

"STRINGER—THE DEMON BOWLER!"

STARTS
INSIDE.

The
BOYS' HERALD



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ON SALE

EVERY TUESDAY.

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**GREAT
CRICKET
STORY**



STRINGER
the
**Demon
Bowler**

GREAT NEW CRICKET AND SPORTING STORY!

STARTS THIS WEEK.

Our Magnificent, Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars School.



The Bounder's Confession!

Another Splendid School Story Here Next Week.

Cash Required!

WHAT'S up?" growled Vernon-Smith.
Tom Redwing was standing at the window of No. 4 Study, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars.

The window gave a view of part of the green old quadrangle. Redwing was looking out into the quad, and he frowned and bit his lip at what he saw there.

Vernon-Smith, loafing in the arm-chair, had his eyes upon his study-mate. He asked the question suddenly.
Redwing glanced round.

"Look!" he answered laconically.
The Bounder rose from the arm-chair, and stepped to the window. His glance followed Redwing's into the quad.

There were a number of Remove fellows in sight—Harry Wharton and Co., and Squiff, and Lord Mauleverer, and Bolsover major. And Jack Drake was coming across from the direction of the school shop behind the elms.

Drake came on with a steady stride, looking neither to the right nor to the left. The other fellows looked away from him. Harry Wharton and Co. seemed unconscious even of his existence; Lord Mauleverer coloured and looked uncomfortable; Bolsover major had a derisive grin on his face. Without looking at them, but with a flush in his cheeks, Jack Drake walked straight on.

He was "in Coventry"—not a fellow had a word to speak to him, or a nod of recognition to bestow upon him.

The Bounder watched him, with intent eyes, from the study window above.

Drake's pride upheld him, under the scornful avoidance of his schoolfellows. But that he felt his humiliation keenly there was no doubt.

He disappeared from sight; and Redwing turned from the window with a dark brow.

Vernon-Smith flung himself into the arm-chair again, with a puckered and frowning face. There was silence in the study, till Tom Redwing broke it at last.

"Smithy, old chap, you can't let this go on? You can't see that chap barred by all the Form—cut in the quad like that—for something he hasn't done! Smithy, if you don't speak out, I must."

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders.
"I haven't asked you to keep the secret," he answered. "Give me away if you like. I shall change places with Drake, that's all. I don't care much."

"But—but—" Tom Redwing faltered.
"Smithy! You can't let it go on—it's too rotten—"

He broke off abruptly, as the study door opened without a knock.

A fat face, adorned by a large pair of spectacles, looked into No. 4 Study. The ace and the spectacles belonged to Billy

Bunter, and the rest of Bunter followed them in.

"I thought I'd find you here, Smithy!" he said cheerily.

"Get out!" snapped Redwing.
Billy Bunter blinked at him.

"I've come here to see Smithy!" he said. "I'm not anxious for your company, Redwing. In fact, I've got a rather private matter to discuss with old Smithy, and I'd prefer you to travel."

"Shall I kick him out, Smithy?" asked Redwing, glancing at his chum.

"Certainly, if you like!" answered the Bounder, unmoved. "He will go and howl out what he knows to all the Form if you do. Perhaps that's what you want."

Redwing bit his lip.
"Then I'll get out!" he said.

And he walked out of the study, closing the door behind him rather hard, and leaving Billy Bunter alone with the Bounder.

The Owl of the Remove gave Vernon-Smith a friendly smirk; but he kept a little distance from him. Smithy's temper was so very uncertain of late that Bunter felt there was no telling what he might or might not do next. Even Bunter's cordial friendship did not seem to soothe the Bounder's ruffled spirits. In fact, the Bounder's gloomy brow grew darker whenever the fat and fatuous Owl dawned upon his vision. He was looking at him now in a way Bunter did not at all like—a way that could not be described as friendly or genial.

"Well, Smithy!" said Bunter.
"Well, you fat rascal!"

"Oh, really, Smithy!" protested Bunter
"What do you want, you toad?" demanded the Bounder abruptly.

"If you call me names, Smithy—"
"I've half a mind to kick you to the other end of the Remove passage!" said the Bounder lovingly.

Bunter backed round the study table.
"You'd better not have a whole mind, then," he said. "If you want me to tell the fellows about Drake, you can say so. I dare say Wharton and the rest would be glad to hear that I heard you telling Redwing—"

"Shut up, you rotter!"
But Bunter did not shut up. He ran on: "That I heard you telling Redwing that you picked up Nugent's fiver in No. 1 Study, and planted it in Drake's desk, to disgrace him for having licked you! Lots of fellows would be glad to hear about that. They've sent Drake to Coventry now, and they're keeping him there. What do you think they'd do to you, if they knew the facts?"

