to know whether he changed a banknote for the purpose. It is necessary for me to inquire as his Form-master."

There was a surprised tone in the voice as it replied over the wires.

"Master Vernon-Smith changed a ten-pound note, sir, in paying for the seats. As he is well known here I had no hesitation—"

"I quite understand. Please do not allow that banknote to pass out of your hands for the present."

"What?"

"I am afraid, sir, that the boy has passed a banknote which he was not entitled to have in his possession. For your own sake, you had better keep it by you till inquiry can be made."

"Surely, sir, it is impossible—"

gasped the man at the Courtfield box-office.

"I have warned you how the matter stands, sir," said Mr. Smedley coldly. "You will keep the note in your possession, I conclude?"

"Oh, certainly!"

Mr. Smedley rang off.

He wiped a drop of perspiration from his face. Victory was in his hands now—at all events, he had no doubt that it was. What could be clearer? All that remained now was to "miss" the ten-pound note from his desk, and lay the matter before the Head.

But it was with slow steps that the man with a borrowed name at last made his way to Dr. Locke's study.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Accused!

"I SAY, you fellows—"
"Blow away, Bunter!"
"But, I say—" yelled Bunter.
"Scat!"

There were seven fellows at tea in Study No. 1 in the Remove, and an eighth was not required. So the Famous Five and Smithy and Redwing, who were teeing with the Co., all spoke at once as Billy Bunter's fat face and big spectacles glimmered in at the door. But the Owl of the Remove did not "blow" away.

"I say, you fellows," he gasped. "I was going to tell you—"

"Don't tell us your postal order's come!" implored Bob Cherry.

"Anything but that!" grinned Nugent.

"I say, Smedley——"

"Oh, bother Smedley!"

"He's gone to your study, Smithy, and——"

"Mine!" ejaculated the Bounder.

"You're for it, old chap, if you've got any smokes there——"

"I haven't, you fat duffer!" grunted the Bounder.

"Well, Smedley's jolly well after something," said Bunter. "I can jolly well tell you the Creeper and Crawler's after you, and——"

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!" The fat Owl spun round in the doorway. "I—I didn't know you were creeping up behind me, sir. I—I mean I—I didn't see you, sir. I—I wasn't calling you the Creeper and Crawler, sir——"

"Where is Vernon-Smith, Bunter? He is not in his study."

"He's here, sir——"

"Take five hundred lines, Bunter, and go to your study and write them out."

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter rolled away in great dismay. The tall figure of Smedley took his place in the doorway of Study No. 1.

Harry Wharton & Co. rose to their feet at once. What trouble was cropping up now they could not guess, but the Creeper and Crawler's visit to Study No. 4 evidently meant trouble of some sort.

The Bounder was glad at that moment that he was on the reform tack, and that Smedley could not possibly have anything against him.

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Yes, sir?" said Smithy quietly.

"You are to go to your headmaster's study. I came to tell you so."

"Very well, sir."

Smedley's face was hard and cold, and expressed little or nothing. Yet all the fellows present had a sense that the matter was serious; that something unusually grave was impending.

The juniors exchanged uneasy glances.

"Is anything the matter, sir?" ventured Wharton.

"Yes, Wharton, something very serious is the matter," answered the Remove-master coldly. "Go at once, Vernon-Smith."

The Bounder breathed hard

"I've done nothin'," he muttered.

"You have to answer to your headmaster for what you have done, not to me, Vernon-Smith," said Smedley icily, and he turned and walked back to the stairs.

The Bounder stood panting.

"Smithy," muttered Redwing, touching his chum's arm, "buck up, old man! It can't be anything serious——"

"Didn't you see his face?" sneered the Bounder. "He's got me at last—or he thinks he has. The rotter!"

"But if you've done nothing——" said Harry Wharton uneasily. Smithy's reform was so very recent and so very uncertain that it was a little difficult to believe that he had done "nothing."

"Nothing—nothing!"

"Better go to the Head," said Tom anxiously. "Come back as soon as you can, Smithy; we're all anxious."

The Bounder nodded and left the study.

He went slowly down the stairs. His conscience was unusually clear. He had done nothing. But he had a feeling of impending calamity as he went down the stairs with faltering steps.

In the lower passage he passed Mr. Smedley. He looked at him, but the Remove-master did not appear to notice him.

Slowly he went to the Head's study.

He tapped and entered.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.

Dr. Locke was seated at his writing-table, a pen in his hand, but he was not writing; his face was very grave.

"Come in, Vernon-Smith!" he said. He laid down the pen and fixed his eyes on the Bounder. "Mr. Smedley informs me——"

"What has he told you this time?" said the Bounder, between his teeth.

"It is not true, whatever it is!"

"Vernon-Smith!"

"I've done nothing!" said the Bounder stubbornly. "Smedley's been against me ever since he's been here. But I've done nothing this time."

"That is what I have to ascertain, Vernon-Smith," said the Head quietly, "and if you have, as you express it, done nothing, you have nothing to fear. You must be aware that you can rely on your headmaster for justice."

"I know that, of course, sir."

"Very well. Have you changed a ten-pound note to-day?"

The Bounder stared. The question was utterly unexpected, and seemed to him utterly irrelevant.

"Yes," he answered.

"You admit that, Vernon-Smith?"

"Why shouldn't I, sir? It's true."

"Mr. Smedley has missed a bank-note for ten pounds from his study."

MANCHESTER READER WINS TOPPING LEATHER POCKET WALLET!

For the following jaunty Greyfriars limerick, Leslie Turner, of 48, Goodman Street, Blackley, Manchester, has been awarded one of our useful prizes.

Billy Bunter, while out for a spree,
Did clamber up a very high tree.
He fell to the ground,
And blinking all round,
Said: "I wonder what came
and hit me!"

Have you sent in a limerick yet?
Have you won a pocket wallet?
If not, why not? All efforts to
be sent to: "Limericks and Jokes"
Editor, c/o MAGNET, 5, Carmelite
Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

"Has he, sir?"

"The banknote was kept in a locked drawer. But yesterday Mr. Smedley chanced to leave his keys on the table. He tells me, however, that it never crossed his mind that they had been used by an unknown hand, until he went to the drawer this afternoon for the banknote and discovered that it was no longer there."

The Bounder burst into a scoffing laugh.

"And he thinks I've taken it? He would! That's the sort of thing Smedley would think."

"Vernon-Smith!"

"He thought so before when he lost a banknote, and it turned out that it wasn't lost at all. Perhaps if Mr. Smedley looks again he will find the one he has lost this time."

"That banknote, Vernon-Smith, has, I fear, been changed."

"Does he think I've changed it?" sneered the Bounder. "Well, he's mistaken! I've seen nothing of it—and I don't believe that he really thinks I have, either!"

"Kindly speak more respectfully of your Form-master, Vernon-Smith!" rapped the Head sharply. "And listen to me without interruption. It

came to Mr. Smedley's knowledge that you had spent a considerable sum of money on booking theatre seats, and he was aware that you are kept strictly to your allowance by your father. He therefore made an inquiry by telephone and learned that you had changed a ten-pound note at the box-office of the Courtfield Picture Palace to-day."

"He need not have inquired there, sir. I'd have told him, if he'd asked me."

"You deny that it was Mr. Smedley's banknote that you changed?"

"Certainly, I do!"

"You claim, then, that another bank-note for ten pounds was in your possession?"

"Yes."

"If you can prove that statement, Vernon-Smith, well and good," said the Head dryly. "You will now explain where you obtained such a sum."

"From my father," answered the Bounder coolly.

Dr. Locke's face set.

"Your father, Vernon-Smith, has kept you to your allowance ever since your trouble last term, when you were very nearly expelled from the school. I requested him to do so, and he entered completely into my views."

"That is so, sir. But it was a rather special occasion. My father came down and saw me playing cricket in the St. Jim's match, and he was bucked—I mean, he was pleased with me. I think you told him something in my favour, too, sir. Anyhow, he tipped me a ten-pound note. He said he would trust me and see how it turned out."

Dr. Locke looked hard at the Bounder.

The scapegrace of the school was cool enough now. It was his father's bank-note he had changed at the Courtfield Picture Palace. What had he to fear? But the Head's look was long and doubting.

"Will your father bear out this statement, Vernon-Smith?"

"Of course he will, sir!"

"You are aware, of course, that I shall write immediately, and inquire of him?"

"The sooner the better, sir. He will tell you exactly what I have told you; and if you ask him for the number of the note he will be able to tell you that also. He always keeps the numbers of banknotes."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, quite taken aback.

His eyes searched the Bounder's confident face.

The matter, as reported to him by Mr. Smedley, had seemed a certainty. Yet it seemed impossible that the accused boy was lying, when an immediate inquiry to his father would reveal the truth in so short a time. The Head was completely puzzled.

"Very well, Vernon-Smith!" he said, at last. "I shall communicate with your father at once, and the matter will remain in abeyance until I receive his reply. If you have nothing to confess, you——" He paused for a second, but the Bounder did not speak. "You may go!"

And the Bounder went.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tom Redwing's Tip!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were waiting, rather anxiously, in Study No. 1 for the Bounder's return.

Tom Redwing stood in the doorway, watching the passage for him. He breathed a sigh of relief when Smithy

came in sight, coming up the Remove staircase. The Bounder's brows were knitted, and his eyes glinting; but he did not, at all events, look like a fellow who had got it "in the neck," as Tom had feared.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as Smithy came into the study. "Here you are again, old bean!"

