

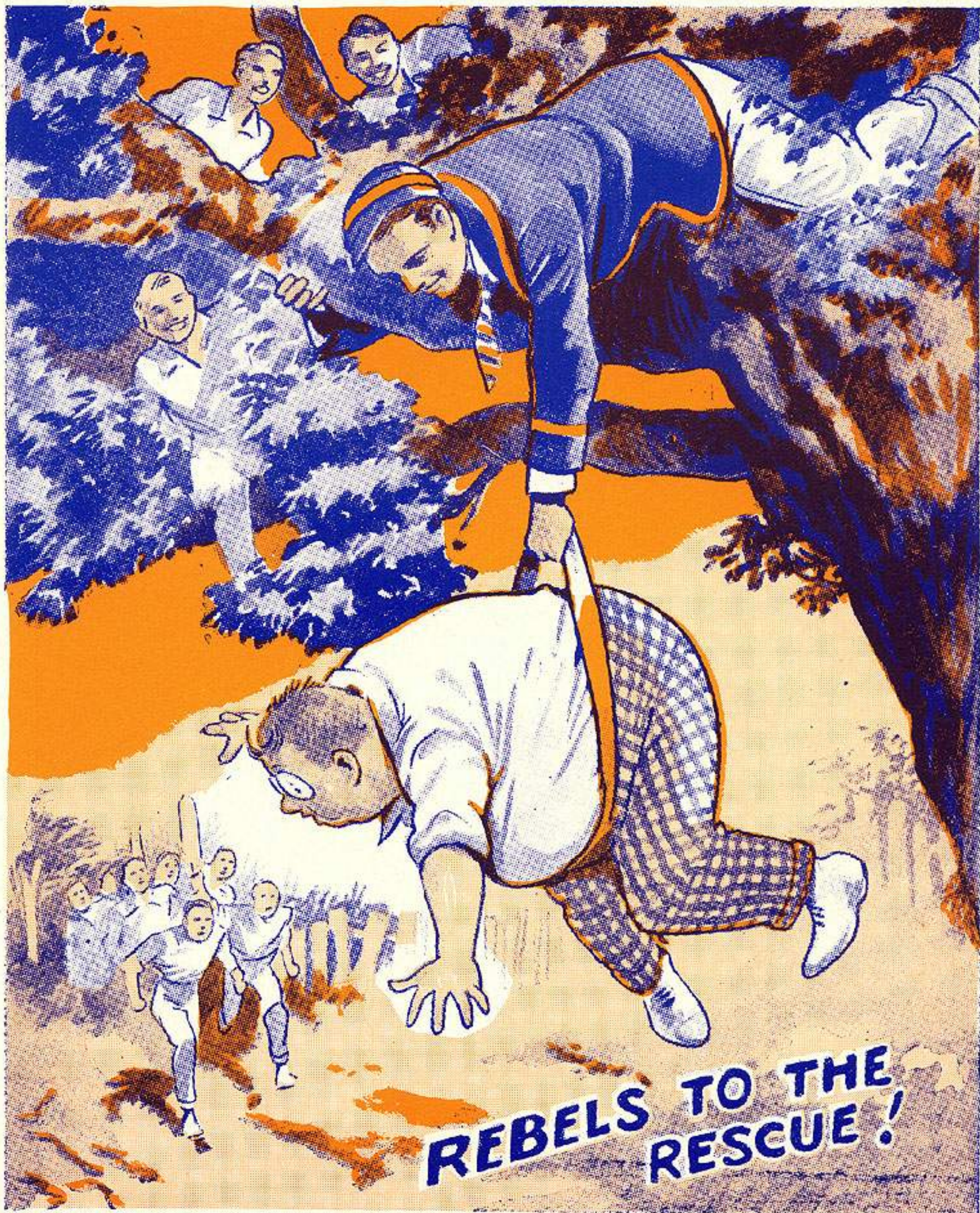
MEET HARRY WHARTON & Co., "The 'NO-SURRENDER' CRICKETERS"—Inside.  
of Greyfriars . . .

# The MAGNET 2<sup>D</sup>

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EVERY SATURDAY.

Week Ending July 21st, 1934.





BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Nasty Jar!

"SAFE as houses!" urged the Bounder.

"Um!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked doubtful.

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove were sitting in a row on the grassy margin of Popper's Island in the River Sark.

Far away, across the tall trees of Popper Court woods, could be seen the grey old tower of Greyfriars School.

That was all that the Remove had seen of Greyfriars for the last couple of weeks.

Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was arguing. The chums of the Remove were listening to his arguments—willing to be convinced, but rather dubious.

"We can't cut cricket matches!" urged the Bounder.

"Not if we can help it," agreed Harry Wharton. "But—"

"But—" said Bob Cherry.

"The butfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled through the trees on the island, blinking round him through his big spectacles. "I say—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" snapped the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy! I say, we're out of jam—"

"Shut up!" roared the Famous Five with one voice.

"But we're out of jam!" said Bunter warmly. "Don't you understand? Jam!"

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Billy Bunter blinked at the Remove fellows, apparently expecting them to display an instant and deep concern. But they didn't! They were not so deeply interested in jam as William George Bunter was. On the other hand, they were very deeply interested in cricket, which did not interest the fat Owl of the Remove at all.

"If we could manage it—" said the captain of the Remove thoughtfully.

"We're all as keen on playing Highcliffe as you are, Smithy. But—"

"Safe as houses!" repeated the Bounder.

"Are you fellows jawing cricket?" hooted Bunter.

"Yes, ass! Shut up!"

"Cricket!" snorted Bunter. "Cricket! Is this a time to talk cricket, you silly asses?"

Billy Bunter was indignant.

It was no time, in Bunter's opinion, for the Remove fellows to be talking cricket, or thinking of cricket.

The fact that it was Monday, and that the regular fixture with Highcliffe School was due on Wednesday, was to Billy Bunter a trifle light as air. In fact, he had quite forgotten it.

Much more important matters occupied Bunter's fat mind.

Billy Bunter was under sentence of the "sack." If the fat junior fell into the hands of authority it was the "boot" for Bunter, short and sharp! The first train home from Courtfield, with a Sixth Form prefect to keep him company, was Bunter's hapless fate if the Head of Greyfriars had his way.

Only one thing had saved Bunter from that dire fate so far. Harry Wharton & Co. had stood by him, and the rest of the Remove had followed their lead. For more than a fortnight now the Re-

move had been out of school, camped on Popper's Island, refusing to give up Bunter to be sacked.

Every attempt to deal with the rebels had so far failed. They had held the island against all comers.

How the dispute was going to end nobody could guess, but the rebels drew confidence from the knowledge that the Head could not possibly expel a whole Form.

So long as the whole Form stood by Bunter, Bunter was all right. And they were not going to let down a fellow they believed to have been unjustly sacked.

But Billy Bunter for the moment was not thinking of the sword of Damocles that impended over his fat head. There was a more immediate and pressing worry on Bunter's mind.

The garrison of Popper's Island had run out of jam!

That was serious!

So it was no wonder that the fat Owl of the Remove snorted with mingled wrath and disdain when he found the chums of the Remove talking cricket—and more keen on cricket than on really urgent matters.

"Cricket!" snorted Bunter. "Cricket! My hat! I say, you fellows, you might have a little sense! I say—"

"Shut up!" yapped the Bounder.

"Beast!"

"We can't scratch with Highcliffe," went on Vernon-Smith. "At least, we jolly well don't want to!"

"Hear, hear!" agreed the Famous Five.

"We can get across on Wednesday and play the match just the same as if we were at Greyfriars. We haven't seen anything of the giddy enemy for days. The Head's giving us a rest. We've whopped the prefects, and put paid to

old Popper and his keepers. The fact is that the Head can't handle us, and by this time he jolly well knows it!" said the Bounder confidently.

"It looks like it," agreed Wharton. "But—"

"They keep an eye on the island, though," said Frank Nugent. "If we start walking across to Highcliffe we shall be spotted and bagged."

"No need!" said Smithy promptly. "We can pull up the river in the boat past Courtfield and land at the Highcliffe boathouse. Start early in the morning, and nobody at Greyfriars will be a penny the wiser."

"I say, you fellows—"  
"We've left all our things at the school," remarked Johnny Bull. "We can't ask the Head to send on our cricketing things—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Fathhead! That's no trouble," said the Bounder. "We go shopping in the town nearly every day, two or three of us. Well, my father runs an account for me at the school outfitter's in Courtfield. You fellows can settle up later for anything you want."

Bob Cherry laughed.  
"Smithy's got an answer to everything!" he remarked.  
"By Jove! It's tempting," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "We don't want to scratch with Highcliffe if we can help it. But—" He paused. "There's still time to let Courtenay know. But—"

"Oh, blow your butts!" growled the Bounder. "We're not going to scratch! If we go in the boat, and come back the same way, not a soul at Greyfriars will know we've been off the island at all."

Harry Wharton looked dubious.  
The Bounder was a fellow to take reckless risks, but the captain of the Remove was rather more thoughtful. The rebels had needed every man in their battle with the prefects. If an attack came while nearly half the Form were absent the result was fairly certain to be disastrous for the Greyfriars rebellion. On the other hand, they had been left in peace for some days now, and an attack did not seem probable. The Famous Five agreed with Smithy that the Head did not know how to handle the situation.

"It all depends on whether they find out at Greyfriars that we're gone," said the captain of the Remove at last. "If they do, the prefects will bag the island while we're away."

"Oh, rot!" said the Bounder. "They won't! Who's to tell them? Anyhow, we're taking big chances in backing up that fat, frowsy frump against the Head! Can't we take a chance on our own account?"

"I say, you fellows—"  
"Shut up, Bunter!"  
"Shan't!" roared Bunter indignantly. "I tell you we've run out of jam! It's tea-time, and there's no jam! I thought—"

"Dry up!" shrieked Bob Cherry.  
"I thought there was another jar, but I remember now I had it for brekker. And here you sit cackling about cricket! Talk about Pontius Pilate fiddling while Carthage was burning!" snorted Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" roared Bunter. "I can jolly well tell you that if you think you're going to keep me short of grub you're jolly well mistaken! See? It's not much I eat—"

"Will you ring off?" yelled Johnny Bull.  
"No," said Bunter firmly, "I won't!

I want to know what's going to be done about the jam? You fellows make out that you're backing me up—"

"Aren't we backing you up, you frowsy freak?" bawled Johnny.

"If you call it backing a fellow up to keep him short of grub, I don't!" said Bunter. "You ought to have got in more jam. You know I like jam. Fat lot you care!" added Bunter bitterly.

The chums of the Remove chuckled. They did not, in point of fact, care fearfully, whether there was jam for Bunter or not.

"Suppose I could find you a jar?" said Bob Cherry, getting up from the grassy bank. "Will a jar keep you quiet?"

"You silly ass!" hooted the Bounder. "What does that frowsy frump matter? Let's settle about the cricket!"

"You shut up, Smithy!" exclaimed Billy Bunter hotly. "Blow your silly cricket! If you've got a jar of jam, Cherry—"

"Look here—" roared Smithy angrily.

"My dear chap," said Bob Cherry soothingly, "we can't talk cricket with Bunter barging in all the time about jam! I'll give him a jar and keep him quiet! Sure you'd like a jar, Bunter?"

"Yes, rather!"  
"Quite sure?" asked Bob.

"Yes, you ass! If you've got a jar, hand it over! I thought it was all gone."

**Although Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, have rebelled and cut lessons, they've no intention of cutting the special cricket fixture with Highcliffe. But little do they know of the enemy within the gates!**

I thought I'd finished the last jar this morning. But if you've got one—"

"I can give you a jar if you want one!"  
"Hand it over, then!"  
"Here you are!"

Bob Cherry grasped the fat Owl of the Remove by his podgy shoulders. Billy Bunter whirled in his grasp.

"Yaroo!" he roared. "Wharrer you mean, you silly chump? Wharrer you up to, you fathhead? What—"

"Giving you a jar!" explained Bob Cherry.  
Bump!

Billy Bunter sat down on Popper's Island with a jar that jarred every bone in his podgy body. It almost shook the island in the river. The yell that rang out from William George Bunter could have been heard almost as far as Greyfriars School.

"Yaroooooooop!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Beast! Wow! Yaroooh! Ow! Oh crikey! Wow!" roared Bunter. "Oh lor! Oh scissors! Wow!"

"I asked you if you were sure you'd like it!" said Bob Cherry. "Get up and have another! Let's all give Bunter a jar!"

"Let's!" exclaimed Nugent.  
"Hear, hear!"  
"The jarfulness is the proper caper!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter squirmed to his feet. He did not wait for another jar. He bolted through the trees, followed by a roar of laughter from the chums of the Remove. And the juniors resumed their cricket discussion, untroubled further by William George Bunter and the jam shortage.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Ponsonby Takes a Hand!

"GREYFRIARS cad!" remarked Cecil Ponsonby.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe, were strolling over Courtfield Bridge. Pon's eyes fell on a boat that was tied up at the foot of the steps leading down beside the old stone bridge. In that boat sat Frank Nugent of the Greyfriars Remove, and it was the sight of Nugent that caused Pon's polite remark.

"Oh, don't rag!" said Gadsby. "Come on, Pon!"

"Hold on, though!" said Ponsonby. "That cad's alone there—there don't seem to be any of the other rotters about! Waitin' for them, perhaps!" Ponsonby glanced up and down the bridge, and the High Street adjoining. There were plenty of people to be seen about, in the bright July sunshine; but there was no Greyfriars cap in sight.

Pon stopped at the top of the stone steps, and looked down at the boat. Frank Nugent did not look up. He had not observed the old enemies of the Famous Five in the offing.

"I hear they've got a tremendous rag on at Greyfriars," went on Pon. "Their beaked sackered a man in the Remove—that fat freak Bunter, I believe—for chucking ink over a Form-master. The Remove wouldn't let him go."

"Cheeky asses!" said Monson.

"They've cleared out of school, and camped on old Popper's island in the river," continued Ponsonby. "I hear that they had a fearful row with Sir Hilton Popper, and he got wet and caught a cold. They come up in their boat to do shopping in Courtfield—gettin' in grub and all that! That's why that boat's there now, I fancy! Some of the mob have gone into town to buy things, and Nugent's on guard in the boat."

"No bizney of ours!" yawned Gadsby.

"Isn't it?" grinned Ponsonby. "I rather fancy it is, Gaddy, old bean! Looks to me like a chance of gettin' our own back on those Greyfriars cads! They'd be rather in a scrape, on their jolly old island, if they missed their boat. You can bet that their beaks won't give them a chance of gettin' hold of another!"

"Oh, come on!" said Gadsby. "If we're goin' down to the Three Fishers, we've not got a lot of time to waste."

"Never mind the Three Fishers now," answered Pon. "We're not losin' this chance of puttin' a spoke in their wheel. Besides, we can pull down to the Three Fishers in that boat, an' save time—quicker than walkin' down the towpath. We'll leave that milksop, Nugent, here to tell the fellows he's waitin' for, that we've bagged the boat. It will amuse them a lot."

"Good egg!" grinned Monson.

"It means a row!" grunted Gadsby. "Those Greyfriars men are coming over to Highcliffe on Wednesday to play Courtenay's lot, and—"

"I don't see how they'll come if they haven't a boat!" chuckled Pon. "I've never heard of a cricket eleven swimmin' to a match."

"They can't be comin', anyhow," said Monson. "They wouldn't risk it, with their beaks and prefects watching for a chance at them. Fools if they did!"

"Anyhow, Courtenay keeps us out of the cricket, and if we can dish their game, so much the better!" said Ponsonby coolly. "Now you've mentioned it, Gaddy, that's a jolly good reason for baggin' the boat. Come on!"

Pon took a last glance up and down. It was fairly clear that some of the Greyfriars rebels had pulled up the Sark to buy supplies of some kind in the town, and were among the shops at that moment. If two or three of the hefty fighting-men of the Remove had shown up just then, Ponsonby would have walked on, as peaceably as a lamb. But the coast was clear, and it looked like a safe rag. The dandy of Highcliffe went down the steps, and Gadsby and Monson followed him.

Frank Nugent glanced up. Pon jumped into the moored boat, and his comrades jumped after him. It rocked against the lowest step, with a wash of water.

Nugent leaped to his feet.

"What the thump—" he exclaimed.

"Mind lendin' us your boat?" asked Pon blandly. "We're goin' down the river."

"Don't be a silly ass!" answered Frank. "Get out of this boat!"

"Just what I was goin' to ask you to do."

Nugent clenched his hands.

It was obvious that Pon & Co. meant mischief, and they were three to one! But Frank was not the fellow to give up the boat without a fight.

He cast a hasty, anxious glance up the steps. Vernon-Smith, Redwing, and Bob Cherry were the shopping party. But they had not had time to get through yet. There was no likelihood of their coming back yet awhile.

Pon took hold of the painter to cast off.

"Let that rope alone, Ponsonby!" said Frank, between his teeth.

"Make me!" suggested Pon pleasantly.

"I'll try!" snapped Nugent, and he hurled himself at the dandy of Highcliffe, hitting out right and left.

"Oh gad!" gasped Pon, as he went sprawling in the bottom of the boat. "Oh crumbs! Back up, you fools! Oooooop!"

Pon had not quite expected one fellow to begin on three. He was taken rather by surprise. With crimson spurting from his nose, he rolled in the boat, panting and yelling.

Gadsby and Monson grasped at Nugent, and seized him. He fought gamely with the two of them.

The boat rocked wildly, crashing on the stone step. Water washed over the gunwale. Pon was scrambling up, red with fury, when the struggling trio pitched over on him, and flattened him down again.

There was a fearful yell from the dandy of Highcliffe.

In the rocking boat four fellows were mixed up together, wriggling and struggling.

But three to one was too heavy odds. Still resisting manfully, Frank Nugent was collared, dragged out of the boat, and dumped down on the lowest step, his feet in the water.

"Shove off!" panted Pon.

Gadsby cast loose the painter. Pon leaned over the gunwale, and gave Nugent a last punch as the boat rocked away. Monson picked up an oar to fend off, as Nugent staggered dizzily to his feet. He planted the end against the Greyfriars junior and shoved, and Nugent went sprawling backwards on the wet steps.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Monson.

The boat floated out into the Sark. Nugent, on his feet once more, stood staring after it, enraged and dismayed.

Gadsby and Monson sat to the oars and pulled: Pon dropped into the stern, one hand on the tiller, the other dabbing his crimson nose.

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"You rotters!" yelled Nugent. "Bring that boat back!"

"Don't you wish we would!" chortled Monson.

"Tell the other cads we've borrowed it!" called back Pon. "We'll let it drift down the river when we've done with it. You can look for it at Friardale or Pegg! Ta-ta!"

"Oh, you rotters!" panted Nugent.

Ponsonby grinned cheerily. He had collected some damages in that tussle, but he was satisfied with the result. He had, as he expressed it, put a spoke in the wheel of the Greyfriars rebels.

"We shall pass the island, goin' down to the 'Three Fishers!'" he remarked. "We'll call out to the Greyfriars cads there, and let them know we've got their boat! It will make them happy! What!"

"What-ho!" chuckled Monson.

The gliding boat disappeared from the eyes of Frank Nugent, staring after it in impotent wrath from the steps below the bridge. The loss of the boat was utterly dismaying. Frank could only wait on the steps for his friends to rejoin him, with bad news for them when they came.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Stranded!

HARRY WHARTON stood at the landing-place on Popper's Island, gazing up the river, with a thoughtful and rather troubled brow.

The Bounder had gained his point, and that cricket discussion had ended in a decision to turn up at Highcliffe on Wednesday, and play. All the cricketers were in favour of chancing it; and the captain of the Remove had bowed to the majority. He was as keen as anyone to play cricket at Highcliffe so far as that went, and he was rather glad that it had been settled that they were to go. At the same time he was dubious about the outcome. Even a cricket victory at Highcliffe would count for little if the cricketers found Popper's Island in possession of the enemy when they came back. But the die was cast now; and Wharton made up his mind to it.

He was watching the river for the boat. Four fellows had gone up to Courtfield for some necessary shopping. The rebels had already made several expeditions to the town, for food and other needed supplies; but it was a risky business, for Greyfriars prefects looked for stragglers in the streets of Courtfield, and there had been several narrow escapes. Any Removite who fell into the hands of authority was likely to suffer, not only for his own sins, but for the sins of all the rest. But the greatest danger was the loss of the boat, without which the rebels on the island would have been in sore straits.

There was no chance of getting another craft from the Greyfriars boat-house. The beaks took care of that. There was a place by Courtfield Bridge, where boats could be hired by the public; but the Head had put in a word there, and the boatkeeper was not likely to involve himself in the "row" by lending a boat to the rebel school-boys. The captain of the Remove was very anxious to see the boat coming back with Vernon-Smith, Redwing, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent in it.

"I say aren't they in sight yet?" Billy Bunter joined the captain of the Remove at the landing-place. "They're a jolly long time."

"They've got a lot to do," answered

Harry. "If we're to play at Highcliffe, we've got to have an outfit."

Snort from Bunter!

"Are they wasting time over that rot?" he demanded.

"That's what they've gone for, fat-head."

"And what about the jam?" demanded Bunter warmly. "If they forget to bring the jam there will be a row, I can jolly well tell you."

"Oh, dry up!"

"Beast!"

Johnny Bull came through the island trees. He had been climbing in the branches of the big oak in the centre of the island.

"I've seen the boat," he said. "At least, it looks like our boat—from the top of the oak! But there's only three fellows in it."

"Here it comes!"

The boat came sweeping round the upper bend of the river. It was the rebels' boat—the property, actually, of Coker of the Fifth, who was in a state of undying indignation, at Greyfriars, over the unexampled cheek of the fags in keeping possession of his boat!

"That's our craft," said Johnny Bull. "But—what the thump—" he stared blankly at the fellows in the boat.

"The esteemed and ridiculous Pon!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh in astonishment.

"Ponsonby!" said the captain of the Remove between his teeth.

The rebels watched in angry amazement. It was their boat—Coker's, at least—but the crew was a new one. Gadsby and Monson were rowing and Ponsonby steering, as it came down the current to the island.

"Highcliffe cads!" exclaimed Peter Todd.

