

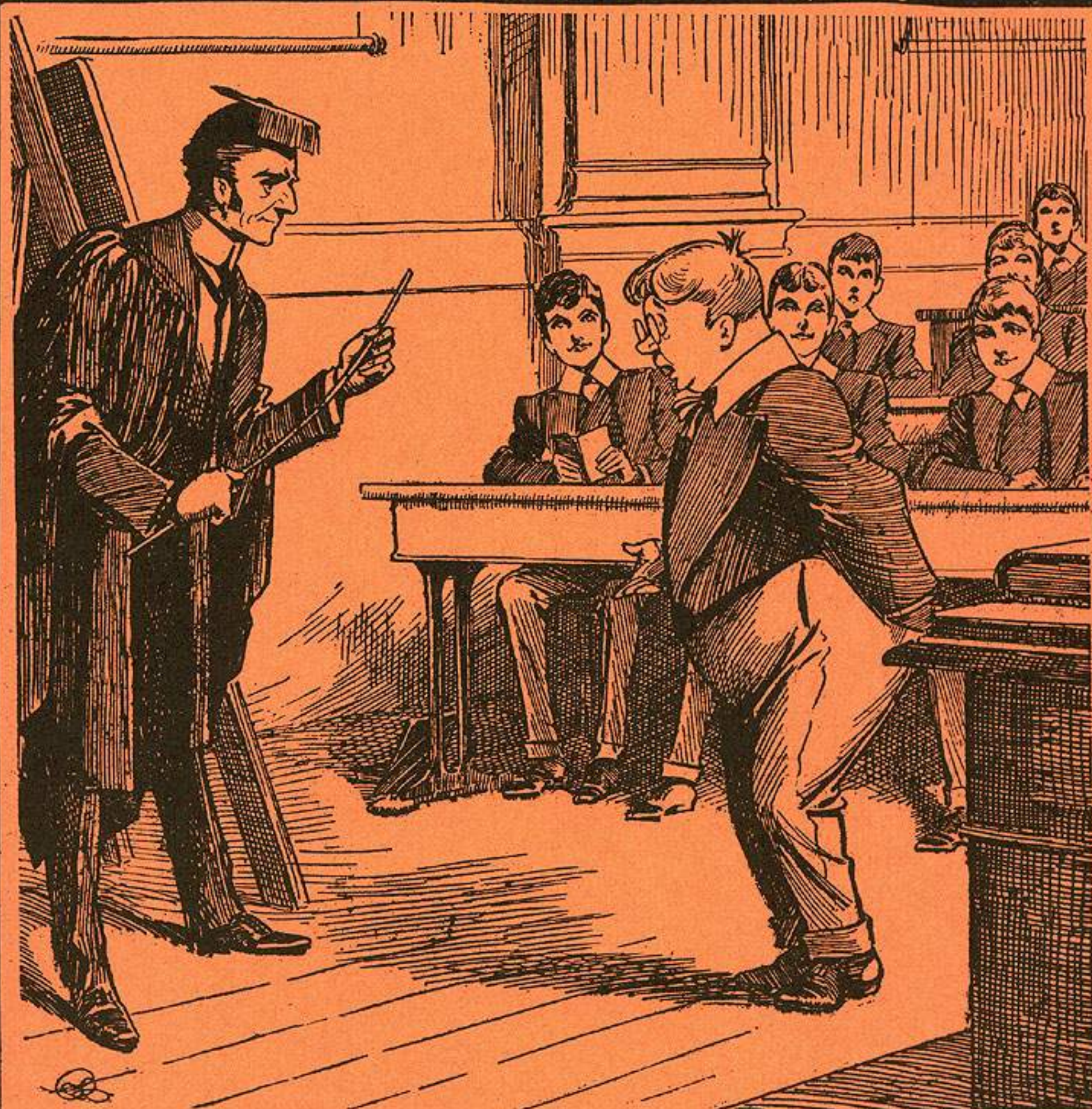
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**School
Tale.**



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THE FIRST CHAPTER. Bunter the Treasure-Hunter.

"DO you fellows happen to know——"
"The ground's too mucky for footer," said Harry Wharton, looking out of the window of No. 1 Study in the Remove passage.
"Do you fellows——"
"What price some practice in the gym.?" asked Frank Nugent.
"That's a good idea."
"The goodfulness of the esteemed idea is terrific," murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.
"I say, you fellows, do you happen to know——"
"Well, let's get along to the gym., then," said Wharton.
"I'll get into the passage and whistle for Bob Cherry."

The Greyfriars Treasure

A Splendid, Long, Complete
School Tale of
The Boys of Greyfriars.

BY

FRANK RICHARDS.

*I shall be glad if my readers will note the Pictorial
Announcement on page 8.*

"Right-ho!"
"I say, Wharton——"
"Mark Linley and Tom Brown can come, too, and we'll get through the half-holiday somehow, and rats to the weather!" Harry remarked.
"I say, you fellows—— I say, Wharton——"
"Hallo! Did you speak, Bunter?"
Billy Bunter blinked indignantly at Wharton through his big spectacles.
"You jolly well know I did! I've been trying to make my voice heard for the last half-hour while you've been jawing!"
"And the voice of the porpoise was heard in the land," murmured Frank Nugent, addressing nobody in particular.
Bunter blinked at him.
"Oh, really, Nugent——"
"Well, whistle for Bob, if you're going to," said Nugent.
"Otherwise, let Bunter take a run along the passage and tell him. A little run will give him an appetite. You know how little he eats."
"I say, you fellows, do let me speak! It's awfully important! It may mean this study rolling in wealth!"
"Go hon!"
"Another blessed scheme for getting rich quick!" groaned Nugent. "Well, I suppose we've got to listen to it? Go ahead!"
Wharton took out his watch.
"We'll give him three minutes," he said.

"That's right! Three-minute rounds and a five-bar rest," said Nugent. "Make the most of it, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Get ahead!"

"Well, I was going to ask you, do any of you happen to know—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said a cheery voice, as Bob Cherry, of the Remove, put his head into the study. "What are you chaps doing this afternoon, besides blessing the weather?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We're going into the gym."

"I say, you fellows—"

"How awfully long-winded you are, Bunter!" exclaimed Wharton. "Are you ever coming to the point? You've only got two minutes now."

"How can a chap speak if you keep on interrupting him?" said Bunter with a glare of indignation. "Look here, do any of you fellows happen to know—"

"Sorry I interrupted you," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Still, what's done can't be undone, so let Bunter remain interrupted, and let us buzz off."

"Look here—"

"Will you get on with the washing, Bunter, or will you not?"

"I—I—I— Look here, do any of you fellows happen to know—"

"I believe I've heard you say that before."

"Do you happen to know of any place where you can exchange old coins—pieces of eight, and so on—for modern money?" said Bunter. "It's important."

The chums of the Remove stood round Billy Bunter, and stared at him. There was a momentary silence in the study.

Billy Bunter was frequently surprising his chums, but he had never surprised them more than by that particular question.

The fat junior, evidently pleased with the impression he had made, swelled visibly, and blinked at the juniors.

"Well?" he said.

"Old coins!" said Nugent.

"Pieces of eight!" murmured Wharton.

"Exactly! You see, I don't want a lot of public fuss made about the matter, or the Government will come swooping down and collaring a lot of the tin. You know what our blessed Government is—it's not safe to be rich in these days; you have to pay as much in taxes as if you were poor! I'm going to keep it awfully dark about the treasure."

"The—the what?"

"The treasure."

"What treasure?"

"The Greyfriars treasure."

"You don't mean to say you've found it?" yelled Bob Cherry, in great excitement.

"Well, not exactly found it."

"You fellows coming out?" said Tom Brown, of New Zealand, coming into the study. "Hallo! What is this—a tea-fight or a council of war?"

"Neither," said Wharton, laughing. "Bunter is telling us about the Greyfriars treasure. It seems he's on the track."

The New Zealand junior looked puzzled.

"The Greyfriars treasure!" he ejaculated. "What on earth's that?"

"Oh, you're a new chap, and I dare say you haven't heard of it! There's supposed to be a treasure hidden somewhere in the crypt under the ruined chapel," explained Wharton. "They say it was hidden there by the monks at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. Another tale is that some Cavaliers shoved it there to keep it out of the hands of Cromwell's soldiers. Some give us a yarn that a miser buried it, and died afterwards without saying where it was. There's only one point the yarns agree upon, and that is that there's a treasure buried under the old chapel. Fellows have hunted for it on half-holidays on and off for the last hundred years or so, I believe, but it hasn't turned up."

"It will turn up jolly soon!" said Billy Bunter.

"How do you know?" asked Tom.

"I'm going to look for it."

"Ha, ha, ha! I remember now hearing that it was with a yarn about a buried treasure that Wun Lung got Bulstrode into the crypt the other day, and locked him up there," said Tom Brown.

"Yes; same treasure," said Wharton, laughing.

"I'm going to look for it this afternoon," said Bunter.

"You see, a lot of chaps have looked for it, I know; but, then, I don't suppose there was a chap among them with a really keen and intelligent brain. I'm going to concentrate all my brain power on the matter, and—and discover the treasure!"

"Well, if you concentrate it hard enough something is bound to happen," said Bob Cherry. "Mind you don't turn

it on too hard, though, and burst the brain-box! There would be a flood, and—"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Have you got a clue to the treasure?" asked Tom Brown.

"Well, no; not exactly a clue!"

"What chance have you of finding it, then?"

"Well, I'm going to look for it, you know, and by concentrating my brain power—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Brown—"

"You young ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, in disgust. "Do you mean to say you're trying to find out how to dispose of old coins and pieces of eight before you've even begun to look for the treasure?"

"Well, you see, there's nothing like being prepared. Suppose I come in this afternoon with my pockets bulging with gold pieces? Mrs. Mimble won't take Spanish doubloons and pieces of eight at the tuckshop, and I may have to wait for hours before I even get a feed out of it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you fellows, do you know of any place where old money is exchanged for banknotes? If you do, I might as well send them a wire—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hang it all, he's had six minutes instead of three!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, glancing at his watch. "Come on, kids!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Linley! Come on, Linley, and let's get some practice in the gym!"

"I say, you fellows—"

But the fellows were gone.

Billy Bunter blinked after them with his fat face red with indignation.

"You'll jolly well sing to another tune when I come in with my pockets bulging with doubloons and pieces of eight!" he muttered. "And I jolly well won't share out a cent—so there! Blessed if I know how I stand the rotten jealousy that exists in this study!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bumped!

"BUNTER!"

"Where's Bunter?"

"Anybody seen Bunter?"

Nobody had, apparently.

The Famous Four had come in for an early tea in the study, but instead of finding a bright fire burning, and a smell of toast and poached eggs in the room, they found chill and silence, and no scent whatever of an appetising nature.

Billy Bunter was not there.

"Where on earth's Bunter?" exclaimed Nugent. "He agreed to get tea, and—and— My only hat! I know what this means!"

"It means that he's scoffed all the tommy," said Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

Wharton crossed quickly to the cupboard. The juniors had come in hungry, and it would have been no joke to find that the Falstaff of the Lower Fourth had cleared up all the provisions.

But for once Bunter was unjustly suspected.

The cupboard showed no signs of having been raided. A part of the supplies for tea had been taken, but that was evidently only a "snack."

Nugent looked astonished.

"My hat! Bunter's had the grub at his mercy, and he's only eaten enough for two, instead of clearing up the whole show. What does it mean?"

"He's ill, I suppose."

"The illfulness must be terrific."

"Is he still looking for that giddy treasure?" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton looked a little anxious.

"By Jove! He may have got into some trouble down there, if he is really in the crypt, or someone may have shut him in for a lark, as Wun Lung did Bulstrode the other day. We'd better go and look for him."

"But it's nearly two hours since we left him," said Tom Brown. "He can't have been looking for the treasure all the time surely."

"He may be shut in."

The chums of the Remove, leaving tea for the present, quitted No. 1 Study, and went downstairs. Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, were standing in the doorway, and Wharton stopped to speak to them.

The rivalry was keen between the Upper and Lower Fourth at Greyfriars, and the Remove, though the lower Form of the two, had certainly generally had the best of it.

Temple, Dabney & Co. looked with superior smiles at the Removites. The Upper Fourth fellows prided themselves on their clothes a great deal; and Temple in particular was a great dandy. He wore Etons of the most elegant cut, and his collar and tie were the envy of the Sixth-Form dandies.

"Seen Bunter?" asked Wharton.

"Bunter!" drawled Temple. "Yes; I believe I've seen an animal of that name!"

"When and where?"

"I'm not in the habit of noticing the movements of lower Form kids!" said Temple, in a drawling voice. "I don't think I can make the effort to recall when and where I saw the animal!"

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know!" said Harry Wharton cheerfully. "Where is he?"

"Better go and look for him!" suggested Fry.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Bosh! Where did you see him? I think he went to hunt for the treasure in the crypt, and I'm afraid he may have got shut in there," said Wharton. "I don't want to go grubbing in that black hole for nothing, though, so if you've seen him, tell me where."

