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In this issue— A splendid long School Tale, entitled—

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The Duffer's Downfall By Frank Richards.

No. 142 | Grand, Complete School Tale of | Vol. 5.

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The Duffer's Downfall

A Splendid, Long, Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. and Alonzo Todd at Greyfriars.

— By —

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Stony Broke.

HARRY WHARTON ran his hands through his pockets—his trousers-pockets, his jacket-pockets, and his waistcoat-pockets—with exactly the same result in each case. His hands came forth empty again.

Frank Nugent was similarly occupied. In his case the result was a little better. He turned a penny out of one pocket, and a halfpenny out of another. But the penny was a French one, and the halfpenny was bent and broken, and had already been refused several times at the tuck-shop.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, stood regarding his chums with great commiseration in his dusky features.

As a rule, the dusky junior was simply rolling in money, for he had an allowance which exceeded that of any other junior at Greyfriars, with the exception of Wun Lung the Chinee.

But on the present occasion the nabob was as "stony" as either of his chums.

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2 OUT THIS WEEK. NO. 1 of the "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. A NEW STORY-BOOK!

It was not often that the three chums of No. 1 Study in the Remove were all broke together, but it had happened this time, and the available funds of the study were reduced to the stock Nugent held in his palm—a French penny and a bad halfpenny.

"My hat!" said Harry Wharton, breaking into a laugh. "This looks promising, and no mistake! It's only Wednesday, and we're all stony!"

"No more funds till Saturday, either," said Nugent, dolorously. "My word! I should like to interview the chap who passed this French penny on me!"

"Well, if it had been an English one, it would have gone before now!" said Harry, laughing. "And, after all, a penny wouldn't go far among three. This is rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific," said Hurree Singh, in his peculiar variety of English. "I feel muchfully for my worthy chums."

"You blessed inky bounder!" exclaimed Nugent. "What do you mean by being stony just now? You're always rolling in filthy lucre."

"The rollfulness is usually terrific, but——"

"You really ought to know better, Inky."

"The oughtfulness is great, but——"

"But we're all three stony," said Harry Wharton, "and we're going over to Cliff House. Of course, we sha'n't actually need any money, but something might turn up, you know. I've always noticed that when you go out without any tin in your pockets that's just the time you need some."

"Exactfully."

"Well, let's borrow some," said Nugent. "When in doubt, beg, borrow, or steal. Stealing's barred, and to beg we are ashamed—so we must borrow."

"The borrowfulness——"

"But where?" said Harry Wharton.

And the chums considered that question. They did not like borrowing at all, but there was evidently nothing else to be done. Pocket-money in a junior's pocket generally burns till it is expended, but the pocket-money of No. 1 Study had run away much more quickly than usual that week.

Frank Nugent had purchased a new football, for one thing, thereby expending all his own funds, and most of Wharton's too. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had paid a tailor's bill, Wharton had lent most of his cash to Nugent, and Billy Bunter had borrowed a good deal of what was left, and the rest had gone in inevitable study expenses. When they came to compare notes after lessons this Wednesday, they made the discovery that all three were completely stony, with the exception referred to of the two not very valuable coins owned by Frank Nugent.

"There's Bob Cherry," said Harry at last. "We ought to ask him first, as he used to be in our study. He'd lend us anything, if he had it."

"Good!"

And the chums of the Remove looked for Bob Cherry. Most of the Remove fellows were in the Close, but Bob was not to be seen among them. Harry Wharton & Co. entered the School House, and proceeded upstairs to the Remove passage. Bob Cherry shared Study No. 13 there with Mark Linley, the lad from Lancashire. Linley was not likely to have anything to lend, for he was a "scholarship" boy, and his people were very poor. The smallness of his allowance was a standing joke among the less good-natured fellows in the Form. Billy Bunter, who tried in vain to borrow of the scholarship boy, was never tired of sneering at his poverty. Bob Cherry, however, was usually better provided, but he was careless with money, as with everything else, and it was always a doubtful point whether he would have anything in his pockets by the middle of the week.

Bob Cherry's study was the last but one in the Remove passage. It had been the last, but a new study had lately been opened there—No. 14—at present tenanted by Billy Bunter, once the ornament of No. 1 Study, and Wun Lung, and Alonzo Todd. That queerly-assorted trio dwelt together in the new study in more or less of amity, and Harry Wharton and his friends did not conceal their satisfaction at Billy Bunter's departure from their quarters.

Bunter was standing in the doorway of the end study as the chums came along the passage. The fat junior blinked at them through his big spectacles. He had made more than one attempt to insinuate himself back into his old quarters in No. 1 Study, but he had met with a steady resistance there. They did not want him, and they made no secret of it. In consequence, Bunter's expression was not very pleasant as he watched them come along the passage.

They stopped at the door of Study No. 13, and Frank Nugent kicked at it.

"Come in!" roared a deep bass voice.

The chums of the Remove went in.

There were two juniors in the study—Bob Cherry and Mark Linley. The latter sat by the window, with a pencil and paper—the paper resting on a book on his knee. He was writing out a Greek exercise from memory. Bob Cherry was eyeing him, half in admiration and half in impatience. Bob Cherry did not take Greek, and the Greek alphabet was to him as intelligible as the Sanskrit, and he never ceased to wonder that Mark should so occupy his time.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he exclaimed, as the juniors entered. "Look at that aggravating image!"

Mark smiled as the new-comers looked at him.

"Well, what's the matter with him?" asked Nugent.

"Look at him—doing rotten Greek when I want him to come out," said Bob Cherry, in an aggrieved tone. "I want to go on a tramp over the Pike, and he wants to stay indoors. Indoors on a fine day, mind you, doing Greek—Greek!"

"I'm working up for the Dobel prize," Mark Linley explained. "I hope to take it in this term. It will be ten pounds. But it's all right, Bob—I'll chuck this now, and come out, with pleasure. A walk will do me good."

"Oh, rats!" said Bob Cherry, changing his tone at once. "You can't come out if you ought to be at work!"

"But——"

"I don't want to make you lose the prize. Blow the prize!"

"But——"

"But it's beastly aggravating," said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"There doesn't seem to be any pleasing you, Bob," he remarked. "Look here, leave Marky to do his blessed Greek, and you come with us."

"Whither bound?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Cliff House."

Bob Cherry coloured.

He would have given up anything short of a football match to go over to Cliff House. Harry Wharton knew that very well, and Bob knew that he knew it, hence his blush.

"Going to see Marjorie, eh?" said Bob Cherry, speaking as indifferently as he could, with the colour in his cheeks giving him away all the time.

"Yes."

"I'll come with pleasure. You can stick to your rotten Greek, Marky."

Mark Linley laughed his pleasant laugh.

"Very well," he said. "And if you're coming back to tea I'll have it ready."

"Isn't he nice?" grinned Bob Cherry. "Going now, Harry?"

"Yes."

"Good! I'll come." And Bob Cherry rose and stretched his long legs.

"Just a minute," said Harry. "There's another matter. We're all stony. If you could lend us a few bob till Saturday——"

Bob Cherry made a comical face of dismay.

"By George, I'm sorry! I'm stony too!"

"Phew!"

"So is Marky! I borrowed his last boblet this morning," said Bob Cherry. "By the way, I owe you some tin, Nugent."

"Never mind that now," said Nugent, laughing. "We didn't come collecting. But if you're in the same stony state——"

Bob Cherry ran his hands through his pockets.

"Broke to the wide," he said. "That's all I've got."

The "all" did not amount to much from a financial point of view. It consisted of a pencil, a penknife, a coil of string stuck to some cobbler's-wax, and a few marbles.

Harry Wharton looked at it.

"Well, you couldn't start a banking account with that, anyway," he remarked. "I don't think we'll raid that. But the question is, where are we to raise the wind? It's rotten to go out without any tin."

Bob Cherry reflected for a moment.

"Wun Lung!" he exclaimed.

"Good!" said the three chums together.

And they left the study, leaving Mark Linley to the thrilling joys of a Greek exercise, and stepped along to the last study in the Remove passage—at the door of which Billy Bunter still stood, with a decidedly unpleasant expression upon his fat face.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Billy Bunter Mounts the High Horse.

BILLY BUNTER did not move as the Famous Four came up. He could see perfectly well that they wanted to enter the study, but he did not stir. And as the fat junior's plump proportions pretty well filled the door from side to side, there was no room to pass him in the doorway.

Harry Wharton & Co. stopped.

Bunter's fat face assumed a supercilious expression as he blinked at them.

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"Lend me a sov., Wun Lung," said Harry Wharton as the little Chinee came into the shop. "Allee light!" exclaimed Wun Lung, putting his hand into one of his many pockets, without turning a hair. *(See page 7.)*

"Want anything here?" he asked.

"Yes," said Harry shortly. "We want to see Wun Lung."

"Oh, you want to see Wun Lung, do you?"

"Yes. Is he here?"

"What do you want to see him for?"

"Mind your own business, Bunter," said Bob Cherry bluntly.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I rather think this is my business," he said. "I'm head of this study——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm head of this study," Bunter repeated firmly. "Wun Lung is my chum. I don't see what you can have to say to him that couldn't be said to me just as well."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Not much good saying it to you, Bunty," he said. "The fact is we want to borrow some tin of Wun Lung. No secret about it."

A very unpleasant sneer came over Bunter's face.

"Oh, that's it, is it?"

"Yes, that's it. Is Wun Lung here?"

"Never mind whether he's here or not," said Bunter coolly, "you can't come in. As head of this study, I don't mean to allow a chum of mine to be worried for money by a lot of impecunious bounders."

The juniors almost staggered.

Billy Bunter, as a rule, could take the whole cake for coolness and cheek, but they had never expected this.

"Wh-w-w-what!" gasped Wharton.

"You heard what I said," replied Bunter, with a sniff. "You're sharp enough with a chap who wants you to cash a postal-order in advance for him, or any little thing of that sort, and I tell you plainly that I'm not going to have you come cadging round here."

The juniors reddened.

Billy Bunter was the most remorseless borrower at Greyfriars. He seemed to know by some peculiar instinct when a fellow had money, and he had a thousand ways of extracting money, even from the most unpromising persons. Fellows who never lent to anybody else lent to Bunter. They didn't like him, but, somehow, he managed it.

For Bunter, the most unscrupulous borrower in the place, to begin preaching on the subject was so astonishing that the juniors could only stare at him for some moments.

Bunter pursued his advantage.

"As head of this study, I can't allow it," he said. "I'm sincerely sorry, but it can't be did. You fellows must be more careful with your money."

"What!"

"Don't spend it in extravagance. Don't be careless with it," said Bunter, wagging a fat forefinger at them. "I can't have you come borrowing here."

"You fat young rotter!" shouted Harry Wharton, finding his voice at last. "How dare you?"

Bunter receded a pace.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Get out of the way!"

"I tell you——"

Wharton lost patience. He seized the fat junior by the shoulders and sent him spinning into the study. Bunter

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

whirled round and sat down on the carpet with a sounding bump.

He gave a gasp like escaping steam.

"Oooooooh!"

"You—you fat worm!" said Wharton wrathfully. "If you weren't such a fat, helpless toad, I'd give you the licking of your life."

"The lickfulness ought to be terrific."

"Ow!"

Harry Wharton glanced round the study for Wun Lung, but he was not there. Alonzo Todd, the junior who was distinguished by the title of the Duffer of Greyfriars, sat in the window-seat, with a surprised expression on his face. He had listened in astonishment to Bunter's remarks.

"Dear me!" he said. "I do not approve of violence—my Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me never to be guilty of violence—but really I consider that you deserve this, Bunter. I consider you to have spoken in an inexcusably rude manner."

"Ow!"

"Under the circumstances, I regard your provoking expressions as a complete justification——"

"Good old dictionary!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"My dear Cherry——"

"Where's Wun Lung, Todd?" asked Harry.

Todd shook his head.

"I'm sorry I don't know, Wharton—so sorry. I think I heard you say that you wished to borrow some money."

"Yes," said Harry, flushing.

"Perhaps I should do as well as Wun Lung," said Todd, with a beaming smile. "I should be only too happy to oblige you, if you would accept it from me."

Bob Cherry gave the Duffer of Greyfriars a slap on the shoulder that made him jump.

"Good old Duffer!" he exclaimed.

"Ow! My dear Cherry! Ow!"

"You'll do!" said Frank Nugent. "Hand over the spondulics."

"The dofulness is terrific, my worthy dufferful chum."

"You're very obliging, Todd," said Harry Wharton, after a moment's hesitation. "I suppose a loan from you would be just the same if you can wait for it till Saturday."

"Quite well; in fact, I am thinking of saving the money, so it will not inconvenience me in the least," said Alonzo.

"Good enough."

"As for obliging you, I am only too glad to do so," said Alonzo. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to oblige everybody I could. I try to make myself useful."

"A few bob will do," said Harry. "We'll settle up on Saturday, as soon as we get our tin, honour bright."

"Oh, certainly! I had a remittance yesterday for ten shillings," said Todd. "I have spent nothing since. You are welcome to the whole amount if you like."

"You're very good."

"Not at all."

"Well, hand it over, then," said Wharton. "Till Saturday."

"Oh, certainly!"

Alonzo Todd dived his hands into his pockets. He looked a little puzzled, and dived them into other pockets. In each case they came out empty.

The Duffer of Greyfriars looked very perplexed. He went through all his pockets again methodically, the chums watching him with growing anxiety.

"Dear me!" said Todd.

"Lost it?" asked Harry.

"It's very odd. I cannot have lost it, you know. My Uncle Benjamin always told me to be very careful with money, and I am always very careful. It is very odd."

For a third time Alonzo went through his pockets. He turned each of them out, dragging out the lining to its full extent. Various articles were brought to light, but there was no money among them.

Billy Bunter stood grunting and sniffing contemptuously. He was glad to be able to turn the tables upon his old study-mates, and the rough way he had been handled a few minutes ago had not improved his temper.

He threw into his fat face, and into his sniffs and snorts all the scorn he could, to express what he felt of fellows who came borrowing. The chums of the Remove took no notice of him outwardly; but they were feeling uncomfortable.

"Dear me!" said Todd again.

"You haven't any?" asked Bob Cherry. "Never mind. You're an ass, Todd."

"My dear Cherry——"

"And a fathead. Come on, you chaps!"

"But the money must be somewhere," said Todd, wrinkling his brows in an effort of memory. "I did not lend it to you this time, did I, Bunter?"

"No, you didn't," growled Bunter.

"Ah," Todd's face brightened up suddenly. "I remember. I placed it in the jar on the mantelpiece for safety."

"Good!" said Wharton.

Alonzo Todd crossed to the mantelpiece. A peculiar expression came over Billy Bunter's face, and he turned to the window and stared out, apparently becoming very interested all at once in the doings in the Close.

Todd lifted a little delft jar from the mantelpiece, and removed the lid, and looked into it. Then he uttered an exclamation.

"Dear me!"

"Isn't it there?"

"No. This is very, very odd!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

No Cash.

ALONZO TODD stood with the jar in his hand, staring blankly into it. The jar was empty, that was certain, and the Duffer of Greyfriars was very much astonished.

The chums glanced at Bunter. They could guess now why he had turned his back, and had become suddenly interested in the Close. Alonzo Todd was a remarkably innocent youth in many respects. But he had never shown his innocence so much as in thus leaving money about a study that was shared by Billy Bunter.

"Dear me," said Todd, "I remember distinctly putting the money into this jar, and I have certainly not touched it since. Bunter."

The fat junior did not seem to hear. Alonzo went over to the window, and jabbed his bony forefinger into Bunter's ribs. Bunter gave a yell.

"Ow! You ass!"

"My dear Bunter——"

"Yow! You've punctured me, you chump!"

"Bunter, have you seen anything of my ten shillings?"

"No."

"Did you take the money from this jar?"

"That jar!" said Bunter. "I hope you don't think I would take your money, Todd?"

"Certainly not, Bunter. I could not think that you meant to keep it. But you may have taken it by mistake."

"Oh, rats!"

"Then someone must have stolen it," said Todd. "I suppose I must make a complaint about this to Mr. Quelch. If there is a thief in the Form——"

Bunter turned a sickly colour.

"Oh, really, Todd——" he began.

"My dear Bunter, I am not speaking of you. But someone must certainly have entered the study and removed the ten shillings from the jar——"

"I—I say, Todd, I—I don't think I'd mention it to old Quelch, if I were you," stammered Bunter.

"It is my duty, Bunter," said Alonzo firmly. "My Uncle Benjamin would never approve of my passing over such an action."

"I—I don't think I'd mention it. You see, it must have been a mistake."

"My dear Bunter! Impossible! Nobody could enter this study and take my money out of the jar by mistake."

"You see, I—I—as a matter of fact, Todd, I think I must have made the mistake myself," said Bunter. "I keep the study funds in that jar, you know."

"The what?"

"The study funds. I put them in that jar to—to be handy, and you went and planked your money in along with mine, you see."

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"There was no money in the jar, when I put the ten shillings in."

"Oh! I—I must have used the jar second, then. I went to it to take out my money, and, of course, I didn't notice there was any more as well. I must have taken your ten along with my—my fifteen."

"Dear me! How very unfortunate!" said Todd. "You should be more careful, Bunter. A mistake like that might get you into trouble."

"I jolly well think it might," burst out Bob Cherry. "Of all the blessed, low-down, thieving tricks——"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"I don't believe you had any money of your own there, or not more than a tanner," said Bob Cherry wrathfully. "You knew jolly well you were taking Todd's money."

"Of course, I shall make it up to Todd out of the first remittance I get," said Billy Bunter, with dignity. "I am expecting a postal-order this evening——"

"Oh, ring off!"

"Really, Cherry——"

"I'm so sorry," said Alonzo, looking at the chums—"so sorry. I am just as short of money as you are now, owing to Bunter's mistake. I'm so sorry."

"Well, it can't be helped," said Wharton. "Never mind! But I should recommend you not to leave money about the study in future, or Bunter will make a lot more of those unfortunate mistakes."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"If that mistake came to the Head's knowledge, I think Bunter would very likely have to look out for new quarters," Bob Cherry remarked.

"Oh, really——"

"Pah! Cheese it, you worm! You ought to be expelled!"

"Look here, you fellows, get out of my study!" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "I'm blessed if I'm going to have any cheek from you. I expect to be in funds shortly, and then I shall pay Todd, and also settle up any small accounts I owe you."

"Rats!"

"If you doubt my word, Nugent——"

"I jolly well do doubt it!"

And the chums of the Remove walked out of the study, leaving Billy Bunter glowering with wrath and Alonzo looking distressed.

"Look here, you're jolly well not going to be so friendly with those fellows, Todd!" exclaimed Billy Bunter.

"Eh?"

"I don't like it! I'm the head of this study—the head of the new firm—and we're up against those rotters all the time! The less you have to say to them the better!"

"My dear Bunter——"

"Or there will be trouble!" said Bunter, in his most threatening tone.

Alonzo Todd was so meek that many fellows adopted a bullying tone towards him sometimes, but at times they found it to be a mistake. Bunter, indeed, had found it so, but the Owl of the Remove had a very short memory.

"My dear Bunter——"

"'Nuff said!" exclaimed Bunter, with a lordly wave of the hand. "Let the matter drop!"

And Todd blinked at him dubiously, and let it drop.

Meanwhile, the Famous Four went down the passage somewhat disconsolately. They did not know where to look for Wun Lung. There were not many fellows Wharton cared to borrow off, and those he first thought of—Tom Brown and Russell—were gone out for the afternoon. If Wun Lung failed him, there was nothing for it but to go out with empty pockets. And where was Wun Lung?

"Anybody seen Wun Lung?"

"He's gone out," said Hazeldene.

Wharton's face fell.

"Wun Lung gone out! You're sure?"

"Yes; I saw him go off with that minor of his, Hop Hi," said Hazeldene. "What do you want the blessed Chinee for?"

"Oh, it doesn't matter! We may as well get over to Cliff House now, you chaps. Are you coming Hazeldene?"

Hazeldene coloured.

He was Marjorie Hazeldene's brother, and it had been a habit of his to accompany the chums of the Remove over to Cliff House on most of their visits. In fact, it was because Hazeldene had a sister at Cliff House that the intimacy had first grown up. But of late Hazeldene had dropped off. Harry Wharton knew the reason well enough. It was through the evil influence of Vernon-Smith, the Bounder.

"Sorry," said Hazeldene; "I can't come!"

"Marjorie would be glad to see you with us," said Harry.

Hazeldene made an irritable gesture.

"I can't come; I've promised Vernon-Smith——"

Wharton's brow darkened.

"I wish you'd drop that fellow, Hazeldene! You promised me once that you would."

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Hazeldene looked discontented.

"I don't see why I should!" he replied. "He makes himself pleasant enough, and—and he's rolling in tin, and, goodness knows, I don't have too much!"

Wharton could not help his lip curling. Hazeldene saw it, and the blood flushed into his face at once.

"Oh, I don't toady to Vernon-Smith for his money, I assure you," he exclaimed angrily. "I can see that's what you're thinking. I like him. There's no rotten side about him, for one thing! And I can jolly well choose my own friends, I suppose."

"Of course, you can; but——"

"Hang your buts!" said Hazeldene.

And he walked away with his hands in his pockets, without another word. Harry Wharton drew a deep breath, but said nothing. Bob Cherry's nostrils were dilating a little.

"If that chap weren't Marjorie's brother——" he murmured.

"But he is," said Nugent. "Come on!"

And, saying nothing more about Hazeldene, the juniors walked down to the gates. It was an appointment with their girl chums of Cliff House, and they were bound to go; and as they were in so utterly stony a state, the only thing was not to enter into any expense. Marjorie never would allow the boys to spend any money upon her, and that was a trait in her character which made matters easier for the juniors now.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
After the Feast, the Reckoning.

"I TINKS tat dey come, ain't it?"

It was Miss Wilhelmina Limburger who made the remark. She was standing at the gate of Cliff House, looking into the road. Marjorie and Clara were talking in the garden. Miss Limburger was a plump young lady, and her ample proportions were added to in appearance by her dress, which was very gorgeous—as gorgeous as Miss Primrose, the principal of Cliff House, would allow.

Miss Limburger looked like a great sunflower, and the other girls like two pretty primroses beside her. There was a fat smile of satisfaction upon the German girl's face as she saw the Greyfriars juniors coming up the road.

"I tinks I sees tem," she said.

Marjorie looked over the gate, and then opened it. The girls joined the Greyfriars juniors in the road. The lads raised their caps. Bob Cherry blushing red, as he always did when he met Marjorie Hazeldene—for some reason best known, or perhaps unknown, to himself.

"What a nice afternoon for a little walk," Marjorie said, as the boys and girls strolled along the sunny beach. She glanced at the great, towering Shoulder, with a little shiver. "That is where you were so nearly—— Oh, Harry!"

Harry Wharton smiled. It was not long since he had been shut up in the cave under the great Shoulder, and almost drowned by the incoming tide, but he could afford to smile now.

"A miss is as good as a mile," he said lightly. "What a glorious day it is, after the rain yesterday, too. We'll have a jolly good ramble along the cliffs."

"Yes, indeed. I thought," said Marjorie, with a slight shade on her face—"I thought that perhaps Hazel would come with you."

Wharton coloured.

"He couldn't come," he said. "I asked him, but he was fixed up for the afternoon."

Marjorie nodded without replying. She could guess with whom her brother was fixed up. The friendship between Hazel and the Bounder had caused her much anxiety, and once she had believed it broken off for good; but Vernon-Smith had been only biding his time, and Hazeldene was too weak and easily led to long resist the wiles of the Bounder.

