

" IN OPEN REVOLT ! " Thrilling Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co.— **The Schoolboy Rebels !**

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*Caught
on the Hop!*

IN OPEN REVOLT!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Who's Game?

WHO'S game?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

Nearly every fellow in the Greyfriars Remove roared responsive.

It was "third school" at Greyfriars. The bell for classes had ceased to ring. All Forms, excepting the Remove, had gone in after morning break.

The Remove were still "out," and they did not intend to go in. Great excitement reigned that morning in the Lower Fourth Form of Greyfriars School. The excitement was, as Hurree Janset Ram Singh justly remarked, terrific.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, waited in vain for his Form. Other Form-masters had gathered in their flocks. Quelch was not a man, as a rule, to be forgotten. But his Form had forgotten him now.

Bob Cherry, mounted on the granite rim of the fountain, was addressing the Removites. His ruddy face was ruddier than usual, his blue eyes flashing. Mr. Quelch, coming to the door to look out for his Form—like Bo-Peep looking for her lost sheep, had a distant view of the orator, and stared blankly. But nobody looked at Quelch. All eyes were fixed on Bob.

"Are we standing this?" roared Bob.

"Never!"

"That fat ass, Bunter, has been sacked—"

"Shame!"

"He's a blithering idiot!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And a howling ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But he never did what they've sacked him for, and we all jolly well

know it! Somebody chucked ink over that pompous old ass, Prout! Serve him jolly well right, if you come to that!"

"Hear, hear!"

"If they want to sack somebody for it, let them spot the man that did it. Did Bunter?"

"No!"

"Quelch knows it as well as we do. Quelch was against sacking the fat duffer. The Head wouldn't listen to Quelch."

"Good old Quelch!" roared the Remove.

That vociferous expression of appreciation reached the ears of the Form-master staring out of the House into the quad.

"Bunter hid himself, and we all helped him to keep doggo," went on Bob. "Now they've nailed him, and two prefects have been sent with him to the station. They're taking him home. Well, he's not going!"

"But he's gone," remarked Peter Todd.

"The gonefulness is terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and ridiculous Bunter is gone from our gaze like a beautiful nightmare."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess it's a cinch this time, big boy," said Fisher T. Fish. "They've snuffed Bunter, and booted him. He's gone."

"Who's game to go after him?" bawled Bob.

"Oh, good egg!" shouted the Bounder. "I'm game, for one!"

"Hear, hear!"

"But we can't bring him back, old bean!" said Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove.

"Hardly," grinned Skinner.

"I know that," snorted Bob. "But

we can jolly well stand by him, all the same. They've sacked a Remove man for nothing. It's up to the Remove to stand by him. If Bunter goes, we all go!"

"Phew!"

"And the first thing is to get after him, and get him away from the prefects before they hike him to the station. Once they stick him in the train, the game's up."

"Hurrah!"

"Let's!"

"Bravo!" roared the Remove.

Mr. Quelch had come out of the House now. With an extraordinary expression on his face the Remove master hurried towards the excited crowd in the quad.

"Boys!" he called out.

There was a general turning of heads.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Quelch!"

"The esteemed and absurd Quelch was—"

"Blow Quelch!" said Herbert Vernon-Smith. "Who cares a straw for Quelch?"

"Shut up, Smithy!"

"We're not letting Quelch round us up into the Form-room!" hooted the Bounder.

"No fear!"

Mr. Quelch arrived on the spot.

"Boys, what does this mean? You are late for class! Go into the Form-room at once!" he rapped.

There was no reply. Nobody, except perhaps the reckless Bounder, wanted to "cheek" Quelch. They knew that he had been against the expulsion of Billy Bunter, and that it was a blow to him when the Head disregarded his opinion. The Remove were silent, but they did not stir from the spot. Even the weaker brethren, such as Skinner & Co., stood firm with the rest.

"Sorry, sir!" said Harry Wharton, breaking the silence. "We can't go in."

"What? What do you mean, Wharton? Are you, my head boy, setting an example of mutiny to my Form?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"No disrespect to you intended, sir," said Harry. "But they've taken Bunter away."

"He's gone to the station with Wingate and Gwynne, sir," said Johnny Bull. "They're taking him home."

"And he's done nothing," said Nugent.

"And you know it, sir, as well as we do," said Vernon-Smith.

Mr. Quelch winced.

As a Form-master who believed that a member of his Form had been unjustly expelled, he was in a very difficult position. In his heart he could not help feeling a certain sympathy for the rebels. But as a member of Dr. Locke's staff he was bound to stand for authority.

"I cannot discuss that, my boys," he said. "You know very well that I cannot. Bunter is gone. That matter is closed. Now let there be no more of this disorder. Go into your Form-room."

"We're standing by Bunter, sir," said Bob Cherry.

"You can do nothing of the kind, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch, with unusual patience. "The Head has decided, and the matter is closed."

"We're openin' it again," said the Bounder.

"Silence, Vernon-Smith!"

"We mean it, sir!" said Bob. "If Bunter goes, we're all going! If the Head wants to sack one man for nothing, he can sack the lot."

"Cherry, be silent! Get down at once!"

Bob Cherry jumped down from the fountain rim.

"Now follow me to the House," said Mr. Quelch.

"Sorry, sir; can't be done! Come on, you men!" said Bob; and he started at a run—not in the direction of the House.

He started for the bike-shed, and after him went Wharton, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh. And after them went Smithy, Redwing, Toddy, Squiff, Mauleverer, Tom Brown, Wibley and Micky Desmond, and then a whole troop. Half the Remove raced off, under the startled eyes of their Form-master.

"Boys!" shouted Mr. Quelch.

"Ta-ta, Quelch!" called the Bounder, over his shoulder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop!" roared the Remove master.

"Bow-wow!"

"Come on!" roared Bolsover major.

"We're all in this. Follow your leader!"

"I—I say—" stammered Skinner.

"Come on, I tell you!" bawled Bolsover. And he grabbed the hesitating Skinner by the collar; and Skinner came on, in a hurry, spluttering.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "I—I—I— Every boy taking part in this mutiny shall be severely punished—most severely! Stop! I command you to stop! Upon my word!"

Quelch stood and gazed after a vanished Form. Quelch was a resolute man, and a whale on discipline. But he could not handle a swarm of mutinous fellows with his own hands. The voice of authority had lost its power;

the spell was broken. The Remove master stood dumbfounded, while the Remove streamed away and disappeared from his sight.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Rescue, Remove!

BILLY BUNTER gasped for breath.

Bunter was walking fast.

Bunter did not like walking at all, and much less did he like walking fast. But with Wingate of the Sixth on one side of him and Gwynne of the Sixth on the other, Bunter had no choice in the matter. His little fat figure rolled in between the two tall prefects, and he gasped, he panted, and every now and then he groaned.

"I say—Wingate—" mumbled Bunter.

"Don't talk!" said the captain of Greyfriars, briefly.

"I say, Gwynne—"

"Dry up!" said Gwynne.

"Beasts!" groaned Bunter.

"That's enough!"

"Oh lor'!"

"Don't lag!" said Wingate sharply, and he cast a look back along the long

A silly chump, an untruthful duffer and an irritating fat-head. . . the Remove Form at Greyfriars freely admit that Billy Bunter is all these and more! But he's a Remove man—sacked for what he has not done—and his fate is a matter of intense interest to the whole Form. Like one man, Harry Wharton & Co. determine to stand by their Billy!

white road, which ran past the gates of Greyfriars School. It was against all rules for fellows to go out of gates in break, but Wingate would not have been surprised to see Remove fellows on the road behind him.

He was well aware of the high state of excitement in which Bunter's Form had been left when Bunter was marched off.

"I—I say, I'm tired!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I say, don't walk so fast! I—I say, I can't keep it up, you know."

"Think a lift from my boot would help you?" inquired Gwynne, genially.

"Oh crikey! No!"

"Keep going, then!"

Wingate and Gwynne were in a hurry to reach their destination, the railway station at Courtfield. Bunter wasn't.

Reaching the station meant the train home, and Billy Bunter did not want to go home and face Mr. Bunter and Mr. Bunter's inevitable inquiry as to why he had been turfed out of Greyfriars.

It was true that he could tell Mr. Bunter that he was innocent, perfectly innocent, innocent as a babe-in-arms, of what was laid to his charge! He had planned to ink Prout, but he never had inked Prout. The Head had made a mistake!

But was Mr. Bunter likely to believe him?

It was improbable.

Often and often Billy Bunter's statements were not believed. History was

sure to repeat itself on this occasion. Untruthfulness was Billy Bunter's long suit; and now he was suffering for his sins—severely!

Bunter wanted to lag by the way! He wanted a chance to dodge the two prefects! They were taking care that he had no chance!

Wingate and Gwynne, as a matter of fact, were both kind-hearted fellows. They were sorry for a young ass who had got himself sacked. But they were prefects, and had their headmaster's orders to carry out. And Bunter had given trouble enough already. It was more than a week since he had been sacked. All that time he had remained hidden in the school, helped by his Form-fellows, supplied by them with surreptitious meals. He had been rooted out at last and dispatched on the spot for the station. He could not be got rid of too quickly in the Head's opinion, after the trouble and excitement he had caused. It was a quick walk for Bunter, and the finish!

Gwynne, like Wingate, looked back and was relieved to see the long white road stretching clear across the green expanse of Courtfield common towards the school. He, too, had wondered whether there might be an outbreak on the part of the Remove.

All that Form believed that Billy Bunter was unjustly sacked. They had declared that he should not go! Now he was going—so swiftly and suddenly, that the Remove had had no time to intervene.

Billy Bunter stumbled suddenly, limped, and lagged. Two tall Sixth Formers glared down impatiently at the short fat figure between them.

"Get on!" rapped Wingate.

"I've sprained my ankle!" groaned Bunter. "I—I can't walk! I—I shall have to sit down and rest a bit."

Wingate frowned, and Gwynne laughed. Billy Bunter was blinking back along the road through his big spectacles. To his fat mind also had occurred the thought that the Removites might take a hand in the proceedings. Delay would give them a chance.

"Will you toddle on, you young ass?" demanded Wingate.

"How can I when I've sprained my knee?" demanded Bunter indignantly. "It's hurting fearfully!"

"Your knee?" roared Wingate.

"I mean my ankle! I wonder what made me say knee? I mean my ankle, of course! I—I think I've broken the—the spinal column in my ankle—"

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Gwynne.

"I'm in awful agony!" groaned Bunter. "The pain in my knee—I mean my ankle—is dreadful! In fact, frightful! I—I can't walk!"

Gwynne took a step back behind him and lifted his right foot. Bunter gave him one blink and re-started after the interval. He found, suddenly, that he could not only walk, but run! He fairly bounded.

"Ow! Beast! Don't you kick me!" he yelled as he bounded.

"Sure your ankle's all right now?" asked Gwynne.

"Ow! Yes! Quite!"

"Get on, then!" said Wingate, laughing.

And Bunter got on.

Greyfriars School was out of sight behind. Courtfield town was in sight ahead, across the green common. Bunter was half-way to his destination. And then there was a sound of bicycles on the road behind.

Plenty of cyclists used the Courtfield road. But the sound of many bikes

made Wingate and Gwynne glance round over their shoulders.

What they beheld caused them to frown.

A bunch of cyclists came into view, riding hard, in a cloud of dust. A ruddy youth with a mop of flaxen hair was ahead, recognisable as Bob Cherry. Behind him, in a row across the road, came Harry Wharton, Johnny Bull, Hurreo Singh and Frank Nugent. Close behind them rode the Bounder and Redwing and Squiff. Farther back were more riders.

"Phew!" murmured Wingate.

"Remove kids!" said Gwynne. "I rather half-expected it, Wingate!"

"Same here!" admitted the Greyfriars captain.

Bunter blinked back! His little round eyes danced behind his big round spectacles.

"I say, you fellows!" he yelled.

"Rescue! I say——"

"Shut up, you young ass!" snapped Wingate.

"Beast!"

The two prefects walked on. They might have grabbed Bunter's fat arms and run for it with their prisoner. But the dignity of the Sixth Form forbade anything of the kind. Sixth Form prefects could scarcely bolt because an unruly mob of juniors had followed them from the school. They did not run, but they walked very fast, Wingate taking hold of Bunter's collar to keep him going at an accelerated pace.

But the bikes came on with a rush! The quickest walker could not beat a bike! Indeed, had the prefects so far forgotten their dignity as to run for it, the cyclists would have overtaken them all the same. With a whirr, a rush, and a jingling of bells, the Remove riders came on. Bob Cherry shot past the walkers, jumped down, and let his machine run into the grassy bank by the road. He jumped into the middle of the road, facing the two prefects, crimson and panting, and evidently prepared to dispute their further progress.

In a moment or two, the other members of the famous Co. had joined him. Another few seconds, and the Bounder was with them. Six determined juniors barred the way to Courtfield. Others were coming on fast.

"Stop!" shouted Bob.

"You young sweeps!" exclaimed Wingate, angrily. "What are you doing out of gates in break?"

"Came after you, old bean," answered Bob, cheerily.

"It's third school now!" said Gwynne.

"Not for us!" grinned the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows——" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Come on, Gwynne!" said Wingate, and he strode grimly on. "Stand aside, you cheeky young rascals!"

"Let Bunter go!" said Harry Wharton. "We don't want a row with you, Wingate, or with Gwynne either, but you're not taking Bunter to the station."

"He's going home, you young ass!"

"Nothing of the kind!"

"Back up, Remove!" roared the Bounder. "Bag those Sixth Form duffers!"

"I say, you fellows, rescue!" squeaked Bunter.

More than a dozen fellows were off their machines now. In the distance, more could be seen coming on, on foot. But a dozen determined fellows were more than enough to deal with Wingate and Gwynne, big and hefty seniors as they were.

"Will you stand aside and let us pass?" hooted Wingate.

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"No!" answered Wharton, coolly.

"No fear!" bawled Bob Cherry.

The two prefects came to a halt. They were surrounded by excited Removites, and they had to halt or fight a way through. That they were ready to do, if there was no alternative; but the Greyfriars captain made one more appeal.

"Look here, you Remove fellows," he said. "You've kept Bunter hidden at the school for a week after the Head bunked him! You can't hide him again, even if you get him away! You know that you can't take him back to Greyfriars! Have a little sense."

"We know that!" admitted Bob Cherry. "But we're not going back without Bunter."

"You can't stay out of gates, you young ass!"

"I fancy we can," answered Bob coolly. "If the Head wants the Remove at Greyfriars, he's got to have Bunter, too!"

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows, you stick to me!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "I'm not going to be carted home, you know! I told the Head I couldn't go! I told him plainly that my pater would very likely whop me coming home in the middle of the term, and he never took any notice——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"We're sticking to you, old fat man!" said Bob.

"The stickfulness is terrific!"

"Hand over Bunter, Wingate!" said Harry Wharton. "We all like you, old bean, and think no end of you; but we shall handle you if you don't give up Bunter!"

Wingate breathed hard.

"Stand aside!" he hooted.

"Rats!"

"Come on, Gwynne!" And the two prefects charged. And the next moment a wild and whirling combat was raging on the Courtfield road.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Some Scrap!

"GO it!"

"Back up, Remove!"

"Pile in!"

"Give 'em jip!"

Big and powerful fellows as they were, the two Sixth Formers did not mow a way through the Removites, as doubtless they expected to do.

What the juniors lacked in size and weight they made up in numbers and in pluck and determination.

Remove juniors, man to man, had no chance against the big seniors. But they were strong and sturdy; and they were six or seven to one! And they meant business!

The Famous Five, fighting valiantly, went down before the charge of the two hefty men of the Sixth. But the two did not get through. The Bounder leaped at Wingate, got an arm round his neck, and dragged him over. Peter Todd and Tom Brown and Squiff clung to Gwynne like cats, and he swayed and tottered to and fro, striving to shake them off in vain. Harry Wharton & Co., breathless but undaunted, were on their feet again in a twinkling and leaping into the fray.

Smithy was crumpling in Wingate's powerful grasp when five pairs of hands grasped the Greyfriars captain all together and he went over, bumping on the hard high road.

"Man down!" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"Keep him down!" panted Wharton.

"You bet!"

Wingate, struggling up, was jammed down again. Seven or eight fellows crammed on him, pinning him down by sheer weight. Now that the mighty Wingate was once down it was evidently safer to keep him there; and the juniors took care that he did not rise again. He struggled and wrestled and roared, but he was pinned down, and the result of his frantic resistance was chiefly the collection of dust.

Gwynne was still tottering about, trying to keep his feet, with cat-like juniors hanging on him. More and more added their clutches, and Gwynne went down in the road, gasping.

"Got 'em!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

"Let me go, you young rascals!" panted Wingate, still struggling.

"You'll be sacked for this."

"Rats to you!" grinned the Bounder.

"You young sweep——"

"You talk too much, old bean," said Smithy, and he gathered a handful of dust, of which there was plenty on the road, and crammed it into Wingate's open mouth. "Now keep quiet!"

"Urrrrrgh!" gurgled Wingate.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, whop 'em!" roared Billy Bunter. "I say, give a fellow room to punch the beasts! I say, I'll give Wingate a black eye——"

"Waddle off, you ferocious barrel!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Beast! I tell you I'm going to give Wingate a black eye!" howled Bunter wrathfully. The fat Owl of the Remove had not shared in the scrap. But now that the enemy were down and safely held, he was bursting with valour. "I say, you give a fellow room to get at the beast—— Yaroooh!" added Bunter, as Bob gave him a cheery shove on the widest part of his circumference and he sat down suddenly in the road. "Owl! Oooogh! Beast! Wooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you leggo, you young spalpeens?" roared Gwynne, struggling frantically under a heap of Removites.

"Hardly!" grinned Squiff. "We've got you where we want you, old thing!"

"I'll smash you!" gasped Gwynne.

"The smashfulness will be a boot on the other leg, my esteemed and idiotic Gwynne!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton dabbed a crimson trickle from his nose and panted.

"We've got Bunter!" he said. "Now we can let those Sixth Form men go, if they'll go quietly."

"Rag 'em first!" shouted the Bounder.

"Oh, shut up, Smithy! Let them hop out if they'll hop quietly! Will you make it pax, Wingate?"

"Groogh!"

"Will you make it pax, Gwynne?"

"Faith, and I'll spifigate the lot of yez!" howled Gwynne, who always became more Irish when he was excited. "Ye thaves of the worruid, I'll spifigate yez intirely."

"Stick 'em in the ditch!" said the Bounder.

"Good egg!" roared Bolsover major.

Nearly all the Remove were on the scene now. The fellows who had followed on foot had had time to arrive. If Wingate and Gwynne had had no chance before, they had no ghost of a chance now.

But surrender was not in their thoughts. Great and mighty Sixth Form prefects could not surrender to fags. They still struggled and heaved under heaps of juniors.

"Look here, Wingate——" exclaimed Wharton.

"Let me up at once!"

"Will you clear off quietly, and leave Bunter with us?"

"No!" roared Wingate. "I'm taking Bunter to the station to take the train for home! You know that!"

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I think you might let me give that beast a black eye."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, if you won't give in, we shall have to take care of you!" said the captain of the Remove. "Will you walk back to Greyfriars? Last time of asking?"

"No!" raved Wingate.

"Then you'll hop!" said Harry. "Shove his paws behind him, you men! I want something to tie them with—his necktie will do! Sorry, Wingate, but you're asking for this."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Will you go quietly and leave Bunter with us if we let you loose?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"No!" roared Wingate.