The Bounder did not reply; he looked moodily at Bunter, his brows wrinkled.
The fat junior rattled on triumphantly: "You'd jolly soon get sent to Coventry instead of Drake—and you'd get jolly well ragged into the bargain. All the Form are down on Drake—and they'd be jolly wild

if they found out they'd been down on him for nothing, and that you'd been pulling their leg all the time. I wouldn't like to be in your shoes when they know, Smithy."

Still the Bounder did not speak.

"But rely on me, old chap," said Bunter reassuringly. "I'm not giving you away—not an old pal like you. I don't like Drake; he's refused to cash a postal-order for me several times, and he even said once that he didn't believe I was really expecting one. A low, suspicious beast, you know. He kicked me the other day, when I went into his study. I was only going to borrow a Latin grammar, and I knew simply nothing about his cake. You rely on me, Smithy. I'm going to protect you, old chap, so long as we're such jolly good pals."

And Bunter grinned.
"By the way, Smithy, could you lend me a pound?" he added casually.

"No!"
"Sure?" asked Bunter.

"Quite."
"Dear me! I shall have to ask Drake to lend me some tin, then," said Bunter regretfully. "I've been disappointed about a postal-order, you know. I'm short of tin. I know it sounds absurd, as my people are so rich, but at the present moment I'm actually short of cash. I really would be obliged if you could let me have a pound, Smithy."

"You've had all I'm going to give you," said the Bounder, between his teeth.
"Now shut up!"
"If you put it like that, Smithy, I shall certainly refuse to accept a small loan from you," said Billy Bunter, with dignity. "I'll ask Drake. I dare say Drake will be glad to hear some things I can tell him. If he does me a small favour, I suppose I shall be bound to tell him what I know. Don't you think so, Smithy?"

The Bounder did not answer, and Billy Bunter turned to the door. He cast a threatening blink at the gloomy-faced junior in the arm-chair as he went. Vernon-Smith gritted his teeth hard.

"Hold on, Bunter!" he muttered.
Billy Bunter smiled.

"Certainly, Smithy."
"Drop in again, say at seven," said the Bounder. "I'll see you then. I can't oblige you now, Bunter."

"Short of cash, what?" said Bunter. "I can sympathise, old chap. I've been there, you know. I'm afraid I couldn't wait later than seven, though. If you're stony, you can borrow it up or down the passage. Fellows know you would square. Seven sharp, then, Smithy?"

"Seven sharp!" assented the Bounder, with a strange look at Bunter.
"Righto, old top!"

And Billy Bunter rolled out of the study in a satisfied frame of mind. It was a new and happy experience for Bunter, to have a millionaire's son under his fat thumb.

and the Owl of the Remove was making the most of it. And so far as Bunter could see, there was no danger of the worm turning.

But perhaps the Owl of the Remove did not see very far!

Smithy Makes Up His Mind!

SMITHY, old son!" Harry Wharton and Co. were coming in from cricket practice, when Vernon-Smith came out of the schoolhouse. The Bounder's brow was dark, and his hands were thrust deep into his pockets.

Wharton turned, and walked with him, his chums going into the house.

"Well?" said Vernon-Smith abruptly. "Just a word, old scout," said Wharton, taking no notice of the Bounder's sharp tone. "You're not looking very chippy."

"I'm not feeling very chippy." "You've looked down on your luck for some time," said the captain of the Remove. "You've been cutting cricket practice, too. It's occurred to me that something's worrying you, and I think I've an idea of what it is."

Herbert Vernon-Smith started, and looked quickly at the captain of his Form.

"You—you think——" he stammered. "It's over that affair of Drake!" "Of—of Drake?" Vernon-Smith's heart beat fast. "What do you mean, Wharton?"

The Bounder felt almost suffocated, for a moment, at the thought that Harry Wharton knew all. Had Bunter spoken, then—or Redwing? But surely in that case Wharton's manner would not have been so cordial! Harry Wharton was the last fellow in the world to look with a lenient eye on the treacherous trick the Bounder had played.

"About that banknote," said Wharton, unconscious of the riot of feelings in his companion's breast, "Drake's in Coventry for stealing it, and he will be barred by the Remove all the time he stays here—if he hasn't the decency to get out of the school. Rodney's still sticking to him, but he must know well enough that Drake is guilty."