But the shade soon passed from the girl's face. Indeed it would have been difficult not to be merry that afternoon. It was a keen day, just keen enough to make the exercise of walking a pleasure, and the wind blowing over the sea brought life and health upon its wings. The sun was shining on sea and sand and towering cliff, and the seagulls screamed round the lofty summit of the Shoulder.

The girls had intended to get back to Cliff House to tea, where they were always at liberty to take their boy friends on half-holidays. But Miss Limburger was not in as good condition as the others, and she was puffing and blowing at a couple of miles from Cliff House, and declared that she must rest.

The juniors, as a matter of fact, had not known that they were to be honoured with Fraulein Limburger's company; and, as another matter of fact, Marjorie and Clara had not.

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known it either, until the Fraulein had announced her intention of coming with them. Miss Limburger was as much trouble as Billy Bunter in some ways, and the others could have rambled on for miles when she announced that she must rest.

They sat down among the rocks and watched the sea, and chatted pleasantly enough, Miss Limburger's contribution to the conversation being a series of grunts, which seemed to express dissatisfaction of some sort.

At last the German pupil of Cliff House uttered the weight that was on her mind.

"I tinks tat I am hungry," she remarked.

"Yes; the sea air gives a chap an appetite," said Bob Cherry.

"I tinks I like tea!"

Marjorie smiled as she met a comical look from Harry.

"Perhaps we had better go home, then," said Marjorie. "After all, it is getting near tea-time, and it is two miles to Cliff House."

"I tinks tat I like tea pefore I go home mit myself, ain't it?"

"Oh, we are going to have tea at Cliff House!" said Miss Clara, in her brisk, businesslike way. "Let's get on!"

"I tinks I am too tired!"

"Well, dear, what would you like to do?" said Marjorie patiently, as the fat German girl showed no disposition to stir. "If we are to go home to tea, you know, we must walk."

"I tinks we have tea here."

"But——"

"Dere is teashop py de Point," said Miss Limburger. "I tinks tat te tea dere is ferry goot, ain't it, pefore?"

Marjorie hesitated.

Harry Wharton's eyes met Bob Cherry's in dismay. The Point was a place much used by bathers in the summer, and then the teahouse there, with its long gardens, did a roaring trade. It was kept open through the winter by local custom, but, of course, on a much smaller scale. It was an expensive place; but the juniors would not have cared for that if they had been in funds. But at present they were stony.

Miss Limburger was evidently determined not to go home without her tea. The young lady had a healthy appetite—quite as healthy as William George Bunter's—and the keen sea air had started that appetite on the warpath.

Miss Limburger, too, had a way of wiring in as if refreshments at seaside teashops could be had for the asking. Perhaps it was German economy which led her to spoil the Egyptians in this manner, and perhaps it was simply innocence. Be that as it might, the Greyfriars juniors, as a rule, fought shy of Miss Limburger outside the school.

It was no joke for a fellow whose weekly pocket-money amounted to two shillings, to be suddenly presented with a bill for four-and-sixpence.

There was a story at Greyfriars of Smith minor having had to leave his watch as security, after dropping into a teashop with Miss Limburger. Smith minor never admitted it, but all the fellows said it was true. It was noticeable that Smith minor had lost the eagerness he had once shown to join in the expeditions with the Cliff House girls.

Knowing Wilhelmina's little ways, Harry Wharton felt dismayed. If only he had his remittance, then it would have been all right. He would cheerfully have expended it to the last penny. But——

Miss Limburger was already rolling off towards the teashop under the cliff. The long shelving beach, thick with bathing-machines in summer, was bare and deserted now. A thin column of smoke rose from the building that was swarmed and buzzing in the summer months.

Miss Limburger rolled into the wooden verandah, and sat down with a puff. The others followed her in. A waiter came out, looking quite cheered to see a visitor to break the quiet. The juniors sat down, wondering what on earth was going to happen. What was to be done? Harry Wharton remembered the story of Smith minor's watch.

Wilhelmina Limburger was already giving orders.

She gave them liberally.

"Ja, ja, I vill have tea," she said; "also brett-und-putter, also te sausage and te ham, and te eggs, and te cake. Ja, ja, and te jam and te marmalade."

She beamed upon the juniors.

"I tinks I am hungry," she remarked.

"I think you are!" murmured Nugent.

"You speaks, ain't it?"

"Nice weather for tea!" said Nugent.

"I tinks the veather is all right. I tinks I am hungry. I tinks tat I like mein tea, ain't it? Vat a plessing is a goot appetite!"

Perhaps there was a divided opinion on that point in the party. But Miss Limburger was quite satisfied.

Miss Limburger's wants were supplied, and she kept the waiter very busy.

Marjorie cast a quick glance at Harry's face.

It would have been wiser for the lad to confess the true state of affairs at the beginning, but it was too late now. Miss Limburger was already wiring in. She had a keen appetite, and the walk by the sea had made it keener. Wharton assumed a cheerful smile. He could only plan to get the girls taken away after tea by Nugent and Bob, and stay behind himself and offer his watch to the waiter, as security against future payment. Once the girls were off the scene he wouldn't mind arguing it out so much.

Having made up his mind that it was as well to be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, so to speak, Wharton gave his orders recklessly.

His chums stared at him as he ordered tea and teacakes, and poached eggs and other delicacies.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry dazedly.

But he said nothing aloud.

Marjorie had taken a quick glance at Harry, perhaps detecting some signs of trouble in his face.

But if there had been any, they were gone now. Wharton was quite cheerful, and in fact jolly, and he urged the girls to have tea so heartily that they could not refuse.

It was getting near the tea-time at Cliff House, and they were hungry; and neither Marjorie nor Clara ever pretended to be destitute of that vulgar thing, a healthy appetite.

Wharton would not be refused. He felt that if he was to get into hot water over Miss Limburger, it was hard that his own friends shouldn't have tea, too.

Wharton forced himself to be in high spirits, and the other juniors, amazed at first, could only conclude that Harry had found some funds, previously overlooked, in his pockets.

Then they wired in, too. They were hungry, and they made the provisions fly almost as rapidly as Miss Limburger did.

But they were not such good stayers.

Long after the juniors had finished, Miss Limburger was still busy, and urging Marjorie and Clara to join her in dainty dishes.

"I tinks tat you must have some of tat toast, Marjorie."

"No, thanks," said Marjorie, laughing. "I have quite finished, thank you."

"You vill like dose sardines, Clara?"

"No, thanks."

"Dese cakes are ferry goot."

"Oh, go it!" said Miss Clara, in her slangy way. "We'll time you."

"Oh, Clara!"

"So we will. Wilhelmina against the field!" said Miss Clara audaciously.

The juniors laughed; but Miss Limburger was too busy to laugh. It was quite a little time before she allowed her last plate to be taken away.

"Now I tinks tat I feels comfy," she remarked. "I am finish."

And Bob Cherry very nearly said "Hear, hear!"

But he stopped in time.

Miss Wilhelmina leaned back in her seat, and regarded her companions, and the sea, and the shore, and, in fact, the whole world, with benevolent cordiality.

She was feeling completely satisfied with herself and everything else.

Marjorie looked at her little watch.

"It is time we were going," she said. "We must not be late for calling-over at Cliff House."

She rose to her feet, and Clara followed her example. Miss Wilhelmina Limburger gave a sigh.

"I suppose ve must move," she said.

"Yes, unless you want to stay there all night," said Miss Clara.

"I tinks I come."

And Miss Limburger rose with an effort. As Bob Cherry remarked to Nugent, aside, she must have been considerably heavier than when she sat down. The girls descended from the verandah, and the waiter came out.

"Bring me the bill," said Harry bravely.

"All together, sir?"

"Yes, all together."

"Yes, sir."

Wharton drew closer to Nugent and whispered to him.

"Get the girls away. I've got to argue it out with the waiter yet."

Nugent jumped.

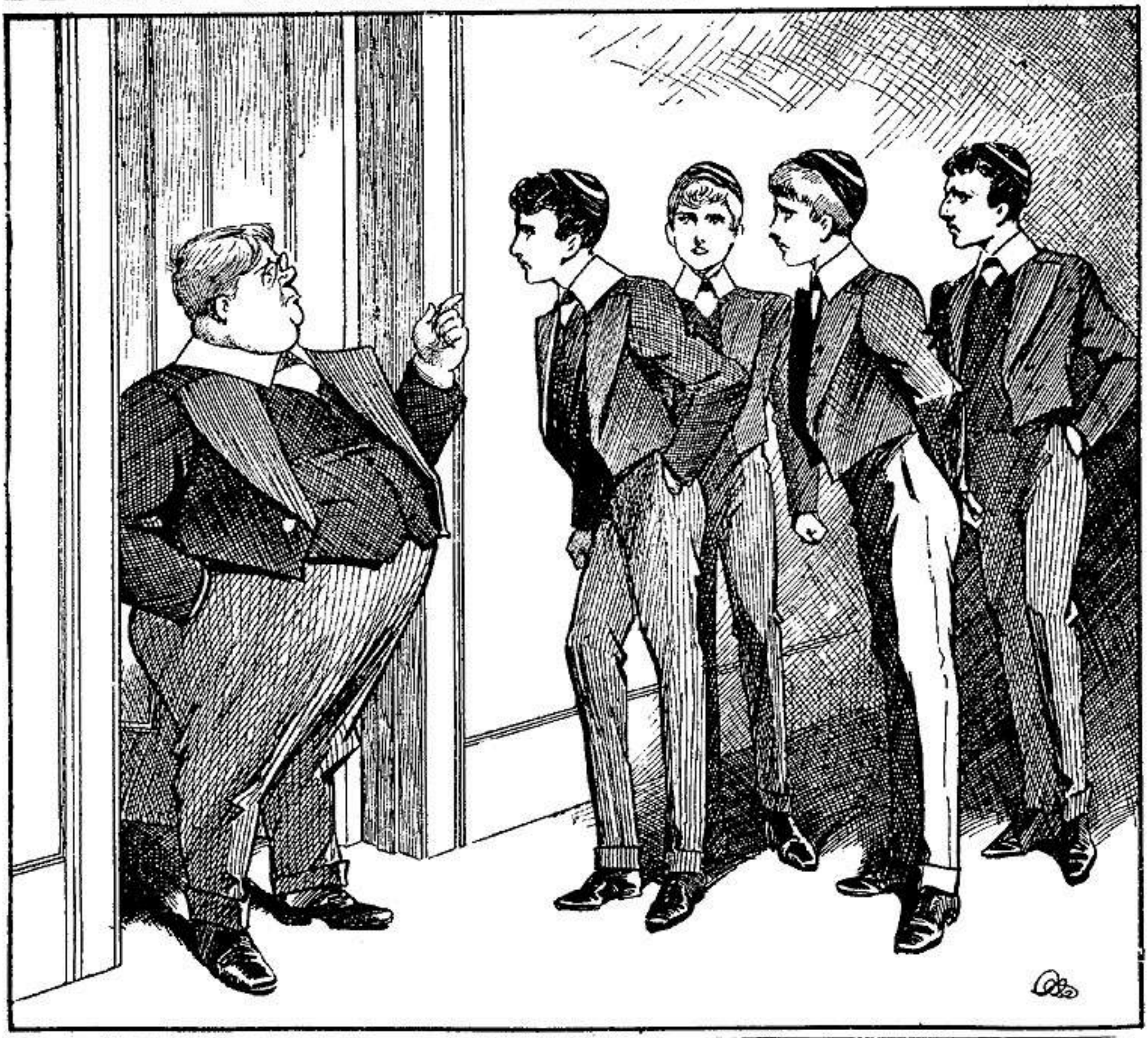
"Great Scott! I thought——"

"Never mind now; buck up."

Nugent, looking dazed, went down the steps to the sand.

"Come on!" he said briskly. "Wharton will follow when he's settled with the waiter. I remember we've got to get round the Shoulder before the tide turns."

OUT THIS WEEK. No. 1 of the 'EMPIRE" LIBRARY. A NEW STORY-BOOK!



"As head of this study," said Billy Bunter, wagging an admonishing forefinger at the four chums, "I don't mean to allow a chum of mine to be worried for money by a lot of impecunious bounders!" The juniors almost staggered. "W-w-what?" gasped Harry Wharton. (*See page 3.*)

"It doesn't turn for more than an hour yet," said Miss Clara.

"Never mind; we may as well make sure."

They started down the sandy path. Harry Wharton remained on the wooden verandah, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remained with him. Bob Cherry and Nugent had gone with the girls, and the nabob thought he could be spared to stand by his chum in the coming painful interview.

Wharton turned very red as the waiter brought the bill. The lad had faced many a danger without losing his nerve in the least. But this was different. He felt a hot tremor run through him at the approach of a little man whom he could have knocked off the verandah with a single drive of his fist, if it had come to that.

"Ahem!" said Wharton.

"The buck-upfulness is the wheezy good idea," murmured the nabob sympathetically. "On the ball, my worthy chum!"

"Ahem!"

"'Ere you are, sir," said the waiter, beginning to look suspicious. "Your bill, sir!"

"Ahem——"

"Fourteen shillings and eightpence, hif you please," said the waiter, with a heavy stress on the "hif."

"H'm! Ahem!"

"Me tinkee we catee glub hele," said a voice on the beach close by the steps of the verandah. "What you tinkee?"

"Wun Lung!" shouted Harry Wharton, in great relief.

The little Chinee came up the steps, accompanied by a still more diminutive Chinee, very like himself in feature. This was Hop Hi—Wun Lung minor—a most innocent-looking youth, but fuller of all kinds of mischief than Wun Lung himself, and even more silky and soapy in his ways.

Wun Lung gave Wharton a cheerful grin.

"Fancee meetee you," he remarked. "We takee long walkee—gettee hunglee——"

"Lend me a sov., Wun Lung."

Wun Lung fished in his voluminous garments, without turning a hair. He had heaps of money, and he would have lent Harry Wharton five pounds as soon as fivepence.

"Allee light!" he exclaimed.

He handed out the coin. Harry Wharton laid it on the bill, and the waiter, giving him a very peculiar look, walked away to get the change.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Chance of a Lifetime.

HARRY WHARTON could have hugged the little Chinee. His arrival had been in the very nick of time. Wun Lung grinned amiably as he sat down with his minor.

"Nicee tea hele," he remarked. "You had tea, allee samee?"

"Yes, we've had tea," said Harry, "and I was in a jolly fix to pay for it, too. I'm stumped."

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Wun Lung grinned.

"Me glad me comee. Allee light."

"You shall have this back on Saturday, Wun Lung."

"Allee light."

The waiter came back with the change. Wharton gave him a tip, and handed the rest of the change to Wun Lung. The little Chinee shook his head.

"Keepee till Satulday," he said.

"Thanks, I will, if you've got lots."

The little Chinee chuckled, and drew a handful of coins from his pocket. There were three or four gold ones among the silver.

"Plenty allee samee," he remarked.

"By Jove, yes!" said Harry, in astonishment.

"Me lendee you 'nother sov., allee samee."

Wharton shook his head.

"Thanks, no. I couldn't pay it if you did. I don't have a giddy millionaire's allowance," he said.

"You takee, allee samee, all light."

"No, no! And look here, Wun Lung, old chap, keep that money out of sight, or you may get into trouble," said Harry. "It's not safe to show so much money about in public, you know—a mere kid like you."

"Allee light."

And Wun Lung rattled the money back into his pocket. It was really surprising to see the respect the waiter showed the little Chinee, after that view of a handful of gold and silver.

"Me solly you had tea," said Wun Lung hospitably. "You sittee down and havee 'nothel; what you tinkee?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No, thanks," he said. "You're awfully good, but I've got to join the others. Good-bye, kid, and thanks again."

"Allee light."

Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh ran along the sandy path after the others. They soon overtook Marjorie. Nugent had started the party walking quickly, but Miss Limburger had soon entered a protest against that. Miss Limburger was never much inclined to walk quickly, and after that extensive tea she was less inclined to hard exercise than ever.

Nugent gave Harry a quick, comical glance.

"Well?" he murmured.

Wharton laughed.

"It's all right," he said. "Wun Lung came in just in time, and it's all serene."

"Good egg!"

It was a pleasant walk back to Cliff House. Miss Limburger grumbled considerably at the distance, in a way that reminded the chums of Bunter. It appeared that after a very hearty meal she found walking a trouble, and appeared to overlook the fact that no one but herself was responsible for the heartiness of the meal. Marjorie and Clara, however, were very cheerful and kind, and the juniors tolerated Miss Limburger with great fortitude.

At the gate of Cliff House they said good-bye to their girl chums, and set out for Greyfriars at a rapid walk. They had not too much time to get in before calling-over.

A fat form was standing in the gateway of Greyfriars in the dusk. It belonged to William George Bunter.

The Famous Four would have passed him without a word, but, to their surprise, Billy Bunter had an agreeable grin on his fat face, and he came towards them with his most insinuating wriggle. The Owl of the Remove appeared to have quite forgotten the unpleasant incidents in No. 14 Study.

"I say, you fellows——" he began.

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry gruffly, and strode on.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

The fat junior walked along beside the chums—or, rather, ran, for his fat little legs had to go like clockwork to keep pace.

"I say, you fellows," he said, "look at this paper."

"I don't want to."

"I wasn't speaking to you, Bob Cherry. You look at this paper, will you, Wharton?"

"I don't want to."

"It's the 'Friardale Gazette.' Look at it, Nugent."

"I don't want to."

"I say, Inky——"

"The don'twantfulness is terrific, my worthy fat chum."

"Look here, you fellows," exclaimed Bunter warmly, "I'm showing you this for your own benefit. It's the chance of a lifetime."

"Rats!"

"It's an advertisement——"

"Bosh!"

"And it's a way of earning money—heaps of money."

"Piffle!"

"Look here," exclaimed Bunter, "just say plainly whether you want to see this paper or whether you don't?"

"We don't."

"H'm! For your own sakes you'd better see it. You see, it's a great chance, and ought not to be lost. I know you're all stony, from the way you came cadging round my study this afternoon, and——"

"What!"

"Oh, really, you know, I wish you wouldn't shoot things at a fellow like that! You quite made me jump," said Bunter, in an injured tone. "You did come cadging, you know. I am sorry—sincerely sorry if I was too hard on you, but a fellow has to stand by principle. I couldn't have you get into the habit of coming to my study at such times, you know. I made a firm stand on the matter really more for your sakes than anything else."

The chums of the Remove did not reply. Bob Cherry murmured something about Buntericide being justifiable, and that was all.

"Now, this will set you up," said Bunter, persuasively. "Don't think I've got an axe to grind in the matter. I haven't. Todd pointed this out to me, and I'm pointing it out to you from sheer good-nature. If you want to make money——"

Wharton turned on the fat junior.

"Look here, Bunter, we want you to let us alone," he exclaimed. "Is that plain enough for you?"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Shut up! Don't speak to us! Now you're not in our study, you're not going to bother us as you used to do."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, very well, Wharton! I could show you a way of making money; but if you prefer to go about stony and trying to borrow——"

Bunter got no further.

The four chums seized him simultaneously, and he was whirled off his feet, and sat down upon the ground with a bump.

They walked on and left him sitting there blinking.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.
Of Advantage to Schoolboys.

ALONZO TODD came out of No. 14 Study with a beaming face, and a folded newspaper under his arm. The Duffer of Greyfriars was looking particularly pleased.

Something had evidently happened to set Alonzo's spirits up. He came along to the door of Harry Wharton's study, and looked in. Wharton, Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were busily engaged upon their preparation, but they left off as Alonzo came in.

"I trust I am not interrupting you?" said Alonzo.

"Well, you are, as a matter of fact," said Harry. "But it doesn't matter, Toddy; we're in no hurry. Come in!"

"Thanks so much. You are aware that, owing to a mistake of Bunter's, I have no money. I am to have it back out of a postal-order, but that has not yet arrived."

"And isn't likely to," said Nugent.

Alonzo nodded thoughtfully.

"Yes, there seems to be a curious delay about Bunter's remittances," he remarked. "You fellows also are short of money?"

"Stony!"

"So are many fellows in the Remove," said Alonzo. "During the afternoon I have heard Bunter ask quite a dozen fellows in turn whether they had a few shillings to spare, and not one of them had."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Sort of epidemic," said Nugent, grinning.

"Yes," said Todd. "It is very remarkable, and it is all the more fortunate that this advertisement should have appeared in the 'Friardale Gazette' to-day. It really comes just in the nick of time."

The chums stared at him.

"What are you driving at?" asked Harry.

"This advertisement," said Todd. "It is really a splendid offer, and, as Bunter says, it is the chance of a lifetime."

"Oh! Is that what Bunter was babbling about?"

"Bunter was going to show you fellows?" said Todd. "It was I who first saw the advertisement. Bunter was showing me an advertisement in the paper in the next paragraph, you see, when I saw this and read it. The heading caught my eye—'Of Advantage to Schoolboys!'"

"Oh, let's look at it!"

Todd, with a satisfied smile, handed the paper to Wharton.

"Read it out," said Nugent.

And Wharton, with a somewhat puzzled brow, read out the following:

"'OF ADVANTAGE TO SCHOOLBOYS!

"'Schoolboys—public schoolboys preferred—wanted to do home work—easy translations, etc. Work can be done in

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spare time at school quite easily Good remuneration. Send 1s. postal-order for full instructions to Nemo, Box 1,001, "Gazette" Office.'"

"There!" said Todd, beaming. "What do you think of that?"

"Blessed if I can understand it," said Harry, wrinkling his brows. "Looks to me like a swindle."

"Spoof!" said Nugent.

"Oh dear!" said Todd. "I must say that is rather suspicious, you fellows. I am sure the editor wouldn't insert the advertisement if it were not honest."

"My dear chap, editors have something else to do besides reading over advertisements, and they suppose the public have sense enough to look out for themselves."

"My dear Wharton——"

"What the dickens should a chap want schoolboys to do easy translations for?" said Harry. "You can get easy or hard translations done for next to nothing. And what is one to send a shilling postal order for?"

"For instructions," said Todd.

"It would cost only a penny stamp to send instructions."

"Oh, there may be expensive papers, and so on! Bunter thinks that the shilling will barely cover the expense of sending instructions."

"Bunter's an ass!"

"Well, yes, I think that perhaps Bunter is a little asinine," assented Todd, "but I thought this advertisement offered a splendid chance of making money. You see, it distinctly says good remuneration."

"It might say that without its being true."

"My dear Wharton!"

"If you believe all you read in advertisements, Toddy, you'll accumulate a wonderful store of knowledge."

"But really——"

"My dear chap, advertisements are about as true as leading articles, and leading articles about as true as the reports of our special correspondent on the spot," said Wharton, laughing. "You had better light the fire with that paper."

"My dear Wharton," said Todd, with a great deal of dignity, "I am shocked to hear you speak in such a tone about the most glorious institution of our country—the great and independent Press. My Uncle Benjamin says that the Press is the most glorious institution of modern times and the palladium of our wonderful constitution. I refuse to believe that an editor would allow any article to be written except in a sincere and earnest spirit. I decline to credit that there are special war correspondents who never go nearer the field of battle than the end of Fleet Street. I have heard of such things, but I decline to believe them. Moreover——"

"Oh, if you've got to 'moreover,' I've done," said Harry, laughing. "Send in your bob, Toddy, and get the instructions. It will be a bob's worth of experience to you."

"But I should like you fellows to take it up, too," said Todd, anxiously. "Bunter points out that it is the chance of a lifetime."

"Is Bunter sending a shilling?"

"No: he says he isn't up to translations."

"Well, that's true enough. He couldn't construe 'dum vivamus vivimus' without three mistakes," said Harry, with a laugh.

