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CRICKET STORY

(All-Star Features—Inside.)

The MAGNET 2^D



BUNTER THE VENTRILOQUIST!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Busy Bee!

IT was hot! Even Hurree Janset Ram Singh admitted that it was hot. Other fellows in the Greyfriars Remove described it as "scorching," "melting," and "baking."

Every Greyfriars man admitted that it was a glorious thing to be a Greyfriars man! But that afternoon most of them envied the tramps who loafed along shady lanes, or rested under dusky trees, by cool waters.

Billy Bunter, perhaps, felt it the most. The fattest fellow at Greyfriars streamed with perspiration. There was more of Bunter than of any other fellow, to feel the heat.

Last lesson for the Remove that day was French, with Monsieur Charpentier. Often and often, in the French class, there was ragging. On such a baking afternoon, when every fellow was fed-up to the back teeth, a record "rag" might really have been looked for. But—wonderful to relate—the Greyfriars Remove were quiet, orderly—meek as a class of lambs. Which was a tremendous relief to Monsieur Charpentier.

Harry Wharton & Co. set an example. Even the Bouncer, the most reckless ragster in the Form, played up. Nobody dropped a book! Nobody banged a desk-lid! Nobody whizzed an ink-ball! Anybody looking into that class-room might have supposed that the Remove were a model Form—which they weren't, by any means!

But the explanation was simple. Next day was not only a half-holiday, but it was Rookwood day. Detentions had to be avoided at any cost. Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, had

warned the Form that there were to be no rags. All the cricketers backed him up. And the rest toed the line, under warning of what would happen to them later if they didn't.

So matters progressed smoothly in the French class. Mossoo might almost have fancied that the juniors wanted to learn French!

Good as they were that afternoon—so good that they were feeling the strain severely—the Removites were glad when a big bumble-bee sailed in at the open window.

It made a diversion.

With a loud, prolonged buzz, that bee sailed across the class-room and settled down for a little rest on Monsieur Charpentier's head.

"Ciel!" ejaculated Mossoo.

He swept his book round his head, and the bee, disturbed, rose and sailed away again, buzzing noisily.

Buzz-zzz!

"Bozzer zat bee!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "Va-t-en, alors! Go away viz you!"

"Shall we drive him out of the window, sir?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, jumping to his feet, book in hand.

"Chuck it, Smythy!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"Oh! I forgot!"

The Bouncer sat down again. It was a glorious opportunity for a rag. Gladly would the whole Form have risen to the occasion and turned the class-room into pandemonium, under pretence of driving away that buzzing bee. But the Bouncer remembered in time that it was Rookwood day to-morrow, and "chucked" it.

"Non, non! Sit you down viz you!" said Mossoo hastily. "Zat bee, he go away viz himself."

To Mossoo's relief, and the disappoint-

ment of the Remove, the bumble-bee sailed away from the open window. It had interrupted class for hardly two or three minutes, which, all the Remove felt, was rather hard lines.

Billy Bunter gave a fat little cough.

Bob Cherry glanced round at the fat junior suspiciously. He knew that fat cough, which was Bunter's usual preliminary to playing his weird ventriloquial tricks.

Bunter grinned.

Bunter was feeling the heat more than any other fellow, being the fattest. He was feeling the French more than any other fellow, being the laziest. Mossoo was getting on to irregular verbs, and Bunter loathed irregular verbs. That buzzing bee had put an idea into Bunter's head. There was room for it.

Buzz-zzz!

Monsieur Charpentier cut short the flow of irregular verbs and stared round him, waving his book. He was sure that that wandering bee had buzzed out of the window. But here was the buzz again, if not the bee!

Buzz-zzz!

Nobody, looking at Billy Bunter, would have supposed that the buzz came from him. Bunter, who could do nothing else, could do ventriloquism. It was, of course, a gift. If it had required brains, Bunter could not have done it. Niggardly nature had been very mean with him in the matter of brains. But Bunter could ventriloquise, and often and often had he been kicked, in the Remove, for his strange and weird tricks in that line. Now Bunter was at it again!

Bob Cherry, who was near him, suspected, and whispered fiercely:

"Shut up, you fat image!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"No rags to-day, fatty! Chuck it!" hissed Bob.

"Sherry, you talk in class!" rapped out Mossoo. "I will not have ze talk in ze class! Taisez-vous! Be silent!"

Bunter chuckled. "I zink zat bee he go vunce more, and—"

Buzzzzz!
"Mon Dieu!" Monsieur Charpentier jumped, as the buzz sounded—or seemed to sound—close by his ear. He brandished his book frantically. "Allons! Va-t-en! Go away viz you!"

Buzzzzz!
"Blessed if I can see that bee!" murmured Frank Nugent. "I can hear him all right, but—"

"The buzzfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "But the seefulness is a boot on the other leg."

Buzzzzz!
The invisible bee buzzed and buzzed. Irregular verbs, in the midst of that loud and incessant buzzing, were a sheer impossibility. Also Mossoo was in fear of the bee settling on him every moment, and he did not want to be stung. The buzz came behind him, and he whirled round. It was behind him again, and he whirled again. It sounded in his left ear, then in his right. And the sight of the French master turning on his axis, brandishing his book, made the Remove chortle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Silence!" shouted Mossoo. "It is not for to laff! There is nozzings for to laff! Taisez-vous! It is one strange zing zat I do not see zat bee! Vhar-ton, do you see zat bee?"

"No, sir!" gasped Harry Wharton. "You see zat bee, Bull?"

"No, sir!" answered Bull.
All the Remove were aware, by this time, that the Greyfriars ventriloquist was at work. But Mossoo was not so well acquainted with Billy Bunter as the Remove fellows were. He did not suspect.

Buzzzzz!
"Mon Dieu! I zink zat I sall be stung!" exclaimed Mossoo. "Zat bee, he stick to me—he buzz me round ze head. Vere is zat bee?"

Buzzzzz!
"I say, sir, it's on your back!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "On the back of your neck, sir!"

Shriek, from Monsieur Charpentier. "Zat you knock him off! Quick!"

"Yes, sir! I'll get him!" gasped Bunter, and he jumped up, seized a book, and started rolling out of the Form towards the French master. "I'll smash him, sir!"

There was no bee on Mossoo's neck. But there was going to be a bang there shortly, from the book in Bunter's fat hand. In other circumstances, the Remove would have considered this quite a good rag, and would have enjoyed it. But they were aware that their Form master, Mr. Quelch, was not far away, and if Quelch had stepped in and discovered a rag going on, goodness only knew what might happen to the Rookwood match on Wednesday. Quelch had a way of coming down heavily on raggars.

Bunter had to be stopped! Already the members of the Form who were not keen on cricket were getting restive, eager to join in the rag. Skinner and Snoop were on their feet, and Bolsover major grasped an inkpot. The usual orderliness of the Remove was in danger of falling to pieces.

"Shut up, you fat idiot!" hissed Bob Cherry, and he grasped Billy Bunter by

the collar and bumped him back into his seat—hard.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "Zat you knock off zat bee!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Sherry! Vat you do? Vy for you stop Buntair? Mauleverer, knock off zat bee!"

"There's no bee on your neck, sir!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Bon! He is gone vunce again off viz himself, zen!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Wow!" roared Bunter. "Sherry, you are one mauvais garçon, one verree bad boy! Vunce more you offend, and I give you one detention. Now ve will resume—"

Buzzzzz!
"Mon Dieu! Toujours cela! Zat bee—" exclaimed the exasperated French master. "But zis is of ze most intolerable! Vere is zat bee?"

"Whoop!" roared Bunter, the buzzing changing suddenly into a fiendish yell, as Bob gave him a warning hack under the desk. "Ow! Wow! Beast!"
"Sherry!" thundered Monsieur Charpentier. "Vun and two time I varn you, and now you take one detention! I speak to your Form master! You are detain ze next half-holiday! I will keep ordair in zis class! Mais oui!"
"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob in dismay.

As a matter of fact, it was in the cause of law and order that Bob had hacked Bunter. But Mossoo was not aware of that; and when Mossoo handed out punishments he handed them out rather wildly. Bunter was in fault, but

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Outside eating, sleeping and telling whoppers, there aren't many things that William George Bunter can do well. But there's no denying the fact that he's a born ventriloquist!

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Bob Cherry got it "in the neck"—not an uncommon happening in the French class.

And when the buzzing of the invisible bee was heard again Bob made no further effort to keep Bunter quiet, and the "Buzz-buzz-buzz!" put Mossoo into such a frantic state that he was, as Skinner expressed it, like a hen on hot bricks. And if a stranger had looked into the class-room then he would not have supposed by any means that the Remove was a model Form. Judging by their chuckling and chortling, they might have been watching a comic film. But French irregular verbs were interrupted—and that, from Billy Bunter's point of view, at least, was all that mattered.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Where is Bunter?

"CERTAINLY not!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"But, sir—" said Bob. "You need say no more, Cherry! Monsieur Charpentier has reported you to me for creating a disturbance in the French class—a 'rag,' as I suppose you would call it."
"I never meant—"

"I am resolved," said Mr. Quelch, "to put down the disorder in the French class, so far as my Form is concerned. That is my duty to my colleague—Monsieur Charpentier. You are under detention for Wednesday afternoon, Cherry."

"But—but Mossoo was mistaken, sir!" said Bob desperately. "I never meant to—"

"I cannot discuss that with you, Cherry. You may go."

"But to-morrow we go over to Rookwood to play cricket, sir—"

"You certainly will not be going, Cherry!"

"But I'm in the team, sir—"
"You should have thought of that earlier. You may leave my study."

"But, sir—"

"Leave my study!" thundered Mr. Quelch in a voice that made the junior jump. And Bob left the study. Evidently there was nothing doing.

His comrades were waiting for him at the end of the passage in an anxious mood. Bob Cherry was a mighty batsman, and he was wanted when the Greyfriars men went over to Rookwood on Wednesday.

"What does Quelch say?" asked Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Johnny Bull all together.

"Detention Wednesday; no cricket for me!" growled Bob.

"Rotten!"
"The rottenfulness is terrific," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"I'll burst that fat frump all over the House!" growled Bob. "I was trying to stop him ragging, when that little idiot Mossoo jumped on me. Lot of good trying to keep out of detention! Might as well have ragged the little ass!"

"Let's jolly well kick Bunter!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Let's!" agreed all the Co., and they repaired to the Remove passage to look in Study No. 7 for Bunter and kick him. Kicking Bunter would not set the matter right—still, there was solace in it.

Bunter's fat voice was heard from Study No. 7 as they came up the Remove passage.

"I say, Toddy—"
"Oh, go and eat coke, you fat chump!" grunted Peter Todd. "You've got one of the team detained with your ventriloquist foolery in the French class—and you ought to be jolly well kicked!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"
"And you jolly well will be if Quelch doesn't let Bob off! You can get ready for the kicking of your life!"

"Beast! I say, Toddy, if those beasts come up here asking for me I'll get out of sight. Don't tell them I'm here. Not that I'm afraid of them, you know! I'd lick the whole gang for two pins! But in this hot weather—"

The tramp of feet in the passage reached Bunter's ears, and his fat voice broke off suddenly. Harry Wharton & Co. arrived in the doorway of Study No. 7 and looked in. Peter Todd was standing at the table slicing a loaf for tea; no one else was to be seen. But from behind the armchair in the corner came the gasping grunt of a fellow who had been moving quickly. The Famous Five grinned.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter here?" roared Bob Cherry.

Peter Todd chuckled. "We're going to serag him," said Harry Wharton. "Quelch won't let Bob off to-morrow! We're going to serag Bunter for getting him detention."

"The seragfulness will be terrific."
"Can't see him here," said Bob. "Mind if I sit in that armchair for a minute or two, Toddy?"

"Not at all," answered Toddy. Bob walked across to the armchair and sat in it. A terrified gasp was suppressed behind the chair—but not wholly suppressed. It was quite audible to all

the fellows in the study. Bunter, squeezed between the high back of the chair and the study wall, hardly dared to breathe.

Bob, with his feet planted on the carpet, pushed the chair back closer to the wall as he sat in it. The heavy armchair glided on its castors, and the fat junior behind it was flattened against the wall. The rest of the Co. watched the performance with interest.

"Now, the question is," said Bob—"where's Bunter? I fancy he's hiding somewhere."

"Ooooh!" came a breathless gasp from the Owl of the Remove, squashed between the chair-back and the wall.

"We've got to find him and scrag him! My idea is to give him about three dozen with a fives bat."

"Hard!" said Frank Nugent.

"Let the hardness be terrific, my esteemed chums. Also the pourfulness of the esteemed ink down his ridiculous neck is the proper caper."

"And then a jolly good kicking!" said Harry Wharton.

"Yes, rather! But where is he?"

"Echo answers that the wherefulness is preposterous," chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Bob was still propelling the armchair backwards to the wall, with his feet planted on the floor. The chair felt as if it was in contact with something soft and resilient. So it was! Bunter's fat form was acting as a buffer between the chair and the wall. The hapless Owl of the Remove could hardly breathe. But after hearing the list of the things that were to happen to him he dared not reveal his presence. It did not occur to his powerful intellect that that was already known.

Bob got a firmer grip with his feet on the wall of the alcove and gave a tremendous shove backwards.

It was too much for Bunter. He felt like a pancake, and the wind escaped from him in a prolonged gasp, like the air of a punctured tyre.

"Ooooooooooogh!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That sounds like Bunter!" said Bob. "Did you fellows hear something like a grampus gurgling?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fancy he's in the study all the time! But where can he be?"

"Can't see him," said Nugent.

"The usefulness is not terrific."

"Urrrrrgh!" came from Bunter, as the armchair-back squeezed harder. "Oooh! Gooooooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Stoppit!" gasped Bunter, unable to stand the strain any longer. "Oggh! You're squish-squish-squishing—squashing me, you beast! Oooooogh!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's in the corner!" roared Bob. "Behind this chair all the time! Now, who'd have thought it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have him out!" roared Johnny Bull. "Scrag him!"

"I say, you fellows! I'm not here! I mean—Oooooooooogh!"

Billy Bunter shoved desperately at the chair, and it rolled off. The fat junior's crimson face rose into view behind the chair-back. He blinked at the Famous Five through his big spectacles.

"I—I say, you fellows—Ow!" gasped Bunter. "I say, it's all right! You needn't worry about the Rookwood match. I've got an idea! It doesn't really matter about Bob being detained to-morrow—"

"Doesn't it?" roared Bob.

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"No, old chap! After all, you're rather a dud, you know—"

"Rather a dud," explained Bunter. "You needn't grouse, Wharton, so long as you get a better man!"

"And who's the better man?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"Me!" explained Bunter.

"Oh crumbs!"

"I'll play!" said Bunter. "I can't say I'm keen on cricket in this hot weather; but—dash it all, I'll play! I'll come over to Rookwood with you to-morrow. The fact is, I was thinking of it—you see, the fellows who go over to Rookwood get out of morning classes. That's something! I'll take Cherry's place, so that will be all right."

"That—that—that will be all right, will it?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes. After all, you want to win the game," said Bunter. "For once, I suggest that you entirely set aside your jealousy of a better man, and give me a chance to show what I can do. Really good cricket, you know—"

"Where's that fives bat?"

"Here you are!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Now, Bunter—"

Billy Bunter jumped out of the corner. He made another jump for the door. There was a sound of flying footsteps in the Remove passage.

"Come back!" roared Bob Cherry. "Come back and be scragged, you fat fooler! Come back and be batted!"

But answer there was none! Billy Bunter had disappeared.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton tea'd without Bunter in No. 7 that afternoon. Kicking, scragging, and batting did not seem to appeal to Bunter somehow, and he was keeping out of sight. But he did not miss his just punishment—he missed his tea! And that, to William George Bunter, was a punishment as severe as any amount of kicking, batting, and scragging.

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THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter's Programme!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

It was prep in the Remove, and Wharton and Nugent were at work in Study No. 1. They were, in point of fact, giving less attention to prep than to thoughts of the morrow.

Bob Cherry's detention was a disaster to the team. The fact that he was to play, if Bob stood out, was not a great solace to Frank Nugent. He was keen enough to play, but he did not suppose that he could put up such a game as Bob's; and the Greyfriars Remove needed all their best men in the field to beat such a team as Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood.

Prep was rather desultory in Study No. 1 that evening; it was interrupted by a good many discussions of the prospects at Rookwood on Wednesday. It was interrupted once more, as a fat face and a pair of glimmering spectacles looked in at the door. Billy Bunter, apparently, was giving prep a miss.

Harry Wharton gave him rather a grim look. It was Bunter's fatuous proceedings that had caused Bob's trouble. Wharton glanced round the study.

"Where's that stump?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! If you're going to be a beast—"

"Oh, cut off, you fat chump! Prep!" snapped the captain of the Remove.

"Never mind prep! There's only one

class to-morrow for the fellows going to Rookwood, so prep doesn't matter much," said Bunter.

"If you're caught out of your study in prep—"

"That's all right! Walker's taking prep—and he's gone off to read a novel; you know Walker! Now, look here, Wharton, I've offered you my services in that dud Cherry's place—"

"If you insist on being kicked—"

said Harry, rising from the table. "You've refused!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "Well, I can't make you understand what you're losing—you're too dense. But look here, I want to come over to Rookwood with the team. I'm frightfully keen on teeing with Jimmy Silver—I mean, on cricket—"

"Buzz off before you're kicked!"

"Besides, there's second and third lesson to be cut—so, you see, I really must come!" explained Bunter. "Suppose I get Cherry off detention—"

"How?" demanded Wharton.

"Well, that little idiot Mossoo detained him for ragging in class," said Bunter. "Quelch backed him up, of course. But suppose a fellow went to Quelch, and owned up, in a frank and manly way—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm the man to do it, as you know," said Bunter. "Frank and manly and straightforward—that's me all over! Did I ever let a pal down?"

"Oh, ye gods!"

"If I went to Quelch and told him that Bob wasn't ragging, but only trying to stop me ragging, wouldn't he be let off?" said Bunter.

"Yes, ass; but you're too funky, and too fatheaded, and too much of a rotter generally—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Give him a chance, though," said Frank Nugent, looking very curiously at the fat Owl. "No reason why even Bunter shouldn't do the decent thing for once. If Quelch knew the facts, he would let Bob off. Bob can't tell him, but Bunter could—and ought to."

"Well, will you, you fat Owl, or are you trying to pull my leg?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"One good turn deserves another, you know," said Bunter. "Suppose, in a manly and generous way, I take the blame on myself, and get Bob off. Well, will that fix it for me to go over to Rookwood?"

"You can't get leave for the day."

"Leave that to me."

"Well, if you get leave, you can come if you like. No law against any man taking the train to Sussex if he wants to."

"I've been disappointed about a postal order—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's only temporary, of course," said Bunter. "Purely temporary. The postal order is from one of my titled relations, and will be here the day after to-morrow at the latest. But, in the meantime, I'm stony! I know it sounds ridiculous, but there it is. Somebody will have to stand me a return ticket. That's the difficulty."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"If that's it, fathead, it's a go! Get Bob off detention, and we'll raise the wind to pay your fare over to Rookwood."

"Good!" said Bunter. "Of course, I shall hand back the small sum as soon as my postal order comes—"

"Never mind that!"

"But I do mind!" said Bunter firmly.

"I'm not a sponger, I hope! I shall insist upon settling up as—as soon as the postal order comes."

"Oh, all right. If I don't remember it—people get forgetful at eighty or ninety, you know—you can remind me."

"Beast! If it's clearly understood that I settle this trifling sum as soon as my postal order comes, I will accept your offer!" said Bunter, with dignity. "I'll go to Quelch after prep."

"Good!" said Wharton and Nugent together. And Billy Bunter rolled away, leaving them in a very relieved frame of mind. Bunter, as a rule, was not the fellow for owning up; he did not care very much upon whom punishment fell, so long as it did not fall upon his fat and important self. But in this case there was a "quid pro quo"—Bunter was not doing it for nothing. He was going to get his return ticket to Rookwood. How he was going to get

not say so. In this new mood Bunter was entitled to encouragement.

"Those chaps paying my fare to Rookwood to-morrow, of course, has nothing to do with it," added Bunter.

"Oh! That accounts for the milk in the coconut, does it?" grinned Toddy. "But how the thump are you going to get a day's leave from school?"

"I fancy that's all right. Quelch is a beast, of course," said Bunter. "All schoolmasters are beasts, naturally. They can't help it. Still, Quelch can appreciate a fellow acting in a manly, straightforward, plucky way. When I go to him and say 'Sir, I was to blame'—just like that, you know—what do you think Quelch will do?"

