

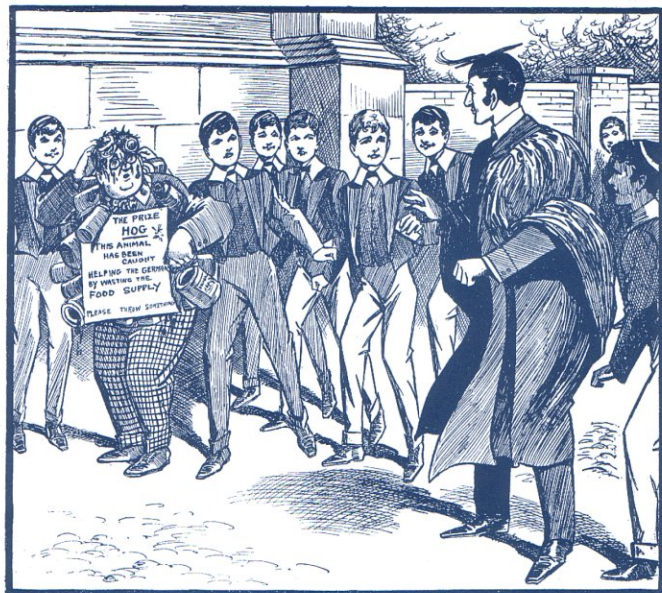
# BUNTER'S ANTI-TUCK CAMPAIGN!

A Magnificent New, Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.



## The Magnet 1° Library

No. 401. Vol. 9. October 16th, 1915.



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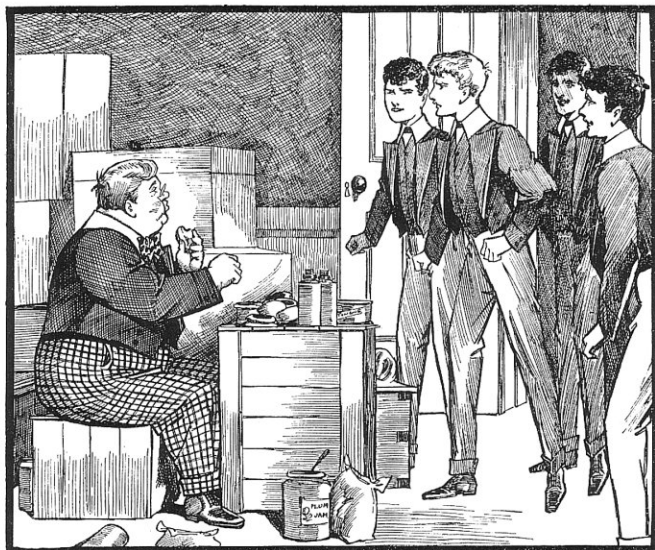


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# BUNTER'S ANTI-TUCK CAMPAIGN!

A New, Long, Complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.  
 at Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Hurree Singh threw open the door, and the Removites crowded in at the doorway. A fat junior was seated upon an empty box, and he looked up with a startled blink at the sight of the Famous Five. Billy Bunter was evidently enjoying a high old time, for he was simply surrounded by tuck. (See Chapter 1.)

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Limit!

**T**HE rottenfulness is terrific!" Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh made that emphatic statement as he came into No. 1 Study, in the Remove passage. There was a buzz of voices in the study—Wharton and Nugent and Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry were talking

cricket—but they ceased as the dusky junior came in, and stated, in his remarkable English, that the "rottenfulness" was terrific.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "What's biting you, Inky?"

"There is no bitefulness, my esteemed Bob, but the disgustfulness is great. I am shocked."

"Been handling an electric battery?" asked Nugent.

"I am disgusted."

"But what's the row?" asked Harry Wharton, mystified. "Who's been shocking and disgusting you, Inky?"

"The esteemed Bunter."

"Oh, Bunter!"

"Are we not," continued Hurree Singh indignantly, "in a state of warfulness?"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"The warfulness is terrific," he agreed; "as terrific as your variety of the English language, Inky."

"Have not the great and august Ministers of State urged upon the people to practise self-restraint and economy during the warfulness?" demanded Inky. "Have they not set the noble example by denying themselves all their little comforts?"

"Ahem! Perhaps."

"Is this a time for guzzling and gormandizing?" pursued Inky. "Is this a time for waste and extravagance and disgusting guzzleness?"

"Certainly not!"

"Then it is up to us to put our foot down!" declared Hurree Singh emphatically. "We are the leaderful chiefs of the esteemed Remove—"

"Hear, hear!"

"And it is up to us to make an esteemed example of the disgusting Bunter."

"But what's Bunter up to now?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Fall in followfully, as the song says, and you will ace," replied Hurree Singh.

The dusky junior led the way, and the chums of the Remove, somewhat puzzled, followed him from the study. Billy Bunter's "guzzleness," as Inky called it, was nothing new, though, as Bunter had been out of funds for some time, his guzzling had not been on its usual extensive scale of late.

Hurree Singh led the way down the passage and up the stairs to the box-room. Harry Wharton & Co. followed him.

Right up to the top box-room they went—a very secluded corner of the school. As they reached the landing they heard a voice from the box-room.

"Prime!"

It was the voice of William George Bunter of the Remove. Billy Bunter was evidently enjoying himself. A feed was in progress, and Billy Bunter had retired to that isolated spot in order to enjoy it uninterrupted, and without being called upon to "whack out" the good things.

Hurree Singh threw open the door, and the Removites crowded in at the doorway. A fat junior was seated upon an empty box, and he looked up with a startled blink at the sight of the Famous Five.

Billy Bunter was undoubtedly enjoying a high old time.

He was simply surrounded by tuck!

On the rare occasions when Bunter was in funds, he "did himself" remarkably well. But the present occasion quite outdid all previous ones. On the boxes round the fat junior all kinds of good things were arrayed—jars of jam and preserves, cakes and biscuits and candied fruits, ham and tongue, and tarts and chocolates. Harry Wharton & Co. simply stared at that tremendous array of eatables. It looked as if a considerable portion of the stock from the school tuckshop had been transferred to the box-room.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton. "Have you been robbing a bank, Bunter?"

"Or robbing a wholesale stores?" asked Frank Nugent. Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at the juniors.

"I—I say, you fellows, you can clear off, you know," he remarked. "I—I didn't invite you, you know."

"And only this morning the fat bounder was trying to borrow a tanner from me!" exclaimed Johnny Bull indignantly.

Bunter sniffed.

"You can keep your tanner!" he replied scornfully. "And you're jolly well not going to chip in in my feed, Johnny Bull! You buzz off!"

"But where did you get it?" demanded Bob Cherry. "My word! That little lot must have cost over a quid!"

"Oh, I've a remittance!" said Bunter. "No business THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

of yours, anyway. You clear off! You're interrupting me!"

"Time you were interrupted, I think," said Wharton, with a glance at the empty jars and bottles and packets that surrounded Bunter. "You seem to have eaten enough for a dozen already."

"Look here—"

"My esteemed chums," said Hurree Singh solemnly, "is this proper capers for war time? Ought not the guzzlesful and disgusting Bunter to be taughfully given a lesson?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Look here," roared Bunter, "you clear off! I suppose I can eat my own grub if I want to!"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Not in war time," he replied. "In war-time grub is really national property, and anybody who eats more than he needs to keep him in health is a pig—and an unpatriotic pig, too. It won't do, Bunter."

All the Co. shook their heads seriously.

As a matter of fact, the spectacle of a greedy fellow guzzling at a time when economy in food was imperatively necessary for the good of the country was not agreeable. And Bunter's guzzling on the present occasion was what Inky justly described as terrific. He had certainly already eaten three times as much as was good for him, and he was still going strong.

Hurree Singh's suggestion that the Co. should put their foot down was fully concurred in by the Co. They felt that the time had come to impress a lesson upon the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter did not share their opinion. He simply glared with indignation at the idea of being stopped from eating his own tuck. It was an interference with the liberty of the subject that raised his indignant ire at once. He felt like a coal-owner who is stopped from doubling the price of coal.

"You—you—you cheeky rotters!" spluttered Bunter. "What the dickens has it got to do with you? It's my grub, ain't it? Can't I eat my own tuck if I like? Ain't it a free country? Go and eat coke!"

Another solemn shaking of heads.

"It won't do, Bunter. Haven't you read in the papers about national economy?"

"Blow national economy!"

"And about husbanding the food supplies?"

"Blow the food supplies!"

"Don't you know that the Germans are trying to cut off our supply of food, and that every pig who over-eats himself is helping them?"

"Blow the Germans!"

"Blow the Germans as hard as you like," agreed Wharton—"blow 'em from the Kaiser downwards—but it won't do. As a patriot, you are required not to eat more than enough for two."

"You—you silly ass!"

"Now, we'll give Bunter a chance," said Bob Cherry generously. "I can get you the address of a prisoner in Germany, Bunter, who would be glad of all that tuck. We'll help you make it up into a parcel—"

"What!" gasped Bunter.

"We'll pay for the packing ourselves, and I'll biko down to the post-office with it," said Bob. "I can't say fairer than that."

"You silly fathead!" yelled Bunter.

"Is it a go?" demanded Bob.

"No, it isn't, you silly chump! Gerrout!"

"My esteemed chume, I suggest that an example be made of the guzzlesful Bunter. We will exhibit him guzzlesfully to all Greyfriars in the quad."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The grinning juniors closed round the Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter jumped up in alarm.

"I say, you fellows—look here—hands off! You—you can have some of the grub, if you like, you beasts!"

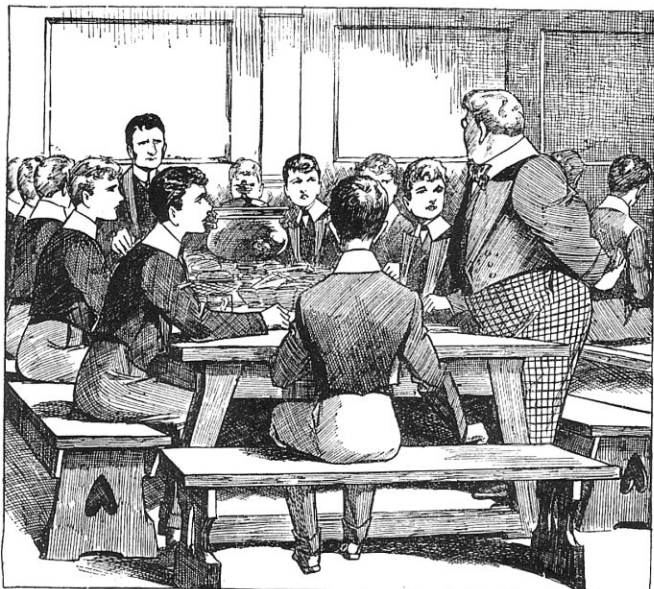
"We don't want any of the grub!" grinned Bob Cherry. "We want you, my fat tulip. Kim on!"

"Yow! Leggo! I—I—I'll punch your nose!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry roared at the idea of the Owl of the Remove punching his nose. Bob was a tremendous fighting-man, while Bunter had been licked by a Third





Bunter stood up when Mr. Quelch sat down at the head of the table. The Remove hung on his words. "If you please, sir—" began Bunter. "Well, Bunter?" "We don't want any bacon this morning," said Bunter, speaking for the whole form. (See Chapter 9.)

Form fag. But circumstances alter cases. Even the peaceful pigeon will peck in defence of its nest, and Billy Bunter found unexpected courage in defence of his tub. A fat fist crashed on Bob Cherry's nose, and Bob's laughter was changed to a terrific yell.

"Yoooooop!"

Crash!

Bob went spinning over a box, and he crashed on the floor. Billy Bunter blinked at him ferociously. He had knocked down Bob Cherry!

Bob remained down for about the tenth part of a second. Then he was up again, raging for gore.

"Lemme gerrat him!" he bellowed.

Wharton caught him by the collar just in time.

"Hold on—"

"Leggo!"

"Don't be an ass, Bob! You can't wallop Bunter—"

"Look at my nose!"

"I'll jolly well give you another one!" yelled Bunter truculently.

"Another nose?" grinned Nugent. "Well, that one's damaged—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry dabbed his nose. His fingers were The Magnet Library.—No. 401.

crimsoned. It had been a doughty blow, with all Bunter's terrific weight behind it.

"I tell you I'm going to make sawdust of him!" yelled Bob. "Leggo, you ass!"

"Shush! Shush!"

Bob Cherry tore himself loose and rushed at Bunter. The fat junior dodged round a trunk, and scuttled behind Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off," he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The infuriated Bob was grasped again by Wharton and Nugent. Billy Bunter was grasped at the same time by Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh.

"Got him!" said Johnny Bull. "Now, cheese it, Bob, you can't lick the fat duffer. We're going to make an example of him."

Bob Cherry calmed down a little, and dabbed his handkerchief to his nose. Billy Bunter wriggled in the grasp of the juniors, with an uneasy eye on Bob.

"I say, you fellows—" he mumbled.

"Shurrup!"

"Yes, but I say—"

"Silence in Court!" rapped out Wharton. "Hold the

fat bouncer; don't let him get away! Prisoner at the bar—"

"Look here——"

"You have been caught in the act, and found guilty, of making away with part of the national supply of grub in reckless extravagance, and thereby helping the enemy. You are guilty of high treason within the meaning of the Act. Sentence has been passed, and will now be duly executed."

And the chums of the Remove proceeded to execute sentence.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Bunter in the Limelight!

**B**ILLY BUNTER wriggled like a fat eel. But there was no escape for him. Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh held him by either arm, and Bunter had to resign himself to his fate.

His chief alarm was for his tuck.

"I say, you fellows," he murmured, "I know your little game. You're jolly well not going to raid my tuck, you know. I'll complain to Quelch!"

"Shurrup!"

"Tie his paws!" said Wharton.

"Oh, really, you know—— Ow!"

Bunter's fat wrists were pulled together behind him, and tied with his own handkerchief. Then several old cords were taken from boxes—a proceeding that Bunter watched with growing alarm.

"Look here, you fellows. I—I'll whack out the tuck with you, if you like," he stammered. "I—I really meant to. Look here, you can all have a whack——"

"Bribery and corruption!" said Wharton sternly. "Another remark like that, prisoner, and you will get it in the neck!"

"W-w-what are you going to do with that grub?" howled Bunter, as the juniors began to collect up his jars and bottles and packages.

"You'll soon see," grinned Nugent.

Bunter did soon see.

A cord was passed round his neck, and to the cord was suspended a large variety of bottles, jars, and tins. It was quite a necklace. Then another cord round his ample waist was similarly adorned.

Bunter watched those proceedings in astonishment.

There still remained a large supply of tuck. It was disposed of about Bunter's person wherever room could be got for it. Several tarts were squashed on his head, and bottles of ginger-beer were crammed into his pockets till he bulged out on all sides. Bottles and jars, tins and packets hung all round him, and clinked against one another as he moved.

"What the thunder are you up to, you silly asses?" roared Bunter at last. "What's the little game?"

"There, I think that will do!" said Wharton, stepping back to survey the fat junior. "That's the lot."

"We want a placard on him," said Bob.

"Good egg! Get a sheet of cardboard, somebody."

Nugent cut away to the study for a sheet of cardboard. He returned with it, and a brush and a bottle of ink.

In large characters an inscription was daubed upon the card, which was then pinned securely on Bunter's chest. The inscription ran:

### "THE PRIZE HOG!"

THIS ANIMAL HAS BEEN CAUGHT HELPING THE  
GERMANS BY WASTING THE FOOD SUPPLY!

PLEASE THROW SOMETHING!"

"Look here, you rotters——" howled Bunter.

"Come on!"

"You're not going to take me out like this?" yelled Bunter.

"We are—we is!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Kim on!"

"Leggo! Yah! I won't come— Yow-ow! Leggo my ear, you rotter! Leggo my nose, you other beast! Leggo my hair— Yaroooh!"

Bunter went. His car and his nose and his hair went, so Bunter had to go, too. In the midst of the Famous Five he was marched down the stairs to the Remove

passage, the bottles and jars and tins clinking on him like a swarm of castanets. In the Remove passage there was a shout as they were spotted.

"What's the little game?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you doing with my prize pig?" said Peter Todd, looking out of No. 7 Study.

"Read the placard, my son," replied Wharton.

"Rescue, Toddy!" yelled Bunter. "Stand by your own study, Toddy! Come and let me loose. You can lick Wharton, Toddy——"

"Of course I can," said Todd cheerily.

"Can you, though?" said the captain of the Remove warily.

"But I'm not going to," added Peter. "You are let off with a caution, Wharton."

"Why, you skinny ass——"

"Shush! I'm joining the procession," said Peter. "Get on, Bunter!"

"Help me, you silly idiot!" shrieked Bunter.

"Certainly, I'll help you!" replied Peter, lifting his boot. There was a fiendish yell from Bunter, as Peter Todd helped him, and he marched on at an accelerated pace.

With shouts of laughter, the Remove fellows joined in the procession. Squiff and Fisher T. Fish, Vernon-Smith and Skinner, Rake and Wibley and Micky Desmond and Kipps, and Tom Brown and Bulstrode and Hazeldene swarmed after the Famous Five; and it was quite an army that marched down the big staircase and out into the Close. There they were joined by Linley and Esmond and Ogilvy and Snoop, and Tom Dutton, and a host more juniors. Nearly all the Remove joined in, in fact, and Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth came along to assist as soon as they heard what was on.

Bob Cherry marched ahead, with a very red nose and a mouth-organ. He blew terrific blasts on the mouth-organ, and the strains of sweet music echoed and re-echoed through the old Close of Greyfriars.

Right through the Close the procession marched, Bob leading the way with the mouth-organ, Billy Bunter next to him, with Johnny Bull's finger and thumb on his fat ear to keep him from bolting.

The din of the mouth-organ, and the roars of laughter from the juniors, brought all eyes upon the procession.

"What the thunder is that?" exclaimed Wingate of the Sixth, looking out of his study window. Then he gave a yell. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wingate!" yelled Bunter. "Yow-ow! Help!"

But the captain of Greyfriars only roared with laughter. There was no help for Bunter, even from a prefect. He was marched on.

The invitation on the placard to "throw something" was accepted by nearly every fellow the procession passed. The "somethings" were all aimed at Bunter: but when the aim was not good Johnny Bull received a few of them. But that could not be helped.

"Will you chuck it, you beasts?" shrieked Bunter, scarlet with rage and shame. Even Billy Bunter could feel ashamed.

Clink, clink, clink! went the tins and bottles and jars.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Right round the Close!" directed Harry Wharton. "All Greyfriars has got to see our prize hog."

"I say, you fellows—yow-ow-ow!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Quelch!"

Bob Cherry suddenly ceased his sweet music on the mouth-organ. The procession came to an abrupt halt. They had come fairly upon Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, who was crossing the Close.

Mr. Quelch halted in utter astonishment.

"What is the meaning of this?" he ejaculated.

"Ahem!"

"Help!" shrieked Bunter. "Makem lemme go, sir!"

"Bunter, what—what is all this? Where did you obtain that immense quantity of food?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Why—what—bless my soul!" he added, as he looked at the placard on Bunter's chest.

The juniors were not laughing now. The Remove master could not be depended upon to take a joke, however good; but to their relief they saw Mr. Quelch's mouth curl into a smile, and the smile became a laugh.

"How utterly absurd!" exclaimed the Form-master. "Ahem!" murmured Wharton, encouraged by the laugh. "Just a little lesson to Bunter, sir—war-time, you know, sir—national economy, and all that—ahem!"

Mr. Quelch laughed again.

"Is it possible that Bunter intended to consume that great quantity of food?" he exclaimed. "Bunter, you will make yourself ill. You are a greedy boy. Are you not aware that, in the present time of stress, it is every patriotic citizen's duty to be very careful with food. Anyone who is wasteful is, in effect, helping the enemy. You are a foolish and gluttonous boy, Bunter."

"Hear, hear!" murmured the juniors.

"You must cease this absurdity at once," added Mr. Quelch; "but I trust, Bunter, that the lesson will not be lost upon you."

Billy Bunter was speechless with indignation. This was all the sympathy he received after his unpleasant experiences. Bob Cherry untied his hands, and Bunter, with a furious glare at the ragers, bolted for the School House. There was a tremendous clinking and clattering of bottles and tins and jars as he ran, and a roar of laughter.