"Gentle shepherd, tell me where!" murmured Fry.

"You silly duffers——"

"Oh, run along and play!" said Temple.

"Where did you see Bunter?"

"Let me see," said Temple, with an air of great deliberation. "Where was it, Dab?"

"In the gym," said Dabney.

"Oh, yes; that was it!"

"When?" asked Harry impatiently.

"When was it, Fry?"

"Yesterday," said Fry.

"Oh, rather," said Dabney, "yesterday morning."

The Removites glared at them. The Upper Fourth fellows grinned cheerfully.

"Then you haven't seen him this afternoon?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Not that I remember," said Temple blandly. "But I so seldom notice the movements of Lower Form fags, that——"

Temple got no further.

Harry Wharton made a sign to his comrades, and they rushed upon the trio of the Upper Fourth.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were collared and whirled round in a twinkling, and bumped upon the floor.

"Collar them!"

"Bump them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo!" roared Temple, as his elegant collar flew from its stud, and his tie streamed round his neck. "Ow! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help!"

"Yow!"

"Yaroo!"

"Bump them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Temple, Dabney and Fry were bumped—and bumped again.

The Removites, laughing, crowded on, leaving the three Upper Fourth fellows sprawling on the linoleum, gasping and dusty and dishevelled.

Temple struggled into a sitting position. He felt for his collar and tie, and groped over his waistcoat, from which three buttons had burst in the course of the bumping.

"Ow!" he gasped.

"Oh!" panted Fry.

"Oh, rather!" stuttered Dabney. "Yow!"

"The beasts!"

"The cads!"

"Boys!" It was a severe voice, and Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth, looked down upon the three with a frowning brow. "Boys! Temple, I am surprised at you!"

"Oh, sir——"

"You are the head of your Form," said Mr. Capper severely. "I am surprised and pained to see you sprawling about the floor in this absurd and untidy way!"

Temple scrambled up.

"If—if you please, sir——"

"Really, Temple, this is too bad. And you, too, Fry and Dabney. I am surprised and pained. You would be a disgrace to the First Form!"

"Please, sir——"

"Look at your appearance!" said Mr. Capper sternly. "It is untidy, dishevelled—in a word, disgraceful! I am ashamed of you!"

"But, sir——"

"You will take twenty lines each," said Mr. Capper. THE MAGNET.—No. 105.

NEXT
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The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

"Go and put yourselves tidy at once, and take twenty lines each!"

"Oh, sir——"

"Not a word, Temple!"

And Mr. Capper strode away majestically.

Temple, Dabney & Co. looked at one another ruefully.

"Beastly!" said Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

"All through those Remove beasts!" said Temple, trying to fasten his collar. "I'll make them sit up. Capper didn't see us being bumped, but he might have guessed that we didn't get into this state for the fun of the thing."

"Oh, rather!"

"Oh, what's the good of expecting a master to guess anything?" said Fry disparagingly. "You know what they are."

"I feel as if I had been digging into a dust-heap!" grunted Temple. "I'll make those fags squirm, too. My—my hat!"

"What's the matter now?"

"They're going to the crypt to look for Bunter."

"What about it?"

"Nothing; only you remember the trick Wun Lung played on Bulstrode. Suppose we give those Remove bounders a turn in the crypt——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And not let them out till they apologise humbly," grinned Temple. "That will be a come-down for Wharton & Co."

"Good egg!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Come on, then."

And Temple, Dabney & Co. went out into the dusky quad on the track of the chums of the Remove.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Looking for Bunter.

"I SUPPOSE we'd better go down and look for the duffer?" said Tom Brown.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the ruins of the old chapel of Greyfriars. Before them lay the stone stair leading down to the crypt under the old chapel.

It looked very gloomy and uninviting.

"Yes; I suppose so," grunted Bob Cherry. "Curious thing that we take so much trouble over that fat bounder. Did anybody think of bringing a lantern?"

"I've brought a bicycle lantern," said Mark Linley.

"Good! I've got a match."

Bob struck a match, and the lantern was lighted. Harry Wharton took it in his hand, and led the way down the stone stair to the crypt.

The thick oaken door at the bottom stood wide open, giving admittance to the dark crypt below the chapel.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's not shut in, at all events," ejaculated Bob Cherry. "The door's wide open."

"He may have tumbled into something or other," said Harry. "The crypt isn't the safest place for a short-sighted fellow to wander about in, especially an ass like Bunter! We'd better look for him."

"Ratherfully, my worthy chum."

"Come on, then."

And they plunged into the darkness of the crypt. Save for the gleam of their own lantern, no ray of light broke the dead blackness of the subterranean vaults.

There was no sign of Bunter.

"Bunter! Bunter!"

Harry Wharton shouted the name at the top of his voice.

The sound boomed and echoed along the vaults with a noise like thunder, and boomed back in a thousand echoes to the ears of the Removites.

"Bunter! Bunter!"

"Let me shout," said Bob Cherry. "He'll hear my voice if he's here and he's not stone deaf."

"Ha, ha! Go ahead, then."

"Bunter! Hallo, hallo, hallo! Buntty!"

The booming echoes died away. From the dark distance a faint sound came back.

"Help!"

"It's Bunter!"

"And the silly young ass is in some scrape, just as we expected!" growled Wharton. "Let's go and look for him."

He led the way in the direction of the voice.

There was no gleam of light, and it was evident that Bunter's lantern, if he had one, had gone out.

Wharton held up his lantern as he advanced, with the other juniors close behind. Again and again came the squeaky voice of Billy Bunter from the deep shadows.

"Help! Rescue!"
 "Where are you?" shouted Wharton.
 "Here!"
 "You young ass!"
 "I'm here. Help! I've been here for days, famishing—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You—you heartless beasts! I'm at the point of death—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Which day did you start looking for me?" groaned Bunter. "Have the police been communicated with?"
 "You young ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "You haven't been here two hours."
 "Oh, really, Cherry—"
 Harry Wharton turned the lantern light upon the fat junior. Billy Bunter was standing in a hollow of the floor, into which he had slipped in the course of his explorations. Wharton thought that a child of five could have climbed out of the hole, but it had evidently been beyond Billy Bunter's powers.

The grinning juniors surrounded Bunter, and looked down at him. He blinked up at them piteously. His lantern lay broken and extinguished at his feet, and he was covered with slime. His fat face was pale.

"I say, you fellows, you might help a chap out."
 "Take my hand," said Nugent, reaching down to the fat junior.

"All right. Do be careful!"
 "Take hold tight."
 Bunter grasped Nugent's hand, and Frank braced himself to drag him from the hole.

Bunter clambered up the side, and slipped back just as he reached the top, and fell into the hole again, dragging Frank Nugent with him.

There was a roar from Nugent.
 "Oh, you ass!"
 "Ow!"

"You frabjous ass! What did you do that for?"
 "Groo! Mind my glasses."
 "Blow your glasses!"

"Look here, Nugent, get off my chest, and mind my glasses! If you break them, you'll jolly well have to pay for them; I can tell you that!"

"You dangerous idiot!"
 "Oh, really—"

"For goodness' sake stop that row, and come out!" said Tom Brown. "You shove Bunter up, and I'll take hold of his ears, Nugent!"

"All right."
 "Look here, Brown—"
 "Shut up, Bunter!"
 "I'm not going—"

"Shut up!"
 Between Nugent below, and the other juniors above, Billy Bunter was dragged out. He reached terra-firma, and sank down, gasping and exhausted.

"M-m-my hat! I—I'm nearly done!"
 "Slap him on the back," said Bob Cherry sympathetically.

"He's expiring!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Keep your paws off me!" roared Bunter. "I'm all right! Go and eat coke! I say, you fellows, how long have I really been here?"

"Two hours."
 "It seems like two days, or two years. I'm frightfully hungry. Did you bring any grub with you?"

"No, ass!"
 "Well, I must say you're a thoughtless lot. Hang it all, you might have brought a sandwich or two!"

"Oh, come on! Let's get out!"
 "Have you found the treasure, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton, as the juniors turned back towards the exit from the crypt.

The fat junior blinked at him.
 "Of course I haven't—yet!"
 "You were going to concentrate your brain-power upon it," said Bob Cherry. "Haven't you concentrated yet?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"
 "Here's the door!" said Linley. "Hallo! Look here! I don't remember our shutting this door!"

"We didn't shut it."
 "It's shut now."
 "Well, open it," said Nugent.

Linley took hold of the door, but it did not open as he pulled. He pulled again, harder, but the door remained fast.

The juniors looked at one another seriously in the lantern-light.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "How did the door get

shut? There's no wind in this vault, and we didn't shut it ourselves."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.
 "It's pretty plain—it's a jape."

"My hat!"
 "Oh, I say, you fellows, we're shut in, and I'm fearfully hungry, and—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"
 Wharton rapped on the door with his knuckles.

"Hallo there! Open this door!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Phew! It's Temple, Dabney & Co.!"
 "Don't be an ass, Temple!" called out Wharton. "We want to get out. Open the door."

"Ha, ha, ha! This is where we smile!"
 And the Upper Fourth fellows smiled—loudly. The chums of the Remove looked at one another in dismay.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter to the Rescue.

"FAIRLY caught!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.
 "Well, we're done in, and no mistake!" exclaimed Nugent.

"The done-infulness is terrific!"
 Harry Wharton hammered on the door.

"Temple, open the door, there's a good chap! Don't be an ass, you know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Look here, we're willing to come to terms. What do you want?"

"Now you're talking!" said Temple, through the door.

"You've got to apologise humbly and meekly for your cheek in laying your paws on members of a higher Form—"

"How much higher?" howled Bob Cherry indignantly.

"Open the door, you ass!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"
 "Shut up, Bunter! Look here, Temple—"

"But I say—"
 "Oh, do ring off!"

Temple's chuckle came gleefully through the keyhole.

"Are you going to cave in?" he asked. "You can stay there all night if you like, of course. Or you can follow the subterranean passage out into the wood—it will take you a few hours, but it will be a healthy exercise."

"You—you worm!"
 "By the way, have you found the treasure yet?" called out Fry.

And the Upper Fourth fellows roared again.

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were masters of the situation, there was no doubt about that. They could dictate their own terms.

"We're not going to give in!" muttered Tom Brown. "I'd rather stay here all night than let the Upper Fourth crow over us!"

And the New Zealand junior voiced the sentiments of the whole party. Bunter, however, was an exception.

"I say, you fellows—" he began.

"Oh, shut up, do!"
 "I'm hungry."

"Rats!"
 "I'm fearfully hungry."

"Bosh!"
 "Look here—"

"Squash him, somebody!"
 "Certainly. The squashfulness of the honourable Bunter is a ripping good wheeze."

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NEXT TUESDAY

ONE PENNY.

"Keep your paws off, Inky; Look here, I've thought of a scheme——"

"We don't want any of your blessed schemes for getting rich quick now," grunted Bob Cherry. "What we want is to get out of this."

"But that's what I mean. I've got a scheme——"

"Well, why can't you say so then?" demanded Bob rather unreasonably. "What a blessed long-winded chap you are, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Get on with the scheme, or dry up!" said Bob crossly.

"Well, you know what a wonderful ventriloquist I am——"

"I know what a wonderful idiot you are——"

"I don't know whether I could make my voice come through a wooden door——"

"Well, you can make it come out of a wooden head!"

"Oh, really——"

"Bosh! Ring off! We shall have to get out of this by the underground passage that Bulstrode went through the other week, you chaps."

"I suppose so."

"But I say, you fellows, I've got a jolly good scheme! Do shut up a minute!"

Billy Bunter, the Remove ventriloquist, went close to the door. The next moment a deep, stern voice startled the Upper Fourth fellows from within the crypt.

"Temple! Open this door at once!"

The Fourth-Formers outside simply jumped.

"My hat! It's Quelch!"

"The Remove-master!"

"Oh, rather! Phew!"

Temple unlocked the door with feverish haste. He hadn't had the least suspicion that the Remove Form-master had gone into the vaults. To shut up a Form-master was a little more than a joke, and the Upper Fourth fellows opened the door in fear and trembling.

But the stately form of Mr. Quelch did not appear to their startled eyes.

There was a rush of the Removites from within, and Temple, Dabney & Co. were bowled over on the stone steps in a twinkling.

"Hallo!" gasped Temple. "What the—how the——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help! Ow! Yow——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump them!"

The Removites collared the trio, and bumped them for the second time that evening with great heartiness.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were left rolling on the stone steps.

The juniors hurried on, laughing, and they gave Billy Bunter appreciative slaps on the back that knocked all the breath out of the fat junior.

Temple sat up on the lowest step and gasped.

"Where was Quelch?"

"He wasn't there."

"But—but——"

"It was that fat ventriloquist beast imitating his voice," gasped Fry. "What silly owls we were not to guess that it was a trick!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Well, I thought Quelch had gone down there to find them, or something," said Temple. "How was I to guess? We'll make that fat beast squirm for this."

"Oh, rather!"

The "fat beast" in question was already squirming, as a matter of fact. Bob Cherry and Nugent had slapped him on the back together, and at the same moment Tom Brown gave him a friendly smack on the chest.