Peter did not answer. His own impression was that Quelch would reach

"That's how I figure it out," said Bunter. "Play the game—that's the idea! You never lose by being frank and manly and straightforward like me, Toddy. You should try it, old chap."

"Oh, help!" gasped Toddy. "That's the programme," said Bunter, with a satisfied smirk. "I fancy it will work. What do you think, Toddy?"

"I think I'll get on with my prep!" gasped Toddy. And he did.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not as Per Programme!

MR. QUELCH was frowning a little as he sat in his study, busy with papers for the Remove.

To the Remove fellows Mr. Quelch



Bob Cherry firmly planted his feet on the wall of the alcove and gave a tremendous shove backwards. It was too much for Bunter. He felt like a pancake, and the wind escaped from him in a prolonged gasp like the air of a punctured tyre. "Ooooooooooogh!" "Hallo, hallo, hallo! That sounds like Bunter!" said Bob. "Did you fellows hear something like a grampus gurgling?"

leave for the day was another matter, but Bunter seemed satisfied about that.

The fat junior returned to his study, where Toddy and Dutton were at prep.

Peter gave him a look as he rolled in. "No prep?" he asked. "Quelch will scrag you in the morning."

"I'm chancing that," said Bunter cheerfully. "There's only one class, you know, for the fellows going over to Rookwood—"

"You're not going, you ass!"

"I fancy I am!" grinned Bunter. "I'm going to Quelch to own up about that rag in the French class, and he will let Cherry off."

"You are!" ejaculated Toddy in astonishment.

"Naturally!" answered Bunter. "Am I the fellow to let another chap take my gruel? I ask you!"

Peter could only gaze at him. His opinion was that Bunter was exactly that kind of fellow! However, he did

for his cane. But he was not going to discourage Bunter. A whopping for Billy Bunter was a trifle light as air, compared with getting Bob Cherry off to play in the Rookwood match.

"He will be moved," said Bunter. "He will say: 'Had this come to my knowledge by any other means, Bunter, I should have punished you severely! But in the circumstances, you may go.'"

"Oh!" said Peter.

"Very likely he will lay his hand on my shoulder, and say: 'That is very frank, very manly, Bunter! It is what I should have expected of you, knowing you as I do.' Think so, Toddy?"

"Oh crikey!" said Toddy.

"And then, while he's feeling so jolly good-tempered, I shall ask him for leave to go over to Rookwood for the day," went on Bunter. "And he will say, 'Yes, my boy, you deserve it! Go, by all means!' What?"

"Oh crumbs!"

seemed rather a grim and unbending gentleman. Indeed, they often compared him to a gargoyle. But under his crusty exterior Quelch had quite a kind heart. And he was thinking of Bob Cherry, and that unfortunate youth's detention on Rookwood day. He had had no choice but to confirm Monsieur Charpentier's sentence; he was bound to support a colleague. And he was determined to put down the ragging in the French class, so far as his own boys were concerned.

Nevertheless, he was sorry that a keen cricketer had to be detained on the day of a match that was immensely important to the juniors, and it weighed a little on his mind. His thoughts on the subject were interrupted by a tap at his door, and it opened to reveal the fat face and spectacles of William George Bunter. A pair of gimlet eyes fixed on Bunter as he rolled in.

"You have not brought your lines, Bunter."

"Oh, no!" gasped Bunter.

He had forgotten that he had lines to do for Quelch. Quelch had a rather better memory in such matters.

"And why not?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, really, sir—I mean, I—I came to speak about something else, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"This was not a good beginning."

"Very well; be brief."

"The fact is, sir—"

"Well?"

"The—the fact—" stammered Bunter.

He had worked out his programme to his own fat satisfaction in his own study. But he did not feel quite so confident in Quelch's study. There was something rather disconcerting in the steady stare at a pair of gimlet eyes.

"Have you anything to say to me, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Then say it at once, and leave my study."

"The—the fact is, sir, it—it was me, sir," gurgled Bunter.

"What?" barked Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean it wasn't me!" gasped Bunter, his nerve shaken by that bark.

"Bunter!"

"I—I—I mean—" Bunter backed to the door; but there he rallied, and tried again. "The fact is, sir—I did it!"

"You did what?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, both surprised and impatient.

"Make your meaning clear."

"I mean, about old Froggy—"

"Who?" almost roared Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean, Monsieur Charpentier, sir," stuttered Bunter. "I—I didn't mean to say old Froggy, sir. I—I never call him old Froggy, sir—never!"

"How dare you, Bunter?"

"I—I was going to say, Monsieur Froggy—I mean old Charpentier—that is to say, Mossoo—Mossoo was mistaken, sir, in—thinking that Bob was ragging in the French class—"

"Are you referring to Cherry?"

"Yes, sir. I—I—I was to blame!" gasped Bunter, getting it out at last, though not in the impressive way he had intended.

Mr. Quelch stared at him.

"You were to blame, Bunter?" he repeated.

"Oh lor! I mean, yes, sir! The fact is—"

"Explain yourself at once!"

"I—I—I was ragging, sir, and—and Bob was stopping me. And—and old Froggy—I mean old Mossoo—he fancied that it was Bob ragging, and came down on him, sir," gurgled Bunter.

"Upon my word! And why have you come to tell me this, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch, staring very hard at the crimson, perspiring Owl.

It was the first time that Bunter had "owned up" in this way.

"Because it's the frank and manly thing to do, sir."

.....

IMPORTANT NEWS!

Readers of the MAGNET who are about to visit the seaside for their holidays will be glad to learn that Messrs. Cadbury Bros., of Bourneville, have contributed no fewer than A QUARTER OF A MILLION BARS OF CHOCOLATE for the consumption of readers buying their MAGNET from beach sellers, kiosks, and other such places at most of our popular seaside resorts. In addition to this, Cadbury Bros. are contributing pound boxes of their delicious assorted chocolates as prizes at our Concert Party, Cinema, and Gala Competitions. Be sure, then, and watch out for the MAGNET representatives when you are at the seaside this summer.

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"What?"

"Being a frank and manly and straightforward fellow, sir, I—I felt that it was up to me!" gasped Bunter.

"Upon my word!"

Mr. Quelch gazed at Bunter. Now, according to Bunter's programme, it was time for him to say: "Had this come to my knowledge by any other means, I should have punished you severely. In the circumstances, however, you may go." It was time for him to lay his hand on Bunter's fat shoulder, and say: "That is very frank, very manly, Bunter. It is what I should have expected of you, knowing you as I do."

But Quelch did none of these things.

There was a hitch in the programme. Quelch, of course, did not know that Bunter had assigned him a part to play. Anyhow, he did not play up.

"Very well, Bunter, I will accept your assurance that an error was made," he said. "You may give Cherry a message from me, that his detention is cancelled. I will explain to Monsieur Charpentier. You will be detained to-morrow afternoon—"

"Eh?"

"Instead of Cherry—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"As you have confessed that you are the person to blame in the matter. You may leave my study."

"Oh!"

Bunter blinked at his Form master. Quelch showed no sign whatever of laying his hand on a fat shoulder. He turned to his paper again, as if the matter was at an end. Bunter blinked at him in dismay.

"You may go, Bunter."

"I—I say, sir," gasped Bunter, "I—I—I was going to— Oh crikey! I—I was going to ask you for leave to-morrow—"

"What?"

"To—to gig-gig-gig—"

"To what?"

"To gig-gig-gig-go over to Rookwood with—"

"You are under detention to-morrow, Bunter. You will go into the Form-room at two o'clock. Now leave my study."

"Oh crikey!"

"Do not utter ridiculous ejaculations in my presence, Bunter. Leave my study at once!"

"Oh lor!" Bunter blinked at him. Evidently his programme was wide of the mark. "I—I say, sir, it—it wasn't me—"

"What do you mean, Bunter?"

"I mean, it wasn't me, sir. I—I had nothing to do with it, sir. I—I was ragging in the French class. I—I—"

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet.

"It is too late to make that statement, Bunter."

"But—but I thought—I—I mean—I—I—I never thought— Oh, crikey! I—I thought that—that this was what you would have expected of me, sir, knowing me as you do," stammered Bunter. "What I really meant to say, sir, was—was I wasn't to blame—"

Mr. Quelch picked up his cane.

"If you do not leave my study instantly, Bunter—"

"Oh lor!"

Bunter left the study quite hurriedly. It was clear that the cane was going to be featured in the next scene, if he didn't. The fat junior vanished like a ghost at cockerow.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter, as he rolled down the passage. "Oh lor! Oh scissors! Beast! Catch me owning up again! Lot of good, being frank and manly and straightforward in a school like this! Oh jiminy!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away in a state of dismal dismay. He had mapped out quite a good programme, if Quelch had only played up. But Quelch hadn't—and that was that!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not on the Warpath!

BUNTAIR! Vere is Buntair? The voice of Henri Adolphe Charpentier, French master of Greyfriars, was heard in the Remove passage. Billy Bunter heard it, and frowned ferociously.

Bunter was in Study No. 1 with the Famous Five.

A study supper was on, so, of course, Bunter was on. For once, Billy Bunter was a man whom the chums of the Remove delighted to honour. That study supper was stood especially for Bunter! It was a sort of consolation prize. Bob Cherry was free to go over to Rookwood on the morrow—that was the result of Bunter owning up. Bunter was detained for the half-holiday instead of Bob—that was another result!

It was a good thing for Bob—and a good thing for the cricket—but it was rough on Bunter. Hence the solace of a study supper. As his fare to Rookwood would not be wanted after all, it was possible to "spread" a little—and the chums of the Remove "spread" accordingly. And Bunter was considerably consoled as he devoured the good things provided for him.

Then came the high-pitched voice of Monsieur Charpentier in the passage, inquiring for Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove shook a fat fist in the direction of the door—fortunately closed.

"Beast!" he murmured.

"Smeet! Have you seen zat Buntair?" came Mossoo's voice again, in the passage.

"No, sir!" answered Vernon-Smith.

"Better tell him you're here, Bunter," said Harry Wharton.

"No fear!" answered Bunter promptly. "I don't know what the beast wants, but he may have brought up a pointer. Quelch said he was going to explain to him—so he knows I was ragging in the French class. Keep it dark that I'm here, fthead!"

"But—" said Nugent.

"Shut up, ass! Look here, if he comes into the study, I'll step behind the door. You fellows tell him you haven't seen me, see?"

"You fat villain!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Todd!" came the high-pitched voice in the passage. "Have you see zat Buntair?"

"Bunter, sir! I think he's in Study No. 1."

"Zank you, Todd!"

"Oh! Beast!" gasped Bunter. He jumped up from the festive board and backed behind the door, so that it would conceal him when it opened. "I say, you fellows, not a word! Keep it dark."

"You fat idiot—" began Bob Cherry.

"Shut up, you beast!"

There was a tap at the door, and it opened. The dapper little figure of Monsieur Charpentier stepped in. He gave the chums of the Remove a polite little bow, and they rose respectfully to their feet. Mossoo glanced round the study in expectation of seeing a sixth person there. But only five were to be seen—the open door concealed the sixth.

"Allons! Is zat Buntair here?" asked the French master. "Todd, he say zat he zink zat Buntair is here, chez vous."

"He—he was here a minute ago, sir!" stammered Nugent. It was a rather

awkward situation for the Famous Five. Certainly they were not going to tell any untruths; having quite different ideas from Bunter on that subject. At the same time, they could not give Bunter away. So they were rather red and uncomfortable.

"Mai foi! I wish to see Buntair," said Monsieur Charpentier. "Monsieur Quelch have explained to me zat it was not you zat rag in ze class, Sherry, but zat Buntair."

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Bob. "Savez vous—you shall know where is Buntair?" asked Mossoo.

The Famous Five were silent. The open door was all that was between Mossoo and Bunter. Had he stepped farther into the study and glanced round, he must have seen the fat junior—who was fully visible to the five fellows standing round the table.

"I—I don't think he's far away, sir," stammered Nugent.

"Have you looked in his esteemed study, sir?" inquired Hurree Jamset Ram Singin.

"Mais non! I go to see!" said Mossoo; and with another polite bow, he quitted the study.

"Thank goodness he's gone!" gasped Bunter, slamming the door when the French gentlemen had departed. "Beast! Did he have a pointer with him?"

"No! I don't think he's on the war-path," answered Harry. "Most likely he only wants to tell you what you're to do in detention to-morrow."

"I'm not risking it! I say, you fellows, pass that cake!" Billy Bunter re-started after the interval.

A few minutes later, steps were heard outside once more. Once more the high-pitched voice of Mossoo floated into the study.

"Mon Dieu! Zat Buntair, he seem to disappear viz himself! Allons, Kippis, you shall know where to see Buntair?"

"No, sir!" came Kipp's answer.

Monsieur Charpentier's footsteps receded in the direction of the stairs. Evidently he had given Bunter up and gone.

"Beast!" said Bunter.

And he settled down to finish supper. Billy Bunter was not finished supper till the last crumb was finished. Then he rose from the table, fat and satisfied. When he rolled out of Study No. 1, Fisher T. Fish called to him in the passage.

"Say, bo! Mossoo's hunting for you!"

"Blow Mossoo!" answered Bunter.

"He's told a dozen fellows to send you to his study if they see you. I guess you better hit that study!" said Fishy.

"Guess again!" grunted Bunter.

And he rolled down to the Rag, keeping a wary eye open for Monsieur Charpentier. In the lower passage he had a sudden glimpse of a dapper little figure in a tight frock-coat.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

"Alors! C'est le garçon que je cherche!" exclaimed Mossoo. "Buntair—Mon Dieu! Buntair!"

Bunter vanished round the nearest corner, leaving Mossoo staring. The fat junior threaded half a dozen passages to arrive in the Rag by a different route. He gasped with relief when he reached the shelter of that apartment. There were a good many fellows in the Rag—Remove and Fourth—and Temple of the Fourth called out to Bunter as he rolled in.

"Mossoo wants you, Bunter!"

"Bless Mossoo!" snorted Bunter.

"Let him want."

"You're to go to his study."

"Rats!"

Billy Bunter rolled to an armchair

and sat down. A few minutes later, Monsieur Charpentier looked in.

"Buntair! Is Buntair here?" he asked.

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. He sat tight! The high back of the chair hid him from the French master in the doorway. A dozen fellows stared at him, and at Mossoo!

"Has zat Buntair been here, mes garçons?" asked Monsieur Charpentier. "I wish to see Buntair verree mooch!"

"I can't see him here, sir!" said Dabney of the Fourth, standing with his back to Bunter.

"Mon Dieu! It is verree strange zat I cannot find Buntair anywere," said Mossoo. "If you shall see him, you will tell him to come to my study!"

"Oh, certainly, sir."

Monsieur Charpentier left the Rag—

WELL WON, WAKEFIELD!

Have a chuckle at this yarn for which H. Parkin, of 3, St. Catherine Street, Agbrigg Road, Wakefield, has been awarded one of this week's MAGNET pocket-knives.



Rusty (visiting the Picture Gallery for the first time):
"Why did they hang that awful picture?"
Crusty: "I suppose they couldn't find the artist!"

Don't miss this opportunity of winning something useful. Send in that latest rib-tickler of yours—Now!

But he was not quite done with him! The Removites were turning in, Wingate standing in the doorway, when a high-pitched voice was heard addressing the captain of Greyfriars.

"Je cherche Buntair—I wish to speak to Buntair, Wingate!"

"He's in the dormitory, sir!" answered Wingate.

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. He bolted into bed like a fat rabbit into a burrow, and pulled the bedclothes over his head. It was his last refuge.

Monsieur Charpentier stepped in. The juniors eyed him curiously. It was extremely unusual for a master to turn up in a dormitory inquiring after a fellow, and it looked as if Mossoo was extraordinarily keen to find the Owl of the Remove. Yet he did not look angry; and there was neither cane nor pointer in his hand. It was really quite surprising.

Monsieur Charpentier glanced up and down the dormitory. Some of the fellows were already in bed, and they sat up and looked at him. But he could not see Billy Bunter.

"Mon Dieu! But where is Buntair?" he exclaimed.

"O where, and O where can he be?" sang Skinner softly; and there was a chuckle from the Removites.

"Wingate! I do not see Buntair!"

"Eh, what?" The prefect stepped in. "He's here, sir!" Wingate stared at Bunter's bed. Bunter was not visible there. But the bedclothes were piled up in a hillock over the fat figure of the hidden Owl.

Wingate walked across to the bed. He slipped his official ashplant from under his arm into his hand.

"Bunter!" he rapped.

No reply.

Whack!

"Yaroooh!" came a muffled roar from under the piled bedclothes, as the ashplant whacked on the fattest legs at Greyfriars.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-ow-wooooo!"

The bedclothes were hurled aside, and Bunter squirmed into view, yelling. Monsieur Charpentier stared at him in amazement.

"Mon Dieu! Buntair is here!" he ejaculated. "Buntair—"

"Yow-ow-ow! It wasn't me!" howled Bunter.

"Mon cher garçon—"

"I—I didn't—"

"Monsieur Quelch has told me—"

"Oh dear! It was all a mistake!" gasped Bunter.

"Zat you own up zat you make a rag, and zat you are to blame, and not Sherry—"

"I—I—I never—"

"And for zat reason, Buntair, I wish to speak to you—"

"I wasn't—"

"And to tell you zat I excuse you zo detention—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"And zat he is all vash out," said Monsieur Charpentier.

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. His fat brain began to understand. Mossoo was not, after all, on the warpath.

"I zink zat it vas verree good, verree honourable, Buntair, to own up to ze fault for ze sake of ze vun zat is innocent," said Monsieur Charpentier. "For zat reason I excuse you, tout a fait!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He sat on the bed and blinked at the French master. "Oh! I—I—I thought—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zat is vat I wish to say to you, mon bon Buntair! Demain—to-morrow—zere

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is no detention!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "He is vash out! You shall be free as ze little bird in ze air! N'est-ce pas!"

"Oh! Good!" gasped Bunter.

"Bon soir, mes enfants!" said Mossosoo.

"Good-night, sir!"

And Monsieur Charpentier departed. Wingate put out the lights, and followed him. Then there was a fat chuckle from Bunter's bed.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Gratters, old bean!" said Bob Cherry. "I'm glad you've got off! Mossosoo is a good little ass!"

"It's worked better with him than with Quelch!" chuckled Peter Todd. "Quelch knows you better than Mossosoo, old fat bean."

"Oh, really, Toddy! I say, you fellows, you can take a tip from this," said Billy Bunter. "Manliness and straightforwardness always pay, in the long run. I've always found it so."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! My advice to you fellows is, follow my example, and always play the game. Don't forget that you're lending me my fare to Rookwood to-morrow, Whar-ton!"

And Billy Bunter settled down to snore, in a happy and contented frame of mind.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Rough on Jimmy Silver!

"LIKE this!" said Jimmy Silver. It was morning break at Rookwood School.

It was Wednesday, and a glorious morning in July, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were as merry and bright as the cricketers now on their way from Greyfriars for the great game at Rookwood.

Jimmy had a ball in his hand, and his chums, Lovell, and Raby and Newcome of the Fourth, were watching him. Other members of the Rookwood junior team, Mornington and Erroll and Conroy, were standing round. Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Rookwood junior side, was a great bowler—a tremendous bowler—and he was looking forward to making hay of the Greyfriars wickets that day. In the batting line, Mornington and Erroll were greater men, and Arthur Edward Lovell was as good; but as a bowler, Jimmy stood in a class by himself. He had a gift for that branch of the great game, and he had cultivated it sedulously. Great things were expected of Jimmy that day.

Tubby Muffin, of the Fourth, came out of the House and looked round.

"I say, Jimmy!" he called out.

Nobody heeded Muffin.

He came across to the group, quite unheeded. Muffin was nobody. Jimmy Silver was a great man. All eyes were on Jimmy.

"Like this!" repeated Jimmy, grasping the ball and swinging his arm.

Jimmy Silver had lately seen Larwood bowl. Naturally, he had kept a very keen eye on Larwood. Now he was demonstrating to his comrades just how Larwood did it!

As he was standing only a few yards from the window of the headmaster's study, and facing it, Jimmy had, of course, no intention of bowling. Dr. Chisholm was in his study. Had the ball left Jimmy's hand it would have landed on that study window, and undoubtedly startled the headmaster of

Rookwood very considerably—with dire results to Jimmy. But the captain of the Fourth was simply demonstrating how Larwood had done it, without any intention of letting the ball go.

It was rather unfortunate, in the circumstances, that the Rookwood fellows took no heed whatever of Muffin.

