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BUNTER THE BOLSHEVIK!



FUN AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE!

(A Very Amusing Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)

21-6-19



Bunter the Bolsheviki!

A Magnificent Long, Complete

Story of

HARRY WHARTON & CO.

AT GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Amazing!

"HURRY up, Bunter!"

Harry Wharton paused a moment on his way to the Remove Form-room to call out to Billy Bunter.

It was one minute past the time for afternoon lessons, and the Remove were already in their Form-room with Mr. Quelch, when Wharton came speeding along the passage. Wharton was seldom or ever late for classes. Mr. Quelch was the soul of punctuality, and he expected punctuality from his pupils. On the present occasion a puncture was the cause of delay. Wharton came along the passage almost as if he were on the cinder-path, and was astonished to see Billy Bunter lounging carelessly by the window.

Bunter glanced round through his big spectacles as Wharton called. He did not seem disturbed.

"You're late, Billy!" shouted Wharton.

Still Bunter did not get a move on.

Harry Wharton whipped into the Form-room, feeling that he had done enough in wasting a few precious seconds on the Owl of the Remove. If Billy Bunter did not choose to hurry up, that was his own look-out.

"Wharton!"

Mr. Quelch rapped out the name as the captain of the Remove hurried in.

"Yes, sir?" gasped Harry.

"You are late!" said Mr. Quelch severely. "One minute late, Wharton—a full minute!"

"Sorry, sir—"

"Unless you can give a good reason, Wharton, I am afraid that I cannot take your sorrow as an excuse!" said the Remove master drily.

"Puncture, sir—landed me half-way from Friardale—"

"Oh, very well! You may go to your place."

Harry Wharton went to his place in great relief. He did not want fifty lines, and he did not want the pointer.

He dropped to his seat between Frank Nugent and Bob Cherry.

"Lucky for you!" murmured Bob. "But where's Bunter? Bunter hasn't come in."

"He's in the passage—"

"Why doesn't the fat duffer come in?" whispered Nugent. "Quelchy is looking ratty. He will take it out of Bunter."

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Bunter does not seem to be here. Do you know where Bunter is?"

"I—I think he's just outside, sir."

Mr. Quelch looked astonished—and so did his class. If Bunter was just outside the Form-room, there seemed no reason why he should not come in to his place, instead of asking for trouble in this way. Yet the fat junior did not appear.

"What's the matter with Bunter?" whispered Johnny Bull. "Has he gone off his fat rocker? Quelchy will scalp him!"

"To judge by the esteemed Quelchy's look, the scalp-fulness will be terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Silence in class!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

There was silence as of the tomb. When Mr. Quelch spoke in that tone it was not a time for whispering.

Mr. Quelch strode to the door and threw it open. His eyes glinted over his glasses at Billy Bunter, who was loafing by the window in the passage, in full view.

"Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove blinked round.

"Hallo!" he said.

That reply was audible in the Form-room, and it made the fellows stare at one another and rub their eyes. For a junior to reply "Hallo!" to a Form-master was something new. After that, it seemed time for the skies to fall.

"Is he potty?" whispered Nugent, in wonder.

Mr. Quelch did not speak again for a moment or two. He seemed petrified. He stood in the doorway and blinked along the corridor at Billy Bunter. Bunter turned back to the window, and

looked carelessly into the quadrangle. Apparently the fat junior had lost all his awe of his Form-master—and Mr. Quelch was rather an awful personage!

"Bunter!" gasped the Remove-master at last.

"Hallo!" repeated Bunter.

"Boy! How dare you answer me in that manner!" thundered the Remove-master. "Are you out of your senses?"

"Not a bit!"

"You are late for classes, Bunter!"

"Really?"

"Come into the Form-room at once!"

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter carelessly.

"I don't mind if I do!"

Mr. Quelch whisked to his desk and picked up his cane. His face was a study.

The Removites sat frozen as Billy Bunter rolled in.

They could only conclude that William George Bunter had gone suddenly insane; but, mad or sane, they were sorry for him. The expression on Mr. Quelch's face was like unto that of a lion in his wrath.

Bunter was rolling towards his desk when the Form-master called to him.

"You need not go to your place yet, Bunter. Come here!"

Bunter stopped.

"What for?" he asked.

"I am going to cane you, Bunter!"

"Oh, are you, Quelchy?"

The juniors sat dumb with horror.

Bunter had addressed Mr. Quelch as

"Quelchy" to his face!

Certainly, in the Common-room and

the studies Mr. Quelch was generally

spoken of as Quelchy. But not in his

presence. The juniors had too much

respect for the palms of their hands to

call him Quelchy personally. Bolsover

major, the most reckless fellow in the

Form, would never have dreamed of it.

But Bunter—

"Mad as a hatter!" murmured Bob

Cherry, aghast.

Mr. Quelch had the same suspicion in

his mind, apparently, for his frown

cleared a little, and he looked concerned.

"Are you ill, Bunter?" he asked, quite gently.

"Not at all!"

"You are acting very strangely, Bunter."

"I don't see it!"

Mr. Quelch scanned his fat face. Bunter certainly looked quite normal. The Form-master's brow darkened again.

"If you are not ill, Bunter, will you kindly explain what this means?" he inquired, in a voice like rumbling thunder. "You have addressed me with utter insolence! What do you mean?"

"I don't see that. You call me Bunter. Why shouldn't I call you Quelch?"

"Eh?"

"It's a free country, isn't it?" said Billy Bunter, blinking at him. "I'll call you 'sir,' if you'll call me 'sir.' That's a fair offer!"

"Bless my soul!"

"As for being caned, I'm not going to be caned," said Bunter. "If you cane me, I've a right to cane you!"

"What?"

"I'm standing up for my rights! I'm jolly well not going to be caned, and I'm coming in to lessons when I please—not when you please! So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Quelch!"

"I'm dreaming!" murmured Harry Wharton, in blank bewilderment.

The class gazed at Bunter.

"Boy!" said Mr. Quelch. "Boy! Bunter! Is it—is it possible that you have been drinking?"

"Rot!" said Bunter.

"Eh?"

"Rot! Rubbish!"

And with that independent reply Billy Bunter went to his place and sat down in the midst of a petrified class.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Nipped in the Bud!

MR. QUELCH looked at Billy Bunter.

So did all the Remove.

Fellows craned their necks round to keep their eyes on the fat junior.

Bunter blinked at them cheerfully.

He seemed rather pleased than otherwise by the sensation he had caused.

There was a full minute of silence in the Remove Form-room. Mr. Quelch seemed to be at a loss. It was no wonder, for certainly nothing of the kind had ever happened before during Mr. Quelch's sway over the Lower Fourth.

"Bunter!" he said at last, gripping his cane.

"Hallo!" answered the Owl of the Remove.

"Come here at once!"

"What for?"

"I am going to punish you, Bunter, with the utmost severity, for this unexampled insolence!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"You're jolly well not!" answered Bunter warmly. "I'm fed up with that kind of thing, Quelch!"

"Boy!"

"You don't seem to know what o'clock it is," said Bunter. "I've been thinking it out. I'm going to call on all the other fellows to follow my example. I'm not standing any more of it. I believe in liberty."

"Liberty!" stuttered Mr. Quelch.

"Liberty, equality, and fraternity," said Bunter cheerfully. "Jack's as good as his master, you know, if not a little better. Isn't everybody in the world equal to everybody else?"

"Eh?"

"I've been reading it up. I think there isn't enough freedom in this country," said Bunter. "The Bolsheviks are the men for my money!"

"Bub-bub-Bolsheviks!" stuttered Mr. Quelch.

"That's it. Bolsheviks! I'm a Bolshevik!" explained Bunter.

"You—you—you are a Bolshevik?"

"You've got it, Quelch."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He's been reading the newspapers, and they've got into his head."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Evidently, Bunter's Bolshevism was not a laughing matter—from the point of view of the Form-master representing law and order. The Removites suppressed their chuckles. But it was with difficulty. Bunter in his time had played many parts, but Bunter the Bolshevik really took the cake.

But the fat junior had evidently thought the matter out, in the depths of his fat brain, and was quite satisfied with his new attitude.

"I say, you fellows," went on Bunter, "you back me up! What right has Quelch got to give us orders? Ain't we as good as Quelch?"

mopped him up. It simply wanted doing. It's the same in a school. I've thought it out, you know. You fellows back me up, and we'll make Quelch do the lessons himself!"

"Phew!"