A crowd of the Remove fellows were at the landing-place now.

"They've bagged our boat!" roared Bolsover major.

"I guess they've sure cinched that boat!" said Fsher T. Fish. "I'll say this lets us out, you guys."

"I—I say, you fellows," gasped Billy Bunter. "If those beasts have got hold of the boat, what about the jam?"

"Shut up!" roared Wharton.

"Look here—"

"Something's happened at Courtfield," said Lord Mauleverer. "Perhaps those johnnies are bringin' our boat back to us. What?"

"Fathead!" said Squiff.

Wharton shook his head. The rebels had friends at Highcliffe: Courtenay, and the Caterpillar, and the cricketing set. But Pon & Co. were their enemies, and had always been their enemies. Courtenay or the Caterpillar would have lent a helping hand: but from Pon & Co., nothing of the kind was to be expected. They had captured the boat, and meant to keep it.

"I guess them guys ain't out to do us a good turn!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say nope!"

"Not likely!" growled Johnny Bull.

"But I say, you fellows, if they've got the boat, what are we going to do for grub?" yelled Bunter.

"Kick him!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Beast!"

"Pon's waving!" said Tom Brown.

The dandy of Highcliffe, sighting the crowd on the island, grinned and waved his hand. Gadsby and Monson glanced over their shoulders for a moment, and grinned, too. They pulled on into the channel between the island and the Popper Court bank—keeping well into the bank and away from the island. They clearly did not intend to give the Greyfriars fellows a chance to jump.

Opposite the landing-place and at a safe distance, the oarsmen backed water. Pon stood up and waved his cap.

"What are you doing with our boat?" shouted Wharton.

"Taking a little trip in it!" answered Pon airily. "Any objections?"

"Where are the fellows——"  
 "We only found one fellow in it! We persuaded him to step out!" said Pon in the same airy manner. "We left Nugent sittin' on the steps at Courtfield Bridge countin' up his bruises."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gadsby and Monson.

"Bring that boat here, you Highcliffe cads!" roared Bolsover major.

"Hardly!" grinned Pon.  
 "I say, you fellows, ask 'em if the jam's on board! They'll let us have the jam, anyway! Pon don't want our jam—— Yaroooh! If you kick me

Harry Wharton set his teeth. Pon & Co. had stopped at a safe distance for the cheery purpose of mocking their old foes. They were ready to start again at once if a swimmer came off the island. It was useless to attempt that. All the Greyfriars fellows could do was to rage and shake their fists at the enemy out of their reach. Which Pon & Co. found extremely amusing.

"Look here, Ponsonby! You know how matters stand with us," said Harry Wharton. "We shall be in a rotten scrape without our boat."

"That's what I want!" assented Pon. "You don't want to get mixed up in a Greyfriars row!"

"I do!" contradicted Pon.  
 "You rotten cad!" roared Wharton. "You wouldn't be so cheeky if you were within reach."

"Dear me!" said Pon.

boat dipped, and his shoulders went into the water.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the island.

"Good shot, Field!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

The boat rocked and spun, and Pon had a narrow escape of going in. But he scrambled back inside, with water dripping from his drenched jacket, and his cap floating down the Sark.

He was not laughing now!

He shook a furious fist at the Greyfriars crowd, and howled to Gadsby and Monson to pull. The boat shot on down the river, and two or three more missiles dropped short.

"They're gone!" said Peter Todd, as the Highcliffians disappeared down the winding Sark.

"The gonefulness is terrific."  
 "I say, you fellows——"



Resisting manfully, Frank Nugent was dragged out of the boat, and dumped down on the bridge steps. "Shove off!" shouted Ponsonby. Monson picked up an oar to fend off, as Nugent staggered dizzily to his feet. He planted the end against the Greyfriars junior, and shoved. Nugent went sprawling backwards on the wet steps. "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Highcliffe juniors.

again, Bull, you beast, I'll—— Yarooooop!"

"Look here, Ponsonby!" called out Wharton, speaking as calmly as he could. "You can't keep our boat!"

"Your boat?" retorted Ponsonby. "I've heard that it belongs to a Fifth Form man at your school, and that you bagged it."

"That's no business of yours."

"Oh, not at all!" answered Pon. "But I'm a good-natured chap, and I'm going to take Coker's boat back to him. I'm always doin' fellows good turns—as I dare say you've noticed."

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled Gadsby and Monson, greatly entertained by the idea of Ponsonby doing anybody a good turn.

"The esteemed Pon is terrifically funny," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "And the laugh is on his absurd side."

"You worm!" bawled Johnny Bull. "I jolly well punched your nose last time I met you! I'll punch it again the next time."

"Perhaps you're sorry now that you punched it at all!" grinned Pon. "One good turn deserves another, what?"

Squiff had stepped back into the trees. He reappeared with a big, fat, juicy orange in his hand. With a keen eye, the Australian junior gauged the distance, and the orange suddenly flew.

Pon, standing up in the boat, was laughing, enjoying the situation to the full. He ceased to laugh, and ceased to enjoy the situation, quite suddenly, as the orange landed on his nose and burst there.

"Oh!" gasped Pon.  
 He staggered, and went over backward as if he had been shot. He landed on his back on the gunwale, and the

"I guess this lets us out!" said Fisher T. Fish dismally. "They've sure put one across on us."

"I say, you fellows, now the boat's gone, what are we going to do about grub? We shall run out of grub——"

"Kick that fat fozzler."  
 "Whooooop!"

Bunter was duly kicked! But that was the only solace. Pon & Co. were gone in the rebels' boat; the Removites were stranded, and that was that!

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.  
 Coker's Capture!**

**H**ORACE COKER, of the Greyfriars Fifth, frowned, and grunted.

"If you fellows had backed me up——" he said.

"Oh, give us a rest!" said Potter.  
"And give your chin a rest!" said Greene. "It needs it!"

Coker glared.

Coker was not in a good temper.

As a matter of fact, many tempers, at Greyfriars School in these days, were not in a high and palmy state.

The Head, generally kind and benevolent, was distinctly irritable. With a whole Form missing from the school, in a state of rank rebellion, even Dr. Locke's kind temper was rather "edgewise." The Sixth Form found him unusually tart, in their Form-room.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was glum and snappy. Quelch was a master without a Form—a peculiar and very displeasing position. Troublesome as the Remove often were, Quelch wished that they were back at Greyfriars.

He drew little comfort from the fact that, at the bottom of his heart, he had a sort of sneaking sympathy with his rebel Form. For Quelch believed no more than the Removites, that Bunter had been guilty of that awful outrage of squirting ink over Prout. This difference of opinion with his chief added to Quelch's discomfort.

Prout, the master of the Fifth, was not amiable, either, and had less patience than ever with Coker's blunders in class. Prout was the beak who had been inked, and in his opinion Billy Bunter had been very justly expelled for that fearful outrage. But Bunter, though expelled, was not packed off home, as he ought to have been, which was very annoying to Prout.

The Sixth Form prefects, too, were very cross these days. The Head seemed to expect them to handle the rebel juniors; they had tried, and they had failed. Whoppings were handed out more frequently than of old by disgruntled prefects, which did not cause satisfaction in the lower School. Even Wingate and Gwynne, generally the best tempered fellows, seemed cross; while Loder and Carne and Walker were, as Tubb of the Third declared, just beasts! Tubb was Loder's fag, so he had reason to know.

Coker of the Fifth, however, was probably the most annoyed, irritated, and grumpy member of the Greyfriars community. Potter and Greene of the Fifth, not for the first time, wondered whether they would be able to stand Coker much longer. Even Coker's lavish spreads in his study did not always draw Potter and Greene now. Along with those spreads, they had to have Coker's conversation—never exhilarating, and now less so than ever.

On this especial afternoon, after class, Potter and Greene even doubted whether they would join Coker when he said that he was going up the river with a picnic basket. But they all knew what Coker's magnificent picnic-baskets were like; they were tempted, and they fell! But they were much less amenable than usual to Coker's autocratic authority. Picnic or no picnic, they weren't standing much more from Coker.

Coker had one topic! He had exhausted it over and over again in the opinion of his chums. And still he kept on with it. Now, as the three Fifth Formers walked up the towpath, he was at it again. And, recklessly disregarding the picnic-basket, Potter and Greene implored him to give his chin a rest, and give them a rest. They felt that they needed it.

But Coker did not give his chin a rest! He seldom did. He glared at his comrades and resumed:

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,370.

"If you'd backed up a pal, it would have been all right! We went after my boat that those cheeky young scoundrels had the cheek to bag! Did we get it? No! What did we get? Detentions for all the half-holidays this term!" Coker snorted. "That's the way the Head thanked us for trying to handle a thing that he can't handle himself."

"The Head's put that dashed island out of bounds," growled Potter. "You knew what to expect."

"If you'd backed me up—"

"Oh, shut up!" roared the exasperated Potter. "I'm fed up! Look here, Coker, if you're going on jawing, I'm off."

"Same here!" said Greene. "Now shut up!"

To the utter amazement of his friends, Coker shut up! It was not a thing they

## GREYFRIARS CARTOONS

By HAROLD SKINNER.

### No. 7.—HORACE JAMES COKER

(The Champion Chump of the Fifth).

This week the great "I AM" of the Fifth Form comes under the eagle eye and pen of our lightning artist. Coker's furious, but all Greyfriars is highly amused!



Coker's on his motor-bike!  
How the people run and leap!  
Diving down in ditch and dyke,  
Dogs and chickens, ducks and sheep!

Death's Pale Horse in modern style,  
Spreading terror through the dales.  
Fifteen accidents per mile  
Till the carburettor fails!

had ever known to happen before!  
Coker was silent!

But the next moment, Potter and Greene saw the cause of that almost unexampled phenomenon.

Coker, forgetting their existence, was staring up the river at a boat that was coming down with the current. The three seniors were passing at the moment the Three Fishers Inn which had a gate on the towpath. That rather disreputable place had no interest for Coker & Co., but it had for the three fellows in the boat, who were heading for the bank.

"My boat!" gasped Coker, at last, breaking his silence. "My boat! My hat! My boat!"

Potter and Greene stared.

"It's Coker's boat!" said Greene in

astonishment. "But they're Highcliffe kids in it!"

"I know that gang!" remarked Potter. "One's Ponsonby—a cheeky young blackguard, if you like! And Gadsby and Monson—"

"It's my boat!" articulated Coker. "My boat! I know my own boat when I see it! Those young rascals have got my boat! I'll give them getting hold of my boat! Jump on 'em!"

Coker dropped the picnic-basket and pushed back his cuffs. Horace Coker had given up hope of recapturing that boat, so long as the Remove rebellion lasted. This was a chance not to be lost—not to mention the satisfaction of thrashing the cheeky young rascals who were in it!

It was cheeky enough of the Removites to bag Coker's boat, but they, at least, belonged to Coker's school. Pon & Co. did not, and their nerve, in pulling about the Sark in Coker's boat, almost took Horace's breath away. Coker was prepared to make an example of anybody he found in possession of his property, and he was prepared to make a more horrible example of Highcliffians than of Greyfriars fellows! This was, in Coker's opinion, the limit!

Unaware of the terrific hurricane about to burst on them, Pon & Co. brought the boat to the bank. Pon had told the fellows on Popper's Island that he was going to take Coker's boat back to him, but he was going to "take it back" by the easy process of leaving it to drift down the river to Greyfriars.

No doubt Coker would have recovered it sooner or later, when it was taken in by some boatman at Friardale, or some fisherman at Pegg. Pon cared little whether he did or not. Pon's intention was to land, and then give the boat a shove out into the river, and leave the current to do the rest.

But that programme was not carried out.

For as the boat bumped on the grassy bank a burly figure came shooting down and leaped right into the boat.

Coker landed in the midst of Pon & Co.

The boat rocked, and nearly capsized, under Coker's heavy impact. Pon & Co. sprawled over, wondering for a breathless second, if it was an earthquake.

It was not so bad as that, but it was nearly as bad. Coker was rather like an earthquake.

"Got you!" roared Coker.

He had them—there was no doubt about that. He grabbed Gadsby, who was nearest, and pitched him bodily to the bank. Then he grabbed Ponsonby and Monson by their collars. Heedless of the wild oscillations of the boat, Coker gave all his attention to the two Highcliffians. He brought their heads together with a sounding concussion.

Crack!

Two fiendish howls floated together over the Sark.

Crack!

Coker did it again. He seemed to find satisfaction in it.

There was no satisfaction in it for Ponsonby and Monson. They yelled with anguish.

"Got you!" grinned Coker. "Bagging my boat, by gum! Highcliffe fags, bagging a Greyfriars boat! I'll show you! I'll give you bagging my boat! What? Why, I'll spifficate you!"

Crack!

"Yarooooop!"

"Yow-ow-wooop!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Potter. "Don't brain them, Coker!"

"I'll spifficate them! I'll—"

"Leggo!" shrieked Ponsonby. "You

silly idiot— Yaroooh! Leggo! We don't want your rotten boat— Whoooooop!

Splash!  
The boat had rocked out from the bank, leaving a stretch of shallow water and mud. Coker dropped his prisoners into it.

Pon and Monson sat up to the arm-pits in water and mud. They splashed frantically to the bank.

"Teach you to bag my boat!" gasped Coker.

"Urrrrggh!"  
"Wurrrggh!"

Coker picked up an oar, and brought the boat to the bank again. He was done with the Highcliffians now.

"Jump in!" he said. "We've got the boat, after all! Shove that basket in, Greene! Jump in!"

Potter and Greene got in, with the picnic-basket. Coker was grinning with glee as he pushed off. Pon & Co. dragged themselves up the bank in a muddy, breathless, and infuriated state.

"Oh, you idiot, Pon!" groaned Monson. "What did you want to touch that rotten boat for at all? Ow!"

"I told you to leave it alone!" snarled Gadsby. "You can't say I didn't! More of your dashed cleverness!"

"Oh, shut up!" howled Ponsonby savagely.

"You touch my boat again, you cheeky young Highcliffe rotters!" Coker's voice floated back to them.

Pon shook a muddy and infuriated fist after him.

Coker grinned cheerily as he sat down to steer. Potter and Greene took the oars. They were glad enough to be pulling up the river instead of walking up the towpath. Coker was in great spirits.

"We shall pass the island," he remarked. "We'll let those young rascals there see that we've got the boat—what? Ha, ha, ha!" Coker roared.

Potter and Greene pulled on, and Popper's Island came in sight. There was a shout from a cluster of Remove fellows there as the boat was spotted.

"They're coming back!" roared Johnny Bull.

"That's not Pon!"  
"That's Coker!"

"Oh, my hat! What—"

"Keep clear!" said Coker jubilantly. "They've got cheek enough to jump into the boat if we give them half a chance! Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared blankly at the boat. They had watched it disappear down the river in the possession of Pon & Co., and had not expected to see it again. Now they saw it—in the possession of Coker & Co. It was quite a surprise.

Coker waved a cheery hand to them as the Fifth Formers pulled past.

"Like to borrow my boat again?" he roared. "Ha, ha!"

A whizzing apple just missed Coker. The boat pulled on, and disappeared from the sight of the Remove rebels—up the river this time. Coker grinned with glee as Potter and Greene pulled on past the Popper Court Woods. He gave them a sign to pull in at last.

"This will suit us!" he said cheerily.

The boat ran in to the bank, and the Fifth Formers landed with the picnic-basket. Coker tied the painter to a willow, and the three seniors crossed the towpath, and picked out grassy seats under the overhanging trees. Then the picnic-basket was unpacked.

Good humour reigned now in the Fifth Form party. Coker had recaptured his captured boat, and all was calm and bright. But, like so many

happy things in this imperfect universe, that calmness and brightness was destined to be brief.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Luck!

"YOU silly ass!" snapped Vernon-Smith.

"I couldn't help—"

"You should have!" growled the Bounder savagely. "Fat lot of good you stickin' in the boat if you let those Highcliffe cads get it off you!"

"I did my best!" said Frank Nugent quietly.

"Lot of good that was!" sneered the Bounder.

"Oh, cheese it, Smithy!" interrupted Bob Cherry. "You couldn't have handled three Highcliffe men, any more than Nugent could! And what's the good of ragging, anyhow?"

"Not much good," remarked Tom Redwing. "The question is—what the thump are we going to do?"

The Bounder scowled blackly. Grousing and scowling really did not help, but Smithy seemed to find some sort of satisfaction therein.

Nugent had waited till the three came back to the steps by the bridge; he could do nothing else. They came back cheerfully enough, after getting through their business at the outfitter's in Courtfield High Street and a considerable amount of other shopping. All three carried parcels, which were to be deposited in the boat for transport to the rebels' island. Their cheery mood changed very considerably at the news that the boat had been raided by Pon & Co. of Highcliffe.

"We shall have to walk back and get across to the island somehow!" said

Bob Cherry. "No good grousing, anyhow."

"We've got to have a boat!" growled the Bounder. "How the thump are we going to get away to Highcliffe on Wednesday without a boat? And we've arranged to call at the outfitter's tomorrow for our things, too! We've got to have a boat! We're done for without one!" He gave an angry growl. "If you'd kept your eyes open, Nugent—"

"Oh, chuck it!" said Frank. "Let's get back; that's all we can do now!"

"We'll take it out of Pon & Co. some time!" said Bob.

"That won't help us now!" grunted Vernon-Smith.

"Look here, let's try after a boat at the boathouse above the bridge! We might—"

"We've tried there once, and found that the Head had warned them not to let us have one," said Bob. "Nothing in that."

"We might get hold of one, and—"

"Oh rot! We're not pinching boats!" exclaimed Bob. "Anyhow, it's for Wharton to decide what's to be done! He's skipper! Let's get off!"

"Blow Wharton!" growled the Bounder.

"Oh rats! Come on!"

Bob Cherry and Redwing and Nugent started walking down the path beside the river. The Bounder grunted angrily and followed them. They were soon out of the precincts of the town and following the grassy path between the Sark and the Popper Court woods. All of them were looking very serious. It was a hot afternoon, and they had to carry the rather heavy parcels that had been brought for the boat. Altogether, it was not a happy walk.

The Bounder's eyes were on the river as they went. There was a chance of spotting some man in a boat to give them a lift, and had Smithy sighted either a Greyfriars or a Highcliffe craft he was prepared to attempt to get hold of it by the strong hand. But Highcliffe boats seldom came so far down the river, and Greyfriars boats seldom so far up. Anyhow, none were to be seen. Only a heavy barge rolling along to Courtfield came in sight, half-way to the island.

"Give the gee-gee room!" said Bob Cherry, as the barge-horse, led by a boy, came plodding along the towpath.

"Bother it!" grunted the Bounder.

But he stepped out of the path with the other fellows, and they stood under the trees to wait for the horse to pass. The long rope from the horse to the lumbering barge on the water sagged over the high bank, scraping over rushes and bushes, and every now and then dipping in the water. The bargeman,

(Continued on next page.)

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with a black pipe in the corner of his mouth, was seated in the boat.

Suddenly, from the shady trees abreast of the barge, came a shouting voice:

"Here! You bargee! Look out!"

The four juniors started at the sound of that voice. They knew those dulcet tones.

"That's Coker!" said Bob Cherry, staring along the bank.

"That howling ass!" grunted the Bounder.

Horace Coker was not to be seen! Apparently he was in the shade of the trees back of the bank. But he was to be heard! He was to be heard at a considerable distance as he roared to the passing bargeman.

"Mind my boat! Hi! Look out!"

The burly bargee glanced round stolidly. The barge was going along rather close to the bank, and the wash of it rustled the rushes and made Coker's boat dance. The boat was tied up under the steep bank, out of sight from the towpath, and the juniors had not seen it. A sudden gleam shot into the Bounder's eyes.

"Did you hear that?" he whispered.

"Anybody within a mile could hear it," answered Bob. "Coker's jolly old voice isn't a whispering zephyr."

"Fathead! He's got a boat!" breathed the Bounder. "That's where we come in."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"Good egg!" said Redwing, with a grin. "We've borrowed one boat off Coker already; let's borrow another."

"What-ho!" said Nugent.

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hold on, you ass!" muttered Smithy, catching him by the arm. "He mayn't be alone—we can't handle Fifth Form men. Easy does it."

Bob Cherry nodded. He realised that,

if Horace Coker had other Fifth Form men with him, strategy was required.

Coker was shouting again. He stepped out of the trees to shout and wave a large paw at the stolid bargee. The juniors promptly backed into the trees. They did not want Coker's eye to fall on them.

"Hi!" roared Coker. "Don't swamp my boat! See?"

"The boat's all right, Coker!" came Potter's voice from the wood.

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"For goodness' sake, Coker, don't get into a shindy with a bargee!" came Greene's voice.

"Don't be a fool, Greene!"

Coker waved at the bargeman again.

"Do you hear me?" he bawled.

"I ain't deaf, sir!" answered the stolid man on the barge. "I could 'ear you along to Courtfield."

"I don't want any cheek!" bawled Coker. "Mind you don't swamp my boat with your filthy barge!"

"Your boat's all right sir," answered the bargee cheerfully. "Which is more'n you'd be if I was on that there path, you impudent young roog, you! I'd smack your cheeky 'ead for you, and chance it."

"Why, you impudent blackguard!" roared Coker, in great wrath. "Look here, if you swamp my boat, I'll jolly well jump on your barge and whop you! Mind, I mean that! Now look out!"

"Look here, Coker—"

"Shut up, Potter."

The bargee gazed at Coker in a thoughtful way. He seemed to be considering whether it was worth while to land and smack his head. Apparently he decided that that would be more trouble than it was worth, for he steered on, calling to the youth with the horse to "gee up." But he steered nearer to the bank, and the barge banged on

Coker's boat as it passed, jamming it into mud and rushes. This was the bargee's retort to Coker!

"You cheeky sweep!" roared Coker, and he strode to the edge of the towpath, with the fierce intention of jumping on the barge and whopping the bargee. In his haste he rather overlooked the tow-rope, which jerked up as he stepped over it and tangled in Coker's legs. Coker made a sudden nosedive into the grass.

"Yaroooh!" he roared.

"Haw, haw, haw!" came from the bargee. He seemed amused.