Muffin, unregarded, arrived on the spot.

"I say, Jimmy—"

"And then—like this!" said Jimmy Silver; and he swung over his arm. At that moment Muffin poked him in the ribs, to draw his attention.

That did it!

Quite unintentionally the ball left Jimmy Silver's hand. It flew!

"Ooogh!" gasped Jimmy. "What are—"

Crash!

Smash!

"Oh gad!" yelled Mornington.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Muffin.

"Oh thump!"

"Muffin, you mad ass!"

The juniors gazed in horror at the Head's window. One pane had a fearful gash in it. Fragments of glass shot all over the study within. At the gap, appeared the severe and startled face of Dr. Chisholm. The juniors gazed at that face, as if it fascinated them. Only Arthur Edward Lovell had the presence of mind to kick Muffin. Muffin departed, yelling.

The Head's window flew open.

"Who did this?"

Dr. Chisholm's voice was not loud, but deep. It had a tone in it that made cold chills run down the backs of the Rookwood juniors.

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "It was an accident, sir!"

"You have broken my study window, Silver?"

"Oh! Yes, sir! But I never meant the ball to go. A fellow pushed me—"

"You have broken my study window with a cricket-ball?" said the Head of Rookwood, in a terrifying voice.

"Yes, sir," groaned Jimmy.

"Come to my study!"

"Oh dear!"

Dr. Chisholm disappeared from the window. Jimmy Silver looked at his friends. They looked at him.

"Rotten luck!" said Mornington.

"Well, it was rather fatheaded to be handling a ball so near the beak's window," remarked Lovell, apparently in the role of Job's comforter. "You've done it now, Jimmy!"

"Think I don't know that, fathead?"

Jimmy started for the House. He passed his Form master, Mr. Dalton, as he went in. The master of the Fourth glanced at him.

"What is the matter, Silver?" he asked. "I heard a sound of breaking glass. An accident?"

"Yes, sir; the Head's window," said Jimmy dismally. "I—I was showing the fellows how Larwood does it."

"I don't think Larwood would have done that," said Mr. Dalton, with a smile. "You should be more careful, Silver."

Jimmy had already realised that. He went on dismally to the headmaster's study. In that dreaded apartment he found Dr. Chisholm looking grimmer than he had ever seen him look before, which is saying a great deal, for the Head of Rookwood was always rather a grim gentleman.

Fragments of glass were scattered over the Head's carpet, and the summer breeze blew cheerfully in at the jagged gap in the window. A cane lay before the Head on his table. Jimmy Silver

did not need to ask why it had been placed in readiness. He only hoped that the licking would not be severe enough to put him off his form at cricket.

"It—it was quite an accident, sir," stammered Jimmy, faltering under his headmaster's icy stare. "I—I was only—"

"Such accidents must not occur, Silver," said Dr. Chisholm, in his rather shrill voice, which disrespectful Rookwooders sometimes compared to the blowing of a tin whistle. "You have given me a sudden and very startling shock. If your act was one of intentional disrespect—"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Jimmy.

"I accept your assurance on that point, Silver. Otherwise, I should cane you, as well as giving you detention," said Dr. Chisholm grimly.

The beginning of that sentence caused Jimmy Silver's face to brighten. Its conclusion caused his face to become deeply overcast.

"As a warning to you," said Dr. Chisholm, "you will be detained for three half-holidays, Silver. I shall mention this to your Form master. You may go."

Jimmy stood rooted to the floor.

"If—if you please, sir—" he stammered.

"I have said that you may go," said Dr. Chisholm, his hand straying to the cane, which evidently it had been his first intention to use.

"Yes, sir; but—but—but I hope that—that my detentions will begin on Saturday, sir."

"What! To-day is a half-holiday, Silver! Your detention, naturally, will commence to-day!"

"But, sir—"

"Go!"

Jimmy Silver went. When Dr. Chisholm said "Go!" in that tone of voice, it was dangerous to linger.

In utter dismay the hapless junior captain of Rookwood went down the passage. He spotted Mr. Dalton again, and hurried up to him. The consternation in the junior's face made Mr. Dalton stare at him.

"What—?" he began.

"It's detention, sir," groaned Jimmy; "and the Greyfriars men will be here in half an hour. If—if you'd be so kind as to speak to the Head, sir—"

Mr. Dalton compressed his lips. He greatly respected Dr. Chisholm, but he was well aware that the Head was an extremely obstinate gentleman, unlikely to change a decision once decided upon. A majestic raising of the eyebrows was all Dicky Dalton had to expect.

"I will speak to Dr. Chisholm, Silver," he said, after a pause. "But I can hold out little hope that anything will come of it."

"Thank you, sir!" mumbled Jimmy.

Mr. Dalton proceeded to the Head's study. He tapped and entered, and found the Head grimly surveying the scattered broken glass on his carpet.

Dr. Chisholm glanced at him.

"A boy in your Form has done this, Mr. Dalton," said the Head icily. "However, as I believe his statement that it was not an intentional act, I have not punished him severely."

"Silver has told me, sir," said the Fourth Form master. "Possibly you are aware, sir, that the Rookwood junior team is playing Greyfriars to-day, and the members of the eleven are excused third school for the game. Silver—"

"Silver, of course, will attend third school, as he is detained for three half-holidays, beginning to-day."

"Possibly, sir, you might be willing



"Vingate!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "I do not see Buntair! Where is he?" "Under here, sir!" said the prefect, swiping with his ashplant at the bedclothes piled up in a hillock over the fat figure of the hidden Owl. Whack! "Yaroooh!" came a muffled roar. "Yow-ow-ow-woooooop!"

to defer the detention till Saturday, in view of the match to be played to-day."

"Not at all, Mr. Dalton."

"Silver is captain of the junior eleven, sir."

"I am aware of it, Mr. Dalton."

"If you could possibly see your way to make a concession—"

"I can only remark, Mr. Dalton, that I am surprised that you should make such a suggestion."

Richard Dalton bit his lip. It was a snub—a distinct snub—and Mr. Dalton did not like being snubbed.

"Very well, sir," he said quietly. And he left the study.

Jimmy Silver was waiting for him in the passage, with a worried and clouded brow. He gave his Form master a hopeful look.

"I am afraid that nothing can be done, Silver," said Mr. Dalton.

"Oh!"

"You must attend third school, and this afternoon you will go in to detention."

"Oh!" repeated Jimmy.

"I am sorry; but—"

"I don't care about the detention, sir, only—the game's up if I don't play!" groaned Jimmy. "We've got plenty of batsmen, but we're not strong in bowlers—and I'm wanted. But you know that, sir."

Mr. Dalton, who was games master at Rookwood as well as Form master, nodded. He knew exactly how the matter stood. And being only half Dr. Chisholm's age, he was more in touch and sympathy with schoolboys. He pursed his lips.

"I am sorry," he repeated. "Perhaps—he paused—"perhaps I might speak to Dr. Chisholm again—after lunch. He is very angry now, as is

natural in the circumstances. Later he may take a more lenient view. That is all I can say, Silver."

"Thank you, sir!" said Jimmy dimly.

And he went out of the House to tell his friends.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"HARRY, old chap—"

"Bow-wow!"

"After all I've done for you—"

"Scat!"

"Look here!" roared Billy Bunter. "I don't want to go in to second school—see? It's maths with Lascelles."

"Buzz!"

"You're taking Nugent," went on Bunter. "Well, leave Nugent behind, and take me. If a man should be wanted, you'll want a good man, not a dud."

"Thanks!" said Frank, laughing.

"If you went to Quelch, Wharton, and told him that I couldn't possibly be spared from the cricket—"

"Oh, my hat! That's a bigger one than I could possibly tell, old fat bean. There's a limit."

"I say, Bob, old chap, I got you off detention, you know, by going to Quelch in a frank and manly way—"

"He's wound up," said Bob Cherry.

"Well, there's such a thing as gratitude," said Billy Bunter. "You know what Spokeshave says: 'How sharper than a toothless child it is, to have a thankless serpent.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked wrathfully at the party for Rookwood. Quite bright and early in the sunny July morning Harry Wharton & Co. were preparing to start.

It was rather a long way to Rookwood School, which was in Sussex. There had been only one class that morning for the cricketers, which added to the enjoyment of Rookwood day. Less lucky fellows had to go in to second and third school. Neither second nor third school had any special appeal for Billy Bunter. Owing to the kindness of Mossoo, he was getting his half-holiday, after all. But he wanted the morning, too.

If that beast Wharton would only have played him in the Remove eleven, it would have been all right. What did a game of cricket matter, in comparison with getting Bunter off classes? Practically nothing at all. But Wharton did not seem to see it. Nobody could see it, excepting Bunter.

"Come over this afternoon if you want to see us beat Rookwood, old fat bean," said Squiff.

"Well, you're not likely to beat Rookwood without my help, you know," said Bunter. "I'll come over and see you licked. I say, Wharton—"

"Oh, dry up, old fat man!"

"You're lending me my fare to Rookwood, you beast!"

"Oh, all right!"

As a matter of fact, that little sum had been expended on the study supper the previous evening. But the chums of the Remove were not the fellows to argue about that. They had had a whip round, and the cash was available. Harry Wharton passed it over to the Owl of the Remove, who blinked at the silver in his fat hand with a scornful blink.

"That won't pay my fare first-class," he said.

"We're going third!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Yes, that's all right for you fellows,"

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agreed Bunter. "But I'm accustomed to doing things rather decently. I'd rather travel first."

"Oh, kick him!"

"I call this mean," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows—Yaroooh! If you kick me again, Smiathy, you beast, I'll—Whooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter sheered off; the fat Owl ceased from troubling, and the weary were at rest. He rolled away with a discontented frown on his fat brow. It was time for second school—and Mr. Lascelles did not like his class to come in late.

As Mr. Lascelles was taking the Remove in maths in second school, Mr. Quelch was at liberty, and he was enjoying the sunshine in the quad, sitting in a deckchair under his study window. Billy Bunter gave him an inimical blink from a distance. Had Quelch played up according to Bunter's programme, Bunter would have had leave that morning.

Bunter rolled into the House, with a glimmer in his little round eyes behind his big round spectacles. An idea was working in the fat brain of the Greysfriars ventriloquist.

Instead of heading for Lascelles' classroom and mathematics, Billy Bunter headed for Masters' Studies.

He entered Quelch's study.

His fat heart was beating rather fast. It was no light or safe matter to attempt to pull the leg of Henry Samuel Quelch. As an amusement it was rather like twisting a tiger's tail. But Billy Bunter had made up his podgy mind; he was not going to be left in class that morning while the other fellows cleared off, if he could help it. And he had great confidence in his weird powers as a ventriloquist. Bunter could imitate anybody's voice, and the squeaky voice of Monsieur Charpentier was particularly easy for him. Often he had played such tricks in the Remove; now he was going to "try it on" with Quelch.

"Mon bon Monsieur Quelch!"

Mr. Quelch, sitting outside his study window, glanced round as he heard—or, at least, believed that he heard—the

voice of Monsieur Charpentier float from that window.

Bunter kept back out of sight. If Quelch saw him, of course, the game was up. But Quelch—so far, at least—had no suspicion. He supposed that Monsieur Charpentier had stepped into his study to speak to him, and was speaking from the window as he was not within; only he was rather surprised that Mossoo did not appear at the window as he spoke.

"Yes, Monsieur Charpentier?" answered the Remove master.

"I should take it as a great favour, Monsieur Quelch, if you would give leave to zat good boy Buntair zis morning."

"What?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"I zink zat Buntair is a verree good boy—"

"I hardly agree, monsieur," said Mr. Quelch dryly. His eyes were fixed on the window, and he was still more surprised at Mossoo keeping out of sight while he was speaking.

"I zink verree mooch of zat boy Buntair. Ze ozzers vant him verree mooch to travel viz zem to Rookwood zis morning. I should be verree obliged if you would give me permission to tell him zat he is free zis morning, sair."

Mr. Quelch grunted.

He had been by no means pleased when he heard that Mossoo had let Bunter off detention. But that was a matter for Mossoo to decide. This was a matter for Mr. Quelch to decide—and he was quite decided about it.

"I regret that I cannot do as you request, Monsieur Charpentier," he answered. "Bunter is a very backward and lazy boy, and certainly cannot be excused lessons without a very good reason."

"Mais, monsieur, I zink—"

Mr. Quelch rose from the deckchair. He stepped to the window to look in at Mossoo while he answered him. Billy Bunter dropped promptly out of sight behind the study table.

"Really, Monsieur Charpentier—Why, where are you, sir?" Quelch stared blankly into the study. "What—what—Bless my soul! He is gone!"

There was no sign of Mossoo in the study; there was no sign of anybody, as Bunter was crouching behind the table.

Considerably puzzled, Mr. Quelch sat down in his chair again, wondering why the French master had departed so suddenly.

"Beast!" breathed Bunter.

Evidently there was nothing doing. The Greysfriars ventriloquist had ventriloquised in vain. He shook a fat fist at the window and rolled out of the study. From the passage window he had a view of the cricketers going down to the gates in a merry crowd.

"Beasts!" grunted Bunter.

And he rolled away dismally to Mr. Lascelles' class-room. He arrived there ten minutes late.

"Where have you been, Bunter?" rapped the maths master.

"I—I've been speaking to Mr. Quelch, sir," stammered Bunter. "That—that's what kept me late, sir."

Mr. Lascelles stared at Bunter. Quelch was the last man in the world to keep a fellow late for a class. And Bunter certainly could not explain the extraordinary way in which he had, indeed, been speaking to Quelch. The maths master picked up a cane.

"Bend over that form, Bunter."

"Oh lor'!"

Whack!

"Wow!"

"Now go to your place, Bunter."

"Ow! Wow!"

Bunter went to his place. He had maths with Lascelles, and after maths with Lascelles came English literature with Quelch; while Harry Wharton & Co. were speeding away in the booming express for Rookwood. It was a beastly morning!

But there was still balm in Gilead. After English literature with Quelch came dinner. Life, after all, was worth living!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Rookwood Match!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. arrived bright and cheery at Rookwood. They were rather surprised not to see Jimmy Silver among the Rookwood men who greeted them.

Third school was going on, and the hapless Jimmy had had to go in with the Fourth. Valentine Mornington was to skipper the team in Jimmy's absence, but Jimmy's place had not been filled. The Rookwood cricketers were clinging to the hope that something might yet be done. It was easy for the visitors to see that something untoward had happened, and they were not long in learning what it was.

"Jimmy's out of it," Arthur Edward Lovell explained. "He was rather an ass—"

"It wasn't Jimmy's fault, fathead!" said Raby.

"That idiot Muffin—" said Newcome.

"But what's happened?" asked Harry Wharton. "Not ill, I hope?"

"Oh, no; detention!" said Lovell.

"What rotten luck!"

"It's raining detentions!" said Bob Cherry. "I got detention for to-day, but I got off."

"I hope Jimmy will," said Mornington. "But our beak is a bit of a Tartar. Jimmy wrecked his study window with a cricket ball in break. It was a pure accident, of course—"

"Accidents will happen!" grinned Bob.

"Dalton's going to speak to the Head after lunch—the beak is always a bit

Read Frank Richards' School Stories

Every Week in the Ranger



TWENTY POUNDS REWARD!

for finding some valuable loot hidden in Middlemoor Wood by a burglar. Great is the rivalry at Grimsdale School to earn that reward. Fritz von Splitz covets it—to buy himself endless supplies of tuck! Jim Dainty would like it—to pay for some damage he has done at the school! Ginger Rawlinson desires it—finding the loot would be an honour for Redmayes' House. But who finds the missing swag and gets the reward? The answers are in this week's six-star-story issue of the

RANGER Every Saturday **2^d**

better-tempered after lunch," explained Morny. "Dicky Dalton will get him off if he can. If he can't, Jimmy's out of it for the day. Anyhow, he can't show up in the first innings."

"That's rather rotten!" said Harry. "The rottenfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sympathetically.

"Well, if we bat first we'll try to keep you busy, and give Jimmy a chance to take his knock before the end," said Mornington. "And if we field we'll put in a sub for Jimmy—what?"

"Right as rain!" said Harry. "Only we want his bowling," said Tommy Dodd. "Still, it can't be helped, and we'd better get going."

And as it evidently could not be helped, the cricketers got going. Harry Wharton won the toss, and elected to bat on a perfect pitch. The Rook-

wooders went into the field, a substitute taking the place of the missing man.

In the Fourth Form Room, Jimmy Silver was not feeling happy, and there was no doubt that he gave more thought to the game beginning on Little Side than to the instructions of Mr. Dalton. But Dicky Dalton was a sportsman, and he left Jimmy alone during that class, quite in sympathy with the feelings of the junior skipper.

Harry Wharton opened the innings for Greyfriars, with the Bounder at the other end. The Greyfriars men were well aware of Jimmy Silver's wonderful powers in the bowling line, and some of them had rather wondered how they would stand up to it. It was, in a way, a relief not to have that deadly bowler to face. Nevertheless, they felt keenly for the Rookwooders, and certainly they would, as good sportsmen, rather have

seen "Uncle James" of Rookwood in his place on the cricket field. And how sorely the Rookwooders missed Jimmy was soon very clear.

Mornington and Tommy Dodd were good men with the leather, Conroy and Erroll were good, but none of them was a patch on Jimmy Silver. And the Greyfriars batting was excellent—and needed the best man at Rookwood to handle it. The Bounder, who had been in great form all through the season, was in tremendous form to-day—and Wharton was at his best. The two of them proceeded to knock up runs in great style.

The score stood at fifty when Morny got the Greyfriars skipper's wicket. Bob Cherry took Wharton's place, and proceeded to put up some mighty hitting.

(Continued on next page.)



"Umpire's" store of knowledge is at the disposal of all cricket fans. Address your queries to him, c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farrington Street, London, E.C.4., and then look for a reply in this regular weekly feature.

GETTING the batsmen out! That seems to be the job of the moment, judging by the letters the post-man leaves me each morning. First of all, I have to express regret, because I am going to disappoint some readers. I have had at least three letters asking me, roughly, the same question. "Please, Mr. Umpire, will you tell us how to bowl 'shooters'?" The short, crisp answer to those correspondents is that there is no definite known way of bowling "shooters"—those deliveries which, instead of rising to normal height, go skidding almost along the ground.

I am going to say this—and I have no hesitation about it. If there was some way of bowling, at will, a ball which, while going at a good pace would refuse to rise from the ground after pitching, no county cricket match would last two days, much less three. I know that there are "shooters" bowled in first-class cricket from time to time. Early this season at Lord's I saw several Sussex men out to deliveries from G. O. Allen which kept very low indeed. But the "shooter" is really due to some freak of the wicket, not to some uncanny art on the part of the bowler.

Of course, the bowler who can impart what is called top spin to the ball stands a better chance of seeing it go through low. The short-stature bowler, and the bowler with a round-arm delivery, can also keep the ball lower. But the definite "shooter" cannot be bowled at will.

I repeat that this statement may disappoint some of my readers who were looking forward to gathering a bag of cheap wickets with this type of delivery, but the plain truth must be told. And when you see a case of a batsman being bowled with a ball which shoots along the ground off the pitch, remember that if the score book were really truthful it would put down a verdict something after this style: "Bowled by a fluke."

ACCURACY BRINGS SUCCESS!

FAST bowling is in fashion again, and I want to talk to you for a little while on this subject, because I shall reply to several readers in doing so. By all means go in for fast bowling, if you feel like it, but remember that the short cut to real success with fast bowling is not by pace alone; it is by accuracy combined with pace. Therein is the Larwood secret. I have talked to many of the players who went to Australia for the recent Tests. They have all told me that Larwood out there was bowling faster than he had ever done; probably as fast as any bowler has ever done. Each of those colleagues of Larwood, however, emphasised that it was the amazing accuracy which brought him so much success.

This fact should give us the first tip.

Once you start trying to bowl so fast that you lose control of the pitch of the ball, then your analysis will inevitably begin to suffer. Try to bowl only at such a pace which permits you to retain your accuracy.

I have a very pathetic note from a Carshalton reader who tells me that he can't keep them straight. I am certain this is a case of trying to bowl too fast. There is only one cure for lack of accuracy, and that is practice.

There may be other lesser reasons for lack of accuracy. For instance, there is the fact that many bowlers do not take as much care of the run to the wicket as they should do. All the bowlers of pace I know—the successful ones, that is—measure out their run with the utmost care, and don't vary the length of the run at all. This means that they are always in a particular swing with the body when they reach the wicket to deliver the ball.