"Then hop it home! Tweak their noses till they start, you fellows."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That rather drastic method of persuasion caused Wingate and Gwynne to start in quite a hurry. Red with wrath, gasping for breath, they hopped frantically away up the road towards the distant school, followed by a yell of laughter from the Remove rebels.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "The Head will know that we mean business when he sees his jolly old prefects hopping in."

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Hopping It!

DR. LOCKE walked to the window of the Sixth Form Room at Greyfriars, and looked out into the quad.

His face was very grave.

The Sixth Form fellows exchanged glances. They knew that something was "up."

All Greyfriars knew that much. In every Form-room there was suppressed excitement, and masters found it difficult to keep the attention of the fellows on the work in hand.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, had, in fact, left his Form-room to see what was "up," leaving the Fifth to themselves. With the result that the



With a whirr, a rush, and a jingling of bells, the Remove riders dismounted, crimson and panting, and barred the prefects' way. "You young sweeps!" exclaimed Wingate angrily. "Let Bunter go!" said Harry Wharton. "We don't want a row with you, Wingate, or with Gwynne, either; but you're not taking Bunter to the station!"

Still resisting furiously, but in vain, Wingate and Gwynne had their hands tied behind them. Then the right leg of each prefect was bent up at the knee and tied in that position. Then they were jerked up from the road, each with a single leg to stand on. They hopped! They had to hop, or go down—and a fall on the hard road was not attractive.

"Hop it!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The hopfulness is the proper caper!" chortled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Give them a start!" said Vernon-Smith, and the reckless Bounder landed his boot on Wingate.

The captain of Greyfriars hopped wildly.

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

"Hop it!" shouted the Removites. "Get going, Wingate! Tell the Head we're not coming back without Bunter!"

"Oh, you young rascals!" gasped Wingate. "You rascally young sweeps! You'll be bunked for this!"

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Nugent.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"We've jolly well won the first round!" said the Bounder. "And what's the next move? We can't take Bunter back to the school, and we're not going back without him. But what can—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"You got any suggestion to make, fatty?" asked Bob.

"Yes, rather!" answered Bunter.

"Well, go ahead!"

"Let's walk on to the bun-shop in Courtfield—"

"Eh?"

"And get something to eat—"

"What?"

"I'm hungry," explained Bunter.

"Kick him!" said Harry Wharton.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

Bunter's suggestion was not adopted. For the next two or three minutes Billy Bunter led the life of a football, and forgot even that he was hungry.

Fifth had crowded to the windows to look out.

The quadrangle was deserted now.

Gosling, the porter, could be seen, standing by his lodge, staring towards the House. That was all.

Dr. Locke turned back from the Sixth Form window, and resumed Sophocles with the Sixth.

But his mind was not on that great Greek poet; neither were the minds of the Sixth. There was a tense excitement in the air.

A footstep was heard in the passage. Mr. Quelch looked into the Sixth Form Room. The expression on Quelch's face hinted of calamity.

"One moment, sir!" said the Remove master.

The Head glanced round at him, and went to the door. He stepped into the passage, and closed the door, rather to the disappointment of the seniors, who would have been glad to hear what was going on.

"Bunter is gone, I presume, Mr. Quelch?" asked the Head.

"He is gone, sir!"

"Doubtless he is in the train by this time."

"I—I trust so, sir. But—"

"But what, Mr. Quelch?" There was a note of sharpness in the Head's usually kind voice. He had been altogether too much worried on the subject of William George Bunter of the Remove.

It seldom fell to the headmaster's lot to "sack" a Greyfriars fellow. But if a Greyfriars fellow was sacked, all this trouble was not expected to follow.

Such a fellow was expected to get out and stay out; in fact, to be glad to get out of sight and stay out of sight. Billy Bunter, in the sacked state, was making new history at Greyfriars.

"The Remove, sir—" stammered Quelch.

"I trust, Mr. Quelch, that your Form are giving no further trouble on the subject of that wretched boy, Bunter!" said the Head, in a deep, rumbling voice.

"I regret to report, sir, that they are!"

"Surely, Mr. Quelch, you have sufficient authority over your Form to keep them within the bounds of discipline!"

Mr. Quelch breathed hard.

"Do you mean to tell me, sir, that the Remove are again in a state of mutiny?" exclaimed the Head.

"They have left the school, sir!"

"Left the school?"

"Every boy in the Form, sir!"

"You allowed them to do so?"

Quelch breathed harder! He wondered bitterly whether his Chief expected him to take about thirty fellows by their necks, all at once, and walk them into their Form-room. If

his Chief expected that, his Chief was expecting too much of any Form-master.

"They are actually out of the school at this moment?" asked the Head.

"They are, sir!"

"Extraordinary!" said Dr. Locke. "Most amazing! And what is the reason, Mr. Quelch, for this unheard-of outbreak?"

"I fear, sir, that they have followed Bunter, with some intention of taking him away from the prefects who have him in charge."

"Impossible!"

"Unfortunately, the boys have an impression, I may say, a fixed belief, that Bunter was innocent of the act for which he was expelled, sir. That is the cause of this—this extraordinary defiance of authority."

Dr. Locke compressed his lips.

Although Mr. Quelch did not say so, he knew that the Remove master shared that fixed belief of his Form. It was intensely irritating to him.

For twenty years and more Quelch had been his right-hand man, his faithful and loyal colleague. Now there was disagreement, for which neither party was to blame. The headmaster held one view; the Remove master held another. It was for the Chief to decide, and for the subordinate to yield to authority. But Quelch, of course, could not change his own belief. Outwardly he could obey; inwardly, he could not come into line.

"I fear, sir, that severe measures must be taken with your Form," said the Head at last. "I should be sorry if further expulsions prove to be necessary, but this kind of thing, obviously, cannot continue. Perhaps a flogging administered to the whole Form— But you say that the boys are absent! Most extraordinary!"

The Head walked down the passage to the open doorway on the quadrangle. It seemed impossible for him to believe that a whole Form had walked out of the school, instead of going into class. Quelch, with a set face, followed him.

Mr. Prout met them at the doorway, portly and pompous, as usual.

"I hope your boys are not giving more trouble, Mr. Quelch!" he remarked. "I heard a great deal of uproar in the quadrangle a short time ago, and—"

"You need not trouble about the matter, sir!" barked Quelch. "Probably the Fifth Form, sir, require your attention."

Prout reddened.

"Really, my dear Quelch, your Form has been in such a state of insubordination, I may say rebelliousness, of late—"

"Due, sir, I think, to other masters having taken them during my absence from the school and having acted, sir, tactlessly."

Prout purpled.

"Sir! It was at the request of Dr. Locke that I took the Remove in third school for a few days—"

"I am aware of it, sir; but the result has been unfortunate."

"If you attribute to me, sir—" boomed Prout.

"Gentlemen!" said the Head icily.

Prout's boom died away. He suppressed his feelings, and sailed away to his Form-room. There he found his Form packed at the windows, and found a little solace in giving them lines all round, with an extra lot for Coker of the Fifth, who glared in what Prout considered an impertinent manner.

Dr. Locke walked out into the quad with Quelch. They walked down to the gates. Gosling touched his hat, with a very queer expression on his gnarled old face. Gosling was greatly shocked and scandalised by the present astonishing state of affairs. He was more convinced than ever that all boys ought to be "drowned."

"Have you seen anything of the Remove boys, Gosling?" asked the Head.

"Not since they all 'ooked it, sir!" answered Gosling.

"Since they what? What do you mean, Gosling?"

"I mean, since they 'iked orf!" explained Gosling. "The 'ole lot, sir, all 'iked orf, some of them on bikes, some a-follering a-walking. Wot I says, sir, is this 'ere—"

Dr. Locke walked out of the gateway, leaving the ancient porter to waste his sweetness on the desert air. Mr. Quelch joined him in the road. They gazed up the road in the direction of the town. A farm-cart lumbered by; a motor-car whizzed. But nothing was to be seen of the Greyfriars Remove.

But as they gazed, two figures came in sight.

They were strange figures. They proceeded at a sort of hopping run, rather like kangaroos. Dr. Locke glanced at them in surprise. Then, as they came nearer and he recognised the fact that they were Greyfriars seniors, his surprise changed to angry amazement. He stared at Wingate and Gwynne with bulging eyes as they came.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head. "Do—do you see them, Mr. Quelch? Are they not the two prefects I sent to the station with Bunter?"

"They—they certainly are, sir!" gasped Quelch.

"They look extremely untidy—dusty—in fact, dishevelled!" said Dr. Locke. "And—and why, in the name of wonder, are they progressing in such a very singular manner?"



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Mr. Quelch shook his head. That was beyond him. It was not surprising that the two prefects were coming back in an untidy, dusty, and dishevelled state if they had encountered the rebel Removites. But it was amazing to see them hopping on a single leg each, their hands behind them. Unless these two Sixth Form prefects had a sudden fancy for playing hop-sotch on the King's highway, there was no accounting for it!

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head. "They—they seem to be—to be tied!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch, spotting it at last.

"Tied!" exclaimed the Head. "I—I think so——"

"But who—what—goodness gracious!" Headmaster and Form-master stared at the two approaching figures. Wingate and Gwynne, already pink with exertion, became crimson, as they saw the Head and Mr. Quelch at the school gates. They would have been almost glad to sink into the solid earth to get out of sight.

They had hoped to hop in unnoticed, and get Gosling to untie them, before other eyes fell on them. And here were two beaks watching them as they came!

"Howly mother av Moses!" groaned Gwynne. "That puts the tin hat on it!"

"I—I—I'll skin those fags!" gasped Wingate.

They hopped on. There was nothing for it but to hop—and they hopped! Nearer and nearer to the scandalised headmaster they hopped, crimson with humiliation, bedewed with perspiration, feeling utterly ridiculous, and only too well aware that they looked as they felt!

They saw Quelch's face twist, and twist again, as if he found it hard to suppress a smile. But there was no sign of a smile about the Head! His face was like thunder.

"Wingate!" he gasped, as they came into the offing. "Gwynne! What—what does this mean? How dare you perform these absurd antics on the public road? I repeat, how dare you, prefects of the Sixth Form——"

"We—we couldn't help it, sir!" gasped Wingate. "We—we were tied up by—a mob of fags, sir——"

"We're not doing this for amusement, sir!" gurgled Gwynne.

"You allowed Lower boys to treat you in this disrespectful and absurd manner?" thundered the Head.

"They were too many for us, sir——"

"Nonsense!"

"The whole Remove, sir——"

"Absurd!"

"We—we did our best, sir——"

"Do not talk nonsense, Wingate! You should never have allowed anything of the kind, as you are perfectly well aware! I am ashamed of you! Go in at once—at once! How dare you make such an exhibition of yourselves?"

"We couldn't help——"

"Nonsense! But where is Bunter?"

"What have you done with Bunter?"

"They've got him, sir——"

"What?" almost roared the Head.

"And they say they won't come back to school without Bunter, sir!" hooted Gwynne. "And perhaps you can make them, sir—we can't!"

And the hapless prefects hopped in. It was sheer ill-luck for them that third school had now ended, and the fellows swarmed out into the quad. The sight of the hopping prefects drew every eye. Gone was the hope of being quietly untied by Gosling, before the eyes of the school fell on them. The eyes of the school were on them—dancing with merriment. There was a rush from all sides to witness this amazing sight.

"Oh, my hat!" roared Coker of the Fifth. "Look at 'em! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Prefects playin' hop-sotch!" ejaculated Temple of the Fourth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hop it, Wingate!" yelled Hobson of the Shell.

"Hop it, Gwynne!" shrieked Tubb of the Third.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crimson, panting, perspiring, the two wretched prefects hopped into Gosling's lodge. They were only anxious to get out of sight. Dr. Locke, with a brow of

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GREYFRIARS CARTOONS

By HAROLD SKINNER.

No. 5.—HARRY WHARTON.

This series of cartoons would be incomplete if Harry Wharton were left out, so our lightning artist has duly obliged with the popular captain of the Remove.



Here's Wharton, the junior skipper of games,
A captain admired by all readers.
Though slackers and frowsters may call him hard names,
He's always the keenest of leaders.

The captain must toss before cricket begins,
For that is a duty most pressing;
A lot may depend on the way the coin spins—
Here's wishing him luck in his guessing!

.....

thunder, rustled back to the House—leaving the quad in a roar.

Even Gosling was grinning as he let loose the hapless victims of the Remove. Outside the lodge surged a swarm of fellows, waiting for the prefects to come out. Loud yells of laughter penetrated to them as Gosling slowly unfastened knots.

Louder yet rang the laughter when Wingate and Gwynne emerged from the lodge at last and strode away to the House, with burning faces. They had to run the gauntlet of all Greyfriars, and

all Greyfriars rocked with laughter. And when at last they were able to hide their blushes in the House, their feelings could not have been described in words.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

What Next?

"I SAY, you fellows——"
"Shut up, Bunter!"

A mile from the school the Greyfriars Remove were gathered on Courtfield Common. A council of war was going on.

Every man in the Remove was there. Most of the fellows were quite determined. Whatever the outcome, a Remove man was not going to be sacked for nothing, if they could help it!

But there were weaker spirits, whose feeling was chiefly one of alarmed uneasiness. Skinner & Co. were thinking mostly of the possible consequences. Fisher T. Fish was looking very grave.

Fellows who were not at all funky were rather puzzled what the next step was to be. Bunter was not going—they were determined on that! But they could not take him back to the school and keep him there! They had handled a couple of prefects successfully; but the whole body of prefects would have been too hefty for them—not to mention the masters. But if they were going to stick to Bunter, they had to stick him out of Greyfriars—and that wanted some thinking out.

It was sunny and bright on the green common, and very pleasant there on a summer's day. But, obviously, the Greyfriars Remove could not camp on the common and keep Bunter there. They had won the first round; but the forces of authority would soon be arrayed against them. Something had to be done—and soon!

Bunter's idea was dinner! It was getting near dinner-time, and dinner occupied Bunter's fat thoughts. The Owl of the Remove was prepared to let matters of less importance slide for the present, so long as there was dinner. But nobody listened to Bunter.

The whole row was about Bunter! Bunter had had injustice, and the Remove were going to see that he had fair play! That did not change their usual opinion of Bunter, which was that he was a fat and frabjous fathead, and did not matter.

It is said that in the multitude of counsels wisdom may be found. But that council of war on Courtfield Common produced a remarkable diversity of opinion. Everybody spoke at once, and everybody had something different to suggest. Almost the only thing on which the Removites were agreed was that they weren't going to give up Bunter to be sacked—little as the fat Owl personally mattered! Lord Mauleverer was almost the only fellow who was not speaking; and Bob Cherry gave him a dig in his noble ribs to wake him up.

"What do you think, Mauly?" he demanded.

"I think the sooner all you fellows leave off talkin' the better," yawned his lordship.

"You silly ass!" roared Bolsover major. "I think——"

"No, you don't!" interjected Bob. "You've got nothing to do it with! Let Mauly speak! Go it, Mauly!"

"Yaas! There's about thirty fellows here," said Lord Mauleverer, "and every fellow has his own ideas! We can't go thirty ways at once—what! Wharton's captain of the Form! Leave it to him and take his orders!"

Harry Wharton laughed.
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"That's not a bad idea!" he remarked. "Somebody's got to be leader, that's a cert. I'm willing to play second fiddle, if anybody's keen on it."

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry. "You're skipper!"

"The skipperfulness of the esteemed Wharton is terrific!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh, "and the hearfulness is the obeyfulness."

"I don't think!" remarked Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Shut up, Smithy!"

"Order!"

"Rats!" roared Bolsover major. "We're going to do as we jolly well like, see? Who's Wharton?"

"You cheeky ass, Bolsover—"

"Go and eat coke, Bull! Nobody's giving me orders, I know that!"

"Look here—"

"Rats!" roared Bolsover. The bully of the Remove was in a truculent mood. Discipline was not in his line; and having thrown off the authority of the "beaks," he was not disposed to submit to any lesser authority.

"My dear men," said Lord Maul-everer placidly. "If we row and rag and cackle and jaw, we shall still be waggin' our chins here when the Head sends a dozen prefects along to round us up."

"Let him!" bawled Bolsover.

"Shut up! Silence for the skipper!" roared Bob Cherry. "Go it, Wharton! For goodness' sake let's settle on something."

"I say, you fellows, I'm fearfully hungry! What about going down to Courtfield and getting dinner first? I say—yarooooooop!"

"Go it, Wharton!"

"Well, look here," said the captain of the Remove. "We've started on a stunt we can't chuck, without winning. We're standing by Bunter—"

"Hear, hear!"

"But Bunter's sacked, and that means standing up against the Head—which will mean the sack for some of us, and floggings for the rest, unless we win. We've got to win."

"Yes, rather!"

"If we take Bunter back to the school, they bag him on the spot—and you can bet that next time we shan't have a chance of getting him away! We can't take him back! We're not going back without him! That means that we're not going back at all, unless the Head comes round, and gives that fat, frabjous, fozzling, footling frump another chance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

"We're going on strike—" continued Wharton.

"Hear, hear!"

"And we're keeping it up as long as the Head does! Nobody wants to check the Head, of course—"

"Bow-wow!" from the Bounder.

"Anybody who checks the Head will get jolly well kicked! The Head's a brick, and we all like him and respect him. He's made a mistake about Bunter, and we hope he will set it right. Until he does we stay out."

"I guess that goes!" said Fisher T. Fish, with a nod of his bony head. "I guess that's O.K."

"Which means," went on Wharton, "that we've got to camp somewhere, and in a place where we can bar the prefects off if they come after us; and bar the beaks off, if it comes to that; and the Head, too! If we give in, we're done for—it's a fight to a finish."

"Bravo!"

"Sooner or later it may come out who really inked Prout, and then, I

hope, the Head will be glad that we never let him sack Bunter—"

"The hopefulness is terrific."

"We're sticking together! There's safety in numbers! So long as we stick shoulder to shoulder we shall pull through. United we stand, divided we fall. And now—hold on, Smithy! Where are you going?"

The Bounder was putting a leg over his bike.

"I'm going down to Courtfield," he answered coolly. "I'm lurching to-day at the Courtfield Hotel."

"You ass, stay where you are!" roared Bob Cherry. "Haven't you just heard Wharton say that we're all to stick together?"

The Bounder laughed. Like Bolsover major, he was disinclined to submit to new authority, after casting off the old! The Greyfriars Remove were now rather in the state of the ancient Israelites, when there was no King of Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes!

"Any fellow who doesn't want to cut tiffin can come along with me," called out the Bounder. "I'm standin' lunch."

And he pedalled away. Bolsover major, Skinner, and Snoop started after him at once, and then three or four more fellows.

It was getting near dinner-time; and other fellows, as well as Billy Bunter, were beginning to think that dinner was a good idea as the next item on the programme.

"I say, you fellows, stop for me!" yelled Bunter. He started after Smithy and his followers.

"You fat, footling fozzler, stay here!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Beast! I'm hungry!"

"Look here, Bunter—"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter rolled after the Bounder as fast as his fat, little legs could carry him. He did not want to be sacked, and he did not want to be recaptured by the enemy; but he did want his dinner, and he was not going to miss this chance.

Harry Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"If we don't stick together, we're done for!" he said.

"Well, after all, we want our dinner!" remarked Peter Todd.

"I guess that's so!" said Fisher T. Fish, "and Smithy says he's standing 't!" The fact that Smithy was standing it appealed strongly to Fisher T. Fish, who had an intense dislike to spending his own money.