Coker sat up, rather dizzily. The horse plodded on, and the barge rolled on in its wake, the bargee steering out again. Coker picked himself up and shook a fist after the grinning bargeman. It was rather too wide a jump to the barge now, and Coker did not try it on; which was fortunate for Horace Coker, for had he landed on the barge it was not the big bargee who would have got the "whopping."

Snorting, Coker tramped back under the trees. He gave Potter and Greene an angry glare.

"What are you grinning at?" he demanded.

"Your acrobatic performance, old man," answered Potter blandly. "I'd like to see you do it again."

"So would I!" said Greene heartily. "Frightfully amusing, Coker, old man."

Coker breathed hard, as he sat down again. His tumble over the tow-rope had been a sheer accident, such as might have happened to any fellow—any fellow like Coker, at least! It was like these brainless asses to think that there was something funny in it.

"So you think that was amusing, do you?" asked Coker darkly.

"Awfully!" said Potter.

"Fearfully!" said Greene.

"Perhaps you'd think it amusing if I banged your cheeky heads together!" roared Coker.

Potter and Greene remembered that it was Coker's picnic. The basket was not half empty yet. They did not want a row with old Horace, at least, before the basket was empty. So they made no reply, but devoted themselves to the foodstuffs—and Coker, with a grunt, followed their example. And four juniors, at a little distance along the bank, grinned at one another. They considered that they had a healthy chance of getting afloat again now.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Useful Man, Coker!

"**T**HREE of them!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Too many for us!" said Nugent.

"We might handle them!" muttered the Bounder. "But—"

He shook his head.

There were four of the juniors, all good men with their hands. But three Fifth Form seniors were a big order.

"We've got to get the boat!" said Smithy. "If we can't get it without a scrap, we shall have to try our luck. But—"

He put his head out of the trees and glanced along the towpath. A sudden rush across the bank for the boat tied up below would take them fairly in sight of Coker & Co. Neither could they tell exactly where the boat lay. The bank of the Sark, at that point, was high and steep, the towpath a good five feet above the river. Nothing could be seen of the boat; and the juniors only knew it was there from what they had heard from Coker. On one thing they

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Splash, splash, splash! Coker dropped his prisoners, one after the other, into the shallow water and mud. "I'll teach you to bag my boat!" he roared. "Urrrrgh!" "Wurrrgh!" "Groooh!" Covered with mud, and gasping, the Highcliffe juniors splashed frantically to the bank.

were quite determined; they were going to have a boat. But it was evidently a case for strategy.

"I fancy we can work it!" said Tom Redwing.

"Go it, old bean!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "What's the big idea?"

"One of us can drop down the bank and wade along to the boat. So long as those Fifth Form duffers stay under the trees they won't see anything."

Bob's eyes danced. "Good egg! What a jolly old surprise for Coker when he goes back for his boat and finds it gone."

The juniors chuckled. No time was lost in carrying out that masterly plan. Redwing removed his shoes and socks and tucked up his trousers. He cut across the bank and dropped into the shallow water under it.

Under the high, steep bank he waded along with the water to his knees, his head ducked low. In a few minutes he came on the boat; and he heard the murmur of the voices of the picnickers, across the towpath above. But he could not see them; and they could not see him.

"I say, this is a jolly good cake!" Potter's voice came distinctly to the junior's ear as he bent over the painter.

"Ripping!" said Greene. "I say, it's topping here! Couldn't be better! A jolly good spread, and pleasant company—like Coker's—"

"Yes, it wouldn't amount to much without Coker's company!" remarked Potter solemnly. "It's agreeable company that makes a thing a success."

Potter and Greene felt that Coker was entitled to this! After all, he was standing the picnic, and it was a jolly good picnic. Luckily, it was always easy to pull Coker's leg.

"Glad you like it, you fellows!" said Coker amiably.

"And we shall have an easy run back in the boat, instead of walking!" said Greene. "All through Coker spotting those cheeky Highcliffe cads in the boat and getting it away from them."

"It was his presence of mind," said Potter. "Coker has presence of mind. That's what it is."

"Well, I fancy I'm fairly quick on the uptake," said the gratified Coker. "I dare say you fellows wouldn't have noticed that it was my boat that those cheeky young cads were in. Of course, I spotted it at once."

"It's quickness of observation, you know," said Greene.

"Prompt intelligence!" agreed Potter. "Pass that cake!"

Redwing, under the bank, grinned. He had untied the painter, and the boat was loose. He pushed it out silently into deeper water, and then waded up the stream again, drawing it after him.

Five minutes later he had it opposite the spot where his comrades waited under the trees by the towpath. He stood up and waved a hand to them.

They came quickly and quietly across the towpath. Bob Cherry glanced along the bank, but the Fifth Formers, under the shady trees on the edge of the wood, were screened from view.

Coker & Co., from where they sat, had a view of the towpath close at hand. But they could not see a dozen yards up the river from their camp, and the juniors were not within their purview. They continued to deal with the picnic, in happy unconsciousness that any of the rebel Removites were at hand.

"Quick!" breathed the Bounder. "If that ass Coker steps out again—"

"Chuck the parcels in!" said Redwing.

The parcels were dropped into the boat. The juniors followed. They

shoved off in haste, and Coker's boat floated out into the Sark.

Bob Cherry and Redwing took the oars and pulled. Nugent sat and steered, and the Bounder stood up, watching the bank as the boat glided past its late anchorage.

The high bank hid Coker & Co. from sight of the boat's crew, and hid the boat's crew from Coker & Co.

The Bounder chuckled. "Our win!" he remarked.

"And it's the same jolly old boat," said Bob Cherry. "Coker must have got it back somehow from those Highcliffe cads!"

"Jolly useful man, Coker!" remarked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him a yell!" said the Bounder. "We ought to thank Coker for lending us the boat, before we lose him."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the boat's crew.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob Cherry. "Coker! Cokey! Coke! Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

That cheery roar from the river reached the picnickers on the bank. It might have reached them at ten times the distance. Bob had a powerful voice, and it carried far and wide.

Coker stared round.

"That's that cheeky young sweep, Cherry!" he said. "Where—"

"On the river!" said Potter.

"But we've got the boat away from them!" said Coker, puzzled. "They can't have got another boat."

It did not occur to Coker, at the moment, that they had got the same boat!

He jumped up and ran across to the towpath. Standing on the high bank, he stared at the boat in the middle of the Sark.

The Bounder waved a hand to him. "Thanks Coker!" he yelled. "Many thanks!" bawled Bob Cherry. "So awfully kind of you to get the boat back for us, Coker!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Wha-a-at?" gasped Coker.

He stared at the boat; then he stared down at the spot where his craft had been tied under the bank. That spot was vacant now.

"They—they—they've got the boat!" babbled Coker.

"What?" Potter and Greene joined him, on the edge of the bank, staring.

"They've pinched my boat again!" roared Coker.

"But—but how could they?" gasped Potter in bewilderment. "We never saw anything of them. How the thump could—"

"They've got it!" howled Coker.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Greene. "They must have sneaked along under the bank and pinched it, and we never saw—"

"You didn't see them, either!" hooted Potter.

"Don't jaw, Potter!"

"Well, did you?" howled Greene.

"Don't gabble, Greene!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the boat. "Thanks, Coker! Fearfully obliged! Good old Coker!"

"I'll smash them!" yelled Coker. "I—I—I'll spificate them! My boat! I'll hammer them black and blue! I'll—"

Coker brandished a pair of large fists at the grinning crew of the boat. Had the Removites been within reach, there would certainly have been some very severe hammering and spificating. But the boat was far out of Coker's reach, and he could only brandish his fists after it. The Bounder waved his hat

in cheery farewell, and Coker was left on the bank in a state that was almost frantic.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Pon Knows How!

"PUNCHED?" asked the Caterpillar sympathetically.

Cecil Ponsonby scowled. It was the following day; but there was still a lingering ache in Pon's head. There was another in Monson's. Coker had banged their heads together, not once, but several times. And Coker had a hefty and heavy hand.

Pon, strolling in the Highcliffe quad after class, tilted his straw hat and rubbed his head, with a grunt and a grimace. Hence Rupert de Courcy's sympathetic inquiry, though the glimmer in the Caterpillar's eyes seemed to hint that he was a little amused.

"Raggin' with Greymfriars again—what?" smiled the Caterpillar. "What a man you are for huntin' trouble, Pon!"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Ponsonby.

"Franky, old man, my conversation palls on Pon!" said the Caterpillar solemnly. "I'll talk to you instead, if you'll wake up."

"Eh, what?"

Frank Courtenay, the junior captain of Highcliffe, was with his chum. He seemed to be deep in thought. There was a letter in his hand, which he had just been reading, apparently with satisfaction. He glanced round at the Caterpillar.

"Did you speak, Rupert?"

"Did I?" sighed the Caterpillar. "Yes, sort of. Lots of good speakin' to you when you're moonin' over

cricket. I was goin' to tell you about a recent tragic happenin'—"

"What on earth's that?"

"Pon's had his head punched!"

"Fathead!" said Courtenay, smiling. "I say, it's all right about the match, Caterpillar! They're coming over to-morrow!"

"Hear, hear!" said the Caterpillar with enthusiasm. "That's splendid! I'm no end bucked! If the match comes off no classes with Mobby in the mornin'. That will be a compensation for havin' to play cricket in the afternoon."

Ponsonby was passing on, but he turned back at that. His eyes gleamed unpleasantly at the junior skipper.

"You won't be playin' in that match to-morrow, Courtenay!" he said.

"I rather think we shall!" said Courtenay. "Why not?"

"I suppose you've heard that the Greymfriars Remove have cleared out of school and parked themselves on Popper's Island?"

"Yes, I know all about that. I was afraid it might mean scratching, but it seems that it's all right."

"All right, is it?" grinned Ponsonby.

"I fancy not. Unless those Greymfriars cads can swim here for the game."

"They'll come in their boat, I suppose," said Courtenay, staring.

"They've got a boat at the island."

"They had, you mean," said Ponsonby.

"Anythin' happened to their jolly old craft?" yawned the Caterpillar.

"You see, the boat belonged to a ruffian called Coker, of the Fifth Form at their school," said Ponsonby. "I think he got it back yesterday."

"Then I dare say they've got hold of another."

"Not likely! Their beak seems to be a silly old ass, from the way he's lettin' them carry on. But I fancy he's got sense enough not to let them get hold of another boat. All he's got to do now is to wait till they get hungry and give in."

Courtenay looked at the letter in his hand again. He shook his head and smiled.

"This letter's from Wharton," he said. "He says plainly that they will be over here to-morrow. It was posted in Courtfield last evening. Looks as if they can get off the island when they like."

Ponsonby started.

"Then you think they'll be comin'?"

"I'm sure they will!"

Ponsonby walked on, the Caterpillar glancing after him very curiously.

"Dear old Pon's been up to somethin'," he remarked. "I noticed him come in yesterday with Gaddy and Monson, all three of them lookin' in a fearfully moulting state. Those bad boys have been tryin' to bag the jolly old rebels' boat and leave them stranded on the jolly old island."

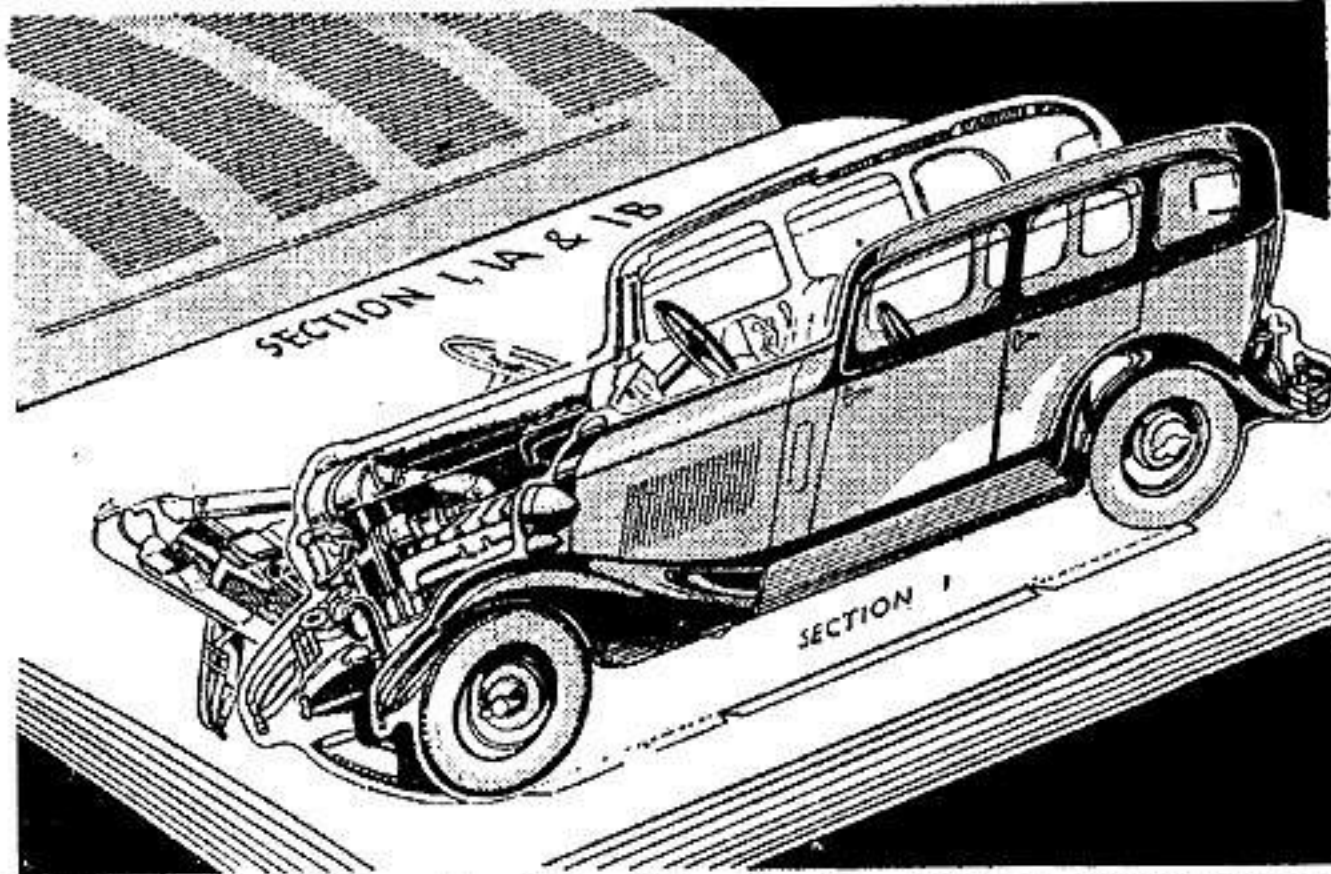
Courtenay frowned.

"They haven't succeeded, then," he said. "Wharton says plainly that the Greymfriars team will be here in the morning. Bother Pon, he's always up to some rotten trick! It will be all right, Rupert—and it's going to be a great game. I wish Pon wasn't such a rotten slacker. I'd like to give him a chance in the team. But—"

"I'd stand out to make room for him, old man, if you were keen on it!" remarked the Caterpillar.

"I wouldn't lose you for a dozen Pons!" said Courtenay, laughing. "You've got to pull up your socks to-morrow, Rupert."

The Caterpillar groaned. Pulling up his socks, and exerting himself at the noble game of cricket, did not appeal



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to the lazy Caterpillar, so much as it did to his more energetic chum.

"You'll enjoy the game, Rupert," said Courtenay.

"Well, I shall enjoy seein' Pon's face when the Greyfriars men turn up here all merry an' bright," admitted the Caterpillar. "Pon seems to think that they're dished. It will be amusin' to watch his face when they barge in."

And the Caterpillar smiled, consoled by that happy anticipation.

Ponsonby was not smiling, however, as he walked away across the Highcliffe quad. There was a black scowl on Pon's handsome face. He was still feeling, painfully, the effects of his hectic encounter with Coker of the Greyfriars Fifth. The severe handling he had received from Horace Coker could not, certainly, be laid to the charge of the Removites. But it added to Pon's bitter animosity towards his old enemies of the Remove.

He joined Gadsby and Monson under the beeches. Monson was rubbing his head ruefully. There was still a pain in it.

"Anythin' up?" asked Gadsby, noting the black look on the face of the dandy of Highcliffe.

"Those Greyfriars cads are comin' over to-morrow, after all," answered Ponsonby. "They've pinched a boat from somewhere, I suppose."

"Blow 'em!" grunted Monson. "I wish we'd left them alone. That hooligan Coker jolly nearly cracked my nut."

"I fancy we can dish them, all the same," said Ponsonby.

Gadsby looked alarmed.

"Look here! Cut it out!" he exclaimed. "I'm not goin' anywhere near that dashed island, I can tell you! I'm leavin' those rotters alone!"

"More ways than one of killin' a cat," said Pon, with a glitter in his eyes. "Suppose they knew at Greyfriars that the rotters were over here?"

"They'll keep it dark enough," said Gadsby.

"It might be let out."

"Oh, don't be a rotter, Pon!" said Gadsby uneasily. "You can't go sneakin' about fellows to their beak. And it would mean trouble here, too, if you did anythin' to muck up the match. Courtenay's lookin' forward to it. And, anyhow, why can't you let them alone?"

"If they knew at Greyfriars," went on Ponsonby, unheeding, "the game would be up for those cads. The prefects would come over and bag them while they were playin' cricket."

"I suppose they would; but—"

"It's too jolly risky," muttered Monson. "Baggin' their boat is one thing, but sneakin' about them at their school is another. And it would come out, too."

"How could it come out?"

"Well, things always do come out," grunted Monson. "You're always layin' schemes, Pon, but they don't generally come to anythin', except trouble. Look here! Leave 'em alone and let 'em rip!"

Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders.

"Comin' for a bike spin?" he asked.

"Where?" growled Gadsby suspiciously.

"Round by Greyfriars."

"No," answered Gadsby and Monson together.

Ponsonby laughed.

"Well, I can go alone," he said; and he turned away.

"Look here, Pon—" began Gadsby and Monson simultaneously.

Ponsonby did not answer, or turn his head. He walked away to the bike-

shed, leaving his pals looking very uneasy.

"It's a rotten trick!" growled Gadsby.

"Just like Pon," grunted Monson.

"I'm jolly well havin' no hand in it, anyhow."

"Same here!"

Ponsonby cared little whether his pals had a hand in it or not. He did not need help in the treacherous trick he was going to play on the rebels of Greyfriars. There was quite a cheery expression on Pon's face as he wheeled out his bicycle and mounted, and pedalled away to Greyfriars School.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Information Received!

"REALLY, sir—"

"Really, Mr. Quelch—"

"I fail to see—"

"A Form-master," said the Head of Greyfriars, "is naturally expected to exercise authority over his Form."

"Quite, sir! But—"

"Your Form, Mr. Quelch, is in a state of rebellion—of unexampled defiance of authority—"

"I regret it, sir; but—"

"This state of affairs cannot continue," said Dr. Locke, with acerbity. Mr. Quelch was silent.

Obviously such a state of affairs could not continue. But it did continue. Although it couldn't, it did. There was the rub.

"A headmaster," said Dr. Locke, "does not expect to find a member of his staff totally unable to control his Form."

Henry Samuel Quelch breathed hard.

"A boy in the Remove was expelled," continued the Head. "Such an incident is very regrettable. But such things have happened before. They have never been followed by such an extraordinary occurrence as this."

"My Form, sir, do not believe that Bunter committed the act for which he was sentenced to expulsion—"

Dr. Locke raised his hand.

"I trust, Mr. Quelch, that you do not dream of upholding these rebellious boys in any way, or making excuses for their outrageous conduct."

"Certainly not, sir! Nevertheless, I—"

"Discussion," said Dr. Locke, "is futile. I have said that I have a natural desire that a Form-master should be able to control his Form. I need add nothing to that, Mr. Quelch."

The Remove master left the Head's study.

His lips were compressed in a tight line as he went.

The master without a Form was not enjoying life these days. There was certainly something in the headmaster's contention that a Form-master should be able to keep his Form under control. On the other hand Mr. Quelch was convinced that the Head had made a mistake regarding Bunter. Who had inked Prout was a mystery. But Quelch did not believe for a moment that it had been the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove.

Mr. Quelch went slowly to his own study.

The Head seemed to expect him to take some steps, but what steps he was to take Quelch did not know. He had had some hope of discovering who really had inked Prout on that celebrated occasion, and thus putting the guilt on the right shoulders, and ending the whole affair. But he had had no

luck. Indeed, he had little chance, as it was fairly certain that the unknown inker was a member of the Remove, and the Remove, fortified on Popper's Island, were out of reach of investigation.

Mr. Prout, portly and pompous as usual, met him at the corner of the passage.

"Your boys are still absent from the school, my dear Quelch!" boomed Prout.

"I do not need informing of that fact, sir," answered the Remove master tartly.

"No doubt—no doubt; but surely you realise, my dear Quelch, that it is time—high time—that something was done to—"

"If you have any suggestion to make, Mr. Prout—" said the Remove master sourly.

"It is not for me," said Prout, "to make suggestions. Far be it from me to intervene in the management of a colleague's Form. But I am bound to observe that it is high time that this unprecedented state of affairs was brought to an end. I am bound to say— Really, Quelch, I wish you would not walk away while I am addressing you!"

Quelch did, however, walk away, leaving Prout snorting with indignation.

The Remove master went into his study. He paced that apartment in deep and troubled thought. He was sure, or almost sure, that the Head had, for once, made a mistake. But that did not alter the fact that discipline had to be maintained. Bunter had to go, and the Remove had to return to obedience. But how?

He rang for Trotter at last, and sent him for Wingate. Wingate of the Sixth came, in a few minutes. Perhaps it was natural that Quelch, having been "jawed" by the Head, should find some relief in passing that "jaw" on to the head prefect of Greyfriars.

"Wingate," said the Remove master, "you are aware that it is now more than a fortnight since my Form left the school. A Form-master naturally expects the prefects to have some control over the juniors."

"Oh, certainly, sir!" assented Wingate. "But—"

"This state of affairs cannot continue!" said Mr. Quelch, perhaps unconsciously repeating the Head's words.

"No, sir; but—"

"No Form-master," said Mr. Quelch, "expects to find the Sixth Form prefects totally unable to control the junior boys."