"Do you think so?" said the Bounder, with a note of sarcasm in his voice that Harry Wharton did not observe.

"Certainly. But what I was coming to is this—Drake has accused you of having picked up the banknote in my study, and put it in his desk. Nobody in the Remove believes a word of it. Nobody's likely to take stock in such a rotten yarn. We know you too well to believe anything of the kind, Smithy—especially without an atom of proof."

The Bounder winced. His sin had to be paid for—in many ways. Probably the frank, cheery confidence of Wharton hurt him more than the sly, odious familiarity of Billy Bunter.

The temptation was strong upon him to speak out—to pour out the whole story in a torrent of confession. But he thought of the horror and disgust that would dawn in Wharton's friendly face, and he choked down the impulse. He could not speak.

"So, if that's worrying you," went on Harry, "don't let it, Smithy! I give you my word that nobody thinks of believing a word of Drake's yarn—nobody at all. If you've let it trouble you, you're making a mistake. I shouldn't mention it at all, only I couldn't help noticing how down on your luck you've looked the last week or so."

"Thank you," muttered the Bounder, in a stifled voice.

Harry Wharton, with a cheery nod, left him, and followed his chums into the house.

The Bounder trod on, in the thickening dusk of the quadrangle.

Wharton had noticed—everybody had noticed—how "rotten" he had been looking and feeling! Of course, they could not have helped noticing it! But how far

they were from attributing his black despondency to its true cause!

The Bounder groaned in spirit. Why had he acted as he had done? It was not like him. There was a hard streak in his nature—he could be ruthless, even at times unscrupulous. But he was not a rascal; yet he had acted like a rascal.

Why had he done it? He had quarrelled with Drake—there had been a fight—Drake had defeated him under the eyes of all the Remove. It had left the Bounder full of anger and bitterness. Then the temptation, and the opportunity, had come together—and he had fallen! An hour after his reckless, wicked action, he had repented of it—but then it had been too late. The die was cast then—he had left himself no retreat, and he had had to go forward—forward on the path of dishonour. Repentance was of little use without setting right the wrong he had done—and that meant confession, and general scorn. How could he face that? He no longer hated Drake; but he did not like him. Was he to face open shame and contempt, for the sake of a fellow he did not like?

He paced in the dusk under the elms, a prey to bitter thoughts.

What had his life been like, since he had secured that revenge upon Drake? Drake had suffered—but not so much. He was ostracised, but he had the knowledge of his innocence to support him—the hope that the truth would come out. The Bounder was still respected; but the respect was a sham—it depended upon his keeping up the wretched lie he was living. Not a fellow but would have turned from him on learning the truth. The Bounder had suffered more than his victim—for the torments of conscience are the hardest to bear.

The sound of voices came to his ears, as he paced under the dusky elms. He started, as he recognised the tones of Jack Drake.

Drake and Rodney were there, in the dusk; and the Bounder stopped, and leaned against a tree. He shrank from meeting the junior he had wronged.

"I'm getting fed-up with it, Rodney!" Drake's voice was impatient. "It looks as if there's no way out."

"Keep your pecker up, old fellow," answered Rodney. "Truth will out, you know."

"All very well for a proverb," said Drake.

"It's bound to come out, old fellow. For one thing, I'm pretty certain that Bunter knows."

"Bunter?" "He's been rolling in money the past few days," said Rodney. "Where does he get it from? He's always dropping into Smithy's study now. Smithy lent him his bike the other day—and he never lends his bike. It's pretty clear to me that that fat owl has spied it out somehow, and he's screwing money out of Smithy to keep it dark."

"By Jove! The fat cad!" "It would be just like Bunter! And if Smithy is under Bunter's thumb, he can't be enjoying life."

"Poor wretch!" said Drake, after a pause. "I can't imagine how he came to do it. Must have been a sudden temptation, I suppose, and after he had landed himself, he couldn't back out. I don't see why he should have felt so bitter over a scrap. He's not the fellow to play a rotten game like this, either—anybody can see in his face that it's haunting him and making him miserable. Blessed if I sha'n't feel half-sorry for him when it comes out—if it does."

"It's bound to, in the long run," said Rodney. "All you've got to do is to stick it out, till the truth is known."

"It's pretty rotten in the meantime, though."

"Not so rotten for us as for Smithy!"

said Rodney, "I fancy I could name the wretchedest fellow in all Greyfriars, and that's Smithy. I don't believe he's really such a bad sort—and if he's got any decency at all, this affair must be making him feel bad."