"No thanks to the Creeper and Crawler!" growled Vernon-Smith, as he dropped into his chair. "I'll finish my tea, anyhow. Pass the jam!"

Wharton passed the jam, with a faint smile.

"Then it was nothing serious, after all?" he asked.

"Oh, not at all!" said the Bounder mockingly, as he helped himself coolly to jam. "Only an accusation of pinching a banknote from Smedley's study and passing it in Courtfield this afternoon."

"What?" gasped the captain of the Remove.

"My esteemed Smithy—" ejaculated Hurreo Janset Ram Singh.

"Is that a joke?" asked Bob Cherry, staring blankly at the fellow who was lading out jam.

"Not in the least!"

"Smedley's accused you—" exclaimed Nugent.

"Yes. It seems that there's a banknote missin' from his study again," said the Bounder, with a sneer. "Smedley's a bit careless with his banknotes, isn't he—when he wants to land a fellow in trouble! There was a banknote missin', you'll remember, once last term, when that fat ass, Bunter, had been playin' fool tricks, and it turned up again. This time he says it was in a locked drawer, and he happened to leave the keys about."

"Says!" repeated Johnny Bull.

"Says!" answered the Bounder. "If you fellows believe it, I don't. The man's determined to get me bunked, if he can. Goodness knows why. But he's been keen on it ever since he came. And, as Quelch is comin' back next week, he's got no more time to lose. That's how I look at it."

The juniors stared at him. That was a startling view, to them.

"Smithy!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "You don't mean—"

"I do."

"Well, you're talking rot!" said Wharton, rather gruffly. "We all know that the man's down on you, but that's altogether too thick. If he says he's missed a banknote, he must have missed one."

"And I took it?" sneered the Bounder.

"Of course not! But somebody—"

"Rats! He never missed one," said the Bounder deliberately. "He's heard that I've been spending money, after being next door to stony so long, and that's put it into his head."

"Impossible!" said Nugent.

"Impossible or not, that's it." The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "Why should he jump on me? He never fancied that it was any other fellow. Not he! Only poor little me! And it seems that he's gone so far as to ring up the cinema at Courtfield and ask them whether I'd changed a tenner there, and they told him I had."

"Oh!" gasped Bob

"You fellows knew my father tipped me a tenner last week, after the St. Jim's match. I told you so—"

The Bounder broke off suddenly.

He stared from face to face and rose to his feet. His lips set in a hard line and his eyes glittered.

"I told you so!" he repeated. "Are you thinkin' that I told you so to

account for havin' a tenner, which I'd pinched from Smedley's study?"

"Nobody thinks that, Smithy!" said Tom Redwing quietly. "Don't talk utter rot, old man!"

"You don't, I know," said Vernon-Smith. "But these fellows—" His eyes gleamed at the Famous Five. "I want an answer."

"I believe you, Smithy," said Harry Wharton, but, in spite of himself, the words came slowly.

"Same here!" said Bob Cherry.

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"But it looks frightfully queer, all the same!" said Johnny Bull. "Did the Head believe it, Smithy?"

The Bounder laughed scoffingly.

"Was he likely to? I left him flummoxed, though! He's going to write to my father and ask him."

"And your father—" began Nugent haltingly.

"My father will back me up! You see, though you can't take my word for it, he did tip me a tenner on St. Jim's day. And he will tell the Head so, and Smedley will be dished."

The juniors stood silent.

"There's something more behind this," said Tom Redwing quietly.

"Smedley never knew you had a tenner from your father, Smithy, and he wouldn't believe it if you told him. He won't believe it when he hears it from the Head! But he will have to believe it when your father says so. But that tenner's got nothing to do with Smedley's missing tenner—it's simply a coincidence."

"If Smedley's lost a tenner—" muttered Bob.

"He hasn't!" sneered the Bounder.

"I think he has!" said Tom Redwing, in the same quiet tone, "and I think he believes that you changed it to-day in Courtfield, Smithy."

"Well, not knowing that Smithy had one, he would be likely enough to believe that!" said Harry Wharton. "But—what on earth's become of Smedley's tenner, if he's really lost one?"

"He hasn't!" repeated the Bounder.

"His idea is that if he throws enough mud, some of it will stick. I don't know why he's so keen on getting me bunked—but he's frightfully keen on it, and you all know it as well as I do."

"It was a rotten coincidence, you having a tenner," said Harry. "Still, banknotes are numbered, and if they inquire after yours, the number will prove that it wasn't Smedley's."

"Exactly, and my father will prove it, too!" said Vernon-Smith. "I've had nothing to do with Smedley's tenner—unless he's shoved it into one of my pockets and I haven't found it yet."

"Smithy!"

The Bounder laughed.

"Well, I shouldn't wonder! He's set

on gettin' me bunked, and he hasn't much time left before Quelch comes back."

"That's all rot!" said Bob. "If you found a tenner in your pockets, you wouldn't be a s s enough to pass it. I suppose. You'd take it to the Head, or to Smedley himself. The man couldn't be such a fool, if he was such a villain."

"There's something behind this!" remarked Tom Red-

wing, his brow dark with troubled thought. "When there's talk of missing money, the matter's fearfully serious. We know that Smedley's got some reason that we can't understand for wanting Smithy bunked. We know that he actually told lies once about him, he was so keen on it. Now he says that a banknote is missing from his study, and Smithy is called up before the Head! I think—"

"Well, what do you think, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry, as Redwing paused. "You've got an old head on young shoulders, Reddy, so let's have it."

"I think," said Redwing, "that before the matter goes farther, Smithy ought to let his father know. A fellow's father is the man to give advice when a fellow's in trouble."

"That's all right," said the Bounder. "The Head's writing to my father, and he will know by the morning."

"There's a banknote missing," answered Redwing, "and goodness knows where it may be found. I don't trust that man an inch. Smithy, take my advice, and get on the telephone to your father at once, and ask him to come here. Tell him exactly how the matter stands. He's been severe with you, and you know you've jolly well deserved it, but he's fond of you. If there's going to be a search for a missing banknote, with you under suspicion, your father ought to know."

"Reddy!" gasped Wharton, aghast. "You can't think—you don't mean—" He broke off, staring at Redwing.

"I hardly know what I think," said Redwing. "But I believe that that man, for some extraordinary reason, would stop at very little to get Smithy turfed out of Greyfriars. I think Mr. Vernon-Smith has a right to know, and that he ought to know."

The Bounder stood silent for some moments. He nodded at last.

"I've not often taken your advice, Reddy, old man," he said. "But every time I haven't taken it, I've wished afterwards that I had. This time I'm going to take it—and act on it."

He glanced at his wrist-watch.

"There's time to cut down to Friar-dale on my bike before lock-up," he said. "I'll phone from the post office there. Ta-ta!"

The Bounder hurried from the study. Five minutes later he was wheeling out his bike and mounting it to ride down to the village. And within a quarter of an hour he was speaking to his father on the telephone—and Mr. Vernon-Smith, at the other end of the wire, was snorting with surprise, anger, and indignation. And having expressed those feelings by a series of snorts, the millionaire ordered his car; and Vernon-Smith rode back to Greyfriars with the knowledge that in two or three hours his father would be at the school.

(Continued on next page.)



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THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Glimpse of a Crime!

"FIVE hundred lines——"
"Better get on with them!" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"
Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five of the Remove, like Hamlet's respected pater, more in sorrow than in anger.

A fellow who had five hundred lines to write might really have considered it a good idea to get on with them. But getting on with them was not Bunter's idea at all.

"I say, you fellows, I've started them!" said Bunter. "I want my friends to help me through!"

"Good egg!" agreed Bob. "Go and find your friends——"

"Eh?"
"And get them to help!"

"But——"
"That's the idea!" said Johnny Bull heartily. "And give us a rest, see?"

Billy Bunter did not give the chums of the Remove a rest. He gave them a glare. They, apparently, were the friends to whom the fat Owl of the Remove had been referring.

"It was really your fault that I got the lines," grunted Bunter. "I was talking to you when that beast came along and heard me calling him a creeper and crawler! The least you can do now is to rally round! If you all lend me a hand it's only a hundred each."

"Oh, my hat!"
"In fact, not quite a hundred," said Bunter. "I've done ten, and—and I'll do ten more! There!" said Bunter, in a burst of generosity, as it were. "What about that?"

Harry Wharton & Co. chuckled. The offer did not seem to tempt them. They were strolling in the quad, waiting for the Bounder to come in, and they went on strolling in the quad! They displayed no eagerness whatever to go up to the studies and write Bunter's lines for him. With the selfishness to which Bunter was only too sadly accustomed they were going to leave him to write his lines himself.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" growled Bunter. "The lines have got to be done. Oh dear, I wish Quelch was back! Quelch was a beast—all schoolmasters are beasts, of course—but Smedley's worse than a dozen Quelches! I've felt sorry more than once that Quelch got ill at all! I have, really! It seemed splendid at first, but it's turned out absolutely rotten."

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Five hundred lines!" groaned Bunter. "And if they ain't done they'll be doubled! I wouldn't mind if Smedley went on doubling them till Quelch came back. You see, Quelch wouldn't ask for them! But he won't! It will mean a licking. I say, you fellows, what about coming up to my study and—and wiring in? Don't be a lot of slackers."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Smedley won't notice your fists. Besides, you can make it like mine. I'll do as much for you another time. I say, is that Smedley coming out of the House?" The Owl of the Remove blinked at a tall figure that appeared from the House doorway.