"But you fellows are well up in Latin, especially you, Wharton. Or, if it's French, you're well up in that, too," said Todd. "There's no reason why you shouldn't rope in money. Suppose they pay for the translations at, say, five shillings a page—Bunter suggests that as the figure—why couldn't we all get in about ten or fifteen shillings for an evening's work? Think what that would be like."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It seems to me a splendid offer," said Todd.

"It's spoof!"

"I fear that that remark shows a distrust of human nature," said Todd, with a shake of the head. "My Uncle Benjamin would not approve of it, Wharton."

"Good old Benny!"

"Then you won't take it up?"

"I think not."

"The notfulness is terrific."

"Perhaps you will lend me a shilling, if you have one?" Todd suggested. "I have no cash, owing to that unfortunate mistake of Bunter's in mixing up my money with the study funds."

Wharton had the change of Wun Lung's sovereign in his pocket. He took out a shilling, and handed it to Todd.

"There you are, my son."

"Thanks so much! I will return this on Saturday. If I make a great deal of money, Wharton, I shall not forget you."

"Thanks!"

"Perhaps, too, you will help me with the translations, if they are from the Latin? You are very much ahead of me in that."

"Like a bird, old chap."

"Thanks so much!"

EVERY TUESDAY. The "Magnet" LIBRARY. ONE PENNY.

And Alonzo Todd quitted the study, and hurried away in quest of a postal order to send to "Nemo," at the "Gazette" Office, Box 1,001.

The chums of No. 1 Study looked at one another, grinning.

"The thing's spoof, on the face of it," said Harry. "All advertisements that ask you to send money to an unknown advertiser are swindles."

"The swindlefulness is terrific."

"But there must be a fearful lot of mugs in the country," said Nugent thoughtfully. "The advertisers are exposed over and over again, and yet the advertisements keep on appearing. I remember some time back Bunter was in high feather over an advertisement about home-work—an awful swindle. I suppose this is another of the same sort."

"Yes. Bunter's a silly young ass to be taken in a second time in the same way! But he's ass enough for anything."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

Billy Bunter was blinking in at the doorway.

"I say, you fellows, I think it's rotten to talk about a fellow behind his back," said Bunter. The fat junior never lost an opportunity of taking a high moral tone.

Wharton flushed angrily.

"I've never said anything about a fellow behind his back that I wouldn't say to his face, and you know it," he exclaimed. "I said you were an ass, and a bigger ass than ever, and so you are."

"I didn't come here to quarrel with you, Wharton," said Bunter loftily. "Look here, I suppose Todd has shown you the advertisement in the 'Gazette'?"

"Yes."

"I want to answer it," said Bunter. "If you would lend me a shilling——"

"Rats!" said Harry. "It's a swindle; but if it were genuine, you can't construe."

"Oh, really, you know! I would get Linley to help me—he's strong on Latin and Greek and all that rot. Besides, the translations might be from the French, you know, and I'm a dab at French. You remember how I used to interpret for you when we were in France?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I can't see anything to cackle at. I've seen French people smile with pleasure when I've talked to them in their own language. But that's neither here nor there. Will you lend me a bob?"

"Don't you disapprove of cadging, Bunty?" asked Nugent, with a grin.

"Oh, really, Nugent! This is a different matter, of course. What I want is a small loan. I am expecting a postal-order by the first post in the morning——"

"Oh, give the postal-order a rest, for goodness' sake!" exclaimed Wharton. "Here's a shilling. Buzz off!"

"Shall I let you have this back out of my postal-order, Wharton, or would you prefer it to be put down to the account——"

"Rats! Catch!"

Bunter caught the shilling—on his nose. He yelped.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Get out!"

Bunter had nothing to stay for now that he had the shilling. He got out. He hurried out of the School House, but his steps did not take him in the direction of the post-office. Apparently he had dropped the idea of answering Nemo's advertisement, for he made a direct line for the school tuckshop, and the shilling was rapidly expended in tarts and ginger-beer.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Thinks of Others.

THE next day there was considerable talk in the Lower School on the subject of that advertisement.

Alonzo Todd had brought it into general notice in his obliging way.

Todd, as he often said, had been brought up to be obliging and to make himself useful by his estimable Uncle Benjamin, and he was never tired of doing things for others, and making efforts to make people happy.

It was unfortunate that his efforts generally turned out not as he had intended, and that all kinds of ill-luck attended his efforts to do good.

But that was not Alonzo's fault.

He tried to do good, and if the results were unfortunate he regretted the results, and tried again.

There was no end to his obligingness. He would do anything for anybody, and when a chance came of helping his Form-fellows to make themselves rich by a little work, he was not likely to lose it.

His child-like faith in the honesty of advertisers was almost

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS

touching. Yet that it is not an uncommon quality is proved by the frequent success of dishonest advertisements.

The man who advertises in a racing paper that he has a "dead sure snip" is frequently a man who has never been on a racecourse in his life, who does not know a jockey even by sight, and seldom sees horses other than cab-horses. Yet such a man will frequently receive shoals of postal-orders for his tip, and if it by chance turns out to be correct, he establishes a circle of firm believers, and as fast as his old clients find him out to be a humbug new clients pour in. And it is but too seldom that he receives a visit from the police. Other advertisers will offer you a phonograph or a bicycle for a shilling, concealing in very small type the fact that you have to make endless payments more before you get the article. Yet they make it pay. Alonzo Todd was a duffer, certainly, but he "duffed" in numerous company.

The other fellows in the Greyfriars Remove were not such duffers as Alonzo. But lads in the Lower Fourth at any school are not likely to be very worldly-wise. They may think they are.

Besides, the chance of making a great deal of money for a small expenditure seems to be irresistible. It is that which surrounds the gaming-tables of Monte Carlo with eager crowds all the year round. They all know that every chance is in favour of the bank—they all know that the bank makes a profit of much more than a million sterling a year out of the losses of the players, yet each hopes to be the brilliant exception.

And it is to that instinct that the cunning advertiser appeals, whether he advertises a "sure snip" for a race he knows nothing about, or a splendid berth to be obtained for a small commission, or a handsome bicycle to be sold for next to nothing for the sake of the advertisement, and in only too many cases he reaps a profit.

The fellows in the Greyfriars Lower Fourth read Nemo's advertisement, and the thing caught on. Most of them could construe after a fashion—in a style sufficient to pass their Form-master. The appeal, too, to "public schoolboys preferred" touched them on their vanity. After all, why should not somebody be in want of easy translations, and be willing to pay for them.

Todd's earnest belief carried weight.

Todd was so certain of his good fortune in finding that advertisement, and so eager to make others share it, that he impressed them in spite of themselves. And it was a fact that there was a general "stoniness" in the Remove about that time. Many of the fellows were short of money, and the prospect of earning some easily appealed to them with an irresistible fascination.

But for the shilling to be sent for instructions, it is safe to say that the whole of the Remove would have plumped for that home work at once.

That shilling made them hesitate.

Some hadn't the shilling, and some were too cautious to part with it if they had it without some more tangible evidence that there would be a return for it.

Others unreflectingly rushed into the trap.

Alonzo had sent off his shilling the previous evening, and was hourly in expectation of receiving instructions about the translations. He urged the others to follow his example.

"You see," he exclaimed, addressing a number of juniors in the common-room—"you see, an advertisement like that is bound to have crowds of answers. First come, first served. If we get the work the others will get left out. We have the advantage of being on the spot, and able to reply quickly."

"Yes, rather!" said Billy Bunter. "I think that every fellow here ought to buck up and send in his postal-order."

"Rats!" said Ogilvy.

"Oh, really——"

"I suppose it isn't a relation of yours, by any chance, who's running this thing?" grinned the Scottish junior.

"Oh, really, you know——"

"Because you seem so jolly keen about it, Bunter."

"Oh, I'm not keen about it," said Bunter indifferently. "It's Todd's idea, not mine. Todd first saw the advertisement, and showed it to me."

"Oh, certainly," said Todd. "I think I may take the credit of having brought the matter into notice in the first place."

"I can't translate well enough," said Bunter. "I'm not going to answer the ad. myself. You fellows can do as you like."

"Why, you fat young fraud!" exclaimed Nugent. "You borrowed a bob last night of Wharton to send in to the paper!"

"Oh, really, you know, I—I changed my mind! I had a bit of a snack at Mrs. Mimble's instead."

"You fraud!"

"Look here, Nugent, I suppose I can do as I like with my own money?" said the Owl of the Remove, with a great deal of dignity.

"But it wasn't your money—it was Wharton's!"

"Oh, really——"

"The fat bounder!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "I lent him a bob for the same thing."

"You—you see, Bulstrode, I—I——"

"I'm going to the village after dinner," said Todd. "If any of you fellows want any postal-orders brought in I'll be very pleased to oblige you."

"You can get one for me," said Bulstrode. "It's only a bob, anyway, and we shall see whether there's anything in it."

"I may as well have one," said Morgan.

"Faith, and I'm wid ye!" said Micky Desmond.

"Shall I get one for you, Ogilvy?"

Ogilvy grinned, and shook his head.

"No, thanks! I'll wait and see how it turns out."

"Better strike the iron while it's hot," said Billy Bunter. "You can't do better than take Todd's advice."

"Rats!"

And after dinner, when Todd walked down to the village, he took three shillings to purchase postal-orders. Billy Bunter rolled out of the school gates and overtook him in the lane, and walked down to Friardale with him.

"Are you coming to the post-office, Bunter?" asked Todd.

"No. I've got a—a call to make, that's all," said Bunter.

"I could make it for you, perhaps," said Todd, in his obliging way, for Bunter was puffing and panting along the lane, not at all in a condition for walking after an enormous dinner. "You could sit down and rest."

"No, I shall have to go personally."

"If a message would do——"

"It wouldn't."

They reached the village, and Billy Bunter saw Todd safe in at the post-office before he rolled away on his own mission. They met again ten minutes later, and Bunter did not say a word as to where he had been. Todd did not ask him, but he wondered a little.

"Got the postal-orders?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, here they are."

"Good!"

"You seem to be very pleased," Todd remarked.

"Yes. I—I'm so pleased at the idea of the fellows making money, you know."

"That is very kind of you, Bunter. I like to see you thoughtful for others. It is very seldom that you are so. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that a fellow should be very thoughtful for others. Dear me, there is the bell for classes!" exclaimed Todd, as they came up to the school gates.

Bunter gave a grunt of annoyance.

"I wonder if there would be time to cut into the tuckshop?" he muttered.

"Oh, no!" said Alonzo. "Besides, what is the use? Mrs. Mimble would not give you credit, Bunter—I have heard her refuse to do so very distinctly many times. And you have no money, you know."

"I think I might have time——"

"But you have no money."

"That's all you know. I think——"

"The bell's stopped ringing."

Bunter cast a longing glance towards the tuckshop, but he dared not be late for class. Mr. Quelch was very particular on those points. The two juniors ran for it, and reached the Form-room as the Remove were taking their seats there—just in time to avoid being called over the coals by the Form-master.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.
Greek for Bunter.

IT was observed by the Removites that Billy Bunter seemed to be in a state of suppressed anxiety during afternoon lessons. He cast frequent glances towards the clock, and two or three times Mr. Quelch looked at him very fixedly. But the Owl of the Remove was too short-sighted to notice that.

"Bunter!" rapped out the Remove-master at last, as Bunter blinked once more towards the clock over the bookcase.

Billy changed his blinking gaze to the Form-master.

"Ye-e-es, sir!"

"That is the fourth time I have observed you look at the clock, Bunter."

"Oh, really, sir——"

"Are you specially anxious for the lessons to be over, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! On the contrary, sir, I—I'm enjoying them very much, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I'm never anxious for lessons to be over, sir."

"I hope you are speaking truly, Bunter."

"Never, sir—I—I mean, yes, sir."

"Well, Bunter, if I see you looking at the clock again, I

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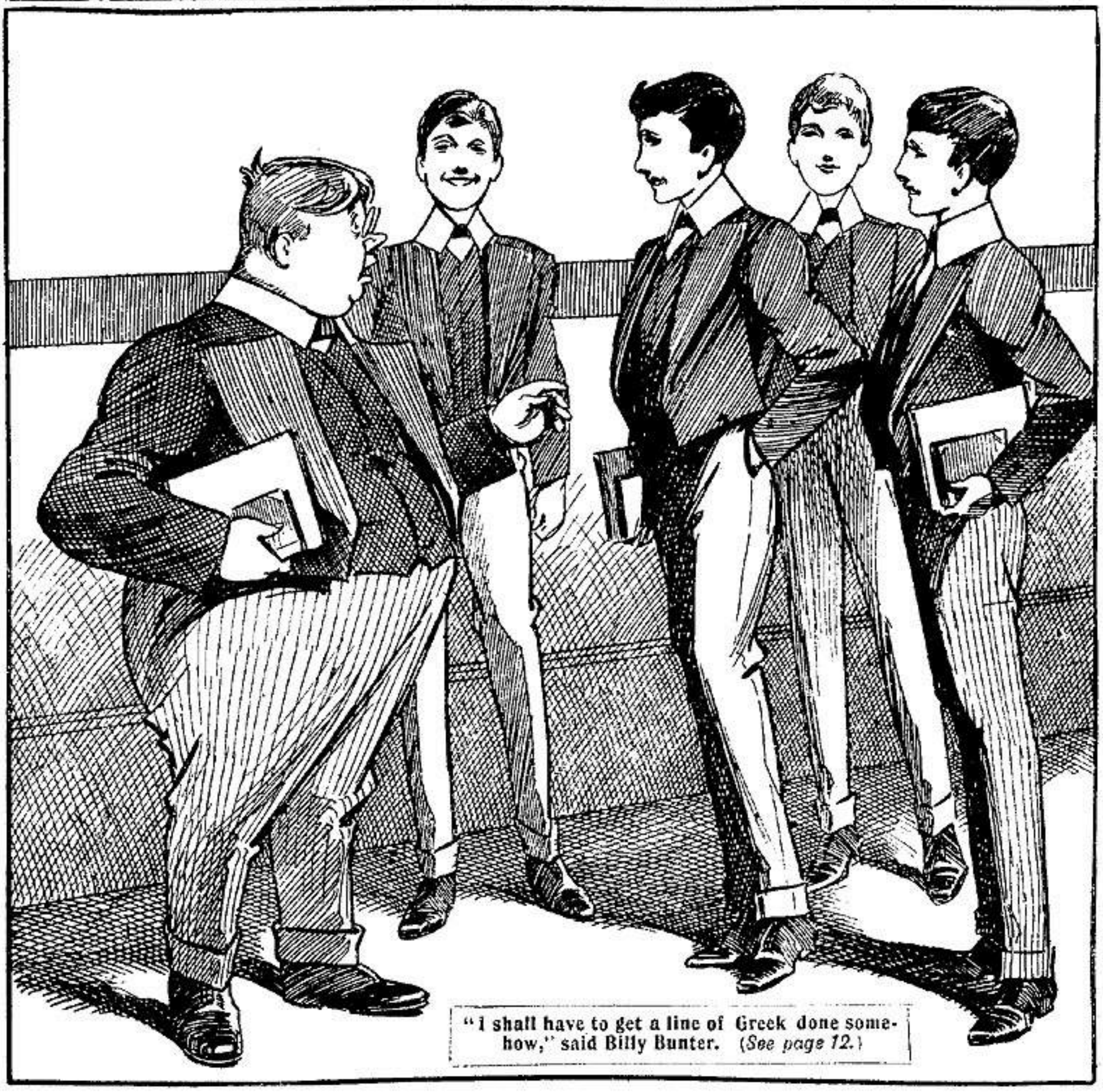

"I shall have to get a line of Greek done somehow," said Billy Bunter. (See page 12.)

shall put your words to the test, for you will be detained half an hour after class."

"Oh, sir!"

"So please give you attention to your lesson."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

Billy Bunter did not look at the clock again. But it was anguish to him to refrain from doing so. Presently he whispered to Nugent:

"What's the time, Nugent?"

"Four o'clock."

Bunter groaned.

"Oh, dear! Another half-hour!"

"You are speaking, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir! I never moved my lips, sir! I only said to Nugent that it was a most enjoyable lesson we were having, sir."

The Remove giggled, and even Mr. Quelch relaxed into a smile.

"Well, don't do so again, Bunter."

"Certainly not, sir."

Bunter was quiet for a quarter of an hour. Then he whispered to Tom Brown, on the other side of him:

"What's the time, Brown?"

"Quarter past four."

"Oh, dear!"

"Bunter, take fifty lines!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I warned you, Bunter, that you were not to offend again."

"I—I haven't, sir."

"What? I distinctly saw you speak."

"You—you told me not to speak to Nugent, sir. I—I was speaking to Brown, sir."

"Take a hundred lines!"

"Oh!"

And Billy Bunter did not venture upon any further expostulation. He only waited in great anxiety lest he should be detained instead of "lined." At twenty-five minutes past four, he ventured, at last, to look at the clock. He did not see that Mr. Quelch's gaze was full upon him at the time.

"Bunter!" came the rasping voice, like the tap of a hammer.

The fat junior jumped.

"Yes, sir."

"You were looking at the clock again."

"Oh, sir! No, sir!"

"What were you looking at?"

"I—I was looking at the bookcase, sir. I was wondering if—if you would let me borrow the Greek lexicon in there, sir, as—as I was thinking of taking up Greek out of class, sir."

The fertility of Bunter's imagination surprised himself. He was as likely to take up Greek as to take up a ton of coal.

"Indeed! You shall have a chance," said Mr. Quelch, eyeing him sternly. "I am afraid you are a most untruthful boy, Bunter."

"Oh, sir!"

"If you are speaking truly, I will take you at your word.

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You shall certainly borrow the Greek lexicon. You may take it now."

"Th-th-thank you, sir."

"And you will bring me your first Greek exercise, and show it to me in my study this evening, Bunter."

Bunter's jaw dropped. He knew as much of Greek as of Hebrew. Greek was not a subject in the regular curriculum at Greyfriars, and Bunter thought the regular curriculum troublesome enough, without taking outside subjects.

But he had committed himself now. How he could possibly write out a Greek exercise of any sort was a puzzle to him.

"Yes, sir," he stammered.

"I shall expect it, Bunter."

"Very well, sir."

And Mr. Quelch dismissed the class.

The Removites filed out.

Billy Bunter went out of the Form-room with a most woebegone face. He seemed to have forgotten for the moment that he was in a hurry to get out, so dismayed was he by the punishment that had fallen upon him for his untruthfulness.

"You young ass!" said Harry Wharton. "What did you tell Quelch such an enormous crammer as that for?"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Why didn't you try something a little more reasonable?"

"How was I to know that he'd drop on me like that?" demanded Bunter indignantly. "It was the first thing that came into my head. I wasn't to guess that the beast would catch me up in that way!"

"My dear Bunter," exclaimed Alonzo, in a shocked tone, "you do not mean to say that you have told Mr. Quelch a deliberate untruth?"

"Oh, get out!" grunted Bunter.

"My Uncle Benjamin would be awfully shocked. My Uncle Benjamin——"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Always impressed upon me that——"

"Go to the dickens!"

"One should always tell the truth. Bunter, I am disgusted."

"Look here, if that's all you've got to say, you can shut up!" roared Bunter. "Isn't it bad enough to be jumped on by old Quelch, without having you starting on me? I think I might get some sympathy."

"No sympathy going for rotten liars," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"You'll get a licking if you don't show up some Greek, and serve you jolly well right," said Frank Nugent. "You may get licked into telling the truth in the long run, you fat bounder. Scat!"

The chums of the Remove walked away. Bunter blinked round on a crowd of grinning and unsympathetic faces.

"I shall have to get a line or two of Greek done, somehow!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Perhaps Ionides, of the Sixth, will help you," suggested Bulstrode, with a grin. "He's a Greek, you know—of course, he's a modern Greek, not an ancient one."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Still, he must know the lingo of his giddy forefathers. In fact, I know he does. Ask him to do some for you, and palm it off on Quelch."

"He's more likely to kick me out of his study. He's a nasty beast."

"There's Linley," said Russell, good-naturedly. "He's all right. He'll do a bit of Greek for you if you ask him."

Bunter brightened up.

"Of course!" he exclaimed. I'll ask him. Being a factory chap, I should think he'd be only too glad to do any little thing to oblige a gentleman."

"What gentleman?" asked Bulstrode.

"Oh, really, you know——"

"But what were you playing the giddy goat in the Form-room for, Bunter?" asked Ogilvy. "What was the matter with you?"

"Well, I was anxious to get out, you know."

"What's on?"

"I'm expecting something, that's all."

"Ha, ha! A postal-order?"

"That's my bizney," said Billy Bunter loftily. "I may get a jolly lot of postal-orders. Some titled friends of mine——"

"Ha, ha! Go easy with the titled friends——"

"Oh, really, Ogilvy! Some titled friends of mine will be sending me postal-orders this week—shilling orders, I expect, but as I have a crowd of friends, I shall get a lot of them, I expect."

"I'll believe that when I see them."

"Well, I've got one already."

"Show it," said Ogilvy sceptically.

"I don't see why I should take the trouble to do that," said Billy Bunter loftily. "If you like to come to the tuck-shop, you'll see me cash it with Mrs. Mimble."

"Oh, we'll do that!" grinned Ogilvy.

A dozen juniors followed Billy Bunter to the tuck-shop. They stared when he produced a shilling postal-order, which Mrs. Mimble took at once. The good lady supplied Bunter's wants to exactly the extent of the shilling.

"Well, my hat!" said Ogilvy. "Wonders will never cease! Billy Bunter has had a postal order at last!"

"Oh, really, you know, I'm expecting quite a lot of them."

"Rats!"

Bunter sniffed, and rolled out of the tuck-shop. He stood at the gates for some time, watching the road, evidently in expectation of somebody or something. But nobody and nothing came, and presently the fat junior rolled indoors with a discontented brow.

"Any more postal-orders?" asked Russell, with a grin.

And Bunter snapped out crossly: "No!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Nemo's Reply.

ALONZO TODD was waiting for the postman to come in, with as keen an anxiety as Billy Bunter had shown in waiting at the gate, whether or not it was the postman Bunter waited for. Alonzo Todd was expecting an answer to his letter to Nemo, Box 1,001, office of the "Friardale Gazette." Nemo had had plenty of time to reply, and Todd was looking eagerly for his answer. He wanted to have the full instructions, so that he could commence the easy translations at once, and begin to draw in the liberal remuneration. Todd's was a trusting nature.

"Have you seen the postman, Bunter?" he asked, as the fat junior came in.

"No," grunted Bunter.

"I am expecting a letter from Nemo," said Todd. "I really hope the reply will come by this post."

"Any more fellows sent in bobs?" asked Bunter, with a gleam of interest.

"Yes, the three I fetched the orders for."

"They're posted?"

"Yes."

"Good!" said Bunter.

"Yes, very good," said Todd, a little surprised, however, by the extreme satisfaction Billy Bunter showed. "I am glad to think that three of the fellows at least—Bulstrode, Morgan, and Desmond—will be able to make money in their spare time by means of easy translations, all owing to me, Bunter."

"Yes, all owing to you, Toddy," agreed Bunter.

It was curious that Bunter, usually grasping as much after glory as after everything else, was willing to allow all the credit of this discovery to fall to Alonzo Todd. Whenever Nemo's great offer was under discussion, Bunter was careful to disclaim any decided opinion on the matter himself, and announce that it was all the business of Alonzo Todd. All the credit was Todd's—all the glory was Alonzo's. Codlin was the friend, and not Short, to quote from the classics. Bunter's self-denial in this matter was a source of great astonishment to the Removites who noticed it.

"Yes, it was very good of you, Todd, and very obliging," said Bunter.

"My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to be obliging," said Todd, with a beaming smile. "I am so glad to be the means of introducing this great chance to the Remove fellows, Bunter."