"Let's talk it over after dinner!" suggested Hazeldene.

"Good egg!" said Kipps.

"Jolly good idea!" declared Wibley.

More and more of the fellows followed in the direction taken by the Bounder. Wharton was captain of the Form, and the natural leader in the Remove rebellion; but just at present it looked as if the Bounder had more followers than the captain of the Remove.

Half a dozen Removites remained with the Famous Five. Common prudence required that the rebel Form should stick together as one man! But there was little sign of it at present.

Bob Cherry made a grimace.

"Order, skipper!" he said with a grin.

Wharton gave another shrug.

"Most of the fellows are gone for grub," he said, "and we—"

"May as well go, too!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"The fact is, I'm getting a bit peckish!" remarked Nugent.

Wharton laughed.

"Let's, then," he said.

And the remnant of the rebel Form

started across the common to Courtfield. Evidently there was no wisdom in the multitude of counsels. The rebel Remove had won the first round in that contest; but the prospects for the second round looked very doubtful.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Rounding Up the Rebels!

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL sat down to dinner in a buzz.

One table in Hall was entirely unoccupied. That was the Remove table, where Mr. Quelch generally sat at the head of his Form.

Quelch was not present at the school dinner. Probably he did not care to show up there without his Form. He was lurching in Common-room with Lascelles, and Monsieur Charpentier, and other masters who had no Forms.

Hall simply buzzed with excitement.

In vain Mr. Hacker tried to still the buzz at the Shell table, as did Mr. Capper at the Fourth Form table, and Mr. Wiggins at the Third, and Mr. Twigg at the Second. Even the Fifth were in a buzz, in spite of the frowns of Prout. Even at the high table where the prefects sat, there was a buzz. Greyfriars was thrilling with excitement.

Fellows continually craned their necks round, to stare at the vacant table. It was unusual for even one fellow to cut tiffin. For a whole Form to cut it was unheard of. And the circumstances in which the Lower Fourth had cut tiffin were wildly exciting. All the school knew by this time that the Remove had marched out of Greyfriars, that they had rescued Billy Bunter from the prefects who had him in charge, that they had sent the prefects hopping home, and that they had declared their intentions of staying out till the expelled Owl was allowed to come back. It was the biggest sensation in the history of Greyfriars. Once upon a time there had been a barring-out in the school, which was still talked of; but this amazing happening put even that famous barring-out into the shade.

It was the Remove against the Head; and nobody could imagine how it was going to turn out. The Remove would not give in; the Head, of course, could not. It was like the old story of the irresistible force brought to bear upon the immovable object!

No wonder every table in Hall buzzed! No wonder the beaks frowned in vain, and failed to suppress the buzz.

Everybody was wondering what the Head was going to do!

Obviously, he had to do something!

He could not allow a whole Greyfriars Form to wander in space, as it were, outside the school, at their own sweet will.

Sending the prefects after them, to round them up and bring them back, was the natural thing to do. But the fate of Wingate and Gwynne did not seem encouraging for the prefects!

Indeed, if the rebels stood shoulder to shoulder on their defence, it was difficult to see how they were to be handled. Canings and floggings could not be administered to an absent Form. Even that last and overwhelming punishment, the sack, had lost its terrors. A whole Form could not be sacked, as the rebels knew very well. And even if they could, they were out of reach of the sack.

Some of the fellows expected that the rebel Form—or some of them—would come in for dinner. But not a Removite came.

The school dinner passed off in a buzz



Vernon-Smith went for Wingate hammer-and-tongs, and Redwing backed him up manfully. A buzzing crowd soon surrounded them, staring. With two sturdy juniors dragging at him and thumping him right and left, Wingate had to let Bunter go to defend himself. The fat Owl promptly ran!

of excitement, and then the fellows swarmed out into the quad, in eager discussion. On the part of the juniors there was a good deal of sympathy with the rebels. Temple of the Fourth declared that it was no end of a lark, and the others agreed that it was. Sammy Bunter, of the Second Form, was quite a distinguished fellow, as the brother of the fellow who had been sacked, and was the cause of all the trouble.

Naturally, a good many fellows went down to the gates, with the idea of looking for the missing Removites, and seeing how they were getting on, and what they were up to.

But there was a disappointment in store for them. Fellows were allowed out of gates, as a rule, between dinner and afternoon school. Now the gates were closed, and there was an order that the whole school was "gated" for the present. Which caused considerable dismay and indignation. Evidently the Head did not intend to allow any visiting of the rebel Form from the rest of the school.

"Rotten!" said Temple of the Fourth.
"Putrid!" growled Hobson of the Shell.

"Idiotic!" declared Coker of the Fifth to his friends, Potter and Greene. "The prefects can't do anything, of course! I never thought much of the Sixth. I've said so often enough. But if the Head asked us we'd jolly soon round up the cheeky young beggars—what?"

"No business of ours," said Potter.
"Hardly!" said Greene.

"Don't be silly idiots," advised Coker. "Of course it's our business! Wasn't it our beak who was inked by that young scoundrel, Bunter?"

"I dare say he asked for it," said Potter. "Prout had the Remove in

class while Quelch was away—and you know what Prout is."

"Pompous old ass!" agreed Greene.

"That's all very well!" grunted Coker. "But Prout's our beak, and he's not going to be ragged by cheeky fags. And I can jolly well tell you I'd round up those young sweeps fast enough if the Head asked me. But he won't!" added Horace Coker, with a sniff.

Coker was right. The Head didn't!

There was a fresh thrill of excitement when a dozen stalwart Sixth Form men were seen going down to the masters' gate, headed by Wingate. A crowd of fellows followed them as far as the gate. The Greyfriars fellows did not need telling that they had the Head's orders to go after the Remove.

"Hop it, Wingate!" called out a voice from the crowd; and there was a roar of laughter.

Wingate reddened with annoyance.

"Going after the Remove, you men?" squeaked Tubb of the Third, from the safety of the mob. "Mind they don't catch you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The prefects got out of the gate as fast as they could. They were getting more limelight than they wanted. The bell for classes called the Greyfriars fellows to the Form-rooms, and they went in very reluctantly, most of them envying the Remove their unaccustomed freedom. Form-masters found their work very difficult that afternoon.

Wingate and his merry men marched down the road, with rather grim faces. They had the headmaster's orders to carry out, and they were going to do their duty; but they did not relish the work in hand. Every prefect had an official ashplant under his arm, ready

for use. It was probable that persuasion of that sort would be needed when the rebels were found.

When they arrived on Courtfield Common nothing was to be seen of the Removites. Wingate stared round over the wide expanse of sunny, waving grass.

"They're somewhere about," he said.

"Where?" grunted Loder.

"We've got to find them."

"How?" snorted Walker.

"Ten to one they've scattered," remarked Sykes. "Wandering all over the shop, most likely."

"All the better," said Wingate.

"We'd better separate and hunt for the young rascals. Every man who bags one of them is to take him straight back to the school and hand him over to the Head. If we get them a few at a time it will come easier."

And the seniors took different directions, in ones and twos, looking for the elusive Removites. Some of them roamed over the common, some in the roads and lanes, some of them in the town of Courtfield.

In the High Street of that ancient market town Loder and Carne came suddenly on two juniors, strolling cheerfully, with their hands in their pockets—Wibley and Micky Desmond, of the Remove. Loder and Carne swooped like hawks.

"Here, leggo!" yelled Wibley, as Loder grabbed his collar.

"Lave go, ye bastards!" roared Micky, in the grasp of Carne.

But the two prefects did not let go. Grinning, they marched off their prisoners, and the two Remove rebels were walked back to the school. On the way they encountered Kipps, of the Remove, wriggling along with Walker's

hand on his collar. Nearer Greyfriars Hazeldene and Fisher T. Fish were seen, in the clutches of Gwynne of the Sixth, who held them by their collars. And then Sykes of the Sixth came into view, conducting Bolsover major home, the burly Removite struggling all the way and giving Sykes plenty to do to hold him.

United, the rebels might have stood; divided, they were falling—into the hands of the enemy!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bagging the Bounder!

TOPPIN'—what?" grinned the Bounder.

"What-ho!" grinned Billy Bunter.

"Better to have kept together," said Tom Redwing.

"Oh, rot!"

There had been a magnificent lunch at the Courtfield Hotel for more than a dozen fellows who had followed the Bounder's lead.

After lunch, those fellows were making the most of their unexpected half-holiday.

Some of them had gone to the pictures. Skinner and Snoop and Stott had sneaked off somewhere to smoke cigarettes. Some were rambling on the common, or in the lanes—and had already fallen into the enemy hands! The Bounder and his chum, Redwing, were seated at a little table outside the bunshop in the High Street of Courtfield, enjoying ginger-beer. Billy Bunter was with them. Billy Bunter was not likely to leave the fascinating society of a fellow who stood magnificent lunches and ginger-beer afterwards, if he could help it.

Bunter was enjoying life, at present. He had a happy way of dismissing troubles from his fat mind when they were not actually present. The shadow of the "sack" was over him, and his position was extremely unsafe and uncertain. But Bunter was not thinking about that. He was thinking of that magnificent lunch, and of the ginger-beer and tarts he was now adding thereunto.

"I say, you fellows, this is prime!" said the Owl of the Remove, dabbing jam from an extensive mouth with the back of a fat hand. "This is better than class with Quelch—what?"

"If it lasts," said Redwing, with a smile. "It's a pretty bad state of affairs, old fat bean."

"Eh?" Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. "What's wrong? Don't you like the tarts?"

"Fathead!"

"Don't you like the ginger-beer?"

"Ass!"

"Well, what's wrong, then?" demanded Bunter. "I think they're both ripping! And we're getting out of classes. What more do you want?"

Life seemed all right to William George Bunter. He was happy, and shiny, and sticky. Redwing, a rather more thoughtful fellow, was wondering how this extraordinary shindy was going to turn out. The Bounder, utterly reckless how it might turn out, was enjoying it for its own sake.

"I'm sticking to you, Smithy!" said Bunter. "I don't think much of that ass, Wharton! The fact is, he's a cheeky fathead! I'm sticking to you."

"You'll stick to anybody you touch if you put on much more jam," remarked Redwing.

"Yah!"

"It's toppin', old bean!" yawned the Bounder. "The Head can't do anythin'. I can tell you, he will sit up and take notice if the Governors hear that a whole Form has walked out of the school!"

"Might get the boot!" said Bunter cheerfully. "Old Popper's never liked old Locke, and he's chairman of the governing board, you know. If Sir Hilton Popper hears of this, he will jump on old Locke. I say, if the Head got pushed out, we should get a new headmaster, and he would see me righted! What?"

"Let's hope old Popper won't hear of it," said Redwing.

The Bounder laughed.

"He's sure to! He's back at Popper Court now. Fellows have been picnickin' on his island in the river, while he was away; but they've chucked it now he's back. He will hear of it all right, if it goes on."

"It can't go on long," said Redwing. "If we'd stood all together, as Wharton wanted us to—"

"Oh, bother Wharton!"

"Well, he's captain of the Form, Smithy, and unless we have a leader, and carry out his orders, we've got no chance."

"I know I'm jolly well not carryin' out anybody's orders."

"Same here!" announced Bunter. "No jolly fear! I dare say the Head will send the prefects to look for us! Well, let him! I'd like to see a prefect handle me!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'd jolly well like to see a prefect show up, this minute!" said Bunter, with a warlike look. "I know I'd jolly well knock him down and chance it!"

"You're going to have the chance," said Redwing, as a tall, athletic figure came striding up the High Street. "Here comes Wingate."

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Bunter.

His warlike look vanished at once. He blinked along the street in alarm through his big spectacles.

Vernon-Smith jumped up. Redwing followed his example. Bunter sat and blinked at the Greyfriars captain, as he stopped at the table.

"So here you are!" said Wingate grimly.

"Have a ginger, old bean?" asked the Bounder.

Wingate eyed the three. He was alone—the other seniors were far afield, some of them on the hunt, some marching prisoners back to the school. Wingate was good for all three of these Removites in a scrap; he was good for two to walk them home. But walking three fellows home at once was a difficult matter for anyone who had only two hands.

He decided on Bunter!

Bunter was the bone of contention! Bunter once safely bagged, the revolt would fizzle out; there would be nothing left to revolt for.

Wingate reached across the little table, grabbed Billy Bunter by the collar, and hooked him out of his chair.

"Come on!" he said curtly.

"Yaroo! Leggo!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows! Rescue! I say, make him leggo! Yooop!"

"Let Bunter go, Wingate!" shouted Vernon-Smith.

"Stand back!"

Wingate yanked the fat junior away from the table. There were a dozen people taking tea or lemonade at the little tables, under the big tree outside the Courtfield bun-shop. They all stared round in astonishment.

Wingate, anxious to get away, jerked

Bunter along the pavement. The Bounder made a spring after him and grabbed him.

"Back up, Redwing!" he shouted.

Tom Redwing, little as he liked the present lawless state of affairs, was not the fellow to fail to back up a comrade. He leaped at Wingate and grasped him.

"Stand back!" roared Wingate, still hooking Bunter along.

"Rats to you!" panted the Bounder.

Perhaps Smithy realised just then that it would have been wiser to follow the lead of the captain of the Form, and stick together. But if he was headstrong and obstinate, he at least had heaps of pluck, and he was not going to see the Owl of the Remove recaptured. He went for Wingate hammer-and-tongs, and Redwing backed him up manfully.

A buzzing crowd soon surrounded them, staring. Customers at the bunshop, pedestrians in the High Street, errand-boys with their baskets, gathered and thickened, till there was quite a mob, all staring and buzzing.

With two sturdy juniors dragging at him, and thumping him right and left, Wingate had to let go Bunter to defend himself. The fat Owl promptly ran.

Smithy and Redwing were left struggling with Wingate. Bunter, perhaps, could not have helped them much if he had tried. But it did not seem to occur to him to try. The moment he was loose from Wingate's grasp, the Owl of the Remove stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once.

He vanished through the buzzing crowd, puffed and blew down the High Street, turned the first corner, and panted on for the open spaces of the common.

Bunter had escaped! But his defenders were not so fortunate. Wingate had a grip on Smithy's collar, and a grip on Redwing's. They were both sturdy and strong; but the powerful Sixth Former was more than good enough for the two. Had he had a third hand, he would have secured Bunter also! As it was, he secured Bunter's defenders, and strode away down the High Street, jerking them along resistlessly.

A buzzing crowd followed.

Struggling and kicking, the Bounder was jerked on with an iron grip on his collar, and Redwing struggled in vain in the Greyfriars captain's other hand.

Wingate was glad when he got out of Courtfield and away from the crowd. He marched his prisoners along the road over the common.

"Now will you walk quietly?" he demanded.

"No!" yelled the Bounder.

"Well, you'll walk, anyhow."

And the Bounder did; there was no resisting the muscular grip on his collar.

Wildly he stared round in the hope of seeing other Removites. But the only Removite he sighted was Russell, wriggling along reluctantly in the grasp of a prefect. Dusty, dishevelled, breathless, still defiant, the Bounder was jerked in at masters' gate at Greyfriars, and the gate clicked shut behind him.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Hot Chase!

OH lor!" gasped Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove felt as if he had run a hundred miles.

He hadn't, of course. It was hardly

a mile from Courtfield to the spot where Billy Bunter stopped to rest, under the shade of the hawthorns along Oak Lane, where that shady lane sloped down steeply towards the bank of the Sark.

Bunter had run, trotted, walked, crawled, gasped, and panted that distance, and now he was at the end of his tether. If the Head of Greyfriars had stood before him, birch in hand, Bunter could have done no more. He flung himself down in the shade, leaned on the trunk of an oak, gasped for breath, and mopped his perspiring brow.

It was quite a warm afternoon. Bunter was feeling not only warm, but nearly melting. He wiped away rivers of perspiration from his fat face.

But he was safe now! At least, he hoped that he was! Anyhow, he had escaped from Wingate; and if other prefects were rooting about Courtfield, they were not likely to see him. It was really lucky, Bunter thought, that the Greyfriars captain had had both hands full with Smithy and Redwing. Bunter was still free; and Bunter was the fellow who mattered—at least to Bunter!

For a long, long time the fat junior sat in the shade, till his podgy limbs were rested, and he felt better. He began to wonder where the other fellows were. Some, evidently, had been rounded up and taken back to Greyfriars. But there must be plenty of them still out of the school. And Bunter was rather anxious to see some of them. There was tea-time to be considered—and what was to be done about tea!

The sound of a bicycle on the rutty, dusty lane, made the fat junior prick up his ears. Some of the rebels had their bikes with them—all the Famous Five had brought their jiggers away from the school. Billy Bunter rose to his feet, and blinked up the lane, and spotted a cyclist free-wheeling down the slope.

But it was not one of the Remove. It was Gerald Loder of the Sixth Form, and as he rode he glanced right and left, evidently in search of a stray Removite.

Bunter dodged into the hawthorns at once. But he dodged too late. Loder had seen him.

The prefect came on with a rush, jumped off his machine, and leaned it on a tree. Bunter backed deeper into the hawthorns, palpitating with terror.

"I've seen you, you fat dummy!" shouted Loder. "Come out of that!"

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

Bunter heard—but he heeded not! There was a big oak growing in the midst of the patch of hawthorn bushes. Bunter backed round it, and was out of sight as Loder came tramping through.

"You young rotter!" shouted the bully of the Sixth. "If I have to hunt for you I'll jolly well whop you before I take you back! Come out of it, I tell you!"

Bunter did not come out of it. He palpitated behind the tree, with the angry prefect hardly ten feet from him. Bunter was wide; but the oak, luckily, was wider, and it hid him from Loder's eyes.

Loder gave an angry snort. He was not a very dutiful prefect, and did not care two straws if the Lower Fourth Form wandered from China to Peru. But he was rather keen to get into the Head's good graces by helping to handle the extraordinary situation that had arisen at Greyfriars School.

Dr. Locke had given him a word of commendation when he marched Wibley in.

The Head would be still more gratified if Bunter, the fat bone of contention, was marched in. Loder was not going to let him escape, if he could help it.

He stared and glared round among the tangled hawthorns. But he could not see through the trunk of an oak, and Bunter remained invisible.

He tramped on again through the bushes with eyes like a hawk. Bunter, quaking with dread, circumnavigated the oak. He did not dare to peer round at Loder; but he could hear his heavy, tramping footsteps, and the rustle of the thicket. Keeping the oak between him and Loder, Bunter circled round it warily, so that when the prefect passed it it was still between him and Bunter. Unaware that he had passed so close by his quarry Loder stamped on, and came out on the open common behind the bushes, where he stared over the grassy expanse in search of a running fat figure, which was not to be seen.

STEP IN AND WIN A WALLET LIKE

John Ferrett, of Wayside, Perran-coomb, Perranporth, Cornwall, who sent in the following winning GREYFRIARS LIMERICK:

Vernon-Smith o'er a new leaf has turned,
By Ponsonby & Co. he's now spurned.
To his father's joy
This foolhardy boy
Shows plainly his lesson he's learned.

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

Bunter, gasping, quitted the oak, and wriggled away towards the lane, when Loder was once safely past.

Unfortunately for him the prefect heard the sound of rustling hawthorns, and realised that Bunter was still in the thicket.

He turned his back on the common, and came striding back through the hawthorns.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, as he heard him coming.

He bolted out into the lane like a fat rabbit.