Mr. Quelch walked away, suppressing a smile.

"Good old Quelch!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He's got a sense of humour, after all. Might have been lines."

"The linefulness might have been terrific. But we have not cured the esteemed and disgusting Bunter," said Hurree Singh, with a shake of the head.

It was only too probable that the esteemed and disgusting Bunter had not been cured. But the Remove fellows felt that they had done their best, and they could not do more than that.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Sticking To It!

**B**ILLY BUNTER was not seen again till tea-time, when he came into No. 7 Study. His three study-mates, Peter and Alonzo Todd and Tom Dutton, were there, sitting round the frugal board. Bunter glanced at the tea-table and sniffed.

"That all you've got for tea, Toddy?"

"Isn't a sardine good enough for you?" demanded Peter warmly.

"Lucky I've got something better," said Bunter; and he planted a parcel on the table. "I was going to whack this out for tea; but as you fellows are so down on feeding, I'm going to keep it for myself, see."

Billy Bunter opened the parcel, and revealed a cake, a pot of jam, a jar of honey, and a tongue. Peter looked at the supplies.

"Blessed if I quite understand this," he said. "Where have you been getting the money from?"

"Oh, I've been getting remittances, you know," said Bunter airily. "One of my titled relations—"

"Cheese it!"

"Besides, my pater—"

"Your pater's hard up, as you've told us yourself," said Peter. "And I don't believe you've had a remittance from anybody. Have you been raiding a study?"

"Oh, really, Toddy!"

"Or robbing the larder?"

Bunter snorted.

Peter Todd was considerably puzzled. Bunter, always impetuous, had been more impetuous than ever of late. It was really remarkable to see him in possession of such apparently unlimited supplies. Unless Mrs. Mimble had begun giving him credit at the school shop, there was really no accounting for it. And that was not at all likely. Mrs. Mimble knew Bunter too well.

The fat junior sat down to his feed, and his three study-mates looked at him very expressively. Funds were short in No. 7, and the tea was frugal. As Bunter seldom or never contributed to the study funds, and generally took the lion's share at tea, he might have been expected to "whack out" his handsome supply. But he evidently had no intention of doing so.

"My dear Bunter," remarked Alonzo Todd, in his mild way. "I really think—"

"You can ring off, Alonzo," said Bunter positively. "You are sniggering when those rotters marched me round the quad. You can go and eat coke."

"Look here—" said Peter.

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"You can go and eat coke, too!" said Bunter.

"I say, that's a jolly nice tongue!" said Tom Dutton, who was deaf, and had not heard Bunter's remarks. "Glad you're in funds, Bunter, as we're on the rocks. Time you stood your whack, too. Thanks!"

"Here, you let that alone!" exclaimed Bunter warmly, as Tom helped himself to a liberal slice of tongue.

"Loan!" said Dutton. "Haven't I told you I'm hard up. But you don't need a loan if you can stand ripping things like this."

"That's mine!" howled Bunter.

"Fine, and no mistake!" agreed Dutton. "Aren't you having any, Toddy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

"Look here, Dutton," roared Bunter, "you can leave my tuck alone, see! I'm not feeding the whole study."

"Yes, quite enough for the whole study," said Dutton. "I'll help you chaps, if you like."

And he helped Peter and Alonzo. Billy Bunter, in great excitement, made a grab across the table to recover his property, and howled as Peter tapped him on his fat knuckles with a fork.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Keep your hands from picking and stealing!" said Peter severely.

"But it's mine!" roared Bunter.

"Oh, don't jaw!"

"My dear Bunter," murmured Alonzo, "if you really object—"

"He doesn't," said Peter. "If he raises an objection, I'm going to lay into him with a cricket-stump! Do you object, Bunter?"

Bunter's only reply was a snort. Under the combined efforts of four hungry juniors the tongue speedily vanished. Then Tom Dutton cut the cake.

"That's my cake!" shouted Bunter.

"Thanks, awfully!" said Dutton. "Blessed if you're as mean as I always thought you were, Bunter. Yes, I'll take it."

The cake disappeared. Bunter was looking furious, and Peter Todd was grinning, and even the serious Alonzo smiled. There was a slight doubt whether Tom Dutton was really quite so deaf as he seemed to be on this occasion.

"That jam looks good," said Tom. "Thanks so much for bringing it in, Bunter."

"You're not going to scoff my jam!" howled Bunter. "Keep your paws to yourself!"

"Oh, no, not all for myself!" said Dutton. "There's enough to go round."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter started on the jam at top speed. It was evidently the only way of saving any of it. Once inside the Owl of the Remove it was safe. And when Tom Dutton reached out for the jar of honey, to wind up, Bunter clutched it and jumped up. He had no room for that inside, but he was determined to save it.

"Hallo! What are you up to?" asked Dutton, in surprise.

"That's my honey!" growled Bunter.

"I don't see anything funny in what you're doing. Open that jar!"

"Rats!"

Billy Bunter rolled towards the door with the jar in his clutch. Peter Todd interposed.

"Halt!" he said cheerily. "Now, Bunter, that honey's your property—"

"And I'm jolly well going to keep it!" howled Bunter.

"Sure you want to?"

"Yes."

"Right-ho!"

Peter Todd jerked the jar away from Bunter's fat hand, and opened it. Bunter made a leap at him.

"Give it to me, you rotter!"

"That's what I'm going to do," said Peter. "It's yours, ain't it? I'm going to give it to you. Here it is!"

"Groooooooh!"

Peter Todd inverted the jar upon Bunter's head. The Owl of the Remove dodged wildly, but he dodged in vain. Peter's left hand grasped his collar, and held him

in a grip of iron. With his right hand he rubbed the honey into Bunter's hair. The expression on Bunter's fat face was extraordinary.

"Gerroooh! Yurrrggg! Oh! Oh, you beast! Leggo! Yah! Oh! You can have the honey, if you like! Help!"

"Thanks; I don't want it now," said Peter. "It's yours, and you can stick to it, or it can stick to you, which comes to the same thing."

"Gerrrrrrrrgggh!"

"Now you can get out, and take it with you," said Peter. And he opened the door.

"Yoooop! Grooogh! I—I—I—I!"

Peter Todd's boot interrupted Bunter's remarks. The fat junior took a hurried departure into the passage, and the door closed after him.

Bunter stood in the passage, clutching at the honey in his hair. It matted his hair, and ran down his face and over his ears in sticky streams. The Owl of the Remove rolled away to the nearest bathroom, and for a good hour he was busy there, rubbing and scrubbing at his head.

When he came into No. 7 Study to do his preparation he was looking unusually clean, though he was still sticky in places. Peter Todd greeted him with a genial nod.

"Like the honey?" he asked.

Snort!

"You can always depend on me to point out the error of your ways, when you are a greedy Hun, Bunter."

Snort!

"You might thank a chap for taking so much trouble, Bunter."

Snort!

Peter Todd picked up a ruler. Billy Bunter blinked at him, and gasped:

"Thank you!"

"Oh, don't mence!" said Peter. And he laid down the ruler and went on with his preparation.

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## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Bunter Surprises the Remove!

IF anyone had observed William George Bunter on the following day he might have noted an expression of unusual thoughtfulness upon his fat face. Bunter was thinking.

It was not customary for Billy Bunter to do very much thinking, but he was thinking now, hard. Several times he burst into a fat chuckle, as if his deep thoughts had something amusing in them.

After morning lessons Bob Cherry found the Owl of the Remove in the passage in a brown study, and he greeted him with a slap on the shoulder, which made Bunter jump.

"Thinking it over?" asked Bob cheerily.

"Yow!"

"Turning over a new leaf?" suggested Bob. "You've had a jolly good lesson, Bunt. Why not make up your mind to stop guzzling for three years or the period of the war—what?"

"I've been thinking," said Bunter, blinking at him through his glasses with an extraordinarily sly expression. "The fact is, Cherry, I've made up my mind. All that talk about national economy is quite right."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"A fellow who eats a lot in war time," said Bunter, "is a pig!"

"My hat!"

"Chaps are not only called upon to eat as little as possible, but even to go on short commons," said Bunter.

"Great Scott!"

"I'm going to set the example!"

"You!" gasped Bob.

"Yes, me," said Bunter emphatically and ungrammatically. "I feel that it's up to me, as—as a leading member of the Remove. I expect all you fellows to follow my patriotic example, of course."

"Oh, crumbe!"

"After what you've done, and all the rot you've talked, you can't do less," said Bunter. "If you don't do it, I'll

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jolly well show you up as a set of rotten hypocrites, I warn you."

"My only sainted aunt!" said Bob, in utter amazement.

"I'm going to call a meeting," said Bunter firmly. "I'm going to put it to the Remove, as British patriots. Nothing like striking the iron while it's hot. I'm going to address a meeting of the Form in the Rag. You can tell all the fellows I'm putting a notice on the board."

"Look here, what's the little game?" demanded Bob.

"National economy," said Bunter. "Self-denial in war-time."

"A lot you care about either!" growled Bob.

"The proof of the pudding's in the eating. I'm going to set an example of self-restraint and economy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nothing to cackle at. If you don't follow my example—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob.

The idea of the Owl of the Remove setting an example of temperate eating and drinking, of economy and self-restraint, was too much for Bob Cherry. He staggered away to tell the chums that extraordinary joke.

There was a shout of laughter from the Co. when Bob related the joke. Bunter as an economist in food appealed to their sense of humour.

But it soon appeared that Billy Bunter was in earnest. For a quarter of an hour later there was a paper, in Bunter's sprawling handwriting and original spelling, on the notice-board. A crowd of hilarious juniors gathered to read it. It ran:

### "NOTICE TO THE REMOVE! ECONOMY OF FOOD IN WAR TIME!

"A meteing will be held in the Rag before diner, for an Adress to be delivered by W. G. Bunter, Remove Form, on the above subject. All the Remove are requested to be present. W. G. Bunter intends to set the Example of Economy in Food, and expects all the Remove to follow his example. Fellows who don't will be shone up as Hippokrites and Scribes and Farisees.

"(Signed), W. G. BUNTER."

"Well, that takes the cake!" said Mark Linley. "Bunter's lesson seems to have done him good."

"The fat boulder is pulling our leg," said Vernon-Smith.

"I guess that ain't a stunt that would suit Bunter," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Must be a joke," said Harry Wharton, in wonder. "Of course, we meant to give Bunter a lesson, but—"

"But it can't have had this result," said Peter Todd, with a shake of the head. "The fat boulder is up to some jape."

"But if he means business—" said Squiff.

"Rats! He doesn't!"

"But if he does we ought to back him up," said the Australian junior. "After the way we've handled him for guzzling we can't do less."

"Let's go to the giddy meeting, anyway!" said Bob Cherry.

"And if he's pulling our leg, we'll bump him!" said Nugent.

"The bumpfulness will be terrific!"

Bunter's new departure caused quite a buzz of interest in the Remove. As there was still plenty of time before dinner most of the juniors adjourned to the Rag to hear Bunter's "address" on national economy. That Bunter would be in earnest seemed impossible, and they were curious to know what it meant.

Billy Bunter was already in the Rag. He blinked with satisfaction at the Removeites as they crowded in. On any other occasion, if Bunter had called a meeting, he would probably have attended it all on his "lonely own." But the Removeites were curious now, and they came in numbers.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "Meeting now open?"

"I'm waiting for you," said Bunter. "I'm going to deliver a short address—"

"Shorter the better!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Let the shortfulness be terrific, my esteemed Bunter!"

"Don't interrupt me, please," said Bunter loftily. "Yesterday your rosters were ragging me for wasting food in war time. Under the circumstances, you can't do less than back me up in being economical, and so on. It means self-denial all round. If you don't back me up—"

"We'll back you up, if you mean business," said Wharton. "Glad the lesson's done you so much good, Bunter!"

"Go ahead with the speech!" grinned Tom Brown. "A speech by W. G. Bunter will be worth listening to."

"Silence for the chair!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter mounted upon a chair, and blinked over the grinning meeting. Nearly all the Remove were there, and some of the Fourth had come in. The fat junior swelled a little with importance. Bunter was, as he would have explained to anybody, one of those fellows who are born to lead, but somehow or other he had never come into his rights yet. It was a new experience for him to see the Remove gathered round him, hanging upon his words as it were.

"Gentlemen—"

"Hear, hear!" said Peter Todd encouragingly. "On the bawl!" said Bolsover major.

"Gentlemen," repeated Bunter, blinking, "I have a few words to say upon a most important subject. We are at war with Germany—"

"Go hon!"

"Prices have gone up—"

"Not really!"

"And Ministers of State," said Bunter impressively, "have impressed upon the nation the necessity of being careful with food. Great statesmen have told us to eat less meat. Gentlemen, it is up to all of us to be economical with food. The man who eats too much is helping the enemy. The man who drinks champagne is a traitor to his country."

"Hear, hear!"

Champagne was not, naturally, among the beverages indulged in by the Remove fellows. They felt that they could back up that sentiment heartily.

"Medical men," resumed Bunter, "have told us that people, from force of habit, generally eat much more than is good for them."

"You ought to know all about that," chuckled Bob Cherry; and there was a laugh.

Certainly, Bunter was an authority on that subject. "People generally eat till they feel satisfied," went on Bunter. "That is a bad habit. A fellow should leave off eating before he feels quite full, or he doesn't give his digestion a chance. If everybody ate only just as much as he needed to keep him in health, it would be practically the same thing as doubling the national food supply."

"Words of giddy wisdom," said Peter Todd admiringly. "All we want now is Bunter to set the example."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen, there is an old saying that example is better than precept. What is the good of a statesman telling the workman to give up his beer, while he sticks to his own champagne? None! What is the use of his preaching economy, unless he begins by cutting down his own salary? None! There is an old saying that a fellow should practise what he preaches, or people won't listen to him."

"Right on the wicket," said Bob Cherry.

"Gentlemen, I am going to set an example to the Remove."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am going to begin by missing my dinner to-day!"

"Great Scott!"

"And I call upon all the Remove to follow my example."

"Oh, dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "I'll miss my dinner if you miss yours, Bunter."

"Ha, ha! Same here!"

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"The herefulness is terrific!"

"Sure, and I'll follow ye're example, Bunter—if you eat it."

Billy Bunter, with an expression of lofty dignity, waited for the laughter to die away.

"That's a beginning," he said. "Every fellow who doesn't follow my example will be held up to public scorn as a hypocrite. All of you joined in ragging me yesterday. Common decency requires that you should be as economical with food as I am, if I set the example."

"But you won't!" roared Johnny Bull. "You don't mean to miss your dinner, you fat spoofer, and you know it!"

"You'll see," said Bunter calmly. "I call on every fellow present to promise solemnly to miss his dinner if I miss mine."

"Passed unanimously!" said Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Honour bright!" grinned Squiff.

"Very well," said Bunter. "I shall expect you to keep your word. And mind, that's only a beginning. We're going on. No jam for tea. No sardines. No kippers. Not anything, excepting plain bread-and-butter. As long as I keep up the example, you're bound to follow it!"

"Done!" grinned Bob Cherry. "You'll keep it up till dinner-time, I expect!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's the bell," said Bulstrode. "Come on—now to see Bunter setting his giddy example!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In a very hilarious mood the Removees crowded out of the Rag. They made their way to the dining-room—to dinner.

AN  
IMPORTANT  
ANNOUNCEMENT  
CONCERNING  
"THE GREYFRIARS  
HERALD" APPEARS  
ON PAGE 28

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Short Commons!

THE Remove fellows took their places at the dining-table.

The Greyfriars dinner was a substantial meal. There was roast beef, potatoes, and Yorkshire pudding in liberal quantities. Most of the Remove fellows were fully prepared to do it justice. As a rule,

Bunter was prepared to do it more than justice.

But now—wonder of wonders—Bunter's knife and fork lay neglected on either side of his well-filled plate. Bunter made no movement to take them up. He blinked at his dinner, and hesitation appeared in his face for some moments. But he sat tight.

Knives and forks clinked along the table. Some of the juniors had started at once; some were watching Bunter. Nobody expected him to keep his word. The idea of Bunter sitting at a meal without touching it was preposterous. The juniors grinned, and waited to see him begin.

But he did not begin.

Bob Cherry, in astonishment, laid down his knife and fork. Was it possible that Bunter meant business? If so, a promise was a promise—and a most uncomfortable one under the circumstances, for Bob had a decidedly healthy appetite.

"You're not eating, Bunter," he murmured across the table.

Bunter shook his head.

"Why don't you begin, Tubby?" whispered Squiff.

"I'm not going to begin, Field. And you're not going to, either."

"Look here—"

"Russell, you are eating," said Bunter.

Russell looked up with a stare.

"I generally eat at meal-times," he replied.

"You've promised."

"My hat! The fat brute isn't eating his dinner," said Russell, in surprise. "What's the little game, Bunter?"

"National economy," said Bunter, with a grin.

"Oh, don't be funny!"

"Pile in, Bunty," said Rake encouragingly. "I'm waiting for you to start."

"You can wait," said Bunter; "I'm not going to start. And nobody's going to start, unless he chooses to break his promise."

"Not so much chatter at the table, please!" said Mr. Quelch, glancing along the board. "My boys, you are not eating your dinner."

There was consternation in the faces of the Removites now. Billy Bunter was keeping his word. They could imagine that it was giving him internal torments to see a meal before him without touching it. But he wasn't touching it—that was certain. They could see that with their own eyes; though really they felt inclined to doubt the evidence of their eyes.

Bunter sat tight with a triumphant grin on his face. He had the Remove in a cleft stick, and he was enjoying it.

Snoop and Skinner and Fish and one or two others went on with their dinner. They did not choose to regard their promise in the Rag as serious.

But a promise was a promise, and most of the fellows suspended the operations of their knives and forks till Bunter should begin. And Bunter showed no sign whatever of beginning.

"The fat beast must have been feeding already!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He's caught us fairly on the hop!"

"The catchfulness is terrific!" groaned Hurree Singh. The nabob of Bhampur was a small eater, and missing dinner was not such a blow to him as to the more sturdy Removites.

Mr. Quelch looked along the fable again and frowned. "Why are you not eating your dinner, my boys?"

There was an uncomfortable silence.

"Is there anything wrong with the meat?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir!" said Bob Cherry.

"Then why are you not eating?"

"Ahem!"

"Are you not hungry?" exclaimed the astonished Form-master.

"Ahem! Rather, sir!"

"I'll have a second helping, please," said Snoop, with a grin. "It is first-rate, sir!"

"What about your promise?" muttered Nugent.

"Oh, rot!"

Snoop received his second helping, and seemed to enjoy it. Skinner and Fish and Stott followed his example. But the rest of the Removites were not eating.

Mr. Quelch suspended his own lunch, and stared at them.

"Pray, what is the meaning of this?" he asked, with asperity.

Billy Bunter rose to his feet and blinked at the Form-master. Now was Bunter's opportunity of getting into the limelight. He was not slow to avail himself of it.

"If you please, sir, we've been thinking about what you said to us yesterday," said Bunter. "We have agreed not to be gluttonous. I am setting the example, sir."

"What!"

"I felt that it was up to me to set an example, sir, after what you said to me yesterday. We are not having any dinner to-day."

"Dear me!"

"In a time of national stress, sir," said Bunter, reproducing Mr. Quelch's remarks of the previous day, "it is the duty of every patriotic citizen to be very careful with food. A great deal of waste goes on in this school, sir. We have made up our minds to stop it, and we're beginning by missing our dinner."

"Ow!" murmured Bob Cherry dolorously.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, astounded. "I am very glad, Bunter, that you have paid so much attention to my words. You do not usually do so. I am glad to see that you understand the necessity of economy in food. But this can be carried too far. I cannot allow you boys to miss your dinner; your health will suffer. Eat moderately; but it is necessary to make a meal."

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"If—if you please, sir, we—we'd like to miss dinner," stammered Wharton. "We've all given our word."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch, with a stare. "Well, I would certainly not wish to discourage any boy exercising self-restraint. Missing one meal will do you no harm—indeed, a short fast is generally productive of good. You may miss your dinners to-day, if you prefer, but the practice must not be continued."

The Removites received that gracious permission with sickly looks. The practice was certainly not likely to be continued. The juniors were feeling inclined to slaughter Bunter already.