"Poor wretch!" said Drake again. "The juniors sauntered on, and their further remarks were inaudible to the Bounder."

Herbert Vernon-Smith stood silent and still.

His face was very pale in the dusk.

They knew him—knew him as well as he knew himself. He was not rascal enough to play out the game he had set himself to play, to the bitter end; sooner or later he must confess the truth, to relieve his conscience of an intolerable burden. Sooner or later, if he did not confess, Bunter would blurt out the truth. Redwing would not speak—but his position, knowing the truth, and keeping silent for his chum's sake, was intolerable, too. The Bounder felt that it must end.

Long the unhappy fellow stood there, in the darkness, communing with himself and gradually coming to a resolution.

He stirred at last.

With slow, heavy steps he moved away to the schoolhouse. A few minutes later he looked in at No. 1 Study in the Remove. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were there; and they started at the sight of the Bounder's pale, lined face.

"Smithy! You look really ill!" exclaimed Wharton in concern.

"Not at all. Right as rain," answered the Bounder. "But I've looked in to ask you something."

"Go ahead."

"I want you to call a meeting of the Form, in the Rag, say at seven."

"What on earth for?" asked the captain of the Remove, in astonishment.

"It's something, rather special. I'll explain at the meeting," said the Bounder.

"You'll do it?"

"It's rather unusual," said Harry. "But I'll do it, certain, if you've really got a good reason."

"I give you my word on that."

"Right, then. I'll get a notice on the board in a jiffy."

"Thanks."

Five minutes later, there was a notice up, in Harry Wharton's hand-writing, announcing that a special meeting of the Lower Fourth Form was called, in the Rag, at seven precisely. A crowd of fellows gathered round the board, to read and discuss the notice, and surmise what the meeting was about. Nobody in the Remove was likely to miss the meeting—with the exception of Billy Bunter, who had an appointment in Smithy's study at seven. Before seven o'clock, the Rag was crowded.

An Amazing Confession!

WHAT'S it about?"

"Give it up!"

"Something to do with the cricket," said Bob Cherry.

"Or Drake!" said Johnny Bull. "It's about time something was done about Drake. He seems to thrive on Coventry."

"What he wants is a jolly good Form ragging!" agreed Bolsover major. "Wharton was down on that, though. Perhaps he's got a little more sense now. I'll lend a hand in ragging the cad!"

"Yes, rather!" said Skinner.

"Hallo, here's the Bounder! Know what it's all about, Smithy?" asked Bob.

Vernon-Smith came in with Tom Redwing. He was looking rather pale, but very calm and self-possessed. Having made up his mind, the Bounder was prepared to go through the ordeal he had set himself, with his accustomed iron nerve.

"Yes," he answered. "You'll see, soon. I'm going to address the meeting."

"You!" exclaimed several voices.

"Little me!" answered the Bounder, with a faint smile. And he passed on.

"Jolly mysterious!" said Bob Cherry, with a shake of the head. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here are Drake and Rodney! I don't think they ought to show up at a Form meeting, being in Coventry."

"Turn 'em out!" roared Bolsover major.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, coming into the Rag. "Let them alone you fellows."

"Look here——" began Bob.

"Smithy says the affair concerns them," said Wharton, with a troubled look. "He's asked them specially to come in."

"Oh, it's a ragging, then," said Bolsover major, mollified. "I see! More fools they to walk into the trap."

"I—I think not," said Harry. "I can't quite make Smithy out. Anyhow, it seems that he wants Drake and Rodney here."

Jack Drake and his chum stood by themselves, at the wall, the other fellows keeping a distance from them. Drake's expression was rather strange, and he looked at the Bounder several times. Like Wharton, he could not quite make Smithy out; and he could think of no reason but one for this proceeding. But that seemed too good to be true.

Harry Wharton looked round the crowded Rag.

"All here?" he called out.

"All except Bunter, I think," said Bob.

"Never mind Bunter. Shut the door."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's a blessed fag——"

"Kick him out!"

Tubb, of the Third, loudly and indignantly protesting, was duly kicked out. Then the big door was swung shut, and locked.

"Now we're ready, Smithy," said the captain of the Remove. "You fellows, Smithy is going to address the meeting, and he says it's important. I don't know what he's driving at, any more than you do; only it seems to be something about Drake."

"Go it, Smithy!"