"By the way, what are you going to have for tea?" asked Bunter.

"I really don't know. Unless you are able to repay me some money——"

"Oh, really, Todd——"

"I shall have to have tea in Hall."

"Oh, that won't do!" said Bunter. "You see, I'm hungry, I'm expecting several postal-orders this evening. If you could stand the tea now——"

"Unfortunately——"

"What about Wun Lung? He might——"

"He's having tea with his young brother in the Second-Form room, I think. Nugent minor came and asked him."

"Oh, really—— Look here, I can't have tea in Hall!"

"Postman!" sang out a voice.

"Dear me! Pray excuse me, Bunter—the postman probably has my answer from Box 1,001!" exclaimed Todd. And he rushed away to meet the postman.

Bunter grunted impatiently. He did not seem to attach much importance to the reply from Box 1,001.

ANSWERS

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But Alonzo was very eager.

He was certain that the postman would have his reply from Nemo of Box 1,001, and in his mind's eye he already saw himself reading out that reply, and convincing the sceptics of the Remove.

Alonzo Todd descended the steps of the School House to meet the postman.

"I think you have a letter for me?" he remarked.

"Name, sir?"

"Todd—Alonzo Todd."

"Yes, sir, there's one for you."

And the postman fished it out, and handed it over. Alonzo's eyes danced. It was the letter. The postmark was Friardale, and there was no one in Friardale likely to write to him, excepting the gentleman who was receiving postal-orders at Box 1,001 of the local paper.

"Got a letter, Toddy?"

"Yes, a reply from Nemo."

"Oh, good! Read it out!"

"Certainly. Come into the common-room, you fellows, and I will read it out to all of you."

A crowd gathered round Alonzo Todd in the junior common-room.

The juniors were all eager to hear what result Todd's application had had. If there was anything in it, of course, plenty of fellows would be willing to send in their shilling each.

Todd opened the letter. The Duffer of Greyfriars was holding his head unusually high. He was not insensible to the importance of his position. He realised that he, Alonzo Todd, was the fellow who was putting the whole school on to a good thing.

He glanced over the letter, and then read it out. The juniors listened to it with great attention. It ran:

"'Friardale Gazette' Office.

"Dear Sir,—Your application for translation work has been received, and forwarded to our Chief Bureau in London, where it will be dealt with in its turn.—Yours faithfully,

"THE NATIONAL TRANSLATION CO., Ltd."

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"No cash," remarked Ogilvy.

"My dear Ogilvy, I did not expect any cash," said Todd mildly. "I was expecting only instructions in this letter."

"But you haven't got 'em."

"I shall get them from the Chief Bureau in London, I suppose."

"I'd rather keep my bob till the supposing was over," said Ogilvy.

"My dear fellow, it is all right. It must be a very great firm to have a Chief Bureau in London."

"Yes, if it has."

"It says so in the letter," said Alonzo simply.

Ogilvy roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! But it mightn't be true, ass!"

"My Uncle Benjamin always told me to avoid being suspicious. I am sure that this is all right. Besides the company is limited."

"So they say."

"Oh, stuff!" exclaimed Bulstrode. "They wouldn't dare to say they were limited if they weren't. They could be prosecuted and sent to prison."

"What's that?" exclaimed Bunter.

"Oh, you don't know anything about limited companies!" said Bulstrode contemptuously. "You mustn't say you're limited if you're not."

"I—I thought it was only a sort of—of form they used," said Bunter.

Bulstrode laughed.

"Well, if you ever go into business, Bunter, and use a form like that without having the legal right to, you'll find yourself in Queer Street, that's all."

Bunter was silent.

"Of course, they're limited liability," said Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin told me once that it is a very serious thing to pretend to be a limited liability company if you're not, you know. They wouldn't dare."

"Well, limited companies are swindles often enough," said Ogilvy, though he was really a little staggered in his belief by the "Limited."

"I think you are very suspicious, Ogilvy. My Uncle Benjamin says——"

"Rats!"

"Not at all. I have never heard him say 'rats'—such an expression would be quite out of his line. He says——"

"Poof!"

Ogilvy walked away. The "Limited" had staggered him, but he did not mean to part with a shilling. The "Limited" had impressed all the fellows—even Harry Wharton admitting that it sounded respectable enough—but after all, there was no great inducement to send in postal-orders. Todd had simply been referred to the London office, and there was no telling how long it would be before he received his instructions for the translation work, let alone payment for work done.

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

The general opinion, in spite of the "Limited," was that it was not good enough.

"You fellows ought to take the chance," said Alonzo persuasively. "I'm so sorry to see you missing a good thing like this. You see, it evidently takes some time to refer to the Chief Bureau in London, so you really ought to lose no time."

"That's what I think," said Bunter.

"I'll wait till I've seen some tin come out of it," said Skinner, with a laugh. "When there's some money to see!"

"Just so!" agreed Elliott.

Bunter blinked at them.

"You mean that you'll send in your postal-orders when somebody's received payment?" he asked.

"That's it."

"The thing's a swindle!" said Harry Wharton decisively.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Look at this letter," said Harry, taking it from Todd's hand. "There is no printed heading to it, and the whole thing is typewritten. Judging by the type, it was done upon a pretty rocky typewriter, too. It's a letter typed by some spoofer, who doesn't care to let his handwriting be seen."

"I don't think so," said Bunter.

"Perhaps not, but you're an ass, you know."

"Oh, really——"

"I think it is the chance of a lifetime," said Alonzo Todd. "I really and sincerely wish that you fellows would take it up while there's time."

"Wait till we've seen some cash come out of it," said Scott.

And that was the general opinion.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

No Help for Bunter.

MARK LINLEY was sitting in his study, with Liddell and Scott, and a Greek Grammar, and the Anabasis on the table. The Lancashire lad was hard at work. He was not through the Anabasis yet—that old friend of our youth, in which for many an hour we "went up" with our old friend Xenophon, and travelled so many, many weary parasangs, when we would so much rather have been out on the river or the cricket-pitch. Mark Linley would certainly have preferred Wharton's or Bob Cherry's company to Xenophon's, and would gladly have left the Ten Thousand to retreat without his assistance; but it was his way to stick to work when he had it to do, and he was concentrating all his attention upon the Greek now. But he was not destined to get through it uninterrupted. A fat face looked in at the door, and a pair of spectacles glimmered in the study light.

"I say, you fellows!"

Mark Linley looked up patiently.

"I'm alone here," he said. "Did you want Bob Cherry, Bunter?"

Bunter shook his head and came into the study.

"No," he said; "I wanted you, Linley, as a matter of fact. I suppose you are going in for the Box 1,001 translations? You are a splendid hand at translations, I know."

Mark Linley smiled.

"I suppose I can construe, Bunter; but I have no money to send them. I do not believe the thing is genuine."

"Oh, really, Linley——"

"I'd like to get on, if you'll excuse me, Bunter," said Mark. "I've got a lot to do, and then there's my usual prep. later."

"I want to speak to you, Linley. It's not the translation business—I just mentioned that because I don't like you losing a chance. Of course, it's nothing to do with me—it's Todd's business from beginning to end."

"Yes, I know."

Bunter blinked at the sheet of foolscap which lay before Mark, and which was covered with characters that looked, to Bunter, ten times more formidable than even the German alphabet, which was one of the terrors of his life. Bunter had more or less of a knowledge of German, that being a necessary subject at Greyfriars, but of Greek he knew not a word—or analphabetical letter, for that matter. From Alpha to Omega it was, to use a pun, Greek to him.

"Do you really understand that stuff, Linley?" he asked, with a feeling of contempt for a thing he could not comprehend himself.

"Yes," said Mark, smiling.

"What's that thing like a snake standing on its tail?"

"That's a Z—zeta."

"And what's that triangle?"

"That's the delta—D."

"And that figure three written backwards?"

"That's the X."

"Lot of rot, I call it," said Billy Bunter, with a large contempt for the language of Xenophon, and Socrates, and Plato,

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

and Æschylus, not to mention Homer. "I can't understand a syllable of it."

Mark laughed.

"Then, of course, it is rot," he assented. "But what are you taking an interest in Greek all of a sudden for, Bunter?"

"You remember what old Quelch said in the Form-room to-day?"

Mark remembered.

"Oh, yes! You weren't telling him the truth, Bunter."

"Well, I had no time," said Bunter peevishly—"and he was on me so jolly suddenly, too. Look here, Linley, I'm in a difficulty, and I want you to help me."

"You want to take up Greek, so as to keep your word?"

Bunter snorted.

"No; that I jolly well don't!" he exclaimed. "Nothing of that sort. I can't bring my brain down to it. I've got better things to think of. I want you to just write out a few lines of easy stuff that will pass for a Greek exercise, so that I can take them in to Quelch."

Mark Linley's face clouded.

"And pretend that they are your own?" he asked.

"Yes; that's the idea."

"It would be a lie."

"Oh, really, Linley——"

"I could not help you to deceive Mr. Quelch," said Linley quietly. "Besides, he would find you out by asking a question or two."

"Oh, I could dodge that all right! Besides, you could coach me a bit for dodging his questions, same as the coaches do the chaps for the exams. You know jolly well that a chap doesn't pass an exam. on what he knows; he does it by keeping dark what he doesn't know."

"Very likely, in many cases; but I cannot help you in telling untruths, Bunter."

Bunter gave him a vicious look.

"Say that you won't, and have done with it!" he exclaimed angrily. "I prefer a chap to speak plainly!"

"Well, I won't, then!" said Mark, compressing his lips.

"Then you're a cad! It's rotten to refuse to help a chap when he's in a difficulty!" grunted Bunter.

"I'd help you in any decent way. I'll give you some instruction, so that you'll know a bit of Greek."

"Oh, I don't want you to show off your blessed cleverness to me!"

Mark bit his lip.

"Then I'll give some advice. Go to Mr. Quelch, and confess that you didn't speak the truth, and ask his pardon."

"When I want your advice I'll ask for it!" said Bunter.

"Very well," said Mark Linley, very quietly. "I'm sorry I can't help you, Bunter. Will you let me go on with my work now?"

"I suppose I was a fool to think of coming to a factory chap for help," said Bunter. "A gentleman ought always to remember what's due to himself, and treat the lower classes with a proper distance. This is what comes of letting oneself down."

"Will you leave my study?"

"I don't want to stay here, I assure you; I'm not the kind of fellow to associate with a rotten factory bounder!"

Mark Linley rose in his chair. Bunter made a sudden hop out of the study. Mark sat down again—the Owl of the Remove was not worth licking. Bunter put his head in at the door again, and shouted:

"Factory cad!"

Then he slammed the door, and fled.

Mark Linley went quietly on with his work.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.
Bunter Has a Shot.

AMONG the juniors who turned up to tea in Hall that evening was William George Bunter. The days when he lived on the fat of the land in Harry Wharton's study were over. He had the satisfaction of calling himself the head of No. 14 Study, but the satisfaction was a poor one at meal-times.

Wun Lung was often very generous, but he was not always to be depended upon, and he had not the patience Bunter had been accustomed to find in Study No. 1. Just now he was at tea with his minor in the Second Form-room, and Todd was in a stony state, and so Bunter had no resource but to have tea in Hall. The crop of postal-orders he declared himself to be expecting had not come.

The Owl of the Remove ate his meal in Hall discontentedly. When it was over, he strolled down to the school gates, as if in a lingering hope that something might arrive for him.

Nothing arrived, and he came in presently, and looked into the common-room. Harry Wharton & Co. were there, roasting chestnuts on the bars of the grate. Bunter brightened up as he saw them. The chestnuts looked as if funds had come somehow to the chums of No. 1 Study, though it was not time for their regular remittances. The fat junior rolled up with an ingratiating smile.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Done your Greek exercise yet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can't," said Bunter. "Linley won't help me. He's a selfish beast! As a matter of fact, I shouldn't care to accept favours, anyway, from a fellow of his class!"

"Don't be a silly ass, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, you know—— I say, you fellows, did you say I was to have some of those chestnuts?"

"No," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "But you can have some."

"I suppose you've had a remittance?"

"Yes; a tip from my aunt abroad!"

"Good! I say, if you could lend me ten bob, Wharton, I could let you have it back to-morrow. I'm expecting ——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really——"

"Not expecting postal-orders!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Don't say that, Bunter. Start something new. Put on a fresh record. Say you're expecting a cheque."

"Look here——"

"Or a legacy from a rich uncle, or a shower of gold from the sky," suggested Bob Cherry. "They're all just as likely to come as the postal-order, and it would be a change. You shouldn't wear a thing quite out, you know."

"The quiteoutfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm really expecting a lot of postal-orders, from—from some titled friends of mine! If you could stand me——"

"We can't! Nobody can!"

"If you could stand me five or six bob——"

"Rats!"

"Well, look here, you might give me a bob to try for that blessed translation business!" said Bunter. "I don't see why I shouldn't have a shot at it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter, the translator! Do you remember him in the Gallic War?" grinned Nugent. "He told Quelch once that Cæsar gave three parties to the Gauls!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you know! I can construe all right, and I don't see why I shouldn't earn——"

"I—I—— I mean I lent me a bob——"

"But I did!" said Harry.

"Well, that went somehow! I—I lent it to Bulstrode——"

"What's that?" roared Bulstrode's voice.

The short-sighted junior had not seen the burly Removite standing almost at his elbow.

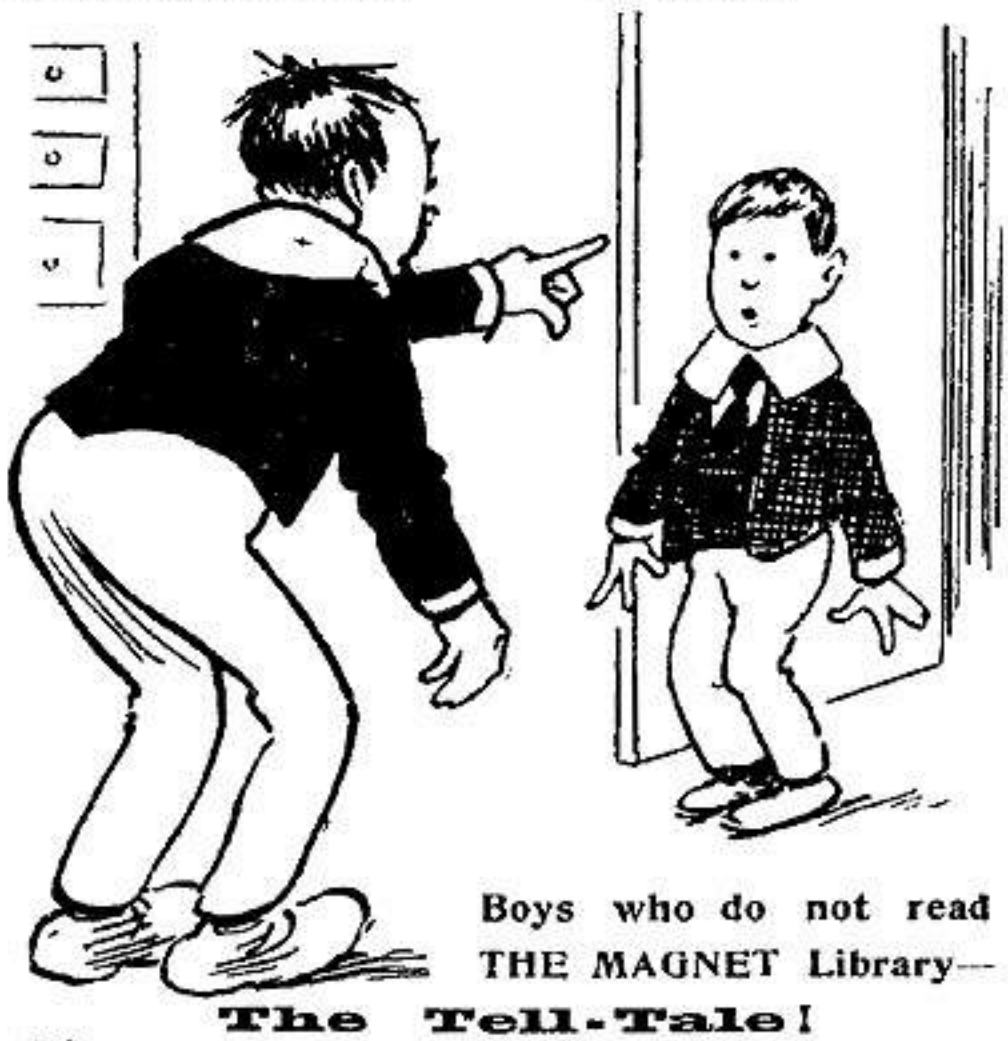
"I—I—— I mean I lent ti it to Skinner——"

"To me?" said Skinner.

"That is to say, I paid an old account with it!" said Billy Bunter. "I thought I ought to pay up an account while I had the money, Wharton!"

"Oh, you frabjous fibber!" said Nugent. "You blued it in the tuck-shop!"

"Well, that—that is what I meant, you know! I had the things, and—and I had to pay for them. I suppose you wouldn't like me to be dishonest?"



Boys who do not read THE MAGNET Library—
The Tell-Tale!

"My dear Bunter," said Alonzo in a shocked tone, "do you mean to tell me that you told Mr. Quelch a deliberate untruth?" "Look here; if that's all you've got to say, you can shut up!" roared the fat junior. *(See Page 12.)*

"My only hat!"

"So if you'll hand over that bob, Wharton, now you're in funds——"

"I'm going down to the village, and I'll get the postal-order for you, if you like," said Alonzo Todd.

"Oh, all right!" said Harry. "Get the postal-order, mind, and don't give Bunter the shilling! Here you are!"

"I will be careful, Wharton. I have already observed that Bunter is extremely untrustworthy in money matters. My Uncle Benjamin——"

"Good-bye!"

And the chums strolled off, leaving Alonzo Todd with the shilling in his hand, and looking very much surprised. Bunter tapped him on the arm.

"You might give me my shilling, Todd."

Alonzo shook his head.

"No; I promised Wharton to get a postal-order with it!"

"Look here, Todd, I suppose I can do what I like with my own money!" exclaimed Billy Bunter indignantly.

"This is not your money, Bunter! My Uncle Ben——"

"Hang your uncle! Give me my shilling!"

"My Uncle Benjamin says——"

"Give me my shilling, or I'll punch your head!" roared Bunter.

The next moment he gasped and wriggled, as a grasp was laid upon the back of his collar, and he was swung away from Alonzo.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"You young rascal!"

"I—I only wanted to save Todd the trouble of going to the village!" stammered Bunter. "That's all, you know!"

"Oh, I don't mind going at all!" said Alonzo.

Wharton plumped Bunter into a chair.

Alonzo ambled away, and Bunter remained discontentedly, blinking at the fire. He cast several pathetic looks at the chums of the Remove, to hint that he was hungry, but they seemed to be simply heartlessly indifferent as to whether he was hungry or not. He rolled out of the common-room with a heavy groan at last, and a laugh followed him, as if the juniors found his sufferings only amusing.

Mr. Quelch caught sight of Bunter in the passage, and stopped him with upraised finger.

"You have not shown me your Greek exercise yet, Bunter!"

"N-n-n-no, sir!"

"I think I told you to do so, Bunter!"

"I—I spoiled it, sir!"

"Oh! You wrote out the exercise, then?" asked Mr. Quelch, almost staggered for a moment into believing that Bunter was speaking the truth.

For Bunter's lies were sometimes so immense that it really seemed impossible that one brain could devise them.

"Yes, sir," said Bunter glibly; "but Bob Cherry upset the ink over it, and it—it was spoiled! I—I'm going to do it again!"

"You had better!" said Mr. Quelch significantly. "I shall expect it before bedtime to-night, Bunter!"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Do not fail this time, Bunter!"

"Oh, no, sir! I shouldn't be likely to, sir! I—I'm very fond of Greek, sir! Whenever I see a Greek alphabet—I—I mean, a Greek letter, sir, I—I feel delighted, sir; I'm so fond of the language! I wish I could take it up as a regular subject!"

Mr. Quelch looked curiously at Bunter, and walked away. Bunter's system appeared to be that if he told an untruth, he might as well tell a big one; and, indeed, he had half-convinced the Form-master for the time being. The fat junior had only put off the evil hour, but it was a respite—and Bunter had a Micawberlike faith in something turning up.

Alonzo Todd came back from Friardale with a shilling postal-order, and reported it to Wharton, who stood over the fat junior while he addressed a letter to "Nemo, Box 1,001, 'Gazette' Office, Friardale."

The letter was posted, and Bunter's last chance of expending that shilling at Mrs. Mimble's was gone. But Bunter was less annoyed than Wharton expected. Although the temptation to spend the money in the tuck-shop was strong, the fat junior did not seem wholly dissatisfied at sending it away.

"After all, it's only for a time!" he remarked.

Wharton stared.

"How do you mean, Billy?" he asked.

Bunter stammered. He had spoken too freely.

"I—I mean, I shall soon make more than that by the translations!"

"Oh!" said Harry, laughing. "I hope you will!"

Towards bedtime Billy Bunter remembered that unlucky Greek exercise. It was not done yet, and he had now involved himself so deeply in falsehood upon the subject that it was hardly possible to own up to Mr. Quelch.

The other fellows grinned when he asked their advice. Wharton could only counsel him to tell the truth, and Mark Linley offered to instruct him in the rudiments of Greek, but declined to be a party to a deception. In desperation, Bunter thought of Heracles Ionides, the Greek senior in the Sixth Form at Greyfriars. Ionides was a bully, and the last fellow to ask a favour of; but Bunter had no choice. At all events, Ionides would have no scruples about a deception, if he could be induced to take any notice of the matter at all. Billy Bunter rolled away to the Sixth-Form passage to try his last chance.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.
Billy Bunter's Greek.

IONIDES, the Greek, was in his study, smoking a cigarette. That was a little way the senior had, and as he was in the Sixth, the prefects affected to know nothing about it. It was not easy to call a Sixth-Form senior to account; and, besides, Ionides was a very rich fellow and free with his money, which gave him a great deal of influence over some of the fellows. Loder, one of the prefects, was his special chum, and given to the same habits. Bunter knocked at the door, and Ionides hastily thrust the cigarette into the fire, though there was a haze of smoke in the study to betray him if his visitor had happened to be a master.

He scowled at the sight of the Owl of the Remove.

"What do you want?" he asked angrily.

"Can I speak to you, Ionides?"

"Oh, get out!"

"I—I want to ask a favour."

The senior stretched his hand out to a ruler. Bunter prepared to dodge, but stood his ground.

"I—I say, Ionides, you might be decent, you know. If—if you'd like any—any smokes, you know, fetched from the village, I'd be glad to go."

"I don't."

"You might to-morrow, you know."

Ionides thought so, too, and his face cleared. Since Harry Wharton had taken up a certain position in the matter, Ionides had found it difficult either to bribe or to bully the fags into going to the tobacconists' for him.

"Well, well, what do you want?" he said.

"I've got to do a Greek exercise," said Bunter.

The Greek burst into a laugh.

"You! You young fool!"

"Old Quelch has given me that as—as an imposition," said Bunter. "He somehow got the idea I was studying Greek. I—I—— In fact, I told him so. I've got to show up a Greek exercise, or else be licked."

Ionides laughed.

"You don't know any Greek?" he asked.

"Not a word."

"Then you'd better take the licking. Do you think I could teach you any Greek in a single evening?"

"Oh, I don't want to learn the rot!" said Bunter, in his polite way. "Blessed if I know how anybody can waste his time over it. That's not it at all. I just want an exercise of some sort scribbled down, so that I can show it up. If you'd be so kind, you know—you're such a generous chap——"

"Oh, ring off that!"