"That's the jolly old Creeper and Crawler!" grinned Bob. "Better cut in and get going on your lines, Bunter."

"Well, the brute can't expect them yet—'tain't an hour since he handed them out," said the fat junior. "If

they're done before prep it will be all right. If all you fellows help——"

"The if-fulness is preposterous."
"I shall get detention to-morrow if they ain't done. Then I shan't be able to come with you to the pictures, and tea at the bun-shop afterwards," said Bunter. "It will rather spoil Smithy's party to-morrow if I'm left out, won't it?"

"Oh, my hat! Will it?" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

"Well, you'll hardly enjoy it without me, you know! Now what about coming in and getting those lines done?"

"Bow-wow!"
Even the peril of losing Billy Bunter's company at Smithy's party on Saturday afternoon did not seem to worry the Famous Five—not fearfully. They looked as if they would be able to bear it with some fortitude!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Smithy!" exclaimed Bob.

"I say, you fellows——"

But the fat voice of Billy Bunter was passed by, like the idle wind which they regarded not. At the sight of Herbert Vernon-Smith coming from the direction of the bike shed the Famous Five walked to meet him.

"I say, you fellows——" roared Bunter.

He roared unheeded, and with an indignant snort he rolled after the chums of the Remove. Other fellows might be thinking of less important matters; but from Billy Bunter's point of view getting that impot done was the most urgent affair in the universe at the moment. Otherwise, he was in danger of missing the party at the pictures, and the spread at the Courtfield bunshop afterwards. As a last resource, Bunter was going to grind out those lines himself. But that, of course, was a very last resource.

"All serene, Smithy?" asked Harry Wharton, as the chums of the Remove joined the Bounder.

Smithy nodded.

"Yes, I got the pater on the phone."
"Is he coming?"

"On his way already."
"That's good!" said Harry. "I think Reddy's right, old chap. If there's really a banknote missing from Smedley's study we can't have heard the last of it yet."

"I say, you fellows——"

Bunter rolled up, breathless.

"Oh, blow off, Bunter!"

"But I say, what about those lines? I say, Smithy, are you going to lend me a hand with my lines? You see, I got them because I came to give you the tip that Smedley was in your study——"

"Roll away, barrel!"

"Beast!" hooted Bunter. "Look here, if you don't jolly well help me with those lines I jolly well won't join your party to-morrow, so there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Smedley!" grinned Bob. "He's going to ask you for your lines, Bunter——"

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles. Smedley, with a black look on his face, was striding towards the group of juniors. The fat Owl gave him one startled blink and rolled away in the opposite direction.

But Mr. Smedley's glance did not follow him. He was not thinking of the fat and fatuous Owl.

His eyes were fixed on the Bounder as he came up. The expression on his face startled the juniors.

"Vernon-Smith!" barked Mr. Smedley.

"Yes, sir!" said the Bounder quietly.

"What are you doing here?"

"Talking to these fellows, sir," answered Smithy. He stared at Smedley, surprised by the angry question. "Why shouldn't I be in the quad, sir?"

A faint grin dawned on his face. It was more than an hour since Smedley had sent him to the Head, and he wondered whether the Creeper and Crawler supposed that he was already sacked. If so, no doubt the man was surprised to see him strolling in the quad with other Remove fellows, and looking quite unconcerned.

"You have seen the Head, Vernon-Smith?"

"Certainly, sir, when you sent me to him."

Smedley gave him a hard, bitter, searching look. He was surprised, puzzled, perplexed—perhaps uneasy. Everything, so far as he could see, had gone like clockwork, yet here was the Bounder, certainly not looking like a fellow who was sacked, or in danger of the sack.

"I do not understand this, Vernon-Smith!" His voice was hard and sharp. "Dr. Locke is aware of what you have done——"

"I've done nothin', sir!"

"Dr. Locke is aware that you purloined a banknote from my study and changed it in Courtfield this afternoon, Vernon-Smith."

"It was his own banknote that Smithy changed, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"Silence, Wharton! How dare you interfere? If you have made such a statement to the Head, Vernon-Smith, it is impossible that he can have given it credit for one moment."

Vernon-Smith's lip curled. In his angry perplexity and disappointment, the man was losing his caution and giving himself away. It was not an indignant Form-master, but an angry enemy, who was speaking.

"I told the Head that I had that banknote from my father, sir," answered Smithy coolly. "He is going to inquire."

"Inquire!" breathed the man with a borrowed name. "Dr. Locke is perfectly well aware that your father would not have sent you a banknote in his letter."

The Bounder stared.

"In his letter!" he repeated.

"If you have told the Head so, Vernon-Smith——"

Smedley broke off, turned his back on the juniors and strode away towards the House, plainly very deeply disturbed.

"What on earth did he mean?" asked Wharton, in a low voice. "You never had a banknote from your father in that letter the other day, Smithy?"

"I never had the letter itself," answered Smithy. "That ass Bunter dropped it into the river when he chucked it to me in my boat."

"Then what did he mean?"

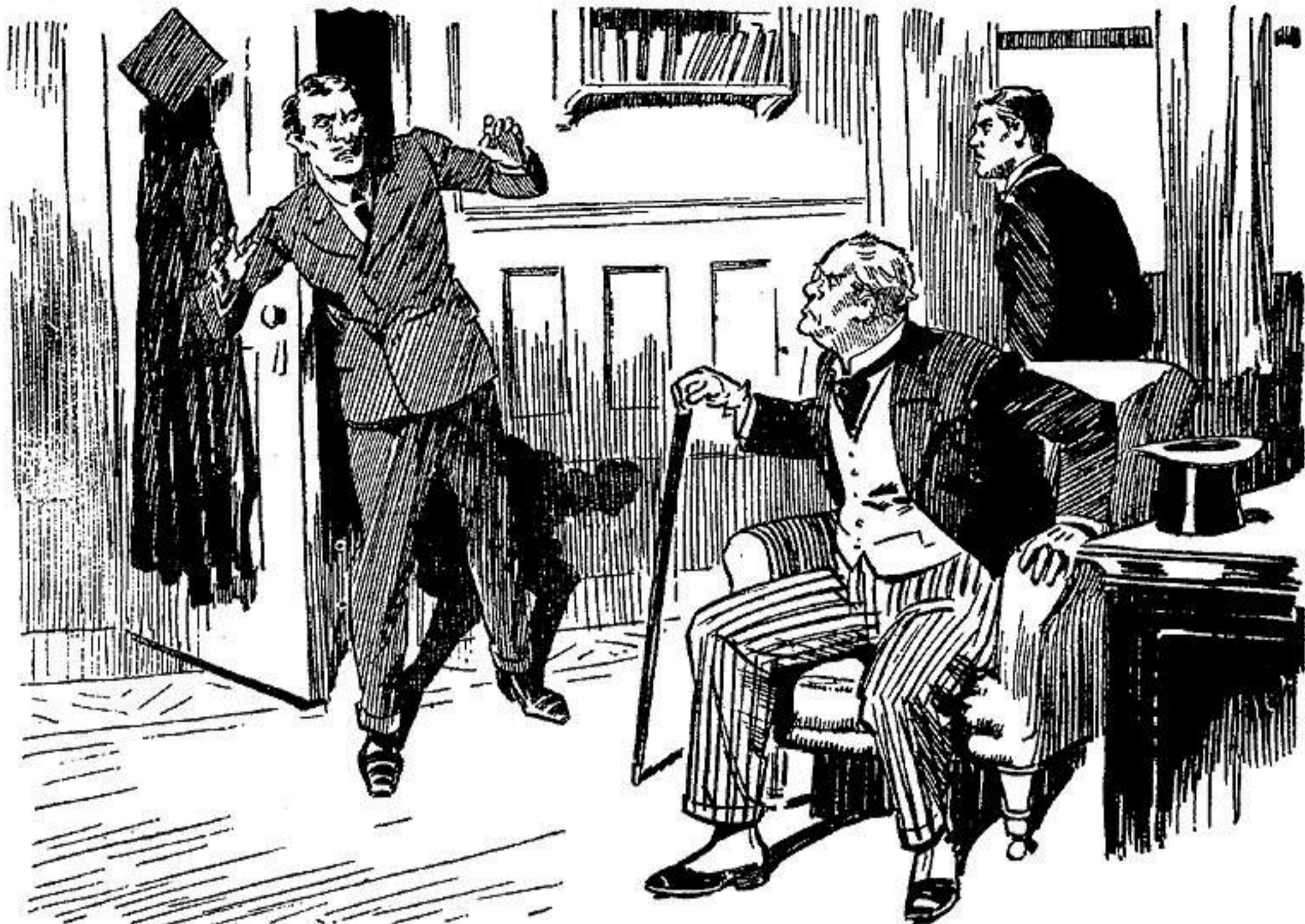
"Goodness knows, unless——" The Bounder turned quite pale. "Oh, my hat! Our letters pass through Smedley's hands——"

"Smithy!"

"Well, what did he mean? What did he speak of the letter at all for? He thinks I told the Head I had a tenner in that letter from my father!"

The juniors looked at one another. It seemed to them that they had a glimpse at that moment of something dark, something terrible! Harry Wharton broke the silence at last.

"Thank goodness Reddy made you call in your father! Your father's wanted here now."



Mr. Vernon-Smith, waiting to see Mr. Smedley, looked up suddenly and stared at the tall man who entered the study. "Lucius!" he stuttered. "Lucius Teggars, wh-what are you doing here?" Mr. Smedley, the man with a borrowed name, stood rooted to the floor, with terror and astonishment.