But he knew that it was useless to run. Loder would be out of the thicket in a few moments, and would spot him in the lane. On the other side was a high fence enclosing the grounds of the Three Fishers. Bunter gave it a longing blink; but he knew that he could never climb that fence. Then his eyes and his spectacles fell on Loder's bike, leaning against a tree.

He made one bound for it.

He dragged it away from the tree and bounded into the saddle, just as Loder emerged into the lane.

It was lucky for Bunter that there was a steep slope down to the river, which was not more than a quarter of a mile away.

Even when he borrowed a bike in the Remove Billy Bunter had difficulties with the pedals, generally beyond his reach. On Loder's bike they

were far beyond his reach. He could not have touched them by stretching out his toes. On the level Bunter would simply have pitched off that bike, at the mercy of his pursuer.

But on a steep slope it was different. The bike shot away as Loder made a furious jump after it. Bunter guided it somehow, clutching frantically at the handles, his fat little legs clinging round and under the saddle. He wanted to go quick, with Loder so close behind. But he went much more quickly than he wanted to go. He went at a speed that took his breath away. He fairly flew. Like an arrow he shot down Oak Lane towards the Sark.

"Stop!" roared Loder.

Bunter could not have stopped if he had wanted to. He shot on, and the enraged senior raced in pursuit.

On foot Bunter would have been overhauled in three or four strides, but on a bike it was very different. Loder was dropped hopelessly behind.

He ran his hardest, not only on Bunter's account, but anxious about what might happen to his jigger. But he had simply no chance. Billy Bunter was dozens of yards ahead when the Sark came gleaming and shining into sight round the last curve of the lane.

"Oh lor'!" gurgled Bunter.

The lane opened direct on the towpath; beyond was the shining river. Bunter was going great guns. It seemed as if the fat cyclist would shoot right across the towpath and take a header into the Sark, bike and all.

"Stop!" shrieked Loder.

Bunter did not even hear him.

Like an arrow he shot out of the lane on to the towpath, and, with a desperate wrench, he managed to turn the racing bike to the left, on the grassy path by the river. The bike turned, skidded on the grass, and pitched over, and Bunter was strewn, roaring, in the green rushes on the very edge of the water. The bike crashed through the rushes, and splashed into the shallow margin of the Sark.

"Oh crikey!" splattered Bunter.

He staggered to his feet.

The bike was in the river. He could hear Loder's heavy footsteps pounding down the lane, though the trees as yet hid him from sight. There was no time to recover the bike before Loder arrived. Bunter hoped, too, that the sight of the handlebars sticking out of the Sark might delay Loder. He started at a run down the river.

Panting and puffing and blowing, the fat junior tore on. A roar of wrath, at a distance behind him, made him turn his head. Loder had stopped at the sight of his bike in the water. He was dragging it out.

"Oh, scissors!" gasped Bunter.

He barged on desperately.

Getting the bike out would not occupy Loder many minutes. Once he was in the saddle again and scorching down the towpath, Billy Bunter had little chance of getting away. He pounded wildly on; and then suddenly he saw a boat.

It was not uncommon for a boat to be tied up to the willows along the Sark; but it could not have happened more fortunately than now.

To whom that boat belonged, where the owner was, and what he would do when he missed it were questions to which Bunter had no time to find the answers, even if he had been interested in finding them—which he was not. That boat was a windfall to the hunted Owl. All he cared about was the fact

that it was, for the moment, untenanted.

To leap into the boat, jerk loose the painter, and seize an oar and shove off, occupied Bunter hardly more than a moment. Gasping with relief he floated out into the river.

Loder of the Sixth was on his bike again now. He was coming down the towpath—where all the local by-laws forbade cyclists to ride—at a terrific rush. Loder forgot all about the local by-laws. He fairly drove at his pedals, and came along the towpath like an arrow.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Painful for Popper!

SIR HILTON POPPER could scarcely believe his eyes, or his eyeglass.

Life is full of surprises, and no doubt the lord of Popper Court had had his share of them in his time. But this really was the greatest surprise of all. Sir Hilton Popper could not have believed this had he not seen it with his own eyes, and he could scarcely believe it now that he did see it.

Checky follows sometimes trespassed in Sir Hilton's woods which bordered the Sark. They even picnicked sometimes on Sir Hilton's island in the river. But for a fellow to bag Sir Hilton's boat, under Sir Hilton's eyes, was unheard-of cheek, amazing, and incredible. And that was what had just happened.

Sir Hilton had been away in London lately; but now he had returned to Popper Court, not perhaps to the joy of the other inhabitants thereof. He had walked and ridden all over his extensive estate, and found fault with all his servants and keepers.

On this particular afternoon Sir Hilton was patronising the river. He had a suspicion—a strong suspicion—that his island had been trespassed on during his absence. He knew the ways of Greyfriars boys, and he knew, too, that they had the nerve to maintain that it was not "his" island at all, but common land, to which he laid claim without a shadow of right. Sir Hilton had floated down the river from Popper Court in his boat, intending to visit his island, and scan it for traces of checky picnickers, and raise Cain generally, if he found any.

Half-way down to the island he landed on the bank and tied up his boat to the willows. The July sun was hot and blazing on the river, and he took a rest under the shady trees along the bank. There he leaned on the trunk of a beech and smoked a cigar and frowned at the sight of a fat schoolboy running down the towpath.

He had seen Billy Bunter before, and, anyhow, he would have known that he belonged to Greyfriars by his cap. Classes were not yet over at the school, and it was not a half-holiday, so it was evident that Bunter was playing truant, which was a serious matter in the eyes of a stiff old gentleman who was chairman of the governing board.

But that, serious as it was, was a mere trifle light as air, compared with what followed. To Sir Hilton's utter amazement and speechless wrath that fat schoolboy bounded into his boat, and pushed out into the river.

It was incredible; but it happened. It happened right under the lordly eyes of the lord of Popper Court.

Sir Hilton gazed. He could only gaze, rooted to the ground with astonishment. This thing actually was happening. It was unbelievable, but it was happening.

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There was that fat, perspiring fellow in his boat pushing off, grabbing the oars, catching crabs with them, and floundering out to the middle of the Sark. Whether he had observed the baronet or not in the shade of the trees Sir Hilton did not know. Whether he had or not he had bagged Sir Hilton's boat, and was making off with it—right under his eyes.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton, at last finding his voice.

For long moments he had been bereft of speech.

His eyes, his very eyeglass, glittered with wrath. He hurled away the stump of his cigar, and rushed across the towpath to the water, to shout to Bunter to bring back the boat.

It was unfortunate that Loder came careering along the tow-path as he did so.

Loder, like Bunter, saw nothing of the baronet standing under the shady trees. He was not aware that anyone was on the tow-path till Sir Hilton rushed across just in front of him.

Then it was too late!

Sir Hilton Popper knew, of course, that cyclists were forbidden to ride on the tow-path. Possibly he knew that they did so sometimes, in spite of the prohibition. But he was not thinking of cyclists just then. His eyes were on the boat on the water, and the fat gasping junior in the boat. The bike took him quite by surprise.

Loder had no time even to jam on his brake.

Sir Hilton Popper was fairly in front of his front wheel before Loder was aware that he was anywhere about at all.

Crash!

To both Loder and Sir Hilton Popper it seemed as if an earthquake was happening.

Loder knew that he had run into something, he hardly knew what. Sir Hilton was aware that something had run into him—and he hardly knew what! But both of them knew that they were suddenly strewn on the tow-path, bumping.

"Oh! Oh, gad! What—what—great gad! Oh!"

"Great pip! What—who—"

"Who—what—"

"Ow! Oh! Ow!"

Gerald Loder sat up dizzily.

His bike was curled up in the rushes. Loder blinked! He had more aches and pains than he could have counted, without going into big figures. He had hit the earth rather hard.

"Ow! Oh! Oh, gad! What—who—what—" gurgled Sir Hilton, incoherently, "What—what—who—oh, you young rascal! Scoundrel!"

He staggered up.

"Sir Hilton Popper!" gasped Loder. He scrambled to his feet and backed away. He did not like the look on the baronet's face. He almost forgot his aches and pains for a moment. Sir Hilton looked as if the number of them was going to be added to.

"You—you—you young rascal!" bel-lowed the lord of Popper Court. "You—you have run into me! You—you have knocked me down! I—I am hurt—my leg—ow, wow! How dare you ride on the tow-path! What—what—"

"What did you jump in front of my bike for?" gasped Loder. "I never saw you, till you— Here, hands off!"

He jumped away as the baronet strode at him. Sir Hilton was hurt—a stiff old baronet could not be knocked down by a careering bike without getting hurt. But he was more enraged than

hurt. He forgot even Bunter, and the fact that his boat had been bagged under his lordly eyes. He fairly hurled himself at the Greyfriars prefect.

"You young rascal! Take that—and that—and that—"

"Yaroooh!" roared Loder as he took them.

It was rather a new experience for Loder of the Sixth to have his head smacked! And Sir Hilton smacked hard! He handed out terrific smites, in fact! Loder reeled and staggered under the smacks.

"Ow! Keep off, you mad old donkey!" yelled Loder, reckless of the fact that he was addressing a governor of the school. "Keep your silly paws to yourself, you dashed old ass! Oh, crumbs! Whoop!"

Smack, smack, smack!

"Take that, and that, and that—"

Loder was soon tired of taking them! He turned and bolted, leaving his bike crumpled in the rushes. He was thinking only of getting out of reach of Sir Hilton's bony hands.

"Stop!" roared Sir Hilton, as he fled. Still unsatisfied, he rushed after Loder of the Sixth. Loder raced desperately up a woodland path: after him charged Sir Hilton Popper, with his hand up-raised to smack again. Both of them, going strong, disappeared from the view of a fat junior blinking at the scene though a pair of big spectacles, from the river.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter.

He pulled away down the river, anxious to get out of sight before either Sir Hilton Popper or Loder showed up on the bank again. He could guess now to whom that boat belonged. Billy Bunter rowed about as well as he did anything else; and the crabs he caught were innumerable. There was a sluggish current on the Sark, and it helped Bunter along, or his progress would have been that of a tired snail.

The fat Owl drifted round a bend of the winding river. Popper's Island came in sight; a mass of dark woods mirrored in the Sark.

Bunter steered to pass between the island and the bank. He intended to land a good way down the river, out of reach of Loder if he turned up again, and of Sir Hilton if he came after his boat.

But that intention was suddenly changed, as the fat junior spotted a boat ahead of him, pulling up the river.

There were three fellows in it, in straw hats, which showed the Greyfriars colours. Bunter's range of vision was limited, even with the aid of his big spectacles; but he could see that the three men in the boat were big fellows, plainly seniors, and that they belonged to Greyfriars. Two of them, of course, had their backs to Bunter as they pulled: the third sat steering, and Bunter could discern his hat and the outlines of a big and burly form.

"Beasts!" gasped the dismayed Owl.

He had no doubt that the hunters were at hand! Three Greyfriars seniors coming up the stream in a boat meant to Bunter that the prefects were searching the banks of the Sark for the rebels.

"Oh lor!" groaned Bunter.

He was quite at a loss. Landing on the near bank meant the danger of falling in with Sir Hilton Popper, or Loder, or both. Pulling across to the farther bank meant landing in trackless woods, and running the risk of wrothy game-keepers. Keeping on down the stream meant meeting the advancing boat. Pulling back up the river meant pulling against the current, which was



Loder had no time to jam on his brake. Sir Hilton Popper was fairly in front of his front wheel before Loder was aware that he was anywhere about at all. Crash! The two collided! "Oh! Oh, gad! What—what—great gad! Oh!" gurgled Sir Hilton. "Ow! Oh! Ow!" gasped Loder.

not to be thought of by a fat, tired, lazy Bunter. He blinked round, and made up his fat mind.

Instead of steering to clear the island, he steered to run into it. The current drifted him into a mass of willows on the edge of the river island: and the boat bumped among the trunks and rushes and drooping branches. The Owl of the Remove clambered ashore, slipped, and sat down in shallow water among the willows.

Splash!

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter.

He gurgled, and gasped, and scrambled up, clambering through the willows and rushes on to the firm land. The boat was left bobbing among the drooping willows. Billy Bunter was only thinking of getting into hiding before the Greyfriars boat came along. He plunged through the trees and reached the centre of the little island, panting for breath.

By that time he could hear the strokes of oars. He wondered whether the beasts would land on the island to search for Removites. He remembered the hollow oak that grew among the thickets in the middle of the island, and he blinked round it for the opening in the trunk, and wedged in. Squeezed in that stuffy hiding-place, with several disturbed insects tickling his fat neck, the hunted Owl listened to the sound of a boat being made fast, and fellows scrambling ashore on the island.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Big Idea!

HARRY WHARTON looked worried.

So did his comrades. With no king in Israel, and every man doing that which was right in his own eyes, matters were not going well with the rebels of Greyfriars.

Where the rest of the Form were, the Famous Five did not know. They had kept together; but the rest had scattered far and wide. Only Lord Mauleverer remained with the Co. They had lunched at an inn, rather less expensively than the Bounder and his party. After that they made an attempt to get the scattered Form together. But it was a failure. Now they were sitting under a shady tree on the common, in sight of the white road that ran from Courtfield past the gates of Greyfriars. Lord Mauleverer, leaning on the tree, with his straw hat tilted over his noble face, was dozing. The Famous Five were consulting. But for all the good it did, they might as well have been dozing like Mauly.

"It's rotten!" said Bob Cherry.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Looks as if the game's up!" growled Johnny Bull. "We had one chance—if we all stood together! We've chucked it away."

"We can't go back!" said Nugent.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"We can't!" he said. "It would be simply asking for it! The Head can't sack a whole Form—but he could jolly well sack the ring-leaders if he got hold of them separately. And he would."

"But what the thump——" said Bob.

"We've got to get the Form together somehow," said Harry, "and find that blithering idiot Bunter! I shouldn't wonder if some of the fellows have been bagged already."

"Pretty certain!" said Bob.

There was little doubt of it. Several times that afternoon the chums of the Remove had sighted prefects in the distance and given them a wide berth. They knew that a general hunt was going on, and it was quite probable that the hunters had a big "bag" by that time.

"Serve 'em right!" grunted Johnny Bull. "They may learn a little sense if the Head takes it out of them. But what the dickens are we going to do? Stick out of gates by ourselves?"

"That's no good! We've got to gather the clan somehow," said Bob. "What's left of them, at any rate. We ought to have some headquarters! But where?"

"We shall have to camp somewhere to-night!" remarked Johnny Bull. "But where——"

"The wherefulness is terrific."

"If we're going to stick it out—and we are—we've got to fix on some place where we can hold the fort!" said the captain of the Remove. "That's the first step! But—where? Anybody got an idea?"

"Yaas!"

That answer came rather unexpectedly from under the straw hat that was shading Lord Mauleverer's noble features.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Mauly's talking in his sleep!"

Lord Mauleverer sat up, shifted the straw hat from his face, and grinned.

"I haven't exactly been asleep," he remarked. "I heard all you fellows were sayin'. I've been thinkin' it over."

"Any result?" asked Harry, with a smile.

"Yaas."

"Get it off your chest, then!"

"What about the island?" asked Mauly.

"Eh! What island?"

"Popper's Island in the Sark! Just the place for holdin' the fort and keepin' the jolly old enemy at bay. What?"

The Famous Five gazed at Lord Mauleverer! Mauly was generally supposed in the Remove to be a priceless

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(Continued from page 13.)

ass. But often and often Mauly had shown that his noble brain could work if he took the trouble to set it going. It had worked now!

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob. "Why didn't we think of it! Just the idea—and just the place!"

"Topping!" said Johnny Bull heartily. "We've picnicked there, and we can camp there! And they won't find it jolly easy to get at us on an island."

Harry Wharton's eyes glistened. Now that the suggestion had been made, all the possibilities flashed into his mind at once.

"Good man, Mauly!" he exclaimed. "Why, we could hold the island in the river against a jolly old army. We can leave the bikes where we've put them up."

"Ripping wheeze!" said Frank Nugent.

"The ripfulness is terrific."

"We can get a boat from somewhere and get off to the island," said Harry. "We shall have to pass the word somehow for the other fellows to join up there. We can build a hut—"

"Hurrah!" chortled Bob Cherry.

The idea of building a hut on an island appealed to all the fellows. It was, in fact, a gorgeous idea!

"I say, though, I've heard that old Popper is back home—"

"Blow old Popper!" said Bob. "It's not his island, really—he's a jolly old grabber, and he can go and eat coke!"

"Hear, hear!"

It was unanimously agreed that Sir Hilton Popper could go and eat coke!

Bob Cherry jumped up from the grass.

"Let's get going!" he exclaimed.

"The sooner the better! Why didn't you start thinking before, Mauly? You should give that old bean of yours more exercise." Bob broke off with a sudden yell. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look!" He pointed along the road in the direction of the town.

Walker of the Sixth was in sight. He was walking between Skinner and Snoop of the Remove, holding them by the collars. Walker of the Sixth was smiling. Skinner and Snoop were scowling ferociously; but they were going quietly. None of them observed the group of juniors under the trees by the roadside.

"Prisoners of war!" said Frank Nugent. "We'll jolly soon get them away from Walker, though."

"What-ho!" chuckled Bob.

"Keep in cover!" said the captain of the Remove quickly. "Wait till they come along—and then rush."

The six juniors dropped into cover among the trees.

They were not more than a dozen yards from the road, and Walker and his prisoners had to pass the spot on their way to the school.

Harry Wharton & Co. waited.

"Now then, buck up!" Walker's voice came to their ears. "Don't drag behind, Skinner! Don't lag like that, Snoop!"

Skinner and Snoop did drag and lag, however. It was evident that they were

not keen to arrive at Greyfriars and face the wrath of the Head.

"If you don't buck up," said Walker, "I shall tap your heads together—like that!"

Crack!

"Yaroooh!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

The bang of the meeting heads and the anguished yells of Skinner and Snoop reached the juniors in ambush.

Skinner and Snoop promptly bucked up. They did not want another bang! Walker grinned and marched them onward. They came abreast of the ambush.

"Go it!" said Harry Wharton.

He led the rush from the trees. Almost in the twinkling of an eye the Famous Five were in the road and hurling themselves at Walker of the Sixth. Lord Mauleverer strolled gently after them.

"Why—what—hands off!" yelled Walker! But it was a case of "hands on"; five pairs of them, and Walker was torn away from his prisoners and bumped in the dust of the hard high-road.

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Skinner. "I say, thank goodness you fellows turned up! Pitch him into the ditch."

"I'll lend a hand!" gasped Snoop.

"Leggo!" roared Walker, struggling wildly in many hands. "You young sweeps— Oh crumbs! You young— Yaroooh!"

"Pitch him in!" yelled Skinner. "He banged our heads—in with him!"

There was a ditch on one side of the road. There was not much water in it in the hot summer weather. But there was plenty of mud. Walker, heaved over the edge, sat in the mud with a squelch. Mud spattered round him and over him.

"Oooogh!" gasped Walker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fellows had better stick to us now!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Or would you rather we left you with Walker?"

"We'll stick to you!" said Skinner promptly.

"Yes, rather!" gasped Snoop.

"Come on, then!" said Harry Wharton; and the juniors started across the common in the direction of the river, leaving Walker of the Sixth squelching mud in the ditch.

They were still in sight when the prefect crawled out of the ditch. But Walker did not think of pursuing them. He had had enough of the Remove rebels at close quarters. He tramped on his muddy way leaving those cheery young gentlemen to their own devices.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Coker's Picnic!