It has often occurred to me to wish that at cricket schools more attention was paid to this matter of the bowler's running. I see lots of fellows in first-class county cricket whose run up prior to bowling is not nearly so "scientific" as it should be,

I notice some fast bowlers, taking a long run, almost stopping in the middle of that run. What a waste of energy! If a fast bowler taking a long run can hesitate in the middle of that run, then I suggest that he could start his run from the spot where he hesitated, get the same effect, and save himself so many steps per ball.

BOWLING TO THE FIELD!

A READER at Benfleet asks me if I think thirteen yards too long a run for him. The reply is no, unless he can get the same effect with a shorter run. I have to say to this reader that spiked boots are considered to be absolutely essential to a fast bowler. Rubber without spikes cannot possibly give the desired grip, and shoes do not give the support to the ankles which the fast bowler really needs. This particular reader is worried because he is not bowling all the time at his fastest. He declares that his slower ball is being hit and his average spoilt in consequence.

If that slower ball is invariably hit to the boundary, then surely the explanation is that in slowing down slightly the bowler loses the length. Stick at it. Don't try to bowl too fast. Arrange your run so that you are all in—body as well as arms—at the moment of delivery.

I have stressed the point that the bowler's run should be kept at a definite length. This does not mean that the ball need always be delivered from the same spot. Here is a tip which all bowlers might take to heart. While keeping the length of the run the same, it pays occasionally to vary the pace from which the ball is delivered. The bowler bowling over the wicket should at times deliver the ball when he is more to the left of the wicket. The batsman may quite likely be deceived by the different angles at which the ball comes to him.

There is another point about fast bowling, and that is bowling to the field.

Don't forget that there are certain slip fielders who are placed in positions for the express purpose of making catches. The ball which "runs" away to the off a little is the one which is most liable to bring about the batsman's dismissal when he gets the ball on the edge of the bat.

Aim all the time at the wicket, of course, but aim in such a way that the batsman can't with safety allow the ball to go past him. But also try to cultivate that ball which goes away as the batsman plays at it and is thus edged into the slips.

"UMPIRE."

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It was Smithy who went down next, to a catch in the field by Erroll. The Bounder did not look pleased as he came off. Johnny Bull took his place, and put in some steady batting, backing up Bob's more brilliant game with cheerful stolidity.

Bob was hitting far and wide. His comrades watched him from the pavilion with cheery faces. There was no doubt that Billy Bunter had done the side a service in getting Bob off his detention that day.

The Rookwooders were getting heaps of leather-chasing. Bob seemed impervious to every kind of ball; but the Rookwooders, at least, were of opinion that Jimmy Silver could have put "paid" to him. But Jimmy Silver was grinding Latin in the Fourth Form Room, and was not where he was so badly wanted. The score went up by jumps.

But the fielding was good, though the bowling was not strong. Wickets went down—though not Bob Cherry's. The score stood at 110 for six wickets when the bell rang for the dismissal of morning school, and a swarm of Rookwooders came down to the ground.

Ahead of them came Jimmy Silver, sprinting, in flannels. He had changed very quickly. He joined the Greyfriars fellows at the pavilion—warmly and sympathetically greeted by them.

"Hundred and ten for six!" said Jimmy, with his eye on the board. "Oh, my only summer hat!"

"Well, you're here now," said Harry Wharton. "Call that man off and pile in, old bean! I hope you'll get off this afternoon; but, anyhow, you're free to play till we knock off for lunch."

"Half an hour to play yet," said Johnny Bull encouragingly.

"And the playfulness of the esteemed and ridiculous Silver will be terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"You fellows are sportsmen," he said.

And the substitute gave up his place to the junior captain, and the faces of the Rookwood field brightened to see Uncle James in the ranks. It meant losing a wicket in their innings if Jimmy did not get off detention—and there was little hope of that, if any. But it was worth it to get Jimmy's bowling while it was available.

Bob Cherry was very carefully on his guard as Jimmy started to send the leather down. He stopped the first ball dead, and the second gave him a single, bringing Peter Todd to the batting end. And there was a cheer from Rookwood when the next ball spreadeagled Peter's wicket. Uncle James was not long in showing his value.

"Man in!" said Harry Wharton.

"Man in" was "man out" at the next ball. And the next man in was out to the next! A roar from a hundred Rookwood throats greeted the hat-trick by Uncle James.

Harry Wharton whistled.

"Good bowling!" he remarked.

"Bit of luck for us that that man's under detention this afternoon," remarked the Bounder. "We'd better hope that he won't get off, as Cherry did."

"I hope he will, all the same," answered Harry.

Hazeldene survived the last ball of the over, and then Bob Cherry got the bowling again from Mornington. In that over Bob added 12 to the score, bringing the total to 123. What was going to happen next was no secret, when Hazel had to face Jimmy Silver's bowling. Hazel went down at the

second ball, and Bob Cherry was "not out."

"All down for 123," said the captain of the Remove, as the field came off. "Jolly good; but if that man Silver had been on the field—h'm!"

"Let's all go to the Rookwood teak in a body and ask him to let the man off to beat us after lunch!" suggested the Bounder sarcastically.

"Oh, he wouldn't beat us!" said Harry cheerfully. "But I'd jolly well get him off if I could. It's rotten for Rookwood."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry clumped down his bat. "That man Silver's a coughdrop, isn't he? He's as good a bowler as you are, Inky."

"The goodfulness is preposterous!" agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Rotten luck for him to be detained this afternoon! Nobody to get him off, as Bunter did for me!" said Bob. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! I suppose you couldn't cut detention this afternoon, Silver?"

"We want to see you performing hat-tricks at our expense, you know," said the Bounder, still sarcastic.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"I'd thought of it," he said. "The Head's going to Latcham this afternoon, and won't be on the spot. But—"

"But Dicky Dalton will!" said Lovell.

"Yes—there's no chance! Rotten luck!" said Jimmy. "Still, Dicky may talk the Head over after lunch. There's just a chance."

It was a slim chance, but all the Rookwooders hoped that it would materialise. And the Greyfriars men, like the good sportsmen they were, hoped so, too.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Blows In!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

The Fistical Four of Rookwood, glanced round. It was after dinner, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were strolling near the gates, rather anxiously discussing the possibilities. Mr. Dalton had gone to speak to the Head once more. It was close on time for the cricket match to be resumed, and it was still uncertain whether Jimmy Silver would be able to bat for his side. Most of the cricketers were already gathering on the ground; but the Fistical Four were waiting to hear the verdict from Dicky Dalton. And then that fat voice hailed them, and they looked round to see a plump youth in a pair of big spectacles, who was a familiar if not a fascinating sight. It was Billy Bunter, of Greyfriars.

A taxi was standing at the gates. Billy Bunter had alighted therefrom. The taxi belonged to Latcham—and the Latcham driver had a rather grim expression on his face.

"That fat ass!" grunted Arthur Edward Lovell. "Come on!" Arthur Edward was too worried about the prospects of the cricket match to have any inclination to bother with Billy Bunter.

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Bunter.

"Oh, let's see what he wants!" said Jimmy Silver good-naturedly. And he walked over to Bunter.

His comrades followed him.

"That'll be six shillings!" the Latcham driver was saying.

"I say, Silver, old chap," said Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Rookwood Fourth. "My friends are here, I suppose?"

"The Greyfriars men are here," answered Jimmy.

"I want to see one of them. You see," said Bunter confidentially, "coming away in rather a hurry, I left my money in my study."

"Oh!" said Jimmy. Raby bestowed a wink on Newcome, who grinned. The Rookwooders had seen Bunter before, and were not unacquainted with his manners and customs.

"Had just enough to take my railway ticket," said Bunter airily; "and as I had to take a taxi from Latcham, I'm rather stumped. One of the fellows will lend me six shillings, if you call him."

"Oh!" said Jimmy again.

"Or I dare say you could," said Bunter. "No need to keep the man waiting. I dare say he'd rather get off."

"I ain't going without my fare!" remarked the Latcham driver. Apparently there had been some little argument already. It was one of Billy Bunter's happy ways to take chances like this.

"The fact is, Silver, old chap, I'd be obliged if you'd lend me the few shillings," said Bunter. "I'll send along a postal order to-morrow, of course."

"Oh, wait a bit," said Arthur Edward Lovell sarcastically. "I'll cut down to the ground and tell your friends—and there'll be a rush. I can see them falling over one another to get here first!"

Raby and Newcome chuckled.

"Oh, cheese it, you men!" said Jimmy hurriedly, and he dived his hand into his pocket. Jimmy was good-nature itself, and he had a very strong doubt whether there would be a "rush" of the Greyfriars men to lend Billy Bunter the required sum. Billy Bunter was rather doubtful, too, and he was greatly relieved when Jimmy Silver handed over the six shillings.

The Latcham man, duly paid, grunted and drove away. Billy Bunter rolled in with the Rookwooders.

"How's the game gone?" he asked.

"Greyfriars batted before lunch," answered Jimmy—"123 for the innings. Our knock's just going to begin."

"Well, look here, come and have a ginger-pop before you begin," said Billy Bunter, blinking round at the school shop. "My treat!"

As Billy Bunter had not been able to pay for the taxi from Latcham, it was a little difficult to see how he was going to pay for the ginger-pop.

"Time you saw Dalton, Jimmy," said Lovell.

"Yes, I'd better cut off."

The four juniors walked towards the House. Bunter blinked after them, and then rolled after them. Bunter was rather keen on ginger-pop, after the railway journey to Rookwood. He was dry.

"I say, you fellows—" he squeaked.

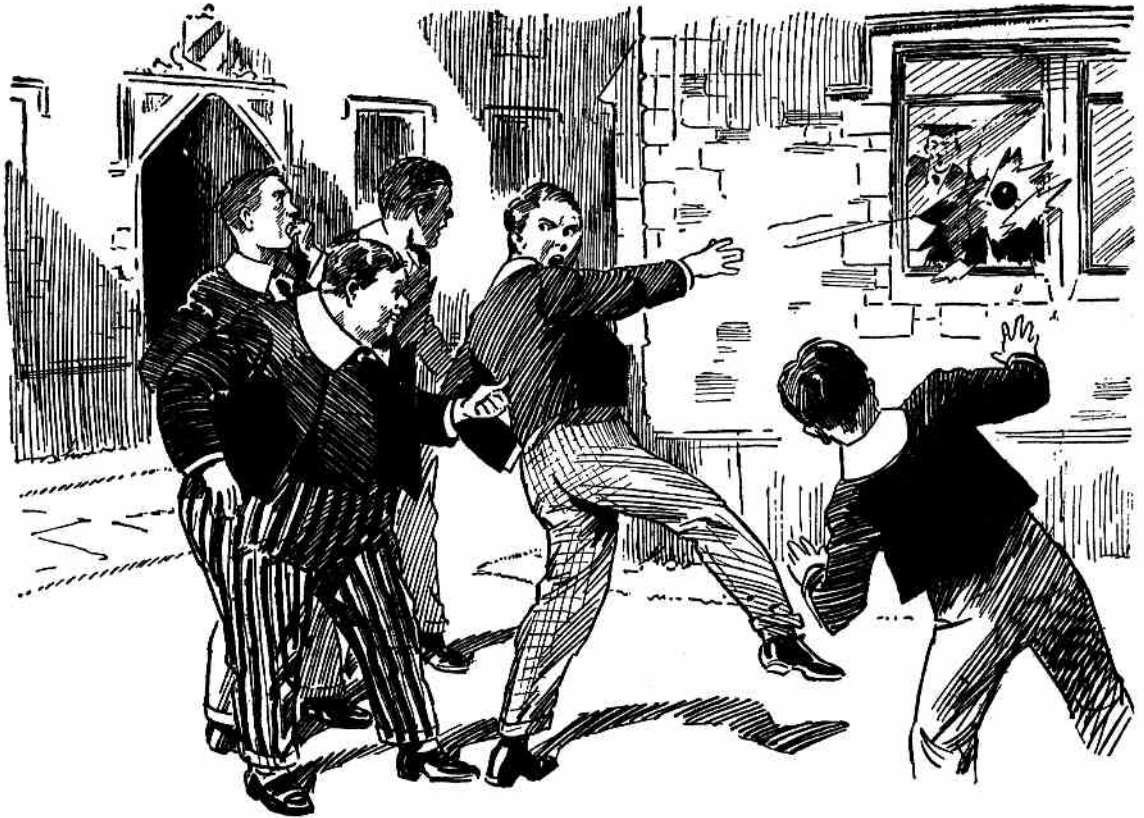
Jimmy Silver & Co. went into the House. Billy Bunter rolled in after them. But though the Rookwooders were quite polite fellows, they were not giving Bunter any further heed. Mr. Dalton was coming away from the Head's study, and they met him at the corner of the passage.

Dicky Dalton's face was grave.

The Rookwood juniors, eyeing him, read that there was no hope. Dr. Chisholm had not relented.

Billy Bunter blinked at him impatiently. He did not see any reason for wasting time talking to a beak. He wanted to get to the subject—the important subject—of ginger-pop! However, even Bunter realised that he had to shut up while a beak was speaking.

"I am sorry, Silver," said Mr. Dalton. "I have spoken to Dr.



Quite unintentionally the ball left Jimmy Silver's hand as Tubby Muffin poked him in the ribs. "Oooogh!" gasped Jimmy. "What——" Crash! Smash! The juniors gazed in horror at the Head's window. One pane had a fearful gash in it, and at the gap appeared the severe and startled face of Dr. Chisholm.

Chisholm, and he declines to alter his decision. You must go into the Form-room."

Jimmy drew a deep breath. "I—I believe that Dr. Chisholm is going out this afternoon, sir!" he faltered.

"Yes—he is going to Latcham," answered Mr. Dalton, raising his eyebrows, as if surprised by the remark.

"I—I mean, sir, as—as my Form master, you could let me off detention——"

Jimmy Silver did not finish that suggestion. Mr. Dalton's frown cut him short.

"I am afraid you are speaking without reflection, Silver," said the Fourth Form master severely. "Kindly say no more."

"Sorry, sir!" stammered Jimmy. "But——"

"I quite understand your feelings," said Mr. Dalton, more kindly. "But without direct instructions from your headmaster, I could not, of course, cancel your detention. There is nothing to be done, Silver."

With that, Mr. Dalton walked away to his study, where he had a pile of papers to correct for his Form that afternoon. The Rookwooders stood in a dismayed group, and Billy Bunter blinked at them curiously. The trouble in their clouded faces was so deep that even the fat Owl forbore to come to the important subject of ginger-pop.

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver at last, though he was far from smiling himself. "What can't be helped, can't be helped, and that's that."

"It's rotten!" groaned Lovell. "The game's a goner!"

"It's not lost till it's won!" said Jimmy.

"You got detention, Silver?" asked Bunter.

"Yes," said Jimmy briefly.

"Rotten luck! Bob Cherry got a detention to-day and I got him off," said Bunter. "Wish I could do the same for you, old chap."

"I wish you could, Bunter," said Jimmy, with a faint smile.

"Why not cut, if your beak's going out?" suggested Bunter brightly.

"You heard what Dalton said! He will be in his study this afternoon—and he can see the cricket ground from his window."

"Nothing doing," said Lovell. "Let's go down and tell the fellows."

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

He was sympathetic—really sympathetic. Jimmy had saved him from quite a painful argument with the Latcham taxi-driver. And he rather liked Jimmy! Still, he was dry, after his journey, and ginger-pop was ginger-pop!

"Oh, don't bother!" said Lovell crossly.

"Oh, really, Lovell——"

"What is it, Bunter?" asked Jimmy patiently.

"Well, the fact is, fellow's thirsty, and if there's any ginger-pop going——" said Bunter.

Jimmy smiled.

"You know your way to my study," he said. "Trot along and help yourself."

"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter.

Not sorry to be relieved of William George Bunter's company, Jimmy went down to the cricket ground with his friends. The rest of the team were there, with the Greyfriars men.

"Any luck?" asked Mornington.

"None!"

"Oh, rotten!"

"Hard cheese!" said Harry Wharton.

"It's really rotten, Silver! Then you're out of it?"

"Right out!" said Jimmy, as cheerfully as he could. "I'll see you started before I cut in; I've got time for that."

Mornington and Erroll went to the wickets to open for Rookwood; and Harry Wharton & Co. went into the field.

Jimmy Silver stood watching them for a few minutes, with his friends at the pavilion. Then, slowly and rather heavily, he walked back to the House. It was time for his detention; in fact, he was already a few minutes late for it.

Billy Bunter met him in the doorway, cheery and refreshed. A tall, severe-featured gentleman was in the offing; but the short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not observe the headmaster of Rookwood.

"Hard luck, Silver, old man," he said. "I say, your beak must be rather a beast not to let you off——"

"Shut up!" breathed Jimmy hastily.

"Eh!"

"Silver!"

It was Dr. Chisholm's shrill voice, and Bunter blinked round at him through his big spectacles. The Head of Rookwood took no notice whatever of the fat Owl of Greyfriars, though he had certainly heard his remark.

"Silver! Why are you not in the Form-room?"

"I—I'm just going, sir!"

"Indeed!" said Dr. Chisholm dryly.

"I will take you there myself, Silver!"

"Very well, sir!" Jimmy hesitated,

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(Continued from page 13.)

and then tried a last shot. "If—if you could—could let me off this afternoon, sir—"

"I am surprised that you should make such a request, Silver! I certainly have no intention of doing anything of the kind!"

"It's a cricket match, sir—"
"You need say no more, Silver! Follow me!"

Jimmy Silver followed his headmaster. Billy Bunter blinked after them through his big spectacles.

"Beast!" he murmured.
And Bunter rolled down to the cricket ground, thoughtfully munching toffee that he had found in Jimmy Silver's study.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Brilliant Bunter!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH was bowling to Mornington.

Harry Wharton & Co., in the field, were watchful for chances. But the Rookwood batting was good; and runs were going up. Plenty of Rookwood fellows had gathered round the field, now that classes were over for the day, and the chief topic among them, at present, was Jimmy Silver's hard luck—and the consequent hard luck of the Rookwood side.

Arthur Edward Lovell watched the innings with a gloomy brow. He had a distant view of Dr. Chisholm, going out, after placing Jimmy in detention; the Head was safe off the scene.

He had thought of the possibility of Jimmy "cutting!" But there was nothing in it. Obviously, Mr. Dalton would spot him—and though Dicky Dalton had a deep sympathy with the cricketers, he was the man to do his duty. There was no chance of escaping observation; he could see the game from his study windows.

And he was too keen a cricketer not to give it a glance now and then, howsoever busy he was with his papers.

Morny and Erroll were making a splendid stand; but Jimmy's wicket was wanted; and still more was Uncle James wanted to bowl in the Greyfriars second knock.

The situation was absolutely "rotten," and Lovell was feeling gloomy and grumpy; and the sight of Billy Bunter's fat face, with a fat grin on it, had an irritating effect on him.

He glared at Bunter. What there was to grin at, was known only to Bunter. All the Greyfriars men were quite concerned about the Rookwood disaster—except, apparently, Bunter! Bunter was grinning from ear to ear. Had Bunter been a Rookwooder, Arthur Edward would have kicked him. As it was, he glared.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter favoured Lovell and Raby and Newcome with his fat grin. "I say, the old jossler's gone out!"

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"Who?" ejaculated Raby.

"Your beak, you know."

The three Rookwooders looked expressively at Bunter. They were deeply wrathful with their beak, who, in their opinion, was exercising undue severity at the wrong moment. But they did not like hearing him referred to as an "old jossler," especially by a fellow who did not belong to Rookwood. Arthur Edward Lovell considered whether, after all, he might kick Bunter.

"Chance for Jimmy!" went on Bunter, happily unaware of Lovell's reflections.

"What do you mean?" grunted Newcome.

"I've got a wheeze."

"What the thump do you mean?" growled Lovell. There was no possible way, so far as he could see, of getting Uncle James off detention. And certainly the fat Owl of Greyfriars did not look like the fellow to solve a problem that beat everyone else.

"I mean what I say," answered Bunter. "I've got a wheeze! I rather fancy I could work the oracle!"

"Rot!" grunted Newcome.

"Don't be an ass!" said Lovell.

Bunter sniffed.

"Oh, all right! If you don't want him here—"

"Look here, what are you driving at?" exclaimed Lovell impatiently.

"Jimmy can't cut, if that's what you mean—Dicky Dalton would spot him at once, and come along and hook him away!"

"I've thought it out," said Bunter calmly, "and if you fellows like to back me up, I can wangle it. But suit yourselves."

Lovell & Co. stared at him. So far as they could see, the situation was hopeless. But they were rather in the position of drowning men ready to catch at straws. Anyhow, it did no harm to hear what Bunter had to suggest.