The Bounder nodded. He was deeply glad that he had asked his father to come to his help. But neither he nor his friends dreamed for a moment of what was to be the startling and dramatic outcome of his father's coming!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Proof!

DR. LOCKE laid down his pen, and frowned a little. There was a sharp tap at his study door, and it opened hurriedly, and Mr. Smedley came in. The headmaster of Greyfriars was not accustomed to being so abruptly interrupted by members of his staff.

"Really, Mr. Smedley——" he said coldly.

"I am sorry to interrupt you, sir." It was difficult for the man with a borrowed name to assume the calm respect of a master speaking to his chief, with his brain in a turmoil of doubt and chagrin, not unmingled with fear. "I have just seen Vernon-Smith in the quadrangle, sir——"

"Well?"

"In the circumstances, sir, I concluded that the boy would be sent away immediately from the school. Is it judicious, sir, to allow a boy convicted of theft to mingle with the other boys——"

Dr. Locke raised his hand.

"Vernon-Smith has not been convicted of theft, Mr. Smedley, and I am the best judge of what is judicious!" he said in a voice of ice.

"Oh, quite, sir! But, as the matter is clear, I was surprised. Surely, sir, you attach no importance, no belief, to

the boy's absurd statement that he received a banknote for ten pounds in a letter from his father, when Mr. Vernon-Smith has undertaken to send him nothing beyond his allowance——"

"Vernon-Smith has not told me that he received a banknote in a letter from his father, Mr. Smedley."

"He has not?"

"Certainly not."

"Then how has he explained the possession of a ten-pound note, sir?" gasped the hapless Creeper and Crawler.

Lucius Teggars, alias Smedley, felt at that moment as if his scheming head was turning round.

That banknote, numbered 000124, should have reached the Bounder in his father's letter. Naturally, he would have supposed that it was a tip, and spent it. It had never occurred to Smedley that that letter had never reached the Bounder at all. He did not remember an old adage that there is many a slip twixt cup and lip. Neither did he remember that, however cunning a rascal may plot and scheme, there is always some little accident round the corner ready to upset the plotting and scheming.

As a man of experience and observation, Lucius should have been aware that rascality, in the long run, never comes out on top. Honesty is always the best policy. But, like other rogues, he disregarded the lessons of experience and hoped for better luck in his own particular case. And he was getting no better luck than other rogues.

He stared almost hopelessly at the Head. Dr. Locke's kind old face grew colder and harder. More than once, already, he had doubted whether this man was just to the scapegrace of the

school—whether there was not some personal dislike in the matter. Now he could hardly doubt.

"Vernon-Smith has explained that his father handed him a ten-pound note one day last week, sir," said the Head icily. "It was on the day of the cricket match with another school, when it appears that Vernon-Smith distinguished himself very much, and his father was greatly pleased with him. That is the boy's explanation, sir."

The Creeper and Crawler could only stare. He was certain, absolutely certain, that it was banknote No. 000124 that Smithy had changed at the cinema that afternoon, the banknote that had been in the letter. Why had the boy said otherwise? It was a hopeless puzzle.

"You—you believed him, sir?" he gasped, at last.

"The matter is in abeyance until Mr. Vernon-Smith replies to my letter on the subject!" answered the Head.

The wretched schemer felt a chill. The risk of Mr. Vernon-Smith being brought personally on the scene was a terrible one to him.

"If I may make a suggestion, sir——"

"Really, Mr. Smedley——"

"I have the number of the stolen note here, sir. The official at the Courtfield box-office has agreed to keep in hand the banknote passed by Vernon-Smith. Here is the number, sir."

Mr. Smedley placed a slip of paper before the Head. On it was written the number 000124.

"If you will take the trouble, sir, to ring up the man in Courtfield, he will tell you the number of the note now in his hands."

"That, certainly, should make the

matter clear, and without delay," said Dr. Locke slowly. "Certainly I am very anxious for it to be cleared up in the shortest possible time. I will do as you suggest, Mr. Smedley."

The Head stepped to his telephone. "I will find you the number, sir."

"Thank you."
The number was given, and Dr. Locke put through to the box-office of the Courtfield Picture Palace. The voice that had answered Mr. Smedley that afternoon now inquired what was wanted.

"It is the headmaster of Greyfriars School speaking," said Dr. Locke. "I am sorry to trouble you, but I understand that you have a banknote for ten pounds, received from a Greyfriars boy this afternoon—"

"The banknote is still here, sir, under my hand!"

"Will you have the kindness to give me the number?"

"Certainly, sir." A pause. "0024689."

"0024689!" repeated the Head.

"Precisely, sir."

"Thank you very much."

Dr. Locke turned from the telephone. His face had lighted up—in very distinct contrast to Smedley's.

"Evidently, Mr. Smedley, the banknote passed by Vernon-Smith was not the one taken from your study!" he said. "The number is entirely different."

Smedley made a husky sound in his throat. The study seemed to be spinning round him.

"It—it—it is impossible, sir—" he gasped.

"The man's answer is perfectly clear, Mr. Smedley. The number of Vernon-Smith's note is 0024689. The number of the note you have missed it 000124. Nothing can be clearer."

"There—there—there is some mistake! Please let me speak to the man—"

"I see no occasion—"

"I tell you, sir, there is some mistake—some falsehood—please give me the receiver."

Smedley almost snatched the receiver from the headmaster's hand. Dr. Locke stood and eyed him with grim disapproval. Heedless of his chief's grim look, Smedley barked into the instrument.

"Please repeat the number."

"0024689," came the reply from Courtfield.

"There is some mistake—"

"Not at all, sir!"

"I tell you there is a mistake!" roared Smedley. "You have mistaken the banknote for some other—"

"Only one ten-pound note has been received here to-day, sir, and it is now in my hand. The number is, as I have said, 0024689."

With a trembling hand Smedley replaced the receiver on the hooks and turned away from the instrument to face the cold, grim, disapproving stare of the headmaster of Greyfriars.

"Are you satisfied now, Mr. Smedley?" asked the Head icily.

"I—I— It appears—" The man with a borrowed name could only stammer, "I—I—certainly—"

"Vernon-Smith," said the Head, "is now absolutely cleared of any possible suspicion of having purloined a banknote from your study, Mr. Smedley—and by your own suggestion. It will now be unnecessary to communicate with his father—the matter closes here."

"But, sir—"

"The matter is closed," said the Head, very distinctly. "And now,

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please leave my study, Mr. Smedley—I am busy."

The Creeper and Crawler almost slunk out.

He was beaten. By what strange chance he had been beaten he did not know and could not guess. But he was beaten, and it was borne in upon his mind that the game was up.

Dr. Locke sat with a grimly thoughtful face for some minutes after he was gone. For some time he had not been satisfied with that temporary master of the Remove—strongly as he had been recommended by Messrs. Leggett & Teggars. Now he was more dissatisfied than ever. But he remembered that Mr. Quelch would be returning in a few days, and that then Mr. Smedley would be going; it was not long, now, before that unsatisfactory Form-master would be gone from Greyfriars. As a matter of fact, his departure was to take place sooner than the Head anticipated; and sooner than the schemer anticipated himself. Mr. Vernon-Smith was on his way to the school—and there was a surprise at hand for the man with a borrowed name.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Sudden Surprise!

"I SAY, you fellows, it's too jolly thick!" declared Billy Bunter.

"The thickfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Smedley's a rotter!" said Johnny Bull.

"A worm!" said Squiff.

"The jolly old last word in worms!" said Vernon-Smith.

Bunter blinked at them, rather in surprise.

He had rolled out of Study No. 7, where he had been making an effort to get on with those lines. Ten more had been written, towards the total of five hundred. That made Bunter feel tired.

So, hearing the voices in the passage, Bunter rolled out to see what was going on, leaving the rest of the impot to take care of itself.

Smithy was leaning on the banisters of the Remove landing, his hands in his pockets, a grin on his face. The Bouncer was in cheery spirits. After that interview with Mr. Smedley, the Head had sent for him, to tell him that the affair of the banknote was, so far as he was concerned, at an end; it having been ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the "tenner" he had changed at Courtfield was not the Remove master's missing banknote. Which cheering news the Bouncer passed on to his friends, to their relief and comfort.

But the fact remained that, according to Smedley, he had missed a tenner from his study. That was a very uncomfortable fact.

As the matter had turned out, the defeated plotter would probably have been glad enough to let the whole matter drop. Somehow or other, that banknote had never reached Smithy, and the plot had failed. But it was impossible to let it drop.

Having stated that a banknote had been purloined from his study, Smedley could hardly withdraw the statement. So he had to stand by it, though it was no longer possible for it to serve his turn. And the Remove fellows were discussing the matter wrathfully and indignantly, when Billy Bunter joined them. And Bunter's remark that it was "too jolly thick" was endorsed by

all the fellows at once—rather to the fat Owl's surprise, for he was referring to his five hundred lines, not to the banknote.

"It's absolutely sickening," went on Bunter. "The man's the limit, you know. Creeping and crawling and listening to what a fellow's saying when a fellow's not looking, and jumping on a fellow, you know. I never knew he'd spotted me, till—"

"He spotted you!" exclaimed Skinner, staring.

"Eh! Yes—that's why—"

"Then it was you?" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"Bunter!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Was it you, Bunter?"

"Eh!" Bunter blinked at him. "You know it was, fathead, as you were there at the time—"

"I was there?" gasped Bob.