Wingate stood silent. As a matter of fact, he guessed that Quelch had been on the carpet in the Head's study, and was sore and ruffled. If Quelch found any solace in passing it on, Wingate did not mind. The Greyfriars captain was a good-natured fellow.

There was a tap at the door.

"Come in!" barked Mr. Quelch irritably.

The door opened, and an elegant junior, with hat in hand, stepped in. Mr. Quelch gazed at him. He remembered Ponsonby, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe, but certainly had not expected to see him at Greyfriars. He had the lowest possible opinion of that elegant youth, and was by no means pleased to see him.

"Excuse me, sir!" said Ponsonby gracefully. "I came over to see you, sir, and, knowing that this was your study—"

"I fail to see why you have called on me, Ponsonby!" answered Mr. Quelch.

frigidly. "Kindly state your business at once, and be brief."

Ponsonby glanced at Wingate. He was not displeased to see a Sixth Form prefect in the study. That made it all the more certain that the information he brought would be acted upon.

"It's about the fellows on the island, sir," said Ponsonby.

"I do not see how that concerns you, Ponsonby."

"It does not, sir! But, in the circumstances, I don't like the idea of those fellows comin' over to Highcliffe!" said Ponsonby calmly. "As the matter stands, I think the cricket match to-morrow ought to be scratched."

"The cricket match!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "Is there a match at Highcliffe to-morrow, Wingate?"

"The Remove have a fixture with Highcliffe, sir," answered the head of the games, with a curious glance at Ponsonby. "I believe to-morrow is the date; but, of course, they will not be playing the match, in the circumstances. That's impossible."

"Quite!" said Mr. Quelch. He gave the dandy of Highcliffe a cold and contemptuous glance. "I see no reason, Ponsonby, why you should concern yourself about the matter; but you may be satisfied that the match will not be played, in any case. You may go."

"They intend to play, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Courtenay, our junior captain, had a letter from Wharton this morning, sayin' that the Greyfriars team would be over to-morrow."

Mr. Quelch started.

"Is it possible?" he exclaimed.

"Wingate, do you think it possible?"

"I shouldn't have thought so, sir!" answered the Greyfriars captain. "Still, those Remove kids have nerve enough for anything, I think."

"It's a fact," said Ponsonby. "If you look in at Highcliffe to-morrow you'll find them playin' cricket! If you look in at the island you'll find half the crew gone! And—"

"And what is your object, Ponsonby, in coming here to tell me so?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"I thought it my duty to do so, sir, as those fellows are rebellin' against their headmaster!" said Ponsonby meekly.

The Remove master's lip curled.

"I do not believe for one moment that you thought anything of the kind, Ponsonby," he answered deliberately.

"I fear that you are tale-bearing because you have some grudge against the boys of my Form. I can only feel contempt for you, Ponsonby! Leave my study!"

Ponsonby's cheeks reddened.

"I assure you, sir—" he began.

"That is enough! Go!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

And Ponsonby, compressing his lips, went. He had received no thanks for his information, and, thick as his skin was, the cold contempt of the Remove master penetrated it. But that, after all, mattered little to the dandy of Highcliffe. He had effected his purpose, and he was feeling satisfied as he went back to his bicycle.

There was an uncomfortable silence in the study after he had gone. Mr. Quelch was more annoyed than pleased by the news he had received. But there was no doubt that he had to act on it. He spoke at last.

"If this is true, Wingate—"

"I shouldn't wonder, sir! Anyhow, we shall see to-morrow," said the Greyfriars captain. "It will be easy enough to find out."

"Precisely! And, in that case, this lamentable state of affairs may be

brought to an end!" said the Remove master. "The boys who go to Highcliffe to play cricket may be easily taken in hand—"

"Easily, sir!"

"And those who remain on the island, if any remain, will hardly be able to offer resistance to the prefects, as they did on a previous occasion."

"Hardly!" agreed Wingate.

"Then I shall leave the matter in your hands, Wingate."

"Very well, sir!"

Wingate left the Remove master's study, leaving Mr. Quelch in a very thoughtful, and not wholly pleased, frame of mind. No doubt he was eager to end the Remove rebellion, as was his duty; but as he stood looking from his study window into the July sunshine he seemed far from satisfied. And as his eyes fell on Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, wheeling his bike down to the gates, his look was one of deep dislike.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### The Highcliffe Match!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life, old fat bean?" roared Bob Cherry. And he bestowed a cheery smack on Bunter's fat shoulder.

"Ow!" howled Bunter. "Wow! Beast!"

Bob Cherry was in exuberant spirits that Wednesday morning. He generally was; but on that particular morning he was rather more exuberant than usual.

It was the day of the Highcliffe match, and the Remove were going to play Highcliffe, in spite of the peculiar state of affairs that obtained.

And it was a glorious morning! The early sunshine gleamed on the Sark, rippling between its green banks. After breakfast the party for Highcliffe were getting ready, in great spirits.

Billy Bunter backed away from the exuberant Bob! Robert Cherry was really not quite safe at close quarters when he was in high spirits.

"You silly ass! You've nearly busted my back!" grunted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, if you ask me, I think it's rather a rotten idea to clear off to Highcliffe to-day!"

"Nobody asked you, sir, she said!" sang Bob Cherry.

"Shut up, Bunter!" said the Bounder.

"Beast! You jolly nearly lost the boat yesterday!" grunted Bunter. "If you lose that boat, what are you going to do for grub? That's what I want to know."

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Squiff.

"And suppose those beasts come along after me while you're gone?" demanded Bunter. "Is this what you call backing a fellow up?"

Wharton's face was very thoughtful. It was settled that the match at Highcliffe was to be played, and it was too late to scratch now, if the captain of the Remove had thought of doing so. But he was not quite easy in his mind. He was as keen as any man on the game, but he could not help feeling some misgivings as to what might happen at Popper's Island, with all the best fighting men in the Remove away for the day. If, by ill-fortune, an attack came during their absence, the result was likely to be disastrous.

The cricketers were all keen on going, and Wharton had yielded to the general wish. But he could not help having some doubts.

"I guess it's asking for it!" said Fisher T. Fish. "If they get wise to this at Greyfriars—"

"That's all right; they won't!" said Bob Cherry cheerily.

"Well, they might," said Bunter, "and I think, on the whole, that you'd better wash it out, and stay here—see?"

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

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter warmly. "Letting a fellow down, I call it! Yah!"

"We never brought any jam back on our last trip!" said Bob Cherry thoughtfully.

"No, you beast! Fat lot you care if I have to go without jam!" said the Owl of the Remove scornfully.

"We'll bring some back to-day!" said Bob.

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"We'll get it in Courtfield, and bring it back in the boat—whole jars of it!" said Bob. "Still, if you'd rather we didn't go—"

"My dear chap, you can't let Highcliffe down!" said Bunter, at once. "Dash it all, if you fix up a cricket match, you ought to play it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mind you don't forget the jam!" said Bunter, quite reconciled now to the departure of the cricketers. "It would be just like you fellows to think about nothing but cricket, and forget all about the jam."

"I guess it's risky, leaving the island!" said Fisher T. Fish, shaking his bony head. "I guess—"

"Don't you be funky, Fishy!" said Bunter. "I shall be here! I'll look after you if the prefects come along! I say, you fellows, whatever you do, don't forget the jam!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was rather a crowded boat that pushed off from Popper's Island. Luckily, Coker's boat was a large and rather roomy one. Still, with a dozen fellows in it it was well filled.

Frank Nugent went with the eleven, which consisted of Wharton, Johnny Bull, Hurree Singh, Bob Cherry, Squiff, Mark Linley, Vernon-Smith, Tom Brown, Peter Todd, Penfold, and Hazeldene. Other fellows would have been glad to go, but it was necessary to leave as strong a garrison as possible on the island, and it would have been rather difficult to cram more passengers into Coker's boat.

Tom Redwing was left in command on the island, though how far his commands would be obeyed by the rest was a doubtful question. Anyhow, without a boat it was impossible for the members of the garrison to wander away.

Somewhat slowly the well-laden boat pulled up the Sark. Harry Wharton kept a keen eye open on the bank, but there was no sign of the enemy.

Sometimes during the day Greyfriars prefects would come along the towpath, apparently keeping an eye on the rebels. But first school was going on at Greyfriars now, and during lesson-time there was not much danger.

"Safe as houses!" said the Bounder, when the boat glided under the old stone arch of Courtfield Bridge.

"The safe-ness is terrific!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton nodded. Really, it seemed safe enough, and he dismissed doubts from his mind, and gave his thoughts to the more agreeable subject of the game at Highcliffe.

It was a good pull up the river from Courtfield Bridge to the Highcliffe boat-house. But the cricketers had started early, and they had plenty of time.

Two figures in flannels were standing by the boathouse watching the river. Courtenay and the Caterpillar waved to the Greyfriars men as they came in



"You cheeky sweep!" roared Coker. He strode to the edge of the towpath, with the fierce intention of jumping on the barge, and whopping the bargee. In his haste, Coker's legs got tangled in the tow-rope, and the burly Fifth Former made a sudden dive into the grass. "Yaroooh!" he roared. "Haw, haw, haw!" came from the bargee.

sight. The boat pulled in and made fast.

"You got through all right, then?" said the Highcliffe skipper, with a smile, as he shook hands with Wharton.

"Right as rain!" answered Harry.

"I suppose our boat will be safe here?" said the Bounder. "If Ponsonby—"

Courtenay coloured a little.

"I'll see that it's looked after," he said.

"All serene!" said the Caterpillar. "If the jolly old craft was missin', some of Pon's features would be missin' soon afterwards! Pon knows that!"

"That's all right!" said Wharton hastily.

Stumps were pitched early, while the Highcliffe fellows—with the exception of the junior team—were in the Form-rooms at second school. Harry Wharton won the toss, and elected to take first knock, and the Highcliffe men went into the field.

The Remove innings opened with Wharton and the Bounder. Both of them were still at the wickets, and the score was growing, when Highcliffe came out in break.

A crowd of Highcliffe juniors came down to the cricket ground to look on, and among them were Pon & Co., who seldom honoured a cricket match with their attendance.

But Cecil Ponsonby was particularly interested in this particular match. He smiled—an evil smile—as he glanced at the field dotted with white figures.

"Bravo, Smithy!" roared the Greyfriars men standing at the pavilion. The Bounder had just hit a 4.

"By gad, they're here!" remarked Ponsonby. "Who'd have thought they'd have the neck to come, in the giddy cires? I wonder whether this game will be interrupted, you men?"

Gadsby and Monson exchanged an uneasy glance.

"It won't be, unless some sneakin' worm gave them the tip at Greyfriars!" said Gadsby sulkily.

Ponsonby smiled.

"Well, I don't suppose anybody would do that," he remarked. "I shouldn't suggest such a thing, if I were you, Gaddy."

"Where did you go on your bike after class yesterday?" snapped Gadsby.

"Oh, just a spin!" answered Pon airily. "Of course, I never thought of buttin' in and spoilin' their little game here! I like them so much! Don't let anybody hear you suggestin' it!"

"I'm not goin' to give you away!" grunted Gadsby. "You know that. But if Courtenay finds out—"

"Oh, give us a rest!"

Ponsonby watched the game with unusual interest till the bell went for third school. Every now and then his glance wandered towards the gates. He had no doubt whatever that that cricket match was going to be interrupted, and he would have preferred the interruption to take place while he was there to enjoy it.

But no interruption came yet, at all events, and Ponsonby had to go back to the Form-room for third school.

During that lesson Pon did not give much attention to his Form-master, Mr. Mobbs. He was listening for sounds from without which would tell of an interrupted cricket match. He wondered whether there would be a scrap on the Highcliffe ground when the Greyfriars prefects arrived for the rebels. That was quite a happy anticipation.

But there were no sounds of alarm.

When school was dismissed Pon hurried down to the cricket ground. Bob Cherry and Mark Linley were at the wickets now, and the game was

going on hard and fast. Ponsonby did not glance at the score, or he might have noted that Greyfriars were seven down for 100. Pon was not interested in the score. He was surprised to find the game still going on.

Pon wondered savagely what it meant.

He had taken a great deal of risk to "dish" the cricketers, for there was no doubt that if Courtenay and his friends discovered his treachery he would be made to pay dearly for it. So far it looked as if he had taken that risk for nothing.

The Greyfriars innings ended as the dinner-bell was ringing. Harry Wharton & Co. were all down for 150. The Highcliffe men came off the field, rather red and breathless after a good allowance of leather-hunting.

"They're givin' them plenty of rope!" Pon muttered to Gadsby and Monson, biting his lip. "But they're bound to barge in! They can't let the blighters rip after what I told them!"

"You were a rotter to tell them, and I jolly well hope they won't barge in!" grunted Gadsby.

"Oh, shut up, you fool!" snarled Ponsonby.

Pon was getting quite uneasy. And he felt still more uneasy and still more savagely irritated when the Highcliffe innings started after lunch and Harry Wharton & Co. went into the field. Again and again, as the innings went on, Pon's expectant glance wandered in the direction of the gates; but, like Sister Anne, he saw no one coming. Courtenay and the Caterpillar were making big hits for Highcliffe, and Gadsby and Monson joined in the cheering of the Highcliffe crowd. Pon, in savage silence, chewed his under lip.

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Fierce for Fishy!

**F**ISHER T. FISH tapped Bolsover major on the arm with a bony finger.

Bolsover gave him a glare. He did not like Fisher T. Fish, and he did not like pokes from bony fingers.

"Wednesday!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"What about it, fathead?" grunted the bully of the Remove.

"Pay-day!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh rats!"

It was a golden July afternoon.

The score or so of Remove fellows left on Popper's Island found it very pleasant there.

Billy Bunter, after an extensive lunch, was sleeping in the shade, dreaming, perhaps, of the jam the cricketers were going to bring back with them. Lord Mauleverer dozed under a tree, with his straw hat over his face. Skinner and Snoop and Stott smoked cigarettes in a quiet nook, and played nap. Tom Redwing was keeping watch from the landing-place. Kipps was performing conjuring tricks for the entertainment of a bunch of fellows. Other fellows played leap-frog in the glade round the big oak.

But Fisher T. Fish, like Gallio of old, cared for none of these things. Fishy, as usual, had his thoughts concentrated on what was, to him, the beginning and end of all things—money!

Fishy had been poring over his account-book, in which he kept careful record of his financial transactions in the Lower School.

It was a sore trial to Fishy that, stranded on Popper's Island with the rebel Remove, he could not go round collecting the various small sums due to him from the fags of the Third and Second at Greyfriars. Many sums, ranging from threepence to half-a-crown, were due to the schoolboy Shylock, chiefly from fags.

But such sums as were due from Removites Fishy could collect—or hoped, at least, that he could. Hence his reminder to Bolsover major that it was pay-day!

Bolsover had borrowed five shillings from Fishy at the beginning of the term, on which he paid sixpence a week interest. Fishy had it all down in his business-book, which was now clutched in his bony hand. The other hand he held out for the sixpence.

Bolsover major stared at it, and snorted.

"Wants washing!" he said.

"Eh—what?" Fisher T. Fish was not holding out that bony paw for inspection. He was holding it out for a "tanner." "Look here, you guy, I'll say it's pay-day, and I'm sure waiting!"

"Wait!" suggested Bolsover major.

"I guess—"

"Guess again!"

Bolsover major turned away. He was

not in a good temper that afternoon. He had a conviction that he ought to have been at Highcliffe, a distinguished member of the Remove Eleven. Nobody else thought so—but Bolsover major was convinced of it. He was in no mood to be bothered by the schoolboy Shylock.

But Fisher T. Fish was not to be denied. He jerked after the burly Removite and grabbed his arm with bony fingers.

"I'll say it's pay-day!" said Fisher T. Fish indignantly. "I guess you want to cough up that tanner, big boy!"

"You skinny skinflint!" growled Bolsover major. "I'm just on stony! You'd better drop the Head a line to send us some pocket-money."

"You borrowed the money, didn't you?" demanded Fisher T. Fish. "You owe me the dust, don't you? I got it all down here!" He held up the business-book. "You ain't paid more'n three bob in interest so far. I guess I ain't lending money for my health. I guess—Why, what—Wake snakes and walk chalks! You pesky gink!" yelled Fisher T. Fish, as Bolsover major suddenly snatched the book from his hand. "Gimme that book!"

Bolsover major, grinning, held the account-book high above his head. Fishy jumped at him, and the bully of the Remove pushed him off with his left hand. It was rather a hefty push, and Fisher T. Fish sat down, bumping.

He jumped up again like a jack-in-the-box.

"Gimme that book!" he howled.

Fisher T. Fish was alarmed.

Once before that business-book had been out of his possession and had fallen into the hands of Mr. Prout. Fishy had been in great straits to get it back before Prout discovered the owner or took it to the Head.

He had been driven to desperate resources on that occasion. Nobody suspected that it was Fisher T. Fish who had squirted the ink over Prout on the Elm Walk in the dark, thus causing him to drop that precious book, which Fishy had then recovered.

Fishy was keeping his part in the inking episode a deep secret. Since that time Fisher T. Fish had kept that precious account-book safely parked in an inner pocket. Now it was in the grasp of the bully of the Remove—held high out of Fishy's frantic reach.

Bolsover major chuckled. He had borrowed money from the schoolboy Shylock, but that did not prevent him from despising the young rascal from the bottom of his heart. And he was idle and ill-tempered, and at such times he found entertainment in ragging and bullying.

"Jump for it!" he grinned.

"You pie-faced geck!" roared Fisher T. Fish. "You hand me that book, or I guess I'll make potato scrapings of you! That book's valuable!"

He jumped for the book. Bolsover major gave him another shove, and he sat down again.

"Gimme that book!" he yelled, as he scrambled up breathlessly. "Here, you Redwing, you make that guy gimme my book!"

Tom Redwing gave him a glance of contempt.

"Chuck it into the river, Bolsover," he suggested. "That's the best place for it."

"Why, you—you pesky geck!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Say, you goob, gimme that book! I'll say I'll walk all over you if you don't hand it over smart!"

Bolsover major walked down to the landing-place, grinning. He made a motion of tossing the account-book into

the Sark, and Fisher T. Fish, in desperate alarm, leaped at him and grasped him.

Fishy was no fighting-man. But the worm will turn—and there was no doubt that Fishy was a worm!

He grabbed the burly Removite with bony claws and fairly dragged him over in his rage and alarm. Bolsover major roared as he hit the island.

"Now, you hand over—Yarooooh! Wake snakes!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish, as Bolsover major handed over, not the account-book, but a mighty thump that laid the American junior sprawling.

"Now go after it if you want it!" snorted Bolsover major, and with a swing of his arm he tossed the account-book across the water to the towpath on the Popper Court bank.

Fisher T. Fish, sitting up, watched it in its flight. It landed on the towpath, dropping into the grass there and disappearing from sight.

"Oh, great Abraham Lincoln!" gasped the dismayed Fish.

"Swim for it if you want it!" grinned Bolsover major, and he walked away to join the group round Oliver Kipps, leaving Fisher T. Fish staring in dismay across the arm of the river.

For several minutes Fishy confided to space what he thought of Bolsover major, then he turned to Redwing, who was laughing.

"Say, Reddy," said Fishy, in his most persuasive tones, "I'll say you're the smartest swimmer in the Remove. You go after my book."

"Go and eat coko!" answered Redwing.

"I got to have that book!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

"You're better without it. You'd be sacked if the Head saw it."

"Aw, can it!" snarled Fisher T. Fish.

He glanced round and stirred Lord Mauleverer with his foot. Mauly started and sat up.

"Say, Mauly, you're some swimmer," said Fisher T. Fish. "That pesky guy Bolsover's chucked my book across to the bank. You'll go after it."

"I'll lend you a book," yawned Lord Mauleverer. "I've got a Holiday Annual here somewhere."

"You pesky mugwump, what's the use of a Holiday Annual?" grunted Fisher T. Fish. "It's my account-book, you jay!"

"It's Fishy's money-lending book, Mauly," said Redwing. "Leave it alone."

"Oh!" said Lord Mauleverer. He rose to his feet.

"Leave it alone, Mauly, you ass!" said Redwing.

"Say, you let Mauly alone!" yapped Fisher T. Fish. "You let Mauly do as he blamed well likes! Don't you horn in, you guy! You're going for the book, Mauly?"

"No," yawned Lord Mauleverer. "I wouldn't touch the putrid thing with a barge-pole. Like your cheek to ask a decent chap to touch it! I'm not goin' for the book. I'm goin' for you—"

"What—Hyer, hands off! Yarooooh!" roared Fisher T. Fish, as the schoolboy earl caught him by the collar and spun him round. "Wharrer you fancy you're up to, you pie-faced geck?"

"Kickin' you, dear man," answered Lord Mauleverer.

Crash!

"Yarooooh!"

Fisher T. Fish flew.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Redwing.

"Aw! Wake snakes!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, sprawling in the grass. "I guess—Ow! I calculate—Wow! I kinder reckon—Urrrgh! Wow! Ow!"

Lord Mauleverer sat down again under the tree. Fisher T. Fish picked himself up, shook a bony fist at him, and jerked away.

There was no help for Fishy. He stood at the landing-place, staring across at the towpath, where his precious business-book lay hidden in the grass. It was gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream, and, unless Fisher T. Fish swam across for it himself, it was evidently going to remain there.

**THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.**

**An Advance in Force!**

**F**IERCE!" groaned Fisher T. Fish. "It's sure fierce!" It was indeed "fierce," as Fishy described it in his own language. For a whole hour he had stood there, gazing across the arm of

the river. Fellows whom he asked to swim across for his precious book only laughed, as if they thought that he was joking.

But it was no joke to Fisher T. Fish. Anyone coming along the towpath might pick up that book, and it would be lost for ever. Fortunately, no one had come along so far.

That book was not only precious as containing the records of the Remove business man's transactions; it was a danger if it fell into strange hands.

Fishy remembered only too well his terror and anxiety when it had been for a short time in the hands of Mr. Prout. Prout, luckily for him, had not guessed who was the owner, and Fishy had got the book back—by desperate measures. But if a Greyfriars prefect came along and bagged it—

Fishy trembled at that thought. Win-

gate or Gwynne or Sykes or Loder would have no doubt to whom that precious volume belonged.