"ROT!" said Coker.

"But—" objected Potter.

"Rubbish!" said Coker.

"But—" murmured

Greene.

"I've told you fellows before," said Coker of the Fifth, "that you talk too much! I'm telling you again."

"But—" said Potter and Greene together.

"Prout's given us leave out of gates!" said Coker. "That's all right! I thought I'd ask him; though, of course, I should have gone anyhow. Gating the fags is all right; I approve of it. But gating the seniors is all rot! Still, I thought I'd ask Prout, and he says yes. So—"

"That's all right," said Potter. "But look here, let's picnic somewhere else. Lots of places beside that dashed island in the river."

"I've decided on Popper's Island," answered Coker. "Old Popper is a

cheeky old ass, making out that it's his island."

"It's out of bounds, all the same," said Greene.

"That's only because the Head wants to keep clear of rows with old Popper. I think he's an ass myself."

"It means a row—"

"It doesn't!" said Coker calmly. "I'm not going to mention to the Head that we picnicked on the island. I'm not going to call at Popper Court and tell old Popper so. See?"

"But—"

"Are you coming?"

Coker picked up the hamper and started. Potter and Greene looked at one another and hesitated.

They knew what was in that hamper! They had seen Horace Coker pack it for the picnic. There was a feast of the gods packed in that hamper. Potter and Greene liked feasts of the gods.

But they would have preferred the feast anywhere but on that disputed island in the river. It would have been all right in the study, if it came to that! It would have been all right in Friardale Wood, or under the trees along the Sark. But it was Coker's picnic, and Coker had decided. From the decision of the great and lofty Horace there was no appeal.

"The silly ass!" murmured Potter.

"The howling fathead!" breathed Greene.

But they followed Coker! With a feast of the gods packed in the hamper it would have been easy for Coker to pick up other company. But with Coker gone out with the hamper, it would not have been easy for Potter and Greene to pick up another feast. So they followed the great Horace. There was no tea in the study with Coker gone out. Tea in Hall did not appeal to Potter and Greene, especially in comparison with the remarkably good things they had seen Coker pack into that hamper.

It was just like Coker, of course! He had planned that picnic on Popper's Island, while Sir Hilton was away in London. Other fellows, having made such plans, gave them up when they heard that the testy old gentleman was back at Popper Court. Not so Coker! Coker was keeping to his programme, just to show that he didn't funk it. Coker wanted it to be clear to the whole universe that he, Horace James Coker, feared nobody and nothing! Perhaps he fancied that the universe was interested.

Potter and Greene would rather have kicked Coker than picnicked with him—only they wanted the feast! So they suppressed their natural inclinations, followed Coker down to the school boat-house, and helped him out with the boat.

It was ripping on the river, there was no doubt about that. The Sark, bright in the July sunshine, rippled and sang between its green banks. Coker was no doubt right in declaring that a pull up the river, and a picnic on an island, beat tea in the study hollow! No doubt it did. But Potter and Greene could not help thinking uneasily of the lord of Popper Court.

Potter and Greene pulled at the oars. Coker sat in the stern, steered, and told them how to row. Perhaps it was by accident that Potter splashed the steersman once or twice. Perhaps it was not.

"Hallo, there's one of the prefects!" remarked Coker, and Potter and Greene glanced round at Loder of the Sixth on the bank. They were now some distance from the school, and the top of the big oak-tree on the island was in sight.

Loder did not glance towards them. He seemed to be in a hurry. He was not exactly running, but he was walking very fast indeed.

"Fags after him, perhaps!" said Coker sarcastically. "Looks as if he's been in a row. If the Head would leave those fags to me, I'd have 'em eating out of my hand! These schoolmasters haven't much sense."

Loder disappeared in the direction of the school. The Fifth Formers pulled on up the river.

"Why, there's old Popper!" ejaculated Coker.

The tall, angular form of Sir Hilton Popper emerged from a path in the wood along the bank. He did not look towards the Fifth Form boat, any more than Loder had done. He, like Loder, seemed in a hurry. He glared up and down the bank through his eyeglass, and then strode away down the river, in the

direction in which Loder of the Sixth had disappeared.

"Looks ratty—what?" said Coker, staring after him. "He can't be after Loder, can he? Anyhow, he's clear of us! Not that I should care if the old donkey watched us land on the island with that silly glass eye of his."

Potter and Greene, however, were rather relieved to see the old baronet going in the opposite direction, as they pulled on to the island. They were glad to see the last of him.

"There's the island!" said Coker. "Put a bit of beef into it. We're going there for a picnic, you know, not to stay the night! Ooogh! What the thump did you splash me for, Potter, you silly ass? If you can't row, what the merry dickens do you get into a boat for? That's the third time you've splashed me!"

"Did I splash you?" murmured Potter.

"Can't you see you did, you howling fathead? If you jolly well splash me again, I'll jolly well give you a jab with this boathook."

Potter decided to have no more accidental splashes.

The island was quite near now. Potter and Greene, having their backs to it, did not see it, or a fat junior in a borrowed boat. Coker, dabbing a wet neck with his handkerchief, had no eyes for anything just then. So they did not see anything of Billy Bunter. They were unaware that the expelled Owl was on the Sark at all, and certainly did not dream that he had spotted their boat, and taken them for a party of prefects searching the river for rebel Removites.

The Fifth Form boat pulled into the channel between the shore and the
(Continued on next page.)



Don't argue, it's a waste of time! Let "UMPIRE" settle your cricket problems. He's a walking encyclopedia where the great summer game's concerned. Address your queries to him: c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

DECEIVING THE BATSMEN:

HERE'S a nice "kettle of fish" to start us on an argument this week. Among my reader friends I number a most promising young batsman, who tells me that he is between fifteen and sixteen years of age, and who is getting a lot of runs with his school team.

During this season, so he tells me, he has had opportunities of watching quite a lot of first-class cricket, and as he lives in Kent he has naturally seen that great little bowler, "Tich" Freeman, getting wickets, as usual.

Here is the "bite" in the story. My friend declares that, having watched Freeman and other bowlers of similar type quite closely, he cannot for the life of him imagine how those simple-looking deliveries get them so many wickets among first-class batsmen. "I am quite confident"—so the letter winds up—"that I could get runs against them myself. What do you think?"

Well, as I haven't seen my friend busy at his bat-wielding business I can't say whether he is sufficiently advanced in the game as to be able to knock the spots off Freeman, Grimmett, and other "easy-looking" bowlers of a similar type. I admit they are easy-looking, and I myself, watching from the pavilion, have often wondered how in the world they do manage to get out good batsmen.

One inevitable conclusion is that there must be something more in the bowling of this type of stuff than appears obvious to the watcher. These simple-looking slow bowlers get their victims by clever variation of flight, pace, and spin. Their main objective, so far as their cricket life is concerned, is to deceive the batsmen, and the measure of their success is the extent to which they succeed in doing this.

Having said that, however, I am going to add this, and then you may possibly come to the conclusion that to a limited

extent I am in agreement with my correspondent. I am quite certain that the bowlers of the type I have mentioned get some of their victims because they have a reputation. Batsmen know, when they are facing Grimmett, Freeman, and other bowlers of that type, that they have got a lot of wickets to their credit. And I am sure many batsmen imagine that there is something more in the bowling than there really is.

PLAY THE BALL!

I RECALL the Test match at Lord's in 1930. On the third day, when England should not really have had much difficulty in saving the game, Grimmett bowled to both Wally Hammond and Patsy Hendren with a silly mid-off and a silly mid-on. The word "silly" is used to indicate that these fielders were very close to the batsmen.

In the ordinary course of events Hammond and Hendren are two of the finest hitters of a ball we have had in English cricket in my time.

I am convinced in my own mind that if it had not been a Test match, and if they had not known that the fellow bowling was Grimmett, they would have hit the ball so hard that those two "silly" fielders would have been in constant danger of being killed—and they would have moved farther back. Yet if memory serves me correctly, Hammond was caught by one of the "silly" close-in fielders, and Hendren was caught by the other.

There is a lesson in the foregoing, and it was brought home to me quite recently by the remark made by a certain coach. Some young batsmen were having a trial at the nets at the Oval, to see if they were good enough to be given a trial in the county side. Just as one of the lads was going to take up his batting position he whispered to the coach: "Who's the fellow bowling now?" The coach looked at the young player and replied: "Go

and do your bit of batting, and don't ask the name of the bowler. His name doesn't matter."

You see the idea, don't you? What does the name or the reputation of the bowler matter? I am quite certain that many a club cricketer would knock up a lot of runs off the Freemans, the Grimmetts, and the Veritys of Test match cricket if they didn't know, at the time, the names of those bowlers.

TECHNICAL POINTS!

NOW we can get on with more answers to cricket questions. Here is one the reply to which will, I think, be of all-round interest. What is the general place of the field for the average bowler? A young and newly appointed skipper asks me that one.

Here is the reply. There are nine ordinary fielders to be spread around, and this is how I should place them for an average bowler: First slip, second slip, third man, point and cover-point, mid-off, short leg, mid-on and long field.

If the captain of a cricket side considers his field in relation to those positions he will find it quite a simple matter to switch them to meet the needs of any particular batsman, and for any particular bowler. Such a placing of the field is the one generally considered to be "right" when an ordinary medium pace bowler, who can be relied upon to keep a decent length, is "on."

The field as I have described it will not only prove efficient in the stopping of singles, but there will be men to prevent the ball racing to the boundary. Whether the players in front of the wicket field close in or comparatively far out will depend on the batsmen.

Another technical point. Will you tell me how to hold the ball to deliver an off spinner—that is, a ball turning from the off to leg. That question comes from A. C. of Morecambo. Try this. Hold the ball between the first finger and the thumb, with the forefinger on top of the seam. Don't hold the ball in the hand. Deliver the ball with the arm at the top of the swing, because there it is easier to impart the spin. The spin is applied by the forefinger, and the hold on the seam enables that forefinger to apply the twist to the ball.

You would all know how completely that forefinger does the spinning if you could examine, as I have often done, the hands of the famous spin bowlers. There is a really hard place—what is commonly known as a "seg"—on the inside of the forefinger, made by connection with the seam.

"UMPIRE."

island. Coker stood up to catch a willow branch, to draw in. Naturally, he missed his catch, and as the boat glided on, the branch caught him under the chin, and he sat down quite suddenly.

The boat rocked as he sat. Potter and Greene stared at him.

"What did you do that for, Coker?" asked Potter.

"You silly chump!" gasped Coker.

"Jolly nearly swamped us," said Greene. "Dash it all, Coker, you shouldn't pitch your weight about suddenly like that, in a boat, you know."

"You burbling idiot!" hooted Coker. "Do you think I did it on purpose?"

"Oh, didn't you?" asked Potter.

Coker did not answer that question. He glared! He scrambled up, caught a branch this time, and pulled the boat in. Potter and Greene jumped ashore, and one of them tied the painter, and Coker followed. The picnic hamper was carried through the trees to the open grassy space round the big oak in the centre of Popper's Island, and set down there.

"Topping here!" said Coker. "We've got the place to ourselves! Nobody else will have the nerve to come here now that old Popper's back at the Court. What's the matter with you, Potter?" He stared at George Potter, who was listening and staring round him.

"I thought I heard a grunt," said Potter.

"Don't be an ass!"

"Well, I thought I heard something!" said Greene.

"Don't be a fathead!"

Potter and Greene peered among the trees. It seemed unlikely that an escaped pig was on the island; but certainly they had an impression that they had heard a grunt. However, there was nothing to be seen but trees and grass and ferns, and nothing to be heard but Coker's melodious voice. So they dropped the subject, and began to unpack the hamper.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Caught!

BILLY BUNTER suppressed a groan.

It was warm, and it was stuffy in the hollow oak on Popper's Island.

But Bunter dared not emerge. He dared not show himself, or make a sound. A groan would have relieved his feelings, but he dared not groan. He had grunted, as it was natural for a fellow to do who was short of breath, and who was packed in a warm corner. But, having heard the remarks of Potter and Greene, he was careful not even to grunt again.

"Beasts!" he breathed inaudibly.

He knew now that it was not a party of prefects who had landed on the island. He had recognised the voices of the Fifth Formers. He heard the unpacking of the hamper, and cheery remarks about the contents. It was a picnic—and nothing would have pleased Bunter better than to make a fourth. But for the presence of Horace Coker he would have shown himself and risked it. But he dared not chance it with Coker of the Fifth!

Any other fellow at Greyfriars, not a prefect, could have been trusted to mind his own business. But not Coker. It was the duty of the prefects to deal with the Remove rebels, at the headmaster's order. Other fellows were not concerned in the affair at all, and Potter

and Greene would not have bothered their heads about the fat Owl had they seen him.

Coker was different! Coker was one of those fellows who never could mind their own business. Coker had both the time and the inclination to mind the business of others. If Coker spotted the Owl of the Remove, he would bag him.

Bunter knew that. So he lay low, crammed in the hollow oak, and suppressed his groans and his grunts, and hardly dared to move even when leggy insects crawled down his fat neck.

Bunter was not the only occupant of the hollow tree. The other occupants were smaller, but they were more active. Many of them seemed curious about Bunter. And they seemed nearly all legs. They crawled on Bunter—on his neck, in his hair, behind his ears, down his back. He felt as if he lived in a world of horrid insects. He wriggled, and he writhed; but he dared not make a sound.

"Jolly here—what?" He heard Horace Coker's voice. Coker was sitting with his back to the oak, his long legs stretched in the grass, dealing with a cold chicken from the hamper.

Bunter did not share his opinion. He was feeling anything but jolly.

"Fine!" said Potter. "I only hope old Popper won't come along."

"Blow old Popper!" said Coker.

"Blow him, if he'll let you!" agreed Greene. "He's rather particular about this island. Still, nobody can see us from the bank."

"This chicken jelly is a treat!" remarked Potter. "Your Aunt Judy knows how to pack a hamper, Coker."

Billy Bunter had to suppress another groan. It was tea-time, and Bunter was hungry. The mere mention of chicken jelly made his mouth water. With that feast going on so near at hand, Billy Bunter was suffering the tortures of Tantalus.

"These ham patties," said Greene, "are a dream! Just a dream! If you ever want to part with your Aunt Judy, Coker, old man, I've got a couple of uncles I'll swap for her."

"Ow!"

Bunter could not help it. A spider, who seemed to Bunter to have about a million legs, had started investigating the inside of his collar.

That ejaculation escaped Bunter unawares.

The three Fifth Formers started.

"What the dickens—" exclaimed Potter.

"Who the dooce—" exclaimed Greene.

"That was somebody!" said Coker in astonishment. "Is there somebody else on this dashed island, or what?"

"I told you I heard somebody grunt when we got here!" said Potter.

"Well, you're always talking rot!" said Coker. "But that sounds like somebody! Listen!"

The picnickers listened. There was no further sound. Bunter did not utter a second "ow." The spider had quitted his neck, and was crawling behind his left ear. Bunter let it crawl.

"Some fag larking, I suppose," said Coker. "Must be somebody! Some of those Remove sweeps, very likely; they're all out of school now, you know. They've got cheek enough to come here, though it's out of bounds; those Remove kids have cheek enough for anything."

Coker laid his plate in the grass, and rose to his feet.

"Look round for him!" he said.

"Oh, let him rip!" said Potter. "He's not doing any harm, whoever he is."

"I said look for him!" answered Coker coldly.

Potter and Greene, suppressing their feelings, relinquished the chicken jelly and the ham patties, and followed their great leader's lead. Round the grassy patch in the middle of the island the trees and bushes were thick. There was ample cover for a cheeky fag, or a dozen cheeky fags, for that matter. The three seniors scouted among trees and bushes.

From the hollow in the trunk of the oak a fat, crimson face was projected. Billy Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles.

Coker & Co. for the moment were out of sight.

The spider had left Bunter's ear, and was travelling in a leisurely and gentlemanly manner along his fat cheek. One smack from a fat hand ended his travels, and the spider, at the same moment.

Bunter listened with bated breath.

He debated in his fat mind whether he could venture to pop out, and make a sudden rush for Sir Hilton's boat. With luck, he could get clear before he was spotted, or at all events collared. Then he remembered that he had omitted to tie up the boat when he landed. Ten to one it had drifted away. It was hardly likely to linger. As a matter of fact, that boat had drifted away round one side of the island, while Coker & Co. were landing on the other. Still, there was the boat Coker & Co. had come in! If he could reach that—

"Seen him?" He heard Coker's roar, and popped back into the hollow tree.

"No! I daresay there's nobody here after all!" called back Potter. Potter was keen to get back to the chicken jelly.

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"Look here, Coker—"

"Don't be a fathead!"

Brushing and rustling in the bushes went on. Billy Bunter put his head out again, and blinked, and listened.

He gave up the idea of a rush for Coker's boat. The three seniors seemed to be moving all round the little glade, and there was no chance.

Billy Bunter's eyes, and spectacles, fixed on the hamper, and the excellent things set out in the grass round it. Temptation assailed Bunter! He was hungry—fearfully hungry! There was a cold chicken almost within his reach!

Once more he blinked round, with terrified caution. The little shady glade was still deserted by the seniors. The temptation was too strong to resist.

Taking his courage in both hands, as it were, Bunter squeezed out of the hollow trunk, pounced on the cold chicken, and grabbed it.

He bounded back with his prey.

He plunged into the hollow oak.

And at that moment, Coker of the Fifth, emerging from the trees into the glade, beheld a remarkable sight; nothing less than a pair of trousers disappearing into a tree!

It was rather an amazing sight; and Coker stopped dead, staring at it.

"My—my hat!" gasped Coker.

Coker was not quick on the uptake. His brain did not work swiftly. But it worked! Coker realised that the tree must be hollow, and that the trousers must belong to some fellow who was plunging headlong into the hollow interior. Having realised that, Coker gave a roar.

"I've got him!"

He rushed towards the oak. Potter and Greene came back into the glade. They stared round.

"Who—" asked Potter.



"Now, then, I've got you! Come out!" roared Coker. He groped into the gap in the ancient trunk, got hold of a collar, and dragged! Like a cork from a bottle, a fat figure, clutching a chicken, was jerked out of the hollow oak. "Ow! Beast!" roared Bunter. "Leggo!" "No fear!" grinned Coker.

"Where——" inquired Greene.
 "That tree's hollow—he's inside!" roared Coker, and he closed up to the big oak, and stretched a sinewy arm into the gap in the ancient trunk, to grope in the interior. "Now, then, I've got you! Come out!"
 "Yaroooh!"
 "I've got hold of something——"
 "Yow-ow-ow! Leggo my nose! Wow!"
 Coker groped again, and got hold of a collar. He dragged. Like a cork from a bottle, a fat figure was jerked out of the hollow oak. A cold chicken dropped into the grass. Bunter roared, "Ow! Beast! Leggo! Wow!"
 "Bunter!" roared Coker.
 "Beast!"
 "Great pip! Bunter! We've got him!" yelled Coker in great excitement. "The prefects have been hunting for him all day! We've got him! My hat!"
 "Leggo!"
 "No fear!" grinned Coker. "You're coming back to school, my fat pippin! You're not getting away again! Hardly."
 Bunter wriggled.
 "Beast! Leggo! Mind your own business!" he shrieked. "You ain't a prefect, you silly ass! Leggo my collar!"
 Potter and Greene exchanged glances.
 "Look here, Coker, it's no bizney of ours," said Potter. "We're not prefects."
 "Don't be an ass!"
 "Tain't our affair to meddle with the Remove!" urged Greene.
 "Don't be a dummy!"
 "Can't you mind your own business?" shrieked Bunter.
 Evidently Coker couldn't! He never had, and he wasn't going to begin now. Coker chuckled.