Bunter gasped and nearly collapsed. He clung on to Harry Wharton, puffing away like a grampus.

"Oh—ooo—ooooch!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter, Bunter?" exclaimed Bob.

"Grooch!"

"Better give him a smack on the back, I suppose——"

Billy Bunter squirmed away.

"Ow! Stop it!"

"I'm trying to help you recover."

"Yow! Get away!"

"Well, of all the ungrateful beasts——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" gasped Bunter, recovering his breath.

"You've nearly choked me. I—I—Groooch!"

"Well, we've done the Upper Fourth, and that's one comfort!" grinned Nugent. "Come up to the study and be fed, Bunt. You deserve it."

Bunter brightened up at once.

"Good! I'm fearfully hungry. I was languishing for hours and hours in that fearful place, and——"

"Rats!"

"Oh, really, Nugent!"

"It's not two hours since you started," said Wharton.

"Come and feed, and don't romance to fellows who know."

And Bunter grunted, and went up to feed.

Although Bunter had got them into the scrape in the first

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NEXT

WEEK:

"THE GREYFRIARS PLOT."

NEXT
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

place, the juniors willingly admitted that he deserved some credit for getting them out of it, and they rewarded him in a way that went straight to his heart—by feeding him royally. Billy Bunter beamed at them across the table through his big glasses.

"Another tart, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter shook his head.

"No, I think not, Cherry, thank you! I'm not a greedy chap, and 'nuff's as good as a feast, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I know you chaps think I'm greedy, but I only like a lot."

"Sure you're finished? You ought to make a good innings while you've got the chance," said Nugent.

Billy Bunter cast a longing eye upon the jam tarts that remained upon the table, but though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak. Billy Bunter simply could not eat any more.

"No, I'm finished!" he said, with a sigh.

And for once in his history Billy Bunter rose from the tea-table and left something on it uneaten.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Clue for Bunter.

"I SAY, you fellows——"

It was the following day, and the chums of the Remove were putting in a little football practice before afternoon school. The weather had changed for the better, and it gave them what Bob Cherry described as a look-in.

Billy Bunter ambled up to the footer-field with a thoughtful expression upon his fat face.

He called to the juniors several times, but received no reply.

Harry Wharton & Co. were not likely to leave off their footer practice to hear what the Owl of the Remove had to say.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Well passed!"

"Now, then, kick!"

"Hurrah!"

"Beasts!" murmured Billy Bunter. "They'll be jolly well ready to share the treasure when I discover it, I know that."

"Of course they will," said Temple's voice at his elbow; and Billy Bunter turned his head and blinked at the captain of the Upper Fourth. "Have you discovered a clue to the giddy treasure yet, Bunter?"

"I'm not likely to tell you, Temple," said Billy. "I'm going to keep it for myself when I find it, of course."

"But the Government have to take their whack," said Fry.

"Oh, rather!" chimed in Dabney.

The fat junior shook his head.

"Certainly not. I consider that an extortion. The Government can go and eat coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If I have the job of finding the treasure, I'm jolly well going to keep it," said Bunter. "If it amounts to as much as a million pounds, I shall invest half of it, so as to be able to live without working all my life, and spend the rest in standing a series of extensive feeds to all the fellows in Greyfriars."

Temple chuckled.

"Well, you're such a generous chap, Bunter, that you really ought to succeed," he remarked. "I suppose you're going to invite us."

"Oh, yes! I'll ask you, if I make a million pounds. I shall be able to afford to stand something decent."

"Well, yes, you can get a lot of jam-tarts for a million pounds," agreed Temple, and his companions chuckled.

"Perhaps you would like a tip about finding the treasure."

Bunter looked eager.

"If you can give me a clue, I'll let you have a share in the treasure," he said. "I have heard that there is an old document in the school library that nobody can understand, which contains a clue. If we could get hold of it——"

"By Jove!" said Temple. "That's really not a bad idea. But what I was thinking of is this. Don't you think it likely that when the monks, or Cavaliers, or whoever it was, were burying the treasure, they may have dropped a few coins around?"

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Well then, if you searched about, and found an odd coin or two somewhere, it would give you a clue to the treasure."

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, look what I picked up in the vault this morning, when I was having a look round."

Temple held out a coin.

A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Billy Bunter grabbed it eagerly, and blinked at it through his glasses.

"My hat! It's a crown!"

Temple nodded.

"Yes, that's it—a crown-piece of the reign of Charles II."

"Phew!"

"Jolly good—eh?"

"And you really picked it up in the vaults?"

"Certainly!"

"Where?"

"Just there at the beginning to the subterranean passage to the old priory in the wood."

"Phew! I think I'll go and have a look and see if there are any more. That's just a likely spot for burying the treasure, isn't it?"

"Well, I shouldn't wonder."

Billy Bunter scuttled away from the football-field, and disappeared in the direction of the ruined chapel. Temple looked after him with a grin.

His companions seemed perplexed.

"Did you really pick that coin up in the crypt, Temple?" asked Fry.

Temple stared at his comrade.

"Didn't you hear me tell Bunter so?"

"Yes, but—"

"I hope you don't doubt my word, Fry."

"No, but—"

"I picked it up in the crypt, just where I told him," said Temple cheerfully. "I've told him nothing but the truth—only I haven't bothered him with the petty details of the case."

"What details?"

"Why, such as the fact that I dropped the coin there first, before I picked it up," explained Temple.

Fry and Dabney stared at him, and then burst into a laugh.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Fry. "How good! Where did you get the coin?"

"Borrowed it from the collection in the school library," said Temple. "I'm going to return it now, in case I lose it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I told Bunter I picked it up in the vaults—and so I did. I went down into the crypt on purpose to drop it there and pick it up again. I'm a truthful chap."

"You are. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter won't find any there, I suppose," grinned Dabney.

"He will find something."

"And what?"

A cross marked in the ground with a trowel," said Temple coolly. "I rather think he will take it as indicating the hiding-place of the treasure. I made it myself an hour ago."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I rather think there will be a treasure-hunt, with all No. 1 Study joining in it. The cackle will be up against them presently."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Upper Fourth fellows laughed so heartily that the Remove footballers looked towards them, wondering what the joke was.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Great Discovery.

BILLY BUNTER hurried towards the ruined chapel as fast as his fat little legs could carry him.

The sight of the ancient coin had caused him feverish excitement. He had no doubt of his abilities to discover the treasure, if it was to be discovered. All he wanted was a clue; and that clue Temple had thoughtlessly furnished him with, instead of hunting for the treasure himself and keeping it.

Billy Bunter's heart was beating as he descended the stone stair into the crypt.

He opened the oaken door, and jammed it open with a stone so that there would be no danger of its closing, and then entered the crypt.

He had left a lantern there, and he now struck a match and lighted it, and as soon as it was burning he hurried towards the spot indicated by Temple.

The dark opening of the subterranean passage, which led under the wood to the old priory, loomed up before him.

Bunter halted, and cast the light of the lantern upon the ground.

It was here that the coin had been picked up.

Doubtless it was only one that had been dropped by the old monks when they carried the bags of gold and silver down there to conceal them from their enemies.

Probably there were others scattered about; and in any case there ought to be some clue to the burying-place.

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Billy Bunter scanned the ground as closely as his short sight would allow him.

He flashed the light of the lantern to and fro, and hardly an inch of the damp and slimy surface of the ground escaped him.

Suddenly he gave a start.

"My hat!"

Deep in the earth, as deep as if newly-cut, appeared a large X.

Bunter stared at it with beating heart, his eyes glimmering behind his glasses.

What did it mean there?

It could only be a sign that it was upon this spot that the old treasure of the monks of Greyfriars was buried.

The fat junior trembled so much that the lantern nearly fell from his hand. His round eyes bulged from his head.

"M-m-my hat!" he muttered. "I—I've found it. I've really found it. The treasure must be buried here. This is the sign they made so as to know the spot again. My hat! I've only got to dig it up to be rich for life!"

For some moments he remained standing there, lantern in hand, staring at the symbol engraved in the earth.

There was no doubt in Billy Bunter's mind now. The treasure of Greyfriars was there, under his feet.

It was only a question of digging it up. A sudden fear of being observed made Bunter turn quickly from the spot. He left the crypt, extinguishing the lantern at the door, and hurried away to try to think the matter over calmly.

He started violently as he received a slap on the shoulder.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Found anything?" asked Temple.

"Oh, is it you, Temple? You startled me."

"I suppose you've discovered something."

"Oh, I haven't found any coins!" said Bunter. "Some fellows have all the luck. I don't suppose I shall find anything, you know."

"Why, yesterday you were as full of confidence as anything!" exclaimed Temple, in surprise. "What's the matter now?"

Bunter blinked uneasily.

The matter was, that he felt he had been a great deal too open-mouthed on the subject of the treasure, and now that he had found a clue, he realised that he would have done more wisely to say less, for every incautious word might bring a rival into the field.

"Well, you see, there really isn't much chance of finding the treasure after all these years," he said. "And then, we can't get hold of that document in the library which gives information about it."

"Are you going to give it up, then?" asked Temple, with a wink at his companions.

"I don't know, really."

"You haven't found anything in the way of a clue?"

"Oh, no, nothing!" said Bunter eagerly. "There's no coins there, and no sign of any kind, such as a cross marked in the ground, or anything of that sort."

Temple nearly exploded, but he restrained himself in time.

"Hard cheese!" he said sympathetically.

"Yes, awfully, isn't it?"

And Billy Bunter took himself off, glad to escape the Upper Fourth fellows and their awkward questions.

Temple, Dabney & Co. grinned at one another.

"The fat little beast!" said Temple. "Fancy a chap rolling out lies like that!"

"He ought to be licked."

"Oh, rather!"

"Never mind; there will be fun in this—especially if we can drag No. 1 Study into it, and make them all look silly asses."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter's keeping it dark, so as to keep all the treasure—ha, ha, ha!—for himself. It will be a lark. I expect he will turn out after dark to dig it up."

"My hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"And if Wharton & Co. turn out with him—"

"Oh, don't!" gasped Fry, with a shriek of laughter.

"To think of their turning out to dig up nothing in the old crypt—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the chums of the Remove came in fresh and rosy from their footer. "What's the joke?"

"Nothing," said Temple.

"What were you laughing at, then?"

"Need you ask? You've just been playing footer."

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled Fry and Dabney.

Bob Cherry was at a loss for a reply, for a moment, and the Upper Fourth fellows took advantage of it to walk away still laughing.

"The bounders!" said Nugent. "They had you that



time, Bob. But I wonder what the joke really is? Something up against us, I expect."

"Oh, that's certain!"

"There's the school bell," said Mark Linley.

"Oh, come in, and blow the Upper Fourth!"

And the Removites crowded into the Form-room.

When they took their places there, there was one fellow missing, and Mr. Quelch glanced round in search of him with a frowning brow.

"Where is Bunter? Ah!"

Billy Bunter entered the Form-room just as the master inquired after him. He dodged quickly into his place, and fell over Bob Cherry's long legs in his hurry, and went to the floor with a bump and a gasp that sounded like air escaping from a punctured tyre.

"Ow!"

"You ass!" muttered Bob. "Get off my feet!"

"Ow!"

"Bunter!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Ow! Yes, sir!"

"You are late!"

"I'm sincerely sorry, sir, it was only a minute, and—"

"Go to your place!"

"Yes, sir—certainly, sir!"

"What makes you late, Bunter?"

"I—I—I—"

"Well?" rapped out the Form-master.

"I—I was thinking, sir—"

There was a giggle from the class. Mr. Quelch smiled a most sarcastic smile.

"Indeed, Bunter! Under the extraordinary circumstances I cannot but excuse you. You may take your place." And Billy Bunter took his place.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch Refuses a Good Offer.

HARRY WHARTON glanced at the fat junior several times during afternoon school.

There was certainly something on Bunter's mind.

He was never a bright scholar, and he usually tried the Form-master's patience severely, and he was the despair of the mathematics-master and of Monsieur Charpentier.

But this afternoon his wits seemed to be wool-gathering with a vengeance.

He misunderstood the simplest matters, gave random answers to the simplest questions, remained in a brown study after the Form-master had spoken to him three times, and upon the whole showed plainly that, like the dying gladiator, "his eyes were with his heart, and that was far away."

Mr. Quelch was not the kind of master to be bothered by absent-minded beggars.

He gave Billy Bunter a steadily increasing quantity of lines, and when that failed of effect, he tried the pointer.

A rap on the knuckles brought the fat junior back to this world with a howl.

He blinked round at Bob Cherry, whom he suspected of having played a joke on him, not observing the Form-master just behind him.

"You ass!" he gasped.

"Eh?"

"You silly ass!"

Bob made a wild grimace to warn Bunter that he was characterising the Remove-master in that way, but Bunter was too short-sighted and preoccupied to see or understand.

"You frabjous idiot!" he gasped, rubbing his knuckles. "Only a dangerous lunatic would rap a chap suddenly on the knuckles."

And then the whole class gasped, too.

Mr. Quelch turned purple.