"You follow your leader: I'm your leader," said Bunter. "Imitate me. Be free, you know, and brave as a lion, and it will be all right. Back me up, and we'll make the masters fag for us, and— Yaroooooh!"

Mr. Quelch had come along to see Bunter.

His grasp closed on the fat junior's collar, and Billy Bunter was yanked out, roaring, before the class.

"Now!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

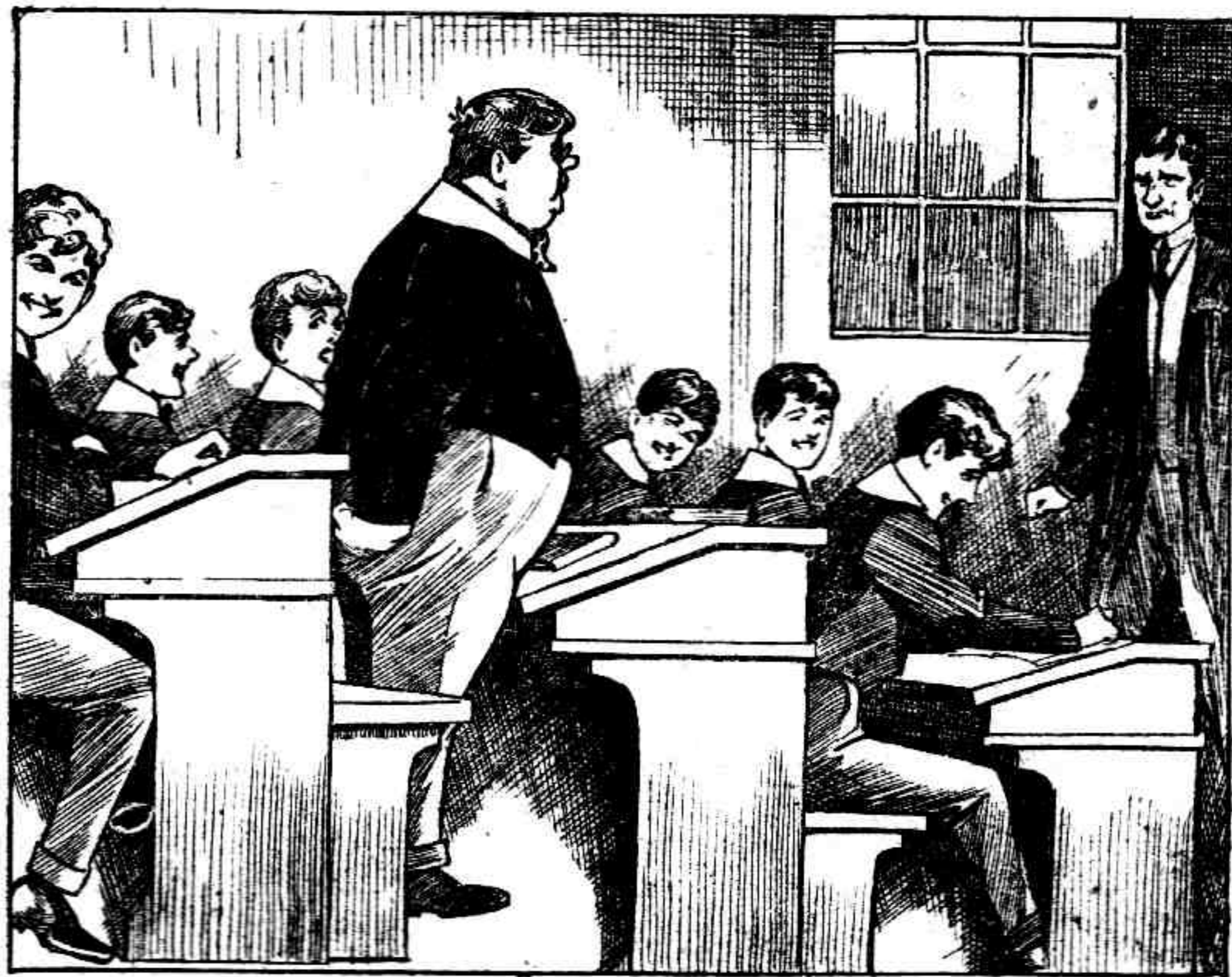
"Yaroooooh!"

"Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows, back up!" yelled Bunter. "Lemme a hand! Collar him! Collar old Quelch!"

The Remove sat still!

They were about as likely to collar a wild tiger in the jungle as to collar "old Quelch."



"There isn't enough freedom in this country!" said Bunter. "The Bolsheviks are the men for my money!" "Bub-bub-Bolsheviks!" stuttered Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 2.)

"Silence!" roared the Remove-master.

"Silence yourself!" retorted Bunter independently. "I'm not taking any more rot from you, Quelch!"

"Bless my soul!"

"You fellows back me up," continued Bunter, blinking round at the dazed Removites. "Have a little pluck, you know, and stand up for your rights. Everybody's got equal rights. I've read that in a paper. Nobody has a right to give anybody any orders. Chap who obeys anybody's orders is a sneak. We're all equal, you know, and a Form-master is just the same as a fag. See?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"My esteemed Bunter—"

"I say, you fellows, I've been right into the subject," said Bunter. "It's only necessary for fellows to stand up for their rights, and the tyrants have to knuckle under at once. Look what happened in Russia. The giddy Tsar used to have 'em flogged to death by the thousand, till they piled on him and

Bunter, perhaps, had thought the matter out, and decided to become a Bolshevik, but the other fellows certainly hadn't.

They sat tight, while the fat Bolshevik wriggled in the grasp of the angry Remove-master.

The call to freedom was unheard. That golden opportunity of establishing liberty, equality, and fraternity passed unheeded.

"Bunter, I think you must be out of your senses!"

"Leggo!"

"You are the stupidest boy at Greyfriars!"

"Yow-ow!"

"You have evidently been reading some absurd nonsense in newspapers," continued Mr. Quelch, punctuating his remarks with severe shakes, which made Bunter gasp and sputter. "You are evidently under the influence of this nonsense which you have been reading, and it has acted upon your utterly obtuse brain in this extraordinary manner—"

"Yooooop!"
 "Otherwise, Bunter, I should take you immediately to the Head, and request him to administer a flogging—"

"Yow! Leggo!"
 "Having regard to your almost incredible stupidity, Bunter, I shall administer your punishment myself; but it will be severe."

"Yah! Oh! Ow!"
 "Hold out your hand, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, releasing the gasping Owl of the Remove at last.

Billy Bunter didn't hold out his fat hand. He blinked round at the staring Removites.

"I say, you fellows," he gasped, "back up!"

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"Back up, you fellows! Rescue!"

"Will you hold out your hand, Bunter?"

"Sha'n't!"

"Wha-a-a-at?"

"Sha'n't!"

"Oh, ye gods!" murmured Bob

Cherry.

Mr. Quelch took Bunter by the collar

again. In the enthusiasm of his new-

found Bolshevistic freedom, Bunter was

not conquered yet. But there was a bad

time coming.

With the Form-master's iron grasp on

the back of his collar, Billy Bunter was

led to the nearest desk, and bent over it.

Then the Form-master's cane rose and

fell.

Whack, whack, whack!

Mr. Quelch did not spare the rod.

He was not a believer in Bolshevism,

especially in a Greyfriars Form-room.

In the Kremlin at Moscow Bolshevism

might or might not be the thing, but it

certainly wasn't the thing in the Remove-

room at Greyfriars. Certainly, only

Bunter's remarkable brain could possibly

have thought of introducing it there.

Mr. Quelch thought it was time for

drastic measures.

And his measures were drastic

enough.

Bunter's fat little legs thrashed about

frantically as the Form-master's cane rose

and fell upon his podgy person.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! Help! Yarooooop! Oh

crumbs!"

Whack, whack!

"Rescue! Yoop! Whoop! Leave

off! I—I—I was only jug-jug-joking!"

yelled Bunter. "I ain't a—yow-ow-ow!

—Bolshevik! Oh, my hat! Leave off!

I'm sorry, sir! Yaroooh! Don't I keep

on telling you I'm sorry? Yaroooooh!

Wooooooop!"

Whack, whack!

"There!" gasped Mr. Quelch, releas-

ing the fat junior at last. "Have you

come to your proper senses now, Bun-

ter?"

"Yaroooooooh!"

"If not, Bunter, I am prepared to ad-

minister further correction."

"Yow-ow! I—I have—oh, quite—cer-

tainly, sir—oh, yes!"