"This will make the Sixth look small!" he remarked. "They've been after the fat freak all day, and a Fifth Form man's got him! Come on, you men."
 "But the picnic——"
 "Never mind the picnic now."
 "What?" gasped Potter and Greene.
 "Pack the things in the hamper! Now we've caught this fat freak we're taking him back to the school. Never mind the picnic," said Coker cheerily.
 Potter and Greene looked at him. Never had they been nearer to seizing their great leader, and jamming his features into the earth. They restrained themselves; but it was with feelings that could not have been expressed in words that they started re-packing the hamper; while Horace Coker kept an iron grip on the collar of the captured Owl.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER. Whose Boat?

"O II, what a little bit of luck!" sang Bob Cherry.
 "What——"
 "Look!"
 Bob Cherry pointed to a floating object on the Sark. The Famous Five, and Mauleverer, Skinner, and Snoop were going down the towpath. They had settled, unanimously and enthusiastically, on adopting Lord Mauleverer's suggestion of Popper's Island as a refuge. To reach that secluded spot they had to have a boat.
 It was risky to visit the school boat-house, and attempt to get out the boat belonging to the Famous Five. At Friardale they could hire a boat; but it was a rather long walk down to the village, with danger of falling in with the enemy. So as they walked down

the bank they kept their eyes on the Sark, in the hope of spotting some boatman with a craft for hire. Thus it was that Bob's eyes fell on an empty boat drifting down the river a short distance below Popper's Island.
 It rolled lazily on the slow current, unguided. Nobody was in it, and the painter trailed in the water. It was quite a handsome little boat, beautifully varnished, with a comfortable stern seat with cushions. Apparently it had drifted loose, or else someone had forgotten to tie it up on landing. Anyhow there it was, and it was a stroke of luck for the rebels of Greyfriars.
 "A derelict!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "But we've got to get hold of it! Who's going?"
 "Like a swim, Skinner?" asked Bob.
 "No!" answered Skinner.
 "What about you, Snoopey?"
 "Rats!" said Snoop.
 "That's a Popper Court boat," said Johnny Bull, "I can see the name on it. Old Popper must have been on the river and lost his boat."
 "Jolly obliging of him," said Bob. "He couldn't have lost it at a more useful time. It's quite a nice boat—and much nicer without old Popper in it. Hallo, hallo, hallo, it's drifting in; I think I can jump it."
 A swirl of the current brought the drifting boat near the bank. It looked, for a moment, like bumping into the rushes, but the current twirled it away again. But as it went, Bob made an active spring, and landed on board, tumbling over as the boat rocked, and sitting down rather heavily. He was up again in a moment.
 He picked up the oars and pulled in to the bank. The other fellows jumped in.
 Eight fellows were rather a crowd for

a small boat. It was rather low in the water when they had all crowded in. Still, there was room, and the little craft floated, and Bob handled the oars carefully as he pulled up towards the island.

"Hi!"

"Oh, my hat! There's old Popper!" ejaculated Skinner in alarm.

"The Popperfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

The tall angular figure of the lord of Popper Court appeared on the tow-path. His eyeglass, gleaming in the sun, was fixed on the crowded boat.

He waved a lean hand and shouted:

"Hi! That is my boat! Bring it to the bank!"

"I don't think!" murmured Bob.

"Hardly!" grinned Nugent.

Sir Hilton Popper strode along the bank keeping pace with the boat and waving and shouting. He had given up looking for Loder of the Sixth, and come back to look for his boat. He had last seen it above the island, in the possession of Billy Bunter. No doubt he was surprised to spot it again, below the island, with eight Greyfriars juniors crammed into it.

"Hi! Do you hear me! Bring that boat here!" he roared. His long legs whisked along the bank.

At any other time the juniors certainly would have heeded the behests of the lord of Popper Court. He was a governor of Greyfriars, and a governor of Greyfriars was a tremendous personage. Besides, it certainly was his boat! But in the present circumstances they passed by his angry shouts like the idle wind which they regarded not.

"I shall report this to your headmaster!" roared Sir Hilton, purple with wrath and exertion, as he stamped along the bank. "You shall be flogged for this! Do you hear?"

The juniors smiled. In the present state of affairs at Greyfriars, a report to their headmaster did not worry them.

"All serene!" called back Bob Cherry.

"What? what?"

"You can have your boat when we've done with it! We're borrowing it at present—"

"You impertinent young rascal!"

"Keep your temper, old bean!" said Bob, cheerily. "We're willing to pay for the hire."

"What?" gasped Sir Hilton.

"A shilling an hour!" said Bob.

"That suit you?"

The expression on the face of the lord of Popper Court made the boat's crew gurggle. Boatmen at Pegg, and in Friar-dale, hired out boats at a shilling an hour. But the idea of hiring out his boat, at that reasonable rate, seemed quite a shock to Sir Hilton Popper, Baronet, lord of many acres. He spluttered with fury.

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

"You—you—you—" gasped Sir Hilton. "I—I—I will have you flogged—expelled—I—I—I—I will thrash you—I will—will—Bring that boat to the bank! Bring it at once! I will kick you out of it with my own hands!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you bring that boat to me at once?" shrieked Sir Hilton.

"Not if you're going to kick us with your hands—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You rascals—scoundrels—"

"It's all right, sir!" said Harry Wharton, soothingly. "We found this boat adrift—we've saved it for you. It might have floated down to the bay and got lost! We're really entitled to salvage! But we shan't charge you anything."

"The chargefulness will not be terrific, honoured sahib."

"Will you bring me that boat?" yelled Sir Hilton.

"Ask us another!"

Sir Hilton Popper brandished both fists at the boat. He tramped along the bank, his eyes on the boat's crew. It would really have been more judicious to look where he was going. He stepped suddenly into a little gully in the bank and disappeared from sight.

"Man down!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sir Hilton reappeared from the gully. He was clad in mud to the knees. He stood shaking off mud, spluttering with

rage. Leaving him thus happily occupied, the boat pulled on round the next wind of the stream and he was lost to view.

"Here's the jolly old island!" said Bob, and he pulled in to the wooded shore of Popper's Island. "Hallo, hallo, hallo, here's another boat! There's somebody here already!"

Coker's boat was tied up to the willows. The juniors tied on beside it, and scrambled ashore. As they did so, a fat and familiar voice was heard, through the thickets, from the interior of the island.

"I say, you fellows, I ain't going back to the school! Leggo my collar, Coker, you beast! I'll jolly well hack your shins!"

"Bunter!" ejaculated Bob.

"The esteemed and ridiculous Bunter!"

"Come on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

And the Famous Five and Lord Mauleverer ran through the trees in the direction of that fat and familiar voice.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rescue; Remove!

BILLY BUNTER wriggled in the grasp of Coker of the Fifth. He had announced that he would hack Coker's shins if Coker did not "leggo." But he did not venture to hack those shins. The result would have been more painful to Bunter than to Coker.

Coker, grinning, kept him tight by the collar. Coker was in great glee. Coker had captured the fellow who had been expelled for inking Coker's Form-master. Coker had succeeded, where the Sixth Form prefects had failed. Coker was going to walk the captured Owl in at the school, and thus demonstrate, to all whom it might concern, what an exceedingly able and clever fellow he, Horace James Coker, was!

But there is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip, as Horace Coker was about to discover.

"Buck up, you men!" said Coker. "The sooner we're off the better. Buck up with that hamper."

Potter snorted! Greene grunted!

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "It's no bizney of yours, Coker! Leggo!"

"I fancy it is!" grinned Coker. "I've got you, my fat pippin! You're not getting away again!"

"Beast!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared a sudden and unexpected voice, as six Romovites burst through the trees into the glade.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Coker.

Bunter yelled.

"I say, you fellows! Rescue! I say—"

"Here, you keep off!" roared Coker. "Hands off! Stand back! I've got this fat rotter, and I'm going to— whoop! Yooop! Yarooooop!"

The sudden appearance of the Famous Five on the scene was a joyful sight to the captured Owl. It was far from joyful to Coker of the Fifth.

Grabbed on all sides, Horace Coker went down in the grass with a mighty bump.

He roared frantically as he established contact with the earth.

He had to release Bunter! The fat Owl tottered away gasping. Coker struggled wildly in avenging hands.

"Potter!" he spluttered. "Greene! Back up! Oh, my hat! Owl! Wow!"

Potter and Greene ceased re-packing



The River Ragers!

Who's for a jolly day out on the river with the Chums of St. Jim's? Fun and frolic guaranteed! Join up with them by getting this week's sparkling long complete yarn and read all about the adventures of the rival ragers of the River Rhyll. Ask for this grand story to-day. It appears in our companion paper.

THE
GEM

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the hamper. They stared at the exciting scene as Coker crumpled up in the grasp of the Removites.

They were not in a hurry to come to his aid. If Coker chose to engage in a row with rebellious fags, it was Coker's own game, not theirs. Coker had asked for it, and he was welcome to have all that he had asked for. Potter and Greene did not want any.

"I say, you fellows, jump on him!" roared Bunter. "Mop him up! Give him socks! Smash him!"

"Urrrrggh!" gurgled the hapless Coker.

"Sit on him, Bunter!"

"He, he, he!"

Coker, extended on his back in the thick grass, was held by all his long limbs. Billy Bunter plumped down on his chest, and sat there.

There was an agonised gasp from Coker. Every ounce of wind was driven out of him as Bunter plumped! He gasped spasmodically.

"Skinner! Snoop!" shouted Wharton.

Skinner and Snoop had not seemed eager for the fray. But they came up, and, finding Coker down, helped to keep him there. Skinner took hold of his hair and Snoop stood on his thrashing legs.

Harry Wharton & Co. were free to deal with Potter and Greene. But Potter and Greene did not require dealing with.

The juniors were two to one, without counting Skinner and Snoop, and Bunter. Three to one, counting them. The Fifth Formers had no chance, even if they had been eager for the fray; and Potter and Greene weren't.

They exchanged a glance and stood back.

Coker gurgled.

"Urrgh! Lend me a—urrgh—hand! Gurrgrggh!"

"If you men are looking for trouble, you—"

said Harry Wharton.

"Thanks, we're not!" yawned Potter. "We told Coker to leave that fat idiot alone—but, of course, Coker knew best!"

"Coker always knows best," remarked Greene.

"Urrrrggh! Drag that fat beast off!" gurgled Coker. "I'm being squish—squish—squashed! Urrrrggh!"

"Stick to him, Bunter!"

"He, he, he! Watch me pull his nose!" chuckled Bunter.

"Oooooogh!" came from Coker as the fat Owl suited the action to the word. "Wooogh! Grrrrrh! Leggo my arms, you young scoundrels, and I'll smash him into little bits!"

"He, he, he!"

"Potter—urrgh! Greene—wurrgh!"

"You shouldn't ask for those things, Coker, if you don't want them," said Potter, shaking his head. "When you fags have done with him we'll get going."

"I say, you fellows, don't let him take that hamper!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "I say, I'm hungry—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sort of picnic, I suppose?" said Bob Cherry, glancing at the hamper. "Well, we can handle the picnic all right—"

"Hear, hear!"

"You Fifth Form men needn't stay," said Bob. "Roll Coker down to the boat, you fellows. You can leave the hamper; we shall want it."

Coker, gurgling and wriggling, was rolled down to the shore in many hands. Potter and Greene walked! They cast a rather lingering look at the hamper. But that hamper was the prize of war! Leaving Coker in the capable hands of the Famous Five, Billy Bunter started on the hamper. In matters of this kind

the Owl of the Remove did not believe in losing time.

Coker arrived on the margin of the island in a breathless, dishevelled, wriggling heap.

"Get in!" said Bob Cherry to Potter and Greene. "We'll chuck Coker in after you!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "We want a boat here; and we can't keep old Popper's boat. We can keep Coker's. Will you lend us your boat, Coker?"

"Urrrrgh! No."

"Bang his head on the ground."

"Yaroooh!"

"Will you lend us your boat, Coker?"

"Wurrgrggh! Yes."

"Thanks! As Coker's going to lend us his boat we shan't want old Popper's. You Fifth Form men can take it."

"Look here—"

said Potter. "If you'd prefer to be chucked in you've only to say the word!" said the captain of the Remove politely.

Potter did not say the word. Apparently, he did not prefer to be chucked in! He stepped into Sir Hilton's boat, followed by Greene, and they picked up the oars. Horace Coker, held by his arms and legs, wriggling like an eel, and roaring like a bull,

was tossed in after them. The boat rocked.

"Shove off!"

A hefty shove sent the Popper boat whirling out into the stream. It whizzed away from the island, followed by a cheery chortle from the heroes of the Remove.

"Good-bye, Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Urrrrggh!" Coker sat up dizzily as Potter and Greene pulled for the bank. "Urrrrgh! Oh crumbs! You funky rotters—urrgh—pull back to that dashed island—wurrgh—I'm going to smash them! Urrrrggh!"

"Fathead!" said Potter.

"Idiot!" said Greene.

They pulled on, and the boat bumped into the bank. Potter and Greene jumped ashore. Coker scrambled after them.

"Stop!" he bellowed. "I tell you I—"

Potter and Greene started for Greyfriars. Coker, in a flaming state of wrath, rushed after them.

"I tell you—"

he roared.

They walked on. "You rotten funks! If you'd backed me up— Look here—stop!" Coker grabbed Potter and Greene by their

(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS.

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

THE first query this week comes from R. K., of Wembley, who asks:

WHAT IS A SLATE CLUB?

How did it get that name? The name is given to a friendly society which exists only from year to year, and "wipes everything off the slate" at the end of the year, dividing all its funds amongst its members. Slate clubs first originated in the old-fashioned inns and taverns of this country, and the accounts were invariably kept upon a slate. Nowadays, of course, the accounts of such societies are kept in ledgers, but the old name still survives.

What is

THE LONGEST WORD IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

That is the question which M. Stillwood, of Mortlake, asks me. The word "antidisestablishmentarianism" has been used by one expert, while the famous William Gladstone coined the word "disestablishmentarianism." I have also heard the word "antitransubstantiationableness," which contains thirty letters, and would therefore, appear to be the longest. But I am not sure whether a professor of English would allow this to be a proper word. The longest word which Shakespeare used is "honorificabilitudinitatibus," which contains twenty-seven letters. You will find this in "Love's Labour Lost," Act V, Scene I.

Here are a few

RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

to other queries sent in by readers:

Portraits of Harry Wharton & Co. Wanted. (Cyril Baxter, of Peckham).—

The portraits of the Greyfriars characters have already been published in our pages. However, I will bear your request in mind, and may publish them again if other readers would like them.

A School Query. (H. H., of Birmingham).—An actual school with that name does not exist, but the stories are based upon an ordinary public school and ordinary school life.

How Many Countries are there in China? ("Inquirer," of Goole).—There are generally reckoned to be four—Manchuria (now an independent state), Mongolia, Sin-Kiang, and Tibet. But there are nineteen provinces, some of which claim to be independent of the rest of China, and over thirty treaty ports, as well as the British island of Hong-Kong, with its surrounding territories.

Can Cross-Eyes be Cured? (B. G., of Leatherhead).—Yes. A competent oculist can cure them by means of spectacles, which draw the eyes back to their proper positions.

Why are the Initials of Some Cricketers not Published? ("Reader," of Woking).—Most newspapers, in their reports, distinguish between amateur and professional players. Amateurs' initials and surnames are always published, but in the case of professionals, only the surname is given.

And now for next week's programme:

"THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!"

By Frank Richards,

is the title of the extra-special yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars, and it's certainly one of the best school yarns you have ever had the opportunity of reading. My advice to you all is not to miss it on any account!

There's a feast of thrills awaiting you in the next instalment of our grand new African adventure story, "The Black Hercules!" not forgetting a full-of-fun issue of the "Greyfriars Herald," and our other features.

Don't forget to send along your queries chums. I shall be waiting to answer them in my chat as usual.

YOUR EDITOR.

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collars and dragged them to a halt. "Now, look here. I tell you—yaroooh!"

Goaded, Potter and Greene turned on their great leader. They had stood much from Horace Coker that afternoon, on account of the hamper. Now the hamper was in other hands, and Potter and Greene were standing no more. They seized Horace Coker, upended him, and bumped him down on the towpath. They bumped him hard.

Then they walked on towards the school again, done with Coker. It was full five minutes before Coker was able to limp after them.

Farther down the river, Sir Hilton Popper, still busy scraping off mud, had the pleasure—or otherwise—of seeing his boat drift past him, unoccupied now. He glared after it as it drifted away down to Friardale.

And on Popper's Island a happy party of Removites were enjoying a picnic—Coker's picnic!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Strategic!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH scowled.

Every other face in the Remove Form Room was glum and gloomy. Nine fellows were there, sitting at their desks—at dismal, detention desks. Where the rest of the Form might be they knew no more than the headmaster knew. Nine of the rebels had been captured and brought in by the prefects; and here they were—not enjoying life.

There had been a big caning scene in the Head's study. Dr. Locke, venerable gentleman as he was, had displayed surprising muscle. The hapless victims wondered dismally where he packed it. After the caning there was detention. Mr. Quelch sat at his desk in the Form-room in charge of that remnant of his Form. His face was grim. Even the reckless Bounder did not think of attempting to make a "break" under the gimlet-eye of Henry Samuel Quelch. He sat and scowled. Lagging pens crawled slowly through dismal tasks.

"We're not standing this!" the Bounder muttered to Redwing.

"Quiet!" whispered Redwing, as Mr. Quelch looked up.

"Look here—"

"Silence!" rapped the Remove master.

And there was silence in the Remove-room. Quelch, probably, did not like the situation, any more than the juniors did. But he was there to keep order—and he kept it.

Outside, the July sun was shining. Sounds could be heard from Fourth Form and Shell fellows on the cricket ground. Hours of detention still stretched before the captured rebels. The Head, probably, considered this a good method to make them tired of rebellion. At least they were tired of detention—fed to the back teeth. They had had a dismal tea in Hall, under stern eyes. Now they were booked for detention till prep. It was an awful prospect. And they were gated for the rest of the term. The same fate was in store for the rest, when they were caught. But they were not caught yet.

A loud voice floated in from the quad, through the open window. It was the voice of Coker of the Fifth.

"A whole gang of them!" came Coker's voice. "Wharton and his mob, and that ass, Mauleverer, and some others and Bunter! On the island in the river—Popper's Island! They've had the cheek to bag my boat! I'd have smashed them, only—"

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"Only they wouldn't let you?" asked a voice—that of Fitzgerald of the Fifth.

And there was a laugh.

"I was going to bring Bunter in—"

"Has the Head made you a prefect, Coker?"

"Oh, shut up! I was going to bring Bunter in, but they all set on me. And those rotten funks, Potter and Greene, wouldn't back me up. That fat villain Bunter was scoffing my hamper when they pitched me out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Laugh!" said Coker bitterly. "Funny, ain't it?"

Apparently the other fellows thought it was, for they laughed loud and long. Coker's voice was heard no more; he stalked away. Mr. Quelch rose from his desk. He had heard the voice of Coker as well as the Removites, and he was evidently interested in that news of the missing Removites.

"Remain in your places!" he snapped; and he left the Form-room and closed the door after him, to go and speak to Coker.