"Of course you were, and the other fellows, too!" snapped Bunter. "What the thump do you mean? You know you were there—all the lot of you, and Smithy and Redwing as well, when I did it!"

"Is he potty?" ejaculated Nugent, in wonder. "If we'd been there when you did it, you frabjous ass, we'd jolly well have stopped you!"

"Well, you didn't hear Smedley coming, any more than I did, the way he creeps and crawls about," said Bunter. "I'd seen him only a couple of minutes before, but I didn't know he was just behind me at that minute!"

The Removites gazed at Bunter.

"Mean to say you've got it about you now?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Eh? Got what?"

"The banknote!"

"What banknote?" gasped Bunter.

"What the thump are you talking about? Who's got a banknote? What banknote?"

"Smedley's banknote, that he's missed from his study!" roared Bob Cherry.

"You've just said that you did it!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Is the fat dummy wandering in his mind?" asked Peter Todd.

"Has he one to wander in?" inquired Skinner.

Billy Bunter blinked in astonishment at the Removites. What they were driving at was a mystery to him. As they were talking about one matter, and he was talking about another, a slight misunderstanding had arisen.

"I say, you fellows, have you all gone batty, or what?" demanded the Owl of the Remove peevishly. "I don't know anything about a banknote! Were you talking about a banknote?"

"You blithering ass—"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Does Smedley say he's missed a banknote? Do you think I'd touch his rotten banknotes? I can get all the banknotes I want from Bunter Court—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows—"

"You said he spotted you!" yelled Bob.

"Eh? So he did! You all saw him! I was in the doorway of Study No. 1 when he came up behind me, and heard me calling him Creeper and Crawler!"

"You—you—you howling maniac!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that what you are babbling about?"

"Eh? Yes! He gave me five hundred lines, and I think it's jolly thick," said Bunter. "I've done twenty, and if you fellows feel inclined to get on with them—"

"Fathead!"

"I say, you fellows, though, does Smedley make out that he's lost a banknote? First I've heard of it—"

"You burbling ass!"

"I say, is that why he was after Smithy?" asked Bunter. "Did you pinch it, Smithy, old chap?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Herbert Vernon-Smith did not answer that question in words. He stepped away from the banisters, grabbed Billy Bunter by the collar, and banged his bullet head on the wall. There was a fiendish howl from Bunter.

"Yaroooooh!"
Bang, bang!
"Yow-ow! Wow! Beast!" roared Bunter. "I say, I won't tell Smedley if you pinched it, old chap! I wouldn't give a pal away—"

Bang!
"Whooooop!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh crikey!" Billy Bunter tore himself loose, and fled. The door of Study No. 7 slammed after him.

Vernon-Smith walked to the landing window, and looked out into the quad, glowing in the June sunset. Any minute now, he expected the arrival of his father. He was almost feverishly anxious for Mr. Vernon-Smith to come. There were suspicions in his mind, vague, but deeply disturbing. He had been a scapegrace son. His father had been angry, stern, displeased, to the extent of menacing him with disinheritance. But now, with a feeling of danger in the air, it was his father that he wanted.

He had known that the Creeper and Crawler was his enemy, though he did not know why. But now he felt, rather than knew, that the man was not only an enemy, but a subtle and treacherous one, who would stick at very little. And he wanted his father.

Smedley, he knew, had gone out. He had seen the tall figure stride down to the gates an hour ago, and wondered, sardonically, whether the Creeper and Crawler was going to Courtfield to see that banknote with his own eyes, and make assurance doubly sure that it was not the one he had "missed." The Bouncer grinned at that thought. Smedley could not turn one banknote into another by staring at it in the box-office of the Courtfield Cinema.

It was nearly time for prep now, and some of the juniors were going to their studies. But the Bouncer remained at the window, staring out.

"Oh, good!" he ejaculated suddenly. A big Rolls car was turning in at the gates. The Bouncer ran to the stairs.

He was at the door when the millionaire stepped from the car. He ran down the steps to meet him.

"Father!"
Mr Vernon-Smith, whose plump face was grim, shook hands with his son. He snapped to his chauffeur to take the car to the garage; he was likely to remain some time; and as it rolled away, he entered the House with his son.

"Come up to my study, father," said the Bouncer.

"I must see your headmaster first! Wait for me in your study!" said the millionaire briefly.

Trotter showed the millionaire to Dr. Locke's study. Vernon-Smith went up to the Remove passage to wait in Study No. 4. But he had not long to wait. Mr. Vernon-Smith was not ten minutes with the Head.

Harry Wharton & Co. saluted him respectfully as the plump gentleman came ponderously up to the Remove passage. He gave them a nod, and walked on to Study No. 4, where the Bouncer and Tom Redwing awaited him. The portly City gentleman sank into the Bouncer's armchair.

"Now, what have you to tell me, Herbert?" he rapped. "I hear from Dr. Locke that the matter you men-

tioned to me on the telephone has now been cleared up. Is there anything further?"

"There is this, father," said the Bouncer quietly, "that I don't feel safe. That man Smedley, for some reason I can't understand, wants to get me bunked from the school—and I believe—I feel it in my bones—that he's fixed this up to do it."

"Nonsense!"
"I believe it, too, sir!" said Tom Redwing.

"Impossible!"
"I know it sounds impossible," said the Bouncer, "but I believe it, all the same. I want you to see him—"

"I shall see him!" snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith, rising from the chair, "and I shall see him in your presence! Come with me!"

"I don't know whether he's come in yet—"

"If he has not, I shall wait for him!" The Bouncer went down the stairs

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Face to Face!

MR. SMEDLEY stopped dead. He stared at the portly millionaire.

He was rooted to the floor of the study with terror and astonishment. His eyes seemed to bulge from his head.

Never had a surprise been more complete.

Mr. Smedley had been down to Courtfield. He had scanned that ten-pound note at the cinema box-office. He had been forced to admit that there was no mistake; it was not the banknote he had fancied it was, that he had believed it must be! He had walked back to the school in a very unenviable frame of mind.

There was one rag of hope left to the wretched, defeated schemer. The missing tenner must be somewhere. Could he yet contrive, somehow, to fix it on Vernon-Smith? Was there a chance, after all, of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat? Such were the dark, miserable thoughts in the mind of the man with a borrowed name, when he arrived at his study—and, utterly unexpectedly, found himself face to face with Mr. Vernon-Smith, the man of all on earth whom he most desired to avoid!

He stood staring at him with bulging eyes, utterly confounded; as if his uncle had been the ghost of a plump City gentleman!

The Bouncer stared, too! He was there to see Mr. Smedley in his father's presence! Hearing the millionaire address the man by the name of the cousin he had never seen was a staggering surprise to the Bouncer. For the moment he could hardly believe his ears.

"Lucius!" snapped Mr. Vernon-Smith. He did not understand yet. "Are you deaf—or dumb? What are you doing at Greyfriars?"

Still the man with a borrowed name did not speak. He was incapable of speech. He could only stare at the millionaire with glassy, staring eyes. The Bouncer caught his father by the arm.

"That's Mr. Smedley, father."

"What?"
"My Form-master, Smedley—"

"Are you mad, Herbert? What do you mean? That is my nephew, your cousin, Lucius Teggers—"

"Lucius Teggers!" repeated the Bouncer. Amazing as the discovery was, he had to believe it. "The fellow you were going to adopt if you disinherited me for getting sacked from school—no wonder he wanted to get me sacked—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith gasped.

"Herbert! Do you mean to tell me that that man has been known by the name of Smedley here—that he is Mr. Smedley—"

"Yes, yes, yes—"

"Lucius! You rogue and rascal!" roared the millionaire. "So that is why you had your face bandaged when I saw you last week—I knew I had seen you before, though I could not see your face. Lucius, you—you scoundrel! By gad you shall go to prison for this!"

The man with a borrowed name licked his dry lips. He found his voice at last.

"So you've found me out? The game's up now! Well, you asked for it—it was your own doing! Your own doing from beginning to end! Did you think that you could dangle a fortune of millions under a man's eyes, and

(Continued on page 28.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.

A POCKET-KNIFE IS ALWAYS HANDY!

CRACK A JOKE and win one like R. Brand, of 41, Silcott Street, Brightlingsea, Essex, who sent in the following rib-tickler:



Two men on a tandem had just reached the top of a very steep hill.

Front rider: "Phew! That was a stiff climb, Bert!"

Bert: "Yes; if I hadn't had me orakes on, we would have gone down backwards!"

Now you supply a laugh and win a prize!

with his father. Mr Vernon-Smith's face was set and grim as he reached the door of Mr. Quelch's old study—now Smedley's. If his son was not getting justice, Samuel Vernon-Smith was the man to see that he did get it. He rapped sharply on the door, and opened it.

The study was empty. Mr. Vernon-Smith marched in, with his heavy tread. He sat down in the Form-master's armchair.

"You may shut the door, Herbert! I shall wait here till Mr Smedley comes in!" he grunted.

The Bouncer closed the study door. It was more than a quarter of an hour later that footsteps were heard in Masters' Passage. They stopped at the study door. It opened.

A tall man came in, and Mr. Vernon-Smith, staring at him, jumped up.

"Lucius!" he stuttered. "Lucius Teggers, what are you doing here?"

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.