He laid a strong grasp on Bunter's collar at the back, and lifted him from his seat. Billy Bunter wriggled in his grip.

"Ow! Leggo! You idiot!"

"Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"What!"

Billy Bunter jumped almost out of his skin.

For the first time it dawned upon him that it was the master of the Remove whom he had been talking to so freely.

His jaw dropped, and he blinked at Mr. Quelch through his spectacles like a dying fish.

"Oh, sir!"

"Bunter! How dare you?"

"I'm s-s-sincerely s-s-sorry, sir," spluttered Bunter, "I didn't know it was you, sir."

"Bunter!"

"How was I to know you would play a silly trick like that, sir—I mean—"

"Bunter! Stand out!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Stand out at once!"

"Oh, very well, sir; but—"

"Not a word!"

Billy Bunter reluctantly went out before the class.

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ONE
PENNY.

Mr. Quelch selected a strong cane from his desk, with a grim and extremely businesslike expression upon his face.

The fat junior eyed him nervously.

"Bunter! You have been most inattentive and careless this afternoon."

"I'm sincerely sorry, sir, but—"

"You have paid no attention whatever to your lessons."

"Yes, sir; but I—I was—"

"You have no excuse to make, Bunter."

"I—I was thinking of something more important, sir," stammered Billy Bunter. "That is to say—I—I mean—"

Mr. Quelch's brow was like thunder.

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

"I—I'd rather not, if you d-d-d-don't mind, sir. I—I'd rather tell you what I've been thinking about, sir, if you don't mind, and you'd see how awfully important it was, sir."

Mr. Quelch looked at him curiously.

"I do not understand you, Bunter."

"You see, sir—"

"If you are in trouble of any sort, Bunter, and it is weighing on your mind, I could make some allowances for you," said Mr. Quelch, more kindly.

"Yes, sir. You see—"

"In a word, what is the matter with you, Bunter?"

"I—I—I—"

"If you have no explanation to offer, hold out your hand."

"It's an awfully important matter, sir."

"What is?"

"The—the matter I've been turning over in my mind, sir," said Bunter, with an eye upon the cane—a very wary eye.

"Explain yourself at once."

Bunter blinked towards the grinning class.

"I don't want to tell everybody, sir. It's—it's an awfully important matter, and very private and confidential."

Mr. Quelch wrinkled his brows. He began to think that the fat junior might be in some real trouble—bad news from home, or something of that sort. He signed to the Owl of the Remove to follow him to the desk, out of hearing of the class unless voices were raised.

"Now, Bunter, explain yourself," he said.

"Certainly, sir. With pleasure."

"Well, go on."

"I was thinking about a big scheme, sir. I—I shouldn't mind going halves with you, sir," said Bunter.

Mr. Quelch stood petrified.

"You see, sir," said Bunter, encouraged by the silence of the Form-master, and too short-sighted to read the expression of his face, "you see, sir, it's a splendid scheme, and I've got a clue."

"A clue!"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you mean? Are you mad?"

"Certainly not, sir. I've got a clue—a clue to the Greyfriars treasure, you know."

"The—the what?"

"You know about the Greyfriars treasure, sir—it's hidden in the crypt under the old chapel," said Bunter. "I've got a clue to it."

"Bunter!"

"That's what I was thinking about, sir. I think you'll agree that it was more important than blessed Latin."

"Bunter!"

"If you like to go halves with me, sir, we could both get awfully rich—"

"Bunter!"

"It's a jolly good offer, sir, don't you think so?"

Mr. Quelch found his voice at last.

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

The fat junior started back, and stared at the Form-master in dismay. He had imagined that he was getting on swimmingly with Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Hold out your hand!" thundered the Remove-master.

"I sometimes suspect, Bunter, that you are weak in the head. At other times it seems to me that you are the most impertinent boy in Greyfriars."

"Oh, sir!"

"Hold out your hand at once!"

Billy Bunter cast a wild blink around him; but there was no escape. He had to hold out his hand, and then the other, and he received a cut on each that made him jump.

Then Mr. Quelch shook a severe forefinger at him.

"Go back to your place, Bunter, and do not venture to talk such nonsense to me again, or I shall punish you severely."

"Ow!"

"Don't make those ridiculous noises, Bunter."

"No, sir. Ow!"

"Go back to your place at once."

"Yes, sir. Ow!"

And Billy Bunter squirmed back to his place in class.

For the rest of the afternoon, he rubbed his hands and muttered, and thought less of the vast wealth that was to fall to him as soon as he found an opportunity of digging it up. Mr. Quelch passed him over lightly after that.

When lessons were over, and the Lower Fourth crowded out, Bob Cherry gave the fat junior a slap on the back.

"Hard cheese, Bunt!" he exclaimed sympathetically.

"Ow!"

"Why, what's the matter now?"

"You've kn-n-n-nocked all the breath out of me, you ass!"

"Never mind; you're going to roll in wealth soon," said Bob. "I suppose you've discovered some clues to the treasure, haven't you?"

Billy Bunter blinked at him.

"That's telling!"

"Phew! You don't mean to say you really have a clue!"

"I don't mean to say anything," grunted Bunter.

And he rolled away, leaving Bob Cherry staring.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

On the Track of the Treasure.

"WHAT'S the matter with Bunter?"

"Oh, he's on the track of the giddy treasure."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of No. 1 Study did not take William George Bunter very seriously.

Billy was taking himself seriously enough. He went about for the rest of that day in a brown study, thinking and making plans, and putting on such an air of mystery that the dullest observer could see perfectly plainly that great schemes were working in his mind.

If anybody had taken the treasure seriously, and imagined for a moment that there might be anything in Bunter's schemes, the fat junior would have given himself away hopelessly.

But Bunter was quite safe, because even if the Greyfriars treasure existed, nobody believed for a moment that Bunter would ever discover it, or a clue to it.

The chums of No. 1 Study took the whole matter as a joke.

Billy Bunter came into the study at teatime, and found the juniors at tea, and for once Bunter was late for a meal.

He blinked at the grinning faces that greeted him.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Nothing for you!" said Nugent. "There weren't enough eggs to go round, and you weren't here to fetch any more."

"Oh, it's all right, I'll have the cake."

And Bunter took the whole cake from the plate, and began to eat it. The juniors stared at him blankly.

"This cake will be enough for me," said Bunter. "It's a three-pound one, I think."

"Put that cake down, you—your wolf!"

"I suppose I am to have something? Look here, you fellows, I've been thinking it out," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "I've made up my mind to let you fellows—"

"Put that cake down!"

"Oh, all right! You might give a fellow a chance to get a bite. I haven't had anything in my mouth for hours. I've decided to let you fellows into it."

"Into your mouth?" ejaculated Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent, of course not! I mean, into the scheme."

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"What scheme?"

"About the treasure."

"Oh, get off the treasure!" said Nugent. "We're getting fed up with that. If you get shut up in the vaults again, you can jolly well stay there."

"But I've got a clue—"

"Rats!"

"A real clue, made by the old monks when they buried the Spanish doubloons and the pieces of eight."

"Ha, ha, ha! What on earth were monks doing with doubloons and pieces of eight?" shouted Nugent. "You're getting the yarns mixed."

"Well, that's only a detail. There's a treasure, wherever it came from, and whoever buried it," said Bunter, "I know now exactly where it's buried."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's a sign made in the ground where it was put."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I've found it!"

The juniors yelled with laughter.

It was not difficult for them to guess that someone had played a trick upon Bunter, and they had not the faintest expectation of finding anything in his clue but a joke of some humorous junior.

Billy Bunter blinked at them with glowering indignation.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've got a real clue—the real thing, with no doubt about the matter. You see—"

"Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's as safe as houses."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm willing to let you fellows have a share if you help me to dig it up," said Bunter. "We shall have to go darkly, at dead of night, or we may be surprised."

Harry Wharton wiped his eyes.

"Better go masked as well, I suppose," gurgled Nugent. "And don't forget your trusty revolver."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you fellows—"

"Oh, Bunter, you're too funny for words!"

"The funniness of the honourable Bunter is terrific."

"It's a jolly good offer," growled Bunter indignantly. "If you don't help me dig up the treasure, I jolly well sha'n't share it with you."

"Never mind; we'll manage on our pocket-money. We'll agree not to be envious when we see you rolling in wealth."

"Look here, Bunter, somebody's been japing you."

"That's enough, Wharton. I know what I know."

"But what do you know?"

"If you like to help me dig up the treasure—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, all right, I'll leave you out of it!" growled Bunter. And he stamped out of the study and slammed the door.

The juniors yelled with laughter.

"My hat! Bunter is getting funnier and funnier!" grinned Nugent. "Phew! The fat oyster's taken the cake with him, though."

Billy Bunter carried that cake to a safe corner, and there he consumed it almost to the last crumb. He always declared that his brain worked more quickly when he was eating, though there were fellows who asseverated that it never worked at all. While he was demolishing the cake, Bunter thought out a scheme for safely disposing of the treasure.

He waited anxiously for night.

During the evening Bunter was not much in evidence.

As a matter of fact, he was scouting. He took a pick from one place, and a spade from another, and placed them in readiness near the old chapel.





"Give me the spade, Billy," said Harry Wharton. "It makes me fit to see you work. I'd sooner do it myself!"

Then he calmly took possession of Bob Cherry's acetylene bicycle lantern, and charged it with carbide of calcium, and placed it ready with a box of matches near the pick and spade.

All was in readiness then for the treasure hunt.

Billy Bunter waited feverishly for night, when he was to steal quietly out of the dormitory and dig up the buried treasure.

His fat face was full of excitement when the Remove went up to bed.

Temple, Dabney & Co. met him on the stairs, and they grinned as they read the suppressed eagerness in the fat junior's face.

Temple tapped him on the shoulder.

"Clues working all right, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Bunter. "There's nothing in that yarn."

"Haven't you been hunting for the treasure this evening?"

"Oh, no. I'm not thinking of looking for it to-night at all, and I haven't got a spade or anything ready."

And Billy Bunter hurried on.

Temple, Dabney & Co. chuckled.

"He's going out to-night, then, to dig in the crypt," grinned Temple. "I only hope the No. 1 Study bounders go with him, that's all. We'll never let them hear the end of it."

"Oh, rather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove went to bed. But they did not all go to sleep. Billy Bunter lay in a state of suppressed excitement, longing to hear serene snoring round him, so that he could steal unobserved from the dormitory.

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The Removees were soon asleep, with two exceptions. Billy Bunter sat up in bed, and listened intently.

The dormitory was very quiet.

The fat junior stepped out of bed, and hastily donned his clothes. Then a voice in the gloom made him jump. It was Harry Wharton's.

"Is that you moving about, Bunter?"

"Oh! You—you startled me, Wharton. Ye-e-es."

"Where are you going?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Look here, you young ass, get back into bed, and don't be a duffer."

"I'm going out," said Bunter. "I suppose I can go out if I like? If you were a decent chap, and stood by a fellow in your own study, you'd come with me."

"I shall go with you if you go," said Harry, getting out of bed. "You will get into some mischief otherwise. But you'd better get into bed again."

"I'm going to dig up the treasure."

"You young ass!"

"Well, you'll jolly well see if you come with me, Wharton."

"Oh, I'll come!"

And they left the dormitory together. Wharton, of course, had not the slightest faith in Bunter, but he did not want the fat junior to go out alone. Billy was certain to get into some kind of trouble, and Wharton had somehow dropped into the habit of looking after the Owl of the Remove.

As they went quietly downstairs, there was a faint sound from the direction of the Upper Fourth dormitory. Wharton paused and looked back.

"What was that, Billy?"

"What? I didn't hear anything."

"Oh, all right! Come on!"
And they went on. Three shadowy figures loomed up in the gloom when they were gone, and there were three separate suppressed chuckles.

"Wharton's there," muttered Temple. "I recognised his voice."

"Oh, rather!"

"Wharton and Bunter; the others, perhaps. I don't know. Let's follow them."

"Oh, rather!"

And the Upper Fourth trio, silent as ghosts in their socks, followed on the track of the two Removites.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Darkly at Dead of Night.

"**W**HERE are you going, Billy?"

"Into the crypt."

"The crypt—under the chapel—again?"

"Yes; the treasure's there."

"You ass!"

"Well, seeing's believing, and you'll soon see. Careful how you go down the steps here. I've got a spade here, and—"

Crash!

"Yaroo!"

"What are you making that row for, Wharton?"

"You frabjous duffer!" groaned Harry, rubbing his shin.

"I've found the spade, that's all. Why couldn't you tell me it was there?"

"Well, I did tell you, and—"

"I've barked my shin, you ass!"

"Never mind! Don't make a fuss about a little pain, for goodness' sake! I— Ow! Yaroo!"

"What's up?"

"I—I've fallen over the spade."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! I'm hurt."

"Never mind. Don't make a fuss over a little pain, you know, for goodness' sake!"

"I'm hurt! Ow! I think my leg's broke!"

"Then it's no good going on. I'll go back to the dorm."

"Here, I say—Wharton—it's all right—I can get up. Lend me a hand."

"Oh, all right!"