The door had hardly closed when the Bounder jumped up, his eyes glittering.

"You heard that, you men?" he exclaimed. "They're on Popper's Island, and we're jolly well going to join them there—what?"

"Don't be an ass, Smithy!" grunted Wibley. "We shall be collared if we step out of this Form-room."

"Quelch won't go far from the door, you bet," said Kipps.

"There's more ways of killin' a cat than by chokin' it with cream," answered the Bounder coolly. "If you fellows like detention, I don't. We were silly fatheads to get snaffled; and we should be sillier fatheads to stay here."

He crossed to the door. The key was in the lock, and he quickly turned it. The other fellows, all on their feet now, stared at that proceeding.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Russell.

"Don't jaw! Lend a hand with this desk."

"But what—"

"Lend a hand, I tell you!"

"What's the good of barring Quelch out of the Form-room?" demanded Wibley. "It only means another whopping from the Head. We've had one, and I haven't got over it yet."

"We're not staying here to be whopped. We're dropping out of the window," answered Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, my hat! There'll be beaks and prefects in the quad—"

"Not when they get busy on this door," grinned the Bounder. "Come and lend a hand, and give your jaw a rest."

The Bounder's lead was followed, and the master's desk dragged to the Form-room door, and jammed against it. There was a considerable amount of din in the process. The door handle turned from without.

"What—what—what is this?" It was Mr. Quelch's voice. "Have you locked the door? Who—"

"Little me, sir," answered the Bounder coolly.

"Unlock the door at once, Vernon-Smith."

"Bow-wow!"

"Vernon-Smith, I should be sorry for any of my boys to be punished further. But if you do not admit me at once I shall call the headmaster here, and he will deal with you."

"Call the old bean as soon as you like, sir."

"The—the what?"

"The old bean!"

Mr. Quelch made no rejoinder to that. He was heard to rustle away. There was a yell along the passage.

"Here, you men! The Remove are at it again! They're barring old Quelch out of the Form-room."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old Remove!"

There was a trampling of feet, and a buzzing of voices in the Form-room passage. The news that the rebel Removites were "at it again" brought a crowd swarming to the spot. There was a thump on the door, and Wingate's voice was heard.

"Open this door at once!"

"Go and eat coke, Wingate!" answered the Bounder.

"The Head is coming!"

"Let him come! Who's afraid of a Big Bad Wolf?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a majestic step in the passage. It was followed by a tap on the door, and the deep voice of the Head.

"Admit me instantly!"

Vernon-Smith crossed to the Form-room window and looked out. Hardly a fellow was to be seen in the quad. Not a master, not a prefect, was in view. Outside the Form-room door in the great corridor was a swarming crowd. But outside the window the coast was clear.

"Get going!" whispered the Bounder. "I'll talk to the Head and keep him busy while you get out."

The chance was too good to be lost. One by one the Removites clambered out of the window, and dropped into the quad.

Rap, rap, rap! came the headmaster's knuckles on the door.

"Will you admit me instantly?" he demanded. "Vernon-Smith, you are the ringleader in this! You shall be flogged! Do you hear me?"

"I'm not deaf, sir," answered the Bounder.

"What?"

"Deaf!"

"How dare you, Vernon-Smith? Upon my word, the insolence of your boys passes all bounds, Mr. Quelch."

"Really, sir—"

"The most exemplary punishment!" exclaimed the Head. "Vernon-Smith, if you do not instantly admit me the door will be forced!"

The Bounder made no answer to that. Eight fellows had dropped from the Form-room window, and Smithy made haste to follow them.

Rap, rap, rap! came the Head's angry knuckles; but there were now no ears to hear. Nine fugitive juniors were cutting across the quad at a run. They did not head for the gates, which were closed, with Gosling on guard. They headed for the Cloisters, where there was a wall easy to climb. And they ran hard. Three or four fags stared at them and grinned.

But as they reached the Cloisters a portly form barred the way. Mr. Prout was taking his walk in the Cloisters. He stared blankly at the mob of juniors as they came scuttling up.

"What—what?" boomed Prout. "What—what— Stop! Stop at once! Upon my word! This is unprecedented, unheard of! Stop!"

He waved a commanding plump hand. It had no effect on the Removites. With the Head and his cane behind they were not likely to stop for the Fifth Form master.

"Barge him over!" yelled the Bounder.

He led the charge.

Prout hardly knew what happened to him. He was vaguely aware that he



Coker, extended on his back in the thick grass, was held securely. Billy Bunter plumped down on his knees, and sat there. "He, he, he!" chuckled the fat junior. "Watch me pull his nose!" "Ow! Ooooooogh!" came from Coker, as Bunter suited the action to the word. "Woocogh! Grrrrrrrh! Leggo my arms, you young scoundrels, and I'll smash him into little bits!"

bumped over, that he sprawled on the stone flags, and that feet that seemed innumerable trod on him.

Leaving Prout for dead, as it were, the Bounder and his followers tore on. A minute later they were clambering over the Cloister wall.

Prout sat up, gasping. He gasped, he gurgled, and he guggled. He blinked round dizzily for the juniors. They were gone.

"Bub-bib-bib-bless my soul!" stut-tered Prout.

He tottered away to the House—with news. Dr. Locke's face when he got Prout's news was absolutely terrifying in expression. He realised that, while he had been rapping and commanding at the Form-room door, the astute young rascals had been escaping by the window. And they were gone.

"Wingate, Gwynne, Loder, follow!" gasped the Head.

The prefects started. But the fugitives were already far afield. They were losing no time.

"I guess," said Fisher T. Fish, as he dropped from the Cloister wall, "that we want to burn the wind, you guys."

And the Removites did "burn the wind." They kept it up as if they were on the cinder path as they headed for the island in the river.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Holding the Fort!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Pile in, Bunter!"

"But I say—"

"Lend a hand, fatty!"

William George Bunter did not seem keen on lending a hand. Work seldom

had any appeal for Bunter. Work was going on on the island in the Sark, and Bunter regarded it through his spectacles with disapproving eyes.

It was hot July weather, fine and dry. It was quite ideal for camping out. Still, a shelter of some kind was really needed. There were ample materials at hand for building a shelter. Harry Wharton & Co. were quite keen on it. Skinner and Snoop helped. Bunter looked on. Lord Mauleverer was gone. It had been agreed that one fellow should pull up the river to Courtfield in the boat captured from Coker and bring back supplies, and any members of the rebel Remove that he could encounter. Mauly volunteered to go; and he went. In his absence the other fellows mapped out the camp and set to work.

"But I say, you fellows," roared Bunter, "we can't camp here! It's rot! We can't go back to Greyfriars, of course—not till the Head owns up that he's in the wrong, and asks me to stay on! But what about putting up at a good hotel—a really first-class hotel—"

"Might be a little difficulty about the bills!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"That's all right, I'll pay!" said Bunter, with dignity. "As this row is all about me, I should consider it up to me to see you through. You can leave the bills to me!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm expecting a postal order, as I've mentioned to you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! If I happened to be temporarily short of cash—"

"If!" chuckled Bob.

"The if-fulness is preposterous."

"If it happened, then Mauly could pay!" said Bunter. "Mauly's got lots of money, and he's a bit soft, too, you know."

"Kick him!" said Harry Wharton.

"Beast! Ow! Beast! Wow!"

"Now lend a hand, Bunter," said the captain of the Remove. "You don't deserve to be backed up, you frabjous owl; but we're backing you up, all the same. But you're not idling while everybody else is busy."

"I'm rather tired—"

"You'll get over that!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly. "I'll kick you till you do! Say when!"

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter got over his tired feeling at once. With an angry grunt he lent a fat hand in the work of the camp.

"Alooy the island!" came a shout from the bank of the Sark suddenly.

And Bob Cherry gave a yell:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's Smithy!"

The Famous Five ran down to the island shore. Nine breathless juniors were on the bank, in the glowing sunset, waving and shouting. The fugitives from Greyfriars had arrived.

"Here we are!" shouted Vernon-Smith. "We heard Coker yelling out that he'd seen you here. Got a boat?"

"Mauly's gone up to the town in the boat!" called back Harry Wharton. "He's gone shopping! He won't be long now; he's been gone some time."

"We'll wait, then; if they get after us we can swim for it."

The Bounder and his companions sat down on the bank to wait, glad of a rest

after their run. They kept a wary eye open for pursuers, but none appeared in sight.

Half an hour or so later a boat was seen coming down the Sark, with Lord Mauleverer on board. He was not alone now, however—Ogilvy and Tom Brown and Peter Todd and Squiff were with him. Evidently he had succeeded in picking up some of the scattered Removites.

Coker's boat was fairly roomy, but there was not much space for the five fellows in it, as the interior was packed, and piled, and stacked with an immense variety of parcels, bags, and bundles.

It looked as if Mauly had done his shopping on rather a large scale! The juniors on the island had clubbed together their cash for the shopping; but their combined resources could not have accounted for a tenth part of the mountain of goods in Coker's boat.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the boat bumped, and he stared at the stack. "What—what's all that?"

"Shoppin'!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I went to Chunkley's Stores, you know. They sell everythin'."

"Don't they charge for it?" grinned Nugent.

"Yaas."

"You're an extravagant ass, Mauly!" said Johnny Bull.

"Yaas."

"I say, Mauly, have you brought some grub?" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Yaas."

"Plenty?"

"Yaas."

"That's all right, then!" said Bunter. "If the grub's all right, everything's all right! I say, you fellows, I'll help unload!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Many hands made light work, and the boat was soon unloaded. Then it was ferried across, to bring the Bounder & Co. to the island. Popper's Island was quite thickly populated now—twenty-two of the Remove were there in all. Only eight or nine fellows remained to be gathered in, and Mauly announced that he had passed the word to some Courtfield School fellows to look them up and tell them where to come. After the happenings of that eventful day, the rebels of Greyfriars were not likely to scatter again. They realised that united they stood, and divided they were fairly certain to fall.

Judging by the cargo he had brought in Coker's boat, Mauleverer must have nearly cleared Chunkley's Stores out of camping material. Blankets and ground-sheets, bell-tents and sleeping-bags, cooking-stoves and utensils—all sorts and conditions of useful and useless things were turned out of the innumerable parcels, bundles, and packages. There was no doubt that it was extremely useful to have a millionaire in the rebel ranks.

Harry Wharton & Co. had been prepared to rough it; but Mauly's contribution certainly made things much more comfortable. Roughing it did not appeal to Mauly, if he could help it. And, having an almost unlimited supply of that useful article, cash, he could! Neither had he forgotten the provisions, which were there in immense variety and quantity—much to the satisfaction of Billy Bunter.

Bunter did not need urging to help unpack the provisions. He packed away a considerable quantity as fast as he unpacked them!

The shades of night were falling fast, as a poet has already expressed it, when there was a yell from the Bounder.

"Look out! Here they come!"

"Who?"

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"The jolly old enemy!"

"Let 'em come!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Line up, you men! All hands repel boarders!"

The schoolboy islanders crowded down to the shore. Coming up the Sark, from the direction of the school, was a large boat, with six fellows pulling. Wingate sat and steered. There were a dozen stalwart Sixth Formers in the boat in all; and they all had their ashplants.

The rebels did not need telling what they had come for. They had come to round the rebels up and march them back to the school. But the Removites had their own ideas about that.

"There they are!" said Wingate grimly, as he stared at the crowd on the island. "Pretty nearly all the Remove, I fancy! They've rounded themselves up and saved us the trouble."

"All we've got to do is to whop them all round and march them back!" agreed Loder.

"That's all!" said Gwynne, with a grin. "And faith, I hope they'll love us to it intirely."

The boat pulled on closer to the island. The rebels did not look as if it would be easy to whop them all round and march them home. Every fellow had a stick in his hand, cut from the thickets, and looked as if he had cut it for use. Bob Cherry brandished a knobby cudgel.

"Come on!" he roared. "Here we are, if you want us!"

Wingate stood up.

"You've got Bunter there?" he demanded.

"Yes! And we're keeping him."

"Now, look here," said Wingate. "I've got the Head's orders to take Bunter and get him home by the evening train. The rest of you are to go back to the school at once. Don't play the goat! Hand Bunter over at once—"

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

"Come and take him!" grinned the Bounder.

"You'll get hurt if we have to handle you!" roared Loder.

"Somebody else will get hurt, too!" chuckled Bob.

"The hurtfulness will be terrific, my esteemed and bullying Loder!"

"Nuff said!" snapped Wingate. "Are you giving in?"

"No fear!"

"Back up, Remove!"

The boat bumped on the island under overhanging boughs.

A rain of lumps of turf shot into it, crashing on the prefects. There were yells of wrath as they scrambled to the shore. Wingate led the way; but as he led, Johnny Bull dropped on his shoulders from a branch above and the Greyfriars captain went down with a crash and a roar.

Loder was next, lashing out fiercely with his ashplant; but the ashplant was parried by Harry Wharton's cudgel, and then the cudgel rapped on Gerald Loder's head and he tumbled back into the boat with a yell. The Bounder gave the boat a swift and hefty shove, and it parted from the bank, before half the assailants had landed.

"Gerroff!" spluttered Wingate wildly. He had fallen in shallow water, and only his head and shoulders emerged; and Johnny Bull sat on them. Wingate spluttered and struggled in vain.

"Back up, Remove!" roared the Bounder.

"Give 'em socks!"

"Hurrah!"

There was a wild and whirling combat on the island shore, half in the water and half out. Probably the Sixth Form party had expected to have

matters all their own way, once at close quarters. If so, they met with a surprise. The odds were heavily on the side of the juniors, and the odds told. Prefect after prefect was pitched, shoved, or pushed into the shallows, splashing; amid a roar of yells and howls and cheers.

Three fellows were holding Wingate down, and he never had a chance. Loder, his head singing, stayed in the boat rubbing his aching cranium. Walker and Sykes, drenched and dizzy, hung on to the gunwale gasping for breath. Half a dozen seniors, ashore, fought a losing fight against a swarm of assailants till a rush drove them into the water.

The boat, shoved off again, floated out; and the drenched and defeated prefects plunged after it. Only Wingate remained on the island, and he remained because his legs were buried in mud and three Removites were sitting on his head and shoulders.

"Hurrah!" roared Bob Cherry. "Remove wins!"

The boat rocked out of reach with its drenched and dizzy crew gasping in it. But they were not out of reach of missiles, and chunks of turf began to fly again, raining into the boat.

"Send Wingate after them!" shouted the Bounder.

"Oooogh!" gurgled the captain of Greyfriars. "Oh gad! Oh, my hat! Gerroff! Leggo! Oooooch!"

"Ha, ha ha!"

Wingate rolled into the water. Gwynne dragged him into the boat. He clambered in, squelching water.

"Come back again!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Waiting for you, old beans!" yelled the Bounder.

"Let's get out of this!" gasped Loder, as a lump of turf took him under the chin. "For goodness' sake get out of this!"

"Where's those dashed oars?" gasped Carne.

"Get going, for the love of Mike!" groaned Walker.

"Look here," gurgled Wingate. "we've got the Head's orders—"

"Rats!"

"Rubbish!"

"Fathead!"

Judging by the replies, the Head's orders did not weigh very much with the wet and weary, drenched and bedraggled crew of the Sixth Form boat. Loder and Walker got oars out and pulled. Carne and Sykes followed their example. The boat rocked away downstream, followed by howls, yells, cat-calls, and whizzing chunks of turf from the garrison of Popper's Island.

"We win!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Hurrah!"

The cheers of the Removites rang after the retreating prefects as they went—defeated and dishevelled, to report failure at Greyfriars. Nearly every fellow on the island had damages to show after that terrific combat; but they cared little. They had won; and that was all that mattered. Billy Bunter, expelled from Greyfriars, was still safe in the midst of the Remove; and the garrison of Popper's Island were going to keep him safe! The next move was up to the Head—awaited with cheery confidence by the rebels of Greyfriars.

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's exciting story of the Greyfriars rebels, entitled: "THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!" You'll enjoy every chapter of it!)



The Warning!

I HOPE you are not feeling any ill-effects?"

Hercules, the giant negro who had plans for establishing a Black Empire by driving all the "whites" out of Africa, showed his gold teeth in a smile, and bowed a trifle mockingly to his two white prisoners.

"Radium is a wonderful metal," continued the black man. "Evidently it has cured you of the snake poison. Each day I find fresh marvels in it!"

Speedy Jack Carter nodded gloomily, for he knew well enough what Hercules meant. Since Jack and his pal, Tickler Johnson, had crashed in their mail plane they had seen quite enough of the remarkable power of radium.

Here in the middle of the jungle Hercules had built a strange steel city, operated entirely by radium which the black giant had discovered. Even while the trio were talking, Jack knew that machines were busy turning out hundreds of steel soldiers with which Hercules intended to sweep Africa from end to end.

"Why did you choose to save our lives?" asked Tickler suddenly.

Hercules was not at all concerned at the directness of the question.

"That is simple," he smiled. "After I had given orders for you to be thrown into the snake-pit I discovered that you had arrived in an aeroplane."

The black man admitted that he had only a limited knowledge of aeronautics and wanted the help of the two English youngsters. Once he had mastered the principles of aeronautics, he proposed to build a fleet of craft which he could man with Amarobs and operate from hundreds of miles away.

With biting scorn, Jack and Tickler declined the black giant's proposal, leaving him no doubt as to their feelings on the matter.

Hercules shrugged his broad, muscular shoulders.

"Do not be hasty, my young friends. Give yourselves time to think over my offer, for it is fair and even generous. I must have the information I require,



By
**GORDON
GREY.**

and I shall not hesitate to torture you in order to help you to make up your minds."

Later, back in the observation-room of his high control-tower, Hercules paced to and fro deep in thought. From time to time he glanced at the instrument-board and the rows of blue lights which showed that everything in the Radium City was working smoothly.

The indicator flashed that someone was outside and Hercules impatiently pressed a button, which caused the door to slide open. To his surprise, two guards entered with a strange white man.

Hercules dismissed the guards and eyed the newcomer without interest. The white man was small and sallow-complexioned, with a dissipated appearance and a frightened look which belied the swagger he affected.

"Name and business?" rapped Hercules.

"Miguel Golanzo," replied the other. "I am a Portuguese Assistant Commissioner, and this reserve is in my territory."

"Your territory!" echoed Hercules, his giant frame shaking with cold, cynical laughter. "Well, you may have some of your territory—about five-feet-six of it!"

For a few seconds Golanzo did not understand this sinister threat, but as

the meaning of it dawned on him, the perspiration of terror broke out on his greasy forehead.

"What do you know about aircraft?" demanded the black man suddenly.

Golanzo looked surprised, but he was quick enough to see a chance of saving his skin.

"I have studied aeronautics," he replied, "and have piloted aeroplanes in Europe."

"Good!" nodded Hercules. "As long as you realise that your existence depends on teaching me everything you know about aeronautics all will be well."

"Yes, yes," Golanzo replied eagerly.

Meanwhile, in the room which was their prison, Jack and Tickler discussing the possibility of foiling the giant negro's plans, had decided that they would feign acceptance of Hercules' terms and hope for an early opportunity to escape.

Unfortunately, neither of them realised that the organisation of the Radium City was so complete and delicate, that it was impossible for them even to talk together without one of Hercules' henchmen listening to every word.

In the room next to the prisoners, seated in front of an apparatus, something like a complicated dictaphone, was Leopold, a mulatto, who was the giant negro's deputy, and he chuckled to himself as he listened to the conversation of the two Englishmen.