"Then you may go to your place,

Bunter!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Billy Bunter crawled to his place. He

sat there in anguish, wriggling painfully,

certainly the most-unhappy Bolshevik in

the wide world.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter Means Business!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Here's the merry Bolshevik!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were

at tea in Study No. 1 in the

Remove after lessons when Billy Bun-

ter blinked in at the doorway.

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Bunter was not looking quite happy.

He was still feeling some of the effects

of the terrific licking he had received in

the Form-room that afternoon.

The Famous Five chuckled as he rolled

into the study.

Bunter the Bolshevik was more enter-

taining, they agreed, than Bunter in any

other shape or form.

"Still going it, Buntty?" asked Frank

Nugent.

"Certainly!" answered Bunter, with a

sniff.

"Still a cheery Bolshevik?" inquired

Johnny Bull. "Better not give Quelchy

any more of it, my fat pippin! He's too

jolly athletic with the cane, I should

think!"

"The foul tyrant—"

"Eh?"

"The foul tyrant—"

"Are you speaking of Quelchy?" de-

manded Harry Wharton.

"Yes. The foul tyrant—"

"You silly ass!" roared the captain of

the Remove.

"The foul tyrant ought to be

downed!" said Bunter undauntedly. "If

you fellows had my pluck you'd rise up

and down him! I'm willing to lead

you! We're downtrodden and oppressed!

The reign of freedom ought to be

established—"

"The which?"

"Reign of freedom—equality, you

know! The rich ought to be made poor,

and the poor rich. That's Bolshevism!

The tyrants ought to be executed, you

know—off with their heads!" exclaimed

Bunter, with a ferocious blink. "Off with

their nappers! Ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"You fellows haven't any ideas!" said

Bunter. "You don't even know that

you're downtrodden slaves!"

"Are we?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Certainly you are—crushed under the

heel of the tyrant! Follow me, and I'll

lead you to freedom!"

"You'll be led to a lunatic asylum if

you keep on like this!" grunted Johnny

Bull. "Where have you been picking up

all this silly rot?"

"The rotfulness is terrific, my esteemed

Bunter!" remarked Hurree Singh.

"The fact is, you fellows, I want you

to back me up," said Bunter. "I've

come here to—"

"Let that cake alone!"

"I shall do nothing of the kind,

Nugent! This cake is mine as much as

yours, according to Bolshevism! Food

belongs to the hungry! I'm hungry!"

"Well, my hat!"

"But where did you pick up this idiotic

stunt?" asked Harry Wharton. "Even

your brain couldn't have originated it!"

"I may have got a few hints from the

'Weekly War-Whoop'—"

"My hat! What's that?"

"I've got a copy here," said Bunter,

producing it. "It's a revolutionary

paper, you know! They want to promote

revolutions and things all over the world,

so as to establish democracy, and so on.

I'll read you out a bit. This is what the

editor says in his 'Editorial Howls'—just

listen!"

And Bunter read out impressively:

"Rise! This is our message to the

groaning masses of the downtrodden!

Rise! Follow the example of your

Russian brethren! Contribute to our

Freedom Fund, for spreading the Light

of Bolshevism in dark places. Collecting-

cards will be sent on application. Rise,

ye suffering millions, and make the tyrant

to tremble upon the golden thrones in

his gilded palaces! Ye are many, they

are few! Our Freedom Fund is still

open—"

"Draw it mild, Bunter!" interjected

Bob Cherry. "It's possible to get fed up

on that kind of eloquence. Where did

you pick up that rag?"

"I found it," explained Bunter.

"Looking through it, I felt my eyes open,

you know. I saw in a flash how true it

all was. The Bolsheviks have been mis-

judged. The fact is, they are the goods!

They've set a splendid example. Why

should fat millionaires roll in costly foods

on the marble floors of their tessellated

palaces—"

"Oh, my hat! Do they?"

"Of course they do—while I haven't

threepence to blue at the tuckshop?" de-

manded Bunter warmly. "Now, the

national wealth—"

"The—the what?"

"The national wealth—it amounts to

something point something per head of

the population," said Bunter. "Do the

population get that something point

something? Of course they don't! This

paper says they don't! Now, under

Bolshevism, you get all the produce of

your labour—"

"Precious little for you, at that rate!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove seemed taken

aback for a moment.

"Well, you see, under Bolshevism,

everybody works, you know," he said,

after a pause, "except—except, of course,

those who have administrative ability,

and take commanding positions. With

my abilities, I should be a big Government

official, under Bolshevism. Like Lenin

and Trotsky, you know. They've made

it a regular paradise for the workers in

Russia—but, of course, they don't do any

work themselves. Great leaders don't!"

"Not if they can help it, I dare say!"

grinned Bob Cherry. "There'll never be

any shortage of great leaders. But sup-

pose everybody wanted to be a great

leader, and had to chuck work, what

would happen then?"

Bunter had to think that out.

"Well, that's rot, you know!" he said

at last.

"I see—everything that doesn't square

with your piffle is rot?" asked Bob. "Is

that a Bolshevik argument?"

"Of course, there'd be difficulties," ad-

mitted Bunter. "Still, there's no doubt

that the Bolsheviks are right. They've

put down Tsarism in Russia."

"That wasn't much loss; but they seem

to have put down jolly nearly everything

else! You're a howling ass, old chap!

The best thing you can do with the

'Weekly War-Whoop' is to light the fire

with it!"

"Coward!" said Bunter scornfully.

"What?" roared Bob.

"Coward! If you don't follow my lead

and back me up, you're a coward!" said

Billy Bunter defiantly. "I'm willing to

lead you to freedom! Follow me, and

we'll make old Quelchy fag for us! We'll

raid the Head in his study—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"And make him swear on his bended

knees not to lick us any more!" said Bun-

ter. "Think of that!"

"Phew!"

"We'll tar and feather all the prefects

in the quadrangle—"

"They'll let you do it—I don't think!"

grinned Johnny Bull.

They couldn't help it—tyrants are help-

less when the masses rise against few, you

know. That's a quotation from a fellow

who used to preach freedom and revolu-

tion a hundred years ago."

"Did he do any work?"

"Of course he didn't—he was a leader

of opinion!" snorted Bunter.

"But if the revolution had come off

when he preached it, what would he

have done for a living?" asked Bob.

Again Bunter had to reflect.

"Blessed if I know," he said. "I

don't suppose he thought as far as that—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter irritably. "Most of the great poets and writers have been on the side of revolution, according to this paper. They've got a lot of quotations from Ruskin. Ruskin denounced commercialism, and the commercial spirit, and love of money, and that kind of thing—he did it in a lot of books at two guineas each—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see the joke!" snapped Bunter. "Look here, you fellows, if you've got any sense you're bound to agree with me!"

"I don't think!" grinned Bob.

"I'm a Bolshevik—I'll say so anywhere!" said Bunter. "Everybody is the equal of everybody else, and all rights of property are abolished! Why should old Sir Hilton Popper have no end of land, while I haven't got a foot—"

"Rot! You've got two feet!"

"I mean a foot of land! Why should Quelchy be paid a salary for teaching us Latin, while we're paid nothing for learning Latin? Remove chaps ought to be paid as much as Remove-masters!"

"Oh!"

"It's as hard work learning as teaching, or harder! We ought to have the same salary—equal pay for equal work!" said Bunter, blinking impressively at the Famous Five. "A chap ought to be paid as much for conducting a 'bus as for conducting an orchestra—in fact, more! Everybody ought to be paid as much as everybody else, or a little over!"

"I don't quite see how—"

"That's because you're not a Bolshevik—you haven't any sense, you see!"

"Thanks!"

"I speak plainly," said Bunter. "The fact is, I'm a chap with a mission—it's my mission to wake you up out of the slumber of slavish submission—"

"Is that from the 'Weekly War-Whoop'?"

"Yes, that's the way they talk. Now, I want you fellows to back me up, and make Greyfriars the first Bolshevik school in England. I'll finish this cake, if you don't mind—"

"But we do mind."

"It makes no difference—I'm going to finish it. It's my cake as much as yours!"

"Only under Bolshevism," said Harry Wharton, "and we're not Bolsheviks yet. Let that cake alone. You've scoffed half of it already!"

"I'm going to finish it. I'm going to help myself to anything I choose!" said Bunter. "I'm going—"

"You are!" said Wharton.

And Bunter went—suddenly.

There was a bump in the passage, and the door of Study No. 1 closed upon the disciple of Lenin and Trotsky.

