

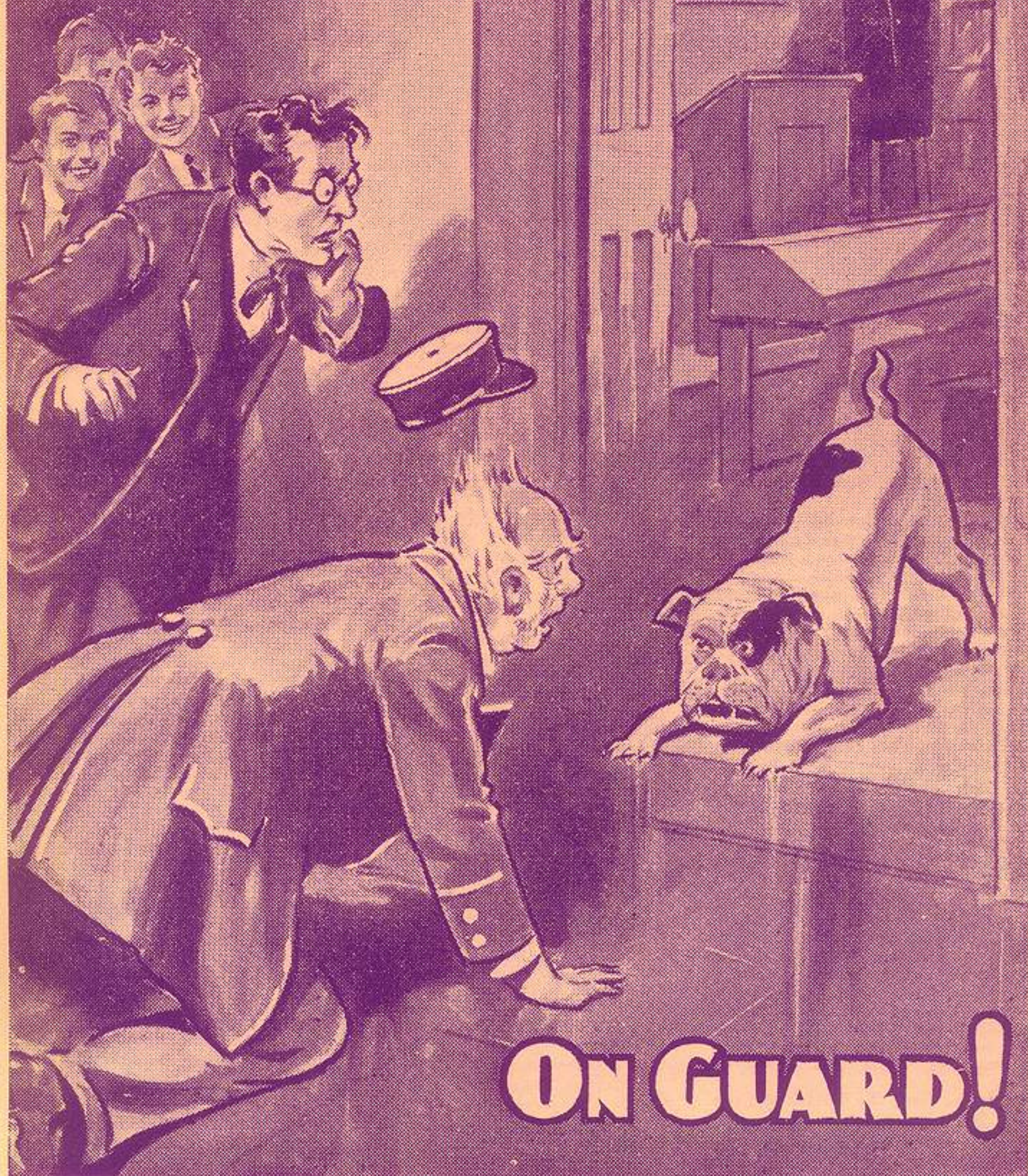
THE
MAGNET

"The Japer of Greyfriars!"

Exciting
School Story
of . . .

Harry Wharton & Co.

The Magnet 2^D



ON GUARD!



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON

STOP
PRESS
NEWS

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THE following extraordinary letter arrived at our palatial offices (Study No. 1) this week. We print it without comment:

Highcliff College,
Courtfield.

Deer Sir,—I am a new boy in the Third Form at Highcliff. I arrived last Wensday. I felt verry important as I stepped into the Hack at Courtfield Stashion, and told the driver to drive me to the Skool. I thought Highcliff was the only big Skool in this vissinity, and had never heard of Greyfriars until the Hack dumped me down at the Gates. The Porter, a narled and anshunt man, gave me a sour look.

"Wot I ses is this 'ere, who are you?"

"I'm a New Boy for the Third Form, sir."

The Porter replide with a Grunt:

"Ho? Then you'd better report yerself to Mr. Wiggins. Go into the 'Ouse and ask the Page to show you where he is."

I did this, sir, but Mr. Wiggins was out, so the Page, whose name was Trotter, told me to leave my Bag in the house-dame's room, and come back after tea. He said I could either have tea in Hall, or buy some myself in the Tuckshop. I chose the latter orlternative, as I had Ten Bob from the Pater.

Outside the Tuckshop I met a very fat fellow, with giglamps, who wanted to know who I was. I told him I was a new boy in the Third.

"That's all right, I'll look after you, kid," he said bennevolently. "You want a fellow to show you the Ropes, and so on. What about Tea? If you're peckish, come into the Tuckshop—my treat. I was just going in myself."

I thought that was verry descent of him. We had a nice Tea, but I never in all my Puff saw any fellow who could eat like this fellow did. He simply wolfed donuts and jam tarts like a starving horstrich and I thought he'd need a good deel of munney to pay the bill. But he said that all his titled relations were millyunaires, which was a Bit of Luck.

After the feed, the Tuckshop Lady asked for the munney.

"Great pip!" he exclaimed. "I've left my wallet in my studdy. You pay the bill, kid, and I'll give you the

munney later on." And he rolled out and left me to get on with it.

The bill came to 17s. 6d., which took all my Ten Bob, and left me owing seven-and-six, and the Lady said I must pay before the end of the weak, or she would complane to Mr. Wiggins. I said it was all right, as the other fellow was going to give me the munney; but she just sniffed.

In the Tuckshop I met a fellow named Tubb, who said he was Captain of the Third. He looked critickally at me, and said I didn't look up to mutch; but he supposed he'd have to put up with me, and then he said I'd better stand the Third a bit of a feed, in order to be poppular. But when I konfessed about the fat fellow, he grew very angry, and he and some other fellows Bumped me, and said I was a Green Iddiot.

But another fellow, who overheard the konversation, told me privately that he would be glad to lend me a Quid, if I wanted one. He seemed to be an American fellow, because he said: "I guess you'll get into a Rookus if you've no spondulics in your jeans. Jest sign this paper, and the quid is yourn." I didn't understand what he was talking about, but it was Jolly Good of him, I think. He lent me the Quid, and I bought some Tuck, and we had a feed in the Third Form Room.

The fellows were then very descent to me, and Tubb said:

"I hope you can play Footer, because we've got a match against the Highcliff fags next week, and it's a tough game, because we always rag Highcliff kids baldheaded when we katch them."

This was a very disagreeable surprise for me, because up till then I thought I Was at Highcliff. It gave me Food for Thought. I could see I had come to the rong Skool, so I told the fellows I had to go and report to Wiggins, and then I sneaked off quietly and grabbed my Bag and sloped out of a windo. The Gates was shut, so I shinned over the wall and Bunked.

I got into trubble at Highcliff for being late, but that didn't matter. What I rite at all for, sir, is to tell the trooth about what happened, and to appollogise all round. I am verry sorry I went away with the American fellow's Quid; but I enklouse a postal order for two-and-six, and he can get the other seventeen-and-six from the fat fellow, who owes it to me.

Yores sinserely,
OLIVER SIMMINGTON BETTS.

We handed Fishy the said postal order, but, somehow, he seemed dissatisfied. In fact, after he read this letter, he was completely dazed, and

lay back in his chair muttering: "That fat clam! Seventeen-and-six! Oh, wake snakes and walk chalks! Seventeen-and-six!" We left him to it.

We then looked for Bunter and gave him a sound bumping, but we didn't quite slaughter him. Fishy will want to do that.

LANGUAGE LESSON!

The other night a burglar tried to break into the school, but P.-c. Tozer spotted him in the act. Next day he called and told the Head about it. And this was part of their dialogue:

"And what did you do when you saw the man climbing the wall, Mr. Tozer?"

"Pinched 'im, sir."

"Indeed? Why did you do that?"

"Why, it's the lor, o' course."

"Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Tozer, that the law instructs you to pinch a burglar? What possible reason is there for such an act? Where did you pinch him?"

"On the spot, sir."

"Which spot, Mr. Tozer? Do you mean his leg?"

"I pinched all of 'im."

"You mean that you pinched him all over? Did you pinch him to make him let go of the wall?"

"Nunno, sir. You ain't got me. I knocked 'im horff."

"You knocked him off the wall?"

"You got it, sir."

"And what did you do when you had knocked him off the wall?"

"Knocked 'im horff, sir."

"Exactly! But after you had knocked him off—"

"Pinched 'im, sir."

"I really cannot understand this procedure. Will you be more lucid, Mr. Tozer? What do you mean, exactly, by pinching him?"

"Snaffled 'im, sir."

"Goodness gracious! Are you serious, Mr. Tozer? Why, a snaffle is a horse's bit. You cannot possibly mean that you fitted a snaffle on this man?"

"Nunno, sir. I put 'im in quod."

"In the quadrangle? But why did you put him in the quadrangle, Mr. Tozer? And why did he stay there—unless you mean that you secured him to a tree or bench—"

"Nunno, sir. I pinched him."

"You took him into the school quadrangle to pinch him? This is positively bewildering—"

And so on, for about an hour.

It seems that between the English spoken by the Head and that spoken by Mr. Tozer there is a great gulf fixed.

MR. LAMB HAS GOT A DOWN ON VERNON-SMITH—AND THE BOUNDER HAS GOT A DOWN ON THE LAMB! WHO WILL COME OFF BEST?

The JAPER of GREYFRIARS!



A SUDDEN SNOWFALL!
HARRY WHARTON jumped.
"You fat ass!" he roared.
Billy Bunter did not heed.
Bunter was in a hurry.

Harry Wharton was seated at the table in Study No. 1 in the Remove. He was writing lines, after morning school. He had a hundred to do for Mr. Lamb, and he wanted to get through before the dinner-bell rang. His pen was racing over the paper, when the study door suddenly opened and the fattest member of the Greyfriars Remove shot into the study.

Billy Bunter rushed across from the door to the window. He did not heed the captain of the Remove. He bumped into a chair, banged against the table, and rushed on regardless.

The table rocked. A shower of blots fell from Wharton's pen on the sheet he had just written, completely spoiling the same. It was a sheer waste of no fewer than thirty lines!

Billy Bunter did not heed the damage he had done. He did not even see it. He reached the study window, and grabbed the catch back. Then he grabbed the lower sash to push it up.

"You mad ass!" roared the captain of the Remove. "Look what you've done!"

Bunter did not look.

He was concentrated on the window-sash. He grunted and gasped in his efforts to shove it upward. That was not very easy. Outside, the window-sill was thickly banked with

The removal of the drawing revealed the notepaper on which was written, in block capital letters, the words: "WHO'S NOBBY?" Mr. Lamb gazed at the paper, his eyes scintillating over his glasses.

snow. Snow was piled against the lower panes. Snow had been falling all night. It had ceased to fall in the morning, and there was a bright gleam of wintry sunshine; but Greyfriars School was almost hidden in a mantle of white. That window-sash seemed rather jammed by the accumulation of snow on the sill.

"What are you up to?" howled Harry Wharton.

He almost forgot the damage to his impot in his amazement at the weird proceedings of the fat Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter was an ass, and was never expected to act otherwise than as an ass; but why even an ass like Bunter should rush into another fellow's study and grab frantically at the window to get it open was quite a mystery.

Billy Bunter blinked round over a fat shoulder through his big spectacles.

"I say, this window's jammed——" he gasped.

"You blithering owl——"

"Lend me a hand with it quick!"

"Are you off your rocker? What do you want my window open for, you potty porpoise?"

"I wish you wouldn't jaw and waste time! Lamb may be gone any minute. Do help me with this window!"

"Lamb?"

"He's just underneath!" gasped Bunter. "I'm going to push the snow off the sill right on his napper, see? If you waste time, the beast may walk away. Lend me a hand—quick!"

Bunter shoved at the window again.

There was no time to be lost. If Mr. Lamb, the art master of Greyfriars, who was taking the Remove in Mr. Quelch's absence, was under that window, obviously he would not remain a permanent fixture on the spot. Bunter did not want to lose such a golden opportunity of landing a cargo of snow right on Mr. Lamb's napper. It was really the chance of a lifetime. But moments were precious.

The fat Owl gave the window a tremendous heave. The sash shot up at last.

But at the same moment Harry Wharton jumped forward, grabbed

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OF GREYFRIARS.**

the Owl of the Remove by a podgy shoulder, and slung him back from the window before he could push at the stacked snow on the sill.

Billy Bunter spun as far as the table, bumped into it for the second time, and sat down with a concussion that almost shook the study.

"Ow!" he roared.

Harry Wharton put his head out of the window and glanced down over the stack of snow.

Wintry sunshine gleamed on spotless snow. There was snow almost everywhere. But some of the paths had been swept clear. And on the path below the Remove study windows Mr. Lamb was taking his usual trot before lunch.

Mr. Lamb had been walking up and down that path. Now, however, he had come to a halt almost directly under the window of Study No. 1 in the Remove, and was speaking to Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth.

Prout was booming, as usual. Little Mr. Lamb was listening to him with the mild politeness that was the Pet Lamb's way.

So long as Prout kept him talking—or rather, listening—Lamb was at the mercy of any fellow who chose to shove the accumulation of snow off the window-sill high over his head. Which was a happy chance that Billy Bunter did not want to lose.

He had selected Harry Wharton's window because Wharton's window was over Lamb's head. But Wharton, naturally, had quite other views on the subject. He did not want Lamb to come raging up to that study Meek and mild as the Pet Lamb was, the Remove fellows had learned that he had a temper and a heavy hand with a cane when his temper was roused. And the mildest temper might have been roused by the sudden descent of a heavy mass of snow on an unsuspecting head.

Harry Wharton drew his head in and grasped the sash to close it down again.

Billy Bunter bounced up and grabbed his arm.

"Stop it, you fathead!" gasped Bunter. "I'm going to shove that snow down on his napper, you silly ass!"

"Fathead!"

"Beast! Will you stop wasting time?" hissed Bunter. "He may go any minute—the beaks always get away from Prout as fast as they can when he starts jawing! Gerrouit!"

The fat Owl dragged at the captain of the Remove. Precious moments were flying.

"You benighted ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Chuck it! Lamb will be up here like a shot if he gets that snow on his napper!"

"Well, I shan't wait for him!" answered Bunter. "That's all right. He won't know it was me, as it ain't my study!"

"It's my study, you blithering clump! Do you think I want him on my track?" booted Wharton.

"Well, you can cut, too! Isn't he a beast?" demanded Bunter. "Look how he makes out that he's a soft ass and let's fellows rag him, and then all of a sudden gets into a

fearful temper and whops a chap! He whopped me in Form this morning just because I dropped a book on his foot—and I told him it was an accident, too! I'm going to get him!"

"You're going to get out!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Leggo!"

"Travel!"

The captain of the Remove whirled Bunter towards the door.

Billy Bunter spun out of Study No. 1 into the Remove passage like a fat humming-top. He bumped on the opposite wall and roared.

Harry Wharton turned back to the window to close it. He supposed that Bunter was done with.

But that was a mistake. Bunter was not done with. Bunter came charging back into the study like an excited hippopotamus. He came across the study at full speed and crashed into the captain of the Remove as he stood at the window.

That window was still wide open. Harry Wharton was pitched at it by the sudden charge in his back, and his face, shoulders, and arms crashed on the pile of snow on the sill.

"Ooogh!" spluttered Wharton.

That pile of snow was, of course, immediately dislodged from the sill. It tipped off and descended in a mass.

A sudden, startled howl from below announced that somebody had got it.

"He, he, he!" gasped Bunter breathlessly.

Harry Wharton, smothered with snow, turned round on the fat Owl. He scraped snow from his face and hair and eyes and ears, gasping for breath.

"He, he, he! You've done it now!" gurgled Billy Bunter. "Lamb's got it—he, he, he! You've jolly well done it!"

"Ooogh! You fat idiot—oogh! I'll—"

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

He shot out of the study. He was finished there now. Prompt retreat was the next item on the programme before Lamb came up to inquire.

Harry Wharton stood scraping off snow. But it dawned upon him that it was unwise to linger. He threw a blotting-sheet over the lines on the table and hurried out of the study.

Bunter had already disappeared into Study No. 7. Wharton cut along to Study No. 14, and Study No. 1 was left vacant to greet the eyes of the Pet Lamb, if he came up to inquire—as there was little doubt that he would.

THE BOUNDER'S BAD LUCK!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, came out of his Study No. 4 in the Remove, and glanced up and down the passage.

He had heard hurried footsteps pass his door, and wondered whether anything was up.

Nobody was in the passage, however, and the Bounder walked along to Study No. 1 and went in.

The door and window of that study were both wide open.

"No football to-day, Wharton—"

he began, before he noticed that the study was empty.

Then he broke off, with a grunt. He wanted to speak to the captain of the Remove, and Wharton had been there, writing lines, ever since third school. Now, it seemed, he had chucked it, and was gone.

Smithy glanced curiously round the study.

An icy wind blew in at the open window. On the floor were patches of snow, scraped off Wharton's face and hair, two or three minutes ago. From outside, below the window, floated the sound of excited voices.

Smithy stepped to the window, put out his head, and looked down. It seemed that something had happened.

A portly figure was visible on the path below. Three or four others were to be seen, gathering round. Prout's voice was booming.

"Ooogh! Upon my word! Oh! Oogh! I have some snow in my eye—actually in my eye! Ooogh! And some in my mouth—groogh!" Prout's boom was interrupted by a splutter. "What ever can have caused the snow to—ooogh—fall so suddenly—grooogh!"

The Bounder grinned as he looked down.

The faces surrounding Mr. Prout wore smiles. Prout supposed that there had been a snow-slip. Others, who could see that the stacks of snow remained undisturbed on the rest of the row of sills, probably guessed that the snow had been tipped down.

Mr. Lamb was not to be seen. He had got most of the snow, having been directly under the window. Lamb had given one look up at that window, and then shot away to the door of the House. Smithy did not even know that Lamb had been on the spot at all.

He grinned down at Prout. The Fifth Form-master's mortar-board was aslant, with a rather intoxicated look. There was snow in his portly neck. He grabbed and gouged at snow. He boomed and spluttered.