"Well, you are, you know. Most of the fellows say you're a beast and a cad, but I always say it's not your fault if you are. One can't expect a foreigner to be very decent, and I dare say they're all the same in your country. I always stick up for you in that way."

Ionides's hand closed on the ruler again. But he let it go, and a curious smile came over his dark face.

Some thought had flashed into his mind, as the gleam in his eyes showed, but the fat junior was far too short-sighted to see it.

"What do you want me to do, then?" he asked, with ominous quietness.

"Write out a sentence or two, as if it were an exercise, and tell me what it means in English," said Bunter eagerly. "Then I can take it in to Quelch, and if he asks me questions about it—he's sure to—I can show I know what it means."

Ionides smiled grimly.

"Oh, all right!" he said.

"You will do it."

"Certainly," said Ionides, with a grin that showed his white, gleaming teeth.

He reached out for a pen and paper.

"Oh, thanks, awfully!" said Bunter. "This is jolly decent of you, Ionides. I know you weren't such a beast as the fellows make out."

"That will do."

Ionides began to scribble in Greek characters on a paper. Bunter watched him eagerly. It meant as much to him as Hebrew or Sanskrit, or the picture writing of the Mexicans. Had he been a little less obtuse, Bunter would have seen something suspicious in this willingness of the cad of the Sixth to oblige him. But he was so eager to get that exercise and palm it off on Mr. Quelch, that he had no suspicions.

Ionides was simply writing out the first line of the Anabasis, which, of course, he remembered, a line known naturally to every schoolboy who has ever looked at Greek as a subject.

It took him but a moment to scribble out the line, and he handed it to Billy Bunter.

The fat junior took it, and blinked at it through his big spectacles.

He knew that it was Greek, but that was all he knew.

"I say, Ionides, what does it mean?" he asked.

"Can't you read it?"

"Not a word."

"Sure—not a word?"

"Not a syllable. I don't even know what the letters mean."

Ionides laughed.

"It means that Darius—you know who Darius was?"

"Darius? No. Chap you know?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Ionides. "No. He was the King of Persia 400 years before Christ. Well, this means that Darius had a pet monkey, whom he used to feed with butterscotch."

"Did he really?" gasped Bunter. "Did they have butterscotch in Persia in those days, Ionides?"

"Of course."

"Is that a regular exercise?"

"Yes, a very common one."

"Well that's all right, so long as I can show it up, and tell Quelchy what it means," said Bunter. "I'm awfully obliged to you, Ionides."

"Not at all."

And Bunter left the study with the precious paper in his hand. When the door was closed Ionides lay back in his chair and roared, showing every tooth in his head in his excess of merriment.

Billy Bunter, nothing doubting, hurried along to Mr. Quelch's study with the paper in his hand.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that Bunty?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, catching sight of the Greek letters on the paper.

"Oh, only my exercise!" said Bunter, in an airy way.

"What?"

"My Greek exercise."

"Rats!"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

OUT THIS WEEK. NO. 1 of the 'EMPIRE" LIBRARY. A NEW STORY-BOOK!

"Don't tell me you know a word of Greek," said Bob Cherry. "It turns Quelch's hair grey to drive a few Latin substantives into your head, and you'll never get hold of the simplest verb. There are kids in the Second who can 'amo amas amat' ten times better than you can. You don't know a word of Greek."

"This looks as if I do," said Bunter, flourishing the paper. "Linley did it for you."

"He didn't! I should disdain to receive help from a chap like Linley. There's such a thing as respect for social distinctions."

"Ah, it was Ionides, then."

"I'm in rather a hurry," said Bunter, and he passed on quickly to Mr. Quelch's study. He knocked, and the Form-master's voice bade him enter.

"Please I've brought one of my exercises for you to look at, sir," said Billy Bunter, presenting the paper.

Mr. Quelch glanced at it.

"H'm! That certainly is Greek, Bunter. You amaze me."

"Oh, I'm a regular dab at Greek, sir," said Bunter confidently. "It's one of my favourite subjects."

"Please construe, Bunter. What does that line mean?"

Bunter blinked at the paper with a thoughtful air.

"Darius, King of Persia, had a pet monkey——"

"What!"

"Which he was in the habit of feeding on butterscotch, sir."

"What!"

Bunter started back. He had expected Mr. Quelch to look pleased; but the Form-master was looking as black as thunder.

"What!" almost shouted Mr. Quelch. "Is this meant for impertinence, Bunter?"

"Oh, sir! I——"

"How dare you make me such a ridiculous answer?"

"But—but that's what it means, sir."

"You—you utterly stupid boy! You have copied this from somewhere without having the faintest notion of its meaning."

"Oh, no, sir; I can read it as easily as anything. It means that Darius——"

"Silence, Bunter! I will render that line into English. 'Darius and Parysatis had two sons, the elder Artaxerxes, the younger Cyrus.'"

Billy Bunter simply staggered.

He realised—too late—the cruel joke Ionides had played on him.

Mr. Quelch crushed the paper in his hand.

"You have lied to me in the most outrageous manner, Bunter——"

"Oh, no-n-no, sir!" said Billy Bunter feebly. "I—I'm a most truthful chap, sir. I—I've never told a lie in my life, sir."

"You have lied outrageously. Don't interrupt me. If you knew a word of Greek you would know that this could not mean anything like the absurd meaning you gave it. If you had ever taken up Greek, you would be acquainted with the Anabasis, and would have come upon this line and known its meaning. Your wickedness in uttering these falsehoods is only equalled by your stupidity in attempting to impose upon me in this manner."

"Oh, sir!"

"You will take two hundred lines from Virgil, Bunter—which will improve your Latin, whatever your Greek may be like. And you will hold out your hand."

Mr. Quelch picked up a cane.

Billy Bunter received two cuts upon each hand, and he went from the study feeling that life was not worth living, when Form-masters were so beastly keen as old Quelch. Bob Cherry met him in the passage, and looked at him quizzically.

"Quelch pleased with your Greek?" he asked.

Bunter compressed his stinging hands under his armpits.

"Ow!" he groaned. "No! Ow! He—he was jealous of the way I did it. I think—he's not very well up in Greek himself, and—and he couldn't construe, you know, so he said it was—was wrong, and caned me. Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! It's the last time I'm going to do any rotten Greek. Ow!"

And Bunter rolled away groaning, leaving Bob Cherry roaring with laughter.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Duffer's Triumph.

HARRY WHARTON sat up in bed as the rising-bell clanged the following morning, and looked at Billy Bunter in great astonishment.

The fat junior was the first out of bed in the Remove dormitory.

Such a thing, so far as Wharton remembered, had never happened before in the history of the Remove, and it was no wonder that he was astonished.

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

"Bunter, are you ill?" he called out.

Bunter put on his spectacles, and blinked at him.

"No," he said. "I'm hungry. If you'll lend me a bob ——"

"What are you getting up for?

"Oh, I want a trot down to the village, that's all."

"To—to the village," said Wharton faintly.

"Yes."

"You're going to take a walk to the village before breakfast?"

"Certainly!"

"What for?"

"Oh, for my health, you know!"

"My hat!"

"I've been losing my appetite lately," said Bunter. "I think that perhaps a walk before breakfast may be good for me."

"Well, wonders will never cease," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, you know——"

The Removites stared at Bunter as he left the dormitory, the first to go down.

"There's some game on," said Bulstrode. "He's up to something."

"The upfulness is terrific!"

"There must be something on," agreed Wharton. "Bunter's never done this before. Blessed if I understand."

The Removites went down. It was true enough; Bunter was already gone. He did not come in till breakfast-time, and then he was dusty and tired from his walk. But he was looking very well satisfied with himself.

The juniors could not help wondering. This was so entirely new a departure on the part of Billy Bunter that it attracted general attention. And the fat junior refused to give any explanation except that his appetite had fallen off, and that he was taking to walking as an exercise to restore it.

No one believed that statement for a moment. In the first place, Bunter never was believed, whatever he said. In the second place, it was so very improbable. There was nothing the matter with Bunter's appetite, except on the side of excess; and he was the last fellow in the world to take up anything that involved physical exercise.

"The fat bounder's got something on," said Bob Cherry. "He's making a giddy secret of it, that's all. One of his schemes for making money, perhaps."

Bunter went on his way and made no sign. If the fellows weren't satisfied with the explanation he gave, he couldn't help it—he had no other to make.

Bulstrode, Morgan, and Desmond received replies during the day from Mr. Nemo, Box 1,001.

They were to the same effect as Todd's—that their applications had been referred to the London bureau of the National Translation Co., Ltd.

"It's all right," Alonzo assured them. "What you other fellows ought to do is to send in your postal-orders while there's time."

"Wait till we see the colour of some money," grinned Ogilvy.

"That shows a very distrustful spirit, Ogilvy. My Uncle Benjamin would not be pleased to hear you talk like that."

"I'm sorry for Ben, then; lucky he's not here."

"My dear Ogilvy——"

"I'm keeping my money in my pocket at present, at any rate."

It was after last lesson that a letter was delivered addressed to Billy Bunter. It was typewritten on the envelope like the others, and was evidently from the National Translation Co., Ltd.

Bunter opened it in the presence of a crowd of juniors.

"Nothing in it, of course," said Ogilvy.

"I think there might be a postal-order," said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I asked them to advance me four bob to buy some books I should need for the translating," explained Bunter.

"You asked them in your letter?"

"Yes."

"And you expect to get it?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Well, if the thing's genuine, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of all the asses!" exclaimed Wharton. "Why, even Todd wouldn't be such a duffer as that, Billy!"

"My dear Wharton——"

Bunter sniffed.

"Look here!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Great Scott!"

"My hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific!"

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Phew!"

Billy Bunter was triumphantly holding up a postal-order.

It was an order for four shillings.

The juniors stared at it blankly.

"Read the letter!" gasped Wharton at last.

"You can read it out," said Bunter. "I'll take care of the postal-order. Upon the whole, I think I shall have a bit of a feed with this, instead of getting the books. I can borrow the books from you fellows as I need them."

"Shut up! Let's hear the letter."

"Read it out, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton read out the letter, which was typewritten like the others, but of a somewhat different tenor.

"'Dear Sir,—We have received your application for instructions, and have referred it to the chief bureau in London. We have great pleasure in forwarding you the sum you require for your books, etc., the same to be deducted from the first sum payable to you for work done for us.—Yours truly, THE NATIONAL TRANSLATIONS CO., LTD.'"

"Well, my only summer bonnet!" said Tom Brown. "If that doesn't beat the whole record!"

"I can't understand it."

"Blessed if I can, either!"

"The blessfulness of my esteemed self is also terrific!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur, with a shake of the head. "It is extraordinaryful!"

"Oh, it's quite simple!" said Alonzo Todd, with a beaming smile of satisfaction. "I don't like to say I told you so. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me never to say I told you so. But you fellows will admit that I said all along that the company was quite genuine."

"So you did, Toddy."

"Quite right, Duffer."

"The Duffer was on the nail all the time."

"I say, you fellows, this is splendid, isn't it? I'm awfully obliged to you, Todd, for putting me on to a thing like this," said Bunter. "It was good of you, it was really."

"Not at all, Bunter. It is my duty to do anything I can to help my schoolfellows," said Todd, beaming. "My Uncle Benjamin always impressed that upon me"

"The firm must be genuine," said Nugent, staring at the postal-order. "They must be genuine, or mad, to part with money like that."

"The madfulness is terrific."

"What do you say, Wharton?"

Wharton wrinkled his brows in perplexity.

"I simply can't understand it," he said. "I never heard of a business run on these lines before. The people are parting with their money without a receipt, and on the applicant's bare word. The company must be run by a philanthropist or a lunatic."

"Or else it's a sprat to catch a whale," said Ogilvy.

But nobody listened to Ogilvy now.

Bunter had sent in a shilling, and had received four shillings the next day, and that was proof enough to the juniors that the firm was genuine, and generous in dealing with its clients.

Some of them had said that they would believe in it when they saw the colour of the money.

Here was the money.

Could anything be clearer?

The juniors were convinced.

There was a rush of fellows to get exeats to go down to the post-office to purchase shilling postal-orders.

If Bunter could send in a shilling and get four, the others could do it; the sight of that four-shilling postal-order acted like magic.

It was a triumph for Todd.

The Duffer, who had always been the joke of the Form, and considered the greatest muff in the school, had come to the top this time.

The Duffer had discovered this advertisement.

The Duffer had brought it to the notice of the Remove.

The Duffer had proved his faith in it by first sending in a postal-order, and the Duffer had been shown to be in the right.

All was fair and above-board.

Those who had only applied for instructions had had their applications forwarded to the London bureau; the one who had asked for money to purchase books had received it.

What more did they want?

That evening fifteen shilling postal-orders were purchased and despatched to the address of "Nemo, Box 1,001, 'Gazette Office,' Friardale." And if the rest of the juniors could have raised the money double that number would have been sent in.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.
Great Expectations.

ALONZO TODD was vindicated; he triumphed. Had he been anything like Bunter, he would have swanked till his brief popularity died. But the Duffer of Greyfriars had nothing of the swanker about him. He had his faults; but he was always quiet and modest, and the only effect of his success was to make him beam with more wide and good-tempered smiles than ever. He was pleased to put his friends in the way of making money, in a way that would pleasantly occupy their leisure hours in the winter evenings, and at the same time improve their education. He was happy to be of use to people, and he liked to feel his new popularity. He beamed upon the whole school, and chuckled softly and kindly when he heard fellows say that Todd was a jolly sensible chap after all, and that those quiet, unassuming fellows often had more brains in their heads than the more swanking sort, and so forth.

Quite a crowd of letters went out of Greyfriars that evening with shilling postal-orders in them.

Todd tried hard to make the chums of No. 1 Study join in the general scramble. He didn't want them to be left out of it. But Harry Wharton smiled and shook his head, when Todd came into the study to point out what he was losing, and to urge him not to let the chance of a lifetime slip past unseized.

"It's all right, Toddy," said Wharton. "I'll see how it turns out, and if it's not a swindle, I'll own up I was wrong"

"But swindlers don't send out postal-orders for four shillings," urged Todd. "How do you explain that?"

"I can't explain it," said Harry frankly. "Only it's fishy."

"You are very distrustful of human nature, Wharton. Now, I am quite clear as to the kind of company this is. I imagine a very kind-hearted and philanthropic gentleman to be at the head of it. That is the impression they give me."

Wharton looked at him admiringly.

"You ought to have lived in the Golden Age, Todd," he said. "The twentieth century is too materialistic for you."

"My Uncle Benjamin says that we could make the twentieth century a Golden Age, if we loved and trusted one another sufficiently, Wharton."

Wharton rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"I've no doubt we could, Toddy," he admitted. "But surely it's not a good move to start by loving and trusting spoof advertisers!"

"Ah, I am afraid you are not to be convinced, Wharton. Won't you go in for it, Inky? I want you to share."

The nabob grinned.

"The thankfulness is terrific to my esteemed chum," he said. "The gratefulness is also very large. But my esteemed and honourable self wishes to be excused from the answerfulness of this august and despicable advertisement."

"But it's a sure thing, Inky."

"The ratfulness is great."

"Aren't you going to enter, Nugent?"

Nugent hesitated. As a matter of fact, he, like most of the Remove, felt inclined to trust the firm after the sending of the four shillings to Bunter.

"Oh, hang it, I may as well have a bob in it!" he said, looking rather guiltily at Harry Wharton.

The Remove captain laughed.

"Have a bob in it by all means, Frank!" exclaimed Harry. "For goodness' sake don't let me influence you. It may be all right."

"Well, it would be ripping to have easy translations to do in the long evenings, and get liberal remuneration for it, wouldn't it?"

"It would be ripping, certainly!"

"Well, here's the bob."

"I will get the postal-order for you, Nugent," said Todd, beaming. "Several fellows have asked me to do so for them, and I am going down to Friardale to oblige them."

"Good old Duffer!"

The Duffer of Greyfriars went along the Remove passage, looked in at No. 13 Study, and found Bob Cherry and Mark Linley at their prep.

"Shall I get a postal-order for you, Cherry?" he asked.

"Certainly," said Bob, without looking round. "Get me one for a pound, will you, and bring it back here?"

"My dear Cherry——"

"Are you standing postal-orders for all the Form, Toddy?"

"You misunderstand. I mean, would you like a postal-order to send in to Box 1,001, at the 'Gazette' office?"

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Oh, no!"

"It is the chance of a lifetime, my dear Cherry, and ——"

"I'm going to miss it."

"Shall I get one for you, Linley?"

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"No, thanks!" said Mark, laughing.

Todd looked into the next study, his own. Wun Lung was there, with his minor, Hop Hi, talking in a language that sounded to Todd, like Greek to Bunter. It was Chinese. The juniors of Greyfriars always listened to the two Chinese juniors talking together with great wonder. There was a popular belief that Wun Lung and Hop Hi only pretended to be able to understand one another.

"Would you like a postal-order, Wun Lung?" asked Todd.

The little Celestial nodded, and held out his hand, with an innocent smile.

"Me likee plentee," he said.

"I mean, shall I fetch one for you, to send in to Mr. Nemo, Box 1,001, 'Gazette' Office?" explained Todd.

"No savvy."

"You can construe Latin very well, especially for a Chinaman," said Todd. "In fact, you are better than I am, at that. You would be able to earn as much money perhaps as any of us."

"No savvy!"

"It is the chance of a lifetime, you know."

"No savvy!"

"My dear Wun Lung——"

"No savvy!"

Todd gave Wun Lung up. He met Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, as he went out of the gates. Todd was far too generous to want to confine a good thing to his own Form alone. He greeted the Upper Fourth-Formers cheerfully, and explained the matter to them.

"If you would care to go into the thing, I will bring the postal-orders for you," he said. "I am going to the post-office."

Temple grinned.

"I rather think I'll keep my bob in my pocket," he remarked. "What do you say, Dab?"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"It's a chance of a lifetime," Todd remarked earnestly.

"Relation of yours running the business?" asked Fry, with a grin.

Todd coloured.

"My dear Fry, that is a most unworthy suspicion. My Uncle Benjamin would be very much shocked if he heard you make that suggestion."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple & Co. walked off, without entering for that chance of a lifetime. Alonzo Todd shook his head, and went his way. He came back to Greyfriars laden with postal-orders, which were duly despatched.

There was a great deal of excitement in the Remove that evening.

All the fellows had asked the National Translations Co., Ltd., for an advance of money towards the purchase of necessaries, the money to be refunded from their first earnings as translators.

Few of them had any doubt of getting it. They went to bed that night in a state of great expectation.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.
Classical.

ON Saturday morning the fellows in the Remove were quite excited.

During the day they were certain to get the replies from the National Translation Co., and every fellow fully expected a postal-order for four or five shillings along with the reply. If Bunter had received a remittance, why shouldn't they? This seemed unanswerable to the hopeful Removites.

Harry Wharton was almost alone in his belief that there was "nothing in it." Alonzo Todd was a great man that day. His efforts to be obliging and useful had generally ended unfortunately. But Todd's time had come at last. He had been useful now, and had conferred great obligations upon his Form-fellows. There could be no doubt about that. It was Todd who had put them on to this good thing, and the Remove did not forget it.

Billy Bunter had expended that four-shilling postal-order—not in books. He said he thought he would borrow the books instead of buying any, which would be more economical. And as he required a snack, there was a path for the four shillings.

He had gone to bed without a penny left, having informed Wharton that he had put down the loan of a shilling to the old account, instead of settling up in cash. But as Harry had never expected to see it again, he did not mind.

After lessons that Saturday the Removites spent their time watching for the postman. There was a junior football match on that afternoon, but it is safe to say that for once even football paled into insignificance. The answers from Box 1,001, "Gazette" Office, filled up the thoughts of the juniors.

Most of the fellows were already expending the money in imagination. Some of them were buying new footballs, some new football boots, some sweets and fruit and cakes, some ginger-pop and doughnuts—in their mind's eye, of course. They had asked for the advance of cash for necessaries. Doughnuts and footballs and the rest were necessaries; nobody at Greyfriars would have denied that. And it was all right, of course, as the money was to be deducted from their first earnings as translators.

Some of the more conscientious fellows began mugging up Latin, to be ready for the work. Smith minor, who never looked at a book out of class if he could help it, was seen walking in the Close with a big Virgil held open, painfully following the far from thrilling adventures of the pious Æneas.

Micky Desmond was discovered with a Horace, picking a precarious pathway through the odes. From Hazeldene's study, while he was putting on his boots, came a sound of recitation; and the Remove passages were treated to a new edition of their old acquaintance. "Arma virumque cano," etc

Even Nugent minor, of the Second Form, caught the infection, and it was related that he and Gatty were seen with a slate in the Second Form-room, mugging up the Georgics.

Such a classical epidemic had never been known in the Lower Forms of Greyfriars before.

Masters and seniors, who knew nothing of Box 1,001, found out what was going on in the classical line, and wondered. When Alonzo Todd came to Mr. Quelch to borrow a classical dictionary, he wondered; when Bulstrode came to him to ask for the loan of a Horace, he marvelled. When Stott came to beg for a Juvenal he gasped.

Wingate, of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, who was always kind to the juniors in the matter of helping them in any way, whether at lessons or at football or cricket, found himself very much in demand. Juniors who had always privately regarded Latin as "rot" came to Wingate, and asked him if he'd mind looking over some exercises. Fags were known to write out lines that had not been ordered by the Form-masters.

In short, there was such a rage for the classics in the Lower School at Greyfriars, as had never been known there before; and Nugent, who was great on history—having mugged up history for a prize once upon a time—said it reminded him of the period of the Renaissance in European history. Smith minor asked him what the Renaissance was, and whether he remembered it himself—a question to which Nugent major replied only with a sniff.

Harry Wharton, who was football captain in the Remove, found that football was taking quite a back seat in the estimation of the Lower Fourth on this particular Saturday afternoon.

The Remove were meeting the Upper Fourth, in one of the Form matches which were always got up when neither Form had an engagement with an outside club.

The Upper Fourth were as keen as ever, but for once the Remove, who prided themselves upon being a footballing Form, were not so keen.

Wharton could hardly drag the fellows together for the game.

Bob Cherry and Nugent were ready and so was Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, but of the rest of the team, not a fellow turned up.

Wharton, with a wrathful countenance, went in search of them.

The kick-off was timed for half-past two, and at a quarter-past Temple, Dabney & Co. were on the ground, punting about a footer, and only four of the Remove had appeared.

The Fourth-Formers jeered a little.

"Where are the kids?" Temple asked Wharton.

"Funking the match?" asked Fry, in his polite way.

"Oh, rather!" remarked Dabney.

"Bosh!" said Harry. "I'll soon have them here!"

Bob Cherry and Inky remained there, to keep up appearances, and to indulge in frank criticism of the way the Fourth were kicking and passing the practice ball. Harry and Nugent went in search of the delinquents.

Micky Desmond was discovered sitting on a bench under the elms, with a Horace in his hand. Wharton lifted one foot, and poked the toe of his boot into the Irish junior's ribs, effectually interrupting his studies.

"Ow! Hurroo!"

"You young ass! Why aren't you on the ground?" demanded Harry.

"Faith, it would be cowld on the ground!" said Micky innocently. "Sure, I like to sit on the bench better, darling!"

"Ass! I mean the football-ground! Don't you know it's nearly time for the match with the Upper Fourth?" demanded Wharton.

"Sure, and I'd forgotten it!"

"Forgotten it!"

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NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Faith, intirely!"

And Micky dropped his eyes upon his bulky book, as if football were quite a thing of his early youth, and he had given it up ages ago.

Wharton jerked Horatius out of his hand.