Harry Wharton caught hold of the fat junior by the ears, and helped him up. Billy Bunter yelled.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"You asked me to help you."

"Ow! Yow! Yah!"

"Haven't you got a lantern here?" demanded Wharton, as Bunter rubbed his ears and growled.

"Ow! Yes."

"Where is it?"

"On the step, unless you've kicked it off."

Harry Wharton groped for the lantern, and found it, and turned on the water-tap. The carbide of calcium began to give off its fragrant perfume, and in a minute or so he had the lantern alight, with its bright white rays cutting through the gloom like a knife.

"Come on, Bunter."

"I'll carry the lantern if you like, Wharton, as I'm going to show the way. You can carry the spade and the pick."

"Oh, all right! Get on!"

The door of the crypt was unfastened, and Bunter led the way in, lantern in hand. Dark and gloomy was the old crypt as the juniors entered it.

Billy Bunter cast a nervous glance around. But for Wharton's presence, it is probable that the fat treasure-hunter would have turned back at the door, and that even the prospect of handling doubloons and pieces of eight would not have drawn him alone into the vault. But Harry Wharton appeared to be quite unconcerned by the silence and the darkness, and Billy Bunter took courage from him.

"Come on, Wharton," he said. "D-d-d-don't be n-n-nervous, you know."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I'm not likely to be nervous when I'm with such a brave chap as you are, Billy," he said.

"Well, no. I know I'm awfully brave. I— W-w-w-what was that, Wharton?"

"Nothing."

"Didn't you hear a sound?"

"No."

"Not a stealthy footstep?"

"Not a sound."

"Or a sound like the rustling of a-a-a ghostly robe, or something?" stammered Billy Bunter, blinking round into the gloom.

"No, ass. Do get on."

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NEXT TUESDAY



Bunter, trying to conceal his trepidation—without much success—led the way, and in a few minutes reached the spot where the subterranean tunnel opened in the vaults. There the fat junior halted.

"Is this the place, Billy?"

"Yes, rather! Did you see anything just then, Wharton?"

"Only a silly ass!"

"I—I mean something yonder. I thought I saw a gleam of—of white—something like a ghost," stammered Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, this is the place. Do shut up. You'll m-m-m-make me feel n-n-nervous soon. Look here, and you'll see the cross cut in the ground."

Bunter turned the light upon that sign in the damp soil. Harry Wharton looked at it, and laughed again.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at, and it sounds creepy," said Bunter peevishly. "You can see the clue as well as I can."

"Is that the clue?"

"Of course it is."

"And how long do you think it has been there?"

"Oh, thousands of years, I suppose," said Bunter, whose historical knowledge was not extensive or accurate; "ever since the Spanish Armada, or the dissolution of the galleons—I mean the monasteries."

"You young ass! It hasn't been there twenty-four hours."

"Eh! What?"

"Can't you see how fresh the mark is?" demanded Wharton impatiently. "Look here, it's trodden out in one place where I've stepped. Lots of people have trodden here, I suppose, in the last two or three hundred years. A cut in the soil like that would have disappeared of its own accord, even if it hadn't been trodden out."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"It's a jape, you ass! Somebody's pulling your leg."

"I'm accustomed to jealousy among the chaps in my study," said Bunter, "but I never expected you to refuse the evidence of your own eyes out of a petty spirit of envy."

"Eh!"

"I'll hold the lantern while you dig, and we'll jolly soon see whether there's a treasure or not."

"You utter ass!"

"Will you dig and see?"

"Of course I won't! It's all rot!"

"Oh, you hold the lantern, then, while I dig!" said Billy Bunter sulkily. "You know I'm of a delicate constitution, and ought not to have to do any hard work. But look here, just hold the lantern and watch me."

And Bunter began with the pick, and loosened some of the soil round the cross, and then set to work with the spade.

Bunter was not industrious, and he was not in good condition. The sweat was soon rolling down his fat face, but he made little progress with the spade.

Wharton set down the lantern.

"Give me the spade, Billy! It makes me ill to see you work! I'd rather do it myself!"

"Well, I'd rather you did, too!" gasped Bunter.

He handed Wharton the spade willingly enough. Harry set actively to work. He had not the faintest expectation of finding anything but earth and stones, but he did not object to a little exercise, and anything was better than standing still and watching Bunter fumbling with the spade.

The soil was turned up rapidly under the strong spade-strokes of the active young captain of the Remove. A heap grew larger and larger beside the excavation, and the latter was soon three feet deep, but no treasure had yet come to light.

Billy Bunter watched, blinking eagerly through his spectacles, and eating chunks of toffee and chocolate which he had thoughtfully brought in his pocket.

Four feet deep, and then Wharton stopped and leaned on the spade, breathing rather heavily.

"You see, there's nothing in it, Billy."

"You haven't gone deep enough."

"Look here, I'm not going through to Australia!" growled Wharton. "How blessed deep do you want to go?"

"Oh, say ten or twelve feet!"

Wharton threw down the spade.

"You young ass, that would be a day's work for a couple of navvies! And why on earth should the treasure be buried so deep? Besides, there isn't any treasure, and anybody but a silly ass like yourself would know it. I'm done!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"If you want to go on you can do it, and I'll take a rest."

"You know I'm not strong!"

ANSWERS



ONE PENNY.

"I know you're jolly lazy."

"You see—"

Harry Wharton leaned against a pillar.

"I'm done. I'll hold the lantern, if you like."

Billy Bunter grunted as he took the spade.

"Oh, very well! But I think you're horribly selfish. I never met such a selfish set of fellows as the chaps in my study. I— Oh!"

"What's the matter?"

"Oh! Ow! Look! Help! Ghosts!"

Billy Bunter dropped the spade into the excavation, and nearly fell in after it. Harry Wharton whirled round to look in the direction in which the fat junior was staring with wildly terrified eyes.

A figure in white had loomed up suddenly in the distant blackness of the vault.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Temple & Co. Smile.

HARRY WHARTON started, and his heart beat quickly. Billy Bunter gave a howl of terror, and bolted. Patter, patter, patter—bump! Bunter was over in the darkness, and rolling on the floor.

"Help! Ghosts! Rescue! Murder! Fire!"

"Bunter!"

"Help! Ghosts! Fire!"

Wharton ran towards him with the lantern. He grasped the fat junior by the shoulder to help him up, and Bunter rolled over and shrieked wildly.

"Ow! Help! Ghosts!"

"Get up, Bunter, you young idiot!"

"Oh, is it you, Wharton? I thought it was the ghost!"

"You young ass, there isn't a ghost—it's only a silly japo."

"Ow! Let's get out."

"I'm going to see who it was!"

Bunter grasped him by the arm.

"Don't leave me, Wharton! Ow! Don't you leave me!"

"But—"

"Come on! Ow! Let's get out!"

"I want to find out—"

"Come on! Come on!" And Bunter dragged the captain of the Remove towards the exit from the vaults.

Harry went very unwillingly. He wanted very much to find out who was playing ghost, and to have a plain talk with him, but Bunter was in such a state of terror that it was better to go.

They left the crypt, and Bunter stumbled up the stairs, and did not leave off whimpering till they stood safe in the open starlight.

"Ow! What a fearful experience! Ow!"

"You duffer, it wasn't a ghost!"

"That's all very well up here, Wharton, but it was different down there," grunted Billy Bunter. "It gave me quite a turn."

"Oh, let's get back to the dorm!"

"All right. We'll go back for the treasure to-morrow."

"You can if you like, but I jolly well sha'n't!" growled Wharton. "There isn't any treasure, any more than there is a ghost. Let's get in."

The two juniors clambered into the window they had left open, and made their way to the Remove dormitory. They reached it without mishap, and Wharton pushed open the door.

All was dark and silent within.

"Quiet, Bunter!" muttered Harry, as the fat junior bumped against the doorpost.

"Ow!"

"If you wake Quelch—"

"Ow!"

"Oh, shut up!"

Harry stepped into the dark dormitory. His foot caught in something, and he went flying, and rolled over on the floor.

"Oh!"

"Quiet, Wharton! Oh!"

Billy Bunter caught his foot, and rolled over, too.

He kicked against Harry, who gasped, and sat up dazedly.

"What on earth—"

"Ow! Yow!"

"Who the—"

"Grooh!"

"Some idiotic ass has tied a string across the doorway—"

There was a chuckle from the dark passage.

"This is where we smile," murmured the soft voice of Temple, of the Upper Fourth. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in suppressed laughter from the passage.

Wharton groped for the string, and dragged it up. Then he rose to his feet, a gleam of wrath and vengeance in his eyes.

"We smile!" murmured Temple. "Oh, the giddy

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NEXT
WEEK!

"THE GREYFRIARS PLOT."

NEXT
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"

LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

treasure-hunters! How many doubloons did you find, Wharton?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How many pieces of eight?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And to think," murmured Temple, "that I made that mysterious mark in the ground myself, with a trowel!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that the ghost of the vault was old Fry with a sheet over his head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think all Greyfriars will smile to-morrow! Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton made a rush in the direction of the voice, and bit out. He gave a sharp yell as his knuckles crashed on the closing door.

"Oh! Oh!"

There was a soft chuckle from without, and the heroes of the Upper Fourth retired. Harry Wharton sucked his knuckles.

"Bunter, you ass!"

"Ow!"

"I suppose you know now how the mark came there, and how much treasure there is?"

"The beasts!"

"And to think they were watching us while we were digging!" ejaculated Wharton, in disgust. "Oh, I could kick myself!"

"The rotters! But—"

"Oh, you fat duffer!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a voice from Bob Cherry's bed. "What's the row? What are you chaps doing out of bed? Is this a midnight conversazione?"

"Wharton's been looking for the abbot's treasure," said Billy Bunter. "A chap played ghost in the crypt, and scared him."

"What!" gasped Wharton.

"He ran away like anything." Bunter slipped off his boots. "I'm jolly well not going treasure-hunting with Wharton any more. Besides, I believe it's all rot. There isn't any treasure at all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, of all the worms!" ejaculated Wharton. "I'll come and look after you again when you're playing the giddy ox—I don't think."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Oh, shut up, and go to bed!"

And Harry Wharton turned in.

The next morning, when he came down, he had a feeling that the last had not been heard of that nocturnal treasure-hunt.

And the feeling was fully justified.

Temple, Dabney & Co. had confided the story to almost everybody, and almost everybody was grinning and chuckling over it.

Billy Bunter gave his own version of the story—by which it appeared that he had gone with Wharton to look for the treasure, and had acted a most heroic part when the ghost appeared, and would certainly have caught the ghost in the act had he not been dragged away by Harry.

Wharton swallowed his wrath as well as he could. The Upper Fourth had the best of it, and it seemed that it would be a long time before the Fourth-Formers would cease from chuckling and No. 1 Study would be at rest.

"We've got to get level somehow," Harry Wharton growled, that evening. "Anybody got an idea?"

"Blessed if I have," said Nugent.

"The blessedness is terrific also in my worthy case," murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Bob Cherry looked into No. 1 Study.

"I say, you chaps, I've got a wheeze!"

"Good! Go ahead!"

And Bob Cherry unfolded his wheeze, and by the chuckles with which it was greeted, it certainly seemed to be a good one.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Wonderful Find.

TEMPLE, Dabney & Co. had scored, and they did not seem to tire of relating the circumstances of their scoring to everyone who would listen. They narrated the history of the clue, and of the treasure-hunt, till everybody outside the Upper Fourth was bored to tears with the whole matter. But in the Upper Fourth there was an incessant chortling.

The Fourth-Formers went down to the crypt to look at the hole Wharton had excavated over-night, and they grinned and chuckled over it.

A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton
& Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Nearly everybody in the Upper Fourth went down to look at it some time during the day, and came back in convulsions at the idea that Wharton had dug so deep in search of an imaginary treasure.

Temple pointed out the exact spot to whosoever wished to see it, and explained all the circumstances, and related the whole story to every victim he could find.

He was holding forth on the subject, by the light of a bicycle lantern in the crypt, when suddenly Fry uttered an exclamation.

Fry was pointing out the exact dimensions of the excavation to Scott and Turner of the Upper Fourth, while Temple explained to them how he had taken in the Removites. And something suddenly caught Fry's eye.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

Temple stopped in the middle of a graphic description.

"What's the row, Fry?"

"Look there!"

"What is it?"

"Look—only look!" breathed Fry excitedly.

Temple, in surprise, turned the lantern light full into the hole. From the dark earth a fragment of wood showed itself—evidently the corner of a box barely uncovered by the excavation.

So little of the box was showing that it was not surprising that it had escaped previous observation, in spite of the number of fellows who had inspected the place.

Temple stared at it.

"What on earth's that?"

"Looks like a box," said Scott.

"It jolly well is a box. But—"

"How on earth did it get there?"

"Why, Wharton would have dug it up if he had gone on for another few minutes!" exclaimed Fry excitedly.

"By Jove!"

"My only hat!" said Turner. "This is a find! How on earth did a box come to be buried here, I'd like to know?"

Temple was pale with excitement.