MERVYN VILLIERS and JULIUS TANKERHEAD, two clever crooks, have been pulling off big coups in connection with sporting events. In order to find out how they work their clever swindles, FERRERS LOCKE, detective, poses as a wealthy Argentine book-maker. Realising eventually that Ferrers Locke has been bluffing them, the two schemers kidnap JACK DRAKE, whom they imprison in a cellar, leaving a bomb cunningly fixed to explode as soon as the cellar-flap is opened. The scheme fails, however, for Drake manages to get free of his bonds in the nick of time. Discovering that the two criminals have left for the Continent, Locke thinks out a scheme to bring them back.

(Now read on.)

The Dead Return!

FERRERS LOCKE'S fast sports car was soon approaching his rooms in Baker Street, and upon its arrival there a tall, sunburnt, bearded young man, clad in rough sailor garb, stepped away from the door as Locke and Drake made to enter.

"Excuse me," he said suddenly, as Locke keyed himself in, "but I am trying to get into touch with a Mr. Ferrers Locke, detective. I understood he lived here. But I've been ringing here for the past ten minutes and can get no answer."

The detective smiled. He liked the healthy look of this young man, and a second quick study of him awoke vague recollections in the detective's mind. Locke was certain he had met the man before somewhere.

"You've made no mistake," replied the detective. "I am Ferrers Locke. Perhaps you will come inside!"

The sunburnt young man was obviously taken aback by that statement.

"I—ahem—but, sir, you do not remind me in the least of the Ferrers Locke I wish to see!" he exclaimed.

Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake eyed each other, and both laughed. It had occurred to them in the same moment that they were still in their disguise of visitors from the Argentine.

"I think I can introduce you to the Ferrers Locke you want to see," smiled the detective. "And your name is—"

The sunburnt young man became embarrassed at first.

"I would sooner not give my name to anyone yet," he answered. "Mr. Ferrers Locke will understand, I'm sure!"

With a wink to Drake the detective mounted the stairs. He quickly entered his "den," what time Jack talked to the stranger and saw him comfortably settled in an armchair.

In less than five minutes the detective reappeared. But gone now was the guise of Mr. Jules Martinez, the rather plump and olive-complexioned Argentine. The sailorman's good-looking face expressed his pleasure at once. He rose to his feet and proffered a hand in greeting.

"Oh, Mr. Locke," he exclaimed, "I was afraid I had made a mistake. The gentleman who let me in said he was Ferrers Locke."

"So he was!" chuckled the detective. "And I am that gentleman, too!"

He waved his hand to stem the string of questions which threatened to pour forth from his visitor.

"You see, in the detective business it is sometimes necessary to adopt disguises. When you first saw me I was in disguise. This cheeky faced youngster"—indicating Jack Drake—"is in disguise, too. Normally, however, he is known as Jack Drake, my assistant. Now, sir," he added playfully, "perhaps you will give me your name. There's something familiar about the cut of your jib. I feel sure we have met before somewhere."

"Once, Mr. Locke," came the reply, "and that was over a year ago. I was performing a special flying stunt at an air pageant. My name is—"

Ferrers Locke had taken a step forward, and was gazing deeply into the sunburnt face, trying to imagine it without that beard.

"Good heavens!" he interrupted. "You're Christopher Dean!"

"What?" ejaculated Drake incredulously. "But he was drowned, gov'nor—you remember he tried to cross the Atlantic in his monoplane, the Heart's Desire!"

Then Drake found himself gazing hard at the sunburnt face of their visitor, and entertaining doubts.

The sunburnt sailorman came to the rescue.

"Mr. Locke is quite correct," he said. "I am Christopher Dean. I know my death was presumed when my plane failed to cross the Atlantic. And thereby hangs a tale."

Drake's excitement was tremendous. He had always had a youngster's admiration of Christopher Dean, Britain's leading airman. But when the vacuum flask which had contained Dean's log-book, telling of the fate of his monoplane, together with the fragment of bomb casing had been picked up in Pegg Bay, he had never hoped to see him again.

"Let me explain," said Dean, with an engaging smile. "I was as near to drowning as any man could be in the middle of the Atlantic. But my flying suit kept me afloat hours after the wreckage of my plane had disappeared for keeps. A passing windjammer—one of the old school of grain ships—picked me up, more dead than alive. The skipper, a Swede, nursed me back to health."

"But how was it the world never heard that you had been picked up?" asked Drake.

Dean smiled at the youngster's eagerness.

"The windjammer wasn't fitted with wireless," he replied. "And, in any case, after I had talked things over with the skipper, I came to the conclusion that it would be better, for the time being, for Christopher Dean to be dead. Our first port of call was Buenos Aires. I've been travelling home by easy stages ever since, thinking things over." He turned to Ferrers Locke with a grave face. "It might interest you to know, sir, that my crash in mid-Atlantic was no accident."

If he expected surprise to show in Locke's keen features he was disappointed, for the detective smiled and beckoned Dean over to the small wall safe. Diving his hand into the recess, Locke withdrew the vacuum flask which

had been the starting point, as it were, of his bitter tussle with Messrs. Villiers & Tankerhead.

It was Dean's turn now to show surprise. With hands that trembled, he took the flask, unscrewed it, and tipped out the rolled-up log-book of that fateful journey across the Atlantic wastes, and the piece of shell casing.

"How in the name of all that's wonderful do you come to have this?" he gasped.

Quickly Locke recounted the facts which had led to his interest in the Dean case, as he called it. But he kept back the result of that long and dangerous investigation.

Christopher Dean could hardly believe the evidence of his own eyes. He gazed stupidly at the flask and the hurried message which he had enclosed in it before the monoplane, Heart's Desire, had disappeared beneath the waves.

"Well, these things are mine!" he murmured at length. "But why didn't you hand them over to Mervyn Villiers, as requested in this message, Mr. Locke?"

Ferrers Locke's face set in a grim mould.

"I did—or, rather, I got Drake to deliver a duplicate set of these things to Mervyn Villiers, with the story that he had found them, Dean."

"Well, what did Mervyn do?" asked Dean excitedly. "He was a good friend of mine—my best friend, I should say!"

"Mervyn Villiers," said the detective coldly and very deliberately, "is the biggest villain outside a prison. Mervyn Villiers, my dear Dean, was your worst friend!"

Christopher Dean started to his feet angrily.

"Mr. Locke, I cannot let that pass!" he retorted hotly.

"Calm yourself," replied the detective unmoved, "and presently I'll explain why I made that statement."

Christopher Dean did calm himself.

"I called on Villiers before I decided to come along here and see you," he said at length. "But, apparently, he is out of town."

Locke laughed grimly.

"He'll be back shortly, never fear," he remarked. "and he'll bring with him his old friend, Julius Tankerhead, too! Know Tankerhead?" he added, with an eyebrow cocked inquiringly.

"Rather!" smiled Dean. "He was always fussing around me—wanted to take up a financial interest in my flight, but I wouldn't let him. Good chap Tankerhead!"

Locke wagged his head in an irritating fashion.

"Mr. Dean," he said simply, "you may be a brilliant pilot, but you have yet to learn something of the wickedness of this world and something of the double-dyed villains who live in it. Julius Tankerhead runs your friend Villiers to a dead heat, in a manner of speaking—he's every bit as bad as Villiers."

Again Christopher Dean made as if to voice an angry retort, but Locke cut him short.

"The bomb that was placed in your aeroplane," he said quietly, "was manufactured by the Tankerhead Foundry. I have definite proof of that, since a similar bomb, fashioned by the same steel formula, very nearly wiped out both my young friend here and myself a few hours ago."

"I don't understand—" began Dean.

"Well, perhaps you will be prepared to credit what I say," continued Locke, "when I tell you that Tankerhead effected a life insurance of a hundred

thousand pounds on one Christopher Dean a short while before he attempted his double Atlantic crossing! Ah, I see that startles you!" he added, as Dean sat bolt upright in his chair.

"It's the truth!" went on the detective. "And Tankerhead was so sure of getting his hundred thousand pounds that he was prepared to pay the extremely high premium of fifty thousand pounds. Surely that convinces you that he knew you would not return safely from your flight?"

An ugly light was blazing in Dean's blue eyes now.

"Good heavens!" he ejaculated. "The awful scoundrel!"

Locke smiled.

"Ah, you're beginning to see things in their right perspective!" he said. "But how deep a scoundrel Tankerhead is perhaps will never be known. Now let's return to Villiers. Do you know what he did with the faked flask, message, and shell-casing I got Drake to deliver to him? Do you know what he said about them?"

Here Drake butted in, at a sign from his chief.

"The murderous rotter told me that the whole thing was a hoax. He paid me money to keep my mouth shut, and then deliberately sent his man after me to kill me. I was in disguise and he didn't know that I worked for the gov'nor. Villiers' man framed a motor accident very cunningly, and I was supposed to be killed. That's all the interest your 'best friend' took in the flask which had been taken out of the sea. He didn't want any inquiry, you see?" he added fiercely, as Dean still seemed unable to credit what he heard.

"I—I can scarcely believe it of Villiers!" muttered Dean at length.

"Well, listen to these interesting facts we've discovered since we hit his trail," said Ferrers Locke, and straightway plunged into a detailed account of Villiers' activities in the world of sport, winding up with the fiendish attempt to kill Jack Drake and himself.

"I tell you all this," he added, "because the net is closing around these two birds. They cannot escape me now, so there is no harm in putting all my cards on the table. I shall, however, require you to play a small part in the final tableau. So, Mr. Dean, if you will be good enough to consider yourself my guest for a day or so I shall be

extremely happy, and honoured into the bargain. What about it?"

Christopher Dean smiled.