There was an unaccustomed silence at the Remove table. Hungry juniors sat and glared at the roast beef and crisp potatoes and Yorkshire pudding. Some of them were on the point of groaning aloud. But a promise was a promise—their honour was involved—and, besides that, they would not be outdone by Bunter. But most of the fellows had a strong suspicion that Bunter had been eating already since morning lessons. Otherwise, how could he have been so strong in the presence of temptation?

Bunter sat and gloated.

The enjoyment in his fat face was so conspicuous that several fellows came near throwing things at him, even in the august presence of their Form-master.

The first course was removed, and a fruit pie of huge dimensions came on. The scent of that pie when the creamy crust was cut was simply delicious. It was all the more tantalising because the juniors had eaten nothing as yet. Skinner and Snoop and Stott and Fish took their helpings. The other fellows suppressed their groans and declined.

Some of them watched Bunter eagerly. Surely that pie would break down the resolution of the Owl, much as he was enjoying the discomfiture of his Form-fellows.

And, indeed, manifold signs of hesitation appeared in Bunter's face. Even if he had been "gorging" already, he was doubtless ready for another meal—he usually was. The hopes of the juniors rose as they watched his expression.

But their hopes rose only to be dashed to the ground again. Billy Bunter set his teeth firmly, and did not touch the pie.

The last hope was gone. There was nothing for the Removites.

They were glad when they were dismissed from the dining-room. Most of them were extremely anxious to pay a prompt visit to the school tuckshop. There was a rush of Removites across the quad at once.

"That's better!" said Bob Cherry, as he started on a sandwich.

"I say, you fellows"—Bunter blinked into the crowded tuckshop—"chuck it!"

"What?"

"You're having dinner!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Is that what you call a promise? Honour bright! Yah!"

"We haven't had dinner," said Bob. "That referred to the school dinner, of course."

"Of—of course it did," said Wharton, a little doubtfully, however.

Bunter sneered a tremendous sneer.

"And you chaps were ragging me yesterday for gormandising, as you call it!" he said. "Now you're breaking your word, just for a feed."

"We're not breaking our word, you fat spoofer!" said Bob indignantly; but he put down the sandwich.

"This is a high tea," said Squiff.

"Tain't tea-time yet," said Bunter. "You never come here feeding just after dinner. It's a dinner, and you know it."

"You fat rotter, you've been feeding before dinner," hooted Wibley.

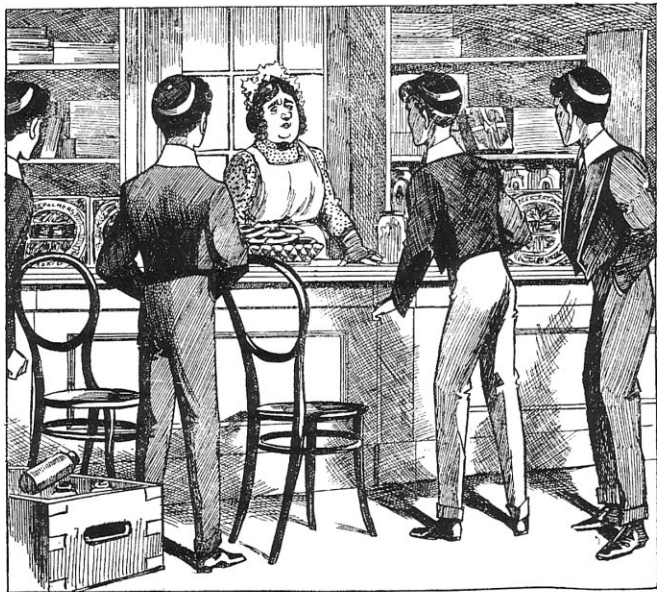
"I decline to answer an insinuation of that kind, Wibley," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity.

"Look here, you fellows, if you don't keep your word—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Bob. "I say, you chaps, I'm sticking it out till tea-time."

"Same here" said Frank Nugent. "This isn't dinner, but—but—it's sailing rather close to the wind. Let's get out!"





"I've been robbed, Master Bull!" "Robbed!" ejaculated the juniors in surprised chorus. "Yes. It is too bad! It will be pounds and pounds—perhaps six or seven pounds!" said Mrs. Mimble, almost in tears.  
(See Chapter 12.)

The hungry and unhappy Removites streamed out of the tuckshop. Certainly, they were not having dinner there, but solid tuck at dinner-time was perilously like dinner, and they would not let the grinning Owl say that they had evaded their pledge. They walked away from Mrs. Mimble's little shop in order to escape temptation; and the only satisfaction they had was sitting Bunter down with a violent concussion in the quadrangle.

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER. Keeping It Up!

THAT afternoon there were solemn and serious faces in the Remove Form-room.

The Removites were ravenously hungry.

Billy Bunter did not seem to suffer. His fat face was more cheery than usual, and he grinned occasionally, like a fellow in possession of a remarkably good joke. His fat grins had an exasperating effect upon his famished Form-fellows.

Bob Cherry even gnawed the handle of his pen. Some of the juniors looked quite pale and worn. They were all intensely eager for lessons to be over, so that they could swarm down to the tuckshop. After lessons even

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Bunter could not aver that a meal at the tuckshop was "dinner."

But the afternoon seemed as if it would never end. The lessons dragged their weary length on and on.

That peculiar and deadly feeling of faintness which comes after one has been long hungry had possession of the Removites, and made them dull and careless. Mr. Quelch was not a master to excuse carelessness, and he was very sharp with some of the Remove that afternoon.

But when Bob Cherry, asked to name the two principal cities of Lancashire, inadvertently replied, "Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding!" even Mr. Quelch had to smile.

Anxious glances from the Remove fellows watched the slowly-moving hands of the big clock over the bookcase. Never had those hands moved so slowly.

Even on occasions when the Remove had been looking forward to a big cricket or football match after lessons the minutes had never seemed to crawl by upon such leaden wings.

And the amazing thing was that Bunter, the glutton, stood it out with complete patience, and showed none of the eagerness of the rest of the Form. Most of the fellows were convinced that he had been feeding surrepti-

NEXT  
MONDAY—

"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry  
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

tiously. Otherwise, it must have been, as Bob Cherry observed, that he was subsisting upon his own fat, like a hibernating polar bear.

But everything comes to an end at last, and at length the welcome hour of dismissal came.

The Remove marched out of their Form-room in sedate array as usual, but the moment they were outside they broke into a wild rush.

They simply swooped across the Close to the school shop.

Mrs. Mimble was in her little parlour, but a dozen sets of knuckles rapping loudly on the counter called her forth. The good dame came into the shop, somewhat surprised. She had never been beset by so famished a crowd.

Orders poured upon her in bewildering variety. Every fellow was ordering something at once.

"Sandwich, please!"

"Ham! Ham! Ham!"

"Biscuits and cheese!"

"Jam-tarts—quick!"

"Currant-cake! Buck up!"

"Any old thing—only get a move on!"

"Buck up, Mrs. Mimble!"

"Deary me!" said Mrs. Mimble, in surprise, as she handed out everything that came within reach. "What is the matter with you young gentlemen?"

"National economy!" groaned Bob Cherry.

"Bunter!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"My hat, I never knew that rabbit-pie was so nice!" said Peter Todd.

"What ripping cake!"

"What topping cheese!"

"This pie is a corker!"

"The corkfulness is terrific!"

"Oh, dear! This is better! Gimme some more tarts!"

There was a steady clamping of jaws on all sides. The Removites were making up for lost time. Never had Mrs. Mimble had such a rush of trade, and never had the juniors' pocket-money flowed so freely.

Billy Bunter blinked in at the doorway. There was a grin on his fat face.

"Draw it mild, you fellows," he said chidingly. "Don't be prize hogs, you know. Remember it's war time."

"Shut up!" roared Bolsover major.

"Remember national economy!" urged Bunter. "Remember that you're helping the enemy by bolting that rabbit-pie, Toddy. Every rabbit-pie may be needed if the war lasts another fifteen years! He, he, he!"

"Get out!"

"I'm not stuffing," said Bunter loftily. "I decline to join in this vulgar scramble for food. I can stick it out till tea-time. I really wish you fellows would try to follow my example."

"You've been stuffing already!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I decline to reply to ill-natured insinuations, Cherry. You fellows know perfectly well that I am stony, and Mrs. Mimble will tell you that I haven't bought anything here to-day."

"Kate!"

"Well, ask Mrs. Mimble," said Bunter. "You can take her word."

"Is that true, Mrs. Mimble?" asked Wharton. "Hasn't Bunter been laying in supplies to-day?"

"No, Master Wharton."

"Nothing at all?" demanded Nugent.

"Nothing, Master Nugent."

"Well, my hat!"

"Ain't you hungry, fatty?" demanded Peter Todd, in amazement.

"Certainly," said Bunter calmly. "But I'm made of sterner stuff than you fellows."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Besides, I'm patriotic," explained Bunter.

"Why, you fat worm—"

"I missed my dinner from patriotic motives, and I'm not going to spoil it by guzzling now. I'm surprised at you—I may say shocked. I'm holding out till tea-time," said Bunter heroically.

"Must have had some grub left over from yesterday," said Squiff. "He had a whole cargo yesterday, enough for a siege."

"Bunter never has anything left off from yesterday," grinned Bob. "He would finish it up if it killed him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, look here, you fellows," said Bunter, "I protest against this. I'm simply disgusted to see all this guzzling going on in war time."

"Satan rebuking sin!" chuckled Squiff.

"You fellows were down on me, and so was Quelch. Well, I've turned over a new leaf, and I'm going on short commons. The least you can do is to follow my example, after all your gas. Otherwise, I shall be compelled to regard you as hypocrites and scribes and Pharisees!"

"You cheeky porker!"

"You tubby bounder!"

"You slimy toad!"

"Abuse is no argument," said Bunter, with a sniff.

"Guzzle as much as you like—I can't stop you; but I'm jolly well going to tell you what I think about you. I call it disgusting. Unpatriotic. Helping the enemy. Revolting, in fact!"

The Removites looked at Bunter as if they would eat him. For the glutton of the Remove to rebuke them for "stuffing" was a little too thick. The tables had been turned, with a vengeance.

Only yesterday they had been holding Bunter up to the ridicule and contempt of the whole school for his gluttony. To-day Bunter was leading the life of an anchorite, and chiding them for their gluttony. The Removites could scarcely believe their eyes and their ears. Harry Wharton put down his second cake.

"It's up to us," he said. "Draw it mild. If that fat frog can go short of grub, we can. We'll keep it up as long as he does, anyway."

"I'll jolly well bump him on the floor!" roared Bolsover major.

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

The bully of the Remove made a stride towards Bunter. Just then Wingate and Courtney of the Sixth entered the tuckshop for supplies for tea. Billy Bunter dodged promptly behind the two prefects.

"Hallo!" said Wingate, fixing his eyes rather unpleasantly on Bolsover. "What's the trouble here?"

"N-n-nothing!" stammered Bolsover.

"You keep off, Bolsover," said Bunter victoriously. "It's all right, Wingate; these fellows are rather waxy because I'm giving them a little lecture. I'm disgusted to see them guzzling in war time, and I'm telling them so plainly. I don't approve of it, and as a patriot I'm bound to say so."

"Great Scott!" said Wingate.

"We missed our dinner to-day, Wingate," said Nugent apologetically. "We—we're rather sharp set."

"Famished!" said Rake.

"I missed my dinner, too," said Bunter. "What's the good of missing your dinner to save food if you guzzle afterwards like a lot of prize porkers. I'm disgusted with all of you. I regard you with contempt!"

Bunter rolled out of the tuckshop completely victorious. He had had the last word. The Removites were almost in a slaughterous frame of mind. To be regarded with contempt for Billy Bunter was a little too much. Some of them suspended their hurried operations on the tuck. But most of them were too hungry to quit, and they went on, but they felt quite uncomfortable.

Bunter had succeeded in putting them in the wrong. After the demonstration of the previous day it was evidently up to them to stay on short commons if Bunter did. The Owl of the Remove was putting them to shame—a new and extraordinary state of affairs that was not at all agreeable.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### High Principles!

"KEEP an eye fixfully on the fat bounder!"

That was Hurree Singh's advice when the Famous Five discussed the matter in No. 1 Study. Bunter's new attitude was so surprising that it required some getting used to, and the chums of the Remove could not help being suspicious.

Bob Cherry declared that the only possible explanation was that Bunter had a secret supply of tuck.

His chums admitted that that was the probable explanation. But there were difficulties in the way of that explanation.

For Bunter was never known to put anything by for a rainy day in the shape of eatables. He might be seen one day with enough tuck for a week in his possession, but on the following day he would never have a crumb left. However large a meal might be, Bunter could always be depended upon to get to the very end of it.

Bunter might lay in a supply of tuck for the purpose of "dishing" his critics by a pretence of self-denial. But it was absolutely certain that he would not be able to resist the temptation to bolt it all at a single sitting.

If Bunter had had a secret store before dinner, therefore, it was certain that he had "scoffed" it all.

However extensive the meal, he was sure to be hungry again by tea-time. Yet he had declined to join in the general "guzzle" of the famished Removites.

"Simply can't understand it," said Harry Wharton, shaking his head. "He never leaves anything over."

"But he can't be going hungry," said Bob. "He can't. Therefore—ergo—he must have a secret supply."

"But he would scoff it."

"Yes, I know he would; but—but perhaps he hasn't this once. It's the only explanation, anyway."

"Might be so big a supply that even Bunter couldn't scoff the lot," suggested Nugent.

"Then where did he get it from?" said Johnny Bull. "We know he's stony, and Mrs. Mimble says he's had nothing at her shop to-day."

"Might have burgled the larder; he did once."

"But that would have been found out before this."

"Yes, I suppose it would. I give it up."

"It is a puzzeful conundrum," said Hurree Singh.

"But let us keep an eye fixfully on the esteemed toad, and we shall discoverfully spot him."

Bob Cherry clenched his fists.

"If he's spoofing us we'll simply scrag him," he said.

"We'll simply snatch him baldheaded."

"Yes, rather!" said the Co., with deep feeling.

"Toddy's asked us to tea," said Wharton. "There's going to be a feed. Alonzo's had a quid from his Uncle Benjamin. Perhaps Bunter means to make up for lost time then. But we'll keep an eye on him."

With that object in view the Famous Five proceeded to look for Bunter.

They looked in No. 7 Study, where Peter and Alonzo and Tom Dutton were making preparations for a feed. But Bunter was not there.

"Where's your pig?" asked Bob.

Peter Todd looked round with a ruddy face from the fire. He was frying sausages in great quantities. There had been short commons in No. 7 Study of late, owing to lack of funds, and the study was celebrating the arrival of Uncle Benjamin's quid.

"Blessed if I know!" said Peter. "He came in here, and told me that he was surprised to find me frying sausages in war-time."

"My hat!"

"He said the smell of cooking sickened him, considering the need for national economy," said Peter.

"Oh, dear!"

"Either he's mad, or he's pulling our leg," said Peter. "He seems to have made up his mind to starve, simply to give us one in the eye. But it won't last long. You'll see him putting on extra steam at tea-time."

"But where is he now?" asked Wharton suspiciously.

"He said he was going out for a walk, as he could endure the pangs of hunger more patiently in the open air."

"Great pip!"

The Famous Five hurried down to the Close, and looked round for Bunter there. But he was not to be seen. They scouted round the gym, and the woodshed and the bikeshed, but Bunter was not to be discovered.

"Let's look in at the box-rooms," said Bob Cherry.

"Ten to one he's guzzling there."

Up to the box-rooms went the searchers, and up and down and round about they went, looking for Bunter. But Bunter was evidently not in the house.

Somewhat fatigued, and in a decidedly ill-humour, the Famous Five gave it up at last. It was past the time

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NEXT MONDAY—

"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"

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fixed for the feed in No. 7 Study, and they were expected guests.

"Better get to tea," said Nugent. "He must have gone out, after all."

They came downstairs, and took a final look out into the Close.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There he is!" exclaimed Bob.

The fat figure of the Owl of the Remove was coming slowly across the Close. The juniors watched him approach. Bunter caught sight of them, and his pace slackened, and he staggered a little as he came up the steps.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Wharton.

"Only faintness from hunger," said Bunter, with heroic fortitude. "I've walked a little too far, I think, considering my weak state."

"You haven't been feeding?" asked Bob Cherry suspiciously.

"Oh, really, Cherry! My postal-order hasn't come, and I'm quite stony. Mauleverer offered to stand me a feed," said Bunter loftily, "but I refused."

"You refused?" ejaculated Johnny Bull. "You refused a feed?"

"Certainly!"

"Wha-a-at for?"

"It's a matter of principle with me."

"Principle!" gasped Bob Cherry. "My hat! Principle—with you? I know I'm dreaming!"

"Some fellows are rather lacking in principle," said Bunter calmly. "Some fellows rag a chap for feeding well in war-time, and then go and guzzle like a lot of prize pigs themselves. I'm not one of that sort. I've a very low opinion of you fellows, I must say that!"

And Bunter went on to the Remove passage, leaving the Famous Five quite overcome. He paused on the stairs and leaned on the banisters, as if almost overcome by weakness. Then he pulled himself together and went on. The juniors watched him.

"Is the fat beast acting," murmured Bob Cherry, "or—or is it genuine? Blessed if I can make it out."

Peter Todd's voice called down the stairs.

"Tea's ready! Waiting for you chaps!"

"We're coming!"

Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded to No. 7 Study. The table was laid, and a perfectly gorgeous spread was prepared. Squiff and Mark Linley were already there, and Bunter. The scent of sausages and ham and tea was very fragrant. To juniors who had missed their dinner that feed was very welcome, in spite of the liberal "snacks" in the tuckshop.

The chums of the Remove were prepared for a good time.

But there was a skeleton at the feast, in the form of William George Bunter. Not that Billy Bunter resembled a skeleton in any shape or form—far from that. He had certainly not grown thinner. He was a metaphorical skeleton at the festive board.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Not a Happy Tea-Party!

THERE were eleven juniors in No. 7 Study—or twelve, counting Bunter as two. Bunter generally needed to be counted as at least two, both in the room he required for his ample form and the tuck he required for his inner Bunter. There was not much room to spare, as junior studies had not been designed by the builder for large social gatherings. Chairs had been borrowed, and boxes brought in to serve as seats. But Bunter did not squeeze himself to the table as usual. He sat in the armchair and looked on.

"It's ready, fatty," said Peter Todd, looking round at him.

"Yes; all right."

"We can make room for you," said Bob.

"Thanks; I'll stay here."

"Don't you want your tea?" bawled Peter.

"Oh, yes! You can pass me something—the little I want."

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Yes, I know the little you want," growled Peter. "And I'm not passing the next hour shoving things over to you. Help yourself."

"You might give me half a sausage," said Bunter.

"Half one?"

"Yes."

"You mean half a dozen, to begin with?"

"I mean half a sausage," said Bunter firmly, "and a little bread. You needn't put any butter on it. Butter ought to be economised in war time."

"And that's all you want?" ejaculated Peter.

"I might have a small piece of cake, to finish with—only a very small piece. It's rather extravagant to eat cake at all in war time."

"Now, look here!" said Peter Todd. "You may be mad, and if you're mad I want to treat you gently. But if you're spoofing, that's another matter. Are you spoofing, or are you only mad?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You've said half a sausage, and you'll have half a sausage," said Peter determinedly, "and that's jolly well all you'll get. I'll keep you to it."

"Some fellows have principles," said Bunter calmly. "I'm acting on principle. I feel rather weak, and I mustn't overdo it. But half a sausage and a little bread will be enough to sustain my strength, and in war time that's all a fellow ought to think about."

"What howling ass said that the age of miracles was past?" murmured Bob Cherry.

The juniors gazed at Bunter in wonder as he started operations upon half a sausage and a little dry bread. The fat junior seemed quite contented with his frugal fare. The rest of the party did full justice to sausages and ham. Bunter watched them in turn, more in sorrow than in anger.

"The fellows in the trenches would be jolly glad of these sausages," he remarked, after a time.

"Well, we can't send 'em to the trenches," said Wharton, rather uncomfortably.

"For goodness' sake, shut up, Bunter!" said Peter Todd tartly.

"Have a tart and dry up!" suggested Squiff.

Bunter shook his head.

"I can't have any tarts, Field. Tarts ought not really to be made up in war time. They use up flour that is required for more useful purposes."