"Well, what's the big idea?" grunted Lovell. "If there's any way of Jimmy cutting, without Dalton spotting him, I'd be jolly glad to hear it, for one."

"Can't talk here," said Bunter.

"Come round the pav."

Lovell hesitated; but he nodded. The three were not likely to be wanted for some time. Morny and Erroll seemed set at the wickets; and Dodd and Cook and Doyle were next on the batting list. The three followed the grinning Owl of Greyfriars.

Out of hearing of the crowd of fellows, they stopped.

"Well?" barked Lovell.

Bunter's fat grin still irritated him—even if the Owl of Greyfriars had a "wheeze," which he strongly doubted. His opinion of Bunter was that the fat fellow from Greyfriars was an absolutely fatuous ass. If he knew enough to go in when it rained, that was about all he did know, in Arthur Edward Lovell's opinion.

"What's the stunt?" asked Raby.

"I'll tell you," grinned Bunter cheerily. "I tried it on at Greyfriars this morning to get off with the team—but it didn't work—old Quelch was too tough, blow him! You see, I'm a ventriloquist—"

"A which?" ejaculated Lovell.

"Ventriloquist!"

"What the thump! Do you think we want to hear ventriloquist tricks now?" snorted Lovell. "Let's get back, you men."

"Oh, don't be an ass," said Bunter. "What I mean is, I can imitate any man's voice, so that you would think it was the chap speaking. Well, the old jossler's gone off for the afternoon, see? He won't know! Suppose Dalton thought that old Chisholm had changed

his mind, and told him to let Jimmy off, what?"

"Suppose—suppose Dalton thought—" repeated Lovell blankly. "Are you wandering in your mind? How could Dalton think anything of the kind?"

"He's in his study, ain't he?"

"Eh? Yes."

"Well, suppose you manage to sneak the key—"

"The—the key—"

"Yes—and lock him in—"

"Lock Dicky Dalton in his study!" gasped Lovell.

"Yes. Then if old Chisholm came along to speak to him, he would have to speak through the door; if the door was locked and the key gone!"

"Eh?"

"So he wouldn't see who spoke—"

"He—he—he wouldn't see who spoke—" repeated Lovell like a fellow in a dream.

"And I'm outside the door, imitating that squeak that your old jossler of a beak calls a voice—"

"Great pip!"

"And I pull Dalton's leg, see?"

"You—you—pip-pip-pull his leg—" said Lovell dazedly.

"He thinks it's old Chisholm speaking—"

"Oh crikey!"

"And thinks the old jossler has told him to let Jimmy off—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"And—and there you are!" said Bunter brightly.

The three gazed at him. Bunter, blinking at them, seemed to expect an outburst of enthusiasm at that brilliant wheeze! But there was no outburst of enthusiasm. They just gazed at him—as if they wondered whether he was out of his senses—as perhaps they did!

"Well, what do you think of the idea?" demanded Bunter.

"Think of it!" gasped Lovell, finding his voice. "I think it's time your people put you in a home for idiots!"

"Or a lunatic asylum!" suggested Raby.

"Think I couldn't do it?" sneered Bunter.

"Think? I know you couldn't, fathead!"

"I've heard the old jossler cackle. I could do his cackle so that you would think he was cackling—"

"Rats!"

"Lovell!" came a sharp, shrill voice. "What is this? How dare you use such an expression, Lovell!"

It was the sharp, shrill voice of the headmaster of Rookwood. Lovell spun round in amazement. He expected to see Dr. Chisholm just behind him. To his intensified amazement, there was nothing behind him but the pavilion.

"Why—what—" gasped Lovell.

"It's the Head," stammered Raby.

"But where—"

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

"Where on earth—" stuttered Newcome, staring round blankly. They had heard their headmaster's voice, but there was no sign of their headmaster.

"He, he, he!"

"What are you cackling at, you fat duffer?" hooted Lovell. "Look here, did you see Dr. Chisholm—"

"I saw him go out half an hour ago, chucked Bunter.

"He's come back!"

"He hasn't!"

"I heard him, you ass!"

"You heard me, you fathead!"

"What?" yelled the three together.

"You?"

"Little me!" grinned Bunter. "That's my wonderful ventriloquism. He, he, he!"

The three gazed at him.

"You—you—you did that!" gurgled Lovell. "Rot! I'd swear it was the Head's toot—think I don't know the Head's toot?"

"He, he, he!"

"Do it again, then!" said Raby.

"Raby! What do you mean, sir? Why are you not in the Form-room, Raby?"

It was Dr. Chisholm's sharp, shrill voice; but this time it proceeded unmistakably from William George Bunter. They gazed at him spellbound. The Greyfriars ventriloquist had convinced them!

"Well, my only summer hat!" gasped Lovell.

"How's that?" came a shout from the field.

"Out!"

Erroll's wicket was down. Tommy Dodd, of the Modern Fourth at Rookwood went on in his place. But Lovell and Raby and Newcome hardly noticed. They were fairly buzzing with excitement now. All their attention was given to Bunter. Bunter had convinced them. Bunter's brilliant wheeze filled their thoughts. The question was, would it work? And that question was going to be put to the test.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Leg-Pullers!

"YOU rotter!"

"You sweep!"

"Take that!"

"And you take that!"

"Wow!"

"Oh, you rotter! I'll smash you!"

Mr. Richard Dalton, master of the Rookwood Fourth, frowned darkly. He was sitting in his study, busy at a pile of papers. That sudden altercation under his study window had a disturbing effect on him.

The window was wide open. Sitting facing it, Mr. Dalton had a view of the crowded cricket ground, and his eyes frequently wandered in that direction. His thoughts, too, wandered to the junior who was sitting in the lonely Form-room at a dreary task. He was sorry for Jimmy Silver—sorry for Jimmy's comrades.

That, however, made no difference to his duty. Had he spotted Jimmy cutting detention, certainly he would have marched him into the House again at once. He had his chief's instructions to carry out, whatever his own personal views and feelings on the subject.

But he forgot the junior under detention and the cricket match as that outburst of wrath and excitement came under his window.

He heard both the voices clearly—one was Raby's and the other was Newcome's. The two fellows were chums, but now they were engaged in a fierce and desperate scrap under their Form-master's window. It was surprising, especially as both of them should have been on Little Side, waiting their turn to bat for Rookwood.

"Take that, you rotter!"

"Ow! My eye!"

Thump! Thump! Punch! Scuffle!

Frowning, Mr. Richard Dalton rose from his table and stepped to the window. He put his head out, and looked down on the two juniors below.

"Raby! Newcome!" he rapped out.

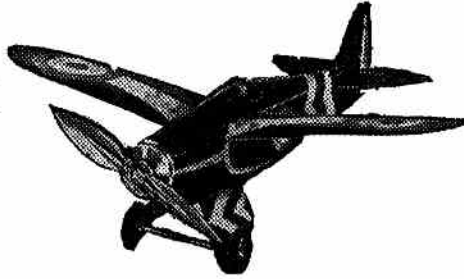
Raby and Newcome, locked in a fierce grapple, were struggling wildly, and seemed too excited to heed him. Why two close chums had fallen out to such an extent was rather a mystery. But they seemed to be desperately in earnest.

(Continued on next page.)

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"Raby!" shouted Mr. Dalton. "Newcome! Cease this at once! How dare you fight in the quadrangle!"

Mr. Dalton, as he stood at the window addressing the juniors outside, naturally had his back to the door of his study.

He was quite unconscious of the fact that that door silently opened, and that the excited face of Arthur Edward Lovell looked in.

Lovell gave one glance at Mr. Dalton's back. Then his hand shot round the door, and extracted the key from the inside of the lock.

The door closed again without a sound.

Lovell slipped the key silently into the outside of the lock, and turned it softly. Then he drew it out, put it into his pocket, and walked away, grinning.

Meanwhile, Raby and Newcome, apparently hearing at last the angry voice from the study window, separated.

They stood panting, and glaring at one another.

Mr. Dalton stared down at them, with a knitted brow.

"How dare you fight," he rapped out, "under my very window!"

"Oh, sorry, sir!" gasped Raby. "I—I—I—"

"I—I—I—" stammered Newcome.

"What is the cause of this quarrel?" demanded Mr. Dalton. "What are you disputing about? Why are you not on the cricket ground?"

He was puzzled as well as angry. But the two juniors had no intention of enlightening him. Certainly they could not explain to Mr. Dalton that the fight under his window had been staged to draw his attention while Lovell abstracted the key of his study and locked him in!

"Oh, it's really nothing, sir!" stammered Newcome. "I—I hope I didn't hurt you, Raby?"

"Oh, that's all right!" said Raby. "I—I got a bit excited! I—I'm sorry if—if we disturbed you, sir!"

"Certainly you disturbed me," snapped Mr. Dalton, "and you will take a hundred lines each for fighting in the quadrangle!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"Let there be no more of this!" said Mr. Dalton. "If this quarrel is renewed, I shall give you both a detention!"

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"Go back to the cricket ground, and behave yourselves!" said the master of the Fourth sternly.

"Yes, sir!" said the two juniors meekly.

And they departed. Richard Dalton returned to his table and sat down to his papers again, certainly without the remotest suspicion that he was now locked in his study and that the key was gone. That was a discovery that he was to make later.

At a safe distance from the study window, Raby and Newcome exchanged a joyful grin. Round a corner, which hid them from that window, they met Arthur Edward Lovell. Lovell's face was irradiated with grins. He tapped his pocket, where a study doorkey jingled.

"All right?" breathed Raby.

"Right as rain!" chuckled Lovell.

"And Dicky?" said Newcome.

"Locked in, though he doesn't know it yet!" chortled Lovell.

"Oh, good egg! Now for that fat bouncer Bunter!"

"Lovell!" Towle of the Rookwood

Modern Fourth came panting up. "Lovell! You here, you ass? You're wanted!"

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"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Lovell. "Don't say there's four men down!"

"Buck up, fathead! What have you wandered off for? Four down for 40—and you're keeping the field waiting!" yelled Towle. "That blessed nigger's mopped up Doddy and Cook and Doyle!"

"Carry on, you men!" gasped Lovell to Raby and Newcome.

And he raced away for the cricket field. In his keenness to carry out that remarkable scheme for getting Jimmy Silver into the game, Arthur Edward had almost forgotten the game itself. Instead of being on the spot for his innings, he had had to be fetched. Harry Wharton & Co., in the field, were wondering why on earth next man did not come in.

Lovell arrived, breathless, at the pavilion. He jumped into his pads, grabbed his bat, and gasped down to the waiting wicket. Vernon-Smith went on to bowl to him; but Lovell, breathless as he was, contrived to hold the Bouncer's bowling. Mornington was still going strong, and seemed set for the innings.

Meanwhile, Raby and Newcome carried on. They joined Billy Bunter in the House. He was waiting for them in the junior day-room, deserted on a half-holiday. Sitting on the table, Bunter was slowly and methodically travelling through a bag of bullseyes.

"Ready, old bean?" said Raby, very amicably.

Really, the chums of Rookwood did not think a great deal of Billy Bunter. But if that fat fellow could "work the oracle" and wangle Jimmy Silver out of detention, he was a man whom they delighted to honour—for the time, at least. And they had great hopes now. Indeed, now that they had succeeded in locking Mr. Dalton in his study, it seemed something like a "cert."

"Get on with it, old chap!" said Newcome.

Billy Bunter nodded. "Wait till I've finished these bullseyes!" he said.

"Look here, we're wanted on the cricket ground—we're next in," said Raby. "We ought to be there now! Buck up, old man!"

"I say, you fellows, I think—"

"Look here, you're not losing your nerve?" exclaimed Newcome, in alarm.

"No fear! But I think—"

"Well, what, then?" asked Raby impatiently.

"I think I'd like a ginger-pop. I'm rather dry, you know, after eating these bullseyes! I fancy I should ventriloquise better after a ginger-pop!"

Raby and Newcome exchanged a glance, and breathed hard. All their hopes were bound up in Billy Bunter, but they were strongly tempted to collar him, and jam the bag of bullseyes down his podgy back.

"Look here, there's no time to lose!"

"That's all right! You get me a ginger-pop! Lots of time while I finish these bullseyes!"

"You silly owl—"

"What?"

"I—I mean, all right!" gasped Raby.

The ginger-pop was duly forthcoming.

Billy Bunter washed down the bullseyes with it. Then he announced that he was ready. From the window Raby had an anxious eye on the cricket ground. He was next on the list after Lovell.

"I'd better cut!" he said. "You carry on, Newcome!"

"Right-ho!"

Raby hurried down to the cricket. It was just as well, for Arthur Edward Lovell was caught in the slips by Peter Todd as he arrived there, Raby was

wanted. But Billy Bunter, having disposed of both bullseyes and ginger-pop, was ready for action at last, and Arthur Newcome led him away to the door of Mr. Dalton's study.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

His Master's Voice!

TAP! Mr. Dalton, resting from his pile of papers, was looking from his open window at the cricket match going on in the distance when that tap came at the door of his study. He had seen Lovell caught out by Toddy of Greyfriars, and Raby take his place at the wicket. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was sending the ball down to Raby, and Mr. Dalton, who had already noticed the class of the nabob at bowling, was wondering what was going to happen to Raby. But he turned and looked at the door instead as the tap came.

The door-handle turned, as if the newcomer, outside, desired to enter after tapping. But the door did not open.

"Come in!" called out Mr. Dalton, rather surprised.

"Mr. Dalton, please open the door!" came a sharp, shrill voice that Mr. Dalton knew well—or, at all events, fancied that he knew.

If it was not the voice of Dr. Chisholm, headmaster of Rookwood School, it was twin-brother to Dr. Chisholm's voice.

Richard Dalton started. He knew that the Head had gone to Latham that afternoon, and he was not aware that the great man had returned to the school unexpectedly early. As a matter of fact, the great man hadn't.

He jumped up from his table in a hurry.

"Is that you, sir?" he exclaimed.

"Why is your door locked?" came the sharp voice, in snapping tones. "Really, Mr. Dalton—"

"But it is not locked, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, in astonishment.

"What? What? It does not open!" Mr. Dalton jumped to the study door.

He turned the handle and pulled. But the door remained fast.

He gazed at it in amazement.

"Please open your door, Mr. Dalton!" came the sharp voice. "I desire to speak to you—really, I do not desire to speak through a closed door! Why do you not open this door, sir?"

"Really, sir—I am sorry. It appears to be jammed—indeed, it seems to be locked," stammered Mr. Dalton. "I cannot understand—"

"Well, well, unlock it at once!"

"The key is not inside, sir! Someone must have removed the key!"

"What? What? Was not the key inside the lock?"

"I really did not notice when I entered the study, sir; but doubtless some thoughtless boy must have removed it for a foolish jest!"

"Absurd!"

"I am really very sorry, sir! But is not the key outside?" stammered the worried and confused young Form master.

"If the key were outside, Mr. Dalton, I could unlock the door myself!" snapped the sharp voice.

"Oh, certainly, sir—of course! But—but—"

"Absurd!"

Mr. Dalton, inside the study, stood, crimson and confused. Evidently, some unthinking junior had played a trick—locking him in his study without his knowledge! It was most unfortunate that such a trick should have been



"Raby!" shouted Mr. Dalton. "Newcome! Cease this at once! How dare you fight in the quadrangle?" Standing at the window addressing the juniors outside, Mr. Dalton was unconscious of the fact that the study door silently opened and that Lovell's hand shot round and extracted the key from the inside of the lock.

played, when the spirit moved the headmaster to come to his study to speak to him.

Had Mr. Dalton been able to see through solid oak—which, of course, he could not do—he would hardly have been able to believe his eyes. For, although Dr. Chisholm's unmistakable voice was speaking to him through the door, Dr. Chisholm was not in the passage outside.

A fat Greyfriars junior in big spectacles was there, grinning. And Newcome was watching Billy Bunter in amazement, almost in awe. If his own eyes had not been fixed on Bunter he would have believed that it was the Rookwood headmaster speaking! Obviously this little game was going to be a success! Billy Bunter, an egregious ass in everything else, was undoubtedly a great man in this peculiar line.

"Absurd!" repeated Bunter, in Dr. Chisholm's sharp, shrill tones, which seemed to come from him as naturally as his own fat voice was wont to do. "This is absurd, Mr. Dalton!"

"I am really sorry, sir!" stammered Mr. Dalton. "I had not the faintest idea that the door was locked! If you will kindly wait a few minutes, sir, I will drop from the window and enter the House—"

"Kindly do nothing of the sort! I have only a few words to say, and can say them here!" rapped the sharp voice. "After all, it is immaterial. I presume you can hear me?"

"Perfectly, sir!"

"I came to speak to you with reference to the boy Silver, Mr. Dalton. I have considered your observations on that subject."

"Yes, sir!"

"In the circumstances, I have decided that the boy's detention may be—er—remitted for this afternoon, in view of the fact that a cricket match is in progress.

"Very good, sir!" said Mr. Dalton,

his face brightening. He was exceedingly glad to hear those words from the headmaster of Rookwood.

"You will—er—inform Silver that he may go, Mr. Dalton?"

"I shall be very glad to do so, sir."

"Very good! That is all that I had to say to you, Mr. Dalton. I leave the matter in your hands."

There was a sound of receding footsteps in the passage. Mr. Dalton, with a very pleased expression on his face, crossed the study to the window. With the door locked, that was his only way out—easy enough to an active young man like Richard Dalton. There was not the faintest suspicion in his mind. He had orders, in the Head's own voice, to release Jimmy Silver from detention, and that he was going to do.

As he entered the House by the doorway, he passed two juniors—one a fat Greyfriars fellow in spectacles, the other a Rookwood junior in flannels—coming out. He hardly glanced at them. Certainly he was not likely to suspect that they had had anything to do with the instructions he had received through his locked study door.

"He, he, he!" gurgled Billy Bunter, as Mr. Dalton disappeared into the House.

Newcome grinned.

"It's worked!" he said.

Arthur Edward Lovell came up at a run.

"Man in, Newcome! Cut off! Has it worked?"

"Like a jolly old charm!" chuckled Newcome, and he ran off to the cricket.

Billy Bunter chortled.

"It's all right," he said. "Dalton got out of his window, and he's just gone into the House! He, he, he!"

"My only hat!" said Lovell. "You're a fat old prize-packet, Bunter, and no mistake!"

"I say, what about ginger-pop?"

"Wait a tick!"

Lovell scudded to Mr. Dalton's study window, and looked in. The room was

empty. Mr. Dalton was in the Form-room by that time. Lovell tossed the key into the study—rather glad to be rid of it. Then he rejoined Bunter:

"Come on!" he said, slipping his arm through Bunter's. And he led him away to the school shop.

Billy Bunter grinned expansively. There was ginger-pop for Bunter—lots of it! There was tuck for Bunter—stacks of it! Arthur Edward Lovell, just then, was feeling as if he could not do enough for Bunter. Willingly he would have rewarded Bunter with the total contents of the Rookwood School shop, had it been possible.

If the match was saved that day, it would be due to this fat man from Greyfriars—evidently a genuine sportsman, as he was helping to put the best cricketer at Rookwood against his own school! It did not occur to Lovell that Billy Bunter had not bestowed a single thought on the cricket match, or the winning thereof! It filled Lovell's mind, and he supposed that it filled Bunter's.

Bunter certainly had wanted to do Jimmy Silver a good turn! Still more, he had wanted to show what an awfully clever fellow he was! And, much more, he had wanted the gratitude of the Rookwooders to take exactly the form that it was taking—ginger-pop and jam tarts!

"Come on!" said Lovell. "We'd better get back to the cricket—Jimmy will be there now—"

"I think I'll have some more ginger-pop!"

"Well, I'd better cut—"

"I think I'll have some of those doughnuts!"

Lovell laughed.

"I'll leave you to it, if you don't mind," he said. "Put this down to me, Mrs. Kettle."

And Lovell cut off, leaving Billy Bunter happy and sticky and busy.

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THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Last Man In!

JIMMY SILVER groaned. Sitting alone in the dusky Rookwood Form-room, Uncle James of Rookwood was feeling rottener than he had ever felt before in his young life.

He could hear the shouts from the cricket field, and every now and then he went to the Form-room window to take a "squint" at the game.

He was taking a squint now.

He had not given a lot of attention to the Latin task that lay on his desk. He couldn't! He had given a lot of attention to the cricket, however. He had counted the men who had gone to the wickets. Morny's game was a pleasure to him to watch. But the other men had fallen fast. The Greyfriars bowling was good—their fielding was first-class.