Vernon-Smith, grinning, drew back from the window. Somebody—Wharton, he supposed, as Wharton had been in the study—had tipped the stack of snow over Prout. He sagely decided not to let Prout see him, if Prout looked up! Prout might have fancied that the wrong party was guilty, if he had seen Smithy at the study window.

The Bounder crossed to the door again.

As he did so, there was a tread of rapid footsteps in the Remove passage. Mr. Lamb appeared in the doorway of Study No. 1.

The Bounder almost walked into him, but he stopped in time.

Lamb's eyes, over his gold-rimmed glasses, fixed on the junior in the study.

"You!" he said. "You threw that snow down on me, Vernon-Smith!"

Smithy gave a start. Lamb's face was set with anger, his eyes glinting. There was a powdering of snow all over him. The Bounder realised that Lamb must have been with Prout, and had got the consignment

from the study window-sill, as well as the Fifth Form master.

"No, sir!" he exclaimed. "I never even knew—"

"You are here!" said Mr. Lamb. "I lost no time—I came up at once, to catch the young rascal who throw down the snow! I have found you here."

He stepped into the study.

Herbert Vernon-Smith's face set.

He knew that hard glint in Lamb's eyes. He knew that, under his lamb-like exterior, Mr. Quelch's substitute was as hard as nails, and cruel as a cat. He had had a good deal of experience of Mr. Lamb's peculiar temper since that term had started. And he was rather in a hurry to explain that he was not the culprit—though he might easily have been, for Smithy had a feud on with Lamb, and seldom lost an opportunity of ragging him.

"It was not I, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "I've only just come into the study. I never even knew you'd been under the window."

"Who else was here?"

"Nobody was here when I came in. I came in to speak to Wharton about the football, but he was not here—"

"Quite so!" said Mr. Lamb grimly. "Nobody was here—but you, Vernon-Smith! You need say no more."

There was a footstep in the passage, and Frank Nugent looked in. He had come up to see whether his chum had finished his lines, and he glanced in surprise at his Form-master and the sullen-faced Bounder.

Mr. Lamb glanced round at him.

"Nugent!" he rapped.

"Yes, sir!"

"Go down to my study and fetch the cane you will find on the table."

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Frank Nugent went back to the staircase.

Mr. Lamb stood in the study dusting off snow. Generally, the Lamb looked meek and mild—some of the Remove fellows said that he was too soft to say "Boo" to a goose. The Bounder knew him better than that. Certainly he looked neither meek nor mild now. It was not often that the Pet Lamb displayed bad temper—but when he did, it was very bad indeed. And it was very bad now.

The Bounder's brow grew blacker and blacker.

He knew that he was for it. He had been for it a good many times that term—his feud with Lamb had earned him more whoppings in a couple of weeks than he would have been likely to receive from Mr. Quelch in a whole term. And from painful experience, he knew how that mild-looking little gentleman could lay it on, on the occasions when the iron hand peeped out from the velvet glove.

"I never did it, sir!" said Vernon-Smith quietly, though his voice was almost trembling with rage. "I tell you that I had only just come into the study—"

"That will do!"

"If you choose to inquire—"

"I do not choose to take your word, Vernon-Smith! I know precisely how much it is worth!" answered Mr. Lamb contemptuously. "You need

say no more! I shall punish you severely for this."

"I tell you—"

"Be silent!"

The Bounder stood silent, almost choking with rage.

He was going to take six when Nugent came back with the cane. And he knew that that six was going to be tough. He had not done it; but certainly it looked as if he had, and Lamb did not choose to inquire into the matter. Perhaps, remembering that it was Smithy who had tossed a bundle of fireworks into his window once in the middle of the night, he did not think inquiry necessary.

Frank Nugent came back in a few minutes with the cane in his hand. He was a very unwilling messenger, but there was no choice in the matter.

Lamb almost snatched the cane from him.

"Now, Vernon-Smith—"

"I tell you I never did it!" said the Bounder between his teeth.

"You've no right to cane me."

"Bend over that table!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith drew a deep, deep breath. Smithy was a mutineer by nature, and always more or less on the verge of rebellion. Now, in his rage and resentment, he went over the verge.

"I won't!" he answered savagely. "I won't bend over!"

"Smithy, old man!" exclaimed Frank Nugent anxiously. "For goodness' sake don't play the goat!"

The Bounder did not heed him. His eyes were fixed in angry defiance on the art master of Greyfriars.

Lamb's face, already angry, grew almost deadly in its expression.

"I have ordered you to bend over that table, Vernon-Smith!" he said, in a low, distinct tone. "I am waiting for you to do so!"

"I won't!"

All the dogged defiance in the Bounder's nature was roused now. He had said that he would not, and he was determined that he would not.

There was a tense pause in the study.

Frank Nugent looked in from the doorway with a scared face. Defying a Form-master was a thing that could not be done; but the Bounder, when his obstinacy was roused, was the fellow to do things that could not be done.

The pause was brief. Mr. Lamb made a stride at the Bounder, and grasped him with his left hand. Mild as he generally looked, fluffy as the juniors thought him, the little art master was as strong almost as a horse, as Smithy well knew. That iron grip had been laid on him before, and he remembered it. With one twist of that strong arm Mr. Lamb twisted the Bounder over the study table.

Swipe!

The cane came down with a crack like a pistol-shot.

The Bounder gave a yell, and kicked out backwards.

Then it was Mr. Lamb's turn to yell, as his shin was hacked.

He staggered back, letting go the Bounder.

Frank Nugent gazed on in horror.

Smithy had hacked the master's shin—probably in his excitement and rage, hardly realising what he was doing. But he had done it.

Mr. Lamb stood for a long minute wriggling his hacked leg, which had a rather severe pain in it. The Bounder stood looking at him, still sullenly defiant, but perhaps a little scared at what he had done.

Then the art master threw down the cane and grasped Vernon-Smith's shoulder in his right hand—with a grasp so hard and tenacious that the Bounder, strong as he was, had no more chance than an infant of throwing it off.

"I shall take you to your head-master, Vernon-Smith!" said the Lamb in low, concentrated tones. "You will be expelled for this! Come!"

Frank Nugent stood aside from the doorway, and the art master passed him, his hand still on Vernon-Smith's shoulder. He watched them in blank dismay as they disappeared down the staircase together.

HARRY WHARTON IN A HURRY!

HARRY WHARTON looked out of the doorway of Study No. 14.

In that study, which belonged to Johnny Bull, Squiff, and Fisher T. Fish, he had found only the American junior, when he dodged in to hunt cover.

Fisher T. Fish was engaged in an occupation that often happily whiled away his leisure moments—counting his money.

He did not even look up when the captain of the Remove came in—being deeply absorbed in that entrancing occupation.

The fact was that Fishy was a penny short in his accounts. It worried Fishy, and he had to get it right. He was on the trail of that penny, like a dog after a bone.

Really, it was a mystery what had become of that penny. He could hardly have lost it—Fishy never lost anything. He could not have given it away—that was impossible! The bare idea of giving anything away would have made Fisher T. Fish feel faint. So with grim determination Fishy was going through his accounts over and over again, guessing and calculating that he was sure going to get wise as to what had become of that pesky penny.

Harry Wharton had intended to keep doggo in that study till the dinner-bell rang. But a sound of loud and excited voices in the Remove passage caused him to open the door and look out.

To his relief, there was no sign of Lamb in the passage. But a crowd of Remove fellows had gathered there, with startled and excited faces. Clearly something had happened. Wharton wondered if it were the snowfall on the Lamb's head that was the cause of the excitement.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry, as Wharton's face appeared at the door of Study No. 14. "Have you heard—"

Wharton came out of the study. "Anything happened?" he asked. "The happenfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and ridiculous Smithy is getting it in his absurd neck!"

"Smithy!" repeated Harry. "I haven't seen him since class! What's up with Smithy?"

"The sack!" said Johnny Bull.

"Wha-a-at?"

"He hacked the Lamb's shin!" said Nugent. "Lamb's marched him off to the Head. It will be the sack this time."

"The mad ass!" exclaimed Wharton in dismay. "Are you sure—"

"I saw him!" answered Nugent. "Lamb got him in our study; and grabbed him because he wouldn't bend over. And Smithy kicked out, and got him on the shin!"

"In our study! What was he doing in our study?"

"Oh, you know Smithy!" said Bob Cherry. "It's his fatheaded feud with the little Baa-Lamb! He tipped a stack of snow over the Lamb's head—"

"What?" yelled Harry Wharton.

"Nothing surprising in that, is there?" asked Johnny Bull, staring at him. "It's just one of Smithy's mad tricks—"

"Yes, but he never did it!" gasped Harry. "Mean to say that Lamb got him for tipping the snow from my study window—"

"Yes; he rushed straight up to the study and got him there!" said Peter Todd. "Smithy must have been an ass not to clear! He might have guessed that the Lamb would come up—"

"But he never did it!" gasped Harry.

"He did it, all right! He was there, and the Lamb got him—on the spot—"

"He must have gone to the study for something! He never did it!"

"How the thump do you know he never did it?" asked Skinner.

"Because I did it!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"It was an accident—that fool Bunter barged me at the window, and then it happened!" gasped Wharton. "Is Smithy with the Head now?"

"Yes. Lamb's taken him there, and—"

Harry Wharton stayed to hear no more.

He ran down the Remove passage to the landing, as if he were on the cinder-path, leaving the crowd of Remove fellows in a buzz.

If Smithy was up before the Head on account of that snow-fall from the window-sill of Study No. 1, the Head had to hear the facts of the matter without delay.

A fellow who hacked a master was booked for the sack, short and sharp; but if anything could save Smithy it would be the fact that Lamb was punishing him without cause—and the sooner Dr. Locke knew that the better.

Billy Bunter, still keeping doggo in Study No. 7, little dreamed of the unexpected outcome of his fatuous jape on the Pet Lamb. Harry

Wharton fairly raced across the landing to the stairs.

Coker of the Fifth was on the landing, talking to Potter and Greene. As the junior came hurtling across to the stairs, Potter and Greene stepped out of the way. Not so Coker!

"Here, stop that!" rapped Coker. "What the thump do you mean by racing about the place like that? My hat! I wonder what these fags are coming to! Stop that at once, Wharton, and— Yaroooooop!"

Coker no doubt expected the junior to stop, as any junior should have done at the behest of so great a man as Horace Coker. But the junior did not stop! He did not even pause. He came on at top speed, and as Coker was in his way he crashed into Coker.

Coker went spinning.

He spun two or three yards, before he crumpled up and collapsed on the landing with a heavy bump. Wharton staggered for a moment from the shock, then recovered himself, and went down the stairs two at a time. He had no time to stop and ask Coker whether he was hurt. Besides, he knew he was! He raced on, regardless of Coker.

Coker sat up dizzily.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Ow! Oh! My hat! Why, I'll spifficate him—I'll pulverise him—I—I—I'll— Where is he?"

Coker staggered to his feet! But he glared round in vain for the cheeky junior who had had the unexampled nerve to barge over a Fifth Form man. That junior was already at the foot of the staircase.

Harry Wharton cleared the last three stairs with a last jump. He was darting on, when a sharp voice rapped:

"Stop!"

It was Loder of the Sixth this time. Loder was a prefect, and could not be barged or disregarded like a Fifth Form fellow.

Harry Wharton came to a breathless stop.

"I'm in a hurry, Loder!" he gasped. "I've got to see the Head, and—"

"You've not got to race about the House as if you were on the football field!" snapped Loder; "and you know that without my telling you! Stop!" added Loder in a roar, as the captain of the Remove ran on again.

But this time Wharton did not stop. He had no more time to waste on Loder than on Coker—Sixth Form prefect as Gerald Loder was!

But as he ran on, Loder rushed after him and grabbed him by the shoulder. Less than this was enough to rouse the wrath of the bully of the Sixth.

"You cheeky young sweep!" exclaimed Loder. "Stop, and—"

"Let go!" panted Wharton.

"I'll let go when I've given you six for your cheek!" growled Loder. Loder was never displeased at the opportunity of giving six to any member of the Famous Five.

Harry Wharton panted.

"Let go, you fool!" he shouted.

In those very moments Smithy might be getting the chopper, and

Wharton was too anxious and too excited to measure his words.

"What?" gasped Loder.

"Will you let go, you idiot?"

"By gad! I'll— Oh!" roared Loder, as the captain of the Remove, in sheer desperation, hooked his leg.

Bump!

Loder of the Sixth sat on the floor. He sat in a state of dizzy amazement. He, a Sixth Form prefect, had been tripped up by a Remove junior; and there he was, sitting on the floor! It was really hard for Gerald Loder to believe that this had actually happened! But it had—for there he was, sitting! He sat and spluttered.

Harry Wharton did not give him a glance. He raced on, heading for the headmaster's study.

"Here, Wharton—" It was Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, who called. But even Wingate's voice was unheeded.

Without a word, or even a look, Wharton ran on, and turned into Head's corridor, and arrived, breathless and gasping, at the door of Dr. Locke's study.

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR!

DR. LOCKE sat at his writing-table in his study with a grim frown upon his brow.

His eyes were fixed on the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Vernon-Smith stood before him, his face still sullen but a little pale, and with a sinking at his heart.

Mr. Lamb stood by the table, resting one hand on it as if for support. Perhaps his hacked leg felt a little uncertain, or perhaps the Lamb was making the most of his injury for the Head's benefit.

The Pet Lamb, who was regarded as a fluffy little ass by almost all Greyfriars, was implacable so far as the Bounder was concerned. Smithy knew—he could feel—that the art master was glad of this chance—that he would be glad to see that especial junior sacked from the school. No such thought, certainly, could have occurred to the headmaster, but Herbert Vernon-Smith had not the slightest doubt of it.

And he told himself bitterly that Lamb had his reasons. Lamb was a man with secrets to keep—according to Smithy—and he knew, or suspected, that Smithy knew more than he cared for any Greyfriars fellow to know. It would be a relief to him if Smithy went, and the Bounder, in his headstrong recklessness, had given him this chance. He could have kicked himself harder than he had kicked the Lamb for his folly.

"Upon my word!" said Dr. Locke. "Vernon-Smith, this passes all bounds! You have actually dared—"

The Head paused as if the enormity of the offence was really beyond words.

The Bounder licked his dry lips. This was not the first time he had been up before the Head—by many a one.—More than once Smithy had had a narrow escape from the sack. He could hardly hope to escape this

time. But he was going to say what he could

"I never meant to hack Mr. Lamb, sir. I—I acted without thinking. I was excited, sir, at being punished for nothing—"

"How dare you say that you were punished for nothing?" exclaimed the Head wrathfully. "You were the most troublesome boy in the Lower Fourth Form, Vernon-Smith, when Mr. Quelch was here. Mr. Lamb has kindly consented to take charge of the Remove during Mr. Quelch's absence, and if I had one fault to find with Mr. Lamb it would have been his excessive mildness in dealing with Mr. Quelch's boys. I am very well aware that Mr. Lamb has had a great deal of trouble in the Remove owing to his mild methods of dealing with boys who require a stern hand."

"Yes, sir, but—but—"

The Bounder stammered. What the Head said was quite correct—Lamb was ragged almost as much as the French master, and the whole staff of Greyfriars regarded him as a tame rabbit who could not keep boys in order.

But Smithy could hardly explain to the headmaster that he believed—or, rather, knew, that that was only a part that the Lamb played for some purpose of his own—and that under it he was a hard and implacable man.

"And you dare to tell me that Mr. Lamb, whose only fault is a disinclination to use necessary severity, was administering an unjust punishment!" exclaimed Dr. Locke. "I will not listen to this, Vernon-Smith! What you have done admits of no excuse. You will leave this school—"

Vernon-Smith caught the glitter that shot into the Lamb's eyes over the gold-rimmed glasses.

"Will you let me speak, sir?" he exclaimed. "I never did what Mr. Lamb thought—I was in that study wholly by chance, and never knew that anything had happened to him at all till he came up—"

Dr. Locke glanced at Mr. Lamb.

"There is no doubt in your mind, Mr. Lamb?" he asked.

"None whatever, sir," bleated the Lamb. In the Head's presence the man with secrets to keep was the meek and mild Lamb, looking as if butter would not melt in his mouth. "I am sorry for this—very sorry—but I cannot help thinking, sir, that it would be for the good of the Form for this incorrigible boy to go."

The Bounder gave him a black and bitter look. Whether it would be for the good of the Form or not, it would be for the good of the Lamb if the junior who suspected him went.

"I agree," said the Head. "You will leave Greyfriars, Vernon-Smith! You—"

"I tell you I did nothing," breathed the Bounder. "Some other fellow must have been in the study, and cut before I went in. I was being caned for nothing at all—Mr. Lamb could have found the right fellow if he had chosen to look for him. But he wouldn't—"

"Be silent!" snapped the Head.

But he gave the Bounder's excited face a very keen look. There was a



Pitched forward by Bunter, Harry Wharton crashed on the pile of snow and dislodged it from the sill. A sudden, startled howl from below announced that somebody had got it!

overwhelmed by the sentence he had received.

"Wharton! What does this mean?" exclaimed Dr. Locke. "How dare you rush into my study in this way—"

"It—it's about Smithy, sir!" panted the captain of the Remove. "I—I heard that he was here, sir, and came at once—"

"You are not concerned in this matter, Wharton! You—"

"I came to tell you that Mr. Lamb was mistaken, sir—Smithy never tipped that snow from the study window!" gasped Harry.

The Lamb's face hardened at once.

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed. "You know nothing of the matter, Wharton! How dare you come here and waste your headmaster's time? Leave the study this instant!"

The Bounder's eyes were on Wharton now eagerly. He realised how much this might mean to him. So, he could see, did the Lamb—and the Lamb would have been very glad to get rid of Wharton unheard. But the captain of the Remove was not to be got rid of unheard.

He did not heed Mr. Lamb's sharp snap! He did not seem to hear him. He stood before the Head's table, his eyes on Dr. Locke, regardless of his Form-master

"It's true, sir!" he exclaimed. "As soon as I heard that Smithy—I mean, Vernon-Smith—was here, because of that I came at once. Smithy had nothing to do with the snow falling on Mr. Lamb—he was not in the study at all, when it was pushed off the window-sill—"

"Do you mean to say that you know who did this, Wharton, and that it was not Vernon-Smith?" asked the Head.

"Yes, sir—it was I!" answered Harry.

"What?"

"It was really an accident, sir."

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ring of sincerity in the junior's voice that had its effect on him.

He glanced at Mr. Lamb again.

"You had no doubt whatever in this matter, Mr. Lamb, when you punished Vernon-Smith?" he asked.

"Not in the least, sir. There is no room for doubt in the matter," bleated Mr. Lamb. "None whatever, sir."