"Oh, scissors!"

"Then the jam—" went on Bunter.

"Pass Bunter the jam!" said Peter.

"I don't mean that, Toddy. I don't want any jam. Please don't pass it this way. I'm fond of jam, but my conscience—"

"Your conscience!" yelled Peter. "How long have you started a conscience?"

"My conscience won't let me eat jam. The labour that is spent in making jam ought to be spent in making shells for licking the Germans. You can't say that jam is a necessity."

"Won't you try these lovely creamy biscuits?" asked Squiff, holding a plate temptingly to Bunter.

Bunter turned his eyes away.

"Don't!" he said. "When I see those nice biscuits I think of the workmen employed in making them, who ought to be making munitions. It's against my conscience to eat biscuits. You fellows go ahead. I don't expect you to be so particular as I am. Some fellows have principles, and some haven't."

"Are you always as cheerful as this at a party?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter sighed.

"On second thoughts, I won't have that bit of cake," he said. "I've eaten enough for sustenance, and enough is as good as a feast. It's rather painful to me to see you fellows guzzling like this."

"Shut up!" shouted Peter.

Bunter rose to his feet, looking very determined. "I decline to shut up!" he said. "I'm going to say what I think! You fellows know very well that you oughtn't to be eating jellies and biscuits and cake. You know what the Prime Minister said about the need

for economy. Do you suppose he eats nice things in war time?"

"I wonder!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Now, I put it to you," said Bunter. "Chuck it up! Be men!"

"What?"

"Be men!" said Bunter. "I'm setting you an example. Don't guzzle!"

"Oh, scissors!"

"Look here, Bunter," said Peter Todd. "You may be mad, and lunatics have to be humoured. But these fellows are guests in this study. There's such a thing as good manners, though you don't seem to be aware of it. If you don't shut up you go out on your neck. Savvy?"

"True patriots are always misunderstood by the ignorant multitude," said Bunter, with dignity. "I'm quite prepared to suffer for my principles."

"Well, that takes the cake," said Johnny Bull. "Bunter with principles, and suffering for them! We shall wake up presently."

"I don't want to be inhospitable," resumed Bunter, keeping a wary eye on the incensed Peter. "In peace time I'd be glad to see all you fellows here, and would join you with pleasure, but in war time it's different. I don't approve of these study feeds."

"He doesn't approve!" said Nugent. "Bunter doesn't approve of feeds! Pinch me, somebody!"

"You didn't approve of my feeding yesterday," said Bunter. "You made it jolly plain, too. I don't complain, and you oughtn't to complain when I point out to you your plain duty. Peter, are you going to eat that pineapple?"

"Yes, I'm going to eat that pineapple," said Peter Todd ferociously.

"I put it to you, Peter—"

"Shut up!"

"If you eat that pineapple you are helping the enemy."

"Ring off!" yelled Peter.

"Money spent on pineapples is a sheer waste, and diminishes the national resources," said Bunter firmly. "I'm bound to speak out. I'm sorry to hurt your feelings, Toddy; but when I see a chap acting in an unpatriotic manner, and helping the enemy, my conscience won't allow me to keep quiet."

Peter Todd half rose, and then sat down again. He pushed the pineapple away uncut.

"That's right!" said Bunter approvingly. "Pineapples are awfully nice, but not in war time, Peter—not in war time, old chap. Self-denial is ever so much more satisfactory in the long run. With me setting the example—"

"It's up to us," said Wharton. "We're not going to let that fat toad preach to us, anyway."

"He must be spoofing," said Peter. "I know that."

"I'm sorry to be misunderstood," said Bunter, "but I've got my duty to do. Are you going to eat that jelly, Nugent?"

"If you don't shut up—" breathed Peter furiously.

"My dear Bunter," remonstrated Alonzo mildly, "Nugent is our guest—!"

"I can't help that. War time ain't a time for politeness," said Bunter. "I object to waste in war time, especially in my own study. Nugent knows as well as I do that jellies oughtn't to be eaten in war time."

Frank Nugent pushed his plate away.

"Dutton!"

"Hallo!" said Tom Dutton, looking up.

"You'd better not scoff that cake!"

"Well, I can't help it," said Dutton, in surprise. "No good telling me you've got the toothache. I dare say it's caused by gormandising."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, be men!" said Bunter, giving Dutton up. "Now, you've eaten enough to keep you in health. Chuck it!"

Peter Todd rose to his feet, and inserted his thumb in Bunter's collar. He led him to the door.

"You may be dotty, or you may be spoofing," he said; "but in either case, I'm fed up with you. Out you go!" Bump!

Billy Bunter departed—on his neck, and the study door closed on him. But the guests in No. 7 Study were not on their feet now.

"Hallo! Get on with the feed!" said Peter.

There was a general shaking of heads.

"Thanks, I've finished!" said Nugent.

"Enough's as good as a feast," said Squiff. "We're not going to be outdone by that fat toad. We'll keep it up if he does."

"The keep-upfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

Peter snorted.

"Well, there's a good feed mucked up!" he growled. "I'll scalp that fat spoofer! I know he's only spoofing."

"I can't make it out," said Wharton. "But it's up to us. Short commons for all of us—at least, as long as Bunter sticks it out."

And the feed in No. 7 Study came to an abrupt conclusion.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Saving Their Bacon!

THE next morning, when the Remove turned out of bed at the clang of the rising-bell, they made a startling discovery.

Bunter's bed was empty.

It was not at all unusual for Harry Wharton & Co. to turn out before rising-bell; but it was extremely unusual for William George Bunter. But his bed was empty and his clothes were gone; so it was evident that Bunter had gone down.

"He's got up early to have a feed!" said Micky Desmond, with conviction.

"But what's he going to feed on?" asked Wharton. "The tuckshop won't be open for an hour yet."

"And he can't be gone down to the village," said Todd. "Besides, I know he's stony; and Bunter can't get tick—he's too well known!"

The Famous Five lost no time in getting downstairs; they were curious to see what had become of Bunter. The fat junior was discovered in the quadrangle. He blinked at the Co. rather sleepily.

"Hallo, you slackers!" was his greeting.

"Slackers!" howled Bob Cherry.

"Yes, slackers!" said Bunter. "Why don't you try early rising? It's good for the health. I don't believe in slacking in bed till rising-bell."

"That's a sudden change, isn't it?" said Wharton laughing.

"It's up to a fellow to lead a steady, self-denying sort of life in war time," said Bunter. "I've been thinking it out, you see. I promised to set you fellows a good example, and I'm doing it."

"You've been out for a feed somewhere," said Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Blessed if I know where he can have got it," said Bob. "But nothing else would make him get up early. I know he's spoofing."

"I dare say you'll do me justice in time," said Bunter loftily. "A fellow who's really patriotic is generally misunderstood at first. But I don't mind. I'm going to set you an example, as I promised. I hope you're going to be economical at breakfast this morning. No bacon in war time."

"Eh?"

"You know very well that bread-and-butter's good enough for anybody," said Bunter calmly. "Poor people don't get bacon in the morning, and it's simply disgusting for well-to-do people to have it, when poor people have to go without. Ain't we supposed to be standing shoulder to shoulder against the Huns—rich and poor alike? Well, how can you call it standing shoulder to shoulder if the rich go on guzzling as usual, while the poor have to do without things?"

"Oh, don't!" murmured Bob Cherry, in a feeble voice.

He was beginning to feel that Billy Bunter was too much for him.

Bunter's sentiments were undoubtedly first class, highly patriotic, and undeniable. It certainly was "up" to the whole population to share and share alike in war time. Such sentiments could not be found fault with; perhaps they were a little too good for this world, that was all. There was no fault to be found with the sentiments; but that those sentiments should be pro-

pounded by Billy Bunter, of all people, was simply astounding—almost unnerving.

"Let's see him miss his rasher, that's all!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"He would be rasher than usual, if he does!" remarked Bob Cherry, with a feeble attempt at a joke. "One thing's a cert—if Bunter cuts out the rasher, I'm going to do the same!"

"The samfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Singh. "But let us see him do it with our own eyesfulness."

When the breakfast-bell rang, and the juniors went in, Bunter was the cynosure of all eyes at the breakfast-table. It seemed impossible that he could have had already a feed that morning, and if he did not feed he was bound to be hungry, and if he was hungry how could he resist the succulent rasher? The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots, and Billy Bunter could never be anything but a glutton—of that the Removites were convinced. But—

Bunter stood up when Mr. Quelch sat down at the head of the table. The Remove hung on his words.

"If you please, sir—" began Bunter.

"Well, Bunter?"

"We don't want any bacon this morning, sir," said Bunter, speaking for the whole form. It was the first time the fat junior had ever been able to speak in the name of the Remove, and he enjoyed it.

"You do not want any bacon?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir."

"I am glad to see, Bunter, that you are apparently changing your habits," said the Remove-master, with a touch of sarcasm. "I have spoken to you several times for your greediness. I am glad to see this change."

"Thank you, sir!" said Bunter cheerfully. "Bring war-time, sir, we feel that we have no right to eat bacon in the morning."

Several slaughterous glares were turned upon the Owl from the hungry Removites, but he did not heed them.

Mr. Quelch looked at the juniors very curiously.

"This is very right and proper," he said, after a pause. "I am glad to see this spirit in my boys. But this kind of thing may be carried too far. Be temperate, but within reason."

"I guess I'm having bacon, sir!" said Fisher T. Fish. And Skinner and Snoop and Stott testified at once that they were having their usual rasher.

But the rest of the Remove declined.

They were not going to be outdone by Bunter. After the scene in the Close, when Bunter had been paraded as a prize pig, they simply could not fail to follow his lead in economising. It was up to them, and they had to admit it.

Bunter sat down with a grin of satisfaction.

He hardly touched the bread-and-butter that fell to him. He did not seem to care for it. The other juniors devoured it—they had healthy appetites, and they made an unusual inroad upon the "staff of life."

"You're not hungry, you fat spoofer," whispered Rake.

"Awfully," replied Bunter.

"Then, why ain't you eating?"

"Bread ought to be economised," explained Bunter. "Bread may rise in price in the winter. The only way of beating the wheat speculators is by eating less bread. I'm setting you an example—"

"Oh, cheese it!" growled Rake.

"You can do as you like, of course," sneered Bunter. "Some fellows have high principles, that's all."

The Removites had never associated Bunter in their minds with high principles. But it could not be denied that the Owl was as good as his word. He ate hardly anything, and most of the fellows, not to be outdone, did not ask for more. Some of them were still feeling hungry when they left the breakfast-table.

Bunter had left his porridge, which he usually guzzled

# ANSWERS

to the last spoonful. It seemed that the fat junior was prepared to go through the morning on a single slice of bread-and-butter.

Never had the Removites looked forward to dinner so much as they did that morning. If Bunter had proposed missing dinner again he would probably have been massacred on the spot.

Only one fellow got through the morning comfortably. That one was Billy Bunter. Perhaps his high principles sustained him; at all events, he showed no signs of distress.

But, knowing Bunter as they did, the Removites could not help feeling suspicious. Bunter was much more likely to be sustained by secret stuffing than by high principles. When the Remove came out of their Form-room, hungry as hunters, the Famous Five joined Bunter in the passage. Billy Bunter was making for the doorway when they joined him. He paused. The Famous Five did not often seek his society, and Bunter ought to have been flattered; but he did not look either flattered or pleased.

"You fellows going down to practice?" he asked casually.

"Not a bit of it. We're going to have a little stroll with you," said Bob Cherry affably.

"I'm not going for a stroll," said Bunter shortly. "I'm going to have a read, under the trees."

"We'll come and have a read under the trees, too."

"The fact is, I think of having a look at the old tower," said Bunter. "I'm rather interested in ruins."

"So are we!" said Nugent. "I'm simply nuts on ruins. Come on!"

Bunter did not come on.

It was so evident that the fat junior wished to be rid of their company that the Co. felt their suspicions strengthened. Not for untold gold would they have parted with Bunter at that moment.

"On second thoughts, I'm rather weak with so much fasting," remarked Bunter. "I'll sit down here for a bit."

"Good!" said Wharton, sitting down beside him. "We'll have a rest, too."

"I don't want to keep you fellows indoors."

"My dear chap, we're sticking to you," said Bob Cherry affectionately. "After the noble example you've set us, we admire you so much, you know! Tell us about national economy while we're having this pleasant little rest together."

Billy Bunter granted; he was silent on the subject of national economy. The chums of the Remove grinned at one another, and sat tight. They were convinced by this time that Billy Bunter desired to get away by himself for a surreptitious feed. After that he would have found it quite easy to set an example of economy at dinner-time. But they did not intend to let him get away by himself.

They were prepared to sit on the bench in the passage as long as Bunter sat there, and to move when Bunter moved. So they sat, and watched Bunter's

face, and grinned cheerfully as the fat face grew longer and longer.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Very Mysterious!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter broke the silence at last, after about a quarter of an hour. He had been growing very restive.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry affably.

"Haden't you better get out for a bit? I don't want to keep you indoors."

"Don't mench, old chap; we're enjoying your society."

"Look here," snapped Bunter, "what's the little game? If you want me to speak plainly, I don't want your company. There!"

"What I like about Bunter," said Bob, "is his good manners. Chesterfield was a booby to that chap. Sir Charles Grandison was not in it with him. Go on, Bunter! Say some more nice things."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, are you going to let me alone?" growled Bunter.

"Oh, no?"

"I've got some things to think out," said Bunter. "I can't think with you silly asses grinning at me! Look here, you keep to yourselves. I'm rather particular about what chaps I chum with. Go and eat-cake!"

And Bunter rose, and rolled out of the School House. Five smiling juniors sauntered on his track. Billy Bunter halted in the Close, and his eyes gleamed through his spectacles.

"What are you beasts following me for?" he demanded. "You're such an attractive chap," explained Bob. "It's like a magnet, you know; there's no resisting you."

"I'm jolly well not going to be followed!" howled Bunter.

"The followfulness is going to be terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter!"

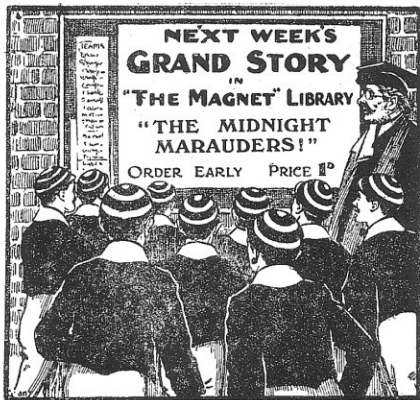
Bunter rolled away again, and five inseparable comrades accompanied him. They were sticking to Bunter like leeches.

The Owl of the Remove walked the length of the Close, and walked back again. He waddled away through the cloisters, and through the cloisters went the Famous Five.

He disappeared into the old tower, and into the tower they pursued him. He snorted furiously, and rolled out again, still with the Five on his track.

It was getting near dinner-time now, and Bunter realised that he was not to be left unwatched a moment before the bell rang. Then it would be seen whether his abstemiousness in food continued.

The fat junior broke into a sudden run, and disappeared at top speed through the cloisters. But, unusual as it was to see Bunter exert himself as a sprinter, the Famous Five were taken by surprise only for a moment.







"Bunter!" thundered the Remove-master. "Oh! Ah! Grooh!" gasped Bunter. "What are you doing here?" "Here, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I—I—I—I've been—been sleeping, sir. On the floor. I—I just woke up! Oh!" (See Chapter 15.)

"After him!" shouted Bob Cherry.

After him they went tearing.

In half a minute Bunter was overtaken; and the Famous Five kept pace with him.

Bunter halted, and glared at them, his very glasses gleaming with wrath.

"You rotters—"

"Keep it up," said Nugent encouragingly. "We'll race you right round the Close, if you like, Bunter."

"Beasts!"

"Like to take my arm, Bunter, as we're strolling together till dinner-time," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter, with a furious face, tramped off to the School House. Five grinning juniors, in a row, walked after him.

The Owl of the Remove went in, and ascended the THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

stairs. He dodged into the lower box-room, slammed the door, and the key turned in the lock.

"Cornered!" grinned Bob.

There was a sound of a window opening.

"Buck up!" exclaimed Wharton. "He's getting out by the window."

The juniors rushed back along the passage and down the stairs. They dashed out of the School House, and tore round.

But they had a good distance to go. When they reached the back of the house, they saw the box-room window open above them. But Bunter was not in sight. The Owl had lost no time. He had vanished.

"Dished, by Jove!" said Wharton.

He climbed on the outhouse below the window, and looked on the flat leads, to make sure that Bunter was not there. He was not there! Wharton dropped to the ground again.

"He's gone!"

"Done us in the eye!" said Nugent.

"The fat spoofer! He's gorging at this very minute!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Call the fellows together and hunt for him."

The Famous Five did not lose a second. In two or three minutes half the Remove were looking for Bunter, and making excited inquiries after him. It was discovered that Temple of the Fourth had seen him pass the tuckshop; and to the tuckshop the searchers rushed. But Mrs. Mimble declared that he had not been in. Round the little shop the juniors went, searching, and they looked at all the windows, and into the branches of the big tree that grew beside the building. But the windows were all closed, and the tree was untenanted. Bunter was not to be seen.

"May have dodged through the cloisters," said Bob Cherry. "Scatter, and look for the beast!"

The dinner-bell rang while the Removites were still searching for Bunter. They trooped in to dinner.

Bunter came in a few minutes late, and Mr. Quelch gave him a severe look. Mr. Quelch was very keen on punctuality.

"Did you not hear the bell, Bunter?" he snapped.

"No, sir," said Bunter. "I'm very sorry to be late, sir. I've been studying."

"Oh!" said the Remove master, and he said no more. He was surprised to hear that Bunter had been studying. But Bunter was full of surprises of late.

Billy Bunter toyed with his dinner. Far from requesting a second or third helping, as usual, he did not even finish the first. His Form-fellows gave him grim looks. They had no doubt whatever that he had been feeding, in the short space of time during which he had escaped their eyes.

After dinner, the fat junior was surrounded in the passage.

"Now, why did you dodge us?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Your face worried me," replied Bunter calmly.

There was a chuckle from some of the Remove.

"That won't do," said Vernon-Smith. "It may be true enough—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Smithy, you silly ass—" began Bob.

"But it won't do," said the Bounder. "You've been feeding."

"I decline to answer that, Vernon-Smith. My principles—"

"Blow your principles!" said the Bounder. "Why did you dodge out of sight, if you weren't feeding?"

"Because I decline to be watched, as if I wasn't a fellow of my word," said Bunter loftily. "I regard these suspicious chaps with contempt!"

"Where did you hide yourself?" demanded Peter Todd. "I didn't hide myself. I've been in the tower, mugging up Latin."

"We looked in the tower."

"Yes; I saw you coming, and hid while you were there," said Bunter calmly. "I thought it was like your cheek to be hunting for me, as if I couldn't be trusted. As for feeding, you know I'm stony."

"Yes, that's true enough," said Peter Todd, greatly puzzled. "If he's been gorging, where did he get the tuck from?"

"I give that up," said Bob Cherry. "But I jolly well know he dodged us to get a feed somewhere, somehow."

"I suppose any excuse is better than none," said Bunter contemptuously. "You want an excuse for giving up economy in food. I'm really surprised at you, Cherry. You might be honest about it."

"Why, you—you—" stammered Bob.

"I don't expect you to be as high-principled as I am. I knew it was only gas all the time," said Bunter. "I can't help despising you a little. But I hope you will do the decent thing in the long run, and follow my example."

Bob Cherry stood petrified. Bunter walked away, leaving the Removites quite at a loss. If he had been feeding, how could he have obtained food without money, and there was no doubt that he was "stony." There was no news of a robbery in the kitchen, and Mrs. Mimble had not served him. Bunter had many resources when

he wanted a feed, but he could not make something out of nothing. Had he simply dodged the Removites, after all, from a sense of offended dignity at being distrusted?

Bob Cherry rubbed his nose hard.

"I give it up!" he announced. "If Bunter's genuine, there's more good in him than I ever suspected, and—I and I'm sorry I've doubted him. And it does begin to look as if he's genuine."

"Wonders will never cease!" said Squiff. "Let's see how long he keeps it up."