Mornington looked like being not out; but the "tail" of the Rookwood side was being mown down like hay. Catches in the field seemed as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa. Ninth man had joined Morny, and it was Towle of the Fourth—and Jimmy expected to see his wicket go at any moment. And he groaned.

"H'm!"

A cough from the doorway answered his groan.

He spun round from the window, and coloured deeply, as he saw Mr. Dalton standing in the doorway of the Form-room.

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy.

Mr. Dalton smiled. Probably he had not expected to find the detained junior deeply and keenly engaged in his Latin task.

"I have good news for you, Silver," he said. "Dr. Chisholm has decided to cancel your detention for this afternoon."

Jimmy Silver jumped.

"Has he, sir?" he gasped.

"He has told me so," answered Mr. Dalton.

"I—I thought the Head had gone out, sir," stammered Jimmy.

"He has returned, Silver; and he has told me to cancel your detention. And I need not say that I am very pleased to do so," said Mr. Dalton, with a smile. "If your place in the team has been kept open—"

"Oh, yes, sir. I bowled a few overs this morning, after third school," said Jimmy eagerly. "I'm in time for last wicket, sir, if I can go."

Jimmy could hardly believe his good luck.

"You may go at once, Silver."

"Oh! Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Dalton, smiling, stood aside from the doorway, and Jimmy passed him like a streak of light. The Fourth Form master went in search of another key to his study. Jimmy Silver, little dreaming of the secret history of his release from detention, fairly flew down to the cricket ground.

His anticipations, with regard to Towle, were realised. That youth was already carrying an unused bat back to the pavilion. Jimmy arrived at the pavilion from the House as Lovell arrived from the tuckshop.

"Oh, here you are!" chuckled Lovell.

"I'm let off!" gasped Jimmy.

"Where's my bat? You've got it here? Where's my pads? I say, this is luck, isn't it?"

"Yes, rather! Worth Bunter's taxi fare from Latham!" grinned Lovell.

The strange remark mystified Jimmy Silver. But he had no time then to

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elucidate the mystery. He ran out to the wickets.

Mornington stared at him as he came. Morny, equally ignorant of the "secret history" of that eventful afternoon, had supposed that there was to be a wicket to the bad. His eyes almost popped as Jimmy Silver ran up.

"You!" he yelled.

"I'm let off!"

"Oh, what a bit of luck! Just in time!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry from the field. "You turning up, after all, Silver, old bean?"

"Yes, the beak's let me off!"

"Good man!"

"Graters!" exclaimed Harry Wharton heartily.

"The gratterfulness is terrific!"

"Bravo!"

Jimmy Silver grinned cheerily. There was no doubt that the Greyfriars men were sportsmen. They were heartily glad to see him there, though his presence undoubtedly meant that what had been as good as a certain victory was going to be turned into a hard fight to a finish.

The Rookwood score was not a happy one, so far. They were nine down for 60. The tail of the innings had been simply mowed down. But there was a sting in the tail now that Jimmy Silver was there to back up Morny's brilliant batting. Jimmy was a bowler, but he was a steady and reliable bat, though he could not put up fireworks, like Morny. He was a good man to have at the other end while a man like Morny put on the runs.

The innings took on a new lease of life.

A few minutes ago the Bounder had remarked that it was all over, bar shouting. Now the Greyfriars men needed their breath, not for shouting, but for leather-hunting.

Steady as a rock, Jimmy Silver kept his sticks up, keeping the innings alive while Morny sent the ball all over the field.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome, at the pavilion, grinned with glee. Jimmy's wicket was worth something—it was worth a good deal—but they were looking forward to his bowling in the Greyfriars second knock. There was going to be some more "mowing" then. And the visitors were going to be mown!

"This is real luck!" Erroll remarked to Lovell. "I never believed for a moment that the Beak would let Jimmy off."

"I fancy he didn't himself," chuckled Lovell.

"Eh, what? But he has!" said Erroll, staring. "You don't mean to say that Silver's out? Dalton—"

"No; that's all right. Dicky Dalton went and let him out," grinned Lovell.

"It's all right with Dicky Dalton. Hallo, that's a four! Hurrah!"

"Bravo, Morny!"

"I say, you fellows!" Happy and sticky, and loaded far beyond the Plimsoll line, Billy Bunter rolled up.

"I say, is Silver here?"

"Can't you see him batting?"

Bunter turned his big spectacles on the pitch.

"Oh, good! He, he, he! I say, you fellows, if Dalton knew—"

"Shut up!" whispered Lovell. "No need to tell the world!"

"Oh, really, Lovell! It's all right," said Bunter, blinking at him. "They can't whop a Greyfriars man here." That important consideration, evidently, had not escaped Billy Bunter's atten-

tion. "I say, jolly lucky for you men that I came over—what? You couldn't have pulled Dalton's leg without me."

"Who's been pulling Dalton's leg?" asked Tommy Dodd, of the Rookwood Modern Fourth, staring at Bunter.

Bunter chuckled.

"Oh, nobody!" he answered. "Better keep it dark, Lovell—what? He, he, he!"

"For goodness' sake, dry up!" murmured Raby.

"I'm not going to say anything," grinned Bunter. "Least said, soonest mended, you know! If Dalton got on to it—"

"Got on to what?" asked Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, nothing. He, he, he!"

"Hallo, they've got Morny!" exclaimed Erroll.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh held up the ball in a dusky hand. Mornington had given a chance at last, and the Nabob of Bhanipur had not missed it.

"All down for eighty-five!" said Lovell. "Nothing to write home about. But wait till Jimmy goes for them with the ball! Hat-tricks are going to be cheap!"

And the field came off.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough Luck!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH scowled.

His face, for a moment, was like a thundercloud.

It was really rough on the Bounder, though that was no excuse for the black scowl.

The Greyfriars fellows were taking their second knock. Smithy took the first over, with Harry Wharton at the other end. Jimmy Silver went on to bowl. The Rookwooders in the field and the crowd round the ground watched Jimmy, with bated breath. Great things were expected of Uncle James by his friends, and he did not disappoint them.

There was no doubt that Jimmy was an uncommonly deadly bowler, and on this particular day he was at the top notch of his form. The Bounder was as good as a bat as any man in the Remove eleven. He was watchful as a cat. Nevertheless, his leg stump went out of the ground, and there was a joyous gasp from Rookwood—and the blackest of scowls from Smithy. No batsman likes to be bowled first ball—and the Bounder had been going to do a lot of execution in that innings. But there it was—he was indubitably out, and he scowled at his wrecked wicket, regardless, for the moment, of the many eyes on him. His feelings were deep.

Slowly, as if he could hardly tear himself away, Vernon-Smith left the pitch.

"Rough luck, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry, passing him coming out.

Smithy did not answer; his feelings were too deep for speech. He contrived to clear the scowl from his face, but he was silent and morose as he joined the waiting men at the pavilion. Bob Cherry had a wary eye open as he faced the next ball. And he told the fellows afterwards that how it happened was a jolly mystery; but he did not scowl like Smithy when his middle stump rocketed. Johnny Bull, who took his place, stopped three balls dead. But the last beat him to the wide, and Johnny took his bat out. And there was a roar from Rookwood.

"What did I tell you men?" chuckled Arthur Edward Lovell. "Hat-tricks are going to be cheap."

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Jimmy!"

Mark Linley came out to the wickets. Harry Wharton got the batting now from Mornington, and he handled it well. But three wickets down for nil had a dismaying effect on the Greyfriars men, while the Rookwooders, on the other hand, chattered with glee.

"That man Silver can bowl," said Bob Cherry, with his eyes on the captain of the Remove from the pavilion. "He's frightfully hot stuff. I fancy Wharton will handle him, though. He's handling Morny all right."

"The hotfulness of the stuff is terrific!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Likely!" grunted the Bounder.

Smithy was not disposed to believe that any man in the team could handle the bowling that had knocked him out first ball.

"Four, and four, and two, and two," said Bob cheerily. "That's twelve, my sons, according to the simple rules of arithmetic. And—hallo, hallo, hallo! My only summer bonnet!"

"How's that?" came a yell from the field.

Jimmy Silver held up the ball.

"Out!"

"Caught Silver, bowled Mornington!" groaned Bob. "This looks as if it's going to be a jolly old procession!"

Harry Wharton had made twelve when he came out, with a rather rueful face, and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh went in.

"That man Silver is a coughdrop," he remarked, when he reached the pavilion. "That was a good catch."

"Rotten luck the fellow getting off detention," grunted the Bounder.

Smithy, at least, could not help wishing that the deadly bowler of Rookwood was still safe in the Form-room.

"Oh, rot!" said Harry Wharton, rather sharply. "If the man can get our wickets, let him get them! We don't want the headmaster of Rookwood to win a cricket match for us, I suppose."

"From what I hear, there was some trick about it," growled Smithy. He had heard some talk among the Rookwood fellows between the innings. "They seem to have pulled a beak's leg somehow, and got him off."

"More power to their elbow, if they did," said Bob Cherry.

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter.

"What are you cackling at, you fat owl?" growled the Bounder, staring round at Bunter.

"It was me, you know," explained Bunter cheerily.

"You!" said Harry Wharton.

"My wonderful ventriloquism, you know," grinned Bunter. "You see, the old josser's gone out, and I pulled Dalton's leg, making him think the old bean was telling him to let Silver off. He, he, he!"

And Billy Bunter proceeded to describe the peculiar trick that had been played on the master of the Rookwood Fourth. Harry Wharton & Co. simply stared at him. The Bounder scowled.

"And you think that's jolly clever?" he asked.

"Well, rather!" said Bunter cheerfully. "Sorry it's cost you your wicket. He, he, he! But Silver's a good chap. He paid the taximan from Latham—"

"You fat freak!"

"Oh, really, Smithy— Yaroo!" roared Bunter, as the Bounder swung round his bat, which was still in his hand, and it came into violent contact with a pair of very tight trousers. "Yoop! Why, you beast—"

"Chuck that, Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Ow! Wow!" roared Bunter.

"You fat frump! Your rotten trickery means that we're going to be licked!" snapped the Bounder, with a glare at the Owl of the Remove. "I've a jolly good mind—"

"Ow! Keep that beast off! I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter dodged round the captain of the Remove.

"If it means that, Smithy, all the better!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "We don't want to beat Rookwood because their best man was kept out of the game. If we can't beat them playing cricket, we can lose like sportsmen."

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull.

The Bounder gave an angry snort. He was rather a bad loser; and the loss of his wicket at the first ball of the first over, had left him feeling very sore. If Jimmy Silver had been still in the Fourth Form Room, Smithy would have been still at his wicket—there was no doubt about that. And for the present, at least, Smithy was unable to look at it from the purely sporting point of view.

"It's like Bunter's cheek to play tricks at Rookwood; but I'm jolly glad he did it, all the same," went on Wharton.

(Continued on next page.)

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"Oh, rats!" growled Smithy. "There goes Linley's wicket! Are you jolly glad to see that, too?"

"Four down for fifteen!" said Hazeldene. "This is going to be as merry and bright as a funeral."

"Man in!" said Harry.

The tide of fortune had evidently turned. The best bats in the Greyfriars team were out, and there seemed no man in the eleven who could play Jimmy Silver. But it was the luck of cricket, and nobody, except the Bounder, was disposed to grouse. Penfold went in and came back with two runs to his credit. The Bounder gave a grunt, and pitched down his bat with a clatter.

"I'm fed-up with this!" he remarked; and he walked away, with his hands driven deep in the pockets of his flannel bags.

"He, he, he!" squeaked Billy Bunter as he went. "I say, you fellows, Smithy don't like making ducks' eggs. The fact is, Wharton, you ought to have played me. I fancy I could stand up to Silver."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" snorted Bunter.

But if Bunter could see nothing to cackle at, the other fellows could. In fact, the idea of Bunter standing up to Jimmy Silver's bowling seemed to have quite an enlivening effect on the cricketers.

And really they needed enlivening a little. It was rather a ghastly innings to watch. Runs went up, but wickets went down, and it was evidently going to be a "procession." And Harry Wharton & Co., as a matter of fact, needed all their sportsmanship, to enable them to feel glad that Uncle James of Rookwood had got out to play cricket, after all.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Smithy Takes A Hand!

"OH gad!" ejaculated the Bounder.

He grinned.

Smithy was, for the moment, at least, sick of cricket. He was sore over the fall of his wicket, and

he did not want to see the tail of the innings going down like ninepins. At the present rate he did not give the Greyfriars knock an hour; but he had to get rid of the hour, and he strolled about Rookwood, gradually regaining his equanimity as he did so. Although he had "batted" Bunter for letting loose a bowler like Jimmy Silver on him, at the bottom of his heart he was a sportsman, and would probably not have had it otherwise. Greyfriars wanted to win, but, as their skipper had said, they did not want the Rookwood beak to win the match for them. But Smithy grinned at the sight of a tall, slim, severe-featured gentleman coming in, with stately steps, at the gate.

It was Dr. Chisholm!

Smithy was strolling along by the windows of the masters' studies. Mr. Dalton was standing at his open window, speaking to old Mack, the porter, who was spraying water from the garden hose over the flower-beds opposite the windows. Old Mack shut off the water, while the Form master was speaking to him, standing below the window, the nozzle in his hand. Smithy saw Mr. Dalton glance towards the gates, followed his glance, and saw Dr. Chisholm coming in, and grinned.

The Head of Rookwood had returned.

It was because he had been absent that afternoon that Lovell & Co., in conjunction with the fat Owl of Greyfriars, had been able to get away with that remarkable stunt. Probably they did not know what time he was scheduled to return—probably had not given it a thought. And here he was! Jimmy Silver, on the cricket ground, was taking Greyfriars wickets, when his headmaster had the impression and belief that he was grinding Latin in the Form-room.

Certainly Dr. Chisholm was not likely to dream, for a single instant, that his lordly behests had been disregarded. It would never occur to him that Jimmy had been let out of detention. Neither was Mr. Dalton likely to mention it, as he supposed that he had acted on the Head's instructions, and that the matter was done with. But if he happened to notice what was going on—As he came with his slow and stately stride to-

wards the House the cricket ground was in his full view, if he had looked in that direction. If his eyes were at all keen, he could hardly fail to pick out Jimmy Silver.

Vernon-Smith capped the Head of Rookwood as he passed, and Dr. Chisholm gave him a slight nod. He turned into the path by the study windows to speak to Mr. Dalton. There was a slightly surprised expression on Richard Dalton's face—which was natural enough, seeing the Head come in, when he supposed that he was in long ago.

Old Mack laid down the hose to touch his hat to Dr. Chisholm as he passed, and the Bounder lounged casually after the stately old gentleman. Evidently he was going to speak to Dalton, and Smithy wondered whether it was all going to come out. He grinned at the thought of what would happen, if the beak discovered that Silver of the Fourth was playing cricket. Probably it would be something in the nature of an earthquake.

Dr. Chisholm was speaking to the Form master at the window as the Bounder lounged within hearing. Standing by the window, the headmaster was looking towards the cricket ground. But his elderly eyes were not keen enough to detect one white-clad figure from another—that was clear—for the stately calm of his face was not disturbed by any expression of wrath. Smithy caught the tail of his sentence as he lounged nearer.

"Going on, I see, Mr. Dalton?"

Apparently he was alluding to the cricket in the distance.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Dalton, to whose younger and keener eyes the figure of Jimmy Silver, just then bowling to Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh, was perfectly clear and distinct.

"I hope the boys are getting a good game," said the Head graciously.

"I believe so, sir!" assented Mr. Dalton.

His chief had evidently come back in a good temper.

"I regret that Silver should have been disappointed," said the Head.

The Bounder, standing at a little distance, apparently interested in Mack and his hose, started a little. This was coming very close to the subject; and Smithy wondered what was coming next.

"But discipline must be maintained, Mr. Dalton," said Dr. Chisholm, without waiting for a reply.

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Mr. Dalton, considerably puzzled by that remark—odd enough if the Head had, as he supposed, directed him to release Jimmy from the Form-room.

The fact was that the Head, severe old gentleman as he was, was feeling a little compunction. He had not changed his mind in the very least; he supposed that the offender was under detention, and intended to leave him there.

But he had been rather short and sharp with Richard Dalton, when that young man had intervened in the matter, and he was now giving him a few gracious words to set that matter right.

"If you are not busy at the present moment, Mr. Dalton—"

"Not at all, sir! I have finished my papers—"

"Then perhaps you may care to walk down to the cricket ground with me," said the Head graciously. "A few minutes—"

"With great pleasure, sir," said Mr. Dalton. "I will join you immediately."

Mr. Dalton left his window, and crossed to his door. He had found the



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"Bunter! Open this door at once!" "Oh erikey!" gasped Bunter. "It's Quelch!" With a trembling fat hand, Bunter unlocked the door. The game was up! The door flew open, and Mr. Quelch almost flew out! His grasp closed on the fat junior's collar. "Come!" said the Remove master, in a voice that was like the filing of a saw.

key that Lovell had tossed into his study, and the door no longer presented difficulties.

Dr. Chisholm, with slow and stately pace, moved along the path, to meet the young master when he came out of the House.

The Bounder whistled softly. So far, the Beak knew nothing! Dalton, supposing that he knew, had not thought of saying anything about Silver. But they were going down to the cricket ground together—Dalton supposing that the Head knew that Jimmy Silver was there, and the Head booked for the surprise of his life when he found him there!

Vernon-Smith stared at the old gentleman's back as he moved slowly away, his thoughts working rapidly.

At this thrilling moment Smithy forgot all about his soreness at the loss of his wicket. He remembered only that he was a cricketer, and that another cricketer, who was playing a great game for his side, was in peril of being marched off the field in the middle of a match. The Bounder's first thought was to cut off at top speed, and warn Jimmy that the beak was coming.

Second thoughts supervened. If he could stop Dr. Chisholm's intended walk down to the field—

Old Mack, spotting a weed in the flower-beds, had shut off the hose and laid it down, while he extracted the weed with tender care. The Bounder's eyes, gleaming with reckless mischief, were on the hose.

He hesitated a moment, but only one moment! He stepped quickly across and picked up the nozzle of the hose.

Probably no man at Rookwood, and no Greyfriars man, but the Bounder, would have thought or dreamed of such a wheeze. But the Bounder was a reckless scapegrace to his finger-tips. He did not think it over—there was, indeed, no time for thinking. Very soon the headmaster of Rookwood, slow and

stately as he was, would have been out of range.

"Ere, you let that alone!" came old Mack's voice.

The Bounder did not heed him. He turned on the water at full power. At that identical moment Dr. Chisholm wheeled round, having heard old Mack's voice, and retraced his steps. A stream shot from the hose, and smote the headmaster of Rookwood full in the face.

Splash!
"Oooooogh!"

A sudden, startled gasp burst from Dr. Chisholm! Never, in all his career as a schoolmaster, had he been so surprised.

In utter amazement, hardly knowing what was happening, he gazed at the Bounder—and the hose! The stream of water played full on his stately and majestic features!

"Urrrrrghh!"
Bump!

Dr. Chisholm sat down!
"Wurrrrrgghh!" he gurgled dizzily. "Urrrgh! Ooooooh! Woooooooh! Gug-gug-gug! Ooooooh!"

There was a frantic yell from old Mack, and he hurled himself at the Bounder and grabbed at the hose.

"You young idjit!" he gasped. "Look what you're doing—drenching the 'Ead— Oh, my eye!"

He wrenched away the hose, getting a stream of water in his own ancient face as he did so.

"Wurrrrrgghh!" came from Dr. Chisholm. "Urrrgh! What—what—what— Upon my word— Wurrrrrgghh!"

The Bounder ran towards him.

"Oh, sorry, sir!" he gasped.

Mr. Dalton emerged from the House doorway, and came running towards the Head from the opposite direction. He glared at the Bounder as he ran up. He had been almost petrified by Vernon-Smith's action.

"You stupid boy!" he exclaimed. "You utterly stupid boy, how dare you

meddle with the hose! Could you not see Dr. Chisholm, you—you—"

It did not occur to Richard Dalton that the Bounder's action had been intentional.

"Urrragh!" said Dr. Chisholm, fairly swimming in water. "I—I—I am drenched! I—I am soaked with water! I—I—I— Urrrrggh!"

"Please let me assist you, sir!" gasped Mr. Dalton.

He gave his chief a hand, and Dr. Chisholm staggered to his feet. He held on dizzily to Mr. Dalton with one hand, and with the other dashed water from his eyes. He looked at Vernon-Smith as if he could have bitten him.