"Yah! Beast!" came a howl through the keyhole.

And the Greyfriars Bolshevik fled.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Little Bolshevism!

BILLY BUNTER was the object of great attention in the Common-room that evening.

By that time all the Lower School had heard of Bunter's remarkable new departure.

Billy Bunter's intellectual powers were not really very great; they were, perhaps, about on a level with his remarkable new doctrines.

That unfortunate discovery of the "Weekly War-Whoop" had quite intoxicated the fat junior with new and indigestible ideas.

It was very unfortunate that he had found it; certainly he would never have given a penny for it. It was odd, too, that the proprietors of the "War-Whoop" should charge a penny for it. Considering what a tremendous message they had for mankind, it was really surprising that they should charge mankind a penny a time for hearing it. But they did. It was barely possible that the "War-Whoop" gentlemen gave more thought to the pennies than to mankind.

And, considering their message again, that was very surprising, too. For when Bolshevism came along money would not be of much use. Possibly the "War-Whoop" gentlemen did not expect it to come along very soon; and meanwhile did not object to feathering their nests.

Bunter was by no means displeased by the unusual attention he was receiving.

He loved the limelight at all times.

Also, he was very pleased to adopt an attitude of intellectual superiority. True, his superiority in that line was admitted by no one but William George Bunter. But it was said of old that wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it. Bunter felt that that was the case now.

Bolshevism, in Bunter's case, filled a long-felt want, as it were. Hitherto, he had been rather Bolshevistic without knowing it. When he raided a cake from another fellow's study, he did it in fear of the other fellow's boot. But, under Bolshevism, raiding another fellow's cake was very far from being a blameworthy action. Bolshevistically, if he wanted a cake he was entitled to it. It was probable, however, that he would still be in danger of the owner's boot. The owner of the cake was much less likely to take a Bolshevistic view of the transaction.

Bolsover major came up to the Owl of the Remove as the latter plumped down into an armchair. There was a grin on Bolsover's rugged face.

"So you're a Bolshevik now, Bunt?" he asked.

Billy Bunter gave a lofty nod.

"You've got it," he answered. "I've thought it all out, you know!"

"What with?" asked Bolsover, in surprise.

"With my superior intellect!" snapped Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! And that's why you were cheeking Quelchy in class this afternoon?"

"I'd cheek the Head, if he talked to me!" answered Bunter. "I'm not going to stand on ceremony with anybody, I can tell you. Let me hear any more rot from Wingate or Loder, that's all! I'll tell 'em off!"

"I'd like to hear you telling Wingate off!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"You wait and see!" answered Bunter darkly.

"The waitfulness may be terrific, but the seefulness will not be great!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Let's hear some more about it!" said Bolsover major. "I'm rather interested in Bolshevism. Bolsheviks are allowed to steal anything they can lay their paws on—what?"

"Not exactly that. They're redistributors of wealth," explained Bunter. "If a chap has more than he needs, and another chap has less than he wants, the other chap takes it. See?"

"But suppose the owner objects?"

"He doesn't if he's a Bolshevik."

"But suppose he isn't?"

"Well, then he gets knocked over!"

"I see. And who's to settle whether one chap has more than he needs? He might think he'd only got enough."

"Well, you see—ahem—"

"Suppose, for instance, I thought you didn't need a watch," said Bolsover.

"Eh?"

"Suppose I thought I wanted your watch—"

"What?"

"Then, as a Bolshevik, you'd be bound to give it to me, wouldn't you?"

"I jolly well wouldn't!" roared Bunter.

"Suppose I were to take it, then, in the Trotsky style—like that?" said Bolsover major, with a chuckle.

He took Bunter by the collar and jammed him hard into his chair, and with his disengaged hand jerked Bunter's watch away. There was a roar of laughter from the juniors. They were interested to see how Bunter liked Bolshevism when it came home to roost, as it were.

"Look here—" yelled Bunter.

"Thanks for the watch!" said Bolsover major affably. "It's jolly good of you to give me this watch, Bunter."

"I haven't—I didn't—I wasn't—"

"Well, I've taken it; it comes to the same thing!"

"It doesn't!" howled Bunter.

"Gimme my watch, you beast!"

"It's only a measly rolled-gold one!" said Bolsover major, inspecting it. "Still, I can sell it for a few bob—"

"You beast! That's my twenty-guinea gold watch!"

"Mine, you mean!"

"It isn't yours—it's mine!" shrieked Bunter.

"How can it be yours when I've taken it away from you?" demanded Bolsover major. "I want it, and I don't think you need it. Doesn't that settle it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gimme my watch!"

"You object to my taking it?"

"Yes, you beast!"

"Then I shall have to knock you over, I suppose!"

"Eh?"

"That's what you said, isn't it?"

"I—I—I— Yaroooh!"

Bolsover major, whose sense of humour was of a rather rough variety, knocked the fat junior over, and Billy Bunter sprawled on the floor with a loud yell.

"Now the watch is mine, I suppose?" asked Bolsover.

"Yaroooh! No!"

"Do you want me to knock you over again?"

"Nunno! I—I—"

"Of course, I'm not well up in Bolshevism. Do I have to keep on knocking you over till the watch is mine?" asked Bolsover.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No! Oh, my hat! Gimme my watch! You've got it all wrong! Bolshevism doesn't apply to watches!" gasped Bunter.

"I think it does, in this case," answered Bolsover major. "Of course, I'm only a beginner, but I've got that far. This watch is mine!"

"It isn't! It's mine. I tell you—"

"Thanks very much!" said Bolsover; and he put the watch in his pocket and walked away, amid yells of laughter.

Billy Bunter blinked after him, with a furious blink that looked like cracking his spectacles. It dawned upon his fat brain that—Bolshevism notwithstanding—there was a good deal to be said for the old custom of respecting the rights of property.

"I—I say, you fellows, you ain't going to let Bolsover keep my watch!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Your own fault!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You shouldn't have started Bolshevism here, Bunter!"

"I'll jolly well complain to Quelchy!" howled Bunter. "I'm not going to have my watch stolen!"

"Not stolen—only Bolshevicked!" grinned Bob.

"Look here, Bolsover—"

Bolsover looked.

"That's not a bad tie you've got on, Bunter!" he said. "Is that a new tie?"

"Yes, you beast!"

"I think I'll have it!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I rather fancy that tie. I don't think you need it. I know I want it, so I'll have it!"

Billy Bunter dodged.

"Come here!" roared Bolsover major. "I tell you I want that tie!"

"You—you—you beast! You're not going to have my necktie!" shrieked Bunter.

"It isn't yours; it's mine, if I want it!" chuckled Bolsover major. "That's good Bolshevism!"

He rushed at Bunter, and Bunter dodged out of the doorway.

"Come back!" roared Bolsover. "I'm going to knock you over—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then the tie will be mine. Come back!"

But William George Bunter did not come back. He had had enough Bolshevism for that evening.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Backing Up Bunter!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! That's Bunter's fist!"

It was the following day, and the Famous Five had come in after cricket practice, following lessons. A number of juniors were gathered round the notice-board, and Harry Wharton & Co. joined them.

There was a new paper on the board, and it was in the well-known, sprawling handwriting of William George Bunter of the Remove. If the handwriting had not been recognised the spelling certainly would have been. Even before he became a Bolshevik Bunter had always allowed himself very considerable freedom in matters of orthography.

The paper ran:

"NOTISS!

"A Meating is called for six o'clock precisely in the Rag. The Meating will be adressed by W. G. Bunter.

"Subject: Bolshevism.

"Kwestions will be aloud, to be folowed by discushun. All the Lower School are speshally invited. Come and have your minds oapened. Come and be enlitened. Come and help to inawgurate the new Rane of Libberty! Back up! Back up! Back up!

"(Sined) W. G. BUNTER."

"The silly ass!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Catch me attending his silly meeting!"

"So he's still going it!" remarked Bob Cherry. "And he wants to be backed up!"

"The backupfulness will not be terrific!"

"I don't know," said Bob thoughtfully. "After all, Bunter's in our Form; and if he wants to be backed up, isn't it up to us?"

"What are you driving at?" asked Wharton.

"Backing up Bunter!" answered Bob. "Of course, there's more ways than one of backing up a Bolshevik. It's close on six now. Let's go to the meeting!"

"I'd rather go to tea!"

"It won't take long to back up Bunter; and we can have tea afterwards. Come on!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, if it's a wheeze—"

"What do you think it is, fathead?" said Bob. "Do you think I'm going to take to Bolshevism in my old age? Come on!"