At tea-time that day Bunter was still keeping it up. He ate hardly anything in No. 7 Study; and Peter and Alonzo and Tom Dutton, under the rebuking glance of the fat junior, ate hardly anything, too. After tea Bolsover major and Skinner and Snoop seized Bunter in the passage, and went through his pockets, on the suspicion that he had a secret supply of cash. But not a single coin was discovered. Billy Bunter endured that suspicious search with manly fortitude.

"I hope you're satisfied now," he said when the searchers had finished.

"Blessed if I can make it out!" said Bolsover. "You can't get grub without money, and you've got no money."

"It's a matter of principle!"

"Oh, rate!"

The next day was Sunday, and that day Bunter was still "keeping it up." Even Peter Todd had to admit at last that it was genuine. And as Bunter was still abstemious, the rest of the Remove felt that they could do no less than follow his example. They had "ragged" Bunter for gluttony, and now that he set an example of extreme moderation in diet, for very shame's sake they could not let themselves be outdone.

But it was a painful experience, and by Monday the Removites were heartily wishing that the words "national economy" had never been heard at Greyfriars. But most of them kept it up, determined that Bunter should not outdo them. If that fat and gluttonous youth could exercise self-denial, they could, and they did. But it was a far from enjoyable process.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Stickers!

"FEELING fit—what?"

Bob Cherry asked Bunter that question on Wednesday morning as the Remove were going to their Form-room.

Bob himself was feeling far from fit. Short commons did not agree with him. He was not greedy, but he liked enough to eat. And for nearly a week now he had about half enough for a healthy, growing youth.

He was looking, in fact, quite pale, almost wan. So were the other fellows who were keeping it up.

But they would not give in. What Bunter could do they could do. Though, as Peter Todd complained, it wasn't really fair, as they hadn't Bunter's reserves of fat to fall back upon.

The curious circumstance was that Bunter looked as fat and ruddy as ever, and showed no signs of weakness or of growing thinner. If anything, he was fatter and shinier than ever.

He seemed to thrive on short commons. But the other fellows didn't, and any of them would have been willing to stand Bunter the feast of his life if he would only have "chucked" it.

Until Bunter gave in they simply couldn't give in. It was not only the fact that Bunter would have cackled—they could have stood his cackle—but he would have been in the right; they had ragged him into self-denial, and now the laws of cricket, so to speak, required that they should not fall short of his example. If they had failed, if they had funk'd that test of endurance, they would have deserved Bunter's contempt. And to be despised by Bunter was a little too much. They would have approached the brink of starvation first.

There had been some backsliders already. Several of the fellows had announced that they weren't going to stand it any longer, and they didn't. Bolsover major was the first, and Bulstrode followed, and Hazeldene.

After a long interval Wibley and Ogilvy and Micky Desmond caved in. They excused themselves on the ground of a moral conviction that Bunter was indulging in hidden feeds. But no proof of those hidden feeds could be adduced, and Bunter made no secret of his contempt for their slacking.

Harry Wharton & Co. would hardly have given in to save their lives. Vernon-Smith and Squiff, Linley and Rake, Kippas and Desmond, Tom Brown and Russell, and Peter Todd and Dutton, and half a dozen more fellows, were still holding out grimly.

They were suffering, but they stood it with fortitude. They were in hopes of seeing Bunter languish and grow pale.

But the exasperating Owl did not languish, and he showed no sign of pallor. He thrived.

Bob Cherry asked Bunter how he was feeling that morning, not from any concern whatever for the state of Bunter's health. He wanted to detect a sign of weakness.

But the Owl of the Remove only grinned a fat grin. "Fit as a fiddle!" was his reply. And he followed that reassuring reply with a fat chuckle.

Bob Cherry suppressed a groan, and went into the Form-room.

That morning Mr. Quelch did not begin lessons immediately. He looked somewhat severely at the Remove, his glance dwelling upon several almost haggard faces.

"My boys," said Mr. Quelch seriously, "I have observed that you have been stinting yourselves in food. Although your motives are quite praiseworthy, I cannot allow this to go on to the extent of injuring your health. I request you to make it a point to take sufficient nourishment."

The Remove received that admonition in silence.

Lessons dragged through, and the Lower Fourth were dismissed at last. There was a discussion in the passage on the subject of Mr. Quelch's request, when the Form-master was gone. A request from a Form-master amounted to much the same thing as a command.

"Can't keep it up any longer," said the Bouncer. "I'm fed up, anyway. I dare say Bunter will be glad to get out of it."

Bunter snorted disdainfully. "I'm keeping it up!" he declared. "You heard what Quelch said?" growled Rake. "That makes no difference. He can't make us eat. We've got our duty to do," said Bunter firmly. "Of course, I don't really expect you fellows to keep it up as long as I do. I've got high principles."

"Go and boil 'em!" said the Bouncer. "I'm going to have a good dinner to-day!"

"Same here!" said Russell. The Famous Five were in a state of hesitation. The remainder of the fasters looked to them for guidance; their lead would be followed. Quelch's admonition weighed with them; so also did the cravings of the inner man.

Bunter surveyed them with a tremendous sneer.

"Chuckling it?" he jeered. "Well, I might have expected that. You ragged me for eating too much, as you put it—not that I ever ate too much, and it was my own grub, anyway. You marched me round the quad with a placard on my chest, and the whole school howling. Now I've set you an example, and you haven't the pluck to follow it. Yah!"

"Quelch—" began Nugent.

"Any excuse is better than none, I suppose!" jeered Bunter. "I'm not going to feed because of Quelch. I'm going to keep it up, and I'll jolly well show you fellows up if you give in! Yah! Funks!"

Bob Cherry clenched his hands, and unclenched them again. After all, Bunter was right. It was really their challenge that he had taken up. They had no right to give in unless he did.

"We're getting into a rotten state!" said Johnny Bull uneasily. "Look here, Bunter, don't you feel rotten?"

"A bit weak, perhaps," said Bunter. "Rather faint, perhaps. But I've got pluck!"

"There's nothing the matter with our pluck, you fat beast!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Then stick it out, the same as I'm doing!" grinned Bunter.

"You rotter!" groaned Bob Cherry. "You only THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

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thought of this wheeze to get even with us for showing you up the other day!"

Bunter chuckled.

"P'raps you're sorry now you were so jolly clever!" he remarked. "P'raps you wish you had let me alone? P'raps you'll mind your own business next time. But chuck up the short commons; I don't care. It'll show you're a set of slackers and gluttons and humbugs! You talk to me about gluttony, and you can't keep away from the tuck when I do. I don't grumble!"

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"I'm keeping it up," he said. "I'm holding out as long as that fat bouncer does!"

"Same here!" mumbled Squiff. "Australia never gives in!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

"Shut up, you toad!" shouted his victims wrathfully.

Bunter didn't shut up; he waddled away, still cackling. The unhappy juniors looked at one another, and went out disconsolately into the quad. Short commons were telling on them; there was no doubt about that. How was it that they did not tell on Bunter? Yet they knew—they had made it a point to know—that the fat junior had not received a single remittance since he had started the "wheeze," excepting his weekly pocket-money, and that he had ostentatiously expended upon repairs for his bicycle, so that there should be no mistake about it. He had assuredly purchased nothing in the way of tuck for a week, yet he looked as fat and sleek as ever. And his victims were feeling worse every day.

Doubtless, as Bunter had remarked, they did regret a little that ragging they had bestowed on the glutton of the Remove. They were being severely punished for it. Bunter was more than getting his own back. But who would have dreamed that the Owl of the Remove could have turned over a new leaf in this remarkable way? "Who'd have thought it?"—as Bob Cherry asked dolorously.

There were two of three more seeders that day from the ranks of the "stickers." But the Famous Five held out grimly, and so did Todd and Tom Brown and Squiff. The eight were determined not to give in.

Bunter had beaten the rest of the Remove, but they were resolved that he should not beat them. But they were looking forward to the following days in a very dispirited way.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

Light at Last!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Something's up!"

Something was certainly up.

Mrs. Mimble had crossed the quad from the tuckshop, with a very red and hurried face. She went to the Head's study, and a few minutes later she reappeared, and Dr. Locke came with her. The Head's face was very severe. The juniors watched the reverend gentleman cross the quadrangle with Mrs. Mimble, and they went into the school shop together.

Something evidently was "up."

It was ten minutes or more before the Head came out of the shop, and he was frowning in a manner which Hurree Singh justly described as terrific.

"What the deuce is the matter?" said Bob Cherry, in wonder.

"Let's go and ask Mrs. Mimble!" suggested Squiff.

Half a dozen juniors hurried to the tuckshop. Mrs. Mimble came out of her little parlour, very flurried and excited.

"Anything the matter, ma'am?" asked Bob.

"Oh, Master Cherry!"

"Place isn't on fire, I suppose?"

"Oh, no! Some wicked boy—some wicked, wicked boy—Oh, dear!"

"Somebody been playing tricks?" said Johnny Bull.

"Tell us his name, Mrs. Mimble, and we'll scalp him for you!"

"I've been robbed, Master Bull!"

"Robbed!" ejaculated the juniors in surprised chorus.

"Yes. It is too bad! It will be pounds and pounds—"

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perhaps six or seven pounds!" said Mrs. Mimble, almost in tears.

"Not the till, surely?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh, no, Master Wharton; it is not money! My stores have been robbed!"

"Stores!"

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged quick looks. They thought of Bunter at once. Was this the explanation of the Owl's fasting?

"Your stores, ma'am?" said Nugent. "Somebody has been raiding your stores?"

"Yes, Master Nugent; and pounds and pounds' worth has been taken. I did not know that anyone could get into the store-room; but he must have got in by the window, and then by the trapdoor into the store-room. The room above is never used, you see, and I never suspected it till I went over the stores this morning. It was very, very wicked!"

"What sort of things are gone?" asked Squiff.

"Tins of sardines and pineapple, and bottles of ginger-beer and cakes and preserved fruits—all kinds of things. Some very wicked boy! But Dr. Locke will see that it is all paid for," said Mrs. Mimble. "He will find out who it was."

"How long has it been going on, do you think?" asked Harry Wharton. "I suppose all the lot wasn't taken at once?"

"Oh, no; there was more than one boy could carry at once—much more. Perhaps for a whole week. It was Monday evening when I went over the stores last time."

Peter Todd looked in at the door.

"Come on, you chaps. School's called into Big Hall for something or other. Seems to be something up."

"There is—there are!" grinned Bob Cherry. "I fancy our champion faster is going to get it now where the chicken got the chopper!"

Billy Bunter hurried up to the juniors as they quitted the tuckshop. His fat face was quite pale and very alarmed.

"I say, you fellows, what's up?"

"The game!" chuckled Bob.

"What!"

"The game's up!" explained Bob.

"I—I mean, what—what has Mrs. Mimble been saying? What did she go and see the Head for?" asked Bunter anxiously. "Wha-a-at is the school called up for?"

"To search for the giddy criminal."

"Wha-a-at criminal?"

"You'll soon see. I hope your conscience is quite easy!" grinned Bob.

"M-m-mum-my conscience is all right!" stammered Bunter. "I—I— Of course, I don't know anything about it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If Mrs. Mimble says she has missed anything out of her store-room, I can only say that she's probably making a mistake."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

Bunter had evidently guessed what was "up." A clearer proof of guilt could hardly have been required.

"You see, women are very careless in business," said Bunter. "Mrs. Mimble very likely doesn't know just how many things she had in the store-room. She might have a dozen tins of sardines, more or less, without knowing it, or a dozen bottles of ginger-beer, you know. She might—"

"She might," said Wharton, "and she mightn't! But, of course, a chap with high principles like yours, Bunter, is quite safe."

"Ye-e-es, of course; but—but a mistake might be made," said Bunter uneasily. "Of course, I don't know anything about it. I couldn't get into the window from the tree, you know. You fellows know that I can't climb trees."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Besides, even if I did, how should I know there was a trapdoor into the store-room?" argued Bunter. "I hadn't the faintest idea."

"Why, you fat villain," roared Peter Todd, "you've been robbing Mrs. Mimble!"

"Oh, really, Toddy!"

"You haven't been fasting at all!" shrieked Peter.

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"I—I—I—"

"Spoofing us all the time, by Jove! And we've been going on short commons, while you've been fattening on Mrs. Mimble's stores! Why, I—I— You—"

Words failed the indignant Peter. He gasped.

"I don't know anything about it!" shrieked Bunter. "Then how did you know there was a trapdoor into the store-room?" demanded Wharton.

"I didn't know."

"But you've just mentioned it!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"I didn't!"

"What!"

"I didn't mention anything of the sort. I may have spoken in a casual way about trapdoors—"

"Why, you fat duffer—"

"Buck up!" said Nugent. "We shall be late. The Head can hear Bunter's whoppers. He'll be interested to hear him talk in a casual way about trapdoors!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors hurried to the School House, and joined the stream of fellows making their way into Big Hall. Only the Lower School was being assembled. The seniors of the Fifth and Sixth were regarded as being above suspicion.

Most of the fellows had no idea of what was wanted. Temple of the Fourth hazarded the conjecture that some of the Remove were going to be flogged, and stated his opinion that it was high time. This was the cause of Cecil Temple entering Big Hall with his handkerchief pressed to his nose.

The Fourth, the Remove, the Third, and the Second gathered in Big Hall, and the Head came in by the upper door. The Head was wearing a portentous frown. The raiding of Mrs. Mimble's store-room had angered him deeply. Probably the Head did not regard it as a "raid" in the schoolboy sense. He took a more serious view of the matter.

There was a hush, and Billy Bunter squeezed himself as much out of view as possible behind the burly form of Bolsover major. He was particularly anxious not to catch Dr. Locke's eye.

"Boys"—the Head's voice was very penetrating, and the juniors hung on his words—"boys, it has come to my knowledge—Mrs. Mimble has reported to me—that a series of thefts has been perpetrated in her establishment."

Thefts!

It was a very unpleasant word—much more unpleasant than "raids." Billy Bunter was observed to turn almost yellow.

"Some person," went on the Head grimly, "has discovered that, by means of a trapdoor in the disused room above the store-room behind Mrs. Mimble's shop, it is possible to obtain entrance to the store-room. This person, at present unknown, has entered the store-room from time to time and abstracted property belonging to Mrs. Mimble."

"Oh!"

"Traces have been discovered in the lumber-room above—empty tins and bottles and so forth—which show conclusively that the thief entered and left by that way, and sometimes stopped there to devour part of his plunder."

"My hat!" murmured Peter Todd.

"Whoever has been guilty of this heinous conduct is now called upon to come forward and admit his guilt," said the Head.

Dead silence.

"Mrs. Mimble will calculate the value of the goods taken, and the bill will be sent to the culprit's parents. It must be paid. The culprit himself will be flogged. Indeed, I have not yet decided whether I shall expel him from the school."

Bunter's complexion was nearly green by this time.

"What has been done was stealing, pure and simple," said the Head. "Perhaps the boy in question did not fully realise that such was the case, and did not fully understand that he was a thief. I shall use my own judgment in dealing with him, and may perhaps be able to allow him to escape with a flogging—a very severe flogging. I now call upon that boy to come forward."

In spite of the seriousness of the situation, some of

the juniors could not help grinning. If the Head expected a fellow to come forward to take a very severe flogging, and perhaps the "sack," he was likely to be disappointed.

There was a long pause.  
 "I am waiting," said the Head grimly.  
 "The waitfulness will be terrific, in my esteemed opinion," murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.  
 Another long pause. Dr. Locke's face hardened.  
 "Very well. The culprit does not choose to confess. Investigation will be made. Dismiss!"  
 The juniors streamed out of Big Hall.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER. The Benefit of the Doubt!

**T**HE fat spoofer!"  
 "The deceitful rotter!"  
 "Scrag him!"  
 "Scalp him!"  
 "Lynch him!"

The Remove were furious. Not a fellow in the Form had the slightest doubt as to the identity of the culprit. Billy, Bunter's astounding abstemiousness was fully accounted for now.

He had not been fasting at all. While he was setting his noble example, while he was keeping the rest of the Remove on short commons for very shame's sake, he had been spoofing all the time. Instead of missing meals and cutting down these he had, he had been feeding even more extensively than usual—in secret.

He had been more or less suspected all along, but the fact that he was "stony," that he received no hampers and no remittances, and had not been served at the tuck-shop had disarmed suspicion at last. Not one of the juniors had suspected that he was secretly raiding the shop store-room; no one but Bunter knew of the existence of the trapdoor in the lumber-room. Bunter had evidently been investigating there, and had made the discovery, and used it for his own purpose. That tremendous supply of tuck the juniors had seen him with in the box-room a week before—they knew where it came

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from now. Since then he had not been seen with another supply. But the explanation was simple—he had devoured his hidden and huge feeds in the empty room over the store-room. It was easy enough for him to display a fair appetite at dinner, after an unlimited raid upon Mrs. Mumble's stores.

It was not only the fact that he had robbed Mrs. Mumble, and that he had spoofed them all, that exasperated the Removes. It was his cool cheek in pretending to set an example of abstemiousness—the lofty attitude he had adopted towards fellows who made hearty meals—his assumption of contempt and disdain for the backsliders.

And worst of all was the fact that the juniors had been on short commons, that they had been in a more or less famished condition for a week, because they would not fall short of Bunter's example. His example! And he had been feeding ad lib. all the time.

No wonder the greatly-wronged and indignant juniors felt inclined to scrag, lynch, and scalp the "spoofer."

Bunter had disappeared. Probably he was anxious not to meet his Form-fellows just then. He had fled the moment he was outside Big Hall.

There was a search for him immediately. Now that the discovery had been made, it was certain that he could not be hidden in Mrs. Mumble's store-room—where undoubtedly he had been hidden on previous occasions when the suspicious Removes had looked for him.

"Where is he?" roared Bolsover major. Bolsover had "economised" for a whole day himself. He had not suffered like the "stickers," who had stood it out to the end, but he was furious, all the same.

"Oh, where, and, oh, where can he be?" sang Bob Cherry.

"The wherefulness is terrific," grinned Hurree Singh. "Let us searchfully scout for the esteemed spoofer."

"I'll scalp him!" roared Bolsover.  
 "I'll scrag him!" howled the Bouncer.

In all directions the Removes scattered, looking for Bunter. Never had William George been in such request.

A yell from the Cloisters announced that he had been discovered, and the angry Removes gathered there. Bunter was hiding behind a stone pillar in the shadiest depths of the Cloisters; but as he was wider than the pillar, it had not been difficult to spot him. Peter Todd's grasp dragged him out into the open, yelling. The Removes swarmed round him, raging.

"Collar him! Scrag him! Duck him! Bump him!"

"Take him to the Head!" yelled Snoop.

"Show the fat beast up," said Skinner.

"Come on! Yauk him along to the Head!" said Bolsover major.

"Leggo!" shrieked Bunter. "Leggo! I don't know anything about it. I'm not going to the Head. Yew-ow-ow!"

"Hold on," said Harry Wharton quietly. "We can't take him to the Head."

"I'm jolly well going to!" shouted Bolsover.

"You're jolly well not!"

"Look here—"

"We can't sneak about the fat beast, and that would be sneaking," said Harry. "Besides, it isn't proved yet."

"It's plain enough," growled Bolsover.

"I guess it's a cinch," remarked Fisher T. Fish. "and I kinder reckon I wasn't taken in like you galeots. Jever get left? He, he, he!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Let the rotter speak up for himself," said Bob Cherry.

"Give every dog a chance. Now, you fat villain, what have you got to say? You robbed Mrs. Mumble!"

"I didn't!" roared Bunter. "This is a conspiracy against me."

"What-a-at?"

"It's because you're down on me because of my high principles," said Bunter.

"High principles! Oh, crumbs!"

"It's because I've set you an example, and you haven't the pluck to follow it," said Bunter firmly. "You want an excuse for chucking up economy, that's all it is. As for the things missing from Mrs. Mumble's store-room, I

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don't know anything about them. Perhaps it was Wharton."

"What!" yelled Wharton.

"I—I didn't see you there, Harry, old chap. I—I didn't mean that. I meant to say, perhaps it was Wibley."

"Me!" shrieked Wibley.

"N-n-nunno, not you, Wib, old man! I really meant to say Rake."

"You meant to say Rake, did you?" roared the owner of that name. Billy Bunter blinked round him desperately.

"Nunno, I—I didn't see you, Rakey—I mean, I didn't mean you! My idea is that it was one of the Fourth Form fellows."