"Chuck that!" he exclaimed.

"'Maecenas atavis edite regibus!'" stuttered Micky Desmond.

"Cheese it, you young ass! Come on!"

"Gimme my book! It's old Quelch's!"

"I'll take care of it," said Wharton, slipping Horatius Flaccus under his arm. "You're coming to play footer!"

"Faith, I was getting ready for work, Wharton, darling!" said Micky regretfully.

"Rats!"

Micky cast a longing glance at Horace, but he evidently could not have it, so he resigned himself to his fate, and went to change into his football clothes.

"Here's Hazeldene!" exclaimed Nugent.

Hazeldene did not seem to see them as they approached. He was reciting to himself, holding a book behind him, and evidently mugging up Virgil by heart.

"'Conticuere omnes——'"

"Hazel!"

"'——intentique——'"

"Hazeldene, you ass!"

"'——ora tenebant——' Ow!"

The last monosyllable did not belong to Virgil. Hazeldene uttered it as Harry Wharton grasped him by the shoulder, and shook him, and the Æneid dropped to the ground.

"Look out!" howled Hazeldene. "That belongs to somebody else!"

"Then you'd better let somebody else have it back!" growled Wharton. "It's time to get on the footer-ground!"

Wharton had cause to be annoyed. He was playing Hazeldene that day because he wanted to break the influence of Vernon-Smith over the junior, and he was not wholly satisfied with himself at putting Hazel into the team. It was too bad to have to hunt him up to play in this manner.

Hazeldene was evidently in two minds about playing at all. He hesitated, but he did not like the grim look on Wharton's face, and he finally slipped the book into his pocket.

"All right," he said; "I'll go and change!"

Wharton and Nugent searched for the rest. Mark Linley had gone to the ground, and persuaded Morgan to go with him, and Ogilvy had turned up, too. Two more members of the team remained to be found—Russell and Trevor. Trevor was discovered reading his Latin grammar with as much keenness as if it had been the last number of the "Gem." The Latin grammar was confiscated, and Trevor was led off to the football-field by Nugent, with linked arms in case he should attempt to escape.

Harry Wharton looked up at the clock in the school tower. It wanted but five minutes to the time arranged for the kick-off, and Russell remained to be found. Wharton was strongly inclined to offer the place to somebody else, but everybody else was so keen on the classics this afternoon that it was doubtful if the place, usually so keenly coveted, would find any takers.

He ran Russell to earth in a deserted Form-room. Russell was really going into the thing. As some of the translations required by the Limited Co. might be Greek, Russell had determined to go in for Greek. He had a sheet of paper before him, which he was covering with Greek characters, learning up the alphabet as the first step.

Wharton looked over his shoulder, and could not help grinning as he saw the early attempts of the Greek student.

"My only hat!"

Russell looked up.

"I'm getting on," he remarked. "Linley has lent me a hand, you know. I shall be able to mug up Greek, I think."

"You won't be able to do it this afternoon, then," said Harry. "There's the footer match."

"Oh, the footer!" said Russell carelessly. "Hear me read this out. 'Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon——'"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"'Hee chora,'" went on Russell, unheeding. "'Hee chora—the land. Hai chorai—the lands.' That's the plural."

"Go hon!"

"'Hee chora een philia—the country was beautiful.'" went on Russell. "I forget whether 'philia' means beautiful or friendly."

"Friendly, you ass!"

"Well, friendly, then. 'The country was friendly——'"

Wharton inserted two fingers into the back of Russell's collar, and lifted him from the desk.

"I can see you're going ahead like wildfire," he said. "You'll be reading Sophocles over your tea in a week or two—I don't think. But we're waiting for you now for the footer."

And Russell was marched off.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Postal Orders for Bunter.

HARRY WHARTON had his team together at last, and they were ready to begin. A crowd of Upper Fourth fellows came to see the match. But very few Removites trickled down to the footer-field, and those who came brought books under their arms, and began to read them while they looked on. The classical fever was still raging. Billy Bunter had been seen to go out immediately after dinner. But nobody else in the Remove had passed the gates of Greyfriars, excepting Vernon-Smith, the Bounder. Those who were not playing footer were digging into the classics with great fervour, all ready for the easy translations at a liberal remuneration.

The Remove played up a little slackly. They were thinking of the classics, and the easy translations, and the postal-orders.

The Upper Fourth began to make hay of them.

Temple put the ball into the net, and Fry soon afterwards landed it—Hazeldene in goal seeming to be of little use.

Wharton's brows contracted. He had prevented Hazeldene from going out with the Bounder of Greyfriars, but it seemed likely to cost the Remove side dear. Hazeldene was not playing up.

"Look out in goal!" said Wharton sharply.

"Oh, all right!" said Hazeldene. "I forgot!"

"Don't forget again."

The sides lined up.

Harry Wharton & Co. made a big effort to pull the team together, and to get into the swing of it.

They had some success, and they broke through the Upper Fourth defence, and a ball from Wharton's foot beat Scott in goal, and landed in the net.

But the usual yell from the Remove was wanting.

Two or three fellows looked up and uttered a feeble "Bravo!" Stott shouted out "Ave Cæsar!" by mistake, and Skinner said "Eheu!" Treluce started "Quo usque abutere, Catiline," and then remembered himself, and shouted "Goal!" instead.

Harry Wharton gave a sniff.

"The fellows are getting dotty with that rot," he said, as he walked back to the centre of the field.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"They'll recover later, when they find there's nothing in it," he said.

"I fancy there is something in it," said Nugent.

"Rats!"

"Bunter got a four——"

"Blow Bunter!"

And the whistle went for play.

The Remove were warming up to their work now, and another goal was taken by the interval, so that the score was level then.

During the interval Russell scrawled Greek letters on the back of an old envelope, and Micky Desmond spouted Horace, addressing Nugent as Maecenas, and refusing to leave off till Nugent knocked his head against the wall.

But the Remove were coming to themselves now, and the Upper Fourth found them harder to handle in the second half.

The game was well played out, but while the Fourth-Formers round the ground loudly cheered any success of their champions, the Remove team had little encouragement.

King Football had been temporarily defeated by Horace, Virgil & Co.

But the Remove players managed to keep their end up, and when the final whistle went the score was level, and the match ended in a draw.

Wharton looked dissatisfied as they came off the field.

"We ought to have won," he said.

"Goal was rotten!" said Bob Cherry tersely.

"Wharton would play him," Trevor remarked.

"It's not only that," said Harry, who could not deny that Hazeldene had failed his side most lamentably, "it's this translation rot, too."

"Oh, that's not rot!" said Russell. "You wait till we're all rolling in money, old son, by doing easy translations!"

"Piffle!"

"You blessed Doubting Thomas!" said Nugent, laughing. "I shouldn't wonder if there are letters ready for us now. The post came in during the match."

The words were enough to set the players off.

Without waiting for a change, they put on their coats quickly, and dashed off to the schoolhouse in search of letters.

The postman certainly had been.

But there was a disappointment in store for the Remove.

OUT THIS WEEK. No. 1 of the 'EMPIRE" LIBRARY. A NEW STORY-BOOK!

There was no letter from "Nemo, Box 1,001, 'Gazette' Office." They looked in the rack in vain for a typewritten address.

It was a great disappointment.

"But, after all," said Nugent, "the chap's hardly had time to reply yet. Give him a chance. Then he'll have to send for postal-orders too."

"Of course."

"Quite right."

"They'll be in by the next delivery."

And the Remove settled down, to wait with what patience they could for the next delivery of letters from Friardale.

Many of them gathered at the school-gates, and watched the road for the postman. The postman was a long time in coming, but the juniors who were playing Sister Ann at the gates were soon rewarded by a sight of the fat form of Billy Bunter rolling up the road with a parcel under each arm.

There was a fat, shiny look upon Bunter's face which hinted that he had just had a feed, and a smear of jam on his mouth added to the effect. The juniors stared at him as he came rolling up.

"Who have you been robbing?" was Nugent's question.

The fat junior blinked at him.

"I've had some postal-orders," he said.

"Rats!"

"I've had a bit of a feed in the village, and I've got some things here," said Bunter, with fat satisfaction. "The walk back has made me rather peckish, though, and I'm going to have a snack. I'll stand ginger-pop if you fellows care to come to Mrs. Mimble's."

"Where did you get the tin?"

"I've had some postal-orders."

"Bosh!"

"Oh, really, Nugent, I told you I was expecting quite a lot of postal-orders from some titled friends of mine——"

"You've told me a good many crammers, as well as that, Bunty."

"If you are going to doubt my word, this discussion had better cease," said Bunter, with dignity. "I'm willing to stand a ginger-pop all round to you fellows if you'll come to the shop. I can't say more than that."

"Oh, we'll come!" said Bulstrode.

And the crowd of Removites followed Bunter to the tuck-shop in wonder. He must have funds if he was going to treat a dozen fellows and have a feed himself—and considerable funds, too.

Where had he obtained them?

Had the mythical postal-orders arrived at last, all together?

It looked like it.

Billy Bunter strutted up to the counter in the school shop, and rapped on it with his fat knuckles. A voice was heard from Mrs. Mimble's little parlour.

"Who is it, please?"

"Me!" said Bunter, ungrammatically, but very impressively.

"Then go away, Master Bunter. I have told you many times that I cannot allow you any more credit."

Bunter turned red, and the juniors giggled. The Owl of the Remove rapped on the counter again, more forcibly than before.

"I want you to change some postal-orders!" he roared.

"Oh, nonsense, Master Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent. "She knows your postal-orders, Bunty!"

"The knowfulness is terrific."

"Will you come and serve me?" yelled Bunter. "I'll jolly well help myself if you don't."

This threat was sufficient to move Mrs. Mimble. She came hastily out of the little parlour, looking very annoyed. Her face cleared a little on finding that the shop was full of juniors. There might be customers among them, even if Bunter was only in search of credit, as usual.

"Really, Master Bunter——" began Mrs. Mimble.

"Look here, I want you to cash some postal-orders," said Bunter, blinking at her. "I've been getting a lot lately."

"Now, really, Master Bunter——"

"If you doubt my word, Mrs. Mimble——"

Mrs. Mimble looked very cross.

"And I was making a pudding," she said. "I think it is very inconsiderate of you to call me out for this silly postal-order story, Master Bunter."

"Oh, really, Mrs. Mimble! Look here!"

Bunter's fat hand came out of his pocket with a bunch of postal-orders in it.

The juniors gasped.

There were five or six postal-orders in Bunter's fat fingers, and each of them, as they could see, was for a shilling.

"My hat!" said Nugent. "Miracles again!"

"The miraclefulness is terrific."

"Great Scott!" said Bulstrode. "Where did you get those from, Bunter?"

"Some titled friends of mine——"

"Oh, rats!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode——"

"Have you been robbing the post-office?"

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

"Ginger-pop all round, please, Mrs. Mimble," said Bunter loftily, declining to reply to Bulstrode's question.

Mrs. Mimble gazed at the postal-orders, but there was no doubt that they were genuine enough. She put them in her little till, and served out the ginger-pop to the wondering Removites.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

No Remittances.

THE Remove fellows left the tuck-shop when the treat was over, leaving Billy Bunter there, sitting on a high stool at the counter, eating. His feed in the village did not seem to have made much difference to the fat junior's appetite.

He was still feeding, and as Nugent went out he saw the Owl of the Remove produce several more postal-orders from his pocket, and hand them over to Mrs. Mimble.

"My only hat!" said Nugent, in wonder.

"What's the matter?" asked Wharton, meeting his chum as he came out of the tuck-shop. "Anything happened?"

"Yes, a miracle."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"What's the miracle?"

"Bunter's had his postal-order."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A whole crop of them," went on Nugent, still in amazement. "He's cashed at least nine or ten with Mrs. Mimble."

Wharton almost jumped.

"Nine or ten postal-orders!"

"Yes."

"You're dreaming, Frank!"

"Fact!"

"The factfulness is terrific!" corroborated the Nabob of Bhanipur. "With my own esteemed and venerable eyes I have seen the august postful-orders."

Wharton gave a whistle.

"But it's impossible that he's had them," he said. "He must have boned them from somewhere. You remember how he took Todd's money from the jar in the study?"

"Well, he's a dishonest young rotter, I know," Nugent assented thoughtfully. "Still, I don't see how he can have got postal-orders."

Wharton glanced into the shop. Bunter was still sitting at the counter, and was steadily travelling through a dish of jam-tarts now.

"Blessed if I can make it out!" said Harry, amazed.

"None of us can, but it's true."

"The truefulness is great!"

There was a shout from the direction of the gates.

"Postman!"

Nugent dashed off.

Harry Wharton followed more slowly. He was not so eager to see the postman as the others were. He was expecting no reply from the National Translation Company, Limited. He arrived at the gates to find the Friardale postman surrounded by a crowd of eager fellows, who refused to let him go on up to the house until he had handed out their letters.

"Any for me, postman darling?"

"I'm sure there's one for me!"

"Hand them out, old man!"

"Dear me! How pleased they will all be with the postal-orders!" murmured Alonzo Todd, rubbing his hands. "I am feeling quite elated—I am, really, Wharton."

The postman went through his bag.

He handed out a couple of letters, but neither was typewritten on the envelope. One was for Morgan and the other for Elliott.

"More!" exclaimed Treluce. "Hand them out!"

"No more, young gentlemen."

"What!"

"Rats!"

"Hand them out!"

"We're expecting a whole shoal of letters."

"Now, then, don't be funny! Hand out those letters!"

The postman closed his bag.

"There ain't any more, young gents," he said. And he pushed his way through the dismayed Removites, and shouldered his bag, and went on stolidly to the house.

"My hat!" said Skinner.

"How rotten!"

"They'll come by the last delivery, I suppose."

"Beastly!"

"It will be too late to cash the remittances."

"Faith, and ye're right!"

"Let's look at that letter, Morgan," said Stott. "Is it from the Co?"

Morgan shook his head discontentedly.

"No; it's nothing—only a letter from home."

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"What's yours, Elliott?"

"Only from my blessed uncle!"

"Oh, rats!"

The Removites were dismayed and angry. The advertiser had had plenty of time to reply and send them the remittances they required for necessaries, but he had not done so. Not even a line to say that their applications had been referred to the chief bureau in London.

It was too bad. But, after all, as Todd pointed out, the company was no doubt very busy, and the representative in Friardale was perhaps overworked. They must give him time. The letters would come by the last delivery that evening. Alonzo was quite certain of it.

"Give him time," said Alonzo placably. "Only give him time, you know."

"A judge will be doing that one of these days," Harry Wharton remarked.

But no one listened to Wharton. Expectation was only deferred, but not destroyed. The juniors looked hopefully forward to the last delivery of letters. The longed-for remittances would be bound to come then. So Alonzo said, and just now the Remove were showing a great deal of respect for Alonzo's judgment.

In the interval the juniors devoted little time to their usual pursuits. They gave up their leisure to a study of the classics.

There was quite a run on classical works in the school library.

Fellows who usually read the "Gem," or the "Empire," or "Pluck" were to be seen devouring whole pages of the Gallic War and the Annals. They spouted Latin to one another to furbish it up. Hazeldene informed Skinner that he sang of arms and the man, what time Skinner was shouting to him that all Gaul was divided into three parts, one of which was inhabited by the Belgæ, another by the Aquitan, and the third by those who were Celts in their own language and Gauls in that of Cæsar; and Bulstrode chimed in with a statement to the effect that he wanted to be a lyric poet, and would attain his ambition if only Mæcenas considered him to be such.

"Latin to right of us, Latin to left of us, Latin in front of us, bellowed and thundered," said Bob Cherry, perpetrating an impromptu parody upon Tennyson.

And the classical enthusiasm did not slacken.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Little Bill for Bunter.

TROTTER, the page, put his head in at Harry Wharton's study door, and looked round. Nugent picked up a book to shy at him.

"'Old on, Master Nugent!" said Trotter. "Master Bunter's wanted."

"Well, Bunter's not here. He's in Study No. 14 now—head of the study there," said Nugent, with a grin.

"I've looked for him there, sir."

"Then search for him in the tuck-shop," said Nugent. "What's he wanted for? Has he been doing Greek exercises again?"

"It's the lad from the 'Gazette' office, sir."

"The what?"

"Mr. Tiper's boy, sir."

The chums of the Remove stared at Trotter.

"What on earth do you mean?" demanded Harry Wharton. "What does Mr. Tiper want with Bunter?"

"I don't know, sir, but it's the truth, Master Wharton. Mr. Tiper's boy, Sam, is waiting in the passage, and he says he won't go without seeing Bunter."

"Blessed if I know what it can mean, then! Anyway, Bunter's not here. Better look in the tuck-shop for him."

Trotter went away, and the chums of Study No. 1 exchanged glances.

"What has Bunter been doing with Tiper?" asked Nugent.

Wharton shook his head.

"I can't make it out, unless he's been up at the office about that advertisement in the 'Gazette.' But, then, why should Tiper send his boy here?"

"It's curious!"

"The curiousfulness is terrific!"

"Well, it's no business of ours, I suppose," Harry Wharton remarked thoughtfully. "Bunter can mind his own bizney."

And the subject was dismissed. Billy Bunter, for his part, did not find it so easy to dismiss. Trotter found him in the tuck-shop. Bunter had produced another postal-order from somewhere, and was having a final feed.

The fat junior had eaten so much during the afternoon that it was a marvel how he could eat any more. He was eating slowly, and it was evident that even Bunter was no longer keen on tarts.

But the greedy junior would not leave off while he had any money left. He blinked at Trotter in a fat, greasy way as the page came in.

"You're wanted, Master Bunter," said Trotter.

"I can't come."

"The boy says he won't go till he's seen you."

Bunter whirled round on the three-legged stool.

"Boy! What boy?"

"The boy from the 'Gazette' office."

Bunter's pasty face turned quite pale.

"You don't mean to say he's had the cheek to come here?" he exclaimed. "I told them plainly I would settle next week—I—I mean, I don't owe them anything. Tell the boy I'm too busy to see him."

"He's waiting in the hall, Master Bunter."

"I decline to see him! Hold on, though! Perhaps I had better come."

Bunter descended with some effort from the stool, and followed the page from the school shop. In the hall of the School House they discovered the printer's boy, waiting, cap in hand, with a very decided expression upon his face.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in the most haughty way.

"What do you want here, lad?" he asked.

"It's the bill, sir."

"Nonsense! I—well, give it to me."

Mr. Tiper's boy Sam handed over an envelope with a half-concealed grin. Billy Bunter took it, and turned it over in his fat hands. Finally he opened it. His fat face was very red. A number of juniors were gathering in the hall to watch the curious scene. That Bunter owed money and hadn't paid it was clear to all, but what he could possibly owe money to the printer of the local paper for was a mystery.

"It's five shillings and sixpence, sir," said Sam, showing an intimate acquaintance with the contents of the envelope.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "What on earth have you been having from Tiper, Bunter, to owe him five and six?"

"N-n-nothing!" stammered Bunter. "It's a mistake."

"I can tell you, sir, if you forgot," said Sam.

"Hold your tongue!" snapped Bunter.

He looked at the bill, and then went through his pockets. Sam watched him with a grin. It was apparent to him, as well as to the others, that Bunter was going through an elaborate pretence. There was no money in his pockets.

"I've mislaid my purse just now," said Bunter at last. "Tell Mr. Tiper I will let him have it on Monday."

"Which he told me to say it was promised for Friday, and then for to-day, sir," said Sam; "and I'm not to go without the money, sir."

"How dare you be insolent!"

"And if you don't pay me, sir, I'm to take the bill to the 'Ead, sir," said Sam maliciously.

Bunter changed colour.

"Wait a minute!" he exclaimed. "I think, perhaps, I can get the money."

"Suttinly, sir!"

Bunter rushed upstairs. Several of the juniors began asking Sam questions as soon as he was gone, but Sam was "mum." He evidently meant to keep his own counsel—if the money was paid. If it wasn't, he hinted, they would know all about it soon enough. Such, apparently, were the instructions of his employer.

Bunter burst into Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows——"

The three chums looked up from the three-handed game of chess they were playing. They glared at Bunter.

"Get out!" said three voices in unison.

"But, I say, you fellows——"

"Get outside!"

"Will you lend me five-and-six?"

"I'll lend you a thick ear!" roared Wharton. "Get out!"

"It's awfully important. I say, I'm being dunned, you know, and the chap's going to the Head if I don't pay."

"You should have paid, then. You had plenty of money to-day."

"Yes, I—I meant to, you know, but—but it went," stammered Bunter. "You know how money does go, you fellows. I certainly meant to pay this account out of my postal-orders to-day. But you know how money goes."

"Yes, when you're feeding."

"Oh, really, Nugent! Look here, I'm expecting a lot more postal-orders on Monday—quite a lot—and I'll settle up then without fail."

"Rats!"

"I only want five-and-six."

"Is that what Mr. Tiper's boy has come for?" asked Nugent.

"Yo-o-es."

"What do you owe Tiper money for?"

"For—for—really—well, you know, I—I want to settle to-night, because he's a poor man, and I'm afraid he's depending on this for his Sunday dinner."

"I asked you what you owed him money for."

"You can have it back on Monday, certain. I'm expecting a whole lot of postal-orders."

OUT THIS WEEK. No. 1 of the 'EMPIRE" LIBRARY. A NEW STORY-BOOK!

"What do you owe Tiper money for?" asked Nugent, with calm persistence. And Bunter, driven into a corner, had to reply.

"It was for some—some books," he said. "Tiper had a cheap line in books, and I—I bought some, you know."

"Liar!" said Nugent cheerfully.

"Oh, really, you know——"

"Tiper had nothing of the sort, and you wouldn't buy books, anyway. If he'd had a cheap line in pork-pies I could believe you."

"It's only five and six, and——"

"And what is it for?"

"Oh, really——"

"Don't tell any whoppers, Billy," said Wharton. "I don't see why you should owe Tiper any money, and I certainly wouldn't think of paying the account unless I knew what it was for. Let me see the bill."

Billy Bunter hastily thrust the bill into his pocket.

"No good looking at the bill," he stammered. "I've told you what it was for. They were very cheap books, and——"

"You are lying, Billy!"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"If you're not lying, why not let us see the bill?"

"It—it wouldn't be any use! Do lend me five-and-six!"

"Rats!"

"I'll settle on Monday——"

"You've wasted pretty near a pound to-day, I should judge," said Nugent. "Then you have the cheek to come and ask us to pay an account for you, and you'd never settle. Get out of the room!"

"I—I simply must pay! I thought the beast would wait till Monday, and—and I meant to pay out of my postal-orders to-day, too. But I shall have a lot more on Monday."

"How do you know——"

"Oh, some titled friends of mine——"

"Rats!"

Ogilvy put his head in at the door.

"Bunter here? Oh, here you are! Sam says he can't wait any longer!"

Bunter blinked at the chums of the Remove imploringly.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Oh, get out!"

Bunter got out. He hurried along the Remove passage in the desperate hope of borrowing the money elsewhere. But Wun Lung did not "savvy" when he was asked, and nobody else had any money to lend. Bunter descended at last disconsolately, to find Sam in the hall, surrounded by inquisitive juniors, and showing signs of impatience. Just as Bunter came down there was a cry:

"Here's the postman!"

The crowd melted away as if by magic. The postman was surrounded by juniors, demanding letters. But they demanded in vain.

There was not a single letter for the Remove. Not a fellow had either letter or postcard from the National Translation Co. or anybody else.

The disappointment was keen. Anger and suspicion mingled with it now.

"What did I tell you?" grinned Ogilvy. "That postal-order that was sent to Bunter was bait—a sprat to catch a whale. The advertising spoofer knew that a public school was bound to be crowded with muffs. You'll never hear from him now he's made a haul!"