"Oh, all right!"

And the Famous Five started for the Rag. Billy Bunter was already there; but though it was close on six, no audience had arrived, so far. Apparently the Lower School of Greyfriars were not keen on hearing a "meating" addressed by W. G. Bunter—subject: Bolshevism—and did not want to be "enlitened."

But the example of the Famous Five was followed, as it generally was, and a good many of the Remove fellows walked after them to the Rag.

W. G. Bunter blinked at the juniors with satisfaction over his big spectacles. The "meating" was not to be a frost, after all.

"I say, you fellows, you're only just in time!" he exclaimed.

"Better late than never!" answered Bob Cherry cheerily. "We've come to back you up, Bunter!"

"Good!"

"Are you ready?" inquired Bob.

"Eh? Wait till the audience gets in!" said Billy, little guessing the kind of backing up he was to receive. "Hurry up, you fellows! Don't come in late and spoil the address! Glad to see you, Mauleverer! It will do you good. You're a bloated landowner!"

"By gad! Am I?" asked Lord Mauleverer, in surprise.

"Yes, rather—you are!"

"Oh gad!" Lord Mauleverer glanced down at his own slim figure, and then at Bunter's ample form, and smiled.

"The bloatfulness is a boot on the other foot!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Buck up, Bunter!" said Squiff encouragingly. "We're all ready to listen to the epoch-making eloquence. Turn on the gas!"

"Oh, really, Field—"

"Go it, Bunter!"

There were a dozen juniors in the Rag now, and Bunter decided to begin. A dozen disciples was something to start with; and Bunter had great faith in his fat eloquence. He mounted on a chair to start.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I'm going to explain the principles of Bolshevism in simple language suitable to your intellects—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Looking round us," said Bunter, "what do we see?"

"The walls!" suggested Skinner.

"And the windows!" remarked Snoop.

"And a silly, fat idiot!" said Bolsover major.

"Looking round us," roared Bunter, "we see a world full of inequalities! Rich and poor, and—"

"And poor and rich!" suggested Hazeldene.

"Exactly. Looking nearer home, what do we see in this school? Masters and pupils. Is that right? Is it equal? Is it just? Masters drawing salaries, and laying into us with a pointer! Is that freedom? No! Who's the Head? Who's Quelchy? Who's anybody? Isn't everybody as good as everybody else? Of course. Why are we downtrodden? Because the common herd haven't the pluck to follow the lead of the master-spirits of the age. Now," added Bunter impressively, "I'm not going in for any false modesty. The truth is the truth. I'm one of the master-spirits of the age!"

"Oh!"

"Great Scott!"

"Follow my lead! Back me up! No lessons, excepting when we choose!" said Bunter eloquently. "If old Quelch objects, we'll collar him, and give him the pointer. If the Head cuts up rusty, we'll mop him up—"

"Phew!"

"And lick him with his own birch—"

"Great pip!"

"We'll form a committee, presided over by me, to run the place," said Bunter, his eyes gleaming behind his spectacles. "Liberty, equality, fraternity—that's the idea! Plenty of grub—as many helpings as we like! That's important!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We loaf into the Form-room when we please; we stroll out when we're tired of Quelchy's jaw. As for the prefects, we abolish them. We shall not allow any prefects in the school. We give 'em a good hiding all round as a warning!"

"Do we?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"We do!" said Bunter firmly. "Wingate, and Gwynne, and Loder, and the rest. Who are they, anyhow? Who's the Sixth? Why should the Sixth be considered before the Lower Fourth? Isn't the Remove as good as any Form at Greyfriars?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We shall insist upon the Remove being placed on an equality with the Sixth!" said Bunter.

"And the Second and Third on an equality with us?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Eh? No! Certainly not! Don't be an ass, Nugent! There's a limit, of course!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was evidently like most other reformers; he had a desire to level down to his own level, and stop there. To go farther than that was evidently to go too far!

"All you fellows have got to do is to follow my lead, and we'll Bolshevik them!" continued Bunter. "I'm a born leader! Some chaps are born to command, you know. I'm one of them!"

"Oh!"

"You back me up, and the thing's done! We'll tackle Quelchy first, and give him a lesson. What do you say?"

"We've come here to back you up!" answered Bob Cherry. "Are you ready?"

"Yes, rather! You follow my lead, and—"

"That's a different matter. We're not going to follow your lead. We're going to back you up!"

"Eh? It's the same thing, isn't it?"

"Not quite!" chuckled Bob.

"I don't see—"

"You will soon! Back up!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a rush at the orator. Billy Bunter was seized in four or five pairs of hands, and backed up against the wall with a terrific concussion.

Bump!

"Yoop! Wharrer you at?" spluttered Bunter. "You silly dummies! Wharrer you up to?"

"Backing you up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter's podgy person bumped on the wall again, and there was a roar.

"Yaroooooop!"

"Back him up!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

Bump!

"Yow-ow-woooooop! I didn't mean back me up against the wall, you silly chumps!" shrieked Bunter. "I didn't mean that at all!"

"But we did!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here— I say, you fellows— look here— Leggo! You back me up—I—I mean, don't back me up—"

Bump!

"Yoooooop!"



Loder jumped up as the fat junior reached him and seized him by the collar. "Rescue!" howled Bunter. "Back up! Pile in!" (See Chapter 7.)

Billy Bunter collapsed at the foot of the wall. He sat there and gasped for breath.

"Gerroooogh! Grooogh! Beasts! Grooogh! Yurrgggghh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors streamed out of the Rag, leaving William George Bunter still seated on the floor, collapsing against the wall, and panting. He blinked at their retreating forms over his spectacles, which had slipped down his fat little nose, and gasped, and gasped, and gasped, as if for a wager. Bob Cherry looked back from the doorway.

"Want any more backing up, Bunter?" he inquired.

But the unfortunate Bolshevik did not reply. He couldn't! He was still struggling to get his second wind.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Bolsheviks!

THE next day Billy Bunter's fat brow might have been observed wearing a deep frown.

He was feeling discouraged.

His perusal of the "Weekly War-Whoop" had filled his fat mind with new ideas, if not with very valuable ones; and he had found many things in Bolshevism that agreed with his own manners and customs. His ideas on the subject of "meum and tuum" had always been a little vague.

Bunter, in his mind's eye, had seen himself the leader of a movement carrying all before him—a sort of Lenin or

Trotsky on a small scale. He fancied himself in that role. As a born leader, it was evidently his place to lead. The unfortunate thing was that nobody else could see it.

His first attempt at Bolshevism, in the Form-room, had been cut short by Mr. Quelch in the most drastic way. Since that occasion he had not ventured to address the Remove-master as "Quelchy"; neither had he pleased himself about the time he started and left off lessons. There was a plentiful lack of support for the Bolshevik in his Form.

Bunter reflected bitterly that a truly great man never was understood or appreciated by the common herd. Even Lenin and Trotsky had their detractors. It was quite certain that the common herd at Greyfriars did not appreciate Bunter at anything like his own valuation.

But the Owl of the Remove did not think of giving in—yet.

Bolshevism, and communism of goods, was an excellent idea from Bunter's point of view; as he never had any money, it seemed to him a first-class idea for money to be held in common. If his celebrated postal-order had arrived, it was possible that his views would have undergone some modification—till the cash was expended. But that was not likely to happen.

"It's rotten," he told his study-mate, Peter Todd. "Simply sickening, Peter! A chap with my intellectual powers is simply wasted here!"

Peter Todd nodded a cordial assent. "That's right!" he said. "Greyfriars

isn't really the place for you, Bunter. Colney Hatch is nearer your mark!"

"You silly ass!" howled Bunter. "I say, Peter—"

"Ring off, old nut!" answered Peter. "I'm going down to cricket. Why don't you come, instead of talking piffle?"

"I've no time for cricket. I say, old chap, that beast Bolsover won't give me my watch—"

"His watch, you mean!" grinned Toddy.

"Mine!" howled Bunter. "He says he's going to give it to me when I give up Bolshevism. I say, Peter, you could lick Bolsover major. I'll hold your jacket, old chap. You make him give me my watch!"

"Bow-wow!" answered Peter.

And he took his bat and made for Little Side, leaving the Owl of the Remove frowning.

"Beast!" growled Bunter.