The Remove had stood by Billy Bunter as one man when he was sacked on the charge of inking Prout, but not a man in the Form would stand by Fisher T. Fish if he was sacked for money-lending—much more probably they would be glad to see the last of him.

Fishy was not much of a swimmer; but there was nobody else to swim for the book, and he began to make up his mind to chance it.

"I guess you'll be sorry if you see me drowned under your pesky eyes, you gink, Redwing!" he growled.

Redwing laughed.

"You're all right!" he answered. "There's a proverb that those who are born to be hanged cannot be drowned."

(Continued on next page.)



Post your cricket queries to "UMPIRE," c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. It's his job and his pleasure to answer knotty problems from readers.

**A GREAT TRIBUTE!**

**I** AM greatly intrigued with the experience of Arthur Chipperfield, the Australian cricketer, who has made good in this country.

When the party to come to England in search of those "Ashes" was being built up, scarcely anybody in Australia dreamt that Chipperfield would be chosen. He was almost unknown: he had never played in a Test match "down under." Even when it was announced that he had been picked by the Australian selection committee there were a lot of people who declared that he would not be chosen for a Test game in England. Only a couple of years or so ago Chipperfield was unemployed. Then he got a job as a coach—not a very good job—and this led to an invitation to play for New South Wales.

Playing for a Sydney team, he scored 152 against the England team which last toured Australia, and this led Warren Bardsley, who had seen Chipperfield from time to time, to remind the Australian selectors that they must watch him bat.

Here is another story which shows the faith Bardsley had in this young man. Just about the time when the Australian side to visit this country was being chosen, Bardsley, so I am told, made a special point of sending a message to the selectors. It read like this:

**"If you don't decide to send Chipperfield to England for his batting or bowling, send him because he is the best slip fielder in the world."**

What influence that message had on the Australian selectors I don't know, but the tribute was great, wasn't it? And the Australian selectors chose him. Immediately Chipperfield got over the illness which he contracted when he arrived in this country he scored a century against one of our counties, and I am quite certain he would have scored a century in his first Test match in England if lunch-time had not come at Trent Bridge, when his score was ninety-nine. This player who has so unexpectedly become

a hero of the Australian side was quite philosophical about his failure to get that hundred. "I have had so much good luck lately," he said, "that I couldn't really grumble."

The real point about the Chipperfield story which I want you to bear in mind is that it is doubtful if he would ever have played for Australia, but for that recommendation about his fielding.

**SHIELDING A BATSMAN!**

**T**WO of my cricketing readers have had an argument about the game which they want me to settle.

One of these readers declares that in the first-class game there is a fair amount of what is called shielding a batsman by the other batsman. The friend of this reader says that this shielding is not done: that there is no necessity for a man who is good enough to play for England to be "shielded" against any sort of bowling.

As I am asked to settle the argument, from my inside knowledge, I have to say that the reader who says that one batsman often does shield another batsman is right.

**It frequently happens in county and Test match cricket, even when the two opening batsmen are together. One batsman may not be very keen on facing a particular bowler. The other batsman may like the type of bowler. So the two of them scheme to take the bowling accordingly.**

Actually there is quite a lot of this shielding. Watch Herbert Sutcliffe carefully—if you get a chance. A new man comes in. Sutcliffe will strive all he knows to keep the new batsman—especially if he is a young player—from the bowling until the newcomer gets thoroughly accustomed to the light, the conditions, and the bowling: in other words till he gets acclimatized.

When England was trying to save the first Test match at Trent Bridge, there was quite a lot of this shielding noticeable.

Runs which could have been made quite easily were not even attempted. Let me add, however, that I don't think the same methods could be applied so successfully, in boys' cricket, because boys are not quite so adept at scoring a single, just when it suits their purpose, as Test match players are. But even in boys' cricket the batsman who is "set" should try to take most of the bowling for a bit until the newcomer to the wicket "finds his feet." That is part of the tactics of cricket.

**LEG BEFORE!**

**H**AVING promised last week to talk a little bit more about leg before wicket, I will now proceed to fulfil that promise, and at the same time answer several correspondents. The first thing to be remembered is that no batsman can properly be given out leg before unless the ball actually pitches on the wicket. If the ball drops off the wicket the batsman can't be out, even though the ball would have hit the wicket, but for the intervention of the pads.

One point which obviously worries many of my readers is how a batsman can be out leg before to a bowler bowling round the wicket. The argument is, that if the ball, bowled round the wicket, pitches straight, then it would miss the wicket if allowed to go on. But it does not necessarily follow.

**There are plenty of bowlers who have the knack of making the ball "straighten out" as it is called. The ball pitches on the stumps, and if it kept on its normal course, being bowled round the wicket, would miss. But it doesn't continue on a normal course. It straightens, and if it then hits the batsman's legs he is out.**

This week I must answer several readers' questions quite briefly. N. Field, of Birmingham, cites the case of a ball, played by the batsman, into the top of his pads, where it rested. The wicket-keeper ran round, and picked the ball out of the top of the pads. Was the batsman out? No, because when the ball rests in the pads thus it is "dead" automatically.

In reply to R. Jackson, a batsman cannot be stumped off a no-ball, but he can be run out.

A Hockley Grammar School reader wants to know if the batsman is out when the ball, played by the batsman at the other end, strikes the stumps with the non-striker out of his ground. The reply is no. The batsman would be out if the ball just touched the tips of the bowlers' fingers, and then went into the wicket.

"UMPIRE."

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"Aw, can it!" snarled Fishy.

He hesitated on the brink. He was not sure that he was born to be hanged; so he could not feel sure that he wouldn't be drowned. Then, to Fishy's immense relief, a barge-horse appeared on the towpath, with a heavy barge from Courtfield lumbering along the river in its wake.

Fishy waved excitedly to the barge man as the great craft rolled heavily into the channel between the island and the bank.

"Say, bo!" he shouted. "You give a guy a lift across?"

The bargeman looked round at him. It was the same burly man who had exchanged compliments with Coker of the Fifth a couple of days ago. He removed his pipe from his mouth and stared at the American junior, and then nodded, and steered in to the island. He seemed a good-natured bargee, and no doubt he supposed that the school-boys had become stranded on the island somehow.

"Roight!" he called back.

"You won't get back, you ass!" said Tom Redwing. "The man can't give you a lift back, if he takes you across!"

"I guess I can wait till the guys come back from Highcliffe!" growled Fisher T. Fish. "I got to get that doggoned book!"

"Joomp!" said the bargee.

He came as near as he could; but it was more than a six-foot jump, and Fisher T. Fish was no athlete. However, there was no help for it, and the American junior took a run and bounded.

He landed on the barge, stumbled over, and went down, with a bump! A howl floated back to the island.

"Yow-ow! Wow!"

"Cloomsy!" said the bargee.

He steered away again. The horse plodded on, and the barge slowly approached the bank. It closed in some distance down, and the bargee made a gesture to Fisher T. Fish.

"Joomp!" he said.

It was more than six feet again, but Fisher T. Fish had to jump it. This time he landed in rushes, with his feet splashing in the water. He scrambled wildly up the bank, clawing at herbage, and yelling frantically as he discovered stinging-nettles among other things.

"Cloomsy!" said the bargee again, and he grinned as the barge rolled on its way down to Friardale and Pegg.

"Aw! I guess this is the bee's knee!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, as he scrambled on the towpath. "I'll say this is sure fierce! But I calculate I'm cinching that pesky book!"

He tramped up the towpath to the spot opposite the landing-place on the island, where the book had fallen. For ten minutes or so he was searching in the grass, but he found the precious account-book at last, and packed it away safely in his pocket.

The barge had floated out of sight down the river. There was no way of getting back to the island, and Fisher T. Fish had to make up his mind to wait till the cricketers returned in the boat from Highcliffe. It was likely to be a long wait, but there was no help for it. The precious business-book was safe, and that was the chief thing.

Fisher T. Fish did not remain on the open path.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and it was quite probable that Sixth Form prefects would happen along the towpath, keeping an eye on the rebels, or taking care that the rest of the school did not communicate with them.

Stragglers from the island were certain to be bagged and marched back to

Greyfriars if a prefect's eye fell on them.

Fisher T. Fish stepped out of sight in the wood that bordered the towpath, to keep in cover, and watch the river for the returning cricketers.

Luckily, he had a happy resource to fill up the vacant hours. He could spend the time in calculating the profits he had made by his moneylending business since the beginning of the term. This kind of occupation was sheer joy to Fisher Tarleton Fish, so he was not likely to be bored.

There was danger from Greyfriars prefects on the towpath, and from Sir Hilton Popper's keepers in the wood. So the American junior clambered into a beech, where he was out of sight, but could watch the towpath and the river through the foliage.

Jammed in a fork of the leafy branches, he gave himself up to the happy occupation of living, breathing, and thinking money! But his sharp eyes scanned the river every now and then; and suddenly the thought even of money was driven from Fishy's Transatlantic mind.

"Great snakes!" he ejaculated.

Far down the river, coming up from the direction of the Greyfriars boat-house, were two boats. Both of them were manned by big Sixth Form fellows.

Fisher T. Fish, through the foliage of the beech, stared at them. They were not yet visible from the island, but from the tree on the bank Fishy had a full view of them.

He whistled.

Even at the distance he could recognise Wingate, Gwynne, Sykes, North, Loder, Carne, Walker, Parkinson, and other Sixth Form men. Every prefect of Greyfriars was there. It was an advance in force, and evidently that large party was not looking for stragglers. It meant an attack on the schoolboys' island.

Fishy glanced up the river. But there was no chance of the cricketers coming back yet. He looked down the river at the boats again. They were pulling steadily up against the sluggish current. In a few minutes they would be in sight from the island.

"I'll say this lets us out!" murmured Fisher T. Fish.

The game was up on Popper's Island! That was a "cinch," as Fisher T. Fish would have expressed it.

Only the whole force of the rebels could have repulsed such an attack as was coming. And nearly half the Form were absent—and the absent ones were the hottest fighting-men.

"Gee-whiz!" murmured Fishy, staring from the beech. "I guess they're wise to it that the guys have absquatulated! I'll sure say they've got the office."

There could be little doubt of that. It could hardly be a coincidence that this advance in force was coming on the only occasion when the enemy had a chance of catching the rebels divided.

Anyhow, there they were, in strong force, and Fishy was glad, from the bottom of his transatlantic heart, that he was no longer on the island. He was not keen to figure in a scrap with hefty prefects in the midst of whacking ash-plants.

Some fellows would have slithered down the tree, swum across to the island, and joined up, in time to lend a hand in the coming struggle. That idea did not occur to Fisher T. Fish.

"Safety first," was a maxim that appealed to him very strongly.

A sudden shout rang on the river.

"Look out, you men!"

"Line up!"

The enemy had been sighted!

There was instant alarm on Popper's Island! Shouts rang through the trees, and fellows raced down to the landing-place.

Fisher T. Fish slithered down the tree; but it was on the side farthest from the island. He did not emerge on the towpath. He retreated deeper into the wood. Then he ran. He heard shouts and yells as he went, but they did not call him back; they only made him sprint the faster.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### The Attack on the Island!

WINGATE of the Sixth watched the gathering crowd at the landing-place as the boats pulled into the channel between Popper's Island and the bank.

The Greyfriars captain's boat led, the other following close behind. The rebels were gathering fast to face the invasion; but it was easy enough to read alarm, as well as excitement, in many faces. And the fact that many familiar faces were missing from the throng, proved that Ponsonby's information was correct.

Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, the Bounder, and the rest, would have been right in the front had they been there. At least eleven of the sturdiest men in the Remove were away, and had not yet returned—and were not likely yet to return. The rebels had been caught divided, and their game was up.

"Plane-sailing now!" said the Greyfriars captain. "If Wharton and his gang were there, we should see them, what?"

"They're away!" agreed Gwynne. "That dirty little Highcliffe tick know what he was talking about."

"We've got the young sweeps!" said Loder, fingering his ashplant. Loder of the Sixth had particular scores to pay off against the rebels. Loder, after his last interview with them, had left coated with tar.

"What about going round to the other side, Wingate?" called Sykes of the Sixth, from the second boat. "Take them between two fires, what?"

Wingate shook his head.

"They've run wire all round the island, among the trees," he said. "They've made a regular fortress of it. Anyhow, there's more than enough of us to handle that lot. I don't think they'll give us much trouble."

"They'll be sorry if they give us any!" growled Loder.

Wingate gave the bully of the Sixth a look.

"If they give in quietly, no whopping!" he said. "The Head will give them enough when he gets going with the birch."

"Faith, that's so!" chuckled Gwynne. "It will be a flogging all round for the young divvils. All we've got to do is to get them back to the school to take it."

"A few swipes——" said Carne.

"Not unless they resist!" said Wingate quietly. "With the ringleaders away, I hope they'll give in without a shindy. Mind that none of them get off the island. We don't want those young rascals at Highcliffe to get a warning and scatter."

The boats pulled on towards the island landing-place.

Now that Wingate knew, beyond doubt, that the cricketers had gone over to Highcliffe his plans were cut and dried.

His party was in ample force to overcome the resistance of the diminished garrison, if they ventured to resist at all.





"Excuse me, sir!" said Ponsonby, entering Mr. Quelch's study. "I came over to see you, sir, and—" "I fail to see why you have called on me, Ponsonby!" answered Mr. Quelch frigidly. "It's about the fellows on the island, sir. Courtenay, our junior captain, had a letter from Wharton this morning, sayin' that the Greyfriars team would be over to-morrow to play cricket!" Mr. Quelch started.

The island refuge of the rebels would be captured, which was the most important point.

The fellows on the island would be taken and sent back to Greyfriars. They were cornered there, and there was no escape for them.

Rounding up the Removites at Highcliffe might be a more difficult matter; but with the island in possession of authority, they would have nowhere to flee if they scattered.

It was only by fortifying themselves on the island in the river that the rebel Removites had been able to make a stand against authority. Getting the island away from them was the first and most urgent step. And that was what Wingate was going to do.

After that the party at Highcliffe could be dealt with at leisure. The capture of the island meant breaking the back of the rebellion.

Close to the landing-place Wingate stood up. Tom Redwing waved a cricket stump and called to him.

"Keep off, Wingate!"

The Greyfriars captain smiled. "We're coming for you!" he called back. "Don't make fools of yourselves—we know exactly how the matter stands."

"They've found out that the other fellows have gone over to Highcliffe!" muttered Ogilvy.

"Looks like it!" agreed Tom. "But we're keeping them off—if we can."

"You bet!"

"We'll jolly well keep them off!" roared Bolsover major, brandishing a fives bat. "Some of them will get hurt, anyhow."

"Back up, you men!" said Redwing. "What-ho!"

"Don't make fools of yourselves," re-

peated Wingate. "You'd better give in quietly, for your own sakes! You've got a pretty stiff flogging coming from the Head, anyhow."

"Anybody keen on a Head's flogging?" called out Ogilvy.

"No, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer. Mauly, who had been dozing in the hot July afternoon, did not look sleepy now. He was active and alert, with a big stick in his noble hand. "Stick it out, you men, and we'll beat them off somehow."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Back up, Bunter!" said Redwing. "Get hold of something, old fat man, and back us up! You'll get it worst if we get licked."

"Oh, lor'!" groaned Bunter.

He blinked dismally at the seniors through his big spectacles. There was no doubt that it was a flogging all round for the rebels if they were captured and sent back to Greyfriars. But for Billy Bunter, it was the "boot"—the next train home, and the end.

"I—I say, you fellows, k-k-keep them off!" gasped Bunter. "I say, we could keep them off if those other beasts weren't away! All that beast Smithy's fault! I say—"

"Stop gabbling, and get hold of a stick or something!" growled Bolsover major.

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter gave the advancing boats another blink, and then rolled up the path to the camp in the centre of the island. Perhaps he was going to look for a weapon. More likely he was going to look for a hiding-place.

"Where's Skinner?" growled Bolsover major, staring round angrily. "Where's Snoop? Funking somewhere."

Skinner and Snoop were not to be

seen. Stott was there, and even little Wun Lung, the Chinese, lined up, with a saucepan in his hand. Quite a resolute party awaited the attack, and it was clear that the affair was not going to end, as Wingate had hoped, without a "shindy."

"Keep off, you Sixth Form rotters!"

"Go home, Wingate!"

"Allez-vous-en!" yelled Napoleon Dupont, the French junior in the Remove. "Cochons! Peegs! Allez-vous-en!"

"Look here—" rapped out Wingate. "Rats!"

"Get out!"

"Buzz off!"

Wingate eyed them grimly. The position of the rebels was strong, had there been a more numerous force to defend it. All round the island trees and thickets grew to the water's edge, and among trunks and bushes the rebels had run lines of wire, behind which logs and branches were stacked. Landing was a difficult matter, except at the one point where the garrison were gathered.

At that point there was a stretch of grass where the path opened to the interior of the island. But across it a barricade of logs had been built, strengthened by stakes driven into the ground. Behind that barrier there were a dozen fellows, all with some kind of defensive weapon in their hands.

Man for man, the juniors had no ghost of a chance against the big seniors. But behind their defences they hoped, at least, that they had a chance of holding their own. In full force it would have been a certainty, but now it was very doubtful indeed. Still, it looked as if there was a rather hefty task ahead of the seniors.

"Look here——" said Wingate.

"Oh, shut it," roared Bolsover major, "and take that for a start!"

He hurled a jagged lump of turf which landed on Wingate's chin and sent him spinning over in the boat.

There was a roar of wrath as the Greyfriars captain landed, sprawling, on his back among the other seniors.

"Man down!" yelled Russell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give them some more!" roared Bolsover major.

Behind the barricade there was a stack of ammunition in readiness. Lumps of turf, tomatoes, aged apples, and squashy oranges fairly rained on the seniors.

Wingate scrambled up, red with wrath.

"Get on!" he shouted.

The boats bumped on the island. Wingate leaped ashore, followed by his men, heedless of the missiles that rained on them. Yells of defiance greeted them from behind the barricade.

A dozen hefty Sixth Formers followed the captain of Greyfriars. They made a scrambling rush for the barricades, and then the scrapping was hand-to-hand.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### King Cricket!

"GOOD old Smithy!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Bravo!" shouted Harry Wharton.

"Good old Bunter!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith grinned.

The Highcliffe cricketers were not grinning. But the Greyfriars men had plenty of reason to smile, especially Smithy.

Courtenay's innings had started well, after lunch. The Highcliffe skipper and the Caterpillar had knocked up runs in great style. Then came the collapse.

The batting was good, but the bowling was better. Never had Smithy proved such a demon with the leather.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh was as good as ever, and Squiff was in great form. But the Bunder surpassed both of them, even the Nabob of Bhanipur,

who was generally regarded as the champion junior bowler of Greyfriars.

It was Smithy who whipped out Courtenay's middle stump, and, in the next over, caught out the Caterpillar. After which, when the Bunder bowled again, he treated his comrades to the hat trick, and one over. And the Greyfriars fellows fairly grinned with glee.

That innings, which had started so brightly, tailed off lamentably. Courtenay and De Courcy between them had put up forty. But the rest of the team after the "rot" had set in, added only ten.

A total of fifty, compared with Greyfriars 150 for their first innings, was nothing, as the Caterpillar remarked, to write home about!

The innings had been short and sharp, and the Highcliffe men had to follow on. It was no wonder that the Remove cricketers cheered the Bunder, and smacked him on the back, and punched him in the ribs. And it was no wonder that the Bunder, like the classical gentleman of old, felt like striking the stars with his sublime head!

The Bunder dearly loved the lime-light; and he was getting it in ample measure. He was in tremendous form, doing magnificently for his side, and enjoying every moment of the game.

More than that, it was chiefly due to the Bunder that the cricketers were there at all. Harry Wharton, keen as he was on the game, would have scratched the match, rather than have taken the risk of leaving Popper's Island at the mercy of the enemy if they came. But the Bunder's persistence had gained his point—he had won over the other fellows, not very difficult to persuade, in the circumstances, and the captain of the Remove had yielded to the majority. So it was the Bunder's view that he was not only winning the match for his side, but that it was due to him that there was a match to be won at all. Which added to the satisfaction of Herbert Vernon-Smith.

His satisfaction was fully shared by the rest. They were going to win that match; and win it in record time! Later, the beaks at Greyfriars would no doubt hear of it, and hear of the opportunity they had missed! The Head

would learn that the rebel Form, so far from being downhearted, had played cricket matches while the rebellion was going on, and won them, too—and that consideration gave an added zest to the general satisfaction.

"Glad you came, old bean?" asked the Bunder, tapping Wharton on the arm as the Greyfriars field came off.

Harry Wharton's face was very bright. In his keenness on the game he had rather forgotten Popper's Island, and his misgivings on that subject. But it clouded a little as the Bunder's words reminded him.

"Jolly glad, so far as the game goes!" he answered. "I hope we shall find things all right at the island, though, when we get back."

"Bit late in the day to worry about that!" said Hazeldene, with a laugh.

"Oh, the jolly old island's all right!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Nothing's happened there, except that Bunter may have scoffed all the grub."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The rightfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and ridiculous Bunter is as safe as absurd houses."

"Blow Bunter!" said Vernon-Smith. "Beating Highcliffe matters a lot more than Bunter."

Harry Wharton made no reply to that. He was quite as keen as Smithy on beating Highcliffe at cricket. But the Remove rebellion had been organised to secure justice for the sacked Owl; and that came first. But it was, as Hazel had said, too late in the day to think about that.

"We shan't have to bat again," said Bob Cherry confidently. "They've got to follow their innings—and will they make a hundred, against bowling like Smithy's?"

"Hardly!" said Johnny Bull.

"Not in their jolly old lifetimes!" said Peter Todd.

"Smithy's a real prize-packet to-day!" said Squiff. "His bowling is really——"

"Terrific and preposterous!" declared Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beating Highcliffe with an innings to spare will console us, I fancy, even if they lag Bunter!" said the Bunder, laughing.

"Oh, rot!" said Bob Cherry uneasily. "Chuck it, Smithy! They're not going to lag Bunter! I'd rather let Highcliffe walk all over us than let him down."

"Fathead!" said the Bunder, shrugging his shoulders. A dozen Bunters would not have weighed in the balance with Smithy, against his triumph on the cricket field that day.