There was intense curiosity in the Remove crowd. Vernon-Smith stood at the head of the big table, round which the Removites were thronged, or on which they were seated, swinging their legs. The Bounder's hand rested on the table, and he faced the crowded meeting calmly, his head very erect. Redwing was close by him. In this ordeal, the sailorman's son meant to stand by his chum, and at that moment, he was prouder of his chum than he had ever been before. The Bounder had sinned, and sinned deeply; but there were few who could have faced what Vernon-Smith was facing now.

"Gentlemen!" The Bounder's voice was calm and clear. "I sha'n't keep you long. I've got something to tell you that I ought to have told you long ago. It's about Drake."

"What has he done now?" grinned Skinner. "Anybody missed any fivers?"

"Silence!" bawled Bob Cherry.

"Go it, Smithy!"

"You're aware that a banknote was picked up in No. 1 Study a week or two ago, and put into Drake's desk, where it was found. Drake was tried by the Form, found guilty of stealing it, and sentenced to Coventry."

"He was guilty!" interjected Bolsover major.

"Tell us something we don't know!" remarked Snoop.

"I'm going to tell you something you don't know," said the Bounder calmly.

"Drake was innocent."

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Gammon!"

"I can prove his innocence, to the satisfaction of everyone present!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Dash it all, Smithy," said Harry Wharton uneasily. "You know how we've treated Drake. If you know anything in his favour, you ought to have told us at once."

"I should jolly well think so!" exclaimed Bob Cherry hotly. "Do you mean to say that we've been down on Drake for nothing, Smithy?"

"Yes."

"And you knew it all the time?" exclaimed Bob.

"Yes."

"Well, you awful rotter!"

"Gammon!" snorted Bolsover major.

"Smithy's pulling our leg!"

"Drake accused me of having planted the banknote in his study!" resumed the Bounder coldly. "He worked it out that I was the only fellow who had a chance of doing it, and had a motive for doing it. Drake was right."

"My hat!" murmured Jack Drake.

Dick Rodney's face lighted up. He pressed his chum's arm.

"What did I tell you?" he whispered.

"I knew he wasn't brute enough to keep it up for ever."

There was a babel of voices in the Rag. The Bounder's statement simply astounded the Remove.

"Drake was right!" stammered Harry Wharton blankly.

"Yes."

"But—but you——"

"You admit——" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Are you potty, Smithy?" exclaimed Squiff.

"Will you let me finish?" asked the Bounder quietly.

"Go on!" said Harry Wharton, compressing his lips. "We'd better hear the whole story now."

"I was wild with Drake, for having got the better of me in the scrap we had!" said Vernon-Smith, and the Remove listened to him in a dead silence now. "I was bitter, and wanted to make him suffer for it. You fellows ragged his study, and he ragged No. 1 in return. After he'd gone, I looked into the study. Nugent's desk being broken, the money had fallen out. I saw the five-pound note lying on the floor among the rubbish. I picked it up. I meant to hand it over to Nugent

when I did that." The Bounder's lips trembled. "I hope you'll believe me, so far. And then——then I don't know what came over me. But I'm giving you the straight yarn. I offered to help Drake set his study to rights, and while I was doing it, I put the note in the Latin grammar in his desk."

Jack Drake drew a deep breath.

His eyes were on the Bounder. He could see the quiver of his lips, and he knew how much this confession was costing the fellow who had wronged him. At that moment, all bitterness died out of his heart; his feeling towards Herbert Vernon-Smith was one of kindness and compassion.

"I fixed it on Drake," said the Bounder steadily. "I don't quite know whether I was glad or not when it was a success. I think I should have been rather glad if the truth had been found out. But it wasn't, and so I've got to tell you. That's all."

Dead silence.

Harry Wharton was the first to speak. "And what are you telling us now for?"

The Bounder gave a bitter smile.

"Because I can't stand it any longer," he answered. "Because I'm not the rascal I ought to have been, to play a game like that. You fellows can do what you like. I suppose you'll send me to Coventry. I've asked for it, in telling you this. I sha'n't complain. If it's any satisfaction to you, I'm going to write to my father to-night, and ask him to take me away from Greyfriars. That's all!"

The Bounder left his place, and walked to the door. Tom Redwing went with him.