It was a fine afternoon, and a half-holiday at Greyfriars. The Remove were playing the Upper Fourth, and the First Eleven were playing a visiting team of seniors from Highcliffe. Nearly everybody was out of doors. Billy Bunter had thought of addressing a mass meeting in the quad that afternoon, but he had had to give up the idea. It was only too clear that the Greyfriars fellows preferred cricket to Bunter's oratory.

Billy Bunter was lounging disconsolately in the Remove passage when Harold Skinner joined him. The slacker

of the Remove, like Bunter, had no time for cricket.

"Hallo, Bunter!" said Skinner, with unusual affability.

Bunter blinked at him.

"I say, Skinner," he began, encouraged by Skinner's affability, "I'm expecting a postal-order this afternoon—"

"Yes, I've heard about that before," said Skinner. "Never mind your postal-order now. The fact is, Bunter, I've been thinking over what you were saying in the Rag yesterday."

"Have you?" grunted Bunter, blinking at him suspiciously. He did not quite trust Harold Skinner.

Skinner nodded.

"Yes; and it seems to me, Bunter, that there was a terrific lot of truth in it, the way you put it," he said.

"Oh!"

"Some other fellows think as I do," went on Skinner blandly. "I've been talking to them in my study—Stott and Snoop and Bolsover major and Hazeldene, and Treluce and Micky Desmond. You see, there's quite a lot of fellows ready to back you up."

Bunter jumped back.

"None of your larks!" he exclaimed. He remembered Bob Cherry's backing up in the Rag. It was a painful recollection.

Skinner looked grieved.

"Larks!" he replied. "Really, Bunter, we're not thinking of larking. I regard the matter as a very serious one. As it stands, we're a downtrodden lot. The prefects have it all their own way. Loder of the Sixth, for instance—look what a bully he is. Under Bolshevism, Loder couldn't bully us. The question is whether we can find a leader."

Billy Bunter swelled a little.

"I've offered to lead the fellows," he said. "They've refused. There's no spirit in this school."

"Some of us are ready," said Skinner. "Step into my study, old chap. Say a few words to the fellows—in your eloquent way, you know—and I'll answer for it that they'll follow you anywhere. You see, Bunter, you're one of those fellows who are born to command, and quality like that is bound to be recognised sooner or later!"

"I'm glad you can see it!" said Bunter loftily.

"I'm not the only fellow who can see it. Come in, old chap!"

Billy Bunter was already feeling several inches taller as he rolled into Study No. 11 after Skinner. There was quite a gathering in that study—Stott and Snoop—who were Skinner's study-mates—and Bolsover major, Hazeldene, Micky Desmond, Treluce, Trevor, and Fisher T. Fish. They were all grinning; but they became serious as the Owl of the Remove rolled in.

"Here's Bunter!" said Skinner. "Bunter's our man, I think. He's prepared to lead us."

"What-ho!" said Bunter.

"I guess Bunter is the genuine goods!" said Fisher T. Fish admiringly.

"Bravo, Bunter!"

"Hurrah!"

It was quite a chorus of admiration.

Choruses of admiration were a new experience for William George Bunter. He swelled with pride, and swelled and swelled, till he seemed in danger of sharing the fate of the frog in the fable. His fat little nose was elevated a little by nature, but it was much more elevated now. Admiration and cheers were what Bunter felt to be his due—long denied. It was like the king coming into his own at last!

"I say, you fellows—" he began.

"Go it, Bunter!"

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"Bravo!"

Bolsover major produced the fat rolled-gold watch from his pocket. He stepped towards Bunter, dropped on one knee, and presented it.

"Here's your watch, Bunter," he said meekly. "Excuse my little joke. I know better now!"

"I excuse you!" said Bunter loftily.

There was a chortle from Snoop, but he changed it into a cough as Bunter blinked at him.

"And you're ready to lead us, Bunter?" asked Bolsover major.

"Certainly! Shall we tackle the Head?" asked Bunter recklessly.

"Phew!"

"I'm game! Let's raid him in his study," said Bunter. "You follow my lead. I'm your man!"

Skinner appeared on the point of choking.

"N-n-not the Head, to begin with," he said. "What about Loder of the Sixth? He's a prefect. Let's rag Loder."

"Oh, we'll begin with Loder, if you like!" said Bunter. He blinked round at the assembly. "How many are there of us? Nine—and me, that's ten—plenty of us to handle Loder."

"You—you really mean it, intirely?" ejaculated Micky Desmond.

"You'll see!"

"Well, if Bunter leads we're ready to follow," said Bolsover major. "All we need is a leader."

"A gallant leader!" said Skinner.

"Chap born to command!" remarked Stott.

Bunter raised a fat hand.

"Follow me!" he said.

"Hurrah!"

"Lead on, Bunter!"

And Billy Bunter led on. Skinner & Co. followed him from the study, and down the stairs. Behind their great leader they were grinning at one another, but when Bunter glanced back they contrived to look serious.

"Back me up, you know!" said Bunter impressively.

"Yes, rather! Lead on!"

"When I rush in you rush after me, and collar Loder on the spot, before he can get to his cane," said Bunter. "Just as well not to give him a chance to use his cane."

"Just as well!" murmured Snoop.

"Have him down, and kneel on him," continued Bunter. "Then we'll give him a jolly good thrashing with his own cane, as a warning."

"Good egg!"

"Then we'll have tea in his study, and make him wait on us."

"Bravo!"

"Come on!"

Bunter, almost bursting with importance, led the way to the Sixth Form quarters. His followers, even yet, could hardly believe that the fatuous Owl of the Remove really intended to lead a raid into the study of Gerald Loder, the bully of the Sixth. But it was soon clear that Bunter meant business. The support of Skinner & Co. seemed to him like the beginning of the end. The Greyfriars Bolshevik was coming to the top at last—his natural place!

He reached Loder's study door, and blinked round at his followers.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!"

"Follow me!"

Bunter hurled open the door and rushed into the study.

At the same moment Skinner & Co. spun round and rushed in the opposite direction. Bunter the Bolshevik was left to deal with Loder of the Sixth "on his own"—as he might have guessed was Skinner's intention had he not been quite so obtuse.

In a second or two the passage was clear. Skinner & Co. fled for the quadrangle, suffocating with laughter, and wondering how their gallant leader was getting on with the bully of the Sixth.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Left in the Lurch!

GERALD LODER of the Sixth was not in a good temper that afternoon.

He had been left out of the eleven that was playing Highcliffe First on Big Side, and that fact did not make him amiable.

Loder had retired to his study, like Achilles to his tent, in a very sulky and savage mood, and he was smoking a cigarette and looking over a racing paper when his door was rudely hurled open and Bunter rushed in.

Loder looked up, almost transfixed with astonishment.

"Come on!" roared Bunter. "Seize him!"

"Good gad!" ejaculated Loder.

"Back up!" yelled Bunter.

In the belief that his loyal followers were just behind, Billy Bunter rushed straight at Loder.

The prefect jumped up as the fat junior reached him, and seized him by the collar. Bunter spun round in his powerful grip.

Read

"SCHOOLBOY AND BOXER!"

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"THE GEM."

Out This Wednesday.





Billy Bunter rolled out into the dormitory passage in his pyjamas, and yelled after Skinner & Co. "Will you gimme my clobber, you rotters?" (See Chapter 10.)

"Rescue!" he howled. "Back up! Pile in!"

"By gad!" exclaimed Loder in amazement. "What's the matter with the fat idiot? Are you mad, Bunter?"

"Back up!" shrieked Bunter.

Loder glanced at the doorway. It was empty, and so was the passage outside. He shook Bunter vigorously.

"What are you up to?" he demanded.

"Yaroooh!"

"What do you mean?" roared Loder.

"I—I say, you fellows— Oh, my hat! Where are they?"

Billy Bunter blinked round in utter dismay as he discovered that he was alone with Loder of the Sixth. His followers had melted away like snow in the sunshine, and by that time they were on the other side of the quadrangle, chortling.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

Loder shook him angrily.

"What does this mean?" he demanded. "How dare you rush into a prefect's study, yelling like a lunatic!"

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, I didn't—"

"What!"

"I—I mean, I wasn't—"

"You fat, little idiot—"

"I—I mean— The beasts! Oh, the rotters! They were pulling my leg all the time!" gasped Bunter. "Oh, the cads! They never meant to back me up! Ow!"

"What did you come here for?"

"I—I—I came to—to—to—" The unfortunate Bolshevik's courage was oozing

out at the ends of his fat fingers now. He wriggled as Loder picked up a cane with his free hand. "I—I say, Loder, I—I didn't come here to rag you, you know—"

"Rag me?" repeated Loder.