"Mr. Locke," he said quietly, "you have given me the greatest shock of my life. But I have implicit trust in you. I shall be happy indeed to consider myself the guest of the world's greatest detective!"

"Mr. Dean, you are too flattering! Make yourself at home. Here, Jack, take our guest into the bath-room and help him shave off that face fungus. And, Jack, get out my blue flannel suit—will just about fit Dean. Now hop it, both of you! I've got an important bit of business with a certain Continental radio station."

The S O S I

MERVYN VILLIERS and Julius Tankerhead were doing themselves well.

They were staying in the Hotel Magnificent, and they occupied the best suite of rooms—those usually occupied by royalty when royalty honoured the Hotel Magnificent.

The food was good, the service was extra efficient, the wine was of rare old vintage. It had been a happy idea of Villiers to get clear of England for a while and stay abroad until the "big event" happened.

The two conspirators had been there only a day, and now, with the passing of the hours, their expectations showed in the peculiar glitter of their eyes. Those in the hotel who noted this nervous tension put it down to the lure of the tables in the adjoining casino. Gamblers for high stakes invariably looked what they were. And these two had certainly gambled heavily that day.

"We ought to be hearing something soon!" muttered Tankerhead. "I suppose nothing has gone wrong, Mervyn?"

His confederate treated him to a superior smile.

"Nothing can go wrong!" he replied smoothly. "And our tracks are very carefully covered up."

Tankerhead fortified himself with a glass of potent liquor. His eyes glowed keenly enough, but there was an ominous trembling of his hand, which indicated the stress he was passing through.

"I regard our handsome win at the tables this afternoon as a good omen," remarked Villiers, puffing out a blue cloud of cigar-smoke. "Julius, my old friend, we shall be in clover!"

Tankerhead leaned forward. "You remember, Mervyn, some months ago I was tempted to get my horoscope cast?"

"I remember, you prize boob! People who give way to that sort of tommy-rot are not all there! I don't believe in horoscopes—and that's flat. Fate is what the individual makes it, see? And no one is gifted enough in this world to say what the future holds for me, you, or anyone else."

Tankerhead, who kept glancing over his shoulder at a tall dark-eyed lady of middle age, suddenly rose to his feet.

"Excuse me, Mervyn. That's Madame Vervella, the famous clairvoyant and astrologer. I've heard an awful lot about her powers of reading the future. I think I'll introduce myself to her."

Mervyn Villiers openly laughed his scorn.

"You poor mutt! Think I don't know what you're after? She'll tell you an awful lot of bunkum, look at you with those big luminous eyes of hers, and it'll cost you a thousand francs, what? Still, it's your money. Don't let me stop you!"

Star Items in—

NEXT WEEK'S "MAGNET."

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DON'T MISS THIS BUMPER PROGRAMME, BOYS!—Ed.

Through narrowed lids he watched his weaker-minded partner cross the lounge, then idly enough he switched on the wireless speaker by his table. The faint strains of a band floated through the instrument, and their dreamy melody caused Villiers to close his eyes and meditate.

Strange, dark, thoughts roamed through that ruthless, murderous mind, and they centred on Julius Tankerhead. Not much longer, Villiers told himself, would the weak-minded Julius be his partner. There were always ways and means of disposing of an unwanted partner.

But those villainous thoughts were rudely interrupted when the dance music came to a close and the announcer, in French, began to broadcast the news. He began with an SOS which made no impression upon Villiers until that same SOS was repeated in English.

Then Villiers became wide awake on the instant. He sat bolt upright in his chair, his eyes ablaze with excitement.

"The police of Scotland Yard, Great Britain, are anxious to get into communication with a Mr. Eustace Johnson, the owner of Ivy Cottage, Witley Common, Surrey, England." Clear as a bell came the announcer's voice. "Will he either phone or call at Scotland Yard immediately?"

Villiers switched off the wireless and rubbed his hands with obvious satisfaction. The big event obviously had come to pass. The cottage at Witley Common had been blown to smithereens, and with it, of a certainty, had gone both Ferrers Locke and his meddling assistant, Jack Drake.

Villiers had no intention of communicating with Scotland Yard. He had bought Ivy Cottage in the name of Mr. Eustace Johnson, and it had proved a profitable investment. In the name of Eustace Johnson it could be blown sky high, so to speak, and forgotten.

But that SOS told Villiers that he and his confederate were safe to return to England, whereupon that reflection was topped by a return to Villiers' murderous thoughts concerning Julius Tankerhead.

"He's getting past the game," Villiers told himself. "He's losing his nerve! Yes, I must get rid of him!"

And in the self-same moment that these villainous reflections chased through Villiers' mind Julius Tankerhead was

in "audience" with the celebrated clairvoyant Madame Vervella.

"You are pursued, monsieur, by a relentless foe," she told him in course of the "reading," whereat Tankerhead felt a thrill of terror run through his entire being, "and there is evil in your future. I cannot go on."

"But you must!" begged the easily impressed Tankerhead. "Tell me—"

Madame Vervella, who had a very handsome living out of credulous folk by purporting to tell them what the future held in store, knew at once that she was interviewing an easy client. He, she could see, would swallow anything. His very attitude suggested to her sharp wits that the man was afraid of something. Something, probably in the past, haunted his conscience. She decided to play upon it.

"This man who pursues you"—she returned to that story—"threatens your life. His fate is locked with yours—"

"Locked!" murmured Tankerhead. "Locked—Locke! Ferrers Locke!"

Beads of perspiration oozed upon his forehead as Tankerhead's guilty conscience twisted the easy-flowing, meaningless words of madame to the picture of the man of whom he stood in constant dread.

"That is all I can tell you," said madame faintly. "I grow tired. The strain, monsieur, is too much."

Trembling slightly, Tankerhead rose to his feet, whereupon madame's "faintness" quickly disappeared as she reminded him in a sharp, acid voice that her fee had not been paid.

Hardly knowing what he did, Tankerhead slipped a wad of franc notes into her greedy palm, and went to look for Mervyn Villiers. The blazing smile on the latter's face was in striking contrast to the terror which lurked in Tankerhead's.

"What the deuce is wrong with you, Julius?" asked Mervyn. "Cheer up, man! Why, I haven't heard such news as that which has just come over the radio in all my life."

"You mean that Locke is finished?" croaked Tankerhead, mopping his brow.

"The cottage has been blown sky high," replied Villiers jubilantly, "so what else can you expect?"

(There are big thrills and big surprises in next week's fine instalment of this detective story, so don't miss it, boys!)

RIVALS FOR A FORTUNE!

(Continued from page 25.)

nothing come of it? You are an old fool, Mr. Vernon-Smith—and your son is a young rascal! He has deserved a dozen times to be expelled—and I'm sorry that I never brought it off!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith's face was purple. He raised his hand and pointed to the door.

"Go!" he said. "Nephew of mine as you are, if you are not gone in ten minutes, you shall be taken away by the police!"

"I doubt whether you could make good any charge against me!" said Lucius Teggers, with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I am going—my game's up here!"

He walked out of the study. "Good gad!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith.

Ten minutes had not elapsed when the man with a borrowed name was gone from Greyfriars—gone for good! Greyfriars School never saw him again—neither did Mr. Vernon-Smith nor the Bouncer. Lucius Teggers had played his game and lost it—and he went.

The Bouncer's party that afternoon was a great success, and Vernon-Smith was as merry and bright as any fellow present. But afterwards, in Study No. 4 in the Remove, Tom Redwing found him with a cloud of thought on his brow.

"I've had a jolly narrow escape, Reddy!" said the Bouncer soberly. "And—rotter as that man Teggers was—it's been chiefly my own fault! The pater has come round, and things look rosy now, but—"

"But what?" asked Tom. "But I'm stickin' to the jolly old strait and narrow path, and you're goin' to help me!" said the Bouncer. "When Quelch comes back he's goin' to get the surprise of his life! I'm goin' to be so good, that it will make his gimlet eyes pop to see me!"

Redwing laughed. He could only hope that it would last.

(Next Saturday's bumper issue of the MAGNET will contain the first of another grand series of yarns by Frank Richards featuring Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars. Make a note of the title: "THE BUNKING OF BILLY BUNTER!" and then get your news-agent to reserve you a copy.)

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VACUUM CLEANER WANTED

Bunter's titled uncle called yesterday—and I want to clean up all the aitches he dropped!—PETER TODD, Study No. 7, Remove.

CAMERA FOR SALE

Shock-proof. Even takes Coker's photo without breaking up!—MONTY NEWLAND, Study No. 9, Remove.



THE NEW Greyfriars Herald



No. 88 (New Series).

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

June 9th, 1934.

NOTICE TO FILM FANS!

When you ask for a pass out of gates to attend the lecture on Roman History at Courtfield next week, kindly remember that a prefect will be on the door to check in all Greyfriars visitors. The fact that there's a "super-programme" on at the cinema has NOT escaped our notice!

BY ORDER,
Geo. Wingate (School Captain).

BUNTER'S FRONT PAGE STORY

Hero of News Scoop

Any doubts we may have had about the "Courtfield Gazette" doing justice to Bunter's story of the haunted cave at Pegg vanished when the paper came out this week. It was splashed right across the front page:—

"CAVE OF HORRORS AT PEGG. Schoolboy's Astounding Experience."

The explanation of all the fuss, we learned afterwards, was that the "Gazette" had been let down over their intended front page story at the last moment. They'd been banking on a sensational account of the darts championship at Friardale and then, unexpectedly, the darts championship was postponed. Something had to be found in a hurry to take its place—and just at the crucial moment, in walked Bunter! It was simply a gift for them.