"That decides the matter," said Dr. Locke. "I have no more to say to you, Vernon-Smith! You may leave my study and go to your dormitory and pack your box—"

"I tell you I did nothing—"

"You need say no more! Leave my study!"

There was a rush of hurried footsteps in the corridor outside, and a sharp knock at the door

It opened the next moment, and Harry Wharton entered, crimson and breathless with haste. He was panting as he came in.

Dr. Locke turned a severe glance on him. Mr. Lamb stared at him over his glasses. The Bounder did not even look at him. He was standing

explained the captain of the Remove breathlessly. "I was close to the window when a fellow barged me, and I fell against the snow on the sill and sent it toppling. I would not have done it if I could have helped it—but it was I who did it."

"Nonsense!" Lamb's voice was harsh. "You were not in the study, Wharton, when I came up immediately. Vernon-Smith was there—"

"I knew you would come up, sir, and that you might not believe that it was an accident," said Harry. "I got away at once. But as soon as I heard that Smithy was up for it I came to tell Dr. Locke."

"That was a very proper proceeding on your part," said Dr. Locke, "and if the incident was, as you say, accidental, I am sure that Mr. Lamb will overlook it."

Evidently, the Head had no doubt of Wharton's statement, whether Lamb had or not. He could, in fact, see that it was the truth.

"I am sorry sir!" said Harry, looking at Mr. Lamb, "that is exactly how it happened, and Vernon-Smith had nothing to do with it. He was not there at the time at all."

Mr. Lamb made no reply. But the cold, hard glint in his eyes revealed to the Bounder, at least, what his feelings were like.

"Very well, Wharton!" said Dr. Locke. "I am glad that you have told me this—you may leave the study, my boy."

Harry Wharton left the study, hoping the best for the Bounder. As the door closed on him, Dr. Locke fixed his eyes again on the scapegrace of Greyfriars. He seemed rather in doubt, and there was a long silence in the study.

He turned to Mr. Lamb at last.

"As it appears that a mistake was made, Mr. Lamb, there is perhaps some slight excuse for Vernon-Smith's act in a moment of excitement," he said. "I think that perhaps a flogging will meet the case."

Lamb's lips set hard for a second. But his voice had its accustomed docile bleat as he answered:

"Very good, sir; it is for you to decide!"

He left the study, leaving Vernon-Smith to the Head.

The Bounder left it ten minutes later—wriggling. But he was well aware that he had got off cheaply; and he was aware, too, that the Lamb was disappointed, which was a comfort to Smithy for the flogging.

NO LUCK!

MR. LAMB bent over the drawing-board, in his study, after dinner.

He was giving the finishing touches to a drawing pinned on the board.

As art master at Greyfriars, and as he was taking the Remove in the place of Mr. Quelch, the kidnapped Form-master, Lamb had plenty to do—but he still found time for pen-and-ink work. Illustrated papers on the table in Common-room contained

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drawings by Mr. Lamb; and Remove fellows had seen cheques lying about on his table—Mr. Lamb being, as was only to be expected of an artist, careless in such matters.

Fisher T. Fish, who was deeply interested in all matters of money, whether it was his own or not, opined that Lamb did drawings for the Press to eke out his salary as art master, and would have been glad to know exactly how much he made by it. Art masters, Fishy guessed and calculated, weren't paid so much as Form-masters; and Lamb looked pretty poor, anyhow. His old velvet coat, which he wore on almost all occasions, had evidently seen a lot of service.

Only the Bounder had a fixed suspicion that Lamb's docility, and his velvet coat and his long hair, and his affected artistic carelessness, were all part and parcel of a part that Lamb was playing—though for what reason, even the keen Bounder did not profess to be able to explain.

He knew that the man had secrets. He knew that he paid visits to the chalet, Sea View, on the cliff road by the sea, secretly; that he knew the caretaker there, Parker, and called him by the nickname of Nobby. He had watched him, once, enter the air-raid shelter in the garden of Sea View, with Parker; and Smithy had wondered a great deal what secret might be hidden behind the green-painted door of the dugout.

Lamb was not aware of it. But he was aware that the name of Nobby had become known in the Remove, and Smithy knew that it startled and disturbed him. Which, of course, led the vengeful Bounder to rub in the name of Nobby for the further startling and disturbing of the art master.

Mr. Lamb, having given the finishing touches to his drawing, removed the drawing-pins, and lifted it from the board.

Then he gave a sudden jump.

The removal of the cardboard revealed a half-sheet of notepaper that had been placed under it.

On that half-sheet was written, in block capital letters:

"WHO'S NOBBY?"

Mr. Lamb gazed at that paper, with his lips shut in a hard line, and his eyes scintillating over his glasses. The Remove would hardly have known their Pet Lamb at that moment. The rage on his face was black and bitter.

He picked up the paper at last and tossed it into the fire. Then he stood breathing hard.

Whatever might be Mr. Lamb's mysterious connection with the chalet on the sea-road, and the stocky, pimply man who was caretaker there, it was not a matter he desired to have known in the school. But this was another proof that something of it, at least, was known.

He could guess who had written that paper and slipped it under the card on the drawing-board. There was no proof; and it would hardly have done to call Herbert Vernon-Smith to account for it—especially as he had had to admit, that day, that he had already punished the Bounder

for nothing. But he knew that this came from the Bounder—whose vengeful enmity he had earned, at the beginning of the term, by one of his savage outbreaks of temper.

Tap!

The black, savage look disappeared from Lamb's face, as if wiped off by a duster, as a knock came at his study door. Instantly he was the amiable little Lamb again.

"Come in!" he bleated.

Harry Wharton entered the study.

Mr. Lamb gave him a smile. If he had been annoyed by Wharton's intervention with the Head, he gave no sign of it now. His manner to his Head Boy was quite kindly.

"What is it, Wharton?" he asked.

He glanced, in some surprise, at Loder of the Sixth, who followed the junior into the study.

Loder had his official ashplant under his arm, and a very unpleasant expression on his face.

It was Loder who answered the art master's question.

"This junior has come to you, sir," he said. "I was about to cane him for knocking me over just before dinner, and—"

"I have a right to appeal to my Form-master!" said Wharton. "I'm not going to be whopped for nothing."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Lamb. He was still looking amiable, but his eyes, as they rested on Wharton, were very cold. "Please explain the matter to me. I am sorry to see you, Wharton, my Head Boy, resisting the authority of a prefect of the Sixth Form! I fear that the rebellious example of Vernon-Smith may be spreading in the Remove. This will not do, Wharton."

"I was in a hurry to get to the Head's study, sir—"

"The Head's study!"

"While Smithy was there, sir! I told Loder I was in a hurry as I had got to see the Head, but he wouldn't listen—"

"Indeed!" said the Lamb grimly. "Am I to understand that you, a junior, take it upon yourself to decide whether to obey a Sixth Form prefect or not?"

Loder smiled. He could see now that Wharton had not benefited himself much by coming to his Form-master.

"Please let me explain, sir!" said Harry. "As you know, sir, there was a mistake about Vernon-Smith, and he might have been expelled, if I had not gone to the Head at once. I could not let Loder stop me, and as he grabbed me and would not let go, I hooked his leg. I don't see what else I could have done, as I could not waste a moment—"

The Lamb's eyes glinted.

Wharton's intervention, in the Head's study, had saved the Bounder from the sack. But for him the fellow who knew about Nobby would have left Greyfriars School. Harry Wharton was far from realising that this was the very worst thing he could have said for himself to the smiling Lamb.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Lamb again. "I fail to see any excuse for your action in this, Wharton! You appear

to have resisted a prefect of the Sixth Form by actual violence. I am quite assured that Mr. Quelch, if he were here, would uphold nothing of the kind."

"But in the circumstances, sir—Smithy might have been sacked!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Did you, or did you not, resist the authority of a prefect of the Sixth Form to the extent of causing him to fall?" asked Mr. Lamb.

"Yes, I did; but—"

"I am afraid I can admit no 'but' in such a matter," said Mr. Lamb. "Loder is fully entitled to punish you for such an act—indeed, it is his duty to do so—and I should be very sorry to see a prefect of the Sixth Form allow such an act to pass unpunished."

"Thank you, sir!" said Loder smoothly.

Harry Wharton stood silent. He was quite certain that Mr. Quelch, had he been there, would have stood by him. But it was clear that Mr. Quelch's substitute was not going to stand by him.

"I regard this matter as very serious, Wharton!" went on the Lamb. "I am a very mild man—I fear that I do not deal with the Remove as Mr. Quelch was accustomed to do, and I fear that they take advantage of it. But an act of forcible resistance to a prefect I cannot possibly pass over. I think that you deserve very severe punishment."

Wharton set his lips, and said nothing.

"You will bend over the table," said Mr. Lamb, "and Loder will administer six strokes in my presence. I shall be obliged to you, Loder, if you will make it perfectly clear to this junior that the utmost respect must be shown to prefects by Lower boys."

Loder was not likely to lose that chance. He was ready to make it clear to that junior—painfully clear!

Wharton, in silence, bent over the table.

Under Mr. Lamb's approving eye, Loder laid on six, and every one was a swipe.

Harry Wharton went through it in silence, but with deep feelings.

"You may now leave my study, Wharton!" said Mr. Lamb. "Let there be no repetition of this unruly conduct. One moment, Loder—I should be glad to speak to you before you go."

"Certainly, sir!"

Harry Wharton left the study in grim silence, and shut the door after him. Loder remained, wondering what the Lamb wanted.

The Pet Lamb peered at him over his glasses.

"I believe, Loder, that a certain boy in my Form, named Vernon-Smith, has more than once come very unfavourably under the notice of the prefects," he said.

"That is certainly the case, sir!" answered Loder. "Mr. Quelch always looked on him as the worst boy in the Form."

"So I have heard," said Mr. Lamb; "and I have reason to fear that this

boy, Vernon-Smith, is a very bad influence in the Remove. I have reason to suspect that he even breaks out of bounds at night. I should be very much obliged, Loder, if you would keep this boy under some observation, and ascertain whether, in fact, his conduct is such that he should be expelled. I am very uneasy on the subject."

"Certainly, sir!" answered Loder. "The young sweep has been near it more than once, as I know very well! I will certainly keep an eye on him this term, sir."

"Thank you, Loder!"

The Lamb smiled when his study door closed on Loder of the Sixth. But it was not a pleasant smile.

A SURPRISE FOR JOHN ROBINSON!

JOHAN ROBINSON, the Head's new chauffeur, was cleaning down the Head's car in the garage yard.

It was a bright, sunny morning. There had been a thaw, and the snow was gone; and there was almost a touch of spring in the air.

John Robinson's olive-skinned face was sedately cheerful that fine morning as he went about his work.

But he frowned a little as a Remove junior came round from the quad and sauntered coolly into the yard.

John Robinson, though a very polite and pleasant-spoken chauffeur, did not like visitors at his garage. He was, as old Gosling described it, rather stand-offish. And the garage was not in bounds for the schoolboys—a circumstance that Herbert Vernon-Smith disregarded with his usual carelessness of such things.

"Good-morning, Robinson!" said the Bounder, with a cool nod to the chauffeur.

John Robinson looked at him.

"Good-morning, sir!" he answered. "Please do not come in here! It is not permitted."

"No beaks or pre's about!" said the Bounder carelessly. "That's O.K., Robinson."

"Not quite, sir! I have to pay attention to my employer's instructions. Please go away at once!"

The Bounder stared at him raising his eyebrows. The millionaire's son did not expect this sort of thing from a chauffeur.

A sardonic sneer came over Smithy's rather hard face.

"Half-a-crown any use to you, Robinson?" he asked.

"Not in the least, sir!"

"What about five bob, then?"

"Nothing, sir!"

The Bounder began to look angry. Five shillings was a handsome tip; and Smithy was almost the only fellow in the Greyfriars Remove who could afford such tips without missing them.

Certainly it had never occurred to Smithy that the dark-haired, olive-faced chauffeur was anything but what he looked.

All the Remove had heard that Ferrers Locke, the famous detective of Baker Street, was in search of

their kidnapped Form-master, Mr. Quelch! But nobody dreamed that Ferrers Locke was at Greyfriars School in the guise of the Head's new chauffeur! That was a deep secret between the Baker Street detective and his venerable relative, Dr. Locke.

"Look here, don't be a checky ass, Robinson!" snapped the Bounder. "I want to borrow your telephone, see?"

"I am sorry, sir—"

"Williams used to be willing enough to let me use it when he was here!" snapped the Bounder. "Why can't you?"

"It is against the rules, sir!" said John Robinson, shaking his head.

"Never mind that! I want a phone badly."

"Probably your Form-master would allow you to use his telephone, sir, if you explained to him that it was urgent."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Smithy.

The frown cleared off his face, and he burst into a roar at that suggestion.

The chauffeur looked at him in surprise. He could see nothing in his suggestion to evoke that outburst of merriment.

"Really, sir—" he said.

"Oh, don't be a goat!" said the Bounder. "I can see myself asking Lamb! You see, I'm going to phone to Lamb."

"I do not quite understand, sir. Why should you telephone to a master when you can go to his study and speak to him?"

The Bounder chuckled.

"If I went to his study and said what I'm going to say on the phone, I fancy I should get some skin taken off!" he answered. "Got it now?"

"Oh! Yes, I think so, sir!" said John Robinson. "You mean that you are going to be impertinent to your Form-master, without letting him know who is speaking. You certainly cannot use the garage telephone for any such purpose."

"He's not my Form-master, really!" grunted the Bounder. "Old Quelch is my Form-master—and not a bad old bean, either, though I had rows enough with him! He's worth a thousand of that rat!"

John Robinson, who was about to turn back to the car, paused, and remained looking at the Bounder. He seemed to have become interested in the Remove fellow's remarks.

In point of fact, anything concerning Mr. Lamb interested Ferrers Locke very deeply. For it was upon Mr. Lamb, the art master of Greyfriars, that his suspicions were closely concentrated.

"Indeed, sir!" said John Robinson. "I should have thought that Mr. Lamb was very popular—such a very mild little gentleman—"

"You haven't seen much of him!" said the Bounder. "That's only on the outside—he's a cat, all claws underneath! It suits him to make out that he's a fluffy little lamb; but he's as hard as nails, really! If you ever get on his wrong side, you'll know it."

"I trust I know my place too well, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,668.

sir!" said John Robinson. But his eyes were very keenly on the Bounder's face.

Smithy did not know with whom he was speaking; but Ferrers Locke knew the Bounder very well indeed. Smithy was keen, acute, and suspicious. It interested the detective, in view of his own suspicions of Mr. Lamb, to learn that there was a fellow in Lamb's Form who had penetrated beneath his carefully assumed outward aspect of amiable simplicity.

"Well, he's a blighter, and I'm going to pull his leg!" said Vernon-Smith. "I'd like to make him sick of the Remove! I suppose you never saw Quelch—he was a tough old bean, and had a pretty heavy hand; but a fellow knew where he stood with him! He was straight as a string. But this cur—the Bounder's eyes gleamed—"nothing straight about him!"

John Robinson ought really not to have listened to all this, about a member of the staff of Greyfriars. But Ferrers Locke was deeply interested.

The Bounder's angry dislike of the man came out with a rush—though he was speaking to the chauffeur with whom he had hardly spoken twice since he had first seen him about the school. But Smithy did not care who heard his opinion of Mr. Lamb.

"Crooked as a corkscrew, all over!" said the Bounder. "Look here, Robinson, I've got to have a phone, and I can't get out of gates in the morning. If I bag one in the House I shall get spotted, ten to one—I tell you that man Lamb, with all his fluffy ways, is as sharp as a razor—just as sharp as they make them. He pounces on a fellow like a hawk."

"He does not look it, sir!" murmured John Robinson.

"No; most of the fellows think he's the biggest ass ever!" snarled the Bounder. "I've got him down all right, though. Goodness knows why he does it, but it's all spoo. I wish Quelch was back, by gum! I dare say you've heard that old Quelch was kidnapped?"

"Was he indeed, sir?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"You must keep your cars shut if you haven't heard all about it," said the Bounder, staring at him. "It's been the talk of the school this term."

"I generally attend strictly to my duties, sir," said John Robinson. "But I have certainly heard Mr. Quelch mentioned, and I understand that he is absent from the school this term—kept away by something, I think—"

"Kept away all right!" grinned the Bounder. "And the 'something' that keeps him away is called Slim Jim, and he's a cracksman. I suppose you look at the papers sometimes, and you know there's a cracksman cracking cribs once a week, at least, in this neighbourhood?"

"I have certainly heard of Slim Jim, sir!" assented John Robinson. "He is very much talked of at Courtfield."

"Well, that's the blighter who snaffled Quelch," said Smithy.

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"Everybody knows it—except you, it seems. Quelch dropped on him, getting away from a burglary one night, and saw his face with the mask off, which nobody had ever done before. That was why Quelch was grabbed. He's never been seen since—the blighter has got him parked somewhere jolly safe."

"Indeed! That is very interesting, sir!" said John Robinson.

"I've heard that Ferrers Locke is after that cracksman, on Quelch's account," said the Bounder.

"Who is Ferrers Locke, sir?" asked John Robinson.

"Oh, gad! Where were you dug up?" exclaimed the Bounder. "Ferrers Locke is a tremendous big gun in the detective line, and a relation of the headmaster here. I've seen it in the papers that he's on spy work on the north-east coast; but I shouldn't be jolly surprised to hear, some day, that he's a good deal nearer than that—with an eye open for Slim Jim in this quarter."

John Robinson's lips set a little. The Bounder's keenness was not wholly agreeable to the Baker Street detective.

"Not that he's doing much good," went on Smithy. "Slim Jim is still cracking cribs, and Quelch is still parked goodness knows where. I fancy Ferrers Locke has met his match this time. But look here, I didn't come here to jaw about that. I want your phone!"

"I am sorry, sir—"

"Oh, chuck that!" snapped the Bounder. "I'm going to have it! You must be better off than most chauffeurs, if five shillings is no good to you!"

Ferrers Locke smiled faintly. Undoubtedly he was better off than most chauffeurs.

"Is it a go?" asked Smithy.

"No, sir; I can't allow it," said John Robinson. "I am sorry, but I must not do anything of the kind."

"Oh, go and eat coke, then!" snapped Smithy.

John Robinson turned back to cleaning a mudguard.

Vernon-Smith did not leave the garage yard.

The refusal of the chauffeur to let him use the telephone seemed sheer cheek to Vernon-Smith. He was going to use it, disregarding John Robinson's refusal; and John Robinson could make the best of it.

He strolled apparently aimlessly across the yard. At the side of the garage was a private door that gave on a staircase leading to the rooms above, occupied by John Robinson.

With a casual air, the Bounder drew nearer to that door.

The chauffeur glanced up again.

"Will you please leave the yard, sir?" he asked in his respectful way.

"You really are not allowed here."

"Can I use your phone?" snapped the Bounder, close to the door now.

"No, sir!"