"Boy!" he gasped. "You—you— Upon my word! I shall flog you with the utmost severity! I—I—I—"

"It is a Greyfriars boy, sir!" said Mr. Dalton hastily.

The Head, dizzy with the stream from the hose, had not noted that circumstance for the moment.

"Eh—what? A—a Greyfriars boy—"

"One of the cricketers, sir!"

"Upon my word!" Dr. Chisholm realised that he could not flog a junior from another school who had come over to play cricket at Rookwood. "I—I—I— You senseless boy, why did you meddle with the hose?"

"Sorry, sir! I just picked it up, and—and—"

The Bounder's look of contrition was well worthy of the best traditions of the Remove Dramatic Society at Greyfriars.

"Pah! Utterly stupid—reckless—senseless! Mr. Dalton, pray assist me into the House— Grooogh—ooogh—urrrghh!"

Leaning on the Form master's arm, Dr. Chisholm tottered into the House, leaving a wet and watery trail behind him.

"Well," gasped old Mack, "if I was the 'Ead I'd flog you and chance it, you young rip!"

"Lucky you're not the Head, then, old bargee!" drawled the Bounder, and he walked away whistling, and strolled down to the cricket field.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Fight to A Finish!

LAST man in!" Harry Wharton was speaking as the Bounder arrived at the pavilion, with a cheery grin on his face.

"How's it gone?" asked Smithy. "Jolly old procession!" groaned Bob Cherry. "That man Silver is pure mustard—Coleman's very best! Nine down for 32!"

"We shan't be doing a song and a dance over this!" remarked Peter Todd. "The songfulness and the dancefulness will not be terrific!" agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Hazel won't last long," said Squiff. The Australian junior was right. Jimmy Silver was bowling again, and last man in stayed at the wickets for only one ball, and then he came lugubriously back again.

"I say, you fellows, what price duck's eggs?" chuckled Billy Bunter. "I say—Yaroooh! Keep that bat away, Hazel, you beast—Wow!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. came cheerfully off the field. They were in great spirits. The Greyfriars second knock had been practically a collapse; the total of 32 was a very different tale from the 123 in their first innings. The Rookwooders would not have been human had they not been very considerably bucked.

"Cricket's said to be an uncertain game," said Bob Cherry, with a cheery grin. "But it's more like a jolly old dead cert when you're bowling, Silver!"

Jimmy Silver laughed. "I've had some luck," he said, "and luckiest of all was Bunter coming over here this afternoon."

Jimmy had learned, by this, of the peculiar manner in which he had escaped detention.

"Yes, the jolly old porpoise has been useful for once," said Bob. "A chap can be useful, if he can't be ornamental!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——" "But, I say, the Head's come in!" said Lovell, rather anxiously. "One of the fellows told me. I thought he was coming in later. What the thump did he want to come in for?"

"If he looks into the Form-room——" murmured Raby.

"He won't!" said the Bounder coolly.

"Eh? How do you know he won't?" demanded Lovell; and all the Rookwood fellows glanced at Vernon-Smith.

"He's had a little accident," explained the Bounder. "He was going to walk down to the cricket with your beak, Dalton——"

"Oh, help!" gasped Lovell.

"But there was a little accident, and it stopped him!" drawled the Bounder. "A fellow got monkeying about with a garden-hose, and somehow or other the beak got drenched——"

"Great pip!"

"He looked rather wet when Dalton walked in," said Vernon-Smith. "In fact, he looked frightfully wet! I fancy he will be kept busy for some time."

"Oh, what luck!" gasped Lovell.

"He, he, he!" from Bunter.

"I'm sorry for the chap that drenched him, though," said Newcome. "The beak will jolly nearly take his skin off."

"Hardly!" grinned the Bounder. "He can't whop a Greyfriars man!"

"A Greyfriars man!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "You! Oh, Smithy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I told him I was sorry—and I was," said the Bounder. "I really hated to do it! But I couldn't let him come down here and catch Silver—I owed you something for my duck's egg, Silver."

Jimmy Silver chuckled. "You're a sportsman, and no mistake!" he said. "It's a real pleasure to play you Greyfriars men! Now what about tea?"

"Now you're talking!" said Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was with an eye to the loaves and fishes that William George Bunter had come over to Rookwood that day. Jimmy Silver & Co. always "did" their visitors well. But Bunter, though he had expected to wedge in, had not expected to be treated as a distinguished guest.

That, however, was how the fat Owl of the Remove was treated on this historic occasion. Jimmy Silver & Co. really did not seem to be able to do enough for the Owl of the Remove. Fortunately, it was easy to testify gratitude in dealing with Bunter.

Bunter preferred it to take a practical and substantial form. It was quite a handsome tea, and all the cricketers did it justice. Bunter did it more than justice. Good things galore were pressed on Bunter—though, as a matter of fact, he did not require much in the way of pressing!

Where he parked them all was a mystery to the Rookwooders—and even to the Greyfriars fellows, who knew his gastronomic powers.

After tea, Billy Bunter's movements were somewhat slow and laborious. He rolled down to the cricket field, with a bag of cherries under a fat arm. He found a shady tree, and sat under it, and ate cherries—slowly!

The Rookwood second innings started, and an excited crowd surged round the field, with all eyes on the game. But Billy Bunter's eyes were not on it. He finished the cherries—it was against Billy Bunter's principles to leave anything eatable unfinished.

Then he tilted his straw hat over his fat face, leaned back on the tree-trunk, and closed his little round eyes behind his big, round spectacles—and from under the straw hat came a rumbling, whirring sound, the deep and resonant snore which had often awakened the echoes of the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, and now awakened those of the playing fields at Rookwood. And, like the gentleman in the poem, the subsequent proceedings interested him no more!

But those proceedings were extremely interesting to the rest. Rookwood wanted seventy-one to win, and, having taken eighty-five in their first innings, they had no doubt of getting them.

But the glorious uncertainty of the great game of cricket was exemplified once more.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh and the Bounder whacked out most of the bowling for Greyfriars; and they were both exceedingly good. And the Remove had always been a good fielding side.

After an hour's play, Rookwood were sixty for eight wickets—and the excitement was growing quite intense. Then it was sixty-seven for nine wickets, and last man in was called.

And Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh went on to bowl to Mornington, with Towle at the other end. And Morny sent the

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ball whizzing for one, two, three—and rather wished that he hadn't bagged the third run, as Towle faced the bowling of the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur.

"One to tie; two to win!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell, all eyes at the pavilion. "Oh, stick it—stick it!"

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily.

It seemed an age to the fellows at the pavilion, and to the fellows in the field, before the ball came down. It came; and the batsman snicked it away, and ran. A white-clad figure moved swiftly—the Boulder of Greyfriars—backing, watching, with wary eye and ready hand. And fairly into the palm of that hand dropped the round, red ball!

Smack!

Smithy held up the ball.

"How's that?"

There was a yell from the Greyfriars fellows that awakened Billy Bunter!

"How's that?"

"Out!"

The great game was over; and Greyfriars, after all, had won that thrilling match—by a single run!

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Once Too Often!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

It was the following day, at Greyfriars.

In morning break, Harry Wharton & Co. were sauntering in the quad, discussing some of the more thrilling episodes of the great game at Rookwood the day before, when Billy Bunter rolled up, with a fat grin on his face.

"That catch of Smithy's," said Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Roll away, old fat bean!" said Bob.

"That catch——"

"For goodness' sake chuck that rot!" said Bunter peevishly. "I say, you fellows, I've got a wheeze! Third school's French, with Mossoo. Now, how'd you fellows like to get off?"

The Famous Five gave Bunter their attention. On a sunny morning in July there was no doubt that they would have preferred cricket, or the river, to French irregular verbs, with Monsieur Charpentier. Only they did not quite see how it was to be done.

"How——" began Frank Nugent.

"My wonderful ventriloquism——"

"Bow-wow!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I suppose you haven't forgotten how I wangled it for Jimmy Silver yesterday at Rookwood!" said Bunter. "Didn't it work like a charm? Well, why shouldn't we play the same game again? Mossoo's in his study now! One of you fellows nip along and lock him in, like Lovell did Dalton—see? I've got his key—I bagged it this morning before class."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Then I'll talk to him through the door—same as I did to Dalton. I can bark like Quelch—you know that. I needn't tell you fellows how clever I am at it——"

"You needn't!" agreed Johnny Bull. "We've heard it often enough. Give it a miss, fathead!"

"Suppose Mossoo heard Quelch tell him—through his door, you know—same as happened at Rookwood—that he had decided to give the Remove third school off, and cut out the French class? What?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Quelch can do it if he likes, being Form master," said Bunter, "and Mossoo would have to play up, of course. We get out of French—get out

of a whole class! Mossoo can't see through a door, any more than Dalton can—and he would think it was Quelch——"

Harry Wharton laughed; but he shook his head.

"Chuck it, Bunter!" he said. "It worked at Rookwood; but that was to get a chap off detention to play cricket. It's rather different, pulling a beak's leg to slack at classes! Nothing doing!"

"Beast!"

The Famous Five smiled and sauntered on. Billy Bunter blinked after them wrathfully, and rolled into the House.

Having scored such a success at Rookwood, Billy Bunter, rather like Alexander of old, was looking for new worlds to conquer.

Getting off a class seemed, to the laziest fellow at Greyfriars, quite as important as getting off to play cricket—indeed, much more important.

Bunter, encouraged by success, rather forgot the proverb that one swallow does not make a summer—he saw no reason why a "wangle" that had succeeded once should not succeed again. And as the Famous Five, for reasons unknown to Bunter, did not care to pull a beak's leg for the sake of slacking, Bunter resolved to try it on, on his own.

After all, it was easy enough! Blinking into Masters' Passage, he saw that the coast was clear. He tiptoed along to Monsieur Charpentier's study door. Having, with great forethought, already bagged the key of the study it was only necessary to be careful!

Swiftly, silently, cautiously, the Owl of the Remove slipped the key into the outside of the lock, and with equal softness, silence, and caution, turned it! Now all was safe!

Bunter tapped on the door.

"Entrez!" came Monsieur Charpentier's voice from within.

Bunter turned the handle—and shook it. Then he spoke—in his remarkable imitation of Mr. Quelch's voice—or bark, as he described it. There was no doubt that, in this line, Bunter was the "goods," so to speak—his imitation of Mr. Quelch's "bark" was amazingly lifelike.

"Dear me!" he said. "Your door appears to be locked, Monsieur Charpentier! However, I have only a few words to say——"

"Mon Dieu!" came a startled exclamation from within. Mr. Quelch's voice outside his door seemed to have astounded the French master. Bunter heard Mossoo jump to the door and turn the handle. "Ma foi! It is lock! Mais, but—who is it zat speak?"

"Surely you know my voice, Monsieur Charpentier—it is Mr. Quelch speaking," said the Greyfriars ventriloquist. "I have decided to give the Remove leave from third school this morning!"

"Vat?"

"There will, therefore, be no French class this morning, Monsieur Charpentier. That is all!"

"Mon Dieu! I am amaze! Vat is zis?" came a howl of astonishment from the study. "Mon cher Quelch, who is it zat speak outside zis door, viz a voice zat is like your own, and who say zat he is you?"

"I cannot imagine!" came a deep voice in the study. "It is some extraordinary trickery——"

Bunter jumped.

His blood ran cold!

The second voice in the study was Mr. Quelch's!

It had not occurred to the happy Bunter that Mr. Quelch might have dropped into the French master's study

for a chat! A fellow couldn't think of everything.

But that, as it happened, was exactly what Mr. Quelch had done. Quelch was there!

There was an angry wrench at the door-handle.

"Who is there?" roared Mr. Quelch from within. "Who has dared to use my name? What does this nonsense mean? Ah—I think I understand—remember some such trickery on a previous occasion—Bunter—is it Bunter?"

"Ow! Oh! No, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Not at all, sir! I—I'm not here—I mean. I'm in the quad—I—I mean—Oh lor!"

"Buntair!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier. "It is zat Buntair zat play one trick! Mon Dieu! He speak viz your voice, mon cher Quelch!"

"Absurd!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "That very disagreeable voice, assumed by that foolish and impudent boy, was, I am sure, nothing like mine."

"Mais, je vous en assure——"

"Bunter! Open this door at once!"

"Oh crikey!"

With a trembling fat hand, Bunter unlocked the door. The game was up—owing to the unforeseen and unfortunate presence of Mr. Quelch in the study. The door flew open, and Mr. Quelch almost flew out. His grasp closed on Billy Bunter's collar.

"Come!" said Mr. Quelch, in a voice that was like the filing of a saw. And he marched Bunter away to his own study.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that awful row?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

The "row" was really rather awful! It proceeded from the open window of Mr. Quelch's study. It rang and echoed across the Greyfriars quadrangle. It was the anguished roaring of Billy Bunter, as the fat Owl of the Remove, bending over a chair, wriggled under the whipping of his Form master's cane.

"Bunter!" said Harry Wharton.

"My hat! Quelch's laying it on!" murmured Nugent.

"Yooop! Whooop! Yaroooooop!"

The sounds of woe ceased at last. A few minutes more, and Billy Bunter emerged from the House. He came almost doubled up, wriggling. He blinked at the Famous Five dolorously through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—wow! I say, I've had six—yow-ow! Wow!"

"But what——"

"Oh dear! I tried it on Mossoo," groaned Bunter, "and—and it would have been all right, only—wow—only—yow-ow—only Quelch happened to be in the study with him, and so—yow-ow-ow-wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Wow! I say, I shan't be able to sit down in the French class—wow! Ow! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was wriggling painfully in the French class in third school that morning. And he was not thinking of any more ventriloquist stunts! For the present, Billy Bunter was fed-up with ventriloquism!

THE END.

(The leading character in next week's tiptop school story is Vernon-Smith, the Boulder of Greyfriars. Make a note of the title, chums: "THE BOUNDER'S GOOD TURN!" and then see that you order your copy of the MAGNET in good time!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,328.

ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!

By JOHN BREARLEY



WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Simon Allison, once part-owner of the great Allison Motor Works, invents a powerful supercharger that promises to revolutionise the small car industry. Spurred on by his new partner, a thug named Valetti, Len Allison, the old man's nephew—"boss" of the works and a "big noise" as an amateur in the Avonshire County Cricket XI—enlists the services of a hunchback to raid his uncle's workshop and steal the plans. The raid is carried out and old Simon is badly battered. The "plans" the hunchback takes away, however, are fakes. Left to support his crippled father, Bill Allison, a crack left-handed bowler, joins the county club as a pro. In his first match, the new recruit causes havoc among the Somerset batsmen, eventually bowling himself to a standstill in a long, relentless duel with two old-stagers in "Farmer" White and Luckes.

(Now read on.)

From Strength To Strength!

BILL, dog-tired and crimson with exertion, was forced to give in. All the snap had gone out of his left arm; his fingers were sore with spinning the ball for over two solid hours.

Nevertheless, it was only by an effort that he managed to conceal his disappointment. He had wanted "Farmer" White's wicket more than all the others put together.

However, orders were orders. With the uproarious ovation of the crowd dinning in his ears, the weary youngster joined Len in the slips, and then:

Snick!

How he ever summoned up energy enough to hurl himself sideways next instant, Bill never quite knew.

Suddenly he saw Frazer's first ball kick sharply off the pitch; saw it spin from the edge of White's bat like lightning and streak towards him. Instinctively he braced his tired muscles, and made a tigerish spring to the right. Simultaneously, Len, diving in from the left, crashed into him.

Thud!

Down on the turf thudded the Allison

cousins in a heap, Bill jammed underneath. The next moment a sharp elbow drove cruelly, treacherously, into Bill's ribs, robbing him of what little wind he had left. Then a breathless voice hissed in his ear:

"Curse you, you clumsy gutter-snipe!"

Goaded to fresh rage by the roar of laughter and cheers that burst from the stands, Len staggered up, dark eyes glinting wickedly. But Bill's only reply was one large, blissful grin that stretched from ear to ear.

For he had dismissed "Farmer" White, after all.

Safe and snug in his right hand lay the ball, snatched out of the air a split second before Len collided with him; and already the batsmen were turning away from the wickets.

Somerset were all out at last. That was all Bill cared.

Friendly hands yanked him vigorously to his feet, then; brown, smiling faces ringed him round. Alec Conway, thrusting past the stuttering Len, gripped the lad's arm.

"As you said, Billyum, this morning—if you don't get 'em one way, you get 'em another!" he cried solemnly. "And now, my buck, if you don't want the crowd to eat you alive—run!"

With the words, he gave Bill a hefty shove.

After one scared blink at the shouting mob of enthusiasts, haring across the ground towards the pavilion gate, Avonshire's new recruit ran!

Jack White, following more slowly with the other players, smiled as he watched the flying youngster take a header though the gate just in time.

"By Jove, you've found a good 'un in that lad, Jerry!" he nodded thoughtfully. "Where d'you pick him up?"

"We don't pick 'em up in Avonshire—we breed 'em," retorted the home captain proudly. "And, listen! Would you like to bet me that lad doesn't play against the West Indies this year—an' Australia next?"

But Jack White, himself one of the greatest slow bowlers of all time, only winked sagaciously.

Out of the Somerset total of 232, Bill had taken 7 wickets for 43 on a plumb wicket. Like Jerry Tempest, "Farmer" White knew a coming England player when he saw one!

"Allison of Avonshire! Avonshire's G-great Left-Hander! Somerset Skittled Out by New Star!"

Cannonball Mike Doyle uttered, or, rather, chanted, these words as he barged into Bill's bed-room next morning, with a grin on his lean face as usual.

Now that their partnership had been signed, settled, and sealed, the young "pro" and the once-famous motor-driver were sharing old Simon Allison's cottage in Kelsey.

"There you are, Allison of Avonshire!" continued Mike gravely, heaving the Sunday paper at Bill's sleepy head. "You're famous, my lad! Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! The papers say so!"

"And you're a chump, and I say so!" yawned Bill, as he crawled reluctantly out of bed. "Wow! Famous or not, I'm stiff!"

"Cold bath, hot breakfast—that's what you want. That is, if you can condescend to eat eggs and bacon this morning, Lord Avonshire!" retorted his sardonic partner, then chuckled and ducked as Bill grabbed a shoe and slung it.

However, it was even as Mike said—the papers had "splashed" Bill's exploit in no uncertain manner! The youngster literally awoke to find himself famous in the county—so famous, indeed, that after the daily visit to his father in Avonport Hospital later on, he had to scorch out of the town to escape the jubilant horde of Grammarian and other youthful hero-worshippers.

He was right glad to spend the rest of that quiet day helping Mike in the workshop, where the new model of the Allison supercharger was already taking shape under the mechanic's skilful hands.

Monday, also, proved a quiet day—for Bill Allison. He spent it in the Avonshire pavilion, contentedly watching Ted Forbes and Conway, the opening batsmen, lay the foundation of a real big score.

Conway, that steady veteran, piled up a chanceless century; Forbes took sixty-three off Jack White, Wellard & Co.; and, later in the afternoon, Len weighed in with a graceful and hard-hitting fifty, which improved the county's total and his own temper. Bill himself did not get a knock, for Jerry Tempest declared at 400 for 8.

Avonshire's new recruit got his chance again next day—and once more seized it with both hands.

In fairness to Somerset, it must be admitted that the luck of the weather went all against them. Rain fell in torrents on the Monday evening, and on Tuesday the sun shone fiercely. With Len bowling at his fastest, and Bill playing ducks and drakes with the ball on a terribly sticky wicket, not even another fine innings from Jack Lee and some lion-hearted clouting by Earle could stave off defeat.

Midway through the afternoon the inevitable end came when Bill, beating Luckes all the way with a leg-break which the Somerset stumper never saw, clipped both bails into Dick Hayes' ready hands.

After that not only the new star, but the whole Avonshire team had to sprint for the pavilion!

That victory over Somerset was Avonshire's first win since 1931. Their supporters went crazy with delight.

"We want Allison! We want Bill Allison!"

Again and again they roared and clamoured, refusing to disperse until Jerry Tempest thrust the blushing Bill out on to the balcony to make a speech.

Bill, however, did not oblige. What he actually did was to gaze wildly at the seething crowd below, stutter something, then bolt for cover like a scared rabbit!

Thus, amid acclamation, and plenty of leg-pulling from his exuberant teammates, the young recruit's "baptism of fire" in first-class cricket ended.

During the busy fortnight that followed, Bill made his place in the County Eleven doubly secure.

Against Sussex in the next match at home, a glorious spell of bowling in the second innings enabled Avonshire to win by two wickets. Then came victories against Northants and Derbyshire, followed by a win on the first innings against Kent.