"Blessed if I had the faintest idea that there was anything buried here when I put that ass Bunter on the track!" he exclaimed. "But—"

"But there is something, you see."

"Yes, rather!"

"It's a box!" said Temple. "Is it possible that—that—" He paused, his face flushed with excitement. "Great Scott, you chaps, it might be the treasure!"

"The treasure!"

"Why not? Everybody believes that the Greyfriars treasure is really buried somewhere about the school, and there's a blessed document in the school library about it, if one could get at it. Suppose we've found it?"

"Phew!"

"We're jolly well going to see, anyway!" exclaimed Temple. "Mind, not a word! We'll keep this dark till we know. We'll have the box out!"

"Who's got a spade?"

"You cut off and borrow one of Gosling, Turner. Mind nobody sees you bringing it here, you know."

"Right you are!" said Turner.

He ran out of the crypt. He dashed from the ruined chapel, and off to the school porter's lodge, at top speed. Five juniors who were lying low among the masses of fallen masonry watched him go. They were the chums of the Remove.

And Bob Cherry chuckled.

"What do you think that means, Wharton?"

Wharton laughed.

"They've discovered the treasure."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ha-ha-ha-fulness is terrific, my worthy chums."

"Wait and see," remarked Tom Brown sagely. "Wait and see if he comes back with a pick or a spade. That will settle it."

"Yes, rather!"

And the Removites waited and watched.

In about three minutes Turner came tearing back through the dusk, and under his arm he carried a spade.

He disappeared down the steps into the crypt.

The Removites exchanged gleeful glances.

"A giddy spade!" ejaculated Nugent. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only hat! Caught!"

"The Upper Fourth have been doing a lot of chuckling to-day," Tom Brown remarked. "I rather fancy it will be somebody else's turn to chuckle soon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The boot will be a foot on the other leg!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

And the chums of the Remove chuckled gleefully.

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Treasure Trove!

"HERE he is!"

"What a time you've been gone, Turner!" "I buzzed off as fast as I could," gasped Turner breathlessly. "I haven't been long, you know. I had to tip Gosling a tanner to get the spade, too. I had to be jolly careful not to let the Remove kids see me."

"Did they see you?"

"No. I nearly ran into Bulstrode, but I dodged him, and nobody else saw me at all," said Turner. "It's all right!"

"Jolly good!"

Temple took the spade, and stepped into the excavation. Fry held the lantern to show his leader a light while the digging proceeded.

"Now then go it!" he exclaimed.

Scott and Turner looked on eagerly. Dabney came into the crypt to look for his chums, and when he was informed of the find, he was as eager as the rest. Temple made mighty strokes with the spade, and the earth flew up in chunks.

Bang! Bang!

The spade crashed on the box again and again.

"Mind you don't bust it!" said Fry anxiously. "If it's crammed full of doubloons or banknotes, we—"

"Banknotes, you ass!" said Dabney. "They didn't have any banknotes in those days. The box will be full of pieces of eight or gold crowns, if anything."

Temple began to perspire freely. He worked and worked, and the earth grew higher round the feet of the Fourth-Formers standing round the excavation.

"Hard work—eh?" said Dabney sympathetically.

"Yes, rather!" gasped Temple. "It's not so hard, though, as it might be. The earth seems to be looser round the box than it is in other places."

"That's lucky!"

"Here, you take a turn with the spade, Fry, old chap, and I'll hold the lantern."

"Right you are!"

Temple clambered out of the excavation, and Fry took his place. The box was almost wholly uncovered now.

It was seen to be an oblong chest of solid oak, clasped with iron at the corners, and it was evidently of great strength. Dabney's eyes danced as he examined it in the lantern light.

"By Jove, I've seen a box like that before!" he exclaimed. "Do you remember there was an oblong oak chest in the lumber-room? It was supposed to be one that the monks used to keep their tin in."

"Yes, rather!" said Temple.

"This one is exactly like it. It's as certain as anything that this was buried here by the monks."

"What-ho!"

"And they jolly well wouldn't have buried it if there hadn't been something valuable in it," said Dabney sagely.

"Of course not."

"We go shares in this, of course!" said Turner.

"Well, I don't know about you chaps," said Temple.

"We discovered it; but we'll let you have a look in, anyway."

"We're jolly well going to have equal shares!" said Scott warmly. "We discovered it as much as you did. Fry happened to catch sight of it, but I—I had a sort of feeling that we should find something when we came down here."

"So did I," said Turner. "As a matter of fact, the idea crossed my mind, in a vague sort of way, that there might be something."

"Rats!"

"Look here, Temple, it's equal shares, or there'll be a row!" said Turner.

"Oh, all right; only the Government swoops down and collars a lot of it," said Temple. "It's treasure trove, you know. They have a legal right to skin you of a certain amount."

"Well, we can spare a bit if the chest is crammed full of doubloons and pieces of eight," said Dabney.

"My hat, this is hard work!" gasped Fry, throwing down the spade. "I say, I think we could yank the thing out now if all you fellows laid hold of it."

"Good! Let's try!"

"Jump down, then!"

The five Fourth-Formers surrounded the chest, and laid hold of it as well as they could. The earth had been well cleared away from it now.

"All together!" said Temple.

"Right-ho!"

"Go it!"

And the Fourth-Formers dragged at the chest.

"It's coming!"

"Hurrah!"

"Crums! It's jolly heavy!"
"All the better, considering what's in it."
"Yes, rather!"

The chest was dragged out of the excavation. It was certainly very heavy. There was a slight clinking sound within as it was bumped down on the ground. That sound was music to the ears of the juniors.

"You hear that, kids?"

"Yes; it's gold!"

"What luck!"

"Wharton will be ready to kick himself when he hears about this," grinned Temple. "Let's see if we can open the box."

"It's locked!"

"Hang it!"

The Fourth-Formers stood round the box, fingering it eagerly. There was a lock to it, and that lock was fast. The keyhole was crammed with soil. That could be got away easily enough, but the key was another matter.

"We shall have to smash it open!" exclaimed Fry.

"Bang it with the spade!"

Temple shook his head.

"We'll get it to my study. I can force the lock there. It's no good banging it with the spade. It would take ages to smash in solid oak like that; and, besides, we don't want to smash it."

"How are we to get it to the study?" said Dabney.

"Carry it. We can't expect it to walk."

"Oh, don't be funny! I mean, those Remove kids will very likely spot us, and—"

"Well, I don't care if they do, now. The box is ours. We've dug it up," said Temple. "We should have to carry away the contents, anyway, and we may as well take them in the box."

"Good! Let's hurry up, then!"

"Take a hand."

Temple, Dabney, and Fry raised the box between them. It was heavy, but the three sturdy juniors carried it easily enough. They bore it up the steps from the crypt, and Scott and Turner followed.

They reached the School House before they encountered any members of the rival Form. There, at the door, Harry Wharton & Co. greeted them with a stare.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What have you got there?"

"Mind your own business!" said Temple loftily. "It's ours, anyway. We found it, and dug it up, and it's ours."

"But what is it?"

"Can't you see? It's a box."

"Anything in it?"

"Oh, only gold and silver and things," said Temple, with exaggerated carelessness.

"My hat!"

"Then it's the Greyfriars treasure?" exclaimed Tom Brown.

"Yes, rather!"

"Phew! Great Scott! Here, you fellows, Temple & Co. have discovered the Greyfriars treasure!" shouted the New Zealand junior.

"Phew!"

Quite a procession gathered round the Fourth-Formers as they bore the valuable chest into the house. The Removites made no attempt to interfere. Temple had rather anticipated an attempted raid upon the chest, but Harry Wharton & Co. did not show the slightest desire to dispute the ownership of it.

Up the stairs to the Upper Fourth passage went the victorious treasure-hunters, with half the Fourth Form and the Remove at their heels.

The chest was carried into Temple's study, and laid solemnly on the table, and there it was surrounded by Temple, Dabney & Co., and as many of their Form-fellows as could cram themselves into the room. Harry Wharton and his friends contented themselves with a place in the doorway.

"Now, then, let's get it open!" exclaimed Turner eagerly.

"All in good time," said Temple, assuming a calmness he was far from feeling. "There's no hurry."

"Hang it! I tell you—"

"Oh, keep cool!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "Keep cool! Here's your chisel, Temple, you ought to be able to get it open with that."

"Good! I'll try. Give me the hammer."

"Here you are!"

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Temple placed the chisel to enter between the lid and the box, and drove it home with sharp blows of the hammer. It was the simplest way of forcing the lock.

The crowded juniors watched him breathlessly. Fellows were cramming in the passage in eager anticipation of what was to be revealed by the opening of the chest. There was a sudden commotion in the passage, and an indignant voice was heard.

"I say, you fellows—"

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A NEW
STORY BOOK!

"THE EMPIRE" LIBRARY.

NEXT TUESDAY. The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE PENNY

"Stop shoving, Bunter!"

"But I say—"

"Keep back there! There's no room—especially for a porpoise."

"Look here, you chaps, they say Temple has discovered the Greyfriars treasure—dug it up in the crypt."

"So he has!"

"Well, it's mine."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you it's mine!" yelled Billy Bunter. "I found it. I was digging it up when that ass played ghost and frightened me away—I mean frightened Wharton away. The treasure's mine, and I'm going to have it."

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"I won't! I—"

"Bundle him downstairs!"

There were suffocated yells as the fat junior was rolled away, with no gentle hand. The juniors were crowded in the passage to see what was to be seen, and no one was inclined to yield his place to Billy Bunter. Bunter was rolled away, and left gasping at the end of the passage.

Meanwhile, Temple's blows were telling on the chest. The chisel was driven home, and the strain put on the lock suddenly snapped it. It was old and in a weak condition. It parted with a sudden loud snap.

There was a gasp of anticipation in the study.

The lid was open.

Temple took hold of it to raise it, drawing a deep breath as he did so. The chums of the Remove in the doorway grinned at one another.

"Now we shall see what we shall see!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

"Open it, Temple!" shouted a dozen voices anxiously.

The captain of the Upper Fourth raised the lid of the chest.

A score of eager eyes peered into it.

Then there was a gasp.

The oaken chest was full—full to the brim! But it was not crammed with gold ingots and pieces of eight and Spanish doubloons.

Far from that!

It was full of flint stones and fragments of old iron and wood; and the musical clinks which had delighted the ears of the discoverers had evidently been caused by the stones and metal fragments clinking together.

Temple, Dabney & Co. stared into the chest dumbfounded.

"My only hat!" gasped Scott.

"Crums!" said Turner. "They must have been mad—those blessed monks—to bury a lot of scrap iron like that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton. "The monks didn't bury it—we did!"

"What!"

"Ho, ho, ho! It's a jape, you see—ha, ha, ha! That blessed old chest has knocked about the lumber room upstairs for dog's ages!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

Temple, Dabney & Co. blinked at the chest, and blinked at Bob Cherry. The truth dawned upon their minds. It was a jape—a jape of the Remove.

Harry Wharton & Co. rocked with laughter in the doorway.

In the passage, Fourth-Formers and Removites yelled in chorus. The utter absurdity of the situation—of the great discovery turning out to be a jape—of the chest of treasure containing nothing but stones and scrap iron—tickled all alike!

One tremendous yell of laughter swept along the passage.

Temple turned furiously upon Harry Wharton.

"You—you beasts!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give them socks!" yelled Fry.

"Oh, rather!"

And the infuriated treasure-hunters rushed towards Harry Wharton & Co., but the crowd was too thick to reach them—and the Remove chums staggered away, almost helpless with laughter, leaving the hapless treasure-seekers foaming with rage.

Upstairs, the door of Temple's study was heard to slam violently. A fresh roar of laughter from the juniors followed the slam.

What Temple, Dabney & Co. did with the treasure did not transpire. But if, at any time, anyone wished to provoke the Upper Fourth chums to personal violence, he had only to whisper the words "Treasure Trove."

THE END.

(Next Tuesday "The Magnet" Library will be permanently enlarged in size, and will contain a grand double-length School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled, "The Greyfriars Plot," by Frank Richards. Please order your copy in advance. Price One Penny. There will be a large demand!)

The First Chapters of a New Serial.

STANLEY DARE

The Boy Detective

INTRODUCTION.

Stanley Dare, the boy detective, on his way back to England from India, goes ashore at Port Said, and is met on the quay by the British Consul. "Just the man of all men I most want to see!" exclaims Matthews (the Consul). "A King's Messenger, carrying important despatches, disappeared mysteriously only a few hours ago. He was on board a liner which had lain-to in a cove a little way up the Suez Canal. He appears to have completely disappeared!" The young detective immediately takes up the case, and proceeds, with the Consul, to the spot where the boat had stopped. A search is made, and in dragging the canal in the vicinity, the body of the King's Messenger is brought to view. Strangely enough there are no marks of violence; but an iron hand firmly clutches the unfortunate man's wrist.

The Iron Hand—A Strange Mystery—Treachery!

Conquering his repugnance to touch the iron hand, Matthews made the attempt, but by no effort of strength could the iron fingers be unclasped. Dare touched the spring, and the hand fell with a clatter to the deck of the launch.