"My dear Ogilvy——"

"Hallo, Todd! Are you still expecting a fortune?"

"Oh, certainly, Ogilvy!" said Alonzo calmly. "I do not doubt the honesty of the company, though they are a little slow. As a matter of fact, my Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me that slow and steady wins the race."

"And slow and spoofy wins the postal-orders!" grinned Ogilvy.

"I say, you fellows——"

"No more postal-orders for you yet, Bunter!"

"I'm expecting quite a lot on Monday. Could any of you fellows lend me five-and-six till Monday?"

And with singular unanimity the fellows replied:

"No!"

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.
The Swindler.

HARRY WHARTON had come down with Nugent and Hurree Singh to meet the postman. There were no letters for them. Angry comments on the failure of Nemo to stump up were heard on all sides. Fellows were beginning now to express the general opinion that Box 1,001 was a swindle, though Alonzo's faith was still firm.

Bunter caught at Wharton's sleeve.

"I say, Wharton, did you say you could manage that five-and-six?"

"No; I didn't!" said Harry.

"I wish you'd oblige me, you know. It's awfully important. I say, Todd, can you lend me five-and-six?"

"With pleasure, Bunter——"

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

"Hand it over, then!"

"——only I have no money!" said Todd. "I have already lent you all my money, Bunter, excepting the ten shillings which you used by mistake, and you have not repaid any of it yet!"

Bunter snorted.

"Well, look here, my lad——"

"I'm waiting!" said Sam, the printer's boy.

"Tell Mr. Tiper I can't settle to-night—it's too late—but he shall have the money early on Monday!"

Sam shook his head.

"I'm afraid that won't do, Master Bunter!"

"It must do! Just you get out, or I'll call the porter!" said Bunter, with an unhappy attempt at bluster.

Sam grinned.

"Gimme the bill back, Master Bunter! I've got to take it to the 'Ead! Them was Mr. Tiper's instructions!"

"Look here——"

"What on earth does it all mean?" exclaimed Hazeldene. "What do you owe him the money for, Bunter?"

"Let's see the bill!"

"It ain't a secret if Master Bunter don't pay!" said Sam. "It——"

"Hold your tongue!" said Bunter.

"I'm waiting for the money!"

Bunter gave Wharton an imploring glance.

"I say, Wharton, if you stand the money you can see the bill, if you promise to keep it dark!" he murmured.

"I won't promise anything of the sort!"

"Five-and-six, please!" said Sam.

"What is it all about?" asked Ogilvy.

"It's a—a mistake!" stammered Bunter. "I——"

"No mistake about it!" said Sam deliberately. "It was five shillings for the advertisement——"

"What!"

"Shut up!" yelled Bunter.

Harry Wharton grasped him by the shoulder. The vague suspicion that had floated in his mind had taken shape at last.

"Advertisement! What advertisement, Bunter?"

"N-n-none! It's a—a mistake!"

"Show me that bill!"

"I won't!"

Wharton, with set brows and gleaming eyes, held Bunter easily with one hand, while he drew the bill from his pocket with the other. He handed it back to Sam.

"That's your property," he said.

"Thankee, sir!" said Sam. "I've got to take it to the 'Ead!"

"Show it to us first," said Wharton quietly. "When we know what it is, we may pay it."

"Suttinly, sir!"

Sam held up the bill. Bunter groaned.

A crowd of juniors read the invoice at once:

To one advertisement in "Gazette"	...	0	5 0
To use of typewriter in office	... ...	0	0 6
Total	... ...	0	5 6

The Removites roared:

"Advertisement in the 'Gazette'!"

"Use of typewriter!"

"My hat!"

"Dear me!" said Alonzo, the innocent. "What advertisement did you put in the 'Friardale Gazette,' Bunter?"

"And what did you use the typewriter in the office for, begorra?" asked Micky Desmond.

"I—I—I——"

"You duffers!" said Wharton. "It's clear enough now. Bunter has been spoofing you."

"How?"

"He was Nemo."

Many of the Remove had already guessed it, at the sight of Mr. Tiper's little bill.

Bunter made a movement to escape, but strong hands dragged him back. Alonzo Todd regarded him with horror.

"Dear me!" he gasped. "Is it possible? What would my Uncle Benjamin say?"

"Faith, and he's spoofed us!"

"The young swindler!"

"My only hat!" gasped Nugent. "Do you mean to say that Bunter put that advertisement in the local paper, and that he's been roping in the postal-orders?"

"That's where he got all those postal-orders from!" roared Bulstrode.

"Great Scott!"

"But—but money was sent once!" gasped Todd. "You remember—a four-shilling postal-order was sent——"

"To Bunter!"

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Ogilvy laughed; he could afford to. But the rest of the Remove did not feel like laughing. They had been spoofed, and they had been plundered. The utter cheek and unscrupulousness of the trick astonished them as much as it angered. That Bunter should have had cunning enough for such a swindle was matter for astonishment, too. That he should have allowed the whole matter to come to light by getting credit from Mr. Tiper, and not paying the account, was quite in accordance with his character.

Wharton's hand fell heavily on Bunter's shoulder.

"You had better own up, Billy," he said quietly.

Bunter blinked round nervously at the circle of threatening faces.

"I—I say, you fellows, it—it was really a joke!" he stammered. "You—you see, I—I was taken in once by an advertisement of home work, and—and lost the money, and—and that put the idea into my head! And—and——"

"And you put that advertisement in specially for Greyfriars, you young cad! And you managed that it should catch Todd's eye, because he was duffer enough to trumpet it over the school!"

"Well, you see——"

"And you called at the 'Gazette' Office for replies, because they weren't sent here, and you typed those answers on Mr. Tiper's machine!" said Bob Cherry. "You young fraud! And when the fellows said they'd send in their remittances when they'd seen the colour of the money, then you went down to the village, and sent a postal-order to yourself, in the name of the National Translations Co.!"

"And called it limited!" howled Bulstrode.

"Swindler!"

"That—that was only a flourish, you know," faltered Bunter. "I—I didn't know it wasn't legal, of course."

Wharton gave him a stern look.

"You might be arrested for that, Bunter."

"Oh, really——"

"I'll pay this account to keep it from getting to the Head. I don't want you to be expelled, though you deserve to be. But——"

"I—I—I——"

"You'll pay back every fellow you've swindled. Mind, we'll all see that you do it," said Harry. "You shall refund every penny!"

"I—I—— Of course, I will! It—it was only a joke! I'm expecting a postal-order, and——"

The Removites gave a shout of rage. It was too much to have the postal-order sprung on them again, after what had happened. They rushed at Bunter, and he fled before a forest of kicking feet. The fat junior dodged into an empty study, and locked the door.

Alonzo Todd was standing, looking like one in a dream, when the juniors turned their attention to him.

"Dear me!" he said. "Dear me! What would my Uncle Benjamin say?"

The juniors surrounded him. They were angry with Bunter. But they were still more exasperated with Todd. If Bunter had brought the spoof advertisement to their notice, if he had pressed it upon their attention, they would have suspected something. Bunter could not have taken them in alone. It was Todd who had done it. Todd had trumpeted forth the wonderful chance, Todd had eloquently persuaded the fellows to go in for it, and Bunter had pocketed the shillings the juniors were never likely to see again. Bunter deserved to be sent to prison, but Todd——"

The fellows did not know what he deserved. Hanging, drawing, and quartering was the general opinion, while some fellows said it ought to be something lingering, with boiling oil in it.

"Collar him!" shouted Nugent.

"My dear fellows," protested Todd, "I am sure I acted for the best! I only meant to be useful——"

"Collar him!"

"——and obliging——"

Todd had no chance to say more. He was whirled off his feet, and rushed away by the juniors. They gave him the frog's-march up the stairs and along the Remove passage, and ducked him in a bath-room. Then they made him run the gauntlet, and then frog's-marched him again. Then they left him sitting in his study, and poured ink and cinders over him till he almost disappeared. Todd sat there, gasping, in the midst of cinders and ink, wondering whether he was on his head or his heels.

Only yesterday Alonzo had triumphed, but the triumph had been quickly followed by the Duffer's downfall. And as he sat there pumping in breath, Alonzo made up his mind that he really never, never would try to be useful or obliging again.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next week by Frank Richards, entitled "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." Order your copy of the "Magnet" in advance. Price One Penny.)

Stanley Dare

The BOY DETECTIVE.

INTRODUCTION.

The mystery of a runaway motor-car, which is found to be driverless, attracts Stanley Dare, the Boy Detective, and his investigations lead him to an untenanted house on Barnes Common. He expects to find the owner of the missing car here, but he is himself seized and left to suffocate in a specially constructed gas chamber. His assailants, two men named Sherard Garth and Luigi Sebastian, had previously kidnapped a boy named Treherne whom they had kept at Cranbourne, for the purpose of extracting certain information from him. They had now brought him to the house on the Common where they could torture him until he divulged the information they wanted.

"I advocated stronger measures at Cranbourne," said Luigi Sebastian, "but here——"

(Now go on with the Story.)

Villains in Council—A Last Resort—Evil Designs—A Startling Interruption.

"Here we have the means to break his spirit," said Garth. And as he spoke the words in his soft, polished tones, there came a look into his eyes that even the hardened villain who was his companion shrank from. "His obstinacy has delayed us for months, and, of course, he is sharp enough to know that his life is not in any danger while he holds the secret."

"He is also sharp enough to know," added Sebastian, "that if he gives up the secret he will practically be giving up his life as well, for to set him free would be almost equivalent to putting our heads into a noose."

"You are so brutally plain in your remarks," objected Sherard Garth. "It is only necessary to say that with us, as with everybody else, 'Self-preservation is the first law of Nature.' If the boy persists in his obstinacy, he will make an early acquaintance with the torture-chamber."

The two villains—the one cold and cynical, with the affectation of a polished, well-bred tone, the other brutally frank and rough—sat in the comfortably-furnished room of the flat they occupied jointly in Bloomsbury, and smoked on for some time in silence. After a time Sebastian glanced across at his accomplice in crime.

"I never heard why old Treherne hid that money; nor the exact amount," he said. "It is a queer business."

"He was eccentric," replied Garth, "and had queer fancies after suffering from sunstroke in Morocco. I made it my business—— Hallo! Who's there?"

The sudden exclamation was caused by a sharp tap, tap, tap, which at that moment sounded on the panels of the door. There was no reply from outside to his demand as to who was there, but the door was flung open, and a smartly-dressed man, with a trim moustache, carefully waxed and pointed, and a general air of being very much at home anywhere, entered the room.

"How do?" he said genially. And there was a decided American accent in the tone of his voice. Luigi Sebastian had sprung to his feet, with a demand, couched in language more energetic than polite, on his lips as to the meaning of the intrusion, when Garth held up a warning hand, and he checked himself, though he favoured the stranger with a savage scowl. That individual, however, was in no wise disconcerted. "I guess your friend is a bit excitable," he said to Garth. "I came here to see a Mr. Sherard Garth. Am I right in supposing I am talking to him now?"

"You are quite right in your supposition," replied Garth. "May I ask what your business is with me?"

"I reckon I've come here to tell it," pursued the visitor. "Silas J. Horner don't usually waste any time in coming to the point. You are the representative in England of the Western Texas Corn Syndicate, I understand?"

For once in his life, Sherard Garth seemed utterly at a loss. He had given out that he was the agent of a syndicate of that name, but as it did not exist, he had naturally never had anybody come to him to do business. He sincerely wished that this intrusive stranger—who had the appearance of a traveller from one of the large New York business houses—was at the bottom of the sea, for he had never taken any precautions against such a contingency as a visit of this sort.

"I certainly do represent that syndicate," replied Garth;

"but you will permit me to observe that this is my private room, not an office!"

"Where is your office?" demanded the stranger.

Again Sherard Garth was nonplussed, for the office was as non-existent as the syndicate. The visitor, who had referred to himself as Silas J. Horner, allowed the shadow of a smile to play about his mouth as he kept his eyes fixed on the other's face.

"If you will state the nature of your business," replied Garth desperately, "we can, after all, perhaps, transact it here, as I shall not be going into the City again for several days."

"Yes, I rather think we can transact it here," said the imperturbable visitor. "But first of all, if you will allow me——"

He stepped briskly across the room to Sebastian's side, and, before the latter could guess what was going to happen, had dexterously extracted a revolver from his pocket, and transferred it to his own.

"Your excitable friend has been fingering that revolver ever since I entered the room," he said. "He is best without it, as it might go off and hurt somebody."

The cool assurance of the act so took the pair of villains by surprise that for a second or two neither of them made any attempt to resent it. How the incident would have ended, probably not one of the three knew exactly, but Sebastian's sallow face was almost black with rage, when there came an interruption so startling that it changed the whole current of events at once.

The sound of a man running along the passage suddenly broke on their ears, and the next instant the door, which the stranger had shut, was flung open again without warning, and a man, flushed and panting, burst into the room.

"Paul Vance!" cried Garth and Sebastian, in a breath.

"What is the matter?" added Garth, while a look of alarm flashed into his steely eyes.

The new-comer was about to reply, when his eyes fell upon the American, who had now stepped a pace nearer the window.

"Who is that man?" he demanded.

"I am a bit uncertain," replied Garth. "He has stated that he wants to do business with the Western Texas Syndicate, but I have my suspicions that that is only a blind."

Paul Vance closed and locked the door.

"You might have guessed that!" he snarled. "Is it likely that anyone would come here on such a fool's errand? I've got some news to tell you that will——"

"Take care what you are saying," warned Garth.

Paul Vance stamped his foot impatiently.

"I know what I am about!" he snapped. "I ask again who this fellow is? You had better make sure before you let him out of this room, because young Dare has got clear away."

"Got clear away?" echoed Garth, in consternation. "You are mad! Got away from——"

"From the place where you left him."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Garth.

"So I should have thought," said Vance; "but I can believe my own eyes, I suppose? Look here!" He pulled off his cap, and showed his hair all clotted with blood on one side of his head. "A little reminder like that there is no getting away from. I got it from him. Nothing seems to be impossible for him to do. He must be in league with the Evil One himself!"

"If that were the case I should be on your side, instead of ranged against you."

The words were spoken quietly, and the trio of scoundrels, who had taken their eyes off the supposed American for a few seconds, now turned round to find that he had disappeared—or, at least, his disguising moustache and wig had disappeared—and Stanley Dare stood there revealed.

"Perhaps you'll believe me now!" exclaimed Vance triumphantly. "I half-expected it must be him when I entered—and yet I could hardly believe that he would walk straight into the lion's den without being decoyed there."

"The wolves' lair, you mean," corrected Dare. "I don't imagine I shall come to any harm here—for, you see, I possess two revolvers now, whereas you have only one between the three of you, and that is in Garth's coat-pocket, where it will remain."

The revolver which he had taken from Sebastian he held lightly poised in his right hand. Garth, with his steely eyes blazing with fury, turned to Vance.

"Lock the door," he said, "we have got to settle this business here." His hand stole towards his coat-pocket, but the gleaming barrel of the weapon which the young detective held moved swiftly until it pointed at his head.

"Keep your hands in front of you!" he commanded. "I think I hold all the trumps in the particular hand we are now playing. You see, if you got your revolver and fired, it would attract the unwelcome—to you—attention of the police. The result would be the same if I fired—but, naturally, I should not mind, as I am quite ready to answer to them for my actions."

"Curse you!" hissed Sebastian. "If you think you are going to get the better of three men, you are mistaken. But

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

you didn't come here just to let us know that you had escaped. You ain't such a fool as that. You had a special reason for coming. Let us hear it."

Stanley Dare walked to the window, and stood close by the side of it. It looked out upon the railed-in space at the back of the block of buildings in which the flats were situated.

There was a soft "click" as the key was turned in the lock. The young detective smiled, and began to speak.

How Dare Escaped from the Gas-Chamber—A Proposal which is not Accepted—The Mystery of Greymere House.

It will be necessary to explain briefly the manner in which Stanley Dare contrived to make his escape from the terrible chamber where death seemed to be threatening him in more than one form. For nearly half an hour he stood watching the flaring gas-flame licking against the ceiling, until the slab of stone was brought almost to a white heat. By this time he found that breathing was becoming difficult, and that it would be necessary for him to carry out his plan of action speedily, while his brain remained clear and he was in full possession of his faculties.

The plan was simplicity itself, and merely consisted in his flinging the pail of water upon the heated stone. The effect was magical. In an instant, with several loud reports, the slab of stone split into fragments, which came tumbling down in a shower on to the floor.

Through the aperture thus created, some immensely thick wooden beams were visible, with pieces of iron projecting downwards that had been fixed into the stone of the ceiling as a support to it. On the upper side of the beams were the planks of an ordinary wooden floor.

It did not take the young detective long now to decide how to act. Taking off his coat, and wrapping it round a large piece of the stone, he clapped it over the gas-jet, and put out the flame. Then he blocked up the open end of the pipe.

The wooden beam was about eight feet from the floor, so, with a short run and a good upward spring, he was able to catch hold of it. Drawing himself up, he had just room to lie down flat on his back upon the beam, for there were transverse pieces which supported the floorboards above him. In this position, he was able to get sufficient purchase with hands and knees and feet to force a couple of the planks out of their place. At the cost of some cuts and abrasions of the skin, he managed to squeeze himself through the opening thus made, and found himself in an empty room.

What part of the house he was in he did not know, except that it must be one of the lower rooms. A door faced him, and beyond that there was a flight of stairs. A lamp hung from a hook in the wall at the other side of the door. As he emerged from the room he came face to face with Paul Vance, who had just descended the stairs in felt-soled shoes. The struggle that ensued was short, but decisive. Paul Vance carried a revolver, but he was amazed at the sudden appearance of a person whom he supposed at that moment to be either dead or dying, that he forgot to use it.

Dare had armed himself with a heavy piece of wood, and, with a smart blow, he sent the revolver flying from his opponent's grasp. Vance drew a knife, but the wood this time descended upon his cranium, and he dropped, stunned and bleeding, to the floor. Five minutes later the young detective was out of the house, making the best of his way to Barnes Station, where he hoped to be in time to catch the last train to Waterloo.

On reaching his office, he found a wire from Harcourt Merivale, stating that he would be up in town on the following day. He arrived at Dare's office shortly after ten o'clock in the morning, and he had plenty to tell him.

"I have found out," he said, after brief greetings were exchanged, "that Mr. Treherne, the father of the missing boy, was in occasional communication with a man named Sherard Garth, though who or what this man is I cannot say. From information which I have obtained, though, I should imagine that Treherne stood in mortal fear of him."

"Wait a minute!" exclaimed Dare quickly. "The scent is getting hot. Sherard Garth is one of the gang who kidnapped young Treherne. Look here!"

He produced an envelope and a scrap of paper from his pocket-book. The superscription on the envelope was: "Sherard Garth, Esq., 17, Courtland Mansions, Bloomsbury, London." The scrap of paper was the commencement of a letter, dated from the King's Arms, Cranbourne:

"Dear Garth," it ran.—"We must be bringing the youngster away from——" There were some words missing, where the paper was torn, then followed, "dangerous. Take him up to——"

"It is another fragment of the letter, the first piece of which I found in your brother's smashed-up motor-car," explained Dare. "I got it and the envelope from the pocket-

NEXT WEEK: "THE HEAD OF STUDY 14." A Splendid Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

book in a brown overcoat which I found hanging up in a room of Greymere House last night."

Dare then proceeded to give Merivale a brief account of his adventure in the gas-chamber, and his subsequent escape. When he had concluded, Merivale produced a crumpled telegram which he had found among some other papers in a handbag which his brother had left behind at the hotel in which he stayed at Cranbourne. The message had been handed in at the West Strand Telegraph-office, and ran as follows:

"You can be furnished with the information you seek if you are prepared to pay for it. Call at Greymere House, Barnes, Friday evening, to discuss terms. No third party."

There was no name to the telegram; but, with the knowledge already in his possession, the young detective knew it must have emanated from Garth, or one of his accomplices.

"This is the telegram which acted as the bait that lured your brother into the clutches of these villains," said Dare. "It is as clear as daylight what happened."

"It is by no means clear to me," replied Merivale.

"Then I will explain," pursued Dare. "The fact that your brother received that telegram proves that he either was personally acquainted with the sender, or had had some former communication with him. Your brother was an intimate friend of the late Mr. Treherne's, and it is only natural that, when the latter gentleman's son so mysteriously disappeared, he should do his best to try and find out what had become of him."

"Of course," admitted Merivale. "I remember that my brother Douglas made some reference to the matter when I last saw him; but as I was unacquainted with Treherne, it was only some slight and unimportant remark."

"It is very evident to me," Dare proceeded, "that your brother either knew or suspected what had become of young Treherne, and who had had a hand in kidnapping him. It was incumbent, therefore, so the scheming villains must have argued, that he should be put out of the way, for he was a menace to their safety. Hence the telegram which decoyed him into the trap."

"Then you think that they have murdered him?" exclaimed Merivale.

"Judging from my recent experience," replied Dare, "I am quite certain that they would not scruple to kill a man if they thought it necessary for their gain or for their safety that he should be removed. That the boy is still alive there is no doubt. His life is safe so long as he does not divulge the secret which they are so anxious to know. We can only hope that your brother is also alive, because we have no proof of his death."

"Look here, Dare," said Merivale, pacing the floor excitedly, "my brother's life and the life of that boy are of more consequence than the bringing of a couple of villains to justice, who will certainly get into the hands of the police sooner or later. Every hour adds to their danger. We must make terms with these scoundrels. You know the address of one of them; let us call upon him, inform him that we know enough to hang him——"

"Which we don't, if it comes to producing proofs which would be accepted in a court of law," interrupted Dare.

"We can lead them to suppose that we do," Merivale continued. "We can then offer to take no action against him if Douglas and the boy are released uninjured within twenty-four hours."

"I don't like that method of setting a case," replied Dare, "and I fear, moreover, that it will fail. But as there are lives at stake, and every hour is of consequence, we will give it a trial. In any case, I will take care that I don't come away from the interview without having learnt something."

The young detective, however, insisted that he should go alone, and he adopted the disguise of a Yankee commercial traveller as the readiest means, under the circumstances, of gaining admittance to Garth's rooms.

We have already seen how he fared there up to a certain point, and how, in reply to Sebastian's strongly-worded demand, he proceeded to give his reasons for coming among them—to quietly dictate terms in the enemy's camp, which he knew even as he spoke would not be accepted.

He was there at his client's wish, but it was against his own better judgment.

"I am here to make a proposal on behalf of my client, Mr. Harcourt Merivale," said Dare, addressing himself more particularly to Sherard Garth. "It is this. That he will take no action against you—and I need, perhaps, not trouble to inform you that a case of kidnapping and attempted murder will land you in one of his Majesty's prisons for a very lengthy period—on condition that Douglas Merivale and Cecil Treherne are set free and uninjured within twenty-four hours. Do I make myself clear?"

"Clear? You young fool!" snarled Sebastian. "Why, if——"

Garth interrupted his accomplice with a gesture of his hand.

"Allow me to deal with this matter," he said. Then, turning to Stanley Dare, he went on: "Your language would be perfectly clear if we knew to what you referred. We have never heard of your client; we have never heard of Douglas Merivale or Cecil Treherne; therefore we don't understand your extraordinary proposal."

"I thought you might possibly take up that attitude," replied Dare calmly. "But you have heard of the gas-chamber at Greymere; and as your accomplice, Paul Vance, has just referred to my escape from it, you are scarcely in a position to deny that my life was attempted."

"We have never heard of Greymere," returned Garth, in the same monotonous, passionless voice; "and my friend Mr. Vance certainly never referred to your escape from a gas-chamber. He has been with us in this room for the past three hours, and could not possibly have made any such extraordinary statement."