"Well, I'm going to, and you can like it or lump it!" retorted the Bounder. And he whipped towards the side door, opened it, and shot through a second after the words had left his lips.

"Stop!" shouted John Robinson.

He cut across after the Bounder with almost lightning speed. But Smithy had time. He slammed the door. The key was in the lock inside, and he turned it rapidly.

A moment more, and John Robinson's knuckles were rapping on the outside of the door.

"Open this door at once!" he shouted.

"Guess again!" answered the Bounder.

"I shall report this to your headmaster!"

"If you do, you'll get me a flogging, Robinson! You don't look such a rotter as that!"

"You deserve it, you young rascal!"

"If we all got what we deserved, who would escape whipping, as jolly old Shakespeare remarks?" chuckled the Bounder. "I've done you, Robinson! Take it smiling—and I'll stand you five bob when I'm through on the phone!"

And the Bounder, taking no further notice of the angry chauffeur outside the locked door, ran lightly up the staircase and into the room above.

A CLUE FOR FERRERS LOCKE!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH grinned as he reached the little landing.

He had, as he had said, done Robinson, and he did not believe that the chauffeur would go to the length of reporting him to the headmaster. With his usual recklessness, he was ready to take the chance of it.

Two rooms opened off the landing—a bed-room and a sitting-room. It was the latter that Vernon-Smith entered—making direct for the telephone.

He did not pay much attention to his surroundings, but he noted that the room was very clean and neat and orderly. One object struck him—a tall pier-glass, in which the full-length figure could be seen reflected. That was a rather unusual article of furniture to be found in a chauffeur's quarters, and the Bounder noticed it, though certainly it did not occur to him that it was required by a detective when he changed his outward appearance.

The telephone was near the window which looked over the garage yard. Smithy picked up the receiver.

He glanced down from the window, expecting to see an angry face looking up. He was rather startled to see John Robinson with a ladder in his grasp, which he was placing to the window.

The Bounder laughed carelessly.

John Robinson seemed determined to root him out of his quarters. But the Bounder had time. He knew that Mr. Lamb was in his study in the House, and it would not take him long to get through.

He rang up at once.

Head and shoulders appeared outside the window. John Robinson's olive face was set and angry. It did not, of course, occur to the Bounder, but he had plenty of reasons for not

desiring intruders in his quarters. Smithy knew that the Pet Lamb was a man with secrets to keep, but it never occurred to him that the Head's new chauffeur was also a man with secrets to keep.

The top sash of the window was open for ventilation. The catch was, therefore, unfastened.

John Robinson, standing on the ladder, pushed up the lower sash to enter.

The cool-headed Bounder completely disregarded him. He did not care a boiled bean for the chauffeur's exasperation. Lamb's voice was coming through on the telephone, and Vernon-Smith gave all his attention to his rag and the Lamb.

"Is that Mr. Lamb?" he asked, adopting as best he could a voice as he could to disguise his own tones. Smithy could not play vocal tricks like Billy Bunter, the fat ventriloquist of the Remove. But he succeeded in making his own voice unrecognisable.

"Mr. Lamb speaking!" came back the bleat of the Lamb.

"Who's Nobby?" asked the Bounder, in the same disguised tone.

"What!"

"Nobby!" grinned the Bounder.

There was silence over the wires. Smithy could picture to himself the startled and enraged face of the Lamb in his study in the House. This was another spot of retaliation for the flogging in the Head's study a few days ago. Smithy had a long memory for offences.

That Mr. Lamb desired to keep his connection with Nobby Parker a secret, the Bounder knew, though he did not know why. But the effect of the name of Nobby on the art master had surprised him. Dimly, vaguely, the Bounder realised that there was—that there must be—something fishy behind all this. Otherwise, why should the name of his peculiar acquaintance at Sea View startle Lamb so much? Why should it—as the Bounder was sure it did—scare him?

What it all meant, Smithy did not know: but he knew that he was giving Lamb a jolt, and that was all he cared about.

Lamb's voice came through again at last. It had lost its gentle bleat and came hard and sharp.

"Who is speaking?"

Smithy grinned. He was not likely to tell Mr. Lamb that.

"Are you there?" came Lamb's sharp voice again.

"Oh, yes, I'm here! Who's Nobby?"

"Is that Vernon-Smith?" came in deep, concentrated tones.

Lamb had guessed it.

The Bounder cared little. There was no proof that he had been on the phone—unless John Robinson gave him away. Lamb could do nothing—except take every opportunity that occurred to make him feel the weight of his angry temper. And that he did already.

"Who's Nobby?" repeated the Bounder mockingly.

The window-sash was up now, and John Robinson standing in the room.

Ferrers Locke had entered by the

window with the intention of taking Vernon-Smith by the collar and marching him down the stairs and out without delay. But now he stood still, watching the Bounder with a curious expression on his face.

Smithy chuckled, as a sound on the line told that the man at the other end had jammed down his receiver.

Lamb had heard enough about Nobby. Smithy had no doubt that he was leaving his study in haste to discover which of the school telephones had been used for that call. Probably he would investigate first in Quelch's old study, where the telephone still stood, though the study was not used in the absence of the kidnapped Form-master. Anyhow, he was not likely to think of the garage.

Grinning, Smithy put up his receiver. He gave John Robinson a wink.

"You needn't have troubled to do your burglar act!" he remarked. "I'm ready to go. Do you want that five bob?"

"Thank you, no!" said John Robinson quietly.

"You're not going to give me away?" asked the Bounder. "Don't be a rotter, you know! Lamb would skin me alive very nearly if he could put this on me!"

John Robinson's eyes narrowed keenly.

"I do not see why Mr. Lamb should be very much annoyed at what you said," he answered. "What did you mean by it?"

Smithy laughed.

"Lamb knows a man he calls Nobby," he answered. "He doesn't want the whole school to know. I dropped on it by accident—a fellow heard him use the name on the phone, and I heard him speak to the man, too. It was quite a windfall for me—it makes the blighter sit up no end!"

"Why should it?" asked John Robinson.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"Ask me another!" he answered.

"A low-browed, pimply blighter who looks like a gangster is a precious queer acquaintance for a Greyfriars master—that's all I know! Anyhow, Lamb wants to keep it dark—that's why I'm rubbing it in! He got me a flogging a few days ago, the vicious rat, and I'm going to feed him up to the chin with his Nobby! Are you going to give me away?"

"No!" said John Robinson.

The Bounder laughed, and ran down the stairs.

John Robinson did not return immediately to cleaning the car in the yard. For quite a long time John Robinson remained with a deeply thoughtful look on his face.

His suspicions were already concentrated on the art master of Greyfriars. Now he learned that Mr. Lamb had an acquaintance—a low-browed gangster, by Vernon-Smith's description—whose existence he was anxious to keep dark at the school. In connection with that man of mystery, Slim Jim, all was dark—but this came like a glimmer of light!

The Bounder had told John Robinson that Ferrers Locke was engaged on the case of the missing Form-master, little dreaming that he was speaking to the Baker Street detective himself! And as he left the garage, grinning, he never dreamed that he had helped the famous detective to lay his finger on another clue in a case in which clues were scarce and hard to find.

SMITHY'S LATEST!

"PLEASE——"

"What?"

"Please may I be let off this afternoon?"

Harry Wharton frowned, and most of the Remove fellows in the Rag grinned.

It was Tuesday, and on Tuesdays, as a rule, there was games practice in the afternoon till school at half-past three. That practice was, of course, compulsory; otherwise the time would have been occupied in acquiring knowledge in the Form-room.

Nevertheless, it was in the power of the Form captain to let any fellow off for good reasons given.

Billy Bunter, that afternoon, had already pleaded that he had a sprained ankle; and, the sprained ankle having missed fire, as it were, that he had a fearful pain in his inside! The fearful pain in his inside having been as ruthlessly disregarded as the sprained ankle, Bunter had developed a terrific headache, which quite incapacitated him for football practice. But even the terrific headache proved a frost, and the fat Owl sadly made up his mind to change for footer, instead of spending a happy afternoon frowsting over the fire.

Skinner, who preferred smoking cigarettes in his study to "urging the flying ball," told the captain of the Remove that he was getting a bit of a cold. To which his Form captain replied that he hoped that a spot of footer would do it good; and Skinner, like Bunter, gave it up.

Now the Bounder was beginning.

Smithy certainly was no slacker. He was as keen a footballer as any man at Greyfriars. So the captain of the Remove was surprised by his request, as well as irritated by the way he put it.

The Bounder's manner was ironically meek as he asked. Smithy hated asking favours, and if he had to ask one, could not help making himself disagreeable in the asking.

He was on friendly terms with the captain of the Remove. Indeed, he had been really grateful for Wharton's intervention before the Head, and he had said so. Nevertheless, as he had to ask Wharton to let him off games practice, he sarcastically assumed the manner of a small boy asking a favour of a master, causing the captain of the Remove to frown and the other fellows to grin.

"Will you please be so kind as to let me off?" he asked, as Wharton did not answer. "I'll go on my knees if you like."

"Shut up, Smithy, you ass!" said Bob Cherry, grinning.

"No!" said Wharton sharply.

"I've got an important engagement," pleaded the Bounder.

"At the back door of the Cross Keys?" asked the captain of the Remove sarcastically.

"No; I want to go to Courtfield."

"No races at Courtfield, are there?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I really must get off!" said Vernon-Smith. "I've paid you the compliment of asking you, Wharton—but I'm going, anyhow."

"You can do as you choose," said the captain of the Remove. "You know I have to give a list of all fellows who cut practice to Wingate of the Sixth. If you want six from Wingate, you've only got to ask for it."

"I don't!" said the Bounder. "Look here, don't be a goat—it's really important, and you can give me leave if you like."

Harry Wharton paused. The Bounder's manner irritated him, but he did not want to be disobliging. Smithy was no slacker, like Bunter or Skinner, but if he wanted to get away, it was quite likely that his engagement might be something of a questionable character. On the other hand, he might have a good reason to give.

"Well, what is it?" asked Harry. "If you mean that your father is coming down to Courtfield, or anything like that—"

Smithy paused a moment. But he shook his head. With beaks or prefects, the reckless Bounder paid little regard to the truth. But among his own Form-fellows he disdained to lie.

"It's a jape on Lamb," he said.

"Well, don't be an ass, then," said Wharton gruffly. "Like me to tell the captain of the school that I gave you leave from games practice to jape your Form-master?"

"I guess that guy Wingate would sure stare a few!" chuckled Fisher T. Fish.

"Wash it out, Smithy!" said Bob.

"But what's the jape, Smithy?" asked Bolsover major. "Lamb ain't going to be in Courtfield to-day that I've heard of."

"I'm going to old Lazarus," explained the Bounder. He was more than willing to admit the whole crowd to knowledge of the intended jape on Lamb. "I noticed something in his window last week, and I fancy it will come in for pulling the Lamb's leg, with the help of that fat idiot's ventriloquism."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"What on earth is it, then?" asked Frank Nugent.

All sorts of things were displayed for sale in the window of Mr. Lazarus, the second-hand merchant at Courtfield. Apparently the Bounder remembered something that he had seen there useful for his present purpose.

Smithy's mind was generally running on ways and means for making the Pet Lamb sit up. Bunter's ventriloquism had served his turn more than once, Lamb being in blissful ignorance of the fact that there

was a ventriloquist in the Greyfriars Remove.

"It's a stuffed bulldog," said Smithy. "Quite a jolly good one, and looks as life-like as anything."

"I've seen it," said Skinner. "Old Lazarus wants a quid for it. Jolly cheap at the price, too. It's worth more, if anybody wanted it."

"Well, I want it," said Smithy.

"Fools and their money are soon parted!" remarked Johnny Bull sententiously. "Catch me blowing a quid to jape Lamb!"

"I'd blow three or four quids if they were needed," answered the Bounder.

"The quidfulness of the esteemed Smithy is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But what the thump are you going to do with a stuffed bulldog if you get it?" asked Hazeldene. "You can't make it bite Lamb, I suppose?"

"I'm going to stick it in the Form-room, and Bunter's going to make it growl," answered the Bounder. "The fat ass can't do anything else, but he can do those tricks—"

"Look here, you cheeky beast—"

"When Lamb lets us in to-morrow morning he's going to find the way barred by a ferocious bow-wow, growling at him! Won't it be funny?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By gum, I'll bet he won't dare go near it!" roared Bolsover major. "When he finds out afterwards that it's only stuffed, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton laughed. His own experience with Mr. Lamb made him quite disposed to back up the Bounder in ragging him. And the idea of the Pet Lamb being kept out of his Form-room by a stuffed bulldog was undoubtedly entertaining.

"Now you know," said the Bounder. "Now I've thought of this stunt, I want to get hold of that bow-wow before it's snapped up by somebody else."

"It's been in the window a week, at least," answered Harry, "and it wouldn't be marked so cheap if it was likely to go in a hurry. You can get it to-morrow, Smithy—it's a half-holiday."

"I'm going to get it to-day."

Harry Wharton shook his head. "Don't be a goat, Smithy! You know perfectly well that I can't let you off games practice for any such reason."

"I shall cut, then!"

"You'll get six from Wingate if you do. It's your own affair."

With that Harry Wharton cut short the discussion by walking out of the Rag.

The Bounder cast a black look after him.

It irritated him to have to ask for leave, and it irritated him still more to be refused.

Tom Redwing touched his arm.

"Leave it till to-morrow, Smithy," he said. "You don't want to cut games practice, with the matches coming on."

"Suppose the dashed thing's gone to-morrow?" grunted the Bounder.

"It's not likely, old man."

The Bounder grunted again. But he had to admit that it was not likely.

"Don't be a goat, Smithy, old man," said Bob Cherry. "Look what a ripping day it is for footer—the St. Jim's match isn't far off. You want



As Mr. Lamb swished with the cane, the Bounder g
It was the Form-master's turn

to be in form for Tom Merry's lot when they come over."

That was an argument that appealed to the Bounder.

"Come on," said Bob. "Time we got to the changing-room, you men." The crowd of Removites poured out of the Rag.

Vernon-Smith was left with an angry face, Redwing with him.

Fisher T. Fish lingered by the door, his keen, narrow eyes very curiously on the Bounder.

Fishy seemed to be keenly interested in this, though the Bounder did not notice it, or take any notice of him at all.

"Smithy, old chap, come on!" urged Redwing. "Soccer comes before japing Lamb, and that dashed stuffed dog won't walk off before to-morrow. It's time we got changed—"

and Wingate will be on the field, too—"

"Hang Wingate!"

"I guess you sure can't hang the captain of the school, Smithy, old-timer!" remarked Fisher T. Fish.

The Bounder stared round at him.

"You pack up your chin-wag!" he answered. "Who wants to hear what you think about it, you bony freak?"

"I guess—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Look here, Smithy—" urged Redwing. "After games practice you can ring up old Lazarus, if you like, and tell him to keep the thing for you. That will make it safe for to-morrow."



gave a yell and kicked out backwards. "Ooooooh!" to yell, as his shin was hacked!

"Oh, all right!" grunted Smithy. He was unwilling to yield the point—the Bounder always hated yielding any point. But he had to acknowledge that Redwing's suggestion washed out the difficulty in the matter, if there was one. And he really was keen on footer on a keen, cold day—and keen on keeping in form for the match with St. Jim's when it came along.

So he gave in, ungraciously, and went out of the Rag with Redwing.

Fisher T. Fish grinned at his back as he went.

"I guess," Fisher T. Fish remarked to an empty space, "I surely guess that this is where I come in! I'll tell a man!"

And Fishy, with a bony grin on his bony countenance, followed the other fellows to the changing-room.

SOLD!

"O H!"

"Ow!"

Billy Bunter roared, Fisher T. Fish yelled.

The Remove men were at practice.

Wingate of the Sixth was on the ground, giving that practice his personal supervision—and the Bounder was rather glad that he had turned up, after all. He really did not want six from Wingate's ash. Moreover, he was as keen as any man in the Remove, and he had dismissed Mr. Lamb and his intended jape on that gentleman from his mind till after the practice was over.

Billy Bunter—after the successive failures of a sprained ankle, a pain in the inside, and a headache, as excuses—was there. Bunter was never likely to make a footballer; but undoubtedly it was better for the fat Owl to be getting some exercise in the keen fresh air than frowsting over a fire, or rooting through the Remove studies in search of toffee or doughnuts, or other such unconsidered trifles.

Bunter barged into everybody who came near Bunter! But now, as it happened, Fisher T. Fish barged into Bunter.

Both went to earth.

"Oh! Ow! Ooooooh!" roared Bunter as he landed. "Woooooh! Beast! Whooooop!"

"Aw, wake snakes!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

Three or four fellows heaved Billy Bunter to his feet.

The fat Owl spluttered for breath, and glared at Fishy, who was still sprawling.

"You bony, blithering goat!" roared Bunter. "Wharrer you mean by barging a chap over?"

"Barging is Bunter's privilege, Fishy!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Bunter likes to be the barger, not the bargee!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, get up, Fish!" Wingate of the Sixth came to the spot. "You're not hurt, I suppose?"

Fisher T. Fish gave a groan.

"My pesky laig!" he moaned.

"Help him up!" said the Greyfriars captain.

Bob Cherry and Squiff took hold of two bony arms and jerked Fisher T. Fish to his feet.

The junior from New York stood unsteadily on one leg. The other, it seemed, was damaged.

"I guess I got a sprain!" he groaned. "I'll tell a man, it is fierce! Aw nuts! My laig!"

Wingate gave him rather a suspicious look. He did not quite trust his Fishy! But if Fisher T. Fish was malingering, he was playing his part very well! His skinny face was twisted, as if in pain, and he seemed unable to put his foot to the ground.

"Help him off!" said the Greyfriars captain at last. And Fisher T. Fish was helped off the ground.

"Like a hand as far as the House?" asked Bob.

"Oh, I'll lug him along!" said Squiff.

"Aw! I guess I can limp it!" said Fishy. He tested his leg, leaning on it lightly. "Yep! I guess I can limp it! You guys get back! But I'm telling you, it is sure fierce."

"Shove some embrocation on it, old bony bean," said Bob. "Lots in the changing-room! Come on, Squiff!"

And Bob and the Australian junior went back to the field, leaving Fisher T. Fish to limp into the changing-room.

Fisher T. Fish limped therein; but once inside his limp left him all of a sudden, and a sly grin replaced the painful expression of anguish on his bony face.

"I'll say," murmured Fisher T. Fish, "that they sure are boneheads in this pesky old island—they sure are boobs from Boobsville! I guess it's cruelty to animals to fool them sich all-fired jays!"

Grinning, Fisher T. Fish proceeded to change.

His next proceeding was a very curious one, for a fellow who had been lamed only a few minutes ago on the football field. He hurried down to the bike-shed, wheeled out his bike, and disappeared up the Courtfield road, as fast as he could drive his machine. If Fishy really had had a game leg, it was the swiftest recovery ever!