"N-n-not at all! I—I wasn't going to give you a thrashing with your own cane, Loder."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I wasn't going to make an example of you—I—I wasn't really, Loder!" gasped Bunter, wriggling in the prefect's powerful grip. "I—I just looked in to—to—to ask you how you were, old chap."

"Well, my hat!" said the astonished prefect.

"I—I say, Loder, can I go now?"

"Not just yet," answered Loder grimly. "I haven't done with you yet, Bunter!"

"I—I'd rather let the matter drop now, Loder!" stammered the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"Would you?" grinned Loder. "Something else is going to drop first, you cheeky young rascal! So you came here to rag me, did you?"

"Nunno! I—I wouldn't think of such a thing, Loder!" wailed Bunter. "I—I respect you too much, old chap. I don't believe you're such a beastly rotter as all the fellows say. I don't, really. I—I've often told the chaps that I don't believe you smoke and back horses, Loder."

"What!" roared Loder.

"I—I mean, I don't know anything

about it, Loder. I—I mean—that is to say— Yarooooh!"

Loder's cane was at work now. With his left hand gripping Bunter's collar, Loder plied the cane with his right. Loder of the Sixth was always liberal with the cane, but on this occasion it could not be denied that the prefect had some reason. And he did not even know that Billy Bunter was a Bolshevik. Perhaps that was all the better for Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh crumbs! Leggo! I say, Loder I— Help! Fire! Murder! Yoop!" roared Bunter. "Oh, my hat! Yarooooh! Leggo!"

Loder did not let go. He whacked away with the cane as if he were enjoying himself. Perhaps he was!

Whack, whack, whack!

"There!" panted Loder at last. "That'll be a lesson to you, Bunter!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Now get out!"

"Wow-wow-wow-wow-wow!"

"Do you want some more?" roared Loder, flourishing the cane.

Apparently Bunter didn't, for he made a frantic jump for the door. Loder gave him another lick with the cane as he went, to accelerate his retreat, and slammed the door after him.

Billy Bunter scuttled away down the passage like a rabbit. He was not thinking any longer of making an example of Loder. He was only anxious to put a good distance between himself and the prefect's study.

He came out breathlessly into the quadrangle, and rolled away gasping. There was a shout from the direction of the cricket-field:

"Well hit! Bravo, Wingate!"

Billy Bunter did not heed it. He was not interested in cricket. He rolled on, gasping painfully. Loder had laid on the cane not wisely but too well.

"Hallo, Trotsky minor!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How did you get on with Loder?"

Billy Bunter blinked at Skinner & Co. They surrounded him with grinning faces.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major.

"Have you made an example of Loder? Did you give him a thrashing with his own cane?"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Hallo! Did you get the thrashing, Bunter?" asked Skinner.

"Wow-wow-ow! Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll tell you what, Bunter!" said Skinner cheerfully. "Let's make an example of the Head next. You lead us to his study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter snorted, and rolled away. He did not intend to lead any more Bolshevik attacks that afternoon.

"Aren't you going to lead us?" yelled Bolsover major. "Don't you want to make an example of the Head? What about giving him a flogging with his own birch?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled on without replying. He left Skinner & Co. yelling with merriment.

But the hapless Bolshevik was not feeling very merry. For an hour, at least, Billy Bunter's voice might have been heard under the old elms, and the burden of his song was:

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow! Wow!"

Bunter the Bolshevik, like Rachel of old, mourned and would not be comforted—till the effects of the licking wore off!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Lord Mauleverer Is Not Taking Any!

BOLSHEVISM—

"Cheese it!"

"Bolshevism—"

"Dry up!" roared Peter Todd.

Not possessing Billy Bunter's superiority of intellect, Peter was fed up on the subject of Bolshevism. Besides, he was hungry after the cricket, and he wanted his tea. From Peter's point of view, Bunter would have been better employed using his hands than his tongue.

"But I say, Peter," urged Billy Bunter. "According to the chaps who write in this paper—"

"Bother 'em!"

"According to them, Bolshevism stands for a redistribution of wealth in—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Chaps who haven't any, you know, are justified in helping themselves from those who have. Quite simple, isn't it?" said Bunter. "I hope you're not looking for the sardines, Peter?"

"I jolly well am!" answered Peter Todd, glancing round from the study cupboard. "Where are they?"

"Confiscated!" answered Bunter calmly.

"Whatted?" howled Peter.

"Confiscated! Being hungry this afternoon, I confiscated the sardines to my own use," said Bunter. "You needn't look for the jam, either. I've confiscated that, too. I wanted it."

"You—you—you fat villain!" gasped Peter Todd.

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"Oh, really, Toddy—as a Bolshevik, you know—"

"I'll Bolshevik you!" exclaimed the exasperated Peter, and he made a jump for a cricket-stump that stood in a corner of the study.

Bunter made a jump for the door.

He caught a lunge as he went, however, and he disappeared with a fearful howl.

"Yaroooh! Beast!"

"You fat rotter, come back and have some more!" roared Peter.

"Yow-ow! Beast!"

Peter Todd looked wrathfully round the study in search of something for tea. It was too late for tea in Hall; and the Greyfriars Bolshevik had cleared Study No. 7 to the last crumb. Breathing wrath, Toddy went along to Study No. 1 in search of hospitality, and he found Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent at tea there.

Fortunately, there was a good supply in Study No. 1, and the Bolshevik had not been there, and Peter found a welcome. When Billy Bunter blinked in at the door a little later Wharton and Nugent had no time to deal with him: Peter charged at his fat study-mate, and Bunter slammed the door and fled.

He fled into Lord Mauleverer, who was ambling gently along the Remove passage with his hands in his pockets. There was a gasp from his lordship as he staggered against the wall.

"Oh gad!"

"Yow! Skinner, you silly ass—"

"Wow! I wish it was Skinner!" groaned Lord Mauleverer. "You fat idiot, you've winded me! Wow!"

"Oh, it's you, Mauly!" said Billy Bunter, setting his spectacles straight on his fat little nose and blinking at Mauleverer.

"I say, I've been looking for you, Mauly!"

"Can't be done!" said Mauly.

"Eh? What can't be done?"

"Nothin' to lend."

"I'm not asking you to lend me anything, am I?" hooted Bunter.

"Oh, my mistake! I thought you were. Nothin' doin', anyway." And Lord Mauleverer detached himself from the wall, and ambled on towards his study. Billy Bunter rolled after him into the study.

Mauly's study-mates were absent, and Mauly indulged in a gentle groan as he noted it. The slacker had hoped to find tea ready. He sat down on the sofa to wait. It did not occur to Mauleverer's lazy mind to get tea himself.

"Hallo! You still there, Bunter?" he asked.

"I'm here, Mauly."

"Go away, will you?"

"No, I won't!" said Bunter.

"Oh, all right! Stay, then! Anythin' for a quiet life," said Mauly placably.

"Don't talk, there's a good chap! If you shut up, it's nearly as good as if you clear off!"

Billy Bunter closed the study door, and turned again to Mauleverer, with a gleam in his little round eyes behind his glasses. Lord Mauleverer did not notice it. His own eyes were half-closed, as they often were. He reclined on the sofa and yawned.

"I've got something rather serious to say to you, Mauly," said Billy Bunter, fixing his eyes—and his glasses—on Mauleverer's face.

"Don't!" yawned his lordship.

"Listen to me!"

"Oh dear! I wish Vivian would come in an' kick you out, Bunter!"

"Listen to me, you silly ass!" said Bunter. "Bolshevism—"

"Are you goin' to talk Bolshevism?"

"Yes."

"Then I'm goin' out."

Lord Mauleverer began to detach him-

self from the sofa. To his surprise, Billy Bunter gave him a powerful shove on the chest, and he reclined on the sofa again suddenly.

"Wow!" gasped his lordship.

"Now listen to me!" said Bunter sternly.

"Oh gad!"

"Bolshevism," said Bunter, "means a redistribution of wealth. See?"

"Yaas."

"You've got no end of wealth Mauly."

"Yaas."

"And I'm rather short of money."

"Yaas."

"Well, then, under Bolshevism, I should collar some of your cash. See?" explained Bunter. "That's what I mean."

Lord Mauleverer sat up and stared at the fat junior. Bunter's face was portentously serious.

"What are you drivin' at, fatty?" asked his lordship politely.

"The redistribution of wealth. Now, I dare say you've got as much as five pounds about you, Mauly?"

"Yaas!"