Harry Wharton's face was clouded with thought. But it was useless to consider, at this stage, the judiciousness or otherwise of having kept that fixture with Highcliffe.

There was a crowd of Highcliffe juniors round the field; and some fellows noticed, with surprise, that Ponsonby was still watching the game.

Gadsby and Monson had tired of it and wandered away to seek more congenial occupations; but Pon, for once in his life, seemed to want to see it through. He did not look, however, as if he was enjoying it. The dark scowl on his face was growing blacker and blacker.

It was impossible that the Greyfriars authorities could have failed to act on the information they had received. He concluded that they were dealing with the party on the island first. Bunter, after all, was the man they wanted; once that fat youth was caught and got rid of, the Remove rebellion would die a natural death. Still, they had had ample time to deal with the islanders

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now, and every moment Pon hoped and expected to see a party of Sixth Form prefects arrive at Highcliffe for the cricketers. Still they did not come.

At the rate at which the game was going on, it looked as if the Greyfriars team might win a victory before they were interrupted. Which was a bitter and disappointing thought to Pon, who had happily anticipated seeing the game stopped and the cricketers marched off with hands on their collars.

The Greyfriars cricketers were in great spirits—not quite shared by the home team. Highcliffe had to follow on, and if Smithy repeated his earlier performances it looked as if the match might end in a victory by tea-time.

"Give us another hat trick, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry, smacking the Bounder on the back with a cheery smack that made him stagger. "Two if you can!"

"Say, you guys!"

A dusty, breathless, bony youth jerked up. The cricketers stared at Fisher T. Fish. Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

"What are you doing here?" he exclaimed.

Fisher T. Fish gasped for breath. He had lost no time in carrying the bad news to Highcliffe.

"I guess—" he gasped.

"What—"

"I calculate I've moseyed along to tell you the noos!" panted Fisher T. Fish. "They're at the island—Wingate and a dozen of the Sixth—and I kinder reckon they've grabbed it before this! I'll say that the game's up!"

Fisher T. Fish sank into a seat at the pavilion, panting, to rest his weary, bony limbs. And the Greyfriars cricketers gazed at him in dismay.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### The Capture of the Island!

"BACK up, Remove!" yelled Tom Redwing.

"Stick to it!" roared Bolsover major.

"Give 'em beans!" panted Lord Mauleverer.

The garrison of Popper's Island stood to it manfully. For many long, wild, and whirling minutes they held the enemy at bay.

There was no doubt that, had all the Remove been there the attack would have been driven off, as on the previous occasion when the Greyfriars prefects had come for the rebels. Even as it was, Wingate and his men had no easy task in hand.

Twice they were driven back from the barricade under hefty lunges and punches and whacks and showers of missiles. But they rallied, and came on, and came over; and once at close quarters the big seniors had it almost all their own way.

Back went the defenders, up the path through the thick wood to the camp in the centre of the island. They were still resisting, but they had no chance. Remove after Remove was collared, breathless and exhausted, and a bunch of prisoners were guarded at the landing-place by two or three prefects while the rest followed Wingate.

Under the branches of the big oak there was a last struggle. But it was overborne by the Sixth Form men. Tom Redwing, Bolsover major, Lord Mauleverer, Ogilvy, and Russell scrambled up into the thick branches of the great oak, but the rest were collared and added to the "bag."

Wingate, dabbing a stream of crimson from his nose, glared up at the juniors in the branches of the oak.

"Come down from there!" he shouted. "Come and fetch us!" roared back Bolsover major.

"Rats to you!" yelled Ogilvy.

"Yaas, rats, and lots of them, old bean!" panted Mauleverer.

"Where's Bunter?" asked Gwynne. "Bunter's the man we want. I saw him from the boat—he's here all right! Never mind about those young rascals, if we get Bunter."

"Hunt for him!" said Wingate.

Leaving the refugees in the oak to their own devices for the moment, the victorious seniors hunted through the island for stragglers.

Two or three more fellows were run down and collared; Skinner and Snoop were rooted out of the hollow in the trunk of the big oak.

Almost every foot of the island was rooted over; but Billy Bunter did not come to light.

Billy Bunter, as a matter of fact, had been the first to climb the oak. Climbing a tree was a matter of some difficulty to the fat Owl of the Remove, and he had to take his time about it; which was perhaps the reason why he had started on the task while the other fellows were holding the fort.

Anyhow, there he was now, wedged in a fork of the big branches, hidden by foliage, and trembling like a fat rabbit with the dogs at hand. And he blinked angrily and indignantly at Redwing and his companions.

"I say, you fellows, you clear off!" gasped Bunter. "They'll come after you, and find me—"

"You silly ass!" said Redwing. "Do you think they'll leave the island without bagging you? It's you they want—not us!"

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, you stick to me, you know! D-d-don't let those beasts come up after me."

Voices were heard under the oak again. The whole island had been searched for Bunter—in vain! There were a dozen prisoners, guarded by some of the prefects, with ashplants ready to deal with any fellow who attempted to break away. Four or five seniors gathered, with Wingate, under the big oak. The Greyfriars captain shouted up:

"Have you got Bunter there?"

"Find out!" retorted Ogilvy.

"We can't go without Bunter!" said Wingate. "Once that fat young rascal is done with, the other sweeps will give no more trouble. But we've got to have Bunter."

"Oh lor'!" gasped a voice in the branches above.

"That's Bunter!" grinned Gwynne.

"Come down, Bunter!" shouted Wingate.

"I—I say, I—I'm not here!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, I—I'm not coming down! I—I can't go back to Greyfriars, you know!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "The Head makes out that I'm sacked—"

"You young ass!"

"I—I say, you leave me alone!" gasped Bunter. "I never inked old Prout! I told the Head so! You're a prefect, Wingate, and you ought to find out who inked Prout! Then the Head will let me off, see?"

"Will you come down?" roared Wingate.

"Ow! No! Beast!"

"Come up after him!" roared Bolsover major belligerently.

Wingate & Co. stared up. There were five fellows in the oak prepared to

dispute an ascent. It was not an easy prospect.

"Bunter, you fat young ass—"

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "I'm not coming down! I told the Head I couldn't go home in the middle of the term! My pater would be awfully waxy."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the branches of the oak.

"I say, you fellows, keep those beasts off! I say—"

"Come on!" said Wingate, and he started clambering up the thick, gnarled old trunk of the big oak-tree. Gwynne and Sykes followed him.

That ancient tree was easy enough to climb, for an active fellow, if the fellow was left alone to climb it. But where the branches jutted off from the parent trunk, five juniors were bunched, with determined looks. Bolsover major brandished his fives bat, knocking away a shower of oak leaves.

"Come on!" he roared. "Waiting for you, Wingate!"

"You mad young ass, if you dare—"

panted the Greyfriars captain.

"Come on, and see!"

"Yaas, begad!" grinned Lord Mauleverer. "We've got Bunter, old bean, and we're keepin' him. We don't want him: but we're bound to stick to him."

Wingate, with a grim face, clambered on. Bolsover major reached down and smote, and he gave a fearful yell as the fives bat clumped on the top of his head! Losing his hold, he slithered down the trunk and landed in the grass below, spluttering.

"Follow your leader, old man!" said Lord Mauleverer, lunging with a cricket stump at Gwynne. "Sorry to puncture you, but—"

"Whoop!" roared Gwynne. The lunge landed in his ribs, and though he was not quite punctured, he felt like it. Gwynne went down even more quickly than Wingate.

Sykes stopped, just out of reach, and glared up. Russell had an apple in his pocket. He grabbed it out and whizzed it down. It landed fairly on the Sixth Former's nose as he glared upward. There was a howl from Sykes of the Sixth, and he dropped into the grass.

Wingate sat up, rubbing his head. A yell of defiance came from the juniors above.

"Come on!"

"Come after Bunter!"

"Have another, Wingate?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Greyfriars captain rose to his feet. He rubbed his head ruefully. The prefects exchanged glances. They had captured the island: most of the garrison were prisoners in their hands. But Bunter was the man they chiefly wanted, and Bunter was out of their reach.

"Look here, we've got to get hold of that young scoundrel!" said Loder. "It's Bunter that the Head wants."

"We'll follow you up!" grunted Gwynne.

"Yes, come on, Loder!" roared Bolsover major above. "I've got a fives bat ready for your nut, old bean."

Wingate's face set grimly.

"We've got to get through," he said. "Come on! Loder, Carne, Walker, keep guard over those young sweeps we've bagged. The rest follow me."

And Wingate led the way again: eight or nine stalwart seniors clambering up round the massive trunk of the ancient oak. This time it was going to be the finish.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

## A Rush to the Rescue!

"PULL!" said Harry Wharton. "It's utter rot—" growled the Bounder savagely. "Oh, shut up, Smithy!"

"I tell you—"

"Shut up!" rapped several voices.

And the Bounder, with an angry scowl, shut up.

The Remove cricketers were crammed in Coker's boat. It pushed off, and pulled swiftly down the river. There had been no help for it: after the news brought by Fisher T. Fish. With every prospect of a sweeping victory before them, the Greyfriars fellows had had to "chuck" cricket! With many apologies to Courtenay, who was sympathetic enough, they chucked it. Only the Bounder was willing to keep on, and leave Popper's Island to the enemy, and Bunter to his fate.

Every other fellow was anxious to get back to the island, in the hope of arriving in time. There was a chance—a good chance!

Fisher T. Fish had cut across the Popper Court woods, and jumped on the motor-bus that passed the gates of Highcliffe. He had lost no time: for once, Fishy's transatlantic "hustle" had come in useful. Wharton felt certain that the garrison on the island would give all the trouble they could, and it was quite probable that they might be holding out. Neither were the enemy likely to be hurrying themselves, for they had no knowledge of Fishy's proceedings, and were not likely to guess that warning had been carried to the fellows at Highcliffe.

Courtenay waved adieu to the boat's crew from the Highcliffe raft.

"Come back and finish if you can!" he called out.

And the boat shot away.

Heavily laden as it was, it moved swiftly down the current, with the oars pulling hard. There was not a moment to be lost.

The Bounder sulked and scowled. He had been suddenly deprived of the lime-light he was enjoying. But the other fellows were not thinking of cricket now.

Unless they arrived at Popper's Island before the garrison was overcome, the game was up, and the Remove rebellion a thing of the past.

"It was a bit of luck, Fishy being off the island!" remarked Bob Cherry. "I fancy Wingate would take care no fellow got away to give us the tip. Sure they never spotted you, Fishy?"

"Search me!" answered Fishy.

"Catch Fishy letting them spot him!" sneered the Bounder. "As soon as he saw the prefects, I fancy nobody could have seen his heels for dust."

"I guess I lighted out pronto to bring the noos—"

"Not for any other reason?" scoffed the Bounder.

"Oh, shut up, Smithy!" growled Johnny Bull. "If we get back in time, we owe it to Fishy—we should have gone on playing cricket while the other fellows were bagged, and marched back to Greyfriars to be flogged—"

"And Bunter hiked off home, and the whole game up!" said Peter Todd. "The fact is, we were asses to chance it."

"That's pretty clear, now!" said Harry Wharton.

"All my fault, of course!" sneered the Bounder.

"Mostly your fault," snapped the captain of the Remove. "But it's no

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good crying over spilt milk. We may be in time yet, owing to Fishy getting over to Highcliffe for us. Pull, you men."

The boat glided under Courtfield Bridge, and shot on down the river. It was deep in the water, but the rowers made it move.

But as rapid as was the progress, it seemed a long time to the juniors, before the tall oak on Popper's Island came in sight.

Harry Wharton scanned the island, anxiously, when it came in view. From the direction in which they came, only its thickly wooded side could be seen; the landing-place being towards the Popper Court bank.

Nothing, therefore, was to be seen either of the defenders or of the assailants, and for all the boat's crew knew, the seniors might already have completed their "bag" and started back to the school.

"Hark!" exclaimed Frank Nugent suddenly.

There was the sound of a yell from the thick wood on the island. Evidently somebody was still there.

Harry Wharton's face brightened.

"We're in time!" he exclaimed.

"Sounds like it," grinned Bob Cherry, as there was another yell.

"Sure!" grinned Fisher T. Fish.

"I'll say I never let the daisies grow under my feet when I was burning the wind for Highcliffe. I'll allow that we're on time."

"Pull on!"

Yell after yell sounded from the island as the boat pulled nearer. It was clear that some sort of a scrap was still in progress.

The Bounder's sulky look vanished. His look became as eager as the rest, and he grasped the cane handle of his bat.

"We're in time," he said, "and we'll jolly well mop them up, and get back to Highcliffe and finish the game as Courtenay asked us to."

"We'll mop them up first," said Wharton dryly.

"The mopfulness up is the urgent sine qua non," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "And the scrapfulness will be terrific."

"Rot!" growled the Bounder. "The lot of us can handle the prefects and some over. We'll jolly well bag the lot of them, and leave them safe on the island while we go back to Highcliffe and finish."

The boat steered into the channel between the island and the bank. Harry Wharton scanned the landing-place on the island.

Two boats were there, tied up to the willows. Evidently the invaders had not departed.

Shouting and yelling rang loudly from the interior of the island. The scrap that was going on seemed to be there by the big oak-tree.

But near the landing-place, by the dismantled barricade, was a bunch of untidy and dishevelled Removites, with three prefects, ashplant in hand, standing guard over them.

Loder and Walker and Carne, and the bunch of prisoners, all sighted the boat at once as it came with a rush for the landing.

Loder stared at the boat, crowded with the cricketers, blankly.

"Those young rascals!" he ejaculated. "They've come back—"

"Look out!" gasped Carne.

"Rescue, Remove!" yelled Micky Desmond, waving wildly to the Remove boat. "Rescue!"

"Come on, you men!" shrieked Wibley.

"Wingate!" roared Loder.

But Wingate of the Sixth was very busy at that moment, out of sight beyond the trees, in the centre of Popper's Island. Wingate and his merry men were clambering up the big oak, to deal with the remnant of the rebels there. They were getting a warm reception, and had their hands full. If they heard Loder's shout, they did not heed.

The Remove boat bumped on the island shore, and the cricketers came scrambling out. Loder and Carne and Walker had no time to decide whether to face them or run for it. Their late prisoners turned on them as one man, and collared them right and left. The sight of the boat's crew coming to the rescue was enough for them.

Micky Desmond led the rush, and the rest jumped after him. In a moment Loder and Carne and Walker were down in the grass, struggling with the prisoners they had been guarding. In a few moments the boat's crew were ashore, and piling in.

"Collar them!"

"Bag them!"

"We've got the rotters!"

"Sit on them!"

The three hapless prefects disappeared from sight under the swarm of juniors. They wriggled and spluttered and gurgled, with every ounce of breath knocked out of them. A dozen fellows pinned them down in the grass.

"Got 'em!" chortled Micky.

"Where are the others?" panted Wharton.

"Some of the fellows are up the oak-tree, and Wingate's after them."

"And we'll jolly soon be after Wingate," chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Make sure of these blighters first!" said the Bounder.

And the three captured prefects were rolled together, and their wrists tied in a bunch with twisted handkerchiefs. They were in no state to resist, and they could only gurgle as the Bounder tied the knots, which he did with great thoroughness.

"Now, come on!" grinned Smithy.

Harry Wharton led the way up the path through the trees. Loder and Carne and Walker were left squirming in an unhappy bunch. The cricketers and the rescued prisoners swarmed after the captain of the Remove. In a whooping mob they burst into the glade where the big oak stood. The tables were turned now.

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

## The Upper Hand!

"I SAY, you fellows! Keep 'em off!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Back up!" panted Redwing.

"Stick it out, begad!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

Crammed in a fork of the oak branches the fat Owl of the Remove quaked like a fat jelly.

In spite of hefty whacks and lunges from above, Wingate and his followers had clambered into the lower branches of the oak. It was not an easy task; but they had done it.

Bolover major was grasped by the Greyfriars captain, jerked from his hold, and dropped into the grass below where he sprawled, panting. Tom Redwing was the next, and he dropped beside Bolover.

Ogilvy, Russell, and Lord Mauleverer scrambled higher into the tree, barely escaping the grasping hands that reached after them.

But scrambling higher into the thick,



Strong in numbers, the rebel Removites hurled themselves at Wingate and his merry men. Even Billy Bunter exerted himself to the extent of sitting on Wingate. It was a truly terrific scrap. But odds of two or three to one were too heavy, and fortune favoured the rebels. "Looks like our win!" chuckled Bob Cherry, breathlessly.

old oak was too much for Billy Bunter. He remained where he was, squeaking.

"I say, you fellows, help! I say— Oh crikey! I say— Yarooogh! Leggo, you beast! Wow!"

Wingate's grasp was on the fat junior.

"Leggo!" yelled Bunter.

"You fat ass! I've got you!" panted Wingate. "Now, out you come!"

"Yarooogh!"

The fat form of the Owl of the Remove was tightly jammed in the forked branch. Wingate grasped him by the collar, and tugged, and he came out rather like a cork from a bottle.

The Greyfriars captain hung over a low branch, lowered Bunter to the length of his arm, and dropped him into the grass. Bunter rolled over there, roaring.

"Ow! Wow! Beast! Oh crikey! I say—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar.

From the path through the trees came a whooping mob of excited juniors—eleven of them in flannels. Redwing and Bolsover major scrambled up with a yell of delight. Billy Bunter sat and blinked at them through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—" he gasped.

"Here we are, here we are, here we are again!" roared Bob Cherry, in a voice that rang over Popper's Island, and far beyond.

"Oh, good egg!" gasped Redwing. "You've got back. I thought that perhaps Fishy would get across to you."

"He did," chuckled Bob. "And here we are—right on time. Wingate, old man, come down and surrender."

"We're all here," grinned Peter Todd. "The whole jolly family; and

this is where the prefects get it in the neck."

"Right in the neck!"

"The neckfulness will be terrific!"

"Hurrah!"

That roar of voices under the big oak was startling to Wingate & Co. In a few more minutes they would have grabbed the remaining three juniors in the oak, and the "bag" would have been complete. But those few more minutes were not granted them.

Instead of taking back a crowd of prisoners to Greyfriars, the sacked Owl among them, and then going over to Highcliffe to round up the cricketers, Wingate & Co. had the cricketers to deal with much sooner than they had anticipated.

The Greyfriars captain stared down from the oak.

Thirty fellows swarmed under the extending branches with warlike looks. The whole Remove was there; more than enough to deal with the prefects, especially as three of the latter were now tied up and out of the scrap.

"Come down, old bean!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Waiting for you, Wingate!" yelled the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!" Wingate's face was grim. "The young rascals have come back from Highcliffe. We've got the whole mob on our hands now. What the thump has brought them back? They can't have got through a cricket match yet—and that's what they went for."

"They're here, anyhow," said Gwynne. "And if you ask me, old bean, it looks a little bit as if we've bitten off more than we can chew."

"Well, we've got to handle them,"

said the Greyfriars captain. "There's no choice about that now. Come on!"

Wingate slithered down the oak. The other seniors followed him. And after them came Russell and Ogilvy and Lord Mauleverer from the top of the tree. There was a rush at once at the prefects, and a terrific scrap was soon in progress under the branches of the oak.

It was "some" scrap!

Now that the Remove were re-united the odds were tremendous. Strong in numbers, the Removites hurled themselves at the enemy, even Skinner and Snoop and Fisher T. Fish joining in the fray, to the extent of sitting on Wingate, when he was got down, and keeping him down. Even Billy Bunter exerted himself to the extent of sitting on Wingate.

It was a truly terrific scrap, but odds of two or three to one were too heavy, and fortune favoured the rebels. Man after man went down, and was pinned down, till only two or three were left on their feet, and those two or three made a desperate break down the path to get to the boats.

But a dozen juniors were after them at once, and they were dragged down on to the landing-place and handkerchiefs knotted about their wrists.

Swollen noses, darkened eyes, tapped claret, were freely distributed on all sides, among both parties. But victory remained with the Remove rebels, and prefect after prefect, wriggling, and gasping, and panting, had his hands tied together behind him.

The last man was secured, and the high and mighty prefects of the Greyfriars Sixth, defeated and captured, were bundled together under the big oak. There they gasped and glared.

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But their glaring had no effect on the Remove rebels. There was a roar of cheering that rang far and wide over the banks of the Sark.

"Looks like our win!" chuckled Bob Cherry breathlessly. "Anybody seen my nose? I think it's been knocked off. It feels like it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—you young rascals!" panted Wingate, wriggling wildly. "You—you cheeky young scoundrels! You'll be sacked for this—the lot of you!"

"I don't think!" grinned the Bounder.

"Sorry, Wingate, old man!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We all like you, you know, and think no end of you; but you shouldn't barge in where you're not wanted."

"I say, you fellows—"

"We've got them safe!" said the Bounder. "We can leave them here and get back to Highcliffe. Courtenay will be glad to see us back."

"Will you let me loose?" roared Wingate.

"Hardly!"

"You young scoundrels!" gurgled Loder. "Let us go! We'll get off the island, if you like. Let us go!"

"Can't part with you yet, Loder. You're too nice!"

"You young rascals!" panted Wingate.

"Let's go!" said Bob Cherry. "Lots of time—and safe as houses, with the jolly old prefects tied up here like turkeys."

The turkeyfulness is terrific."

"Mind waiting here till we come back, Wingate?" asked Bob, with a chuckle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's!" said the captain of the Remove.

It was rather a damaged-looking crew of cricketers that pulled away in the boat. But they went off cheerily enough, leaving the rescued garrison on guard over the prisoners. And Wingate & Co., with feelings that could have been expressed in no known language, could only wonder when they would get back to Greyfriars, and what the Head would think of them when they did!

## THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

### All Serene!

**C**ECIL PONSONBY stared.

Pon could scarcely believe his eyes as he gazed from his study window at Highcliffe.