Some of the Remove men probably suspected that Fishy was spoofing, to get off early from games practice. But Fishy was no use in games, and nobody in particular, anyhow, so his existence was very soon forgotten.

Nobody, certainly, was thinking of Fisher T. Fish when the practice ended and the juniors came trooping back into the changing-room.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was looking quite cheerful as he changed. He was glad, after all, that he had turned up, and was feeling all the better for it. And there was time to get a phone-call through to Mr. Lazarus' shop in Courtfield before the Removites had to arrive in their Form-room for maths with Mr. Lascelles.

When he left the changing-room, the Bounder strolled away to Masters' Passage to look for a chance of slipping into Mr. Quelch's unoccupied study to use the telephone there. He had not ventured to use that telephone in playing his trick on Lamb—the garage telephone had been safer for that. But Quelch's telephone served his present purpose.

He soon found his opportunity and slipped into the deserted study, shutting the door after him.

Then he stepped to the telephone and rang up Mr. Lazarus in Courtfield.

That old gentleman's voice came back.

"Vernon-Smith speaking from THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1.668.

Greyfriars School!" said the Bounder.

"Yeth, Mithter Vernon-Smith," said Mr. Lazarus. "What can I do for you, thir?"

"I want you to reserve for me something I saw in your window the other day, Mr. Lazarus!" said Smithy. "I can't get out to-day, but I'll run down on my bike tomorrow afternoon and take it away."

"I shall be very pleathed!" answered Mr. Lazarus. "Vat is it that you vant me to reserve, Mithter Vernon-Smith?"

"That stuffed bulldog—"

"My cootness!"

"You know what I mean—a stuffed bulldog, priced at a quid—"

"Yeth; but I am very thorry—it is thold!"

"Sold!" howled the Bounder.

"Yeth; it was thold only half an hour ago! I am very thorry, Mithter Vernon-Smith! That article has been in the vindow over a week, and I hardly expected to thell it at all. But thith afternoon—"

Herbert Vernon-Smith slammed back the receiver with a savage slam, without waiting for the old gentleman at Courtfield to finish.

His brow was black and savage.

It had been unlikely, as Redwing had said. But the unexpected had happened. He was too late! Stuffed bulldogs were not, so to speak, everybody's money. That article might have remained in Mr. Lazarus' dusty window for weeks or months or years without finding a buyer even at the low price of one pound. Yet, just when the Bounder wanted it, it had been snapped up—only half an hour before he phoned for it. It was enough to annoy a good-tempered fellow, and it exasperated the Bounder intensely.

He left Mr. Quelch's study frowning.

In his anger and annoyance, he rather forgot his usual caution.

Mr. Lamb was coming down the passage as he emerged.

The Bounder saw him the moment he stepped out—then it was too late.

"Vernon-Smith!" came a rap from the Lamb.

"Yes, sir!" breathed Smithy.

"What are you doing in that study? No Remove boy is allowed to enter that study in Mr. Quelch's absence, as you know very well!"

"I went in to look out a word in Mr. Quelch's Latin dictionary, sir—I have mislaid my own," answered the Bounder. Smithy did not care what answer he made to a beak so long as it served his purpose.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Lamb, unpleasantly. "And what was the word, Vernon-Smith?"

If Mr. Lamb hoped to catch the Bounder with that question, he did not know how quick Smithy was on the uptake.

"Parca, sir," answered Vernon-Smith coolly.

Mr. Lamb gave a violent start. His eyes seemed to burn.

It was possible, of course, that a junior wanted to look out a Latin adjective, and it was possible that the

adjective he wanted was parca—meaning frugal or thrifty.

But as parca sounded exactly like Parker, Mr. Lamb, who had already heard so much about Nobby, was not likely to believe that Smithy had wanted to look out that special adjective.

He was not likely to believe that at all. He knew at once that Smithy was deliberately using that word because it sounded like Parker—coolly letting him know that he knew Nobby's other name!

Vernon-Smith stood quite calmly waiting for him to speak again. He knew that Lamb knew that he was giving him a jolt, but that it was impossible for Lamb to pin him down on it, as it were. A junior could mention any Latin adjective he liked—whether it sounded like Nobby's surname or not. All Lamb could do was to punish him for entering Quelch's study—and that, he knew, Lamb was going to do in any case.

For a moment, Mr. Lamb looked like grasping the Bounder and boxing his ears right and left—as he had done more than once before. But in a moment he was himself again.

"Indeed," he said, "I need hardly say, Vernon-Smith, that I do not believe your statement, knowing you to be untruthful. But since you are, by your own account, so interested in one branch of your studies here, I shall encourage you. You will write out Parcus, parca, parcum five hundred times, and bring your imposition to my study this evening."

"Yes, sir."

And the Bounder went, Mr. Lamb's eyes gleaming at him over his glasses as he went.

A RISE IN PRICE!

"YOU fool!"

"Thanks!"

"You idiot!"

"Thanks again!"

"I've a jolly good mind to punch your silly face!"

"Go it!"

The Famous Five were at tea in Study No. 1 after class when Herbert Vernon-Smith looked in at the door and addressed those polished remarks to the captain of the Remove.

Vernon-Smith had been disgruntled ever since that talk with Mr. Lazarus on the telephone. True, he had scored over Mr. Lamb with his parca, but a heavy imposition rather dashed his satisfaction in that matter. He had been disrespectful to Mr. Lascelles in the maths class, and as Larry Lascelles was not the man to be cheeked by a disgruntled junior, he had been rewarded with a rap over the knuckles that quite washed out any further cheek. So now here he was, telling the captain of the Remove what he thought of him—and more than half-inclined to step into the study and punch him.

"Anything biting you, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Is the bitfulness terrific, my esteemed Smithy?" inquired the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Shut that door, Smithy!" said

Frank Nugent. "Take your face away first!"

"You dummy!" went on the Bounder. "You've dished my jape on Lamb now! When I got old Lazarus on the phone that stuffed dog was gone!"

"Sorry!" answered Harry Wharton politely. "Think out another one! A man can't cut games practice to go shopping as you know as well as I do."

"I say, though, it's jolly queer that it's gone," said Bob. "I shouldn't have thought such a thing would sell in a year. It's a pity—it would have been a jolly good joke on the Baa-Lamb! Are you sure, Smithy?"

"Lazarus said so," growled the Bounder. "It was sold only half an hour before I got him on the phone."

"Hard luck!" said Johnny Bull. "But if you think Wharton ought to have let you off games practice and told Wingate some lie about it, you're a fool!"

"I've a jolly good mind—" breathed the Bounder, with a glare at the captain of the Remove.

"You haven't, old chap," said Bob. "Judging by your looks, you've got a jolly bad one! Change your mind!"

There was a chuckle in Study No. 1. Really, the disgruntled Bounder could not expect to impress that study with his black looks.

Smithy bestowed a glare on the whole tea-party, stepped back from the doorway, and slammed the door with a slam that rang from one end of the Remove passage to the other. Then he tramped angrily up the passage to his own study, No. 4.

He kicked the door open—that was one of Smithy's ways when he was in a bad temper. It was not without reason that the Remove had nicknamed him the Bounder. He tramped into the study rather surprised to see that the light was on, as Tom Redwing was down in the Rag.

But he saw the next moment that the study was not unoccupied. Fisher T. Fish was there.

Fishy's bony person was sprawling inelegantly in the Bounder's armchair. Apparently, he was waiting there for Smithy.

The Bounder scowled at him. He was angry and annoyed and had little civility to waste on any fellow—least of all on the bony, weedy, greedy Fishy.

"What the thump do you want?" he demanded ungraciously.

"Jest a chin with you, old tulip," answered Fisher T. Fish amicably. "I guess I got something to sell—"

"Oh, chuck it!" snapped the Bounder.

Fisher T. Fish always had something to sell, but Smithy was in no mood for the Remove merchant. He did not want to see a pocket-knife, or a fountain-pen, or a camera that the spry Fishy had got off some hard-up fellow for a quarter of its value.

"I'm telling you—" said Fishy. "Get out!"

"You don't want to buy a stuffed dawg?" asked Fishy.

Vernon-Smith stared at him. "What do you mean? If you mean that stuffed dog at Lazarus', it's sold."

Somebody snapped it up this afternoon."

"I guess it was a guy about my size," explained Fisher T. Fish. He pointed to a large bundle that lay on the floor beside the armchair.

"You!" said the Bounder blankly. "Surest thing you know. I reckoned I'd make sure of that dawg for you, Smithy, as you couldn't cut," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh!" said Smithy. His brow cleared. "I say, that was pretty decent of you, Fishy. I knew you were spoofing on the Soccer ground, but I never thought— By gum! Have you really got it?"

"Yep!" Fisher T. Fish jerked the parcel open.

The Bounder's eyes gleamed at the sight of the stuffed bulldog.

There it was! It was a fearsome-looking animal. It looked absolutely lifelike, and in life it had evidently been an animal that few would have cared to approach too near. It had a set of teeth that were positively horrifying to look at, and it had glass eyes that seemed to glint with a vicious, threatening expression.

There was no doubt that anyone who came suddenly on that bulldog, and supposed it to be alive, would be considerably startled. And the Remove ventriloquist was able to supply it with exceedingly lifelike growls and snarls. Billy Bunter, with his "farmyard imitations," as Bob Cherry called his ventriloquism, was quite equal to that.

Smithy's eyes danced. He had not lost that article, after all, to an unknown buyer, and he could carry on with his jape on Lamb.

But he was puzzled. It was quite unlike Fisher T. Fish to take all this trouble on another fellow's account. Fishy, as a rule, concentrated wholly and solely on Fisher Tarleton Fish.

"Well, I'm jolly glad you got it, Fishy," said the Bounder. "Did you pay for it?"

Fisher T. Fish grinned.

"Can you see old Lazarus letting me walk it off, if I hadn't?" he inquired. "That dawg sure is bought and paid for."

"Right-ho!" said Vernon-Smith. "Here's the quid."

He took his wallet from his pocket—the best-lined wallet in the Remove, if not in all Greyfriars.

"The what?" repeated Fisher T. Fish, eyeing the Bounder narrowly. "Did you say the quid, Smithy? I guess that dawg will cost you thirty shillings."

"Rot! It was marked a pound!" said the Bounder. "I saw it in the window, with the ticket on it! Old Lazarus is an honest man—he never diddle you like that! What do you mean?"

"I guess I'm speaking plain Amurrican! That dawg will cost you thirty shillings! And worth more!" said Fisher T. Fish warmly. "Tain't everybody that wants a stuffed bulldog, I allow; but a guy that wants it could never get it cheaper! Why, I gave a quid for that dawg myself! You figure that I biked down to Courtfield this afternoon, and lugged it home on my

jigger, for fresh air and exercise? You want to guess again!"

The Bounder looked at him.

He understood now.

It was not from good nature that Fisher T. Fish had made sure of securing that stuffed specimen for him. Fisher T. Fish, as usual, was on the make.

He had cut in to secure that stuffed bulldog simply because the Bounder wanted it, with the intention of making a profit on the transaction. Fisher T. Fish saw nothing mean or objectionable in doing this. This was what Fishy called cute, and spry, and business from the word go. Fisher T. Fish had been raised in Noo Yark, where a smart guy corralled the dust and the lame duck went under—and Fishy prided himself on it.

He knew, of course, that bone-headed fellows in a mouldy old island did not look at these things as he did. That was because they were boobs, and goobs, and goofs, and jays! Remove fellows often called Fishy by quite unpleasant names—such as skinflint, and Shylock. Fishy did not mind. Hard words broke no bones, and money was money.

"You worm!" said the Bounder, at last. "You mean, sneaking, scrounging skinflint! I'll give you the quid for that thing!"

Fisher T. Fish rose from the armchair, and yawned.

"Forget it!" he said. "If you ain't buying this dawg, I guess I'll keep it on hand till I find a buyer."

He stooped to pick up the parcel. Fishy was quite well aware that the Bounder, who had lots of money, would not let ten shillings stand between him and the jape he had planned on Lamb. Smithy would have bought that dog from Mr. Lazarus at twice the price, without a second thought. His objection was to being done by a mean worm.

"Leave that parcel alone!" said the Bounder, in a savage, growling voice, that really might have come from the bulldog itself.

"You buying?" asked Fishy airily.

The Bounder paused. Fisher T. Fish had bought that stuffed dog from Mr. Lazarus, and it was his! The meanness of the transaction made no difference to that. If the Bounder wanted it he had to buy it from Fisher T. Fish, at Fisher T. Fish's price! And he did want it.

Slowly he drew a ten-shilling note from his wallet, and handed it to Fisher T. Fish along with the pound note.

Fishy grinned cheerily as he received the notes. Black looks did not worry him—and contempt, which is said to pierce the shell of the tortoise, did not penetrate Fisher T. Fish. Money being the beginning and end of all things, Fishy was quite satisfied.

"The dawg's yourn!" said Fisher T. Fish breezily.

And he went to the study door and opened it, to jerk out into the passage.

As he stepped into the doorway, the Bounder, with gleaming eyes,

stepped behind him. His foot shot out, and crashed on Fisher T. Fish's trousers almost like a battering-ram.

There was a fearful yell from Fisher T. Fish as he shot out of the doorway and flew across the passage.

Fisher T. Fish had not expected that! Really, he might have, but he hadn't! He roared frantically, as he crumpled up on the passage floor.

"Aw—wake snakes!" yelled Fishy. "Why, you gol-darned galoot—you pesky pie-faced mugwump, wharrer you figure you're at? You figure that you can kick a free American citizen on the trousers?"

The Bounder evidently figured that he could, for he stepped out into the passage and kicked again.

Fisher T. Fish let out another fearful yell, bounded up, and flew.

The Bounder rushed after him, and got in three more before Fisher T. Fish escaped into Study No. 14, and slammed the door.

Then he went back to his own study, feeling better. The stuffed dog was well worth a pound; and he had taken the other ten shillings' worth out of Fisher T. Fish.

Fishy, as he squirmed and wriggled and moaned in Study No. 14, felt that he had earned that ten shillings.

NO ADMITTANCE!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. eyed the Bounder rather curiously when the Remove gathered at their Form-room door the following morning.

They had heard that Smithy was, after all, in possession of that stuffed bulldog; and expected him to carry on with the jape on the Pet Lamb.

But the Form-room was usually kept locked; so they did not quite see how the stuffed object could have been introduced into the room, to greet Lamb's eyes when he let in his Form.

There was a grin on the Bounder's face. There was a still wider grin on the fat countenance of William George Bunter.

The Remove ventriloquist was ready to go into action.

Bunter had already played a good many tricks on Lamb, with his weird ventriloquism, and Lamb had never dreamed of suspecting him. So the fat Owl felt quite safe in carrying on. That was rather important—for Bunter had experienced Lamb's heavy hand with a cane. Even bribes in the shape of jam tarts and doughnuts would not have made Bunter inclined to take risks.

The fat Owl was in high feather now. Bunter liked showing off his weird powers as a ventriloquist. When it came to ventriloquism, Bunter was the goods, and Bunter liked being the goods.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "The key's in the door!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. Skinner chuckled.

"Did anybody bag that key from the Lamb's study, and unlock this door this morning?" he asked.

"I wonder!" said the Bounder.

"I seem to remember that somebody was late for brekker!" grinned Hazeldene. "What made you late for brekker, Smithy?"

"Not dropping into Lamb's study for a key?" chortled Bolsover major. "Not at all. I was admiring the scenery, and didn't notice the bell," answered the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows, Lamb's going to get a surprise when he comes along!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "I say, I'm going to make him jump!"

"Lamb's late," remarked Tom Brown. "Looking for that key, perhaps."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a chuckle from the Removites. Other Forms had gone in by this time; the Lower Fourth were still waiting. It was not the first time that Mr. Lamb's leg had been pulled in this way. Once, indeed, the Remove had got off the first hour, because Lamb could not find the key of the Form-room.

This time, however, Lamb was not very late. He came bustling along the corridor, in his fussy way, and peered at the juniors over his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Good-morning, my boys!" he bleated. "My goodness, the key is in the door. I have been looking for the key! I must have left it in the door! How odd that I should leave it in the door. I am a little absent-minded sometimes. Dear me!"

The juniors grinned, and winked at one another! This was the innocent Pet Lamb all over! He fancied that he had left the key in the Form-room door, when all the Remove knew that Vernon-Smith had stayed late for brekker, to pinch it from his study.

The Bounder sneered. He knew, he was absolutely certain, that this fluffy foolishness on the Lamb's part was sheer humbug—a part that the Lamb played for some reason of his own. He chose to be considered an innocent and harmless ass, when he was nothing of the kind. Smithy did not doubt that he knew perfectly well that the key had been abstracted from his study and put in the door by one of the fellows present.

But most of the Remove took Mr. Lamb at face value, as it were! Few of them gave any heed to the Bounder's opinion that, under his fluffy manners and customs, he was deep as a well, sharp as a razor, and hard as nails.

Certainly, if the Lamb played a part, he played it well. If he was not an ass, he looked one, with his velvet coat, his rather long hair, his glasses slanting on his nose, a smear of chalk on his sleeve, and a smudge of Chinese white on his necktie.

The juniors made room for him to approach the door, and he put his hand to the key in the lock.

Billy Bunter gave his little fat cough. Then everyone but Mr. Lamb knew what was coming.

Gurrrrrrrrrh!

It was a vicious dog's growl, and it came, or, at least, seemed to come, from the Form-room.

Mr. Lamb gave a sudden start.

So lifelike was that growl that even

the Remove fellows, who knew Bunter and his ventriloquial trickery so well, could hardly believe that it was produced by the fat ventriloquist. It was no wonder that the Lamb was taken in.

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Lamb.

He paused, with his hand on the key, and glanced round at the expectant crowd of juniors. He fixed his eyes for a moment on Herbert Vernon-Smith, who looked elaborately unconscious.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Lamb. "There is a dog in the Form-room! Has some boy here taken a dog into the Form-room again?"

There was no reply. Nobody had ever taken a dog into the Form-room, as a matter of fact; but undoubtedly a dog's growling had been heard there more than once.

Mr. Lamb, naturally, did not suppose that the growl had been there without the dog. On previous occasions the dog had been quite invisible—but it was going to be visible this time.

Lamb gave the Form a suspicious look and then turned to the door again and unlocked it. He threw it open, but did not immediately enter. The Remove had already learned that Mr. Lamb did not like growling dogs at close quarters. He looked into the room.

Gurrrh!

It was a horrible, savage growl.

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Lamb again as his startled eyes fixed on a really terrifying object in the Form-room.

It was a savage-looking bulldog.

It squatted facing the door, its eyes glinting, its partly opened jaws revealing a gleam of teeth.