"But this only deepens the mystery," said Matthews. "Where did this iron hand come from, and in what way is it connected with poor Wargrave's death? He could not have been dragged overboard by a hand, unattached to a living arm, even though it is made of iron and works with a powerful spring."

"Unless black magic is still practised in Egypt," replied Dare. "Turn back the dead effendi's coat, Nouredin—so! Now, with your knife, rip open the lining. Good! What is that packet in the oilskin cover?"

"The documents—the despatches!" cried Matthews, as he snatched the package up. "If poor Wargrave has been murdered, it cannot have been these that his assassin was after."

"It would appear not," said Dare.

He answered in an abstracted manner. Apparently he was paying little heed to what the Consul was saying. With knitted brow, he gazed down at the silent form lying on the deck at his feet, as though seeking inspiration from the dead.

Suddenly a curious look flashed into his eyes. He turned sharply to Matthews.

"How long have you known Wargrave?" he asked.

"Three years," replied the Consul. "We were juniors in the Foreign Office together."

"Was he ever in Egypt before—I mean, to spend any time in the country?"

"Twelve months ago he was in Cairo," said the Consul. "He spent six weeks in that city, but I cannot tell you how long he remained in the country altogether."

"It would not be difficult to find out," pursued the young detective, "although I shall want to know for the present the exact date he came to Cairo, and the date on which he left."

"You will be able to get that information from the hotel register," Matthews answered. "He stayed at Shephard's."

"We will go to Cairo, and make inquiries at that famous hostelry," said Dare. "But first of all, I want to go for a cruise on Lake Menzaleh. We will return now to Kantara, and make arrangements for this poor fellow's body to be conveyed back to Port Said, and you will want to forward the despatches to Aden."

"Yes," replied the Consul. "I must carry them back to Port Said, and cable home for instructions. Afterwards I will join you at Cairo."

"I shall be on the look-out for you," said Dare.

At Kantara they parted, and the young detective made his way towards the shore of the lake. There were one or two felucca-rigged boats anchored a little way off shore, and a dahabiyah—similar to the sailing passenger-boats on the Nile—swung idly to a buoy.

A crowd of Arab boatmen, who were lounging about on the shore, gazed indolently at him. Dare entered into conversation with them in a mixture of Arabic and English. He had the gift of picking up a foreign language easily, and never missed an opportunity of thus adding to his store of know-

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ledge. But as he had only started on Arabic on the voyage from Bombay, he had not yet acquired much of a mastery over it.

However, he managed to glean the information he required. Stripped of a lot of unnecessary detail, it amounted to this—that at ten o'clock the previous night an Arab merchant—a dealer in horses and camels—had embarked in a boat, and crossed the lake in the direction of Tassoumah, a small native town about fifteen miles from Kantara.

It was between half-past eight and ten that the King's Messenger had been assassinated on the previous night—that is to say, it was between those times that he was missed—and since the recovery of the body Dare had no doubt that it was a case of murder, although no marks of violence had been visible, except the grip of the iron hand.

"It is a strange time to cross the lake," observed Dare, "for there is never any wind on the desert at night."

"The merchant was in great haste, effendi," was the reply, "for he heard there were good Tunisian mares for sale there, which might be bought up quickly if he did not hasten to go there when the market opened."

"The boat would have to be rowed across," said Dare.

"It is as the effendi states. There were six rowers in the boat."

"I am desirous of purchasing horses myself," continued the young detective. "There is wind now. I will hire a boat to take me across to Tassoumah."

The boatmen—a lazy lot of fellows—did not, however, seem anxious for the job; but at length one of their number stepped forward, and expressed his willingness to place his boat at the Britisher's disposal.

Stanley Dare did not altogether like the appearance of the fellow, for although he was smooth-spoken, his crafty face and cunning eyes, set too close together, bespoke the calculating rogue, ever ready to take advantage of anyone unfamiliar with the country.

However, Dare wanted to get across to Tassoumah on the track of this mysterious Arab horse-dealer, and he was not going to be daunted by any obstacles. Moreover, it was just possible that there was not much to choose between the whole crowd of boatmen in the matter of roguery, should opportunities come their way; and, in any case, he was armed. He therefore closed with the man's offer, and a few minutes later had embarked on board a moderate-sized felucca-rigged boat, which might have been cleaner, and which smelt abominably of a curious admixture of odours—that of stale fish, perhaps, predominating.

The crew consisted of three other men in addition to Abdullah, the man with whom Dare had made the bargain, and who was, presumably, the owner of the boat.

With a considerable amount of shouting, the boat was poled out of the shallow water, sail was set, and she skimmed over the sunlit lake with the grace and swiftness of an English racing-yacht.

Dare seated himself in the bows, as being the cleanest part of the boat, and farthest away from the accumulated smells, while the men, as soon as the sails were trimmed, lounged in the stern by the holmsman, smoking the "hubble-bubbles" (water-pipes), and talking in a dialect of lower Egypt, not one word of which could the young detective understand.

At the speed the boat was travelling, Dare calculated that they ought to arrive at Tassoumah in a little over an hour and a half, but he soon discovered that, even with the wind holding steady all the time, it would certainly take quite double that time.

The reason of this is, that Lake Menzaleh is studded with shoals and sandbanks, and a wide circuit had to be made to avoid some, while a considerable amount of dodging in and out of narrow channels had to be resorted to to escape others.

When at length they got out into clear water, with a good straight run of ten miles in front of them, the wind fell light. As the afternoon waned, it died away altogether. By sunset they were becalmed, five miles from the nearest point of land.

Dare told the men to get out the sweeps, and row the remainder of the distance, promising to pay them extra for so doing. This they refused to do.

"The wind will rise again," said Abdullah; "there is no haste. If the effendi requires food, we can provide him with some. There are wild ducks in plenty."

"There is great need of haste," replied Dare. "I am in a hurry to get to Tassoumah."

"The effendi desires to purchase horses," returned Abdullah. "For to-day the selling of horses is finished, but we shall be in time for to-morrow's market. Moreover, we are not going to use the sweeps—the work is too hard."

As it was evidently useless to argue with them, Dare resigned himself to the prospect of spending a night on the boat. Had it been a comfortable and well-kept dahabiyah, where it would have been possible to have a decent meal served up, he would have enjoyed the situation. There were fish to be caught, and wild ducks to be shot in plenty, although, in the present instance, he did not happen to possess a gun; and there was the solemn quietness of the desert night, which particularly appealed to one of his temperaments.

All he could do now was to settle himself down to a little fishing with the clumsy hook and line with which one of the men provided him.

Meanwhile, the four Arabs continued their low-toned conversation, and, although Stanley Dare was not aware of it, he was the subject.

"Few of his race understand the Shoon tongue, in which we now speak," said Abdullah. "He does not understand, for I have tried him."

"I have been told that there are certain men among the Feringhees (Europeans)," replied one of the others, "who are so skilled and cunning in the hunting down of evildoers, that no man can escape them. They are not like the police of Cairo, for they do not wear a prescribed dress by which all men may know who and what they are. Mustapha, who works under the canal officer at Kantara, told me that this youth is one of them."

"He is young," said the other musingly. "But did not we, who were watching him, see him discover the place where the effendi was hidden beneath the waters of the canal, and bring the body to the surface? How else should this be done, except by magic?"

"Why is he crossing the lake to Tassoumah? He does not desire to purchase horses. That is merely talk."

"He is already hunting down the one who sent the effendi with the infidel name of Wargrave, to his death."

"He will never reach Tassoumah," said Abdullah darkly. "The accursed ghaour will get no further than the bottom of this lake, and there shall be none who will raise his body."

"He has the iron hand in his possession."

"It is the master's orders that we should recover it," pursued Abdullah. "He meant from the body of the other, not foreseeing what would afterwards happen. We must take it from this one, but before he is hurled into the water, for the water here is deep."

"Let it be done while he sleeps. Very soon his eyelids will become heavy, for the night is still and warm."

All unconscious of the fact that the quartette of villainous Arabs were calmly plotting to murder him, in order to gain possession of the iron hand for some arch-scoundrel whom they served, and to whom it apparently belonged, Dare went on with his fishing, in order to keep himself alert and wakeful, rather than from the sport which he was obtaining.

For although he knew nothing of their plotting, he was yet so far suspicious of them that he did not mean to go to sleep if he could help it. What strange mystery or weird secret was connected with the iron hand he had yet to discover, but he had made up his mind that it would be better not to let any native know that he had it in his possession. He did not guess that the men who were chattering in the stern of the boat had known from the very moment that he had detached it from the dead man's grasp, that the iron hand was in his keeping.

He had made up his mind not to go to sleep, but the still and drowsy night, and the murmuring ripple of the water against the bows had such a soothing effect that, as the Arabs put it, "his eyelids became heavy," and he had fallen into a light doze before he was aware of it.

Abdullah made a sign to the others, which they fully understood.

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NEXT
WEEK:

"THE GREYFRIARS PLOT."

NEXT
TUESDAY, The "Magnet" ONE
LIBRARY. PENNY.

stood, for it was not the first time they had engaged in such work.

A blade gleamed in the light of the stars. One man crept forward with silent, cat-like movements. The others made ready to assist him, in case the stab was not fatal, and their would-be victim should offer resistance.

The sinewy brown arm was raised to strike, with the weapon gripped tight in the hand. For an instant the man paused, and in that instant Dare awoke.

His senses were clear and alert in a moment. He saw the gleaming knife poised above him; he saw it descending for the stab.

"You villain!"

Stanley Dare flung himself on one side, and the point of the knife quivered in the deck. Then he leaped to his feet, and dealt his opponent a terrific right-hander, that sent him headlong to the bottom of the boat.

But the other three scoundrels flung themselves headlong upon him before he had time to turn round and face them.

The fight that followed was a wild and savage one, but, notwithstanding the odds against him, Dare felt a queer feeling of keen exultation fill his whole being. He came of a fighting-stock. The fighting blood was in his veins, and when engaged in a conflict, everything else was, for the moment, forgotten, except the wild excitement of the fight.

Once he managed to free himself from his assailants, and draw his revolver. There was a flash and a report, and one of the Arabs doubled up and then rolled over the side without so much as a groan. It was the only shot he was able to fire, however.

The man he had knocked down at first had now risen to his feet again, and the three closed about him, crushing his arms to his side. They were powerful men, and he could not wrest himself free again. Abdullah struck him twice on the head with a heavy piece of iron. He gave a deep groan, and sank down in their midst unconscious.

A Long Swim—The Fisherman.

"Is he alive?"

"It matters little whether he is alive or not. His senses have left him, and when he is cast overboard, he will sink to the bottom like a stone."

"Even as Mazloum has sunk. He will go on the long journey in brave company."

Abdullah shrugged his shoulders.

"It matters not to us where they go," he said. "Search this ghaour for the iron hand."

It was soon found, and at once given up to Abdullah, the man who had taken it from Dare's pocket regarding it with something of fear and awe. Even Abdullah, who believed in little else than robbery and murder, appeared to have some sort of dread fear of the iron hand.

Having secured it in his waistcloth, he made a furtive search of Dare's clothes, and appropriated everything of value that he could find.

"Now fling the accursed Frank overboard!" he growled.

"If he has magic enough to come to life, and rise again to the surface, I shall believe he is clever enough to outwit even our master."

"Surely there are none but demons could outwit him?" replied one of the others.

They lifted the young detective up between them, and then, with one swing, sent his body over the side. There was a splash, and it vanished from sight beneath the water.

"Row now for the shore," said Abdullah. "I must be at Ismailia by sunrise, and then on to Cairo."

There was no objection to using the sweeps now to propel the boat, notwithstanding their former statement that the labour was too hard; and with such vigour did they pull that the boat was soon speeding at a good rate to the land.

Meanwhile Stanley Dare, having sunk down for about a couple of fathoms, suddenly came to his senses again, the shock of the immersion in the cold water having an effect which his would-be assassins had not calculated on.

The blows which he had received had stunned him, and inflicted two deep cuts in his scalp, without being in any other sense dangerous. He had not lost a lot of blood, and was therefore not very much weakened; so, on arousing to sudden consciousness with the water all about him, his natural impulse was to strike out. He did this quite mechanically, kicking downwards, with the consequence that he immediately rose to the surface.

At first he was too dazed to understand clearly what had happened. In a confused sort of way he wondered why he was in the water, and how he got there. He was conscious of a severe pain in the head, and he also vaguely wondered at the reason of this. But while these confused thoughts were passing through his mind, he kept on swimming, slowly,

A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton
& Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

steadily, mechanically, without heeding the direction in which he was going.

Gradually, as he swam, recollections of the events which had transpired came back to him, and he guessed that he had been flung overboard after receiving the blow which had stunned him.

His muscular strength had not been greatly affected by the blows or the period of insensibility which had followed, and now he struck out more vigorously. The shore of the lake was so low, and the desert beyond was so flat, that no land was visible to him. He knew, however, that he could not be more than five miles distant from the nearest point, but, good swimmer though he undoubtedly was, he feared that the distance would be too much for him.