In that study Pon had been playing bridge with Gadsby, Monson, and Vavasour. Pon was in a very cheery mood. True, the cricket match had not been interrupted, as he hoped and expected, by a party of prefects from Greyfriars. But it had been interrupted, and stopped; and the Remove cricketers had departed in haste—and Pon had no doubt that they had gone to find trouble. So Pon was cheery and satisfied, and he settled down to bridge in the study feeling that an unscrupulous young rascal's life was worth living. For a long time, while the young rascals of Highcliffe played cards with the door locked, they had heard the sounds from the distant field, which indicated that cricket was going on again, but Pon supposed that Courtenay had fixed up a game to fill in the rest of the day, the match being over so early in the afternoon. But now—

Staring from his study window, Pon wondered whether his eyes were deceiving him.

"Those Greyfriars cads—" he gasped.

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"What?" ejaculated Gadsby.

"They're back!" stuttered Pon. "They're playing cricket! They—they—they've come back!"

He hurried to the door, unlocked it, and hurried out of the study. In a state of amazement and rage he ran down to the cricket field.

Courtenay and another Highcliffe man were at the wickets—the last men in.

It was the Highcliffe second innings, and nearly over by that time.

The Caterpillar, lounging at the pavilion and watching his chum, glanced round, and gave Pon a curious stare. Pon's keenness on that game during the day had already excited the Caterpillar's notice—and suspicion.

"Feelin' anxious about us, Pon?" he called out, with a cheery grin. "Your anxiety is well-founded, old thing; we're gettin' it right in the neck! Hard cheese for Highcliffe!"

"Then—then—then they've come back?" he stuttered.

He still seemed unable to believe his eyes as he stared at Harry Wharton & Co. in the field.

"Turned up again like bad pennies," assented the Caterpillar. "I hear they've been doin' great scrappin' stunts with prefects and things, and, from the point of view of winnin' this game, it's rather a pity that their jolly old prefects didn't mop them up—what?"

"Frightfully excitin' day—what?" drawled the Caterpillar, his eyes keenly on the dandy of Highcliffe's furious face. "Their beaks at Greyfriars got wind of what was goin' on, somehow! Looks as if somebody tipped them the wink! You know anythin' about it, Pon?"

Ponsonby made no answer to that. He realised that he was in danger of betraying himself, and he moved away, scowling. The Caterpillar's eyes followed him, with a glint in them.

A roar came from the field.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

"Bravo, Smithy! Good old Inky!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh held up the ball in a dusky hand. He had caught out the Highcliffe skipper, off Vernon-Smith's bowling. The score stood at 99.

"Ninety-nine!" murmured the Caterpillar. "So near and yet so far! What a life!"

With 50 for the first innings and 99 for the second, Highcliffe stood at 149. Greyfriars had won the game by a run, and an innings to spare!

They came off the field with cheery faces. They had had luck; but it was good cricket that had won the match. And nobody was sorry that the game had ended early.

After the happenings of that day the Remove fellows were rather keen to get back to Popper's Island.

"Well, you've mopped us up, but I'm glad you came back to finish!" said Courtenay. He could take a beating cheerfully.

"You are a terrific sportsman, esteemed old bean!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Probably it will be a boot on the other leg when you came over to play us cricketfully at Greyfriars."

And Courtenay grinned.

The Greyfriars cricketers did not stay for tea. Courtenay and the Caterpillar walked down to the boat-house with them, and saw them off on the Sark.

It was a cheery crew that pulled down the river once more to Popper's Island.

Billy Bunter met them at the landing-place, with an anxious, fat face.

"Have you—" he began eagerly.

"We have!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"We've won, old fat bean—an innings and an odd run! Cheer!"

"You silly ass, I mean, have you got the jam?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You blithering, blethering, burbling bandersnatch, we've got the jam!" said Bob Cherry. "Nugent got it while we were playing cricket! Now shove some of it down the back of his neck."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

The garrison of Popper's Island welcomed the victorious cricketers with a cheer! Wingate & Co. were probably equally glad to see them. They were getting rather tired of sitting under the oak-tree, waiting for them.

"Here we are again, Wingate, old tulip!" said Bob Cherry, smacking the Greyfriars captain on the back. "Glad to see us—what?"

"You young sweep!" hooted Wingate.

His temper seemed to have suffered.

"Will you let us go?" hissed Loder.

"Glad to get shut of you!" answered Bob. "We're done with you now, old bean. You're no use—and your best pal wouldn't say that you were an ornament! Roll 'em down to the boats!"

"Untie us!" howled Loder.

"Not till you're aboard!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We don't want to have to thrash you again!"

And the prefects were rolled down the path to the landing-place, and rolled into their boats.

Wingate's hands were untied, and he was left to release the rest, after the boats had been shoved off.

It was not a happy crew of Sixth Formers that floated away down the Sark. Neither were they entertained by the laughter and cheers that followed them from Popper's Island. Still less did they enjoy what the Head had to say when they arrived at Greyfriars and made their dismal report.

But on the island in the Sark all was merry and bright! And that, from the point of view of the Remove rebels, at least, was all that mattered.

And at Highcliffe, Ponsonby was making the discovery, not for the first time, that the way of the transgressor was hard.

After tea the Caterpillar looked into his study.

Pon, not in a good temper, greeted him with a black scowl.

"What the thump do you want?" he snapped.

"You!" smiled the Caterpillar. "Pon, old man, we had a cricket match on to-day, which was jolly nearly mucked up by some sneakin' cur tellin' tales at Greyfriars. Were you the sneakin' cur?"

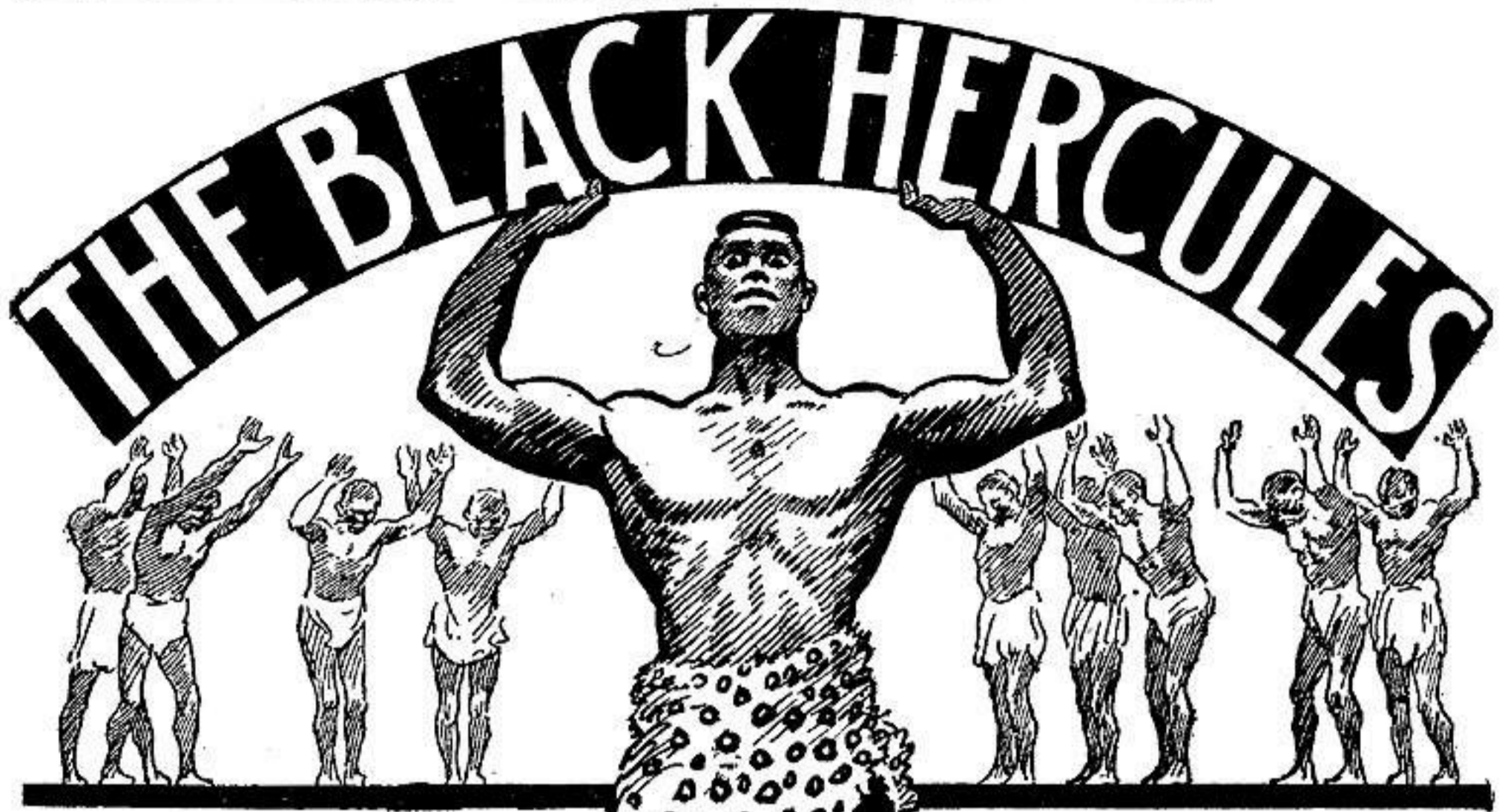
Pon scowled, and Gadsby and Monson grinned.

"There's absolutely no proof that you barged in," went on the Caterpillar. "It would be the height of injustice to punch your head, Pon, on bare suspicion. I've asked Courtenay, and he says it would be so. He's not goin' to touch you without proof. But"—the Caterpillar smiled gently and pushed back his cuffs—"I am!"

And he did—hard! For five wild and whirling minutes there was a terrific scrap in Ponsonby's study. After which the Caterpillar sauntered away—leaving Pon a wreck on the carpet.

THE END

(There will be another topping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., the school-boy rebels, in next Saturday's MAGNET, entitled: "THE SECRET OF THE OLD OAK!" It's crammed with exciting situations, so be on the safe side, chums, and order your copy NOW!)



**An Awkward Situation!**

**S**PEEDY Jack Carter, air mail pilot, and his chum, Tickler Johnson, paced up and down restlessly in the big waiting-room of the magnificent Union buildings at Pretoria.

Although they had tried to impress the desperate urgency of their business, no one seemed to be in the slightest haste to receive them.

Jack looked at his wrist-watch and groaned aloud.

"Three o'clock, and it was yesterday afternoon that we left Radium City! In twenty-four hours' time Hercules will have all his troops ready to attack!"

Tickler nodded glumly. Of all the white inhabitants of South Africa, only he and his chum realised the terror which was so imminent.

When their plane had crashed in Angola they had discovered a remarkable steel city operated entirely by radium. This city was controlled by an enormous negro who called himself King Hercules, and who planned to drive all the whites out of Africa so that he could establish a Black Empire.

Hercules was a genius, and, with the aid of Miguel Golanzo, a dissipated Portuguese, he had been able to produce thousands of radium-driven war planes. In addition to these, he had countless mechanical soldiers called Amarobs, and incredibly fast bullet-cars, all operated by radio-activity.

Only by temporarily wrecking the main control plant had the pals managed to escape in one of the remarkable planes, to give warning of the calamity which was so rapidly approaching.

As the two English airmen knew well enough, all was practically ready for the steel army to be launched on the unsuspecting white population, and every minute brought the Black Terror closer.

"I can't stand this waiting any longer!" exclaimed Jack at last, exasperated beyond words by the casual treatment they had received.

He walked straight across the room to a door marked "Private," and marched boldly in, closely followed by Tickler.



By  
**GORDON  
GREY.**

A mild-looking gentleman was seated at a big desk, and he appeared rather startled at the sudden intrusion.

In a torrent of words, Jack poured out his story, while the man at the desk nodded encouragingly, and said "Yes, yes," in a soothing tone every now and again.

"We've reported everything to the officials at Johannesburg, and they sent us here, as this is the State capital. You must do something at once," concluded Jack fiercely, banging his fist on the desk in his excitement, "or the whole country will be devastated."

The mild-looking gentleman jumped as his inkpots rattled, and there was a scared expression on his face, while his fingers played nervously along the edge of the desk. Evidently the chums had succeeded in startling him from his usual state of composure.

A door flew open suddenly, and a couple of hefty-looking men in police uniform entered. The man at the desk nodded his head nervously in the direction of the two chums. Before Jack or his companion could utter a word the policemen had seized them none too gently, and hustled them out of the room.

"Here! What's the game?" demanded Tickler.

Jack struggled furiously, but could not relax the iron grip of his captor.

"Let me go!" he protested. "You must be mad! Can't you see we're here on a matter of desperate urgency?"

The burly man winked at his companion and chuckled sourly.

"Mad!" he grinned. "Here, Jim, let's shove the poor chaps in the bus and take 'em away quick!"

The awful truth dawned on Jack and Tickler suddenly, and the realisation was like a stunning blow. They were being taken away as insane!

It was some moments before Jack recovered his sense of speech; but the sight of an ugly looking motor-car, something like the English "Black Maria," brought him back with a start.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed, renewing his struggles. "Don't you realise we must get someone to do something? We're not any more mad than you are!"

"Yes, yes," replied the warder. "We know all about that. Up you go!"

With a deft twist he swung Jack up into the back of the vehicle, and Tickler followed. Before the two chums could get to their feet the door slammed into place and the vehicle moved off.

Twenty minutes later Jack and Tickler were hustled into a big, depressing building, and safely locked in a small room not more than six feet wide.

"Well, I'm blessed!" said Jack. "To think what we've gone through to give warning, and then all they do is lock us in an asylum! What on earth are we going to do?"

"Get out—quick!" grinned Tickler. "Let's try the window."

Examination of the window proved fruitless, for it was stoutly barred, and the door, which opened outwards, was apparently locked and bolted.

"H'm! Looks as if we've got to stop here until they find out their mistake," remarked Jack, "unless—listen!"

There was the echo of a heavy tread along the stone-flagged corridor.

"Get over there in the shadow, and be ready to jump," Jack whispered tensely.

Before Tickler realised what his chum had in mind, Jack was clambering up above the door by putting the palms of his hands on one wall and his feet against the other.

He had just got above the lintel when the door opened, and an attendant poked his head inside the room.

Next second something like a ton of bricks seemed to fall on the man from above, and he was sent flying, with every ounce of breath knocked out of him.

Tickler sprang across the two prostrate figures, and grabbed hold of Jack, who, as a result of the fall, was little better off than his victim. With a jerk, he yanked him outside, slamming the door, and shooting the bolts into place, before the startled attendant had time to gather his scattered senses.

### A Bolt for Freedom!

**J**ACK and Tickler managed to get out of the building, and to their delight a small red sports car was standing outside.

"We'll borrow that," suggested Tickler, "and get back to Johannesburg. They'll believe us there, for we've got Hercules' plane as evidence."

The two chums jumped into the little car, started up, and shot off down the road.

Tickler looked back just in time to see a tall man come running out of the building, shouting and gesticulating wildly.

"We're spotted," he groaned. "I suppose that means a chase by the Pretoria flying squad."

Jack pressed his foot hard on the accelerator and the little car leaped forward.

"They'll have a job to catch us," he yelled, as the car raced on the long stretch towards Johannesburg.

Despite the terrific roaring of the engine, a familiar noise caught Tickler's ear, and he glanced behind.

Only a short distance away and overhauling them rapidly was a fast plane, flying not more than a hundred feet high.

"We're being chased," he yelled to his companion. "Plane nearly on top of us!"

Jack nodded grimly, but kept his eye on the road in front, for it would have been fatal to look round.

The pilot of the plane seemed to realise that there was little he could do, for he circled round and swept down to within a few feet of the rocking car.

Tickler shook his fist defiantly, and the plane swept upwards again.

Suddenly Jack let out a yell, slipped his clutch and jammed hard on the brake. The airman evidently meant to stop the runaways somehow, for he was bringing his machine down right across the road.

Stones flew like bullets as the little car skidded on, lurching violently, and came to a stop just as the pilot skilfully "spreadeagled" his plane across the road.

Muttering under his breath, Jack released the brakes, swung the wheel round, and put the engine into gear again.

"We'll go back and find another way, Tickler," he said.

Unfortunately for his hopes, an enormous racing-car was speeding towards them at breakneck speed, and all chance of escape seemed to be cut off.

Jack took in the situation at a glance. "Hold tight," he shouted to his companion, and before Tickler realised what was happening, the little car shot across the road, hit a low bank, jumped a two-foot draining ditch, and then went

careering away over the rough, open veldt.

"Gosh! We've done 'em," cried Tickler joyously, as he saw the big racing-car slow down, swerve off the road, and then turn turtle when its driver tried to take the same route.

The two chums found their triumph short-lived, however, for they had scarcely got out of sight of the pursuers when the front axle of the car broke with a snap!

"H'm! That's useful!" remarked Tickler, trying hard to keep cheerful. "What do we do now?"

"Walk, of course, fathead!" said Jack, clambering from the wreck.

He took out his pocket compass and set a rough course. Then they both started off on foot through the rough pasture-land, hoping to strike the Crocodile River.

A Boer farmhouse was the first sign of habitation they saw and, after some hesitation, they decided to ask the direction.

A stout, apple-checked vraww appeared on the stoep as their arrival was announced by an outbreak of fierce barking. The woman looked at the two dishevelled chums rather suspiciously and seemed to be considering whether or not she should let the dogs loose.

Apparently she thought better of it, for she directed the two chums over a fair-sized kopje, saying they would strike the river about two miles away on the other side.

As they left the farm buildings, neither Jack nor Tickler noticed a Kaffir boy slink out and go streaking away on a course parallel to their own.

Stepping out briskly, the two chums climbed the hill and were skirting a little wood when Tickler stopped and held up his hand.

"Listen!"

Straining his ears Jack caught the faint noise of a horse champing at the bit.

"A horse is just what we want," he said. "We shall take hours on foot. Let's see whether we can find it."

Retracing their steps, they went up alongside the wood and found a big, rawboned sorrel tied up to a tree. Low, guttural voices drifted down wind to them as they advanced cautiously. But they were unable to see anyone.

The horse sensed the newcomers, for it pricked its ears and whinnied softly. But a harsh order quietened it.

Tickler was in the act of untying the sorrel when he caught sight of its owner.

The man was obviously a Boer farmer, probably the owner of the house they had just left, and he was lying at full length in the undergrowth, his eyes fixed on the trail over the kopje. In his hand was a double-barrelled sporting rifle, while beside him crouched a Kaffir boy.

Jack and Tickler exchanged significant glances. It certainly looked as if the farmer was lying in wait for them, which meant that news of their escape had been circulated very quickly.

Neither of the chums could claim to be a horseman, but there was no time to waste. Jack scrambled up into the saddle just as the keen-eyed native let out a warning yell.

With a prodigious spring, Tickler managed to get up behind, and the big horse leaped forward. Although Jack tugged at the reins to bring his mount round, the sorrel had ideas of its own, and went charging straight at the enraged farmer, who yelled with fright and dived sideways.

There was a terrific pounding of hoofs as the horse plunged through the undergrowth and leaped over the low bushes fringing the trail.

It reared almost upright, and Tickler nearly slid over its tail as a stinging charge of shot came whistling past. Snorting violently, the frightened animal went galloping as hard as it could go down the trail, with the two chums hanging on like grim death.

### Help at Last!

**T**HE brute is taking us back again!" yelled Jack, gripping the pommel with both hands.

Tickler nodded, and clung more tightly to his pal's waist, too breathless for speech.

Without slackening its frightful pace the horse cleared the low fence around the farm buildings and did not halt until it reached the stoep, where it stood trembling in every limb and smothered with foam.

The two chums slid painfully to the ground, and were immediately surrounded by a swarm of Kaffirs. The stout vraww appeared and spoke a few words to the natives, and Jack and Tickler were pushed into a stable and made prisoners.

Jack went to the stable door and peered out through the crack between the top and bottom halves.

The natives outside were chattering excitedly, but they dispersed as a wheezy old car came rolling and lurching up to the farm.

Three white men clambered out, and Jack's face dropped as he saw that two of them were the very policemen who had hauled Tickler and himself off a few crowded hours before.

"It's all up, Tickler!" he groaned. "They've come for us!"

Tickler glued his eyes to the crack and gauged the distance to the car.

"If we could only make a dash for it we might get away. The engine of that old bus is still running."

He glanced round to see whether any weapons were available, but there was only a broken hayfork and an old saddle.

"They're coming!" announced Jack, as the two policemen descended from the stoep, closely followed by the third man, who was a tall, well-built fellow, with an upright bearing and keen, restless eyes.

"Here, take this fork-handle!" said Tickler. "We might as well have a try at getting away. When they open the door go for 'em bald-headed!"

The men came across the yard to the stable, and one of them lifted the bar of the door. The next moment a cyclone seemed to burst on them.

One of the policemen was caught full on the chest by a well flung saddle, while the other got his legs mixed up with an ash fork-handle and went flying.

"Hey! Stop, you young idiots!" yelled the tall man.

But the two pals took no notice. They raced across the yard as hard as they could go, while the two policemen, howling imprecations, picked themselves up.

The two chums were good sprinters, but, fast as they were, the tall man was quicker. With a flying Rugby tackle he got Jack well and truly round the knees, and the pair of them rolled over and over on the ground.

Tickler stopped in dismay, not knowing quite what to do, and the hesitation was fatal.



The two burly policemen, having recovered from their shock, were on Tickler like an avalanche.

Jack's captor sat up in the dust and grinned cheerfully.

"You pair of fatheads!" he announced. "A pretty fine dance you've led me!"

The two chums were silent. They were too full for words.

"Yes," continued the tall man. "For two hours, when every second is precious, I've been chasing you."

"Who are you?" demanded Jack.

"I'm Wing Commander Bowman, of the South African Air Force. I've seen the plane you landed with, and have been trying to find you ever since."

"Good heavens!" cried Jack, scarcely able to believe his ears. "You've not been chasing us to put us back in that asylum, then?"

"Bless me, no!" laughed Bowman. "I want you back at Jo'burg as fast as you can get there. Come on, there's no time to waste. Let's hop it into that old bus and get going."

As the car rocked and lurched its way back towards the main road Commander Bowman told the two chums how he had followed them post haste to the Government buildings, only to find they had been taken off as insane.

In his car he had dashed to the asylum, and had reached there a few seconds before they had escaped, for it was actually his car in which the two chums had got away.

"Of course," he explained, "I soon had all the telephone wires between Pretoria and Johannesburg going, and set off after you in a borrowed plane, while my two good friends, the police officers, followed in a car."