Leopold, anxious to put himself into good favour, hurried off to acquaint Hercules of what he had heard.

The black giant was in his large control-room, working at a desk with Golanzo. Already he was starting his lessons in the principles of aeronautics.

Leopold prostrated himself, and craved a word in private with his master, much to the annoyance of Hercules. Sending Golanzo down to the Englishmen, Hercules listened intently to what Leopold had to say.

The mulatto was trembling with excitement at his news of the plot, but Hercules did not seem in the least disturbed.

"Thank you for the warning, Mr. Leopold!" he said, with a sarcastic emphasis on the "Mister," which was lost on the mulatto. "I knew those two

white men would present a problem. See that they are carefully watched, if you value your life!"

Leopold was only too glad of the chance to act as warder to the Englishmen, for he had visions of wreaking vengeance on them. He backed out of the room with joy in his evil heart.

Jack and Tickler were amazed to see another white man when Golanzo arrived, and exchanged experiences. The two chums looked at one another significantly when Golanzo told them that he had promised to instruct Hercules in aeronautics.

"I suppose you realise what it means?" asked Jack coldly.

"With certainty," replied Golanzo, displaying his yellow teeth in an ugly smile. "Life is too sweet to throw it away so lightly."

The two air mail pilots turned from their companion in disgust. It was evidently useless to attempt to remonstrate with him, and they felt sick at heart.

The beaming face of Hercules appeared at the door.

"Come, Senhor Golanzo," he said, "we will continue our studies, while my two young friends here assist Mr. Leopold."

The two chums were placed under the care of Leopold, much to their disgust, and told to proceed at once to their wrecked plane, get it dismantled and brought into the Radium City.

One of the speedy bullet cars quickly carried them to the edge of the jungle, and, with a bodyguard of a score of six-foot natives, they made their way to the little clearing in which their machine had crashed.

"How about making a dash for it?" suggested Tickler, in a low tone, as they made their way through the jungle undergrowth. "We might stand a chance of getting away."

"Not a hope," said Jack. "That coffee-coloured brute Leopold would not have the slightest hesitation in shooting us down at the first sign of an attempt to escape."

In grim silence the little party marched to the wrecked plane, and, under the guidance of the white men, the machine was carefully dismantled.

In an incredibly short space of time, thanks to the mechanical labourers and the speedy bullet cars, the pals found themselves back in the big square before the main control tower, with the parts of their plane, and they set to work to reassemble the machine.

Golanzo, sent by Hercules, appeared on the scene to give assistance, and Jack seized the opportunity to get the Portuguese in the cockpit, out of the sight and hearing of Leopold, in order to make an effort to persuade Golanzo not to go on with the idea of helping Hercules.

"You do not realise, my young friend," said the Portuguese, in a tone full of conceit, "that I have lived longer than you, and I flatter myself that I, Miguel Golanzo, am quite capable of outwitting this black giant who plans to be Emperor of Africa. Can you not see, fool, that I only accepted the offer in order to wait an opportunity to escape?"

"Well," said Jack, "it seems to me that if we can get this plane in order, there will be a good chance for one of us to escape. Since we can all pilot a plane, we'd better agree that, as soon as one of us is sent up, he will fly off immediately, and give warning. It should be easy, once we get the plane into the air,

for Hercules has nothing with which he can pursue us."

After some discussion they agreed on the plan, and Jack felt very much relieved. Here was a chance, however faint, to do something, and in low tones he confided to Tickler what had happened.

A Desperate Plan!

THE three white men were supervising the fixing of the tail skid when Hercules appeared. He made a careful inspection of the machine, and got Jack to explain the mechanism of the engine and propeller to him.

"What a cumbersome affair!" he exclaimed. "I can soon provide you with an engine that will be much better."

He gave a crisp order to one of his bodyguard, and the negro disappeared. In a few minutes an Amarob came on the scene carrying a small metal box.

Hercules took the box, and climbed up into the cockpit, beckoning the white men to follow. With a few skilful movements of his big hands he showed them how to connect the small shaft protruding from the box to the existing propeller shaft by a system of gearing.

"This is an engine operated by radio-activity," he said. "It is a simple machine to control and should give ample power to fly this machine."

"Let me take the plane up and try it," suggested Jack, his face alight at the prospect of getting a chance to escape. "I am prepared to take the risk."

"Since you are so anxious, my young friend, you shall try it," said Hercules. "Your friends here can act as ground engineers and you shall be pilot."

"Don't you think one of them ought to come up with me?" asked Jack. "I want another person for ballast."

"You shall have someone with you," promised Hercules; "but, in the meantime, we will get the machine ready to start."

The plane was wheeled round so that it would have a clear take-off, and crowds of the natives gathered round to watch this strange machine.

Jack slipped into the seat and tried the controls. They seemed to work all right, and he was satisfied that he would be able to get away safely provided the engine was all right. His heart thumped at the prospect of escape.

"Get Golanzo to spin the prop," he said, sticking his head over the side, "and you come up here with me, Tickler, to see how she goes."

Tickler started to scramble up, but a massive black hand restrained him.

"Not so fast! Not so fast!" said Hercules. "The test will not take place yet. I have one or two calculations to make first, and will let you know when I want the machine taken up."

Crestfallen and dejected, the pals climbed down and returned to their rooms under the baleful glare of the mulatto.

It was late in the afternoon when Hercules sent for the three white men again, and they saw that he was surrounded by a mass of figures and drawings.

"I am anxious to test some of my theories, gentlemen, by first-hand experience of flying," the giant negro announced. "I will be ready in a few moments, and in the meantime perhaps you will kindly get the machine ready."

Jack felt a sudden thrill. Here was a chance!

On the way out to the square he confided the scheme to his companions in a low tone.

"The plan is pretty desperate, but it's the only chance I can see," said Jack. "Hercules wants one of us to take him up. Well, I'll go. He can't be proof against crashing from ten thousand feet, despite his undoubted powers. I'll put the machine into a spin and let it fall deliberately."

"But you'll kill yourself as well!" protested Tickler, aghast at his friend's proposal.

"Can't be helped!" Jack was quite philosophical. "It's better that way than to live to see hundreds of thousands of innocent people wiped out—"

He broke off as Hercules appeared, and the two pals set about examining the plane. They went over the machine carefully, tightening wires and struts, while Hercules, seeing they were busy, went back to his control-room to fetch some instruments he had intended to test.

The two pals were absorbed in their thoughts, and did not notice Golanzo slip off and follow the big negro into the building.

"May I have a word in your ear, senhor?" asked the Portuguese, putting on his most ingratiating manner, for he saw a chance of currying favour with Hercules.

"What is it?" demanded the black man, curtly, for he had long ago summed up the Portuguese at his real worth.

In a long, rambling statement, more than half of which was pure imagination, Golanzo told of the plot to crash the aeroplane.

"I could not let them do this without warning you, senhor," he said.

Hercules gazed down on the sallow, greasy-looking Golanzo, and the Portuguese felt completely dwarfed and insignificant.

"You, Senhor Golanzo, are a treacherous fool," he said, to the other's surprise, and hurried on, leaving Golanzo to wonder what he meant.

By the time the machine had been overhauled, Hercules had returned and was seated in the observer's seat intent on his plans and mass of figures. Jack clambered up into the cockpit, his face set in a look of grim resolve, and he gave the signal to start up.

As he swung the propeller, Tickler felt a lump in his throat, for he knew that if the plan worked successfully it would be good-bye to his best pal.

No sooner had Jack pressed a button on the tiny engine than the propeller started to race and he felt the slipstream tearing past. The engine was perfectly silent, yet it was obvious that it held a tremendous reserve of power.

Jack gave the signal to the men hanging on to the tail to let go and, as the plane started to move, he waved a hand to his friend for the last time.

Slowly, as the pilot gave the engine more power, the plane lifted, clearing the long rows of workshops in which machines were busy turning out hundreds of the steel Amarobs.

Jack circled round and as he looked down over the side a queer looking apparatus on top of the main control tower caught his eye. It was something like a small howitzer and he did not fail to notice that the ugly mouth followed him with unerring aim as he circled round.

"H'm, one of those blessed radium guns, I suppose," he murmured to himself. "Still if it smashes the machine up it'll smash the occupants as well."

Inside the room usually occupied by Hercules, he could see Leopold, the villainous mulatto, standing at the control board, watching the flight of the plane.

The Plot Fails!

SWITCHING the engine on to full power, Jack climbed rapidly while Hercules, excited as a child at his first flight, stood up and made experiments with some sort of velocity gauge.

The swaying figure behind him gave Jack a sudden idea. Perhaps he could manage to get rid of Hercules without sacrificing his own life, after all. If so, there would be a chance of landing to pick up Tickler and Golanzo, and getting safely away.

Thrilled with the idea, he put the plane into a steep climb which threw Hercules back into his seat. Gritting his teeth, for in his heart he felt sick at the idea of killing a man in cold blood, Jack sent the plane up and over in a perfect loop and then described a figure eight.

He shut his eyes involuntarily as something shot out of the cockpit behind him and went hurtling down to the ground some twelve thousand feet below.

Back again on an even keel, Jack steadied the plane with trembling hands, and looked back over his shoulder. To his amazement, Hercules was still sitting there with a cheerful smile on his face.

Jack noticed with a glance that the negro had fastened the safety straps around him, and knew it would be useless to attempt to dislodge him.

"That was thrilling," laughed Hercules, "but you should have warned me. Some of my instruments fell out!"

There was nothing for it, but to make the sacrifice thought Jack, and he climbed again to get the necessary height. Gritting his teeth, he pushed the joystick forward and switched off the engine.

With a sickening motion, the plane lurched forward and dived headlong. Jack let go of the joystick and gripped the sides. Faster and faster dropped the machine, twisting round and round at appalling speed. The air tore past the occupants of the plane, and Jack felt himself losing consciousness through the terrific air pressure.

Suddenly he realised that Hercules was shouting to him; a terrific blow fell on his head; stars danced before his eyes and then all went black.

For a few seconds he seemed to continue to spin round and round in the air, then the sickening motion eased and gave way to a comfortable gliding sensation.

Dimly, and with a vague apprehension, Jack realised that something had gone wrong with his plans. The machine had somehow or other righted itself and the engine was working smoothly, although no one had touched it. In the observer's seat Hercules was laughing like a madman and Jack shivered.

His desperate plan, which he was prepared to carry out at the cost of his own life, had failed. By some means or other, Hercules had proved too clever, and no doubt the black giant would exact a terrible revenge.

There was a succession of bumps as the plane hit the ground, raced across

the square, and then drew to a stop right in front of the control tower.

A pair of muscular black arms lifted the half-conscious pilot and pulled him from the cockpit. With a shudder, Jack felt himself in the steely clutch of one of the Amarobs, the relentless grip nearly crushing his ribs.

Poor Tickler could only stand and gape. The mental strain of seeing his pal come hurtling down to what appeared to be certain destruction had left him literally trembling. The sudden righting of the plane, its smooth easy landing and the hauling forth of the dazed white lad, all seemed like a nightmare. Yet there was joy in Tickler's heart for he knew that some unexplained miracle had saved the life of his greatest pal.

"Fools!" Hercules rapped out the word as he glared at the two Englishmen. "When will you realise that you

One of this week's **USEFUL POCKET KNIVES** goes to: Alan Evans, of 16, Malvern Road, Sheil Road, Liverpool, 6, who sent in the following **FUNNY-BONE TICKLER**:



Tom: "New car, old top?"
Bert: "No, Tom, old car—
new top!"

Have YOU sent in a joke yet?

are not dealing with an idiot? Did you think I would be so careless, after all my planning, as to trust myself in an aeroplane without making some provision for its safety? I knew well enough that you would try to kill me, and for that reason I had Mr. Leopold in the tower here controlling the plane. It was impossible for you to crash!"

He paused and spread his hands apologetically, his fit of rage giving way to the sneaking admiration which he felt for the plucky English lad.

"Much as I regret the necessity, my young friends, I'm afraid I have no option, but to keep you safely under lock and key. It is so obvious that you will not hesitate to take my life at the first opportunity that I dare not risk having you loose, much as I admire your courage. Perhaps you will treat my intelligence with more respect when you see what I hope to turn out shortly. I can promise you some startling new developments in aircraft which, unless I am very much mistaken, will amaze you."

Before they had an opportunity to say anything, the two chums were carried off in the steel clutch of the Amarobs. With their odd, jerky movement, the mechanical men carried their victims into the basement of the main control tower, and deposited them none too gently in a small, cell-like apartment.

Jack and Tickler had to wait several days before they saw any further signs of their captor, but at last the big negro came to see them.

There was a cheerful smile on his black, shining face which told, more plainly than words, that his plans were going along very well.

"Come with me, and I will show you what friend Golanzo and I have been able to produce," said Hercules. "We have designed and built a plane which, besides being absolutely silent, can fly backwards, sideways, and vertically, and is, I think you will admit, a great improvement on existing machines."

He took them out to one of the long, low workshops in which the big radium machines worked smoothly and noiselessly.

At the end of a series of machines was a small plane of very peculiar construction. It consisted of a thick, hollow wing, with a body underneath just about large enough to hold a man. A tiny rudder and a small air-screw placed above the middle of the wing completed the strange apparatus.

"These will be automatic planes," explained Hercules. "The body will carry one of my Amarobs, who will control the flight of the machine. The engine is operated by radio-activity, and is noiseless. The hollow wings will be filled with high explosives."

He paused to watch the effect of his words, and noticed that while the Portuguese seemed to be interested and slightly amused, the two English boys were openly horrified.

"The explosive," continued the black man, "will be more deadly than any known to your white scientists, for it will devastate everything within a square mile. These machines will be sent in advance of my main Amarob army, and will act the same part as that played by a creeping barrage in your modern warfare."

"When they reach an opposing force of any size, or a town, they will be crashed deliberately. The result I leave to your imagination!"

Jack and Tickler shuddered at the thought, and their determination to foil the black genius became firmer than ever.

At the direction of Hercules, a squad of Amarobs carried the little machine out into the open, and the giant negro demonstrated it with pride to the amazed boys.

"It is all so simple," he said, "when once you have solved the problem of radio-activity. All that is necessary is a central control-point, and one man will be able to operate fifty of these machines."

He showed them how the plane could rise straight up, shoot forward and back again, swing from side to side, and drop back without so much as a bump in the exact place from which it took off.

Golanzo's Treachery!

THE party then passed along to a larger building, where there was an enormous plane beside which were rows of tiny machines, like aerial torpedoes with small wings.

"This is my chief work!" mocked Hercules. "The main result of my studies in aeronautics, under the expert guidance of the worthy Senhor Golanzo."

"What is it?" gasped Jack. "What are those torpedo things for?"

"This," replied Hercules, laying his hand on the big plane, "is a control machine. Each one of these will operate fifty of the smaller planes you saw just now. Those in their turn will, through their Amarob pilots, control the movements of ten thousand Amarobs on the ground below.

"Unless my calculations are wrong, this plane is fool-proof, and what might be termed unsinkable. The overhead screw will keep the machine aloft, even if the wings are completely torn away, and the only thing that can make it crash is the destruction of the radium engine. As the engine is encased in a special bullet-proof metal, there is not much likelihood of your white airmen fetching one of these down."

He smiled at the effect of his words, and then continued:

"The little fellows which you describe as torpedoes are explosive and poison carriers. They will be dropped on any places which survive the main attack. But come and look inside this control plane."

Speechless with horror and amazement, the two chums followed Hercules into the fuselage of the plane.

Jack inspected the controls, with a stupefied interest. There was a diagram by which the pilot would be able to see at a glance the formation of his fleet of planes, and another showing the position of his ground forces. A simple series of buttons controlled movements, and a small wheel operated a searchlight affair.

"That is the radium projector," Hercules informed them. "Its rays will be powerful enough to disintegrate practically any metal in its path."

Jack could not find words to describe his horror of the calm way in which the black giant was planning to wipe out thousands of harmless and innocent people. He gulped and found his tongue.

"Why, if you let this thing loose, it will simply annihilate everything!"

"Exactly," smiled Hercules, not a bit disturbed, "that is the idea of it!

In addition to the aircraft there will be the Amarobs on the ground, each equipped with a radium rifle. To cover the possibility of any failure of control from the air, there will be bullet cars behind the advancing troops, each one able to control the movements of a thousand Amarobs. The bullet cars will be driven by my own picked men, who will have instructions to see that the whites are annihilated but not to harm any natives."

Sick at heart and filled with despair, the two pals returned to their room and flung themselves down, worn out with the mental strain of trying to grasp what it would mean when the Black Terror was unleashed.

"We've got to do something about it," announced Jack firmly. "This makes the Black Terror more awful than ever. We simply can't stand idly by and not lift a hand to save our fellow beings from such a fate."

"What can we do?" shrugged Golanzo. "The only thing we could do is to kill Hercules, and in that event the natives would tear us limb from limb, for they absolutely worship him."

"I would be prepared to face that," replied Jack, "but it's impossible to kill him by ordinary means. I tried to shoot him once, but he wears some sort of clothing which is impervious to bullets. I don't know what it is—probably something he has to protect himself with when experimenting with radium."

"Perhaps you can think of some extraordinary way of killing him then," sneered Golanzo, "but it will have to be a way that doesn't endanger you at all!"

Jack was too deep in thought to notice the imputation, but Tickler sprang to his feet immediately.

"What do you mean by that?" he demanded angrily.

Golanzo shrugged his narrow shoulders and smiled in a leering fashion.

"When your friend had the opportunity to kill both Hercules and himself he did not take it!"

Tickler growled like an angry lion. For his best pal to be accused of cowardice by a treacherous individual like Golanzo was more than flesh and blood could stand. Tickler knew well enough that Jack's heroic attempt to crash had failed simply because Her-

cules had someone controlling the engine all the time.

"You dirty, greasy brute," he growled. "Come on, put up your fists. I'm going to give you a good hiding for that."

The insult to his friend was just the excuse Tickler needed, and in an instant he was going for Golanzo hammer and tongs. A straight left sent the Portuguese reeling.

Back he came, kicking, biting. A jab in the ribs made him gasp and a sledgehammer blow knocked him flying into a corner, where he cowered and made no attempt to restart the fight.

"You've soon had enough, you yellow coward!" snapped Tickler, turning away from the Portuguese.

Like a flash, Golanzo was on his feet, a wicked-looking knife in his hand.

"Look out!"

Jack yelled a warning to his pal, and Tickler swung round just in time to see the blade curving down on him.

Quick as lightning the youngster side-stepped. His right arm shot out and gripped the descending wrist. Then, steadying himself, he put all his weight behind a straight left that took Golanzo clean on the point of the jaw.

Without a sound, the Portuguese dropped like a log and the knife clattered from his nerveless fingers.

Tickler looked down for a moment in disgust and then, slipping the knife into his own pocket.

"Now we know where we stand with that treacherous cur, Jack," he said to his pal. "We had to have a break with him sooner or later, for I never did trust him. I'm only too pleased that I had the chance to sock him!"

There was a grim smile of pleasure on his face, but Jack looked serious.

"Perhaps you're right, Tickler, but I'm sorry it's happened all the same. The three of us need to stick together if we hope to get the better of Hercules."

"I'm convinced we should never get any help from Golanzo," said Tickler. "Personally, I've felt all the time that we couldn't trust him, and we'd do much better to rely on our two selves."

(Look out for more big thrills and surprises in next week's chapters of this gripping adventure story, chums. Be sure and order your MAGNET early!)

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