All eyes from the doorway fixed on it. The juniors knew that that bulldog was quite harmless, they knew that it was stuffed. But had they not known, few of them would have cared to enter the Form-room with the ferocious-looking beast crouched there watching the doorway and growling horribly. In life that bulldog had plainly been a savage brute, and it still looked it.

Mr. Lamb stood in the doorway. Clearly, he did not want to enter, in defiance of that growling brute.

He eyed it very uneasily. So far from entering, he was ready to grab the door shut in a hurry if the bulldog attacked.

But the fierce brute remained motionless, watching the doorway. It did not stir—it only squatted and watched. But the eyes seemed to move, catching the sunlight from the Form-room windows.

A long minute passed. Mr. Lamb was at a loss—and the Remove waited for Mr. Lamb to make a move.

"Cherry!" said Mr. Lamb at last.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bob.

"Please go into the Form-room, and drive that dog out."

"Oh!"

That was pretty cool on the part of Mr. Lamb! He did not want to venture near those dangerous fangs himself. He assigned the task to Bob Cherry! Something, certainly, had to be done. Form-master and Form could not remain for ever at the door of the Form-room staring in.

Bob Cherry stepped in. He was not at all nervous of that bulldog—in the circumstances! Driving it out, however, was a matter of some difficulty, as a stuffed bulldog lacked the power of locomotion.

"Shoo!" said Bob, waving a hand at it. "Shoo! Good doggie! Shoo!"

Gurrrrrrgh! came a horrible growl.

Bob bounded back to the doorway. Certainly he was not scared by a growl from a fat ventriloquist! But he looked as if he was! All the Remove were ready to play up to the Bounder's jape.

"Oh! Help!" roared Bob, as he bounded. "Keep that dog off! Oh!"

He leaped back into the passage.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb testily. "This is not a laughing matter. Cherry, you should not be so frightened of a dog!"

"Wasn't it going to bite me, sir?" asked Bob.

"It has not even stirred!" snapped Mr. Lamb. "I do not think that the dog is really dangerous——"

Gurrrrrh!

Mr. Lamb compressed his lips. If that savage brute was to be shifted out of the Form-room, obviously it was up to the master, not to the boys, to undertake the perilous task.

But Mr. Lamb had no intention of undertaking it. He had too much regard for his calves, to place them within reach of those horrible teeth. Still, something had to be done.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir! I—I'd rather not drive that dog out, sir!" said the captain of the Remove.

"If you are afraid of a dog, Wharton——"

"He—he looks so fierce, sir!"

"The fierceness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Bull——"

"Shall I come in with you, sir?" asked Johnny Bull. "I don't mind following you in, sir!"

Mr. Lamb gave Johnny an expressive look. He did not want anybody to follow him in! He was not going to lead the way!

"The boy who led that dog into the Form-room will be severely punished," said Mr. Lamb. His temper was showing now. "Was it you, Vernon-Smith?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

That answer was truthful enough. Smithy certainly had not led that dog into the Form-room. He had carried it in, under his arm! That bulldog could hardly have been led.

"To whom does that dog belong?" exclaimed Mr. Lamb. "I have never seen it before. Does it belong to the school at all?"

"I've never seen it about the school before to-day, sir," said Peter Todd.

"First time I've ever seen it, sir!" said Squiff.

"It is extraordinary if such a dog can have wandered into the school!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

There was a gurgle in the passage. Knowing what they did about that dog, the juniors would have thought

it very extraordinary indeed, if it had wandered into the school! Stuffed dogs were not, as a rule, given to wandering!

"Wharton! Go and fetch Gosling!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb, at last. "Tell him to bring a large stick!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped the captain of the Remove.

And he went, leaving the Removites in a state of suppressed hysterics, wondering what was going to happen when Gosling arrived with a large stick to drive out a stuffed dog.

BEWARE OF THE DOG!

WILLIAM GOSLING grunted. He arrived—with a large stick! But he did not seem keen—after a glance into the Form-room—to get going, with that large stick!

Old Gosling eyed that dog—and that dog, with its glass eyes, eyed Gosling—and the more William Gosling eyed that dog, the less he seemed to like the prospect of going nearer.

"Please go in and drive away that dog, Gosling!" said Mr. Lamb impatiently. "The class is already a quarter of an hour late! What are you waiting for, Gosling?"

Gosling gave him a look.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," he answered. "I don't like the looks of that there dorg! I don't want his teeth in my leg, I don't!"

"You have a stick! Drive him away with the stick! The dog seems very quiet. He has not moved since I opened the door."

"Don't I know 'em!" said Gosling. "A bulldog don't do a song and a dance afore he gets his teeth in! Quiet as you like, and then—snap! Too quiet for my liking, sir!"

"I cannot wait here," said Mr. Lamb. "Gosling, go into the Form-room at once, and drive out that dog! Boys, stand aside, and give the dog room to run out—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" Mr. Lamb, quite angry now, glared round at laughing faces. He saw nothing funny in his remark, but the idea of a stuffed dog running out made the juniors yell. "Silence! Now, Gosling—"

Gosling hesitated, eyeing that fierce bulldog dubiously. However, he made the venture at last, with the big stick uplifted ready for a swipe, if the bulldog sprang at him.

Gurrrrrrgh! came a hideous, horrible growl, as Gosling almost reached the crouching brute. Gurrrrrrrgggh!

It was too much for Gosling! Naturally he expected that ferocious growl to be followed by a deadly spring.

Gosling made a backward jump, covering quite a good distance, with an activity very creditable to a man of his years. Indeed, Gosling jumped like a jack-in-the-box! He came down with both feet in the doorway—one of his feet, unfortunately, landing on one of Mr. Lamb's.

Gosling's weight was considerable! Mr. Lamb's toes were not squashed, but they felt, for the moment, as if

they were! The art master let out a yell that woke many echoes.

He gave Gosling a violent push in the back, to get him off that foot in the shortest possible space of time.

Gosling, overbalanced, went staggering into the Form-room again, and tumbled over on his hands and knees.

He landed with his head only an inch from the bulldog's jaws!

"Look out, Gosling!" yelled the Bounder.

"He'll get you, Gosling!" roared Bolsover major.

"Jump for it, Gosling!" howled Bob Cherry.

"Beat it, old-timer!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gosling did not lose time. For a fraction of a second he stared into the terrifying face so close to his own—then he bounded up as if he were made of india-rubber, and flew to the door. The big stick was left on the floor of the Form-room.

"Buck up, Gosling!"

"He's behind you!"

"Look out for his teeth!"

Gosling, gasping, careered out of the Form-room. That bulldog had not bitten him, and was not, in fact, likely to do so, but the Greyfriars porter could almost feel the terrible teeth closing on flesh and bone! Gosling knocked three or four of the juniors right and left as he bounded out into the passage.

"Cor!" gasped Gosling. He spun round, and was relieved to see that the bulldog was not in pursuit. "My eye! That was a narrer escape, and no error! My eye!"

"Narrow squeak, old man!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"The narrowfulness was terrific!"

"He nearly had you, Gosling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gurrrrrrrggh! came from the bulldog. He had not stirred from his place, but his growling was really terrifying.

Mr. Lamb was not the amiable Pet Lamb now! His face was dark with anger. He limped on the foot on which Gosling had landed. Probably he had a pain there! His most unpleasant expression was on his face now. And the Lamb could look very unpleasant when his temper was aroused.

"Gosling! What do you mean by this?" he exclaimed. "Are you afraid of a dog, you blockhead? Drive that dog away at once! Do you hear me?"

Gosling breathed hard, and he breathed deep.

"Yes, I 'car you, Mr. Lamb," he retorted, "and I ain't no more afraid of dorgs than you are! Wot I says is this 'ere—it ain't my dooty to drive dorgs away—that ain't part of a porter's dooty, that ain't—and I ain't going to get my legs tore, sir, not to please you, nor to please anybody! That's wot I says, sir!"

"How dare you be impertinent, Gosling! Take up that stick and drive that dog away at once!"

"P'r'aps you'll 'and me the stick, sir!" said Gosling sarcastically.

The stick lay midway between the door and the bulldog.

Mr. Lamb looked at it. But he did

not step in to pick it up. A hand stretched out to that stick would have been within range of a sudden snap, and it did not seem good enough to Mr. Lamb.

"Gosling! Will you—"

"You 'and me the stick, sir, and I'll try it on ag'in!" said Gosling—quite a safe offer, as it was quite clear that Mr. Lamb was not going to get one inch nearer that bulldog.

Mr. Lamb breathed anger. With a pain in his foot, and another pain in his temper, he was getting less and less like the amiable Pet Lamb every moment. He was in fact, in the Bounder's opinion, letting his real nature come to the surface.

"Gosling! If you are insolent I shall report you to Dr. Locke!" exclaimed Mr. Lamb. "Go in at once and—"

Gurrrrrggh!

"He's springing!" yelled the Bounder. "Look out!"

"Oh, my eye!" gasped Gosling. He did not wait to see whether that bulldog really was springing or not. He shot away down the passage.

Mr. Lamb jumped away from the doorway. If that bulldog was springing, he did not want the teeth to take a sample from him.

There was a roar of laughter in the passage. That bulldog, of course, was not springing. There was no spring in that bulldog. It was a false alarm! The Removites roared.

Gosling disappeared round a corner. He did not return. Evidently Gosling had had enough!

Mr. Lamb stopped at a little distance. As the juniors were still gathered round the doorway and yelling with laughter, he realised that the bulldog could not be putting up an offensive. With a crimson face, and his eyes glinting with wrath, Lamb came back to the spot.

He glared into the Form-room. If that bulldog had stirred—as Mr. Lamb naturally supposed that it had—it had gone back to its place! There it was, crouching, looking as if it had never moved at all! It glared at Mr. Lamb, and Mr. Lamb glared at it—quite at a loss.

COKER TO THE RESCUE!

WHAT the thump—"cjaculated Coker of the Fifth.

The door of the Fifth Form room opened, and a member of that Form came out. It was Horace Coker, and he stared at the crowd of Removites as he came down the passage.

Mr. Lamb glanced round at him sourly.

"If you please, sir, Mr. Prout sent me to ask for less noise!" said Coker of the Fifth.

It was not surprising that the Fifth Form master had sent one of his boys with that message to the Remove room. The buzzing of voices and howls of laughter in the passage must have caused considerable interruption in other Form-rooms.

"Nonsense!" snapped Mr. Lamb. He was too angry for politeness.

either to Coker or to his Form-master. Coker stared at him.

"Am I to tell Mr. Prout that, sir?" he asked.

"You may tell Mr. Prout what you please, and if you are impertinent, I shall box your ears!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

Coker looked at him very expressively. He was a head taller than the little art master. He could not quite see Lamb boxing his ears.

"What the thump's up here?" asked Coker, addressing the Remove crowd. "Why ain't you in your Form-room?"

"We're all frightened!" explained the Bounder.

"Eh? Frightened of what?"

"There's a fierce bulldog—"

"What rot!" said Coker. "There isn't a bulldog at Greyfriars! If there was, are you kids frightened of a dog?"

"Fearfully!" answered the Bounder.

"The fearfulness is terrific."

"He growls like anything, Coker!"

"He, he, he!"

Coker stared at the juniors, stared at Mr. Lamb, and, finally, stared into the Remove room. He gave quite a jump at the sight of the bulldog there.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Coker. "Where did that brute spring from?"

"Wandered in, and wandered into the Form-room!" answered Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you must be a minging lot, if you're afraid of a bulldog!" jeered Coker. "I daresay he's quite good-tempered! Why don't you drive him out?"

"We're afraid to!" explained Bob Cherry.

"Shaking in our shoes!" said Skinner.

"You should hear him growl, Coker!" said Ogilvy. "I can tell you, that growl came from a frightfully unpleasant beast!"

"Oh, really, Ogilvy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker snorted with contempt. Coker at all events feared no foe, on two legs or four! His snort was addressed as much to Mr. Lamb as to Mr. Lamb's Form! It was pretty sickening, as Coker told Potter and Greene afterwards, to see a Form-master sticking out in the passage with his Form because there was a dog in the Form-room. It got Coker's goat!

"Like me to drive that dog out, sir?" he asked.

"That was too good an offer for Lamb to refuse!"

"Please do so, Coker!" he said.

"I say, Coker, look out for his teeth—"

"He nearly had Gosling—"

"Look out for his spring—"

"Mind your legs!"

"Rot!" snorted Coker. "Wait till I get hold of that stick, and I'll show you!"

Coker of the Fifth stepped into the Remove doorway, as bold as brass. He was going to grab up that stick and drive that dog out, just to show that he could do it!

Gurrrrrggh! came a horrible growl.

Coker made a sudden backward movement. That hideous growl was really startling.

There was a chuckle in the passage. Coker did not seem, on second thoughts, to like that bulldog at close quarters much more than Lamb did.

"Oh gum!" breathed Coker. "He looks pretty fierce! If he got his teeth on a fellow's hand—by gum!"

Gurrrrrrggh!

"Go it, Coker!"

"Don't mind his teeth!"

"Carry on, Coker!"

Encouragement from the Remove did not seem to encourage Coker very much. He paused—a long pause! Perhaps Coker wished, at that moment, that he had not taken the job on! It was like Horace Coker to act first and think afterwards!

But a Fifth Form man could not retreat—under the eyes of a mob of juniors. Coker, at all events, couldn't! He was landed now! He had to tackle that bulldog, after his big words.

He made a step—a very short step—into the Form-room, waving a soothing hand at the bulldog.

"Good dog!" said Coker affectionately. "Good dog—good old doggie! Nice old doggie! Good dog!"

The bulldog took absolutely no notice of that! Coker's affectionate tones did not diminish the ferocity of his looks. He remained crouching, with a fixed and deadly glare at Coker.

"Good old doggie!" repeated Coker, advancing about another inch.

Gurrrrrgh!

Coker stopped.

"Are you going to drive that dog out or not, Coker?" snarled Mr. Lamb, behind him. "If you are afraid of the dog, go away at once, and do not be ridiculous!"

"I hope I'm not afraid of a dog, sir!" said Coker with dignity.

"Hopeful nature, Coker's!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Coker, you ridiculous boy, if you are frightened, go away immediately!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

A whole brigade of bulldogs would never have made Horace Coker admit that he was frightened. He wished himself well back in the Fifth Form room—but he was not going to admit that he was afraid of that bulldog, if it took a whole leg off him. Taking his courage in both hands, as it were, Coker trod into the Form-room—his heart beating most unpleasantly, watching the dog like a cat, ready to dodge a spring.

But the stuffed bulldog did not spring—though it was, perhaps, fortunate for Coker that it had reached the stuffed stage of its career!

Gurrrrg!

Coker's heart sank almost into his boots. But he was not going to show the white feather. Grimly he advanced, stooped, and clutched up Gosling's big stick! In momentary expectation of the bulldog springing, he stood on guard—but still the bulldog did not spring! Possibly the bulldog was not so ferocious as he looked—anyhow, he made no movement.

"Drive him out!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

Coker drew a deep breath. Holding the stick before him, ready, he stepped nearer to the crouching brute.

"Shoo!" said Coker.

The Removites, packed round the doorway, watched Coker breathlessly—Smithy with some uncasiness. Coker, if he got to close quarters, was likely to do some damage with that big stick—and Smithy did not want to lose that bulldog. He made a sign to Bunter, and the fat ventriloquist got going again.

Gurrrrrrggh!

It was a horrible, threatening growl, and it caused Coker of the Fifth to feel such a sinking in his inside that he very nearly backed out of the Form-room again! But not quite! Coker simply couldn't back out now—much as he would have liked to.

He paused—then he advanced again.

"Shooo!" said Coker.

The bulldog declined to be shooed. He did not stir an inch. Still as a graven image, he watched Coker.

Coker waved the stick! That had no effect on the bulldog! At length Coker poked with the stick, getting the bulldog in the neck—and jumped back at once, to escape the consequences.

But there were no consequences. Even a poke in the neck did not stir that bulldog into action.

Coker's courage revived! The brute looked fierce enough—but he was tamer than he looked! After all, growls could not hurt a fellow. It was the teeth that Coker objected to. If the brute was not going to use his teeth, it was all right for Coker.

Gurrrrrgh! came another growl.

Coker did not heed it! He marched right up to that bulldog and brandished the big stick.

"Now then!" rapped Coker. His tone to that bulldog was no longer soothing or affectionate. "Now then! Get out! Shift! Get going! Shoo!"

Whack!

Coker gave the bulldog a real whack—not very hard, for Coker did not want to hurt him, only to set him going. Still, it was quite a whack; and if the brute had been as fierce as he looked, he would certainly have turned on Coker and made life unenjoyable for him. But, amazing to relate, that ferocious-looking bulldog did not turn a hair! It did not stir! Even a stick whacking on its ribs did not disturb its equanimity! It just squatted, regardless!

Whack!

Encouraged, Coker handed over another! The bulldog did not attack him. But it did not go! It seemed determined not to move, howsoever much Coker whacked it with that stick!

Mr. Lamb strode into the Form-room! Obviously there was no danger in that dog! A bulldog that allowed itself to be poked and whacked, without even stirring, was not at all alarming! Lamb was in a very much worse temper than the



"Ooooooch!" spluttered Mr. Lamb, as he sprang wildly at the branch. But the bulldog hung on to his coat tail like grim death. There was a sound of rending and tearing!

bulldog. He was much more fierce. He had a strong malicious desire to give that bulldog toco; and as the brute evidently had no bite in him, Lamb was going to do it.

He grabbed the stick away from Coker.

"I say, leave him to me, sir—I'll manage him——" protested Coker.

"Stand aside!" snapped Lamb.

He swung up the stick! It was a thick and heavy stick, and Lamb, evidently, was going to put plenty of force into his swipe.

"Look here, sir——" exclaimed Coker indignantly.

Lamb did not heed.

With all the strength of his arm he brought that thick, heavy stick down full on the bulldog's head, with what a novelist would call a dull, sickening thud!

Thud!

Lamb meant to hurt that bulldog! But even Lamb was not prepared for the awful damage he did—and he jumped, almost clear of the Form-room floor, as, under that terrific swipe, the bulldog's head fell off!

PAINFUL FOR THE PROFITEER!

"OH!" gasped Mr. Lamb.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a shriek from the mob at the doorway.

"Oh crikey!"

"I say, you fellows—he, he, he!"

The Removites roared. That sudden and startling catastrophe struck them as the climax.

Even the Bounder, who did not want to lose that bulldog, having anticipated further japing with its assistance, yelled as loudly as the rest. The astounded expression on Mr. Lamb's face was, as Skinner remarked, worth a guinea a box! It was, as Fisher T. Fish declared, the bee's knee, if not the elephant's side-whiskers!

Mr. Lamb gazed at that dismantled bulldog. Coker gazed at it, his jaws dropping with horrified amazement.

"You brute!" gasped Coker. "Look——"

Coker broke off. Even on Coker's brain it dawned that it was unusual, to say the least, for a bulldog's head to fall off when it was whopped, however hard the whop! There was something unusual about that bulldog!