The two chums heaved a sigh of relief. At last somebody had really awakened to the danger of Hercules and his steel hordes.

Back on the main road, a big, high-powered car was waiting, and the party quickly changed from the old creak which Bowman had borrowed from a farmer.

In a short time Jack and Tickler were in Johannesburg, and saw that their warning was already being heeded. There was a scene of remarkable activity at the aerodrome and a strong armed guard had been posted round the hangar which contained the super-plane the two chums had taken from Radium City.

An elderly, brass-hatted officer was waiting for them, and Bowman introduced him as Sir Watkin Tomson, the Commander-in-Chief of the Union Forces.

"Now," said the Commander-in-Chief, when they were settled down in an office at the airport, "I want you to tell me all you know about this danger you call Black Hercules. Remember that apart from the peculiar craft you arrived in and news of the mysterious disappearance of the Zambesi River Bridge, we have absolutely no information at all."

As briefly as possible Jack told the whole story of King Hercules and his plans, while the commander grew increasingly more serious.

"But if all you say is true, there is absolutely no hope of defending ourselves," he remarked.

"The only thing that is of any use, sir, is high explosive," said Jack. "Thousands of tons of it!"

The Commander-in-Chief nodded grimly and lapsed into thought, while Bowman and the two boys waited anxiously.

"We must get the whole district evacuated at top speed," he announced,

after a few minutes. "I will get my staff at work straight away. In the meantime, you, Bowman, as the senior air officer, will take charge of all aircraft, civil and military, and cover the evacuation as necessary."

"Very good, sir!" said Bowman.

"I will put two regiments of foot and six batteries of field artillery at your disposal, to carry out any ground work and defence. These two pilots, as the only ones who know anything at all about the enemy, so far, will be placed under your care, to give you such advice as they can."

Jack and Tickler nodded eagerly.

"Your general instructions you will take from me, Bowman, but for the rest I shall leave things entirely in your hands. Thank you!"

Bowman saluted smartly, and, with the two chums, left the office as the hastily summoned staff officers and civic heads began to arrive.

Within an hour there commenced the most harrowing scene Jack and Tickler had ever witnessed. News of some dreadful, unknown disaster spread like wildfire amongst the inhabitants. The story became more and more distorted as it passed from mouth to mouth, until the whole of the population was in a state of frenzied terror.

Every wheeled conveyance capable of movement was pressed into service and loaded with the precious belongings of the owners. Tens of thousands of people swarmed to the railway stations and piled into coaches, cattle trucks, coal wagons, grain cars—anything on wheels. The confusion was indescribable, the din appalling.

Rich and poor, old and young, men, women and children, black, white, brown, and yellow, all struggled, pushed, screamed, in one hopeless, tangled confusion, spurred by the overwhelming anxiety to get as far away as possible from the fearful, unknown terror.

### First Blood to the Chums!

**W**HEN the evacuation was complete, and Jack and Tickler had had a much needed rest, Sir Watkin Tomson called a meeting of his staff, to which Jack and Tickler were invited.

Bowman reported that he had posted the six field batteries at strategic points, and, at the suggestion of the two chums, had employed the foot soldiers in filling the extreme edge of all the mine workings with high explosive.

The necessary detonators had all been wired up, and the charges could be fired simultaneously or independently from a hidden observation post on the top of the Rand.

Fast single-seater planes, equipped with radio, had been sent out to give warning, and to look out for any sign of attack, and the telephone and telegraph lines to Mafeking and Shoshong were cleared in readiness.

"Well, gentlemen," said Sir Watkin, "there seems to be little we can do now but wait for the enemy to appear."

"There is one thing I don't quite understand, sir," remarked one of the staff officers,

"and that is why, if any attack is imminent, we have not received a single report of the enemy. According to our young friends, these alleged mechanical soldiers have some six or eight hundred miles of country to cross before they reach here, and surely it is impossible for them to get very far without our knowing."

"Don't you realise that we are not up against an ordinary individual?" protested Jack. "Hercules is a super-man. Why, in six hours his bullet-cars could get enough Amarobs here to wipe the place out, and his carrier-planes could do it in just over an hour!"

"Yes," agreed Tickler. "I'm surprised they are not here already—"

He broke off as the telephone rang insistently, and everyone was silent while the Commander-in-Chief picked up the receiver.

"Yes," said Sir Watkin. "What's that?"

He sat bolt upright.

"A flight of a thousand strange aircraft now passing over Mafeking at an estimated speed of five hundred miles an hour. Right! Yes, please! Keep me informed. Thank you!"

He rang off and looked round at the set, white faces of the company.

"Gentlemen, our two young friends are vindicated. In half an hour the enemy will arrive. Get to your posts!"

With alacrity the officers sprang to their allotted tasks, and in a few seconds only Bowman and the two chums were left with Sir Watkin.

The telephone bell rang once more and the chief answered it.

"Several hundred smaller planes now passing Mafeking," he announced. "Speed slightly less than the first flight."

"That is according to plan, sir!" cried Jack excitedly. "The first, large planes, are troop carriers. They will land somewhere beyond the Rand and unload the Amarobs. The unloading will be covered by the small planes, which are automatic, and carry no pilots. They are filled with a terribly powerful explosive, and will be crashed on the city in order to wipe out any resistance."

Sir Watkin nodded grimly. "There seems to be little we can do, boys," he said, "but we'll put up a fight of some sort, although, quite frankly, I don't know how. It is already dusk, and by the time the black planes arrive it will be so dark we shall be helpless."

"I've got an idea," whispered Tickler, suddenly dragging at his pal's arm. "We might gain a little respite by it. Come on!"

Leaving the Commander-in-Chief, the two chums went out into the flying ground and ordered their plane to be wheeled out ready to take the air.

(Continued on next page.)



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"What are you going to do?" demanded Bowman.

"You come with us and you'll see," grinned Tickler.

Nothing loath, Bowman clambered up into the peculiar, steel-lined cabin and watched with amazed interest as Jack took the controls and switched on the engine.

Noiselessly the plane rose straight up into the air, and Bowman went to one of the grille-covered vents and peered out. Night had already fallen with tropical suddenness, and the Southern Cross showed up brightly in the velvet sky.

"I don't quite see what you hope to do," remarked Bowman. "It's pitch-dark now, and I don't suppose the attackers will carry any lights. If, in addition, they are noiseless, how on earth can we find them?"

Tickler grinned and seated himself in a chromium-plated chair before the big screen.

"Come here and we'll show you. This is where we begin to get the benefit of Hercules' genius."

He switched on the photographic screen which was operated by infra-red rays, and there, clear as daylight, was a swiftly moving panorama of the countryside below. Mine shafts and great hills of spoil showed up in perfect detail, and even the little figures of artillerymen bringing up ammunition under the cover of darkness could plainly be discerned.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Bowman, aghast. "And we've got to fight people equipped with planes like this?"

"Yes," nodded Jack grimly. "And this is only a bit of what we're up against."

He switched over to climb, and the machine shot straight up at a terrific rate.

"Should be high enough to be above them now," he grunted, looking at the altimeter. "We'll wait for 'em."

Answering the controls perfectly, the wonderful machine hovered stationary while the trio stared into the screen.

They did not have many minutes to wait before a black patch appeared on the edge and approached at incredible speed.

Jack dropped the machine a little to get a closer view, and the watchers saw a horde of planes—rather similar to their

own, but smaller—mirrored in the screen.

With clockwork precision the planes stopped in midair over the open veld a few miles beyond the edge of the Rand, and then descended vertically. No sooner had they touched the ground than hordes of mechanical Amarobs swarmed from them and started to line up in military formation.

So absorbed were the onlookers that they did not notice a second fleet flying higher than the others and coming straight for them.

Tickler suddenly sprang forward, snapped up the climbing control, and the machine shot upwards so quickly that the screen became blurred.

"Gosh! That was a near one," whistled Jack. "I'd almost forgotten those explosive carriers. If one of 'em had hit us it would have been all up!"

"Yes," nodded Tickler. "But as they didn't hit us I think I'll try my little scheme now."

He sat down at the control board and pushed a small metal plug into a socket.

"Now," he announced, "we'll see whether my theory is correct."

"What is it?" inquired Bowman.

"Briefly this. As you know, radio activity is the basis of those explosive carriers, and they are controlled by a main plane like this one. Now, this has a fully equipped control board, and I have connected up the juice. As those automatic planes are nearer to us than to any other control source, we should be able to do what we like with them."

Tingling with excitement, Bowman peered into the screen while Jack brought the machine down closer to the explosive carriers. Tickler's hand was already hovering over the control panel, and he gripped the lever which, if their hopes were well founded, would govern the movement of that dastardly fleet.

The outskirts of Johannesburg came into view, and Tickler knew that now was the time to act, for if his plan failed the city would be blown to a shapeless mass within the next few seconds.

Slowly he pulled the lever upwards, and Bowman gave a yell of triumph.

"They're rising!"

Tickler moved the lever to the right and then backwards, and the automatic planes swung round obediently, following the course he set for them.

"Hurrah! It's working all right!" he chuckled, while his companions heaved a sigh of relief.

The danger of complete and terrible obliteration which threatened Johannesburg was staved off—at least, for the time being.

The massed ranks of the Amarobs, with the bullet cars drawn up in perfect order, appeared on the screen. Evidently all was ready for the attack, and the steel soldiers were only being held back until the explosive carriers had done their deadly work.

Tickler made a quick mental calculation, and suddenly depressed the control lever as hard as he could. The automatic planes flying just below seemed to stop, and then grow rapidly smaller as they fell headlong to the ground.

There was an appalling crash, frightful in its intensity, and the terrifying noise of the explosion seemed to split their eardrums. The air was filled with flying steel as the automatic planes dropped right on to the ranks of the mechanical men, while earth and sky were filled with a shivering tremor as the rumble of the explosion echoed back and forth over the valleys of the Rand.

Jack struggled desperately at the controls as flying steel spattered against the machine like hail, and for a few awful seconds it seemed that they were caught in the dreadful vortex created by the explosion.

White-faced and trembling in every nerve, Jack succeeded at last in getting the plane well above the danger zone, and stared aghast at the picture below. The havoc wrought was indescribable. Gone were the neat, orderly ranks of Amarobs, the squadrons of bullet cars, and the long line of planes, and in their place a distorted mass of wreckage spread far and wide.

Without a word Jack set the machine back towards the city while his companions continued to gaze at the rapidly moving scene of desolation.

"Gosh!" muttered Bowman shakily, as the plane dropped down towards the landing ground. "I'm only just beginning to realise what we're up against."

"Yes," replied Tickler, who was beginning to recover his old cheerfulness. "It's first blood to us, and we'll find some way of beating Hercules yet."

(Look out for more nerve-tingling chapters of this powerful adventure yarn in next week's MAGNET, chums!)

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## ENTHUSIASTIC COLLECTORS

Who would like to add to their collections are invited to come along to my End-of-Term Boxing Jamboree and collect a few thick ears!—Partics. from BOLSOVER MAJOR, Study No. 10, Remove.



# THE NEW Greyfriars Herald



No. 94 (New Series).

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

July 21st, 1934.

## RIDE HIM, COWBOY!

Whatever you do, don't miss the Remove Rodeo in Brown's Mead, Friardale, next Monday! Steer-roping and Bronco-busting Competitions and Pony Racing. Valuable prizes for the winners offered by the "Greyfriars Herald." Roll up!—TOM BROWN, Secretary, Study No. 2, Remove.

## GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

For real, downright enjoyment, give us a good old-fashioned Speech Day at Greyfriars! The joys of cricket, we admit, are not to be despised, and indoor recreations such as playing are excellent in their way. But all other forms of entertainment, both indoor and outdoor, must take a back seat where a Greyfriars Speech Day is concerned!

The one we have just had was particularly enjoyable.

The boys were assembled in Hall, and stood in ranks in an erect, soldierly pose. A few were a little apprehensive lest they should find it difficult to remain motionless during the whole of the five or six hours' programme that lay ahead of them. The headmaster's assurance that there would be a flogging for all who failed, however, heartened them considerably in their efforts, and there was general pleasure in the knowledge that the ordeal would greatly increase their powers of self-discipline.

After about half-an-hour, the College Governors, who had been arriving singly in their coaches for some time, took their seats on the platform, while parents and friends were accommodated in the gallery. (\*)

A series of speeches of exquisite verbal magnificence and unsurpassed wisdom was then delivered. What they were about, very few knew, since they teemed with obscure classical quotations; but in order that the college might know where to applaud or laugh, Dr. Goodsmyte had thoughtfully arranged a handkerchief code by which he gave appropriate signals. All were thus able to enjoy the speeches, even though they did not understand them.

The effect of the handkerchief signals may be illustrated by our printing the opening of Sir Balder Dasha's speech.

"My lords, ladies, and gentlemen! Greyfriars stands to-day, as ever, pro bono publico. (Hear!) As we all know, labor omnia vincit. (Hear!) and I think it can be confidently stated that Greyfriars to-day is nulli secundus. (Hear!) As a Governor, I suppose I should find something to criticise, but I really cannot. Hinc ille lacrimae." (A laugh).

Each time the headmaster felt that "Hear" was called for, he pretended to blow his nose; and each time the speaker made a joke, he dropped his handkerchief. It was an excellently contrived arrangement and worked well, on the whole.

Of course, accidents are always liable to happen, and one happened when Dr. Goodsmyte blew his nose without intending the act to be a signal. Most inappropriately, the unintended signal came at a moment when Sir Balder Dasha had just remarked "I have not people who used to say I ought to have been drowned at birth!" The enthusiastic "Hear!" which thundered across the Hall immediately afterwards was so unexpected that the speaker was completely flabbergasted, and sat down without concluding!

This incident, however, was a cloud which obscured for but a single moment the blissful happiness of six inspiring hours.

One suggestion only have we for improving future Speech Days. That is, that the boys should be allowed to relax when applauding.

\*No longer in existence.—Ed.

or laughing. It is surprisingly difficult to cheer and laugh effectively with hands held stiffly at the side and chin stuck up in the air! Doubtless the headmaster will give consideration to this respectful suggestion.

(How they must have revelled in those six solid hours of boring speeches—WE DON'T THINK! No mistake about it, lads, we've a lot to be thankful for nowadays!—Ed.)

## Dicky Nugent's Weekly Wisdom

The chaps seem amazed at Temple of the Upper Fourth going to the eggspense of having a film taken of his innings against the Remove neckst week, but after all it shouldn't be very eggspensive.

The cameraman won't need more than a couple of feet of film at the outside!

## BUNTER THE BOTANIST

Bunter, who has recently taken up the study of botany, is awfully upset about Sir Hilton Popper's rejection of his application to inspect the orchard at Popper Court.

"Anyone would think I couldn't be trusted in a blessed orchard," he complained indignantly to a "Greyfriars Herald" representative. "As a matter of fact, there's no one they could trust better than myself, and anyway, the last time I pinched old Popper's cherries, a blessed gardener sot a dog on me! Apart from that, I never eat fruit!

"Besides, old Popper's fruit is awfully worm-eaten and hardly worth taking. And, anyway, I'm much too honest to take anything that doesn't belong to me, I hope.

studying botany, when his motives are so pure and unselfish and in the best interests of science!

## WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



When the Famous Five took Marjorie Hazeldene and the Cliff House girls for a "hike" over the cliffs, they found the girls surprisingly good walkers. The Removites sportingly refrained from attempting to go too far, though!



"But I'm not jolly well

## FAGS! HERE'S YOUR CHANCE

### Our Great Prize Offer

We've been getting into trouble with the fags lately. One after the other they've been trotting into the editorial study, complaining of the way we refer to them in the "Herald."

They say we're prejudiced against them, and that we give readers the idea that they can't spell, that they're untidy, and that they've no brains! This, they say, is all wrong.

Now, it has never been our intention to treat anybody unfairly, be they fageys or fags, and we feel this accusation keenly; it goes straight to the heart, in fact!

The best way we can think of allaying the fags' suspicion is to offer a prize for the best example of the qualities we're accused of denying in them. This we have decided to do.

Here's your chance, fags! Go in and win!

The Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" will award a prize of 1 doz. Fresh Herrings, 2 doz. Doughnuts, and 1 doz. Bottles of Ginger-pop for the neatest, brainiest, and most 'correctly spelt' essay received by him from any Greyfriars fag not later than the first post on Tuesday next on the subject of "SOAP."

The Editor hopes to publish the result, together with the winning essay, in next week's issue of the "Herald."

## "How I Beat the Beaks!"

Turn the coming Summer Vac to good account by studying Vernon-Smith's Method of Beating the Beaks! Learn the priceless secrets of the guy who has terrorised a dozen Form-masters! Complete Course of Lessons with Self-Examination Charts in handy pocket size, 2s. 6d. only!—Vernon-Smith, Study No. 4, Remove.

## COMPLETELY UP THE POLE

### Coker Tries Punting

"Of course, I shall do the poling!" Coker made that remark in a loud voice outside the School House the other Wednesday afternoon, and every junior within earshot sat up and took notice.

"I'm used to punts," Coker went on. "No sense in novices like you fellows messing about when there's an expert aboard, is there?" Potter said: "No," and Greene said: "Not at all, old man!" and there was a gleam of hope in their eyes as they spoke—or so we thought, anyway!

Well, let's get along," said Coker. "You can carry the grub, Potter, and you the gramophone, Greene. I must reserve my strength for the work that's to come."

Potter and Greene picked up their burdens, and the trio got going. About thirty Greyfriars fellows followed at a respectful distance. The opportunity of watching an expert poling a punt did not occur every day, and those who could take advantage of it did so without hesitation!

At the boathouse, Coker looked at the punts with an appraising eye, and took plenty of time to select one. The attendant was unusually respectful, evidently recognising a past-master in the art of

punting, though some unkind spirits present suggested that it was because of the lavish tips Coker usually bestows on his menials.

Having put the gramophone and tuck-basket



aboard, Coker & Co. climbed into the punt themselves. There was a loud cheer from their admirers on the towpath as they glided out into midstream, helped on the way by a push from a boathook.

Coker's pole went up in the air with a flourish, then slid neatly through his hands into the water. As it sank into the mud at the bottom, Coker gripped hard, and pushed with every fibre of his being (as they say in novels).

As an exhibition stroke in high-speed punting, it was the goods. Potter and Greene felt the punt simply shoot ahead in the water!

The only drawback about it was that it

went so quickly that it had slipped away from under Coker's feet before Coker knew where he was!

That was all right for Potter and Greene, of course. They had the grub and the gramophone, and, being without means of propulsion, had a jolly good excuse for not returning. Judging by the happy smiles on their faces as they glided off downstream, Potter and Greene were by no means displeased by the turn events had taken!



For Coker, of course, it was a different proposition. For two dizzy seconds, he felt himself swaying over the gleaming waters of the Sark.

Then the pole decided which way to go, and Coker felt himself describing an arc through the air. But those of you who think he went straight into the water have got another guess coming!

As a matter of fact, Pon. & Co. happened to be coming along in a motor-boat just at the right moment, and Coker landed in a heap astern, saving himself by the skin of his teeth.

Pon. & Co. were all flung into the water—but Coker escaped unscathed so no harm was done!

## MEET TARZAN Jun.

### New Role for Wibley

The "Greyfriars Herald" representative saw Wibley swinging lightly from branch to branch through the trees of Friardale Woods. The bright sunlight would have gleamed on his lithe figure and rippling muscles, but for the fact that he was wearing his clothes. So it gleamed on his grey flannel bags and dusty blazer instead!

"That you, Wib?" our representative bawled. "Whoopee!" came a half-human—half-animal cry from above.

"I say, old bean, are you doing this for a wager or have you got bats?"

"Whoopee! Woooop!" "Look here, if you don't come down soon, I shall fetch a bobby—you don't look safe!"

A half-human, half-animal laugh was the only response to that threat at first, but later, with a crackling of branches and a snapping of twigs, Wibley of the Remove came to earth.

"No, I haven't gone off my rocker," he said, as our representative instinctively edged away. "I'm just rehearsing."

"W-w-what?" "Rehearsing," said Wibley cheerfully. "My pater, who has been doing some work for the films lately, has got me a small part in a film during the coming vac. It's a 'human ape' film. I take the part of the leading character's young brother, and I don't have to touch the ground once. So I'm just getting my hands in!"

Our representative patted the young actor sympathetically on the back, and, with a sigh, resumed his journey. What, he couldn't help asking himself—and we echo his question—are things coming to when Remove men spend their leisure time swinging about in the trees acting as human apes for the films?

Bit thick, really, isn't it?

## GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



When the Famous Five took Marjorie Hazeldene and the Cliff House girls for a "hike" over the cliffs, they found the girls surprisingly good walkers. The Removites sportingly refrained from attempting to go too far, though!

Coker is very proud of his powerful motor-bike, and says every fellow ought to be able to ride one. When Bob Cherry agreed, and asked when Coker proposed to learn, Coker leaped off his bike and chased Bob for half a mile!

Bolsover major has an unerring aim with a shoe if any fellow talks when he wants to sleep. Bunter is often the target of Bolsover's footwear, and Bunter's yells testify that Bolsover invariably scores a "bull's-eye!"

Fellows have suggested that Hurree Janset Ram Singh has the gift of hypnotism, but "Inky" laughs at it. His cool, dark gaze had, however, a very disturbing effect on Bunter when he caught the Owl out in a "whopper!"

Fisher T. Fish invented a special pen nib which he claimed made writing "lines" a hundred per cent easier. While demonstrating it during classes, he received five hundred lines from Quelch. He would rather have sold his nib!

Bob Cherry and Percy Bolsover have had frequent "rubs" over the question of bullying. Bolsover is learning to keep his temper in check—owing partly to Cherry's fistic persuasion and partly to faint stirrings of better nature.

## Strange

A short while ago a pailful of sooty water placed over the entrance to Masters' Common-room fell right over Mr. Quelch's head, and the master of the Remove is very anxious to learn who did it.

We're afraid we can't supply the answer—although, curiously enough, we know several fellows who turned "pail" at the time of the accident!

Patrons are asked to note that the Comic Cricket Match arranged for Wednesday next at Courtfield in aid of the Cottage Hospital is postponed.

As a good substitute we suggest a Fourth v. Third game.