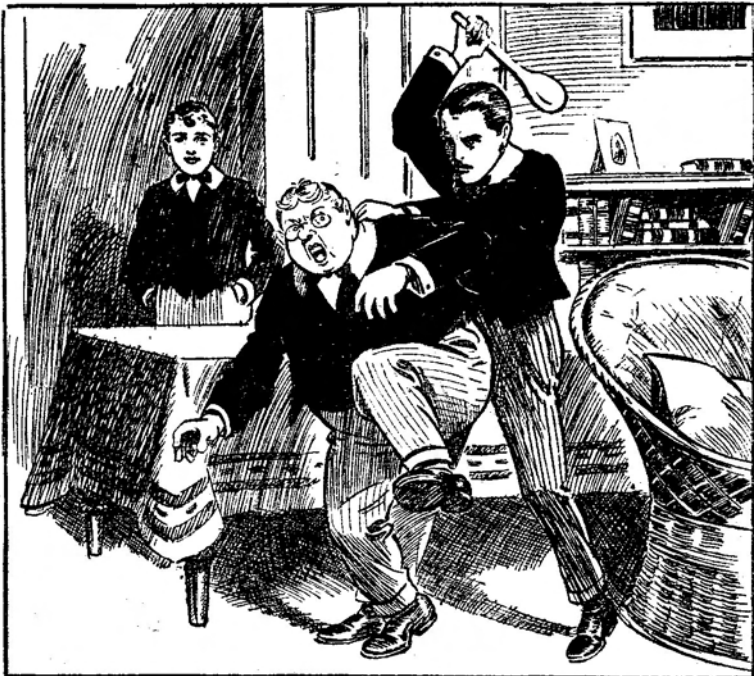
The Removites stared blankly at Vernon-Smith as he went. The door opened, and closed. The Bounder was gone.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath.

"He ought to be scragged!" said Bolsover major. "My hat! What a rotten trick! And pulling the leg of the whole Form, too!"

Harry Wharton crossed over to Drake. His cheeks were red. It was not a pleasant reflection to the captain of the Remove that he had taken the lead in ostracising a fellow who was innocent.

"You've heard Smithy, Drake," said



The Bounder held Bunter by the collar, and the bat rose and fell. It came down on the Owl's fat person with terrific vim. Whack! Whack! Whack! "Yoop! Help!" roared Bunter, struggling in the Bounder's iron grip.

Harry, awkwardly. "You can guess that we're all surprised. I—I don't think you can blame us for finding you guilty on the evidence. It was clear enough. As for Vernon-Smith tricking us in this way, of course we never dreamed of it."

Drake nodded. "All serene!" he said. "I suppose you're satisfied now that I never touched Nugent's banknote?"

"Of course." "And we're all sorry!" said Bob Cherry. "I really don't think we were to blame—but we're really sorry, old scout!"

"The apologise is terrific, my esteemed and honourable Drake!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Jack Drake smiled. "All right!" he said. "I suppose we can consider ourselves let out of Coventry now?"

"Yes, rather." "Sorry all round!" said Nugent. "It was all Smithy's fault—both him. As for Smithy, I'd never have dreamed he could be such a blackguard."

"He can't be a bad fellow, in the main," said Drake. "Precious few chaps would have had the nerve to speak up as he's done. So far as I'm concerned, I don't owe him any grudge, now he's done the right thing, and I hope there won't be any ragging or Coventry."

"Oh, you're an ass!" said Bolsover major. "If he'd played a trick like that on me, I'd smash him. Smithy ought to be jolly well ragged."

"I think he's feeling bad enough, without that," said Harry Wharton. "You can let Smithy alone. He says he's leaving—and perhaps that's the best thing he can do."

"We shall miss old Smithy!" said Nugent. "What on earth did he do such a thing for? Must have been off his rocker."

Jack Drake and Rodney left the Rag—leaving the juniors in excited discussion of Vernon-Smith's startling communication. They were quite restored to the good graces of the Remove now—the long and painful sentence of "Coventry" was a thing of the past. The faces of the two chums were very bright.

Drake paused at the door of their study in the Remove passage.

"I think I'll look in at No. 4," he said. Rodney gave him a quick look.

"Not—" he began. Drake smiled.

"Not a row," he said. "I don't want

to row with Smithy! He's got it bad enough already, I should think!"

And Drake walked on to the Bounder's study.

Goodbye to Greyfriars! VERNON-SMITH, after leaving the Rag, had gone up at once to his study in the Remove passage.

He knew that he had forfeited the good opinion of his Form; he knew that they must despise him. But his heart was lighter. The intolerable burden of the past week was gone, at all events.

He started at the sight of Billy Bunter's fat form sprawling in his armchair.

He had forgotten Bunter. But the Owl of the Remove had not forgotten his appointment. He had been waiting for Smithy. He blinked at him wrathfully and indignantly.