"Which one?"

"Oh, really, Toddy, how can I tell? Temple, perhaps, or Dabney. Or it might have been Coker of the Fifth. The Head never asked the Fifth. I don't think that's fair. On second thoughts, I don't believe it was a junior at all. One of the Sixth, perhaps."

"It was you, you fat spoofer!"

"You know it was you, and we know it!" howled Johnny Bull.

"If you fellows can't take my word, I decline to discuss the matter any further," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "What I want is fair play. You've got no proof."

"You've as good as admitted it!" shouted Bob.

"That was a misunderstanding. Besides, what's as good as admitted isn't evidence," said Bunter. "I may have made a remark about a trapdoor or I may not. Upon the whole, I think it was most likely Fishy who robbed Mrs. Mumble."

"Me!" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish. "Why, you mug-wump—"

"Yes, you," said Bunter. "It's very likely, and there's plenty of evidence."

"Why, you—you—!" stuttered Fish.

"What evidence is there?" demanded Peter Todd.

"Circumstantial evidence," said Bunter triumphantly. "Fishy has told us that his pater corners wheat, and raises the price of bread to make profits. Well, if his pater is dishonest, very likely Fish is dishonest, too. Like father, like son, you know. That's circumstantial evidence."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to cackle at. I regard Fishy as the guilty person," said Bunter. "I think Fishy ought to be shown up. Take him to the Head."

"Why, you—you—you lapsed jay!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "You—you—you—why, there ain't a word for you."

"And look here, I'm not going to have any ragging," said Bunter. "I shall appeal to Mr. Quelch. You've no right to jump to conclusions like this. Every person is innocent till he's proved guilty. That's good law, isn't it, Toddy?"

Toddy had to admit that it was.

"It's as good as proved," said Wharton slowly. "But I suppose there's a bare chance that Bunter is telling the truth; just the decimal fraction of a chance. Give him the benefit of the doubt."

"There isn't any doubt!" howled Bolsover.

"We shall soon see," grinned Bob Cherry. "Whoever has been robbing the store-room won't be able to rob it any more. We'll see whether Bunter keeps up his fasting."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter's jaw dropped.

"Good egg!" said Bolsover, chuckling. "We'll see. And if he doesn't—"

"If he doesn't, he's guilty," said Wharton, laughing. "That's making the punishment fit the crime. Short commons for you, Bunter."

"There's the dinner-bell," said Squiff. "Come on, Bunter! Come on, and let us see you fast as usual!"

The Removites streamed away towards the School House for dinner, and Bunter went with them, and his fat face was a study.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Making the Punishment Fit the Crime!

A.L. eyes were upon Billy Bunter at the dinner-table.

It was an excellent dinner of boiled mutton and succulent vegetables. The scent alone was delightful to hungry schoolboys. Fasting was a thing of the past for the Remove, the discovery of the spoofing had put an end to that. Even the "stickers" intended to make a good dinner, their first for a week.

But Billy Bunter was called upon to continue his noble example. If he had not been deceiving the Remove, there was no reason why he should give up his abstinence. If he had not been feeding secretly, he could fast that day quite as well as the previous day. And that day, certainly, he had not been feeding secretly before dinner. If he fed now, it was the clearest possible proof that his noble example had been humbug from beginning to end.

Bunter realised that, and his face was woebegone. He was hungry—ravenously hungry. His eyes dwelt upon his well-filled plate almost with anguish. The other fellows were all eating heartily. Bunter took up his knife and fork, but the gleaming eyes around him made him put them down again. He almost groaned aloud.

Eating his dinner was a confession of guilt. Then he knew what to expect from the Removites. He had been given the benefit of the doubt, faint as the doubt was. To keep up appearances he had to content himself with the usual small morsel. And he was feeling inclined to bolt three helpings.

He began to eat, slowly and nervously.

"That's enough," whispered Peter Todd, when he had consumed one fragment of meat, a potato, and a dumpling. "That's more than usual, Bunter."

"I—I say, Toddy, I—I feel extra hungry to-day," moaned Bunter.

"I dare say you do," grinned Peter. "You haven't been in Mrs. Mumble's store-room."

"It—it isn't that! But—but—"

"Quelch's got an eye on you, Bunter," whispered Bob Cherry. "I fancy Quelch smells a rat."

"Oh, dear!"

Billy Bunter put down his knife and fork again, hurriedly. Mr. Quelch had been very much struck by Bunter's moderation in diet, in public, for the past week. If the accustomed "gorging" started again immediately it became impossible to raid the store-room any further, it was probable enough that the Form-master's suspicions would be aroused.

Quite possibly they were aroused already. Bunter turned quite cold at the thought.

He did not eat any more. With bitter anguish he watched the dinner taken away, and when the juniors were dismissed he left the dining-room almost as hungry as when he had entered it. The Removites came out grinning. They were satisfied with a full meal, which they had thoroughly enjoyed, especially the "stickers." They had no doubt of Bunter's guilt; but this method of punishing him appealed to their sense of humour.

Bunter's face was long in the Form-room that afternoon. He was famished. He was experiencing the same sufferings as the juniors he had spoofed into semi-starving themselves. And he did not like it. More than once he thought that Mr. Quelch's eye turned on him very keenly, and the mere idea gave him cold shivers. The investigation the Head had promised had not, so far, revealed anything; the culprit remained unknown, except to the Remove. But the matter was not likely to rest. Mrs. Mumble had produced a bill for six pounds, and somebody had to settle it. That was a treat in store for the father of the delinquent, when he was discovered. Perhaps Bunter thought of the probable effect of that little bill upon Bunter senior. Certainly, he was looking far from happy that afternoon.

After the Remove were dismissed, Bunter was discovered making almost frantic efforts to borrow cash in the Remove. But there were no lenders. Lord Mauleverer had been threatened with instant scragging if he lent



Bunter so much as a sixpence, and no one else was likely to lend him anything. In vain Bunter assured Removite after Removite that a certain postal-order was sure to arrive that very evening; in vain he asserted that he wanted a half-crown, a bob, or a tanner, as the case might be, simply to get some solution for his bike, or some oil for his bike-lamp, or to get his watch mended. The Removites were not taking any. That day the Owl was to have no supplies.

In desperation Bunter tried the Fourth, with the happy result of being kicked out of Temple's study, and slung out of Wilkinson's. Then he gave it up. But at tea-time he was prompt in No. 7 in the Remove.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton and Alonzo came in to tea, and Bunter's eyes glistened as he noted that Peter brought a parcel in. His fat face brightened up wonderfully when Peter turned out sausages and ham, and proceeded to fry the sausages. The four juniors gathered round the table for tea, and Bunter prepared to take the lion's share, in his well-known way of old.

"Hands off!" rapped out Peter.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Todd, you're not going to be mean. I—I'd have let you have that honey the other day, you know, if—if—"

"I'm not going to be mean," said Peter.

"Oh, good!"

"I'm going to be economical."

"Oh!"

"You're going to have half a sausage and a dry crust, same as before," said Peter calmly. "That's enough to keep a chap in health, my pippin, as you've pointed out to me several times."

"Oh, dear!"

"My dear Bunter, you have surely not forgotten," remarked Alonzo. "You even remarked that you felt better for your short commons."

"I—I say, Peter, I'm extra hungry—just for once, you know—"

"Not once—nunce!" said Peter cheerfully. "Don't you know that a fellow who eats a whole sausage in war-time is helping the enemy? Don't you know that if you have more than one slice of bread you're helping the price to go up, and placing the nation at the mercy of the speculators and swindlers? You've told us so often enough, dear boy. There's your whack."

Bunter's "whack," a moderate half of a sausage and a slice of bread and butter, disappeared as if by magic.

"I'm hungry, Peter, old chap," he said pathetically.

"Go hon!"

"The—the fact is, I—I was going to give up fasting anyway to-day. I—I've kept it up long enough for—for patriotic reasons."

"You haven't started till to-day, you fat swindler," said Peter grimly. "But you're starting to-day, no mistake about that. Let those sausages alone!" he roared.

"I—I was only—"

"Outside!" said Peter. "Gimme a stump, Alonzo!"

Billy Bunter got outside without waiting for the stump. In the passage he groaned deeply. He had never realised before what it meant to be really hungry. Perhaps he felt a little remorse for the sufferings he had inflicted upon the juniors who had followed his "example."

That evening Bunter was a picture of misery. Those of the fellows who wanted supper were allowed bread and cheese. But there was no bread and cheese for Bunter. At supper-time the Famous Five descended on him, and walked him into No. 1 Study. Bunter went hopefully, and felt still more hopeful when biscuits and roast chestnuts were produced.

But there was none for Bunter. The Famous Five proceeded to eat biscuits and chestnuts, and Bunter blinked at them speechlessly for some moments.

"Look here! What have you brought me here for?" he howled at last.

"To look on," explained Bob Cherry. "We want you to see what a frugal supper we're making; saving the cheese, you know."

Bunter made a rush for the door. Bob Cherry locked it and took out the key.

"Lemme out, you beast!" roared Bunter. "I shall be late for supper."

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NEXT MONDAY—**"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"**

EVERY  
MONDAY

The "Magnet"  
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ONE  
PENNY.

"Supper?" chuckled Johnny Bull. "You don't want any supper, an economical and fasting chap like you! What about a noble example?"

"Lemme out! I—I want to speak to Toddy."

"Not till bedtime!" grinned Nugent.

"I'll yell for Quelchey!" said Bunter desperately.

"Good!" said Bob Cherry, picking up a cricket stump.

"And I'll give you something to yell for! Go ahead! I'll begin when you do."

But Bunter did not begin.

Not till half-past nine was the door unlocked, and then the Famous Five escorted Billy Bunter to the Remove dormitory. The fat junior sank down on his bed, and groaned. His groan was received with heartless merriment by the Removites. The spoofer's punishment was, as Bob remarked, the best joke of the term. It was likely to be a very, very long time before Bunter set the Remove an example again.

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter feebly, "have—have you got any toffee about you?"

"I have," said Skinner.

"Give me some, old chap!"

"You own up that you raided Mrs. Mimble?"

"No!" howled Bunter.

"I'll keep the toffee till the guilty party's discovered!" grinned Skinner.

"I'm sure it was Fishy," said Bunter. "You know how dishonest he is. You know what his father is."

"Why, you mugwump," exclaimed the exasperated Fish. Fisher T. Fish professed to see a great distinction between "cornering" wheat, and robbing a tuckshop; though the distinction was not quite so clear to the other fellows. "I guess if you don't ring off I'll climb all over you, some!"

Wingate came in to see lights out, and the Remove turned in. Billy Bunter was usually one of the first to sleep. But that night he did not fall asleep. The pangs of hunger worried him, and his round eyes remained wide open, blinking into the gloom long after the rest of the form were sleeping. And there was one other fellow in the Remove dormitory who remained awake, and that one was Fisher T. Fish. Fishy was not hungry, but he had his own reasons for remaining awake.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Fairly Caught!

**Y**OU fellows asleep?" Eleven o'clock had struck, and there was deep silence in the dormitories. Billy Bunter sat up in bed, and asked that question in a subdued voice.

There was no reply. In Fisher T. Fish's bed there was an inaudible chuckle, which Bunter naturally did not hear.

Then there was a cautious sound of someone crawling out of bed. The dormitory door opened and closed.

Immediately it had closed, there was another sound of someone getting out of bed. A few minutes later the door opened and closed again.

Two beds were vacant—Bunter's and Fisher T. Fish's. A quarter of an hour later the door opened, and Fisher T. Fish tiptoed in, grinning in the darkness. He chuckled softly as he turned back into bed.

The door did not open again that night.

Clang! clang! went the rising-bell in the sunny morning, and the Remove awoke to a new day. There was a shout from Bob Cherry as he turned out.

Bunter's gone!"

"My hat!" exclaimed Wharton, staring at Bunter's empty bed. "Early rising again! We know now what the early rising's for!"

"He's gone to the store-room," said Peter Todd, in amazement and wrath. "That's what he went out early for before, of course!"

"I guess Bunter didn't go out early," remarked Fisher T. Fish, with a chuckle. "He went out late."

"What!"

"And I kinder guess I went after him, too!" said the Yankee junior; "and I calculate he never came back."

"Then what's happened to him?" demanded Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Fish. "You'll see soon!"

And Fisher T. Fish quitted the dormitory without any further explanation. The surprised juniors dressed themselves and went down. Billy Bunter was not to be discovered in the Close, neither was he in the house. He had completely disappeared.

"He went to the store-room, of course," said Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I'd have thought he'd have the nerve, after it's all found out!"

"Necessity knows no law!" said Wharton, laughing. "He was hungry. But if he went last night, as Fishy says, why didn't he come back?"

"Blessed if I know! Let's make Fishy explain!"

Fisher T. Fish had gone to the tuckshop, which was not opened yet. He was "nosing" round the building and chuckling. Evidently the Yankee junior was thoroughly enjoying some extra good joke.

"Where's Bunter?" demanded the Famous Five all at once.

"There!" grinned Fish.

"Where?"

"In the store-room, I guess."

"In the store-room!" ejaculated Wharton. "But how?"

"I guess he hustled there last night when we were all asleep—or he thought we were!" chuckled the astute Fishy. "But I reckon I had one eye open—some. And I guess I hustled after him, and got in at the same window."

"My hat!"

"And shut down the trapdoor after him!" yelled Fish, in a paroxysm of laughter. "And fastened it on top!"

"Great Scott!"

"I guess Bunter could have had the fed of his life, if he liked!" howled Fishy. "He had all night to feed in—ha, ha, ha!"

And Fisher T. Fish walked away, almost doubled up with merriment. The chums of the Remove looked at one another blankly.

"That dishes Bunter, and no mistake!" gasped Bob. "It was a mean trick—just like Fishy! Bunter will go through it this time!"

"And he's been in the store-room all night!" ejaculated Johnny Bull. "My word! I wonder whether he felt like feeding?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo—he's found!"

The tuckshop door opened, and Mrs. Mimble came out, wildly excited. She fairly ran across the Close. The juniors did not need telling that a discovery had been made. In a few minutes the excited lady came back with Mr. Quelch. The Remove-master strode into the building after the good dame; and the Famous Five took the liberty of following. Fisher T. Fish brought up the rear, trying to suppress his gleeful chuckles.

Down the stairs went Mrs. Mimble and the Remove-master to the door of the store-room. The door was locked, but sounds could be heard inside the room. There was a voice, even the voice of William George Bunter, in accents of woe.

"Do lemme out! Oh, dear! I know you're there, you beast! Open that trapdoor, you rotter! They'll find me here presently if you don't! Have you gone away, you rotter? Oh, crumbs!"

"I heard him, sir!" said Mrs. Mimble excitedly. "I haven't unlocked the door yet."

"Unlock it now, please," said Mr. Quelch grimly.

The door was thrown open.

Billy Bunter stood in the middle of the room, blinking up at the trapdoor. There was a packing-case close at hand, and there were signs that Bunter had been standing on the case and trying to force up the trapdoor overhead. A loose board lay broken at his feet, and the trapdoor showed marks of damage. But Bunter had not succeeded in getting it open. Fisher T. Fish had been too careful for that.

The fat junior spun round, aghast, as Mr. Quelch strode in.

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Then he stood rooted to the floor

"Bunter!" thundered the Remove-master.

"Oh! Ah! Grooh!" gasped Bunter.

"What are you doing here?"

"Here, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I—I—I—I've been—been sleeping, sir. On the floor. I—I just woke up! Oh!"

"How did you come here?"

"I just strolled in, sir."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I—I was curious to see—to see the place where—where somebody had been raiding, sir, so I—I just strolled in—"

"You strolled in—and went to sleep on the floor!" exclaimed the Form-master. "Do you expect me to believe that, Bunter?"

"I—I—I mean, I haven't been to sleep, sir. I—I haven't closed my eyes all night—I mean, I slept like a top, sir, in the dormitory."

"Was the door locked all night, Mrs. Mimble?"

"Yes, sir, and I've only just unlocked it."

"Bunter, you came in by the trapdoor."

"I—I might have, sir," stammered Bunter. "On second thoughts, perhaps I did, sir. I—I'm rather absent-minded, sir."

"When did you get in?"

"Last night, sir—that is to say, this morning. I just strolled in—I mean, I just dropped in to see the place where—where—"

"And you were unable to get out again, apparently?"

"Some rotter sneaked after me and fastened the trapdoor," groaned Bunter. "I—I believe it was that beastly Yankee—oh, dear!"

"And look at my stores!" exclaimed Mrs. Mimble.

"Biscuits, cake, ginger-beer, pineapple, ham, tongue—look at what he has taken!"

"I haven't touched them, ma'm!" gasped Bunter. "It—it—it must have been the rats!"

"Rats!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "Do you dare to infer, Bunter, that those rodents are capable of opening tins?"

"They—they're awfully clever animals, sir," groaned Bunter. "But—but perhaps it was the cat."

"Bunter, you are so stupid that I think perhaps you are not fully responsible for your actions," said Mr. Quelch. "You will follow me to the Head!"

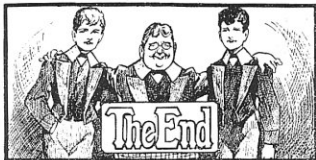
"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

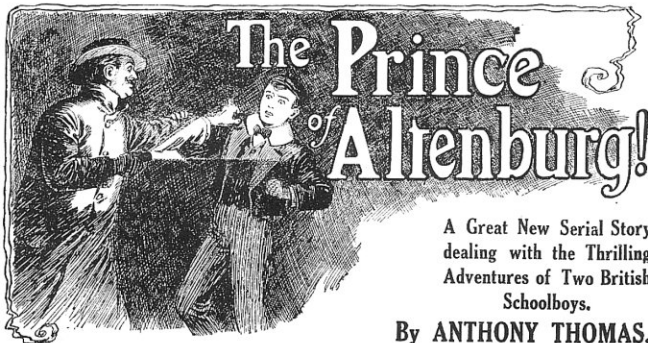
And he followed the Remove-master with a face of woe.

Bunter spent ten minutes in the Head's study. He came out looking as if life were not worth living. After prayers, the school was assembled to witness a flogging. Billy Bunter was the principal performer in that public ceremony. And Bunter's yells would have done credit to a lion.

The Remove fellows assured Bunter that he was lucky not to have been "sacked."

Bunter only groaned in reply. What his pater would say when he received Mrs. Mimble's little bill, he hardly dared to conjecture. But that was not the worst of his troubles. The worst was the flogging—which had been severe. The Head had quite kept his word in that respect. That day Billy Bunter crawled about with an expression that might have touched the heart of a Prussian. But if he looked for sympathy, he looked in vain. His victims had not yet forgotten their painful experiences during Bunter's Anti-Tuck Campaign.





A Great New Serial Story  
dealing with the Thrilling  
Adventures of Two British  
Schoolboys.

By ANTHONY THOMAS.

#### THE FIRST INSTALMENTS.

Two boys of St. Dunstan's School, JACK DARRELL and TEDDY BURKE, are discovered trespassing by an irate farmer, Mr. Stone.

In order to appease the farmer's wrath, Teddy Burke shows him a copy of a newspaper containing a portrait of THE PRINCE OF ALTENBURG, and leads him to believe that Jack Darrell, who bears a strong resemblance to the portrait, is really the prince, and that they were coming to ask his permission to be shown over the farm.

Mr. Stone is unable to keep the knowledge that a prince is a scholar at the local college to himself, and eventually the news reaches the ears of a person named Lewis Mackay, who is staying in the neighbourhood.

Mackay, under the impression that Jack Darrell is really the Prince of Altenburg, kidnaps both him and his chum, Teddy Burke.

The chums eventually find themselves on board the Kielberg, a German cruiser, under the care of BARON ZELLING.

DERWENT HOOD, chief of the British Counter-Espionage Department, goes in search of the Kielberg on H.M.S. Chatswood. The German cruiser, being hard pressed, seeks refuge up the River Kunene, on the West Coast of Africa, where she runs aground.

Accompanied by two members of the Chatswood's crew named Dexter and Walters, Hood proceeds up the river in a motor-launch. They fall in with a superior force of Germans, however, and are all made prisoners.

Dexter, Walters, and Darrell, during a quarrel on the Kielberg between Baron Zelling and her captain, succeed in escaping, but afterwards decide to go back to the Kielberg in order to effect the rescue of Hood and Burke.