At Leeds, Sutcliffe and Leyland, at the top of their form, hammered the novice severely at first; but, quick and eager to learn, Bill took his revenge later on.

Scraping victory by thirty runs, "little Avonshire" came away triumphant, with full points against the mighty Yorkshiremen. That feat alone definitely established Bill as a match-winner in the eyes of the cricket world.

Almost before he realised it, the sensational youngster found himself caught up in a flood-tide of prosperity.

His youth, his wonderful bowling, and cheery personality, plus public interest in the mysterious case of his father, made him a popular favourite on all grounds. Sports writers christened him "Young Bill," and the name stuck. The

Avonshire team, raised to the dizzy heights of second place in the Championship, were with him to a man.

Better still, some much-needed cash began to roll in—munitions of war in the great fight for his father's invention.

Apart from his professional's salary, a big London paper paid him hand-

somely for an interview, and the largest store in Avonshire engaged the pleasant, modest star to preside over their sports department whenever he was not playing.

To Bill the change in his fortunes was as amazing as it was swift.

(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

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

I WONDER how many of my chums have wished they could become speedway riders? Quite a number of them, I'm sure! And now that speedway racing is well into its stride again this season, many of you will be interested in the following reply to George Whitelaw, of Sevenoaks, who asks:

HOW MUCH DOES A SPEEDWAY RIDER EARN?

To begin with, a rider receives £1 for every race he takes part in, with a guaranteed payment of £3 per meeting. But this, of course, does not represent all his earnings. He also receives point-money at the rate of £3 for a win, £2 should he come in second, and £1 if he is placed third. Prize-money for other than League races varies.

So, you see, a really first-class rider, who always features in the first two, can make quite a good income.

Although it was fairly easy a few years ago, to become a speedway rider, it is much more difficult now. There is greater competition for one thing. Also, the present professionals have raised the standard of riding to such a high level, that a novice has a hard job to compete with them.

I receive a large number of letters from readers who ask my advice upon seeking jobs abroad. "Anxious," of Stockport, has written to me this week to tell me that

HE WANTS TO GO TO AUSTRALIA,

and, if possible, to obtain agricultural work there. There are always openings for boys in agriculture in the Colonies, and there are several settlement schemes to aid boys who wish to go to Australia. My reader should write to the Emigration Department, Australia House, Strand, London, W.2, and ask for particulars. The leading shipping companies between this country and Australia may also be able to help him, while the Salvation Army, who also run an Australian settlement scheme, will give him particulars of that, if he writes to them, at 101, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4.

A similar inquiry comes from Reg. M., of Manchester, but this reader prefers

THE LURE OF THE JUNGLE,

and wants to know how he can obtain a situation in some of the wilder parts of Africa. He would like to be an explorer, but I am afraid that, unless he possesses special scientific knowledge, he cannot hope for such a job. There are, of course, big firms who employ a large number of Britishers in out-of-the-way places in the vast African continent, but these are only given to those who have a special knowledge of the country, or who have served in the home offices of the firms concerned. I am afraid that they would not send out a youngster of fifteen to Africa, unless he was very exceptional.

Before a boy can hope for a really "worth-while" job abroad, he must already have shown that he is capable of being entrusted with such a responsible position, and, above all, of being able to stand the rigours of a climate which rapidly undermines even the strongest constitutions!

NOW for a few RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

to various other queries put to me by readers:

Who Was the Ref.? (MAGNET Reader).—The referee at last year's Cup Final between Newcastle and Arsenal, was Mr. W. P. Harper.

Can Plants be Grown by Electricity? ("Inquirer," of Hull).—Scientific experiments have proved that the growth of plants can be greatly stimulated by the use of electricity and artificial sunlight.

More "Smithy" Wanted! ("Keenon-theboulder," of Lancaster).—This popular character takes the leading role in next week's story of Greyfriars. Hope you'll enjoy it!

A Budding Poet. (S. Orwin, of Sunderland).—Your verses are quite amusing, but not quite up to standard. Why not have a shot at our limericks?

Why do we write "£" for a Pound? (P.T., of Kenton).—The "£" is a contraction for the Latin word "Libra." The names used for our monetary system were taken from the Latin.

I am afraid that I have no more space left for replies, so if your particular question has not yet been answered, keep your eye on this chat of mine, and the reply will appear in due course.

Next Week's MAGNET Programme—

There is a real top-notch issue in store for you next week, chums! Frank Richards has really let himself go in:

"THE BOUNDER'S GOOD TURN!"

and has turned out one of the most dramatic and interesting yarns we have ever yet had from his pen. You'll enjoy every word of it—and your chums will, too! So tell them about it, if they are not already regular readers of "the good old MAGNET." There are some really topping yarns of the Greyfriars chums coming along, and those of you who have not already placed an order with your newsagent for the regular delivery of your favourite paper will be well advised to do so without delay! Don't run the risk of being told that it is "sold out"!

Next week's issue will also contain further thrilling chapters of our popular cricket serial, a special "full-of-fun" number of the "Greyfriars Herald," and our shorter features as usual.

Cheerio until next week, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,328

True to his plans with Mike Doyle, however, the lad saved every penny he could. Already he was dreaming golden dreams of the day when the Allison supercharger would be successfully launched on the motor-world and his crippled father would lack for nothing in the way of attention.

It was, indeed, lucky for the ambitious youngster that he had an old sober-sides like Mike to steady him down.

"You go easy, lad! You've got a long way to go before you can buy a decent car and prove the 'blower's' worth!" the mechanic warned him. "And another thing—don't forget Len and Corsica Phil. Those two haven't finished with us yet—savvy?"

Bill savvy'd all right—and forthwith moderated his transports.

Of late he had almost forgotten Len—since the Somerset match his cousin had dropped out of the Avonshire team on the plea of business. Neither Len nor Phil Valetti had forgotten him, however. Bill's successes in county cricket had driven the young boss of the Allison Works well-nigh frantic.

To make matters worse, the Allison cars had recently failed badly in an important road test, and a fine contract had gone elsewhere in consequence. Though he still managed to keep up a bold front, Len's finances were becoming desperate.

"When are you going to do something to earn your keep, you boasting fool?"

With an evening paper in his hand, Len fairly flung the words in Valetti's teeth one evening, just three weeks after the Somerset match. His face was haggard with worry and rage.

"Look what the cub did to-day—six for fifty-one against Hampshire!" he continued, striding up and down the study. "It was you who warned me what would happen if my cousin ever got away with it in first-class cricket—and already the papers are tipping him for one of the Tests against the West Indies. And what have you done to stop him? Nothing! The young devil's piling up cash all the time to fight us. Every week lessens our chance to get the old man's invention, yet all

you do is loaf around! When are you going to start something, you bluffer!"

Corsica Phil, a cigarette drooping from his thick lips, stared at his raging confederate between half-closed lids. No resentment at the insults, no emotion of any kind, showed on his hard, swarthy face. Yet, somehow, that very impassiveness was a threat in itself.

"One day, Len, you'll shoot off your mouth to me once too often!" he drawled at last; and Len, startled by something evil and menacing in the silky voice, winced and stepped back.

Valetti flicked the ash from his cigarette.

"The reason I ain't done nothin' is because the police have been hunting Joe the Hump—hard!" he went on, in the same quiet, freezing tone. "But now—waal, from what I learn to-day, the hunt's slackenin' down a bit. And, believe me, you pup," he snarled suddenly, "I'm just as tired o' waitin' as you are!"

In a sharp blaze of fury, Len's criminal partner crashed a rock-like fist on the table.

"Police or not, Joe the Hump's comin' out of hidin' again to-night!" he whispered fiercely. "And, take it from me, buddy, he won't lose the Allison plans this time! What's more, if Mike Doyle or Bill Allison get in his way again—waal, there'll be one tricky mechanic plumb off the map, and Avonshire's gonna need a new bowler, too! See?"

"H'm! Jolly well done, William, my son!"

A pleasant twinkle lighted Mike Doyle's grave, deep-set eyes as he scanned the evening paper which had just been delivered in Kelsey from Avonport. Unlike Len Allison and Corsica Phil Valetti—who had read the report an hour earlier—Bill's partner was "tickled to death" by the news of the youngster's latest bowling triumph against Hampshire that day.

"Six for 51—and very nice, too!" he murmured, slipping a hand inside his dungarees and glancing pensively at his watch.

The match, according to the paper, had ended at three o'clock in another Avonshire win; and Bill, in a letter which Mike had received that morning, had announced his intention of coming straight back to Kelsey as soon as he was free. The long, lean ex-racing star, after a few minutes' study of the local time-table, grunted.

"Good! Th' kid ought to be home in about an hour if he caught the afternoon express up from Southampton. Bet he'll be hungry, too—as usual!"

Smiling to himself, Mike tucked a fresh piece of chewing-gum into his cavernous mouth and began clearing up the workshop in customary leisurely, but efficient, style.

The plans of the Allison supercharger he neatly rolled and thrust inside his overalls, then gathered up the new, practically completed model of the "blower" itself. Since the disastrous night when the workshop had been raided and old Simon Allison struck down by the mysterious ruffian, Joe the Hump, Mike no longer trusted to the safe under the crippled inventor's bench. He preferred to keep both plans and model where he could reach them—night or day.

For a moment, as he moved towards the door, his eyes rested sadly on the deserted bench in the corner, and a cold, almost ugly glitter appeared in their pale depths. Simon Allison had been a good pal to the broken-down racer for many years. Mike would have given anything—his own life, if need be—for the chance of getting even with the old man's formidable enemies.

A deep sigh filled his muscular chest. "Well, anyway, boss," he murmured aloud—as he frequently did when alone—"me an' Bill have got a hundred-percent notion of who employed Joe the Hump, though we can't bring it home to them. But one day they'll make another shot at grabbin' the blower—an' mebbe they'll make a mistake at the same time. Then we'll get 'em—yes, we'll get 'em stone cold!"

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's exciting chapters of this popular cricket story.)

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THE NEW Greyfriars Herald



No. 43 (New Series).

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

July 29th, 1933.

MOTOR-BUS FOR SALE!

Recently used for taking Greyfriars boys to station. Cost £500 last month. Accept £5 or near offer.—CARPIS, Contractor, Friardale.

MICROSCOPE WANTED!

My pater has promised that when reading my Term Report this time he'll look only for the good points in it!—A. TRELUCÉ, Study No. 9, Remove.

BREAKING-UP DAY AT GREYFRIARS

Smiling Faces Everywhere

It's Breaking-up Day at Greyfriars—and we don't mind telling you, that if you've never seen Breaking-up Day at Greyfriars, you've never lived. Boys, it's a riot!

Prate not to us of ancient Roman carnivals or the Dionysian revels of Greece. Greyfriars can give 'em all a start, and lick the lot of 'em when it comes to letting off steam!

The very buildings look different in the cheery light of last day of term. By that, we don't mean that the ivy has peeled off the walls or that the clock-tower is standing on its head. It's just that when you look at them you get a different impression; but we give you our word, it's a TREMENDOUSLY different impression from the impression you get when you look at them on a wet Monday in mid-term!

The beaks are different, too. For once, they've come down from their pedestals and taken on the semblance of real, genuine human beings. Sounds impossible; but it's true! Even old Quelch doesn't disdain to stand on the School House steps, discussing the merits and demerits of half-a-dozen seaside resorts—and if you know of a bigger miracle than that, please drop us a postcard about it!

Smiling faces everywhere. Coker stops to shake hands with Wharton,

and Loder drops a half-crown into Gosling's horny palm, looking at least fifty per cent less furtive than usual as he does it. The impossible and the fantastic become the normal order of things on this day of all days.

Bolsover stops bullying, Temple stops swanking, Hoskins gives the piano a rest, and only Bunter is Bunter still. Even if the skies fell and the clouds rained copying-ink pencils, we believe Bunter would still be mumbling about postal-orders and titled relations!



What a cheer when the first bus arrives from the station! What a silence when the last bus has gone! Empty and desolate is Greyfriars for the long period of the good old summer vac. But we'll all think kindly of it while we're away. It's not a bad old place while we're there, anyway, and distance may lend it enchantment while we're basking on the golden sands with the soft murmur of the sea in our ears!

But wait till Coker sees this!

(Next week we're going to hear about a fellow who rarely figures in our columns—Coker minor, of the Sixth. Don't miss Tom North's version of Coker mi., whatever you do!—Ed.)

AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What We Think of George Blundell

By Potter and Greene

First we want to say that we're still breathless with indignation over Blundell's article on us, in last week's number. How any man can demean himself to make such base insinuations about our great and illustrious leader, Coker, passes our understanding!

But it's just like Blundell. Really, it's about time we got used to his conceited ideas and jealous ways. We expect he thought he'd win our support last week by praising us at the expense of our worthy leader.

Let him give the compliments to the man who really deserves them—Horace Coker! Let him drop one of us from the cricket team, and put in good old Coker, who's streets ahead of anyone else in the Fifth. Then we'll admit that Blundell has his good points; but until that time comes, there's little we can say in his favour.

All that we've said up to this point is what Coker has told us to say, and with our usual practice of carrying out Coker's wishes for the sake of peace and quietness, we've duly said it!

Having discharged our duty, we should like to add that our real opinion of Blundell is that he's a jolly good fellow! As an all-round sportsman, he has no equal in the Fifth, and as a Form captain, he'd be hard to beat—for he carries out his duties with honesty, courage, dignity, and good humour. You can take it from us, kids, George Blundell is one of the very best!

When Temple did her going in the right action, however, he got her go with a vengeance. So quick as the start that Dabney and only escaped being flung to the river by a miracle. Then an expert like Temple at the helm, they'll have to get used to little practical jokes that, we suppose!



Cecil Reginald Temple is taking Dabney and Fry on a motor-boat tour of the Broadwaters this vac. He gave them a dress-rehearsal on the bank in a hired motor-launch Wednesday, and after waiting that rehearsal, we can assure you that Dabney and Fry in for the holiday of their life.

Admittedly, they uldn't start up at first, and took them an hour to discover that the reason was a shortage of petrol. But an incident like that is just the mirth-provoking sort of thing one sees on holiday.

We must confess that their start was not particularly impressive. Matter of fact, Temple found himself in reverse, and shot back into the dingy-stage. But accidents happen, won't they?

When Temple did her going in the right action, however, he got her go with a vengeance. So quick as the start that Dabney and only escaped being flung to the river by a miracle. Then an expert like Temple at the helm, they'll have to get used to little practical jokes that, we suppose!

They were the cynos of all eyes as they chugged downstream. That was had to be

TEMPLE TAKES THE HELM!

Rivercraft Display by Expert

wondered at, for Temple's steering is of the unorthodox kind. Instead of taking a straight course, he maps out a zigzag line all over the river.

The fact that he eventually crashed into a punt and overturned his own craft must not be regarded as reflecting on his ability in any way. It was merely one of those unfortunate affairs that come into the lives of the greatest river experts at times.

People are blaming poor old Alonzo Todd over the affair of the pickpocket at the end-of-term cricket match.

Now here are the main facts. Crowds of parents and relatives were present, and the jolly old sneak-thief got a tremendous haul because he was strolling about with 'Lonzy, and so escaped suspicion. It was only by chance that Wingate happened to spot him, and got P.-c. Tezer to nab him just in time.

But don't be in a hurry to blame 'Lonzy, chaps! Any one of you might have fallen for the wiles of this confidence trickster just as easily. We've spoken to 'Lonzy, and we quite understand how he was taken-in.

In the first place, the man was wearing an Old Boys' tie. So 'Lonzy naturally concluded that he was an Old Boy.

Then he said to 'Lonzy:

BOLSOVER WONDERS WHY

Answer Quite Simple

Bolsover is in a state of complete wonderment.

He wonders why, when he went for a stroll in the woods the other day, a girl gave a piercing scream and ran from him like a champion on the cinder-track.

He wonders why a man he encountered uttered a terrified yell and hastily climbed up the nearest tree.

He wonders why two Boy Scouts jumped out and started bashing him furiously with their poles till he was forced to run for his life.

He wonders why police-whistles started shrilling out all round him.

He wonders why the trees began to rustle and men began to close in on him.

He wonders why, eventually, a crowd armed with guns and

sticks swarmed round him with every appearance of hostility.

He wonders why two uniformed men carrying chains, took a good look at him, and then said: "No, that's not the one!"

He wonders why the crowd pushed off, muttering disappointedly.

But really, you know, there was no reason for Bolsy to wonder at all.

The explanation was perfectly simple.

A few hours before, the Human Ape had escaped from the circus at Friardale, and the people Bolsy had met had merely made a quite natural mistake!

We hope that, in view of this explanation, Bolsy will now stop wondering!

HE WORE HIS OLD SCHOOL TIE

So Why Blame 'Lonzy'?

"Look 'ere, young shaver, I feel kinder lonesome like, bein' 'ere all on my own; so 'ow about you walkin' around with me—eh?" Naturally, that aroused 'Lonzy's sympathy.

After that, he asked 'Lonzy to point out to him any of the "teachers." Of course, that led 'Lonzy to explain at great length, that they were called "masters" nowadays, and how curious that they should have been dubbed "teachers" in earlier days!

Later, he wanted 'Lonzy to show him over the school explaining that the place had altered so much since his time, that he couldn't find his way about. Knowing that the school has not been altered to any extent for a hundred years,

'Lonzy was understandably trigued by the thought that he was in the company of a man who must have reached the great age of 120, or thereabouts.

Finally, when 'Lonzy saw him going through other people's pockets, the cheery visitor explained that his hobby was giving unexpected presents to all and sundry, so as to bring lots of happiness into the world. How could 'Lonzy do other than feel friendly to such a philanthropic gentleman?

Frankly, we can't see how 'Lonzy can possibly be blamed. The man was wearing his old school tie, and there was nothing on earth to make a chap think he could be a pickpocket.

Be reasonable, you men! Don't blame 'Lonzy!

'Lonzy's Little Letters



Dear Editor,—In the spiritual exuberance associated with that interruption of studious continuity known as the terminal diurnal occasion of knowledge-acquisition cessation or, rendering it in the popular colloquialism, "Breaking-up Day," let us not become oblivious to the circumstantial phenomenon that this interval, in addition to offering recreative facilities in the unrestricted atmosphere, also consolidates the effectuation of the provision of unique opportunities for cultural development on individualistic lines and psycho-analytical experiment tending to the ultimate eventuation of intellectual metamorphosis in that morphological manner concerning which I have previously made comprehensive indicative asseverations.

I enclose a volume entitled "Deterministic Psychiatry, or The Neo-Egoism Philosophy," which explains what I mean in the brief space of 1,500 pages.

Ever perspicuously yours,
ALONZO TODD.

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

The Remove are wondering why their recent raid on the Fifth Form passidge was such a painful fiasco.

If you ask me, the eggplanation is simply that Skinner's forgetful. You see, they left Skinner on guard with a whistle, to warn them if the Fifth returned. But Skinner forgot eggactly what it was he had to blow. Instead of blowing the whistle, he blew the gaff!

HAS GREYFRIARS GONE MAD?

We hate to think it has; but now that the hols. have started, it certainly has a "vacant" look about it!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



Harry Wharton and Co. make a point of being friendly with Peter Hazeldene for his sister Marjorie's sake; but Hazel, a somewhat wayward fellow, usually prefers the company of Skinner and Co.

Wun Lung amused the Removites in the Hag by standing on his head—one of the Chinese's many weird accomplishments. Quite a number of fellows came to grief, trying to imitate him!

Frank Nugent is extremely fond of his young brother Dick, and when Bolsover cuffed the fag in the Second Form, Frank saw red, and thought of giving the bully a trouncing!

Tommy Bunter manages unfailingly to wedge into any feed unpleasant comments from the cads. "Inky," however, proved completely imperturbable. Once, however, he tweaked Bunter's nose!

When "Inky" first came to Greyfriars his dusky skin drew unpleasant comments from the cads. "Inky," however, proved completely imperturbable. Once, however, he tweaked Bunter's nose!

The hard court tennis championship of the junior school was won by Richard Hillary of the Remove, who beat Scott of the Upper Fourth 6-1, 6-4, 6-0.

(Don't get alarmed, chaps; 'Lonzy's only telling us to use the vac for self-improvement! We can give him our word, anyway, that we're whales for self-improvement during the vac. This vac, for instance, we're going to improve our cricket, swimming, sculling, tennis, and penny-in-the-slot-machine prowess!—Ed.)

WHICH?

Bunter informs us that while at the seaside he is going to take his "Holiday Annual."

Does this mean he's developing a taste for literature, or—fantastic thought!—can it possibly be that he intends bringing himself into contact with real water at last?