"Quarter past seven!" he said. "I've been waiting here for you, Smithy. I was a few minutes early, too."

Vernon-Smith gave him a look. He was quite pleased to see Bunter there. In the midst of his humiliation there was some satisfaction in dealing with William George Bunter as he deserved.

"Well, here I am, Bunter," he said. "Leave the door open, Redwing."

Redwing smiled. "Right-o!"

"Well, where's the pound?" asked Bunter. The Bounder's look made him feel rather uneasy.

"Hand me that fives bat, Redwing."

"Certainly!"

"I—I say—what do you want that bat for, Smithy?" stammered Bunter.

"To thrash you."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

The Bounder made a stride at him, bat in hand. Bunter leaped out of the armchair.

"Yah! Keep off, you beast!" he roared. "I'll tell the fellows! I'll—yaroooh! Help!"

The Bounder had him by the collar, and the bat rose and fell. It came down on Bunter's fat person with terrific vim.

Whack! whack! whack! whack!

"Yooop! Help!" roared Bunter, struggling in the Bounder's iron grip.

"Yow-ow! Yarooooooooop!"

"There!" gasped the Bounder, throwing the bat aside. "Now get out!"

He swung Bunter to the door, and, drove his foot behind him. The Owl of the Remove fairly flew through the doorway, and sprawled on his hands and knees in the passage, yelling. A junior coming up the passage stopped, and burst into a laugh.

"Yoop!" roared Bunter. "Beast! I say, is that you, Drake?"

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

"I say, I've got something to tell you!" howled Bunter. "It was Smithy who—yooop! Wharrer you up to, you rotter? Stop kicking me! I'm going to tell you—yaroooh—help—oh, crumbs!"

Jack Drake fairly dribbled Bunter along the passage, till he bolted into No. 7 and slammed and locked the door.

Then Drake came back to the Bounder's study.

He coloured a little, as he stepped in, and found the Bounder's eyes fixed on him.

"Well?" said the Bounder sardonically.

"What do you want, Drake? Any more particulars I can give you, beside those you heard in the Rag?"

Drake shook his head.

"I've looked in, just to say a word or two," he answered. "You acted like an awful rascal, Vernon-Smith, but I felt all the time that you weren't such a rascal as you made out. I hoped you'd come to do the right thing, in the long run; Rodney believed you would, and I thought so too. You've done it—you've set me right with the Form. It can't have been pleasant for you—and if you stay at Greyfriars you'll have something to live down. But—I want to tell you that I don't owe you any grudge."

The Bounder raised his eyebrows.

"You don't?"

"No. You acted badly enough—but you've made up for it. I'm sorry we ever were enemies," said Drake frankly, "let's forget all about it—and there's my fist on it, if you like."

He held out his hand.

In silence the Bounder took it. His voice was rather shaky when he spoke at last.

"You're a good chap, Drake. I'm sorry—really sorry. I sha'n't forget this!" He looked at Redwing when Drake was gone.

"Well, it's all out now," he said. "I've faced the music and got it over. Now it's only left for me to get out of Greyfriars."

"But—you need not—" muttered Redwing.

The Bounder gave a short laugh.

"I don't think I could face the fellows again. It's good-bye to Greyfriars for me. All the better for Greyfriars, perhaps."

THE END.

Another grand, long story of the Bounder of Greyfriars next week.

OUR TUCK HAMPER COMPETITION!

PRIZES FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE.

For the best storyette printed on this page a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck will be awarded. Money prizes will be given for all other contributions used. When more than one reader sends in the same acceptable storyette, the prize is awarded to the first read. Remember your joke should be written plainly on a postcard, and addressed to "Boys' Herald," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.—Editor.

Some Charge!

The chairman of the local gas company was giving a speech.

"Think of the good the gas company has done this town," he said. "If I could use a pun, I should say, 'Honour the Light Brigade.'"

Whereupon a dissentient voice from the audience, which happened to belong to a ratepayer droned:

"Oh, what a charge they make!"—Money Prize awarded to Miss E. Mabon, 13, Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, N.22.

Well Known!

Magistrate: "Do you plead guilty to stealing this person's gold watch?"

Pickpocket: "Yus, yer worship. But, please, don't go too hard on a reg'lar customer!"—Money Prize awarded to Fred Boggis, 12, Rockford Street, Gospel Oak, London, N.W.5.

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● This Wins Our Tuck Hamper. ●

● The Whole Front! ●

● John Willie Arthur was feeling peevish and irritable. It was very unusual for him to be out of sorts.