He exchanged glances with his associates, who, seeing the line he was taking up, cordially agreed with him. Stanley Dare, having expected something of this sort, did not waste any time in useless argument. He knew that his mission had failed, and in his heart he was not sorry, for his professional instinct was entirely against such a solution of the problem. But he had another trump in his hand, which he meant to play before quitting the room.

"I may take it that you decline my proposal," he said. "You need not say any more; we perfectly understand each other. By the way, I see you have had your brown overcoat repaired."

He glanced towards a coat which had been thrown carelessly over a chair. It was the same one that he had last seen hanging in the cupboard at Greymere House.

"What do you mean?" growled Sebastian.

"So it is your coat, my friend," thought Dare. "That is a point worth knowing." Aloud, he said: "You may remember that a button and a fragment of cloth were torn from it during your struggle with Douglas Merivale. I have the piece of cloth and the button in my possession, and might have returned it to you had I guessed I should have the pleasure of meeting you here this afternoon."

The silence of consternation fell upon the trio. They wondered how much this young detective really did know of their secret crimes. Sebastian growled out an oath. Was it safe to let him go? Would it not be better to take the risk and close his mouth for ever while they had him here in the room?

Stanley Dare read their thoughts.

"Unlock the door," he said, "and make no attempt to molest me!"

No one moved, but he fancied he heard Garth whisper, "The knife!"

He referred to an Afghan knife that was hung on a bracket as an ornament.

Sebastian was about to move, when he found that Dare's ready revolver was pointed straight at his head.

"If the door is not unlocked and open in ten seconds," said Dare, "I will fire! And I may tell you that I am a good shot."

There was a pause, and Dare began to count.

"One, two, three, four, five——"

Paul Vance turned the key in the lock, and flung open the door.

"Thank you!" said Dare quietly.

As he crossed the room he took care to keep either one or the other of the men covered with his revolver.

"You have won this trick," said Garth, with an evil glitter in his eyes, "but the game is not yet finished."

"No, not yet," agreed Stanley Dare.

The next instant he was out in the passage, and the door closed behind him.

* * * * * * *

An electric motor brougham pulled up about a quarter of a mile from Greymere House, and the young detective sprang out on to the side path.

Mr. Harcourt Merivale followed in a more leisurely manner. It was his private brougham, and one of his servants, a discreet and trustworthy man, was on the box.

He gave some instructions to him in a low voice, and the brougham proceeded noiselessly along the road, presently vanishing in the darkness. Stanley Dare and he walked towards the house.

The young detective had considered it advisable on quitting the flat in Bloomsbury to make his way as speedily as possible to the house on Barnes Common, for he knew that the trio of scoundrels, realising the danger which threatened them, would make some desperate move that would gain them the knowledge of the secret—in their eyes evidently a valuable one—which young Treherne held; or else the boy

would be spirited away again to some place where it would be still more difficult to trace him.

Calling first at his office, where Harcourt Merivale was awaiting him, the pair of them then motored down to Barnes Common.

"I am certain that both your brother and young Treherne were imprisoned in some part of this old house," said Dare, as they hurried through the grounds, "for there are evidently a number of secret subterranean chambers beneath it, although up to the present I only know of the gas-chamber, and I can hardly be said to have discovered that."

"Were imprisoned," echoed Merivale. "Do you think, then, we are too late—"

"We have to remember that we are opposed to three desperate and skilful criminals," said Dare, "who are absolutely unscrupulous. Here we are at the door! It is open; that is a bad sign."

He rushed into the front lower room, followed by Merivale. As he pushed open the door a faint cry reached them, coming as it seemed from beneath their very feet. Dare crossed to the big, old-fashioned fireplace, and flashed his portable electric light over the mantelpiece and carved side-pieces. Then he took a powerful lens from his pocket, and examined the carved figure of a cupid very closely.

"As I expected," he muttered.

He pressed against the cupid's outstretched hand. There was a faint "click," and the next moment the whole fireplace—hearth and all—slowly receded into the wall—or into a recess in the wall—leaving an aperture, the full size of the hearth, gaping at his feet.

"Good heavens!" cried Merivale. "This is the most amazing thing that I have ever known!"

"A splendid mechanical contrivance," said Dare. "We shall solve the mystery of Greymere House at last."

The Haunted Chamber—Too Late—Tricked—The Chase.

The strange, weird cry reached them again—a cry with a note of anguish and of fear in it. Harcourt Merivale shuddered slightly.

"I don't like that sound," he muttered. "It is unnatural—unaccountable. It hardly sounds like the cry of a human being."

Stanley Dare directed the powerful rays of his portable electric lamp down into the abyss of darkness beneath him. A small stone vault was revealed, with a narrow passage leading out of it.

"What else have we to deal with but human beings?" he said. "A detective must not believe in the supernatural; he has to deal only with facts. Come!"

There were nine steps, and when he reached the bottom he held the lamp so that Merivale could see his way down. They now saw that two passages ran out of the small vault, though one was scarcely more than a tunnel. It was from the direction in which the latter led that the strange, uncanny cry had come.

"This is the one we must follow," said Dare, speaking cheerfully and briskly, though he dreaded, for his companion's sake, the sight which might meet their gaze at the further end. "Be careful how you go, for we know not what snares may be set for intruders."

The tunnel was no more than three feet in height, so they had to crawl forward on their hands and knees. It was damp and evil-smelling, for it was seldom that fresh air penetrated down into these regions beneath the old house; but there were no pitfalls on the way.

For about fifty yards it extended, and then it gave on to another vault, with groined roof, pillars, and arches that had the appearance, and no doubt was, the crypt of an ancient monastery that had once stood upon this site.

"Great heaven! What is that?" cried Merivale suddenly, as they both rose to their feet. "The place is haunted, surely! Is there anything earthly could make that sound?"

The cry had broken out again, strange, weird, and harsh. It came from out of the darkness in front of them, and from somewhere in the distance the young detective fancied he heard a faint echo of the cry.

A few paces further forward, and then a sight was revealed to them which even brought an exclamation of astonishment from Stanley Dare's lips. The terminal wall of the vault was in front of them, and from near the centre of the wall a hideous face glared out—the face of the mask, with only the eyes that gleamed from it to show that a living man was behind it.

But there was no body, no limbs—only that horrible face with the glaring eyes. What could it mean? The last time that Dare had seen that mask it had been worn by one of their opponents—Garth, he believed; but it was not Garth now. The eyes that glared upon him had an awful look of dread in them, but no look of evil.

Harcourt Merivale recoiled with an exclamation of horror, for this was the first time he had seen the mask. The weird, moaning cry came from behind the mask, which, in place of lips, had a grotesque twisting and contortion of the features.

After the first moments of surprise Dare sprang forward,

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and passed his hands rapidly over the wall beneath the terrible face.

"Quick, Merivale!" he exclaimed. "There has been some dastardly work here Get hold of something to prise away some of these bricks. What is that yonder—a short crowbar? The very thing!"

Merivale had picked up the iron crowbar from the floor, and worked away with a will, sending pieces of the bricks flying in every direction, until he had made an aperture large enough to insert the end of the iron well in and obtain a good leverage.

"Now heave together!" said Merivale.

They put their strength to it, and a dozen bricks came tumbling out on to the floor. The man had been built up into a narrow recess just as high as his chin, leaving his head only free. In less than ten minutes every brick was torn away, and the man staggered out, but dropped helplessly into Merivale's arms.

The mask, which was made of bronze, was fastened on by straps, which went behind his head. Dare quickly had them undone, and tossed the mask on one side. An exclamation of grief and horror broke from Harcourt Merivale.

"It is my brother!" he cried. "He is dying! The villains have killed him!"

"For twenty-four hours," gasped Douglas Merivale, "I have been there! Cecil—Treherne—they have——"

His hand dropped limply on to his brother's shoulder. He had fainted.

Although but a few days had elapsed since his disappearance, he looked now as though he had been suffering for months. His face was haggard, and of a ghastly whiteness, his limbs seemed shrunken, and his body was emaciated. The motive of the cold-blooded scoundrels in thus torturing him was not clear, unless they took a mere savage delight in inflicting pain on those who thwarted them.

"He must be attended to at once," said Harcourt Merivale. "Help me to carry him out of this den of infamy, Dare, and I will take him to a medical man in my brougham. Afterwards I can return to assist you in your quest for the boy."

"If we could only revive him for a few minutes," exclaimed Dare, as they lifted their unconscious burden between them, "so that he could finish what he commenced to tell us when he fainted. It would be most important, for he evidently knows what has become of the boy."

But there was no sign of Douglas Merivale returning to consciousness, and the young detective was debating whether it would not be better for him to accompany the brothers to a doctor, when at the door of the house, which they had by this time reached, they came face to face with Harcourt Merivale's coachman.

"What are you doing here?" asked Dare quickly.

"You sent for me, sir, didn't you," replied the man; "you or Mr. Merivale?"

"No," returned Dare. "You had your instructions to wait until one of us signalled to you in person. What has happened? Who brought you the message? Quick, man! Don't stand there as though you were paralysed! Every moment is precious."

"It was a sallow-complexioned, rather gentlemanly man who came to me," replied the coachman. "I understood him to say that he was a doctor. He told me that you had sent him out to countermand your previous instructions, and that I was to bring the brougham to the side gate, as there was a gentleman seriously injured. He rode inside the brougham, and said I was to go to the house to help carry the injured man out. The brougham is at the gate now. I am very sorry——"

"It was Garth for a thousand!" cried Dare. "Where is this man now—in the brougham?"

"No, sir. He jumped out at the gate, but I don't know where he went. I suppose he came to the house."

At this moment the sound of wheels moving quickly along the side road broke on their ears.

"They have tricked us!" exclaimed Dare excitedly. "We are too late!"

Like an arrow from a bow the young detective darted across the garden and out at the side gate. The brougham was no longer there. He rushed to the corner of the main road, and saw the brougham tearing along at a high speed. Already it was a quarter of a mile away, and there were no other vehicles in sight—nothing in which he could give chase.

To shout for help was useless, and it was equally useless to give chase to the motor-brougham on foot. It had gone along the road in the direction of Richmond, and Dare knew that Garth and his companions had got the kidnapped boy with them. Finding that Greymere House was no longer a safe resort, they had made for some other hiding-place with that promptness which characterised their actions.

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It is possible they had been very nearly trapped in the house by the unexpected arrival of Dare and Harcourt Merivale, but, evading them by reason of their more intimate knowledge of the subterranean passages and corridors, had, with a boldness which the young detective could not help but admire, got possession of the brougham by a clever ruse, and so made good their escape.

That they would abandon the motor-brougham after putting a score of miles or so between themselves and their opponents Dare felt certain, for electric broughams are not yet so plentiful but that one could be very easily traced.

Stanley Dare had turned, and was about to hurry in to Putney to send telegraphic messages to the police-offices within a radius of twelve miles to stop all motor-broughams and question their occupants, when he saw a motor-cycle with an empty trailer coming along the road, and proceeding in the direction of Richmond.

He stopped the rider, and briefly explained as much of the situation as he thought was necessary.

"I'm a cycle agent and repairer," said the man in reply, "and this machine is for hire. Can you ride?"

"Yes," replied Dare.

"Well, your name is sufficient guarantee for payment," pursued the man. "I will detach the trailer and leave it somewhere for the night. The machine is a bit of a flyer, and if the electric brougham isn't going at top speed I'll guarantee you can overtake it."

"That is business," said Dare. "I will hire the machine."

The trailer was detached in the shortest possible space of time. The young detective jumped on to the cycle, waved his hand to the dealer, and the next moment was speeding down the road at a pace which rendered him liable to a fine if any constable managed to obtain his name and address. That he would pause in his career for the uplifted hand of a policeman was a very unlikely contingency.

By Accident or Design—A Shot in the Dark—Cecil Treherne's Story.

The road was clear of traffic, and the motor-cycle fully justified the praise which the agent had bestowed upon it. As a rule, this class of machine makes a great deal of noise and a great deal of smell without attaining to any remarkable speed. But this one on which Stanley Dare was mounted proved to be a very bright exception to this rule. It did not make much noise, and it raced along at a pace which Dare calculated was certainly higher than that which the brougham had been proceeding at. When he reached Richmond, where, of course, he had to reduce the speed to proper limits, he learnt, on inquiry from policemen on point duty, that an electric brougham answering to the description of the one he was chasing had passed through the town not five minutes before him.

"There looked to be two men inside," said the last constable to whom he spoke, "but I didn't see anything of a boy. The brougham left Richmond by the Petersham Road."

This was satisfactory information so far as it went, and the young detective took up the chase again with renewed energy.

Trees, hedges, cottages flashed by as he raced along the road. Ham Common was reached and passed in a fleeting glimpse of grass and shimmering water, scrubby bushes, and giant elms. The road beyond, leading into Kingston, passed between level fields of considerable extent, dreary and unattractive at all times, but particularly so at night. In years gone by it was a part of the country much frequented by highwaymen, the fields then being vast stretches of heath. To the right, nearly half a mile away, lay the river.

Stanley Dare had been shooting keen glances along the road in the hopes that he would get the runaways in sight before entering Kingston, when, suddenly he uttered a sharp exclamation, checked the speed of the cycle, and eventually brought it to a stop within a few yards of an overturned vehicle, which was lying on its side in a ditch.

The vehicle was Harcourt Merivale's electric brougham. Was it by accident or design that it had been overturned?

A faint moan proceeded from the inside, and the young detective hastened to do his best to extricate the individual, whoever it was, who appeared to have suffered some injury from the accident. The brougham did not seem to be much damaged.

The night was dark, and as it was now late the road was deserted. Dare had his portable lamp with him, and he switched on the light. Inside the brougham the boy was lying, bound and gagged, though the gag had evidently been fastened hurriedly, and was not very tight. Dare knew at once that it was young Treherne, and it was not long before he managed to drag him from his uncomfortable position clear of the vehicle. Then he cut the ropes that bound him, and removed the gag. The boy was very weak, and his nerves seemed to have received a severe shock, for he trembled violently, but he was not suffering from any severe bodily injury.

"Are you Cecil Treherne?" asked Dare.

"Yes," replied the boy. "But who are you? Are you a friend, that you know my name?"

"You may certainly count me as a friend," returned Dare. "Are you hurt much? You seem very weak and ill."

"I have been tortured," said Treherne. "But I was not hurt when the carriage upset, if that is what you mean. They bound and gagged me first, and then, I believe, overturned the vehicle on purpose. I think they meant to kill me, but something happened to alarm them. I am referring to the men who kept me a prisoner for so long."

"I know," replied Dare. "There were three of them. In which direction did they go?"

The reply to this question came in a sufficiently startling manner. Out of the darkness on their right there came a flash and a report, and a bullet hummed past so close to Dare's cheek that the "wind" of it made his flesh tingle.

With the quickness of thought a plan of action came into his mind. He carried it out mechanically. Flinging up his arms, he uttered a loud cry, as though he had been hit, and then dropped to the ground.

Cecil Treherne, thinking he had really been shot, uttered a wail of fear and despair. But Dare quickly reassured him.

"I want those fellows to think they have hit me," he whispered; "it may put them off their guard. I am not hurt. Keep quiet now, and don't move."

He had drawn his revolver, and crouched down, waiting in case Garth or one of his associates should return, for he knew it must be one of them who had fired.

But apparently they were satisfied with what they had done, or did not want to run any additional risks, for, after a hurried consultation, Dare saw the three figures, dimly outlined in the darkness, separate and move off in different directions. He would have liked to have shadowed one of them, for he knew that the trio would meet again, but he could not leave Cecil Treherne in the nervous and prostrate condition he was in then; so, wheeling the cycle with one hand, and supporting Treherne with the other, he made his way into Kingston, and eventually put up for the night in a quiet little hotel that he knew of.

Some men were despatched to right the brougham and bring it into the town, and on the following morning Dare sent off a wire to Merivale, asking him to come over as soon as possible. Treherne had slept well until past noon, and woke up refreshed and strengthened. Harcourt Merivale arrived shortly after, and to them Cecil told his story.

"One question I wish to ask before you begin," said Dare. "The men who kidnapped you wanted to force you to give them some information, or divulge some secret that you had a special reason to keep to yourself. As they abandoned you in the overturned brougham, I imagine they have at last obtained the information which they require. Is that so?"

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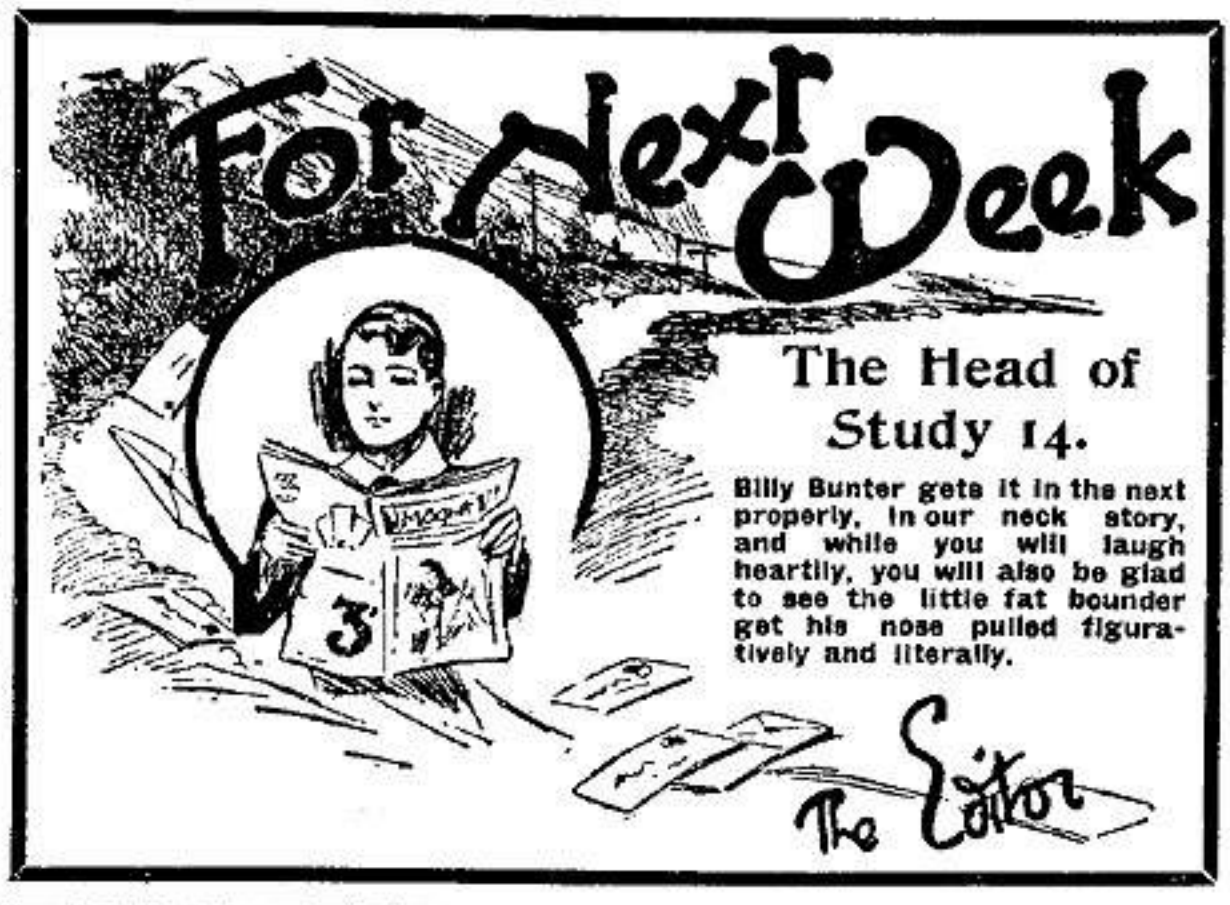

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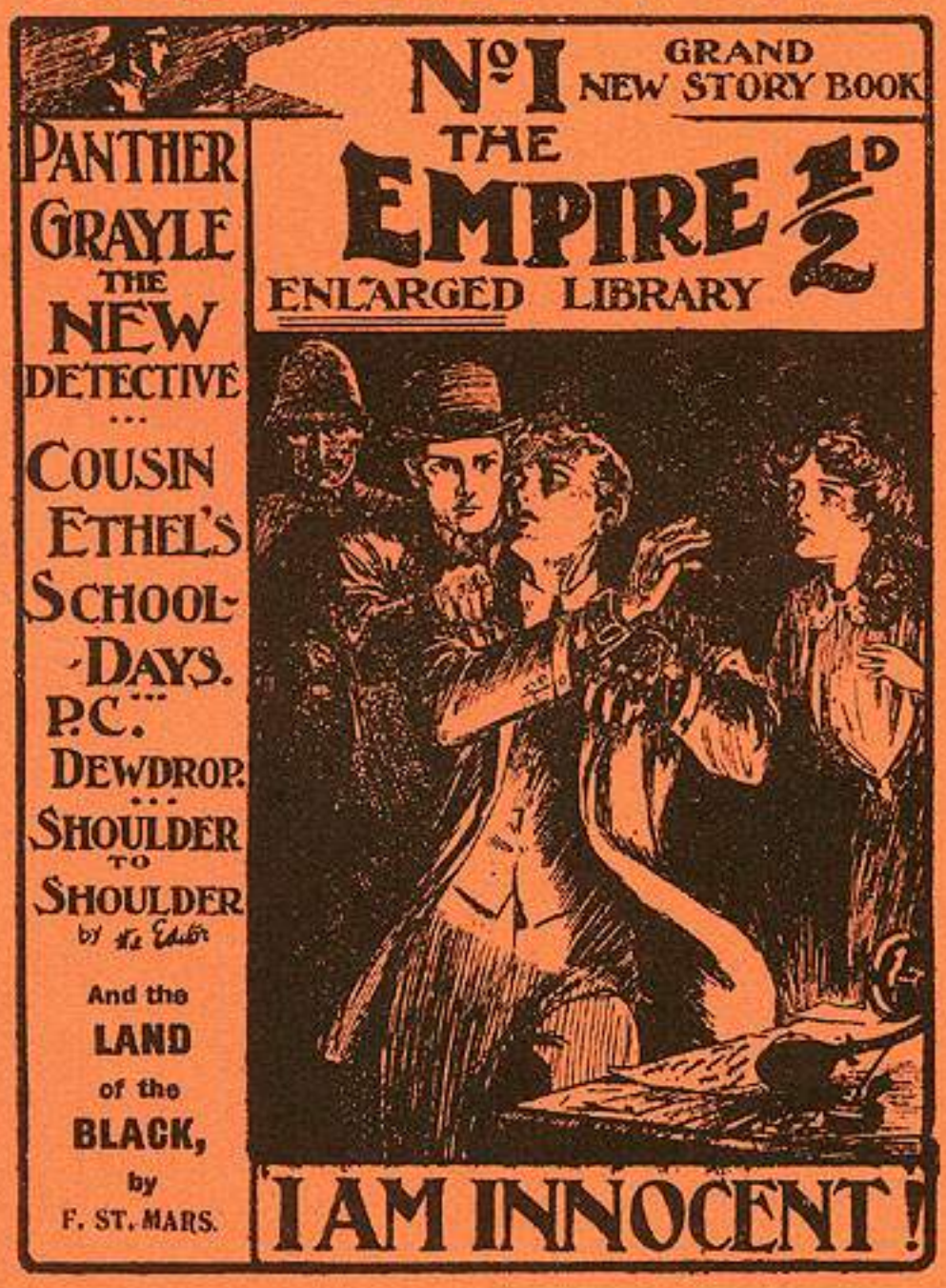

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