(Now go on with the story.)

#### Midshipman Dexter Comes Back!

Derwent Hood calculated that it would be about ten o'clock when he attracted the attention of all on board the Kielberg and started them on their wild-goose chase.

"We shall have to stay here for another couple of hours, I'm afraid," he whispered to Burke. "I expect everybody is on the look-out for us, but I doubt if it will occur even to Zelling to come to this cabin. Where! But I'm thirsty!"

"So am I," confessed Teddy Burke. "My head aches, and my tongue is just like leather. I suppose it will have to stay like that, too."

"I don't know," Hood answered doubtfully. "It's not much use getting away from the ship if we're going to die of starvation or thirst in the end. Something has got to be done."

He stepped to the door and unlocked it very quietly. In the dim light Burke could just distinguish his form as he went 'THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

down on hands and knees and very cautiously opened the door a foot or so.

Then he peered out to right and left. Satisfied with his inspection, he came back to where Burke still stood.

"I'm going to risk it," he whispered. "We can't leave here without making sure of our next few meals. You keep near the door and lock it when I've gone out. It may be a bad move, but it will put off any chance caller who doesn't understand why this cabin should be locked. He won't know whether it has been locked from the inside or the outside."

"I'll give three gentle taps if, and when, I get back safely. There's just a risk I may be collared, in which case you'll have to use your own judgment. My plan would be to get across the river, and then get down stream. You understand?"

"Yes," Burke whispered back. "But I hope you will return here safely."

"I'll do my best, never fear," Hood said. "But I should have to do some exploring in any case, and I may just as well kill two birds with one stone—find where the food is, and what is happening on board. You'll keep right by the door."

He gripped Teddy's hand in a reassuring grasp. A moment or two later Burke could see the door opening and the form of Derwent Hood creeping cautiously out.

When he had gone, Burke carried out his instructions to the letter and locked the door once more. Then he sat down with his back to the wall, prepared for a patient vigil.

And his patience was sorely tested. Hour after hour passed, or so it seemed to him, and still there was no welcome tapping to tell of Hood's return.

Nor did there seem any sound in the whole ship. A curious silence had succeeded the shouting and noise which had been going on at different times during the whole evening.

At last! Teddy Burke had fallen into a half-daze, from which he was jerked into consciousness by the steady tap—tap—tap which sounded on the door.

He sprang to his feet and opened the door hastily. Derwent Hood almost fell into the room, and there was a clatter of packages tumbling to the floor, which at first rather startled Teddy.

"Close the door!" Hood told him. "I've been in luck this journey, without the shadow of a doubt. See if there is a cover or a curtain for that port-hole, and, if there is, put it across."

Burke discovered a curtain and pulled it over, calling out softly to Hood when he had done so.

The next moment the light was on, and there was Hood, surrounded by all manner of packets and tins.

"A decent haul, isn't it?" he asked. "There's practically no one on the boat. I think they're having a meeting, or

something, on the bank. Our departure doesn't seem to have worried them much. Have a drink from this first, and then we'll get off. There won't be such a chance presently."

Burke drank, and it did him good. Then he filled his pockets, as directed by Hood, and, loaded up, the two left the cabin.

They had to proceed very warily, for there were a few men still left on board. Hood's idea was to drop over one end of the ship into the small boat which was generally used for the fishing expeditions.

After some manoeuvring, they succeeded in carrying out the scheme. It was not without its risks, but after all they had already faced, it did not seem a tremendous undertaking. "If we can just drift out from under the trees," Hood whispered, "the rest will be as simple as can be. We could have chanced our luck and swam across, but I want to keep the food department all right."

He untied the boat and pushed out gently. Very slowly they drifted under the great overhanging branches, Hood steering carefully for the opening.

They were through at last, but not until their did Hood venture to take an oar to aid the progress of the boat. "We'll go down stream," he whispered to Burke. "Keep a sharp look-out; but I think the luck is with us to-night."

They went slowly along for ten minutes or so, then ran aground.

"We get out here," Hood said cheerfully. "But what to do with the boat is the problem. I think the best plan will be to turn it adrift."

He jumped to the bank and endeavoured to clear away some of the undergrowth.

"Hand me the food first of all," he called softly to Burke, "then come ashore yourself."

It was done at last, and Hood waded into the water to push off the boat, which was presently drifting of its own accord down the river.

"That may help to puzzle them for a time," he said. "I only wish we could see where it does get to eventually. All that we can do now is to stick just here until dawn. It isn't safe to go far at present."

They sat on the edge of the river, eating the biscuits they had brought from the ship.

"If you feel like a sleep, just roll over and have it," Hood suggested to Burke. "I expect you're still feeling pretty seedy."

"I don't feel any too happy," Burke answered, "and I could fall asleep quite easily."

"Then you do it," Derwent Hood said. "I'll let you know pretty quickly if anything comes along."

Teddy Burke was only too glad to sleep. Indeed, he was beginning to feel that, whatever the cost, he would simply have to close his eyes for a time.

With two minutes of Hood making the suggestion, Teddy was oblivious to everything. Nor did any dreams come to disturb the deep sleep into which he so quickly fell.

When at last he did awaken it took him some time to grasp the realities again. Even then he failed to understand his present position.

He was lying in an open space, and the sun was shining on him. This was possibly the reason why he had awakened, for the heat had almost scorched his face.

There was no sign of Derwent Hood. Burke stood up and looked around him.

On one side stretched fairly open country, gently undulating, and then beyond that came woods, as thick and dense—or so they appeared to be—from where Burke stood—as those he had first explored after the Kielberg went aground.

On the other side, the trees ran down so that he gazed over the top of them, and could see the river below him.

Just as Teddy began to wonder what had become of his companion, Hood himself appeared from among the trees. He had with him some of the packages they had brought with them the night before.

"Hallo!" he greeted Burke cheerily. "You have wakened at last, then? Feel better now?"

"Of course! But how did I get here, and why?"

Hood laughed.

"Well, you just went on sleeping, and I couldn't get you to budge, so I had to carry you up myself. No light weight, I can tell you! We had to move, because old Zelling's crowd are out after us in dead earnest. There seems to be trouble among them just now."

"What time is it now?" Burke asked.

Hood shook his head.

"I don't know. My watch has gone completely. But it must be somewhere about nine o'clock. I came up here pretty soon after dawn, but didn't dare to go back for the few odd packages I'd left, in case those brutes got me. I guess Zelling is in a nice odd temper this morning, and those chaps

who were in favour of him becoming their leader will begin to regret it. Can you see the boat below?"

The sun shining upon the river made it appear like a broad silver band, and Burke, shading his eyes, could just make out a ship's boat manned by a dozen or more sailors slowly moving along.

"They've been pretty far down, I fancy," Hood laughed. "And now they are coming back, with nothing to report. What I'm wondering, though, is whether the little motor-launch of theirs has come back. I saw nothing of it, and I kept a sharp look-out through the night. I'd like to know how Dexter got on."

"So should I," Burke agreed. "I'll bet Jack Darrell is jolly glad to be free from old Zelling. But what are we going to do now?"

"Have something to eat, first of all," Hood answered. "It won't be a very brilliant breakfast, I'm afraid. But we'll just have to put up with it for a time. Here you are!"

He handed Burke some biscuits, then endeavoured to open a tin of some preserved stuff, which he had also managed to bring from the boat.

"Keep a sharp look-out all the time, Burke," he told Teddy. "You never know—What's that?"

Burke had also turned suddenly, attracted by a movement among the trees near him.

Someone stepped out the next moment and came towards them. It was Midshipman Dexter!

"Well, I'm blest!" he said, as he gripped Hood's hand. "If this doesn't beat everything! Hallo, Burke! How are you after the scrap? You don't look seriously ill."

"I'm very fit," Burke answered cheerfully, for the sight of Dexter had done him more good than the prospective breakfast. "Is Jack Darrell here?"

"Not exactly," Dexter answered. "I came up to this place to get our bearings. He's with Walters, trying to make himself and the boat look like a permanent feature of the landscape, in case Mr. Zelling comes round for an inspection. But tell me, Hood, how on earth you managed to turn up here. I'll tell you my little yarn later."

### Unavoidably Postponed.

Derwent Hood quickly explained what had happened to Burke and him since Dexter had last seen them.

"It's been a pretty crowded night for all of us, I guess," the midshipman said. "We had quite a good time. Their launch chased us, and after a little bit of manoeuvring we sank it, and left the beggars to get ashore themselves."

"Good! That's a really nasty blow for Zelling!" Hood cried. "But why didn't you get clean away after that? What are you doing back in this neighbourhood again?"

"Well, we talked the whole thing over," Dexter answered. "Darrell didn't like the idea of leaving his pal in the lurch, and I wasn't keen on leaving you to take your chance with that German brute. I'd seen the kind of man he was, and that was enough for me."

Derwent Hood nodded, but he made no attempt to express the thoughts that were in his mind. One day perhaps he would be able to show Dexter how much he appreciated all that the midshipman had done and risked for him.

"So we decided to run back carefully," Dexter went on, "with the idea of hiding ourselves quite close to the Kielberg, and finding out exactly how things lay with you. Then, this morning, we very nearly spoiled the whole thing. One of their boats came out, evidently on another scouting expedition."

"Fortunately, we were running very slowly, and quite near this side of the river, so I don't think they got the faintest glimpse of us. We just turned in, and let them get past us; then I went ashore, and after a time discovered as nice a little hiding-place for our craft as you could wish to find. I guess they could search for a century and wouldn't discover us."

"Good man!" Derwent Hood was enthusiastic once more. "This place isn't any too safe, but we got up here pretty quickly when their boats began to nose round."

"I simply came here out of curiosity," Dexter told him.

"Darrell and Walters are making a sort of screen, in case someone does come along, and I thought I'd just explore the district. And here we are! You'd better bring what stuff you've got, and wander down to our little camp. A regular home from home we are trying to make it, because we thought it might be a few days before you'd be able to join us. Come along!"

They went into the wood and down towards the river. Dexter led the way and worked over towards the left.

"I don't want to lose my way," he said presently. "But our camp seems to want some finding."

And, in fact, it took longer than the midshipman anticipated.



"Cheer-ho, Jack!" Burke called, not too loudly. But it was sufficient to cause Darrell to turn round at once. He dropped the branch he was fixing in its place and sprang forward. "Teddy! How on earth did you get here?" he cried. (See below.)

pated to locate the hiding-place of his boat. He got it at last, however, and for a few moments the three stood peering through the trees at the scene before them.

They were on the bank of a narrow but fairly deep little waterway, an offshoot from the main river. The launch lay so near them that they could almost have jumped aboard her from where they stood.

At the back of the boat Walters and Jack Darrell were arranging a screen of branches and leaves to fill up the little gap which the trees on either side had left, and through which some of the German sailors, in their searching, might discover the retreat.

Dexter touched Teddy Burke on the arm.

"You go first, and ask Darrell how he's going on," he suggested; and Burke broke through the branches.

"Cheer-ho, Jack!" he called, not too loudly. But it was sufficient to cause Darrell to turn round at once.

He dropped the branch he was just fixing in its place and sprang forward.

"Teddy! How on earth did you get here?" he cried. "Why, we were preparing to stay here a week if necessary—and here you are! What about Mr. Hood?"

Both Dexter and Hood stepped into the open space then.

"Here we are again!" Dexter said cheerfully. "None missing, and no casualties. I guess, after all, this trip is going to turn out a simple kind of picnic. But you chaps want some breakfast; we've had ours long ago. I think we can do you quite nicely."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

NEXT  
MONDAY—

"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Both Derwent Hood and Teddy Burke were quite ready to do justice to the meal Walters quickly had ready for them. Not until they had finished did Dexter raise the question of what their next move should be.

"I had various bright ideas in my mind," he told Hood. "One of them was to try and blow up the Kielberg, which struck me as being quite a first-rate scheme. But now we are all here safe and sound perhaps the best thing will be to cut back as soon as we can and report. The chief will decide what to do then."

"I think that is the best plan, without a doubt," Hood agreed. "You see, they are completely tied up here. I can't for the life of me see any scheme Zelling can possibly work, now that you have sent the motor-launch to the bottom. He's simply beaten if we play for safety. Run no risks, but get back to the Chutswood, is my advice."

"I agree," Dexter said. "We'll spend a pleasant, lazy day here, scouting round a little to see what the beggars are up to; then, when they've all settled down to-night, we'll quietly push off. They can't chase us, even if they do see us."

During the day Dexter and Hood went up to the top of the hill two or three times and surveyed the river.

There appeared to be considerable activity among the Kielberg's crew. Boats were going up and down the river even in the middle of the day, when the heat was at its fiercest.

"I don't quite understand it," Derwent Hood said, when he and Dexter stood together on the hill in the evening. "They seem to be sending half the ship's crew out for boat

practice. There doesn't seem to be any searching business going on, either. What's your impression, Dexter?"

The midshipman was gazing intently through his glasses. "It looks rather serious to me," he said slowly, and handed the glasses to Hood. "What do you reckon those two boats have on board?"

Hood watched carefully for a time.

"Seems to me they're carting one or two of their small guns down the river," he said, at last. "What's the new game?" They watched for some time longer. So far as they could make out, the guns were unshipped at the bend of the river.

"It looks as though Zelling had got some idea of what will happen when you report to the Chatswood," Hood said, at last. "And he's going to mount any guns he can manage to carry down there at the bend of the river. That means serious business later on."

"It means serious business pretty soon, I'm thinking," Dexter said, as he turned to go down through the wood again. "Is he going to keep men down there all night? If so, it will really interfere with our plans, won't it?"

Hood nodded. He began to feel troubled and uneasy in his mind. Had Zelling once again made his move just a few hours too soon?

"We'll leave it until later," he said. "Then we'll come up here again, and see what the prospects are. But I don't like the move at all!"

The sense of uneasiness spread among them all when the two got back to the others.

Four times that evening did Dexter and Hood toil through the wood to the top of the hill. But each survey only made the outlook seem blacker.

The whole stretch of the river from the Kielberg to the bend, where the river was at its narrowest, was a picture of activity, totally different from anything which had taken place before.

"You see, the Kielberg was fitted up to tackle almost anything," Dexter explained. "They've doubtless got mechanics and all the tools they require for any kind of a job. Then they'd naturally be pretty well provisioned, and if they really start in dead earnest to fortify themselves along this place, it would mean no end of trouble to get them out."

"And an equal amount of trouble for us to get away," Hood said. "When I met you this morning, I thought we were in sight of the end of all our troubles. Now it seems to me we are really in the most awkward position of any I've struck so far."

"I'm afraid so," Dexter answered gloomily. "They're putting men on guard to-night, that's pretty certain. They may get tired of the game to-morrow. At all events, it would be sheer suicide to try and run through them to-night. All we can do is to lie up where we are, and wait patiently for a decent chance to get away. After all, they don't know that we are here, and they won't be on the look-out for us."

"They know young Burke and I are knocking about somewhere," Hood said. "But I think your plan is the only safe one; we'll simply stick on here and possess our souls in patience until the right time comes. After all, we're really not in a great hurry to get back, and we're as well off here as hanging about the mouth of the river waiting for the Chatswood to turn up."

"Good man!" Dexter laughed, and the gloominess went from him as quickly as it had come. "That's taking quite the right point of view. We'll have a pleasant evening, though it will have to be a quiet one on account of the neighbours. And I daresay a decent sleep wouldn't harm you?"

"It wouldn't!" Hood agreed. "I shall feel better for it. And then, to-morrow, we'll tackle the problem afresh."

Once more they went back to the launch, and tried to banish all thoughts of the difficulties still before them. To-morrow—Some way was bound to show itself quite clearly to them when the morrow came.

### Baron Zelling Leads.

In fairness to Baron Zelling, it must be said of him that he did not easily give in when it was a question of plans and strategems.

As soon as he had rid himself of Captain Diemster and his chief officer, his first task was to ensure that he himself would run no personal risk from any of the officers or the crew.

He knew better than most men how to appeal to the German mind.

"I am here," he told them, "as the representative of the Emperor. And I have but one ambition—to serve his Majesty."

He exhibited to them the insignia which the Kaiser had given him long ago, and told them of the great things they might yet do for their Emperor and Fatherland.

By inquiry, he had learned who were the most popular

officers with the crew. There were not many, but these he made into special commanders, without interfering with the positions held by the others.

At a conference of the officers he spoke plainly and frankly. Had they followed Captain Diemster's lead, there would have been only one of two ends before them: either they would have lost most of the men, and then been left to fight their way back to civilisation as best they could, or a British expedition would come up the river and wipe them out.

"I promise you that we shall all get back safely to the Fatherland," he cried. "And we shall have even more to our credit than we have now."

Even while he spoke, his one great fear was that the British motor-launch, with the young midshipman, the sailor, and the Prince of Altenburg, would elude the boat which Von Bohn had taken out after them.

At all costs, Zelling meant to make one desperate effort to get the prince safely into Germany. Nor did it suit him in the least to be stranded in this quarter of the globe, away from all the intrigues and schemes and spying which was the breath of life to him.

The escape of Derwent Hood and the boy Burke did not trouble him. He imagined they could not get very far, and certainly they could do nothing whatever to affect his plans. He sent out a boat, and told the officer in charge that if they did discover the two, he was not to bring them back as prisoners.

The officer understood, and began a systematic search; but during the night, at all events, it produced no result.

Morning came, but Von Bohn did not return. Zelling, growing impatient, sent out other boats to row down the river and find out what they could.

The first boat went many miles, without discovering any trace of either their own launch or the British boat.

They were almost on the point of turning, when they were hailed from the bank, and, pulling in, found Von Bohn and his men almost dead beat.

All through the night they had struggled along, fighting their way at times through dense bushes, at other times finding a fairly easy stretch. But their joy on seeing one of their own ship's boats made up for everything.

Except in Von Bohn's case; he was glad enough to get into the boat, but the prospect of telling Baron Zelling what had occurred almost made him wish that he had gone down in the launch.

When, some time after midday, he stood before Zelling, he wished it more heartily than ever.

By this time the officers had decided on their plans. The prospect of boats being sent up the river to attack them was the first danger they had to face, and the task of fortifying themselves against any such attacks had been begun during the morning.

When Zelling grasped the hard fact that his launch had been sunk, and the British boat, with the prince on board, had got safely away, his temper burst all bounds.

"You fool! Oh, you fool!" he raved. "Everything will be reported; we are tied up here like rats in a trap until they come to send enough men up here to wipe us out. Couldn't you do anything, you fool, to prevent the boat from getting away down the river?"

"It didn't go down the river!" Von Bohn answered. "It came back here!"

"What!" Zelling almost forgot his temper as the new idea came into his mind. "What do you mean? When did it come back?"

Von Bohn told the story as best he could. The British boat had stood by while they swam ashore, and then had turned up-stream again. He had been by the river the whole night, and had watched for it, but it had never come back.

"It must be up here," Von Bohn insisted stubbornly. "They've come back to try and get the other two away safely."

"And they've got away," said Zelling.

It was Von Bohn's turn to be surprised now, but Zelling did not feel it incumbent upon him to explain very fully.

The baron stood silent for a moment, running over the different possibilities in his mind.

His temper had vanished utterly now, as his mind began to foresee a clear way, and Von Bohn observed the old, sarcastic smile playing about his lips.

"I think we can assume they came right back last night," Zelling said presently, speaking more to himself than to Von Bohn. "They are in hiding somewhere. Whether Hood and the boy have found them is doubtful, but if not, so much the better. Send Lieutenant Granditz to me, and then return yourself, lieutenant."

Von Bohn went out and returned presently with an older officer.

To them Zelling very carefully explained what had occurred, speaking almost as though he were addressing two

children, so anxious was he that they should make no mistake in any detail.

"You, Lieutenant Granditz, will take a boat and station yourself two miles down the river," he said eventually. "You will be relieved later on, and your instructions are to keep guard, and see that no boat goes past you. This British motor-launch is somewhere in hiding within that two miles, and it must not get away. You will see Ober-Lieutenant Markell, and arrange details with him."

Lieutenant Granditz went out, and Zelling turned to Von Bohn.

"Now, lieutenant," he said, "your performance last night was not a creditable one, but there is an opportunity here for you to retrieve yourself. Find that British motor-launch!"