● "What is the matter with you, Johnny?" his mother asked of him at last.

● "I—I—I—I feel rather bad inside, mummy!" groaned Johnny.

● "You see, I had French beans and German sausage at Auntie Grace's, yesterday, and now they seem to be fighting along my whole front."

● —Tuck Hamper filled with delicious Tuck has been awarded to Master Robert Hollins, King Street, Sacriston, co. Durham.

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Vice-Versa!

At Squasham Station, in the County of Dudshire, the little platforms had just been regravelled. The station-master was feeling justly proud of them. On coming upon a porter dealing with the luggage from a local train he had occasion to shout:

"Bifferson, what on earth do you mean by banging those trunks about in that manner?"

Porter Bifferson (in great astonishment): "B-b-b-but I always understood that passengers' luggage didn't matter

Station-master: "Oh, doesn't it, then! Look at those great dents you're making in our platforms!"—Money Prize awarded to R. Dellar, 31, Bennerley Road, Battersea, S.W.11.

Stringer—the Demon Bowler!

(Continued from page 13.)

the char-a-banc travelled at a comfortable thirty-five miles an hour.

The little village of Merton was tucked away in a valley.

"That's the college," said Jack Denyer, as the char-a-banc swept round a curve and the old building hove in sight. "The playing-fields are about a quarter of a mile from the school."

The cumbersome vehicle had to slacken speed after entering the tortuous streets of Merton, and the Norchester fellows soon became the cynosure of all eyes. A number of youngsters were obviously awaiting the arrival of the visitors, and most of them grinned up at the players in a manner which made Jack Denyer wrinkle his brow.

"One would imagine we were a blessed menagerie!" he growled.

"What the deuce is the matter with us?" asked Mallison.

"Perhaps they're laughing at old Stringer's cap," ventured Craig.

There was certainly some reason for the prevailing merriment, for no sooner did one of the schoolboys catch sight of the Norchester fellows than a grin over-spread his features.

"I'm going to get to the bottom of this," growled Jack Denyer, as a snub-nosed boy looked up at him and deliberately burst into a loud and piercing guffaw.

This was too much for the skipper of the Norchester eleven, who leapt into the road and placed a firm finger and thumb upon the snub-nosed youngster's ear.

"Leggo my ear!" howled the youngster, wriggling like an eel. "I wasn't laughing at you!"

"Now, now!" said Jack Denyer severely. "Little boys should not tell stories. Come on, out with it! Why do you all find us so amusing? Why—"

"Hallo, what's the matter here?"

Jack Denyer turned his head at the sound of a deep, musical voice, and found himself looking into the clear, wide-set eyes of a fellow of about his own age. The new-comer was wearing a sports jacket over his football rig.

"We've been a source of amusement for quite a number of small boys since we arrived," explained Jack, with a smile, "and I'm persuading this young gentleman to let me into the joke."

The new-comer looked from Jack to the other players in the char-a-banc, and then the suspicion of a smile twisted his lips.

A flush crept into Jack Denyer's handsome face.

"Now, don't you start grinning!" he said, with mock severity.

"My name's Moody—" began the Merton man.

"And mine's Denyer," broke in Jack. "You wrote to me for a fixture."

Moody's face broadened, and then, to

the amazement of all standing round, he said:

"Have you come down to play cricket?"

It was obvious to Jack that the fellow was on the verge of hysterical laughter.

"Of course," he returned, somewhat testily. "You wrote for a cricket fixture, didn't you?"

"Never in this life!" said Moody.

"I'm captain of footer."

"Do you mean—" gasped Jack, but his voice was drowned by a roar of laughter from the char-a-banc. "You—you maniac!"

"You—you babbling idiot!"

"Why didn't you say—" demanded Jack Denyer.

"Why didn't you guess?" asked Moody.

It was a piquant situation, and the on-lookers enjoyed it to the full.

"What shall we do about it, old man?" asked Moody.

Jack Denyer shook his head. "I'm hanged if I know," he said.

"This is a proper pukka mess-up if there ever was on."

The two principals were silent for a moment, and then the euphonious voice of Stringer rang out.

"May I be permitted to make a suggestion?" he said, lifting his little green cap to the grinning Moody.

This grand, long 'cricket serial will be continued in next week's issue of the

"Boys' Herald."



THE "BOYS' HERALD" BOYS.—ROBERT DONALD OGILVY, Study No. 3 of the Greyfriars Remove.
(Another splendid portrait next week.)