Mr. Lamb grasped that fact more rapidly than Coker! For a long moment he was astounded and unnerved. Then, with a splutter of rage, he jumped at that bulldog to make a closer examination.

Then he saw!

That animal had been well stuffed. It had been held together well. But no stuffed skin could have stood up against that fearful swipe that Lamb had delivered with a big, heavy stick. Now it was merely a wreck! From gaps in split skin stuffing oozed.

Mr. Lamb had been kept out of his Form-room for nearly half an hour—by a stuffed dog!

He gasped with fury! Probably any Form-master would have been extremely exasperated by such an occurrence. Lamb almost foamed.

"Who brought this stuffed dog here?" he roared, glaring at the laughing faces in the doorway.

Nobody answered that question. Everybody knew that Herbert Vernon-Smith had brought it there, but nobody was likely to tell Mr. Lamb so.

"Stuffed!" said Horace Coker, like a fellow in a dream. "Stuffed! A—a—a stuffed dog! Oh crumbs! Stuffed! Oh, my hat! But—but I—I—I heard it growl—I distinctly heard it growl——"

Mr. Lamb glared at the bulldog again. It was stuffed—he could see that now! But certainly he, as well as Coker, had heard it growl, more than once. It was, of course, some sort of trickery—that was clear!

"There is some mechanical contrivance in it, I presume!" said Mr. Lamb, between his teeth. "The whole thing is a trick!"

Lamb was as far as ever from suspecting that the growls had come from a fat member of his Form in the passage.

"Oh!" gasped Coker. "Something inside—like a squeaker in a Teddy bear! Oh crikey! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you laughing at?" snarled Mr. Lamb. "Go out of this Form-room at once! At once!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker; and he went! Now that he understood the true inwardness of that bulldog, so to speak, Coker seemed to think it funny! He bellowed with mirth as he went back to the Fifth Form room.

Mr. Lamb's feelings did not seem mirthful! And under his glittering THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,668.

eyes, merriment died away in the Remove. At a sign from Lamb the juniors marched into the Form-room—no longer kept out by that fierce bulldog—and took their places—Lamb watching them almost wolfishly.

The dilapidated stuffed bulldog lay stretched on the floor—no longer an object of terror! But Mr. Lamb, to judge by the expression on his face, was an object of terror himself now! The Pet Lamb had turned into a big, bad wolf! He stepped to his desk and grasped a cane!

Then he eyed the Remove with glittering eyes. Those glittering eyes singled out the Bounder. It was plain that he suspected Smithy.

Vernon-Smith met his gaze with cool hardihood.

"Who brought that stuffed dog into the Form-room?" Lamb's voice came almost in a hiss. "I shall make the boy who brought it here sorry for his audacity! That boy will stand out at once."

He paused. Nobody stood out.

"I shall inquire into this," said Mr. Lamb, "until I find the offender! I shall—"

He brake off angrily as there was a heavy tread in the passage.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, looked in.

Prout's plump face looked as if he was trying to subdue a smile, but with little success. Evidently, Coker had reported what had happened in the Form-room and Mr. Prout had stepped along to see for himself.

Lamb gave him a hostile glare. He

was quite conscious of the absurdity of the affair and the ridiculous figure he cut, having been frightened out of his Form-room by a stuffed dog.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Prout, gazing at the bulldog. "Is—is—is that it, Mr. Lamb? Coker tells me that—"

"Please do not interrupt now, Mr. Prout! Enough time has been wasted here already!" snapped Mr. Lamb.

"But what an extraordinary thing!" boomed Prout. "Did you really suppose that that was a—a live bulldog, Mr. Lamb? How extraordinary!"

Prout grinned. The portly, majestic master of the Fifth actually grinned! He seemed unable to help it!

"Dear me!" he said. "Ha, ha! I—I mean, I have seen that bulldog before, Mr. Lamb. I am sure it is the same. Stuffed bulldogs must be somewhat rare—I am sure it must be the same—"

Mr. Lamb took notice at once. He was longing and yearning for a clue to the owner of that bulldog. He suspected Smithy—but he knew it might have been almost any fellow in the Remove who had played that extraordinary trick on him. He wanted to get hold of that fellow and give him the thrashing of his life!

"You have seen that—that object before, Mr. Prout?" he exclaimed.

"I think so," said Mr. Prout. "If it is not the same, it is certainly exactly like a stuffed bulldog I have seen for sale in a shop window at Courtfield—"

"What shop?"

"Mr. Lazarus', in the High Street! Yes, I am sure it is the same!" said Mr. Prout. "There could scarcely be two—"

Lamb's eyes gleamed! He had his clue now! Like Mr. Prout, he did not suppose that there were two stuffed bulldogs about! Some young rascal in the Remove had got this wretched object from Mr. Lazarus to play tricks in the Remove Form-room! It was clear enough to Mr. Lamb.

"But did you really suppose it was alive?" asked Mr. Prout. "How very extraordinary! Did you really—"

"Will you kindly close that door, Mr. Prout? I repeat that sufficient time has been wasted here!"

Which was rather ungrateful of Lamb, after he had obtained such valuable information from Prout. But Mr. Lamb was not in a grateful mood.

"Very well, sir—but, really—ha, ha!—I mean—ha, ha—" Portly Prout faded out of the Remove room and closed the door, a gurgle floating back from him as he went.

Mr. Lamb eyed his class.

"Vernon-Smith!" he rapped.

"Yes, sir?"

"Did you fetch that stuffed dog from Lazarus' shop in Courtfield?"

"No, sir!"

Mr. Lamb set his lips.

"Wharton, I leave you in charge here for a few minutes!" He hurried out of the Form-room.

There was a bowl of laughter when he was gone! Where he had gone, and why, the juniors did not know, but they were glad of a chance to indulge their suppressed emotions. They howled with merriment when the door had closed on Mr. Lamb.

"It's the jape of the term!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "One of your best, Smithy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, Lamb thinks there's a fixture inside the bulldog to growl, like a Teddy bear squeaking!" gurgled Billy Bunter. "He, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That bulldog's a goner now!" remarked the Bounder. "But it was worth it!"

"Worth double the money!" chuckled Peter Todd.

"If Lamb spots the man—look out, Smithy!" said Skinner. "The little blighter's as mad as a hatter!"

"Yep! I'll say he will make you sit up a few, old-timer, if he gets wise to it!" remarked Fisher T. Fish.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. He was quite willing to take the risk of that.

There was a continuous buzz of merriment in the Remove room till the door opened and Mr. Lamb came in again.

Then the Remove were silent, suppressing their mirth. They eyed Mr. Lamb rather curiously. He picked up his cane and faced the Form with a grimly unpleasant expression on his face.

"Fish!" he rapped.

"Eh? Yep?" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish, in surprise.

"Stand out before the Form."

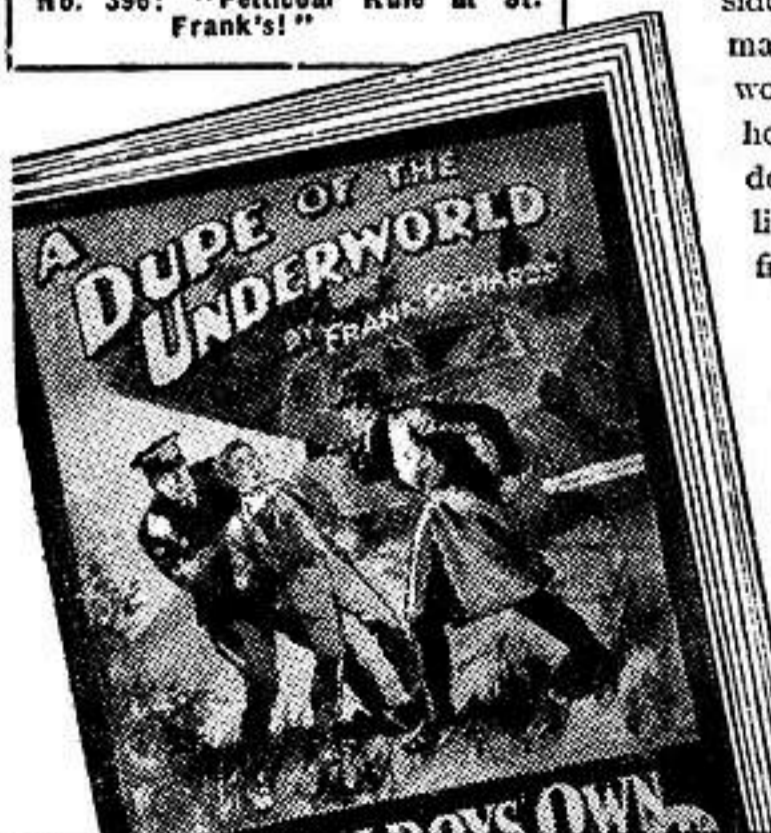
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Fisher T. Fish stood out before the Form. Mr. Lamb fixed his eyes on him, glinting. Fisher T. Fish could see that trouble was coming, though he did not know why, and he was alarmed.

"I—I say, sir, I never brought that pesky dawg into the Form-room, sir!" he exclaimed. "I guess—"

"Silence! I have said that I shall punish the perpetrator of this outrageous action severely!" said Mr. Lamb, between his closed lips. "Now I shall do so! You will not, I think, repeat such an action, Fish! Bend over that desk!"

"But I sure never—" howled the alarmed Fishy.

The Remove gazed on, amazed. Why Lamb had picked on Fisher T. Fish, who was no jasper at any time, was a mystery to them, as well as to Fishy! Evidently, he had! And as Fisher T. Fish did not bend over the desk, the exasperated Lamb grasped him by the collar with his left hand and laid on the cane with his right!

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yarooop!" roared Fisher T. Fish, wriggling frantically. "I say—wake snakes! I say— Yarooop!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"You young rascal!" said Mr. Lamb. Whack! "I have telephoned to Mr. Lazarus"—whack!—"and he has stated"—whack!—"that he sold you that stuffed bulldog"—whack, whack!—"yesterday. As you have done this, Fish"—whack!—"you will take the consequences!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yarooop! Leago! I guess I never—I reckon I wasn't—I'll tell a man— Oh, great John James Brown—yaroooh!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Jerusalem crickets!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish, hopping frantically as the cane whopped again and again. "Help! Let up! I'm saying let up! Yaroooh! Whooop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoooooooooooo—hoooooh!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Mr. Lamb released the yelling Fishy at last.

Fisher T. Fish stood wriggling wildly and waking the echoes on his top note.

"Now go to your place, Fish!" breathed Mr. Lamb. "I do not think you will play such tricks again! If you do—"

"Ooooooh! Woooooh! Ow!"

"Go to your place!"

Another lick of the cane started Fisher T. Fish to his place. He went, yelling.

The Bounder winked at him as he passed—Fishy giving him a deadly glare in response!

Fisher T. Fish collapsed in his place, moaning. He had had it good and hard!

Mr. Lamb, of course, had no doubt in the matter! He had got it from Mr. Lazarus that he had sold that stuffed bulldog to Master Fish the day before! Of Fishy's cute and spry business transaction on the subject, Mr. Lamb, of course, knew nothing! Fisher T. Fish had brought that stuffed bulldog to the

school! That was that! And Fisher T. Fish, as he squirmed and wriggled and moaned through morning school, wished from the bottom of his transatlantic heart that he had not been such a cute and spry guy!

The Bounder, on the other hand, was quite glad of it! Fisher T. Fish was more than welcome to what he had got by his cute and spry business methods!

BUNTER WANTS TO KNOW!

"**H**OLD on, Smithy!"
"Don't bother!"
"Hold on, I tell you!" rapped Harry Wharton.

Billy Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles. Bunter, of course, was interested. Bunter's interest was deep in all matters that did not concern him.

It was nearly a week since the affair of the stuffed bulldog. That episode was almost forgotten in the Remove. Since that day the Bounder had been walking warily and did not seem to have been getting on with his feud.

But wary as he was, that did not save him from plenty of trouble with the Lamb. The Lamb made a special point of keeping a special eye on that member of his Form; and there were plenty of occasions on which it was easy to catch out a reckless, rebellious fellow like Smithy. He would have needed to change his usual manners and customs very considerably to avoid giving Lamb an opening—and he did not even think of changing them. And the slightest fault was enough for Lamb.

All the Remove knew that Lamb had a down on Smithy—and really they did not wonder at it. A fellow could not carry on a feud with his Form-master without finding trouble.

Now, it seemed to Harry Wharton, Smithy was begging for it. Half a dozen times at least the Bounder had gone out of the House surreptitiously in the black-out—which, of course, was strictly forbidden. Now, as Wharton spotted him going along to the box-room stair, after tea, he cut after him and called him to a halt. He did not need telling that Smithy was going to slip out again by the box-room window, and he was alarmed for him.

"You must be a mad ass!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "You know Lamb has an eye on you—"

"Don't I?"
agreed the Bounder.

"I believe he's spoken to Loder about you, too! I've seen Loder's eye on you more than once."

"Sam here!" grinned Smithy. "I'm wise to Loder!"

"Well, haven't you the sense of a bunny rabbit?" demanded the captain of the Re-

move. "You're asking for it by keeping up this rotten game. Haven't you sense enough to chuck up pub-crawling when you're being watched. I tell you that man Lamb would be glad to see you sacked. He was as mad as a hatter with me for getting you off with the Head! I tell you, I know it."

"I know it as well as you!" answered Smithy. "And I'm not exactly idiot enough to play the giddy ox now. Don't be a fool!"

Wharton stared at him.

"I know you've been out in the black-out three or four times, at least," he said. "Now you're going again! Do you think anybody is going to believe that you sneak out of a back window for the amusement of walking about in the dark?"

"So you think I'm going out of bounds?" grinned Smithy.

"What's the good of talking rot? I know you are!" snapped Wharton. "And I think you must be an utter fool to do it."

"Suppose I tell you that I'm not going outside the school at all?"

"Oh, don't be an ass! You're breaking House bounds—and that's serious enough. You're not doing it to walk in the quad."

"Hardly! I might be doing it to walk round to the kitchen gardens, though."

"Oh, don't talk such rot!"

The Bounder chuckled.

"Honest Injun!" he said. "I'm going no farther than that."

"If that's all, you could walk round in the daylight."

"Fellow might be spotted in the daylight," grinned Smithy. "I've chanced it, once or twice; but it's safer in the dark."

Harry Wharton looked at the Bounder's grinning face in doubt and perplexity.

"If that's true, what do you want to walk round to the kitchen gardens at all for?" he asked. "You're not helping Mimble with his winter cabbages, I suppose?"

"I'm making a pal."

"A—a—a what?"

"He's rather bad-tempered! I'm seeing him every day to get him to like me! It's not easy work—but I'm getting on! I hope I shall soon have him feeding from my hand."

Harry Wharton gave him a look, turned on his heel, and walked up the passage. That reply from the

(Continued on next page.)

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Bounder seemed to him sheer mockery—Smithy's way of telling him to mind his own business. He walked away and left the Bounder to his own devices.

Vernon-Smith laughed and went up the box-room stair.

Billy Bunter, whose fat ears had taken in every word, blinked after him, astonished and inquisitive.

If Smithy's purpose in his mysterious excursion out of the House in the black-out were to meet some unknown pal, Bunter could not imagine who that pal could be—unless it was some betting man from the Cross Keys or the Three Fishers. But even the reckless Bounder could hardly have been so utterly reckless as that.

Bunter was deeply and intensely curious. He wanted to know! He always wanted to know!

He made a step to follow the Bounder up to the box-room. But he stopped again. Bunter was going to know—if he could find out—but clambering down from the box-room window, easy enough for the active Bounder, was far from easy for the fat Owl.

Bunter revolved on his axis, and rolled away to the Remove landing. He descended the staircase. Bunter was going on a voyage of discovery—but he was going to look for an easier way out.

A cautious blink up Masters' Passage having revealed that the coast was clear, the fat Owl slipped into Mr. Quelch's old study. As that study was on the ground floor, the window was easy for even Bunter to negotiate.

The fat Owl shut the door and opened the window.

Outside, all was dark—not a gleam of light coming from a single window. Only the stars were shining rather brightly—regardless of A.R.P.

Billy Bunter clambered out of the window and dropped. Even a ground floor window seemed to have a spot of difficulty for Bunter—he slipped over as he landed and sat down, with a bump.

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter.

A shadowy figure loomed up.

"Who's that?" called a sharp voice from a distance.

It was the voice of Loder of the Sixth.

Billy Bunter quaked. He had not expected a prefect to be on the prowl in the black-out. But Loder, it seemed, was out of the House and he had heard Bunter bump.

The fat Owl sat quite still. Under the window he was invisible in the dark, and he hoped that Loder would pass on without spotting him.

He heard footsteps in the dark. But to his great relief, they died away. Loder had not come near him—and now he was gone.

The fat Owl heaved himself to his feet and groped away almost on tip-toe.

About a dozen times he barged into walls, or buttresses, or trees; but he was round the school buildings at last and blinking over the open spaces of the kitchen gardens, which were under the care of Mr. Mimble, the gardener. Mimble, of course, would not be on the scene now—Smithy was safe from him. But where was Smithy?

A tiny spot of light gleamed in the dark, and Bunter grinned! He had spotted Smithy!

That light glinted on the door of a shed, which was used by Mr. Mimble for stacking agricultural implements, the loft above it being used for storing apples.

Bunter wondered, for a moment, whether there were any apples left, and whether Smithy was after them!

He crept closer, his eyes and spectacles fixed on the spot of light.

That shed was kept locked; and how the Bounder was going to get in was rather a mystery to Bunter. To his surprise, the key was in the lock and the Bounder turned it, opened the door, entered the shed, and shut the door after him.

Bunter was left blinking.

He was more and more surprised, and more and more curious. Mr. Mimble must have left that key in his shed door for the Bounder to enter when he liked; Smithy must have tipped him. But that washed out the idea of a betting man from the Cross Keys—Mr. Mimble would never have stood for anything like that! But what?

What indeed? It was utterly amazing to Bunter, and he was simply boiling with curiosity. Certainly he was going to know!

He waited, shivering in the cold wind, his eyes and spectacles glued on the door.

It seemed to him that he caught a murmuring sound of a voice from the shed, but he dared venture no nearer. Smithy might come out any minute, and the fat Owl knew what to expect if the Bounder caught him spying.

It was about ten minutes before the door opened again. The Bounder came out, locked the door, and walked away—unsuspicious of Bunter. Evidently, his mysterious business, whatever it was, was over; and the most astonishing thing was that he had locked the shed after him. He could not have met somebody there and left him locked in the shed. Yet he must have had some reason for going to the shed—what?

Bunter waited till Vernon-Smith's footsteps died away. Then he crept to the door of the shed and unlocked it in his turn. He groped in his pocket for a matchbox. He was going to see what extraordinary mystery that shed concealed.