He could just distinguish the felucca in the distance being rowed hard for the shore, and he congratulated himself that Abdullah and his fellow scoundrels had been in a hurry to get away from the spot, or they must have seen him when he rose again to the surface. Had they done so, he would certainly have been killed outright on the second occasion. They would have taken care that there was no mistake about the matter then.

With occasional spells of floating on his back, to rest his limbs, he swam on for an hour. He was beginning to feel exhausted, and yet the shore, as far as he was able to see, still remained invisible. But he fancied he could make out a dark object away on his left, and, after gazing long and steadily in that direction, he saw that it was a small boat. A man was standing up pulling something over in the stern—a fishing-net.

He swam towards it, and presently began to shout for help. The fisherman heard him, and as soon as the nets were inboard, rowed towards him. Five minutes later Dare lay panting at the bottom of the humble craft, amid a score or so of silver-scaled denizens of the lake that were flapping about in the net.

The fisherman, an old man who could speak English, for he had lived many years in Port Said, showed him every possible kindness, and Dare felt that he could confide in him to a certain extent with safety.

Stating that he had hired the felucca to go across to Tassoumah, he described the man who had attacked and attempted to murder him.

"They are bad men, effendi," said the fisherman. "I know them. Abdullah and Baggarah—for he belongs to that race of robbers—has committed many crimes for which Allah will surely punish him. He also attempted to murder you for sake of the money which you may have had in your possession."

Stanley Dare clapped his hands to his pockets. His watch and money were gone, and, what was far worse from his point of view, the iron hand was gone also.

Of what possible use could that queer mechanical contrivance be to an ordinary robber? A man possessed of the cunning of an Arab thief would let such a thing alone, knowing that if found on him, it would lead to his apprehension. The conclusion that Dare arrived at was that Abdullah and his associates were not ordinary thieves, although it was not likely they would let the opportunity pass of gaining money and valuables when it came their way.

"You have been robbed, effendi?" pursued the fisherman.

"Of everything of value," replied Dare. "I have not a single piastre left with which to continue my journey or pay you for your services."

"The effendi can pay his servant when he obtains some money. Allah is great. You were going to Tassoumah. Whither afterwards, for the Ingles do not remain in such a place?"

Dare sat in deep thought for a few minutes without answering. Then he looked up.

"Listen to what I have to say!" he exclaimed. "These men have robbed me, believing that I am dead, for they threw me overboard when I was unconscious."

"Without a doubt that is their belief," admitted the fisherman.

"Let them remain in that belief," pursued Dare. "It will then be more easy for me to bring about their just punishment. But I have other matters to attend to first. There was an Arab merchant, supposed to be a dealer in horses, who crossed the lake from Kantara to Tassoumah, late last night. I do not believe he is really a dealer in horses, and I am desirous of finding out whether he is still in Tassoumah, or whether he has gone elsewhere. But, as Abdullah and his villainous associates are probably in that town, it will not do for me to go there. If you can gain the information I require for me, you shall be well rewarded. The British Consul at Port Said is my friend."

"I know that an Arab merchant, or pretended merchant, crossed the lake last night," replied the old man. "It will be easy for me to find out what you require, for, as you say, effendi, it will not be good for you to enter Tassoumah while the thief Abdullah is there. He has many friends in the place."

As the result of a short discussion on the best course to pursue, it was decided to run the boat inshore about a mile away from the town, or village, for it was no more, and while the old fisherman set about making the necessary inquiries, Dare should remain in the boat, keeping as much out of sight as possible.

It was characteristic of the young detective that his first thought, even after his imminent peril and escape from death, was concerned with the case that he was investigating, and that his own comfort, his bodily injuries, and the danger which still threatened him, were alike forgotten or put aside in the cause of duty.

The plan which they had devised proved to be eminently successful. The old fisherman was not absent much more than two hours; when he returned, he brought news of the supposed merchant, and also of Abdullah.

"This Arab merchant," said the old fisherman, "did not remain in Tassoumah more than a few hours. He purchased a horse, but it was for his own use, for he rode away on it to Mansoorah, from which place he can go by train to Cairo. Abdullah has followed him. I saw him riding out of the village as I entered it."

"Which means that Abdullah and the pretended horsedealer are acquainted with each other."

"It is as the effendi states," continued the old Arab. "The merchant, whose name I could not discover, carries his right arm in a sling, as though he had received some injury to it."

Carries his right arm in a sling!

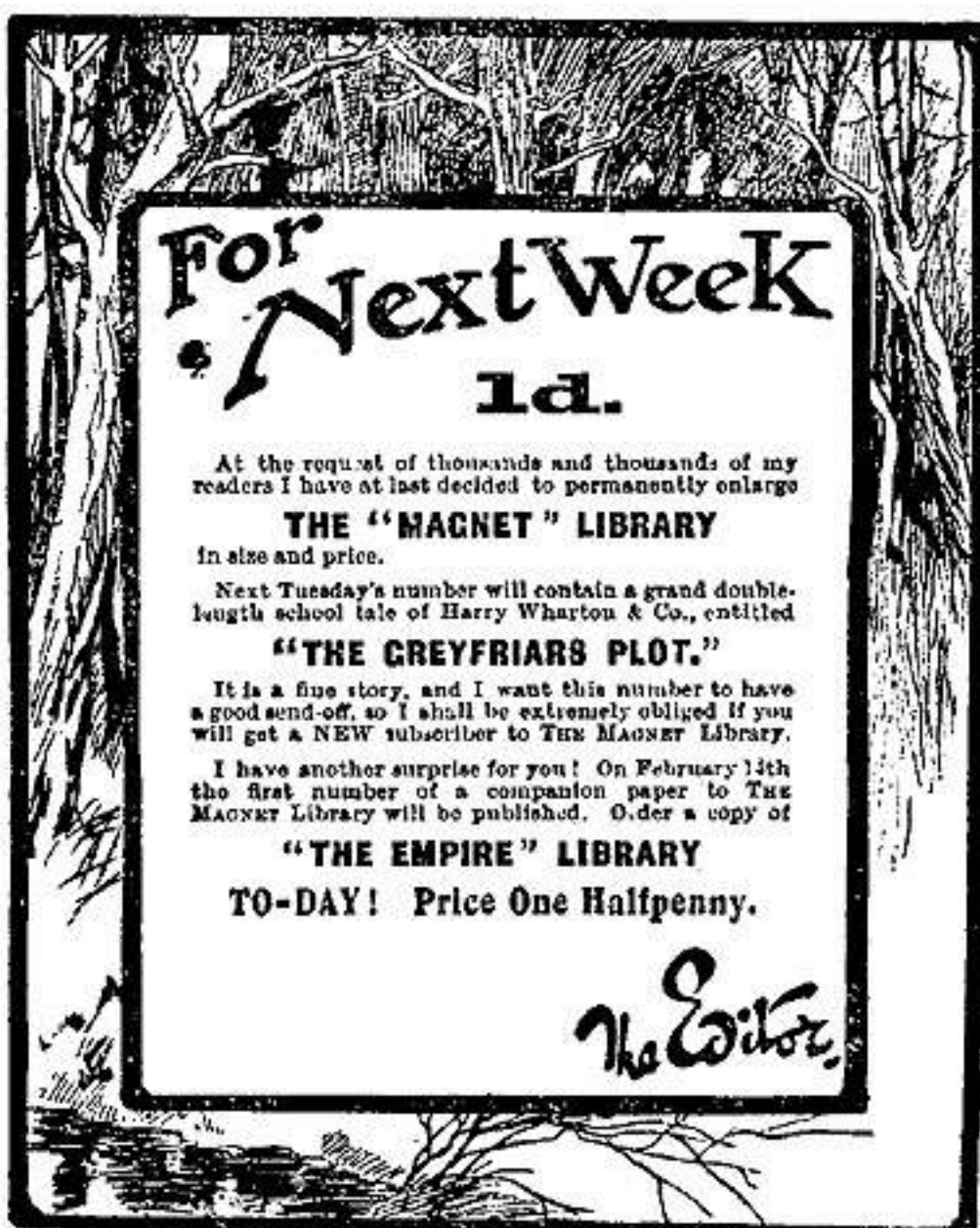
Dare remembered that the iron hand was the right one. It was a remarkable coincidence. Could it be possible that this doubtful merchant, who had apparently injured his right arm, had lost his right hand, and that the iron hand—

"This train of thought opened up so many possibilities that Dare did not follow it up just then. He wanted to get hold of some more facts before he plunged into a sea of theory. Moreover, the old fisherman was pressing him to partake of some food, which, indeed, he sorely needed, and had spread some rice-cakes, fruit, and cooked fish on the sand at the shady side of the boat."

(Another instalment of this fine serial next Tuesday.)

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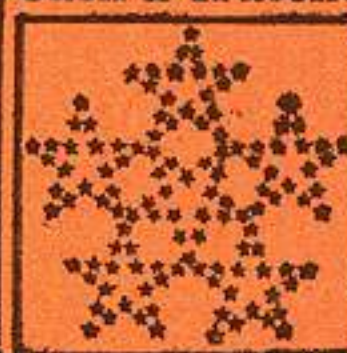
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Applications with regard to advertisement spaces in this paper should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pluck" Series, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.

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2/9

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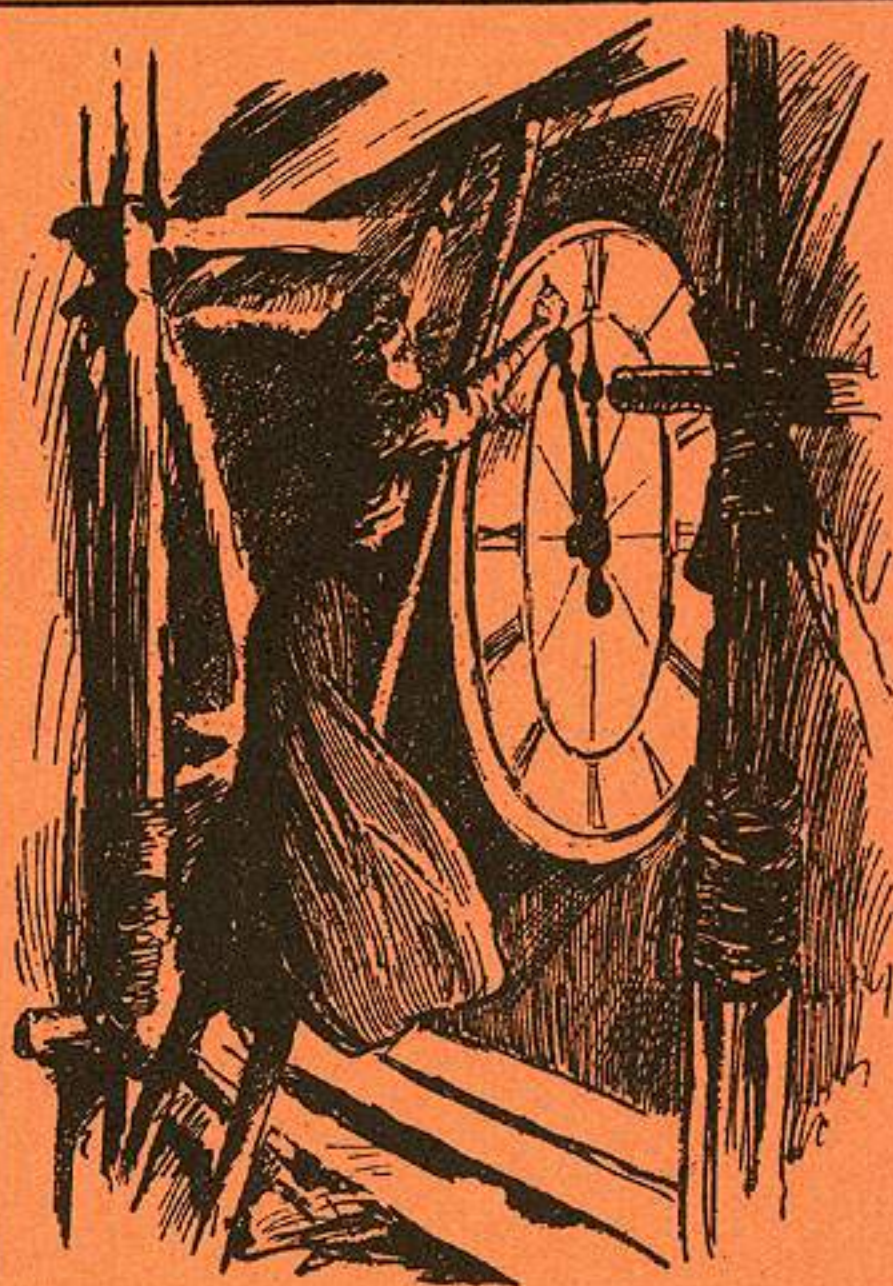
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1/2

JACK NOBLE'S BULL FIGHT
A TALE OF PELHAM SCHOOL

Look out for this attractive cover on the bookstalls. On sale Thursday, February 10th, One Halfpenny.



This picture represents an incident in "The Fatal Ace," the great new serial starting in this week's PENNY PICTORIAL.