Bunter's account of the mysterious cave, we might tell you, doesn't coincide altogether with the facts as we know them. Bunter seems to have drawn slightly on his imagination, particularly in the matter of numbers.

Wharton and Russell, who rescued Bunter, admit that they saw one dancing skeleton, one acrobatic octopus and one gigantic spider. According to Bunter, there were five skeletons, ten octopi and about a hundred spiders!

There are slight errors, too, in his account of what took place. Wharton and Russell say that the cave's peculiar inhabitants were nowhere near Bunter. Bunter's description in the "Courtfield Gazette," on the other hand, avers that Bunter fought single-handed against the lot of them!

Allowing for these minor variations, of course, there still remains the undeniable truth that Bunter did see a pretty varied show in that cave, and we're still as puzzled as ever to know how to account for it.

The "Courtfield Gazette" suggests either that the cave is haunted or else that it leads to some fearful underworld of prehistoric life. They propose to send an expedition to explore the cave thoroughly and find out the truth—and many Removites are at present engaged in ringing up the office of the "Gazette" to ask if they can join the expedition!

What the expedition will discover when it gets there is a matter for speculation.

In the meantime, Bunter has come into his own at last. As the hero of the week's biggest local news scoop, his status is considerably higher than that of the despised Porpoise of the Lower School.

Greyfriars to Bunter this week is a land flowing with ginger-beer and jam-tarts!

(STOP PRESS. Someone has just rushed into the editorial office with the full explanation of the haunted cave! No room for it here—but look out for the big surprise in next week's number!—Ed.)

Anything To Oblige

H. SKINNER (Remove) writes to ask if we know any method of curing thin lips.

Sorry, old bean, we don't. If it's of any use to you, however, you can have a thick ear any time you like to call!



GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

the first choice of mounts and two minutes start!"

"Zounds! You'll do nothing of the sort!" cried Coker. "You shall be the one to have first choice and two minutes start. I assure you you'll need them against such a rider as I am!"

Molyneux laughingly declined the concessions, and it was accordingly arranged that they should toss a coin for the privilege of first choice of mounts and start the race simultaneously.

A great crowd of collegers gathered outside the gates on the following day to witness the finish of the race. They had not long to wait before the clatter of hoofs was heard on the highway. Shortly after, a solitary horseman came into view at a rousing gallop, and there was a loud cheer as he was seen to be Molyneux.

Molyneux, having reined in his sweating steed, waited in the saddle for the arrival of the loser. He had quite a long wait, for it was ten minutes before Nick Coker appeared.

When he did eventually appear, his appearance was such as to excite the spectators to shouts of mirth. He had lost his balance completely and was clinging desperately to his horse's neck with both feet caught up in one stirrup!

When he had been released from his uncomfortable position, he explained that "ill-fortune alone had lost him the race!" His steed, forsooth, had proved an unmanageable spitfire who would easily have thrown a less able rider!

(Continued at foot of next col.)

Armchair Motoring—With Thrills

Schoolboy Inventor's Amazing Machine

When Bernard Glyn, the St. Jim's inventor, arrived at Greyfriars on a visit to Wharton this week, he arrived in a motor-lorry.

Inside the motor-lorry was a machine which, from our point of view, is certainly Glyn's masterpiece!

He calls it the Auto-Thriller. We can give you our word, it beats Barney. Nothing so fascinating has ever been seen before at Greyfriars, though Glyn tells us that similar machines, on which he has based his own, are used in London for testing the ability of motor-drivers.

The entire Lower School was present in the Rag when Glyn fixed it up.

Described briefly, the Auto-Thriller is a stationary motor-car whose controls, instead of working the car, work a moving-picture on a screen in front of it, thus creating the illusion that the car itself is moving along the road depicted on the screen.

When the driver steps on the gas, the picture works more quickly, giving the impression that the car is accelerating. When the brakes are applied, the speed is slackened.

When cross-roads are reached, the driver is quite at liberty to turn whichever way he wishes and the screen picture adjusts itself accordingly!

The illusion that you're actually driving is complete! All this tickled the crowd in the Rag immensely. But what really brought down the house was the fact that all sorts of unexpected things happen on the road to test the driver's nerve and road sense. Other cars dash out suddenly from side burnings, people run across the road just when they're just expected and it's one long succession of thrills.

The best of it is, you get all the thrills without the slightest danger. All that happens when a "collision" occurs is that the picture stops and the driver gets afterwards. Many fellows who had never huddled a real car in their lives did the "journey" almost without an "accident," while others who have driven cars on several occasions had quite a lot of "spills."

The worst score of the evening was registered by the only regular motorist in the School—a member of the Fifth.

We dare not tell you his name for fear of offending him!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Johnny Bull can be a most reliable "stonewaller" when necessary. He was at the wicket for two hours, scoring only five runs against St. Jim's—but he kept his end up, while Bob Cherry bit off the required runs!

Cecil Reginald Temple, of the Upper Fourth, is a great advocate of "style" in batsmanship. His usual style, Bob Cherry points out, is to get a "duck's egg"—as he did against the Remove the other day.

Mark Linley usually fields "in the country." He is an absolutely reliable catch, and his speed round the ropes frequently saves a "four." Linley "caught" six Upper Fourth Form men in a recent fixture.

Tom Brown, the Remove wicket-keeper, says he doesn't notice the "wear and tear" on his hands much. The job is no pleasure, though! "Brownie" stumped three and caught four against Rookwood last week.

Harry Wharton put up a record by hitting five "sixes" and a "four" off one over against Highcliff. No other Greyfriars batsman has equalled this feat—though a good many have expressed the determination to try!

Told by Tom Brown that there are hot springs in New Zealand, where he comes from, Bunter was completely unimpressed. The only sort of country that would interest Bunter would be one with more tuck shops than England!

CAN COACHING CREATE CRICKETERS?

Wingate Thought "Yes," But—

"What's wrong with most kids' cricket is sheer lack of knowledge," remarked Wingate of the Sixth, when he stopped to watch net practice at Little Side the other evening. "If you kids were only shown the right thing to do, you'd do it!"

"Oh, rather, Wingate!" agreed Snoop, who had been trying to bat.

"I've been watching you, Snoop," Wingate said, strolling down to Snoop's wicket. "It's as plain as a pikestaff to me that you've never been told the first thing about the game. Let me show you a thing or two and you'll soon see what a difference it'll make."

"In the first place, your body should be at right angles to the wicket, held nice and square—like this."

He grabbed Snoop and put him in what he imagined would be the correct position.

Snoop's body promptly seemed to take on the appearance of a contortionist's at the climax of his performance!

"H'm! Well, that'll do," Wingate said, a little dubiously. "Now you have to remember, Snoop, that your first duty is to defend your wicket. The bat must, therefore, be kept straight in front of the stumps."

Without Foundation

Notwithstanding the fact that he's stony broke, Wibley is starting a troupe of pierrots. He tells us he can borrow all he needs to get the show going.

There is no truth, however, in the rumour that his troupe is to be called "The Pier-OWES"!

One for Bunter

Bunter wasn't a bit perturbed when we pointed out how wrong it was of him to pinch a chicken from Smithy's hamper and carve every bit of meat off it.

He said that his conscience was clear; he was going to make a "clean breast" of it!

"I see, Wingate," said Snoop, promptly proceeding to hold it like a hockey-stick.

"You have to play to the ball—not from it. So you must never step back—yoooooop!"

At the first mention of not stepping back, Snoop had stepped back like a flash and trodden on Wingate's toes in the bargain!

"Bowl to him, Wharton!" called out Wingate, when he had recovered sufficiently to speak. "Just a simple lob, you know! Now, Snoop, hit it on to the ground for preference so that you're not caught out."

Snoop hit the ball right up in the air! "Try it again," said Wingate, in a voice which contained a hint of tears.

"Just stop this, Snoop—keep your bat upright, that's all!"

Snoop brought his bat clean over his head like a battleaxe and his wicket was spreadeagled at the back of him.

"Think I'm improving, Wingate?!! he asked, cheerfully.

But there was no reply—Wingate had fled!

Somehow, we feel that since coaching Snoop the Greyfriars "skipper" is not quite so sure that efficient training is all that is needed to make a good cricketer!

FISH'S FRISKIES MAKE SUPERMEN

What? Never heard of FISH'S FRISKIES? Well, you surprise us!

FISH'S FRISKIES are— But let Fishy tell you in his own words. "They're Science's greatest conquest. They're the rarest and most appetising combination of cereal ingredients known to man."

"An eminent scientist who, for professional reasons, wishes to remain anonymous, states that he is convinced, after testing FISH'S FRISKIES in his laboratory, that one dessertspoonful of FISH'S FRISKIES is worth one pound of rump steak, two new-laid eggs and a twopenny packet of peanuts combined. What do you know about that?"

"The tonic effects of FISH'S FRISKIES are amazing. Chronic invalids get up from the breakfast table, cured. Punny weaklings are changed in a flash to athletic giants. Nitwits become intellectual supermen."

"Buy a packet at the tuckshop, and buy it right now! Ten thousand doctors can't be wrong! And remember, when you're eating FISH'S FRISKIES you're eating the product of a lifetime of patient investigation by the world's greatest scientists!"

And that's that. The funny thing about it is that when we watched Fish making FISH'S FRISKIES the other evening, the process seemed astonishingly simple.

All he did was to mix up baked rice and sawdust!