Within, when the door was opened, all was black as a hat. Bunter stared into the darkness. He heard a faint sound of a movement, as of some animal stirring. Could that be the explanation—had Smithy got a pet of some kind which he was tipping the gardener to house and care for? That did not seem much like the hard-shelled Bounder.

Bunter struck a match.

He held it up and blinked into the shed.

Two gleaming spots of light met his eyes—and he jumped!

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

But the next moment he was reassured. By the flame of the match he made out the figure of a bulldog lying on a heap of sacking.

It was about the same size as the stuffed dog of the Form-room, and much the same in its general aspect. After the first jump of surprise, Bunter grinned.

He understood now—or thought he did! That stuffed dog—or what remained of it—had been handed over to the dustman. Smithy had got it back and got it repaired—or else he had bought another just like it. And

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he was keeping it in Mimble's shed till wanted!

Bunter had found out the secret now.

Or had he?

As he grinned at the crouching bulldog, nothing doubting that it was as stuffed and lifeless as the one that had startled Mr. Lamb in the Remove room, the bulldog made a movement! Its jaws opened, and from its throat came a deep and terrifying growl.

Gurrrrgh!

Billy Bunter fairly bounded!

It was not ventriloquism this time! It was a genuine growl! And it dawned on Billy Bunter's fat brain that this was not another stuffed bulldog, but the genuine article—that he had disturbed it, and that it was about to spring!

Lightning had nothing on Bunter for rapidity the next second. In about a billionth part of a second, Bunter dropped that match and sprinted.

He did not stop to shut the door. He did not even think of it. He raced away across the kitchen gardens, regardless of damage to Mr. Mimble's crop of winter cabbages. He careered wildly—he whizzed—he flew!

Whether that bulldog was after him or not, Bunter did not know—and he was not likely to stop and ascertain. As a matter of fact, the bulldog, after lumbering to the shed door and emitting a deep growl into the black-out, lumbered back to his bed and went to sleep again. Bunter was unaware of that. Bunter pictured gaping jaws just behind him! Bunter raced!

How he got back to the quad Bunter never knew. But he got back. He did not pause there. If that fearful beast was behind him, he was not safe until he got into the House! He careered on frantically.

Bump!

"What the dooce——" came an angry roar.

Loder of the Sixth reeled from the shock. Then he grasped at the figure that had charged into him in the dark. He got hold of a fat ear.

"Ow!" yelled Bunter. "Leggo! He's after me—yaroo! I say, Loder, leggo!"

Loder peered at him. Perhaps he had thought for a moment that he had caught that young rascal Vernon-Smith. But Bunter's roar enlightened him.

"Is that Bunter?" he snapped.

"Oh! No! 'Tain't me, Loder!" gasped Bunter. "I ain't out in the black-out! I—I—I mean——"

"That will do!" grunted Loder.

By a fat ear, he led Bunter to the House. He let him in at the door of the Sixth Form lobby. Then he slipped his ash down from under his arm into his hand.

"Touch your toes!" he rapped.

"I—I—I say——" A lick from the ash interrupted Bunter, and he yelled, bent over, and touched his toes.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Now cut!" grunted Loder.

Billy Bunter cut—squeaking and squealing!

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

WELL, how do, chums? All merry and bright? Good!

You will remember I made some mention in our New Year's issue of doubling the circulation of the *MAGNET*. That, at the time, seemed a rash resolution. I am pleased beyond measure by the way my thousands of loyal chums have put their shoulders to the wheel. The Old Paper is going great guns; every week brings a fresh crowd of admirers to our banner. But there's still room for more improvement. I repeat what I said in an earlier issue; I intend to bring before the notice of every boy and girl in this little island of ours the wonderful value, the clean, wholesome literature to be found in the *MAGNET*—the paper that has stood the test for thirty years and more, and has never been found wanting. My chums are going to help me—of that I feel perfectly confident. To those who have already done so, I offer my heartfelt thanks. It's a great work this, and worthy of the great body of "Magnetites," whom I like to refer to as my chums. Keep at it, boys and girls!

Next Saturday's magnificent story of the Greyfriars chums:

"THE SECRET OF THE DUGOUT!"

By Frank Richards.

is bound to make a big hit with my thousands of readers. The central figure in this coming treat is Vernon-Smith, whose feud with the mysterious Mr. Lamb is going on as strong as ever. Space will not permit me to tell you anything of the plot; but you can take it from me, chums, that this story is a real corker—one of Mr. Frank Richards' best!

YOUR EDITOR.

Bunter had wanted to know! Now he knew! But he had not really enjoyed the pursuit of knowledge!

THE GENUINE ARTICLE!

MR. LAMB came along to his Form-room door on Saturday morning. He found the Remove gathered there, ready to be let in.

He found, too, the Form-room key sticking in the outside of the lock. For the second time, some playful junior had pinched that key from his study early in the morning.

However, the Pet Lamb made no remark upon it. He unlocked the door of the Remove room—most of the Remove watching him rather breathlessly.

He threw the door open.

Gurrrrgh!

Mr. Lamb gave a start. Then he

stared in at the open doorway! And then a frown of angry annoyance came over his face.

His eyes fixed on an object lying on the Form-room floor. That object was a bulldog.

It lay crouched, its eyes fixed on the doorway. Those eyes had a most unpleasant look in them.

Lamb glared at the dog. This trick had been played on him a week ago, and he had taken the bulldog for a real live one! He was not likely to be taken in like that again!

It looked life-like enough—fearfully life-like! So had the stuffed dog a week ago! It growled in the most convincing manner. So had the stuffed dog—some contrivance in the interior, Lamb supposed, that could be wound up for the purpose.

Mr. Lamb—like Bunter when he had looked in at the gardener's shed—had no doubt that some young rascal had got that stuffed dog back again, and repaired it, to play the same trick over again a second time!

But if the young rascal supposed that Mr. Lamb was going to take that dog for a live one this time, he was mistaken!

Mr. Lamb stepped into the Form-room.

Gurrrrgh! came from the bulldog.

Mr. Lamb paid no heed to the nerve-racking growl. He had been there before, so to speak. He had had some! That low, deep growl passed him by, like the idle wind which he regarded not!

"Go to your places!" he rapped.

"But—but that dog, sir——" stammered Bob Cherry.

"Take a hundred lines, Cherry!"

"Oh!"

"You are perfectly well aware that a foolish trick is being played here again!" snapped Mr. Lamb. "I have very little doubt that it was you, Vernon-Smith, that carried that stuffed dog here."

"I certainly did not, sir!" answered the Bounder.

That was assuredly true. Vernon-Smith had led that dog there, while the school was at breakfast; he had not carried it!

"I gave instructions," said Mr. Lamb, "for that object to be handed over to the dust-collector. Some boy has recovered possession of it. I shall take care that no such thing happens again. This time I shall break the wretched thing to pieces."

Mr. Lamb stepped to the Form-room grate and picked up the long, heavy poker from the fender. With the poker gripped in his hand, and an angry frown on his face, he stepped towards the bulldog.

Mr. Lamb aimed a swipe at the bulldog. That stuffed dog was not going to be used for any more trickery in the Remove room! This time Mr. Lamb was going to make sure of that!

Swipe!

The bulldog, hitherto quite quiet, fairly bounded! A swipe from a poker was more than enough for that bulldog.

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It was not a growl, it was a yell that came from the bulldog as it bounded. Another yell, of startled affright, came from Mr. Lamb! He realised, at that awful moment, that this was not, after all, the stuffed bulldog over again—it was a live specimen of the species!

He yelled, and bounded to his feet as fast as the bulldog! The poker clanged on the Form-room floor. Mr. Lamb shot to the door.

After him shot the bulldog!

He was not a good-tempered bow-wow at the best of times. It had taken the Bounder a week to get sufficiently friendly with him to be able to lead him about. But even the best-tempered bulldog might have been annoyed and a little excited by a swipe from a poker!

Clearly that bulldog was annoyed and excited! He wanted Lamb!

The Remove fellows scattered back from the doorway. Lamb shot out of the Form-room. The bulldog shot behind him, like an arrow from a bow. He took no notice of the juniors. It was Lamb he wanted! And he wanted him badly!

"Help!" roared Mr. Lamb, as he went.

Gurrrrgh! answered the bulldog, as he followed.

"Come on!" yelled the Bounder. "This is too good to miss!"

Mr. Lamb shot for the open doorway of the House. A terrific set of teeth gleamed close behind him. Pursued and pursuer shot out into the quad—and after them rushed the whole Remove, whooping.

Lamb was putting on pace. But the bulldog seemed to have a good turn of speed!

Lamb was half-way across the quad when the bulldog got him! He was heading, apparently, for a tree! But as he reached the tree the bulldog reached him!

"Ooooooooooh!" came a spluttering yell from Lamb.

He sprang wildly at a branch. He caught it, and swung off the earth! But the teeth had closed. Fortunately, they had only closed on the tail of his velvet coat. But the bulldog hung on like grim death—as bulldogs do!

Lamb swung on the branch, holding with both hands! The bulldog swung on Lamb, holding with his teeth!

"Oh crumbs!"

"Look!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help!" yelled the Pet Lamb.

"Draggimoff! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The art master clung desperately to the branch. The bulldog lunged on! Then there was a sound of rending and tearing.

The bulldog dropped to the ground with a section of a velvet coat in his jaws! He settled down to chew it! Lamb swung and yelled.

"Take that dog away! Drive that dog off! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith rushed forward. He slipped a lead on the dog's collar and led him away. Smithy had tipped Mr. Mible to mind that dog for him for a week. Now he was in rather a hurry to tip him to get it away as soon as possible! Smithy and the bulldog disappeared—Lamb, still clinging to the branch, unaware that the animal was gone—having no eyes in the back of his head!

"Help! Will you drive that dog away!" roared Mr. Lamb. "Wharton—Cherry—call Gosling—call Wingate—call Loder—get that dog away! Do you hear me—help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's gone, sir!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Gone! Are you sure he is gone?"

"Yes, sir—quite gone!" gurgled Bob.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Lamb.

He dropped from the branch at last! He glared round him. The bulldog was gone! Whether it was gone for good, or whether it might be lurking about for another chance, Lamb did not know. He was not giving it another chance, at any rate! He shot back into the House—leaving the Remove shrieking!

Mr. Lamb did not take the Remove that morning, after all. Perhaps he was too upset. Or perhaps he fancied there might be still a bulldog about. Anyhow, he gave the Remove a miss, and Monsieur Charpentier took them in extra French instead.

Mossoo had a merry class that morning. He might really have supposed there was something fearfully entertaining in the French language from the incessant chuckles and chortles in the Remove.

THE END.

(Vernon-Smith plays another fat part in: "THE SECRET OF THE DUGOUT!" next week's spanking fine yarn of Harry Wharton & Co.)

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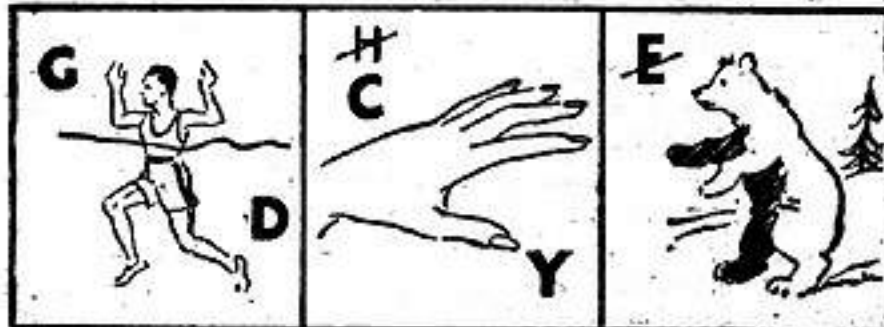
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"No!" said Wharton sharply. "I've got an important engagement." At the back door of the Cross Keys? asked the captain of the Remove sarcastically. "No; I want to go to Courtfield, are there?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I really must get off!" said Vernon-Smith. "I've paid you the compliment of asking you, Wharton—but I'm going, anyhow." "You can do as you choose," said the captain of the Remove. "You know I have to give a list of all fellows who cut practice to Wingate of the Sixth. If you want six from Wingate, you've only got to ask for it."

"I don't!" said the Bounder. "Look here, don't be a goat—it's really important, and you can give me leave if you like."

Harry Wharton paused. The Bounder's manner irritated him, but he did not want to be disoblighing. Skinner was no slacker, like Bunter or Skinner, but if he wanted to get away, it was quite likely that his engagement might be something of a questionable character. On the other hand, he might have a good reason to give.

"Well, what is it?" asked Harry. "If you mean that your father is coming down to Courtfield, or anything like that—"

Smithy paused a moment. But he shook his head. With beaks or precepts, the reckless Bounder paid little regard to the truth. But among his own Form-fellows he disdained to lie.

"It's a jape on Lamb," he said.

"Well, don't be an ass, then," said Wharton gruffly. "Like me to tell you leave from games practice to jape your Form-master?"

"I guess that guy Wingate would sure stare a few!" chuckled Fisher T. Fish.

"Wash it out, Smithy!" said Bob. "But what's the jape, Smithy?" asked Bolsover major. "Lamb ain't going to be in Courtfield to-day that I've heard of."

"I'm going to old Lazarus," explained the Bounder. He was more than willing to admit the whole crowd to knowledge of the intended jape on Lamb. "I noticed something in his window last week, and I fancy it will come in pulling the Lamb's leg, with the help of that fat idiot's ventriloquism."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"What on earth is it, then?" asked Frank Nugent.

All sorts of things were displayed for sale in the window of Mr. Lazarus, the second-hand merchant at Courtfield. Apparently the Bounder remembered something that he had seen there useful for his present purpose.

Smithy's mind was generally running on ways and means for making the Pet Lamb sit up. Bunter's ventriloquism had served his turn more than once, Lamb being in blissful ignorance of the fact that there

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was a ventriloquist in the Greyfriars Remove. "It's a stuffed bulldog," said Smithy. "Quite a jolly good one, and looks as life-like as anything." "I've seen it," said Skinner. "Old Lazarus wants a quid for it. Jolly cheap at the price, too. It's worth more, if anybody wanted it."

"Well, I want it," said Smithy. "Fools and their money are soon parted!" remarked Johnny Bull sententiously. "Catch me blowing a quid to jape Lamb!"

"I'd blow three or four quids if they were needed," answered the Bounder.

"The quidfulness of the esteemed Smithy is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"But what the thump are you going to do with a stuffed bulldog if you get it?" asked Hazeldene. "You can't make it bite Lamb, I suppose?"

"I'm going to stick it in the Form-room, and Bunter's going to make it growl," answered the Bounder. "The fat ass can't do anything else, but he can do these tricks—"

"Look here, you cheeky beast—"

"When Lamb lets us in to-morrow morning he's going to find the way barred by a ferocious bow-wow, growling at him! Won't it be funny?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By gum, I'll bet he won't dare go near it!" roared Bolsover major. "When he finds out afterwards that it's only stuffed, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton laughed. His own experience with Mr. Lamb made him quite disposed to back up the Bounder in ragging him. And the idea of the Pet Lamb being kept out of his Form-room by a stuffed bulldog was undoubtedly entertaining.

"Now you know," said the Bounder. "Now I've thought of this stunt, I want to get hold of that bow-wow before it's snapped up by somebody else."

"It's been in the window a week, at least," answered Harry, "and it wouldn't be marked so cheap if it was likely to go in a hurry. You can get it to-morrow, Smithy—it's a half-holiday."

"I'm going to get it to-day." Harry Wharton shook his head. "Don't be a goat, Smithy! You know perfectly well that I can't let you off games practice for any such reason."

"I shall cut, then!"

"You'll get six from Wingate if you do. It's your own affair. With that Harry Wharton cut short the discussion by walking out of the Rag.

The Bounder cast a black look after him.

It irritated him to have to ask for leave, and it irritated him still more to be refused.

Tom Redwing touched his arm. "Leave it till to-morrow, Smithy, old timer!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. The Bounder stared round at him. "You pack up your chin-wag!" he answered. "Who wants to hear what you think about it, you bony freak?"

"I guess—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Look here, Smithy—"

Redwing. "After games practice you can ring up old Lazarus, if you like, and tell him to keep the thing for you. That will make it safe for to-morrow."

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and Wingate will be on the field, too—"

"Hang Wingate!"

"I guess you sure can't hang the captain of the school, Smithy, old timer!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. The Bounder stared round at him. "You pack up your chin-wag!" he answered. "Who wants to hear what you think about it, you bony freak?"

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"Help him off!" said the Greyfriars captain at last. And Fisher T. Fish was helped off the ground.

"Like a hand as far as the House?" asked Bob.

"Oh, I'll lug him along!" said Squiff.

"Aw! I guess I can limp it!" said Fishy. He tested his leg, leaning on it lightly. "Yep! I guess I can limp it! You guys get back! But I'm telling you, it is sure fierce."

"Shove some embrocation on it, old bony bean," said Bob. "Lots in the changing-room! Come on, Squiff!"

And Bob and the Australian junior went back to the field, leaving Fisher T. Fish to limp into the changing-room.

Fisher T. Fish limped therein; but once inside his limp left him all of a sudden, and a sly grin replaced the painful expression of anguish on his bony face.

"I'll say," murmured Fisher T. Fish, "that they sure are boneheads in this pesky old island—they sure are boobs from Boobsville! I guess it's cruelty to animals to fool them such all-fired jays!"

Grinning, Fisher T. Fish proceeded to change.

His next proceeding was a very curious one, for a fellow who had been lamed only a few minutes ago on the football field. He hurried down to the bike-shed, wheeled out his bike, and disappeared up the Courtfield road, as fast as he could drive his machine. If Fishy really had had a game leg, it was the swiftest recovery ever!

Some of the Remove men probably suspected that Fishy was spoofing, to get off early from games practice. But Fishy was no use in games, and nobody in particular, anyhow, so his existence was very soon forgotten.

Nobody, certainly, was thinking of Fisher T. Fish when the practice ended and the juniors came trooping back into the changing-room.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was looking quite cheerful as he changed. He was glad, after all, that he had turned up, and was feeling all the better for it. And there was time to get a phone-call through to Mr. Lazarus' shop in Courtfield before the Removeites had to arrive in their Form-room for maths with Mr. Lascelles.

When he left the changing-room, the Bounder strolled away to Masters' Passage to look for a chance of slipping into Mr. Quelch's unoccupied study to use the telephone there. He had not ventured to use that telephone in playing his trick on Lamb—the garage telephone had been safer for that. But Quelch's telephone served his present purpose.

He soon found his opportunity and slipped into the deserted study, shutting the door after him.

Then he stepped to the telephone and rang up Mr. Lazarus in Courtfield.

That old gentleman's voice came back.

"Vernon-Smith speaking from THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,668.

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