Von Bohn was about to ask in what manner he should proceed, but Zelling indicated that he had said everything necessary, and the lieutenant went out.

The few officers who were not already engaged in the work started that morning listened to his story with interest.

One of them who had spent most of his spare time in exploring the river banks made a suggestion, and presently three or four of them who had no duties until evening had crossed the river and were climbing to the very mound where, unknown to them, Derwent Hood and Teddy Burke had sat that morning, and from where Dexter and Hood had taken observations.

From where they were they observed the British midshipman and Derwent Hood surveying the river.

When they went back Von Bohn followed them. He kept some distance behind, and it was difficult at times to trace the two without running the risk of being observed himself. But in the end he was fully rewarded, and when at last he came back to the other three Von Bohn had forgotten his dislike for scrambling through the woods. He had forgotten, too, how tired and sleepy he had been when he set out on this task.

Von Bohn reported what had been discovered to Baron Zelling, and the others supported his statements, pointing out the important part they had each played in attaining the happy result.

"Very good!" Zelling said. "Have a watch kept on the place at once."

One of the officers went out to see that the instructions were put into operation immediately.

"They have doubtless decided to stay there the night," Zelling said, as he examined the timepiece before him.

"Probably the most convenient hour to visit them will be about midnight. Listen carefully, please, as we must make no mistake this time. Our own lives probably depend upon the complete success of our next step."

He gave each of the three instructions. Two were to command boats, while Von Bohn himself was to lead a party of twelve, who would land and attack them on the bank.

"Do you understand quite clearly?" Zelling said. "This is no time for gentle persuasion. I want the boy whom Lieutenant Von Bohn knows as Darrell, but who is really the Prince of Altenburg, to be kept unarmed, and brought back to me. The others we do not want. We have had more than enough trouble with prisoners, and we shall be well rid of them. Not one of them must be left alive. Indeed, I think I shall come myself to see that everything is carried out properly."

He was as good as his word, and shortly before midnight the two boats set out. Altogether there was Zelling, three officers, and some two dozen men, all armed and ready for any fighting that might be necessary.

The boat set to watch the place where the launch lay hidden had reported that there had been no attempt to leave, and though it was impossible to see very much of those in hiding, it was safe to assume they were still there.

Zelling had no intention of taking any personal risk. But he had decided to accompany the expedition in order to make certain that his wishes were carried out to the letter.

The launch-party was to be surrounded; it was doubtful whether they would have more than two revolvers between them, so that there would be little danger of a fierce resistance in any event. To make assurance doubly sure, it had been arranged to throw up a number of fire-balls, which they had prepared on board and now brought with them.

The light from these would not only astonish the five who were with the British launch, but would help the marksmen to pick off their men.

Hood, Dexter, and the sailor were to be cleared off at once. The two boys were not to be fired at until they had made quite certain of Darrell's safe capture. Then the other boy, Burke, could be given his quietus.

"But on no account must you let the boy who is the Prince of Altenburg be harmed in any way," were Zelling's final instructions as the boat pulled out. "And avoid injuring the boat; we may want it later. The three men—shoot at once!"

(Look out for next Monday's instalment of this exciting yarn. Order your "MAGNET" early!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 401.

NEXT MONDAY—**"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"**

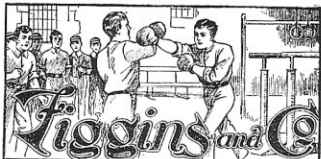
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## FAVOURITE FRIENDS IN FICTION.

No. 10.



Among the heroes free and fine

In the companion papers.

The famous New House fellows shine,

So full of fun and capers.

In school and sport they stand supreme

As great, illustrious leaders;

Their doings are a perfect dream

To scores of ardent readers.

The famous Figgy leads the way

In quite a hustling manner;

His chums are quick to own his sway

And rally round his banner.

If any rival dare dispute

Their paramount position,

He gets the order of the boot,

And black eyes in addition!

George Kerr, the cute and canny Scot,

Springe many sharp surprises;

And rogues and rascals catch it hot

By means of his disguises.

He never lacks the power to hit

In any battle royal;

A son of Scotland every bit—

What chum could be more loyal?

The famous Falstaff, Fatty Wynn—

A human roly-poly—

Can make the fur fly while he's in,

And is a splendid goalie.

He eats in an alarming way

A lunch of many courses,

And stows sufficient food away

To feed the British Forces!

Devoted pals in peace or strife,

They always stand united,

Fair play their constant aim in life

Till every wrong is righted.

The bold, bad blades the New House owns

Are forced to knuckle under,

And slink from sight with grunts and groans,

And brows as black as thunder.

So, comrades, when you've got the blues,

And feel depressed and ratty,

The great and gallant deeds peruse

Of Figgy, Kerr, and Fatty.

You'll simply love each rousing tale

These heroes take a part in,

And heap your praises, without fail,

On Clifford—famous Martin!

Next Monday:

**TOM BELCHER.**

No. 11 of this splendid series.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

# MY READERS' PAGE

## OUR COMPANION PAPERS:

"THE BOYS' FRIEND," 3d., Every Monday. "THE GEM" LIBRARY, 3d., Every Wednesday. "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3d., COMPLETE LIBRARY "THE PENNY POPULAR," 3d., Every Friday "CHUCKLES," 3d., Every Saturday.

The Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums, at home or abroad, and is only too willing to give his best advice to them if they are in difficulty or in trouble. . . . Whom to write to: Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

For Next Monday:

## "THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS!"

By Frank Richards.

Many are the thrills contained in next Monday's grand long complete story of the chums of Greyfriars. Sir Hilton Popper, the fiery, crusty old baronet, whose feud with the Remove has been such a marked feature in previous stories, suddenly and unaccountably disappears. Simultaneously with this alarming occurrence, mysterious signalmen are seen on the island belonging to Sir Hilton's estate. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry put in some cute and clever detective work, and not only succeed in rescuing the baronet from a most dangerous and undignified plight, but are instrumental in bringing to book a couple of aliens, who possess a wonderful hiding-place and various signalling contraptions in an old oak-tree. Thanks to the prompt action of the two Greyfriars fellows.

## "THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS"

are frustrated in their knavish tricks, and a serious international menage is averted.

## EVERY SCHOOLBOY'S WEEKLY.

It will now be only a matter of weeks before "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" (No. 1), price one halfpenny, will make its welcome advent into the world of boys' literature. I have the testimony of thousands that our new companion paper, which will appear side by side with the "Magnet" Library every Monday morning, will be one of the greatest successes of modern times. But it is as well not to be too sanguine, especially when one recalls the old proverb, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he stands take heed lest he fall."

The welfare of "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" will rest almost solely in the hands of the readers of the "Magnet" Library. Let this be perfectly clear from the outset. If every man-jack of them puts his shoulder to the wheel, and makes it his personal duty to see that the "HERALD" sells, all will be well. If, on the other hand—and let there be no mistaking my words—the weekly journal of Greyfriars School is not received with whole-hearted enthusiasm, it will go the way of certain papers whose names it pains me to mention. And what an inglorious ending to such a gigantic scheme!

In a nutshell, "supported we stand, unsupported we fall."

## HAVE YOU HAD A BRAIN WAVE?

Now, amateur editors and youthful dabblers in prose and verse, have you thought of any great "stunt" which might make a sensation were it published in "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD"? If so, do not jaw about it to your chums, and surmise what might happen if you were to submit it for consideration. Send it in! A grain of talent will enable it to steer clear of the wastepaper basket. With us, as with many other institutions, it is a case of all contributions being thankfully received.

## DO IT NOW!

It is not too early to send along your manuscripts. Start right away, addressing them to:

The Editor,  
"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

The Fleetway House,  
Farringdon Street,  
London, E.C.

I cannot, of course, guarantee to find space for everything that is sent in, but depend upon it, Tom, Dick, Harry, or Mabel, that if your effort shows merit you will soon have the satisfaction of seeing yourself "in print."

And now let every loyal Magnetite keep his or her eye upon this page, so that when the date of publication of No. 1 is made known you will be able to brace yourselves up for a mighty concentrated effort to secure for "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" the biggest circulation of any weekly halfpenny journal in the world.



## GET READY TO SHOUT!

The mystery of which mention has been made on this page for some weeks is as much a mystery as ever, despite the efforts of certain clever readers to emulate Sherlock Holmes and fathom the amazing secret.

Claude R., of Chesterfield, imagines he has hit it when he says that Mr. Frank Richards is going to be married shortly! I am afraid my Derbyshire chum must seek a far more substantial clue than this.

Then a reader signing himself "Bexton Slake" affirms that the "Magnet" is to be turned into a threepenny book instead of a penny one. With all due respect to my chum, I must say that my readers would call that anything but a joyful surprise.

The most sound and feasible guess submitted to me is made by "A Loyal Girl Chum," hailing from Ripley, in Surrey, who sums up the secret thus: "You are about to bring out another companion paper, to which Mr. Frank Richards will contribute a long complete story of Frank Courtenay & Co., of Highlife. But my girl chum, although her estimate is a very shrewd one, is right off the track."

There may be a few readers who have successfully foretold the coming surprise, but these are content to sit tight and say nothing, though their hearts are probably throbbing with the expectation of the joy that is to come.

Meanwhile, those who are still groping in darkness can prepare themselves for the Day!

## THE CRY IS "STILL THEY COME!"

The many readers who have written me letters of late, and who are probably feeling very annoyed at not having received a reply in the "Magnet" Library, must allow me to claim their kind indulgence, so abnormally heavy has my correspondence been during the past few weeks. I need hardly say, however, that every single letter which has reached this sanctum has been carefully read and considered, and it is always a very keen regret of mine that I am unable to devote more space in the "Magnet" to the popular Replies in Brief, which have now come to be quite a feature.

However, for this week only I am able to spare a whole page to acknowledging a number of helpful letters and valuable suggestions from my Magnetite chums.

It must be admitted that we are having quite a correspondence boom, but I do not mind in the least. Never be afraid to write to your Editor about it, whether "it" means the age of Harry Wharton, how to keep rabbits, or whether a boy of eight should smoke Flor de Cabbaggio cigars. Every letter which it is my pleasure to read seems to make work less tedious, and but for Wilhelm the Wicked I should possess a sufficiently large staff to enable me to answer every communication through the post where an address was given.

*Yours Editor*



# A SPECIAL PAGE FOR MY CORRESPONDENTS!

Your Editor Acknowledges Some of His Numerous Letters.

As my postbag has been very large of late, I must ask the readers whose names or non-de-plumes appear below to accept this as an acknowledgment to their letters, as time does not permit me to answer all their welcome and interesting letters:

"A King's Scout" (Manor Park).  
Anderson, Phyllis.  
"A Loyal Reader" (Bathgate).  
"A Dunstable Reader."  
Allen, Walter.  
"A Highland Girl Chum."  
A. C. S. (Tonbridge).  
"A Seven Years' Reader."  
"A Constant Reader" (Bournemouth).  
"A Loyal Victorian Reader."  
"A Leicester Square Reader."  
"A Staunch Magnetite" (Chelsea).  
"A Belgian Girl" (Finchley).  
"A Very Loyal Reader" (Acton Green).  
"A Reader" (Pontypool).  
"An Everlasting Reader" (Stepney).  
"An Admirer" (London).  
"A Yorkshire Lad" (Stockport).  
Addison, Harry (York).  
"A Giddy Supporter" (Jersey).  
Attewell, Private J. (France).  
"A Ware Reader."  
"A Loyal Reader" (Rochdale).  
A. L. and H. B. (Ware).  
"A Northampton Critic."  
"An Irish Chum."  
"A Staunch Reader" (Liverpool).  
Arnold, J. (Beckenham).  
"A London Reader."  
A. T. (Tufnell Park).  
"A True Reader" (Fareham).  
Avery, C. (Bristol).  
"A Loyal Chum" (Cumberland).  
"An Interested Reader" (Hucknall).  
"A Country Reader" (Hampshire).  
Bramley, C. J. (Huddersfield).  
Blackall, N. S. (Swans).  
Burton, F. (Leicester Square).  
Buck, Harry (Ipawich).  
Buckley, Ernest (Warrington).  
Briden, William (Highbury).  
Beesley, J. (Peckham).  
Butland, Vic (Natal, S.A.).  
Carnford, Arthur (Rushall).  
Chapman, Tom (Walworth).  
Cornwell, F. (Bow).  
Cherry, Lieut. A. N. (Brighton).  
Cherry, Sergt. H. D. (Brighton).  
Connelly, C. (Glasgow).  
"Daisy" (Dovercourt).  
Davis, Delia (Darlington).  
Digby, L. (Colchester).  
Dady, D. (Dennistoun).  
D. L. M. (Barrowash).  
Davies, H. V. (Cheshire).  
"Devonian" (Windsor).  
Dagger, R. (Blackpool).  
Darken, E. (Colchester).  
D. G.  
D. C. (Leeds).  
E. H. L. (Birmingham).  
Evans, W. H. (S. Bermondsey).  
E. C. (Luton).  
E. H. P. (Battersca).  
Freeman, R. (Aldershot).  
Ford, Walter H. (Chiswick).  
Facer, H. C. (Southsea).  
Furst, E. A. (London).  
Foster, Private Geo. A. (Thetford).  
Grendon, F. (Birmingham).  
Greenwood, Elsie (Fulham).  
Gillbert, D. P. (Kimberley, S.A.).  
G. W. C. (Bayswater).  
Goadley, A. L. (Crouch End).  
Griffiths, Llewellyn (Mumbles).  
"Girl Magnetite" (Llangollen).  
Garner, J. (Lowestoft).  
Grant, Jas. (Inverness).  
Gurney, Thomas W. (Loughor).

H. M. (Huddersfield).  
Holloway, Maude (Bath).  
Hardy, L. J. (Birmingham).  
Hargreaves, James (Blackburn).  
Hobbs, Louie (Harlesden).  
Heather T. (Sydney, Australia).  
Holland, Dr. Harry (Tidworth).  
Harper, J. (Leicester).  
Herrick, Joseph.  
H. J. S. (Australia).  
"Hopeful" (Chorlton).  
Hogg, Jahn (St. Partich).  
Heard, George (Plymouth).  
Hickey, Edward (Wexford).  
Harvey, Stanley (Camberwell).  
Heasley, J. C. (Wigan).  
"Inquisitive" (London).  
Jones, Lance-Corporal G. R. (France).  
Jack, C. (Manchester).  
J. T. S. (Stockton-on-Tees).  
Johnston (Edinburgh).  
Judge, Brian E. (Brighton).  
Kubik, J. and Coopersmith, M. (Aldgate).  
"Lover of Bunter" (Cardigan).  
Leech, S. C. (Camden Town).  
Lambert, Francis E. (Sheffield).  
L. E. (Rotherham).  
Lott, J. (Lyminge).  
Mayfield, Douglas L. (Hasland).  
"Motorist" (Bradford).  
Matthews, Sidney H. (Acton Green).  
Mercer, Ernie (St. Helens).  
"Miltonite" (Harlesden).  
Moriarty, E. (Stoke Newington).  
Mitchell, Rose (Shepherd's Bush).  
Messenger, W. A. (Stoke Newington).  
"Mog" (Richmond).  
Magers, Peggy, Doris, and Edie (Tankerton).  
Miles, G. (Gateshead).  
Marsland, E. (Chinley).  
McCabe, M. and Hassan, J. (Greenock).  
Menzie, L. C. (Tasmania, Australia).  
McIntyre, George (Dundee).  
Minto, J. E. (Cardiff).  
Martin, H. J. (Port Adelaide, Australia).  
MacDonald, Atholl D. Bain (Morpeth).  
"Nibs" (Fort Road).  
"Non-Critic, but Fair Play" (Leamington Spa).  
Nixon, Topsey (Bootle).  
Owen, Dick (Haverhill).  
Oakley, Chas. R. (Newquay).  
O. D. (South Africa).  
Phillips, S. (Ashford).  
Pearson, T. (Manchester).  
Parker, W. Geo. (Birmingham).  
Pegg, Herbert (Birmingham).  
Penner, Reginald (Worcester).  
Phillips, W. (Bradford).  
Partington, Norman R. (Woodford Green).  
"Prizefighter" (Manchester).  
Pearce, C. A. (Dushey).  
R. R. P. (Clapton).  
Reynolds, F. (Norwich).  
R. P. (Andover).  
Redwood, A. (Grimsby).  
S. J. (Norwich).  
S. M. S. (Birmingham).  
Smith, T. and Norman, L. C. (Bucks).  
S. F. A. (Liverpool).  
Snell, Albert (Peckham).  
Stent, S. (Forest Hill).  
Staff, Elsie (New South Wales).  
Steel, George and Revel, Nell (South Shields).  
"Sun and Stars" (Wolverhampton).  
S. M. W. B. (Croydon).  
Shamb, W. (Peckham).  
"Scotsman" (Aberdeen).  
W. G. S. (Hornsey).  
Wheeler, V. C. (Brixton).  
W. E. T. (Willesden).  
Ward, Private S. G. and Grainger, Private W. J.  
"X. H." (Dunston-on-Tyne).  
"X. X. 1." (London).  
Younger, Charles (North Kensington).

# ASTONISHING CASH PRIZE OFFER BY ANSWERS.

2 "FIRSTS" £250 EACH 2 "SECONDS" £25 EACH 2 "THIRDS" £10 EACH

5 Prizes of £5 each; 10 Prizes of £1 each; 100 Prizes 5/- each; 300 Prizes of 2/6 each.  
And 2,000 "Presentation Coupons," each of which entitles the winner to FOUR FREE EFFORTS in a subsequent competition.

The above magnificent prizes are offered this week for

## NEWSIMPLETS

The easiest and best skill competition ever invented.

### THE WAY TO MAKE NEWSIMPLETS

and to win big money is as follows:

First take one of the examples given below, or any One Word or TWO or THREE CONSECUTIVE Words in this week's **ANSWERS** or **ANSWERS' LIBRARY**, and then think out a phrase of not more than four words which has some relation to the example or the words chosen.

One of the words of the phrase must contain one of the letters in the example. The other words may contain any letters whether they are in the example or not.

#### FOR INSTANCE:

**EXAMPLE—Our Double8 week: NEWSIMPLET: Prize8 for all.**

**EXAMPLE—Admiral von Tirpitz: NEWSIMPLET: Has most wonderful whiskers.**

When you have constructed your Newsimplets write them in the Coupon on this page, enclose a postal order for sixpence, and send it addressed to **ANSWERS Newsimplets No. 1, G.P.O., Box 651, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.,** so as to reach that address not later than Wednesday, October 20th.

### REMEMBER ALL BIG PRIZES ARE DOUBLED THIS WEEK.

THERE ARE 2 FIRSTS OF £250 EACH, 2 SECONDS OF £25 EACH,  
And 2417 Other Prizes. YOU MUST win one of these.

#### EXAMPLES YOU MAY USE (SEE ABOVE).

Our Double8 week  
Back to the land  
It's exciting when  
Gloomy outlook  
No time lost  
Germany will regret

They tell us  
Out of pocket expenses  
Every time a winner  
If we hesitate  
At the front door  
Not at all nice

Askward cor!  
Looking upwards  
Our tame poet  
Altogether unprepared  
Suspicious lights  
The right note

Preparing for winter  
The greatest hero  
Undoubtedly true  
Lost opportunity  
In his wife's name  
Arguing the point

No one denied that  
Father Time  
Our rulers  
Brilliant repartee  
My boy's ambition  
The enemy retires

P.O. ORDER. "Answers" No. 1 Newsimplets Competition in accordance with the published conditions announced in "Answers" dated October 16th, and agree to accept the published decision as final and legally binding.

SIGNED.....

ADDRESS.....

EXAMPLE: Page..... Column..... Line.....  
(This space need not be filled if example is taken from list.)

NEWSIMPLET.....  
(Not more than four words may be used. Send the whole coupon, even if only one example is used.)

EXAMPLE: Page..... Column..... Line.....  
NEWSIMPLET.....  
(A sixpenny postal-order must accompany this coupon. Stamps not accepted.)

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From start to finish it is a picture story which will hold you spell-bound with excitement and wonder. A few of the stirring incidents are a desperate fight between an Earl and a Gipsy Poacher, the kidnapping of the Earl's son and heir, who is cleverly impersonated by

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The English Boy Actor;

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Ask Your Picture-House Manager to Book this Film

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