"I'm willing to take half."

"Are you, by gad!"

"That's moderate," said Bunter. "In Russia, the wealthy idle classes have had to hand over everything. Nobody in Russia gets any grub unless he works!"

"Lucky for you you don't live in Russia, old bean!"

Billy Bunter did not heed that remark.

"Halves!" he said. "That's very moderate—for a Bolshevik. I'm waiting for my half, Mauly!"

"You can wait, old top!"

"Mind, I mean business!" said Bunter. "You have to hand it over, or else I collar it. See? That's Bolshevism!"

"My hat! Is it?"

"Exactly! You hand over a fair share of your wealth, or I take the poker to you. See?"

Lord Mauleverer blinked at him. Billy Bunter looked as if he meant business.

"I see!" assented his lordship, slowly. "That's the Lenin and Trotsky style, is it? This is my style, Bunter!"

His lordship's laziness suddenly dropped from him as he jumped up from the sofa. He seized Bunter by the collar, and spun him round towards the door. The fat junior yelled.

"Leggo! Stop kicking me, you beast! Oh crumbs!"

Biff, biff, biff!

Lord Mauleverer threw open the study door, and his last kick landed Bunter in the passage. The Owl of the Remove collapsed there, roaring.

"Have I made my meanin' clear?" asked Mauleverer gently.

"Yow-ow-wooop!"

"You can drop in again when you want some more redistribution of wealth," said his lordship. "I warn you that you'll get more kicks than ha'pence. Ta-ta!"

The study door closed, and Lord Mauleverer returned to the sofa. He was not disturbed there again. Bunter the Bolshevik had abandoned the idea of the redistribution of wealth, so far as Lord Mauleverer was concerned.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Getting Serious!

BUNTER! What are you up to?" Harry Wharton uttered that exclamation, as he looked into Study No. 1 a couple of hours later.

Wharton had come up from the Common-room for a book; and he was surprised to find a light burning in the

study. As he stepped in, Billy Bunter spun round from Frank Nugent's desk with a guilty look on his fat face.

Wharton stared at him, his face growing very stern. The desk was locked; but if it had not been locked—Frank Nugent kept the funds of the Remove Cricket Club in that desk.

"I—I—I say!" stammered Bunter.

"What are you doing here?" demanded Wharton angrily.

"N-n-nothing!"

"You were trying to open Nugent's desk!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"I—I wasn't, you know! I—I haven't got an old key from Fishy to open it. Besides—"

"What?"

"Besides, the key doesn't fit—"

"You fat rascal!" shouted Wharton.

He made a stride towards the Owl of the Remove and seized him by the collar, shaking him vigorously. There was a clink as a key dropped to the floor.

"Ow! Leggo!" howled Bunter. "D-d-don't shake me like that, you beast! You'll make my—ow!—specs fall off—wow!—and if they get busted—ow! you'll have to pip-pip-pay for them—wow!"

Bump! The captain of the Remove sat Bunter down on the study carpet with a loud concussion. He was really angry, and a little alarmed—for Bunter! So long as Bunter's Bolshevism only took the form of "chin-wag" it did not matter very much; but when the egregious Owl began to put it into practice in this way it mattered very much indeed.

Wharton stepped to the study doorway, and called to Peter Todd, who was in the passage talking to Squiff.

"What's up?" asked Peter.

"Bunter's taken to burgling!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"What he calls Bolshevism. He was trying to get at Nugent's desk!" said Harry. "Call the fellows here, will you, Toddy, while I keep an eye on the fat idiot? He's got to be dealt with!"

"Oh, my only hat!" said Peter.

The Co. were soon called up to the study, and Squiff and Peter came in with them, and the door was closed. Billy Bunter plumped himself in the armchair, and blinked defiance at the chums of the Remove. He was not looking at all ashamed of himself.

"Well, my word!" said Bob Cherry, when Wharton had explained the matter. "So the potty porpoise is taking to stealing, is he?"

"Tain't stealing!" snapped Bunter.

"What is it, then?" demanded Frank Nugent wrathfully.

"Redistribution of wealth!"

"You admit that you were after the cricket funds?" exclaimed Squiff.

Billy Bunter nodded coolly.

"You fellows don't understand Bolshevism," he said. "It's coming, I can tell you that! You read the 'Weekly War-Whoop'! Bolshevism is coming! Nobody will be able to call his hat or his boots his own when Bolshevism fairly gets going in this country. You'll see!"

"Phew!" murmured Squiff.

The Co. regarded Bunter blankly. The new and amazing ideas he had absorbed from that valuable and instructive journal, the "Weekly War-Whoop," had evidently got into his head—confusing his fat brain, never very clear.

That state of mental confusion was likely to land Bunter into very serious trouble unless he could be cured. The chums of the Remove realised that it was a serious case.

"What on earth are we going to do with the fat idiot?" asked Harry Wharton, at last.

"We ought to take him to Quelchy!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I don't mind!" said Bunter, recklessly. "I'll tell Quelchy what I think, fast enough! Blow Quelchy!"

"We don't want to get the fat Owl flogged, or kicked out of the school!" said Peter Todd, with a worried brow. "You see, this is only idiocy—and a fellow can't help being an idiot. Suppose we give him a thundering good hiding—"

"You look out!" yelled Bunter darkly. "You wait till I get some bombs, you know, when they object to the redistribution of wealth. Why, I'd think nothing of blowing Greyfriars sky-high!"

Bob Cherry tapped his forehead.

"It's come!" he said.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

"The people who print that rubbish ought to be stopped," he said. "It's all very well to laugh at it; but it's dangerous for weak minds. What on earth can we do with this silly idiot?"

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"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Let's give him some Bolshevism!" suggested Bob Cherry. "Hair of the dog, you know—it may cure him. For instance, I'll have his jacket. You can have his waistcoat, Toddy!"

"Good!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, I say, you fellows—" howled Bunter. "Leggo! Wharrer you up to? You let my jacket alone! Oh crumbs!"

Bunter's protests were not heeded. All the juniors considered it a good idea to cure a Bolshevik by an application to himself, of his own principles.

Billy Bunter's jacket was whipped off, and his waistcoat followed. Squiff took his collar and tie, and Nugent appropriated his boots. Johnny Bull and Wharton took a sock each.

Billy Bunter, reduced to his shirt and trousers, stood and roared.

"Yah! You rotters! Gimme my clobber!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What about his bags?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yaroooh! You lemmie bags alone!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think that's enough!" said Wharton, with a chuckle. "Out you go, Bunter! Can't trust Bolsheviks in this study!"

"You—you—you silly ass! I can't go out like this—"

"You can, old scout, and you're going. Lend him your boot, Bob!"

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter found that he could go; in fact, he went very quickly. The chums of the Remove followed him out of the study into the Remove passage. Billy Bunter blinked at them in almost speechless wrath.

"You—you—you rotters!" he gasped. "You're not going to leave me like this!"

"We jolly well are!" answered Bob. "If you want your clobber, you can come down to the Common-room for it!"

"I can't come downstairs like this!" shrieked Bunter.

"That's your look-out!"

"You—you rotters! Beasts—" Oh dear—"

"Bolshevism has its drawbacks, you know!" grinned Bob. "It's liable to come home to roost. Thanks for this clobber, Bunter!"

"Tain't yours, you beast—"

"It's ours now."

And the grinning juniors went downstairs with Bunter's clothes, leaving the unhappy Bolshevik in his shirt and trousers, in a state of speechless wrath, and perhaps beginning to have some lurking doubts about Bolshevism. From one point of view, the community of goods seemed an excellent idea, but from another it certainly seemed to have its drawbacks.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

No Clobber!

"Ow! Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was finding it chilly in the Remove passage. Half a dozen juniors were lounging about the passage watching him; finding the Greyfriars Bolshevik, in his present moulted state, very entertaining. Billy Bunter appealed to them in vain to fetch his "clobber" for him.

"No jolly fear!" said Skinner. "What are you grumbling at, anyhow? Ain't you a Bolshevik?"

"Yah! Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled away to the dormitory staircase. He dared not venture downstairs in his present state, and risk meeting a master or prefect. There was nothing for it but to go to the dormitory and get his other clothes from his box.

Skinner winked at his companions.

"This way!" he murmured.

Skinner and Snoop and Stott and Bolsover major followed Bunter to the Remove dormitory. They found the Owl bending over his box, spluttering with wrath as he turned out his clothes.

"That's mine!" remarked Bolsover major, catching hold of the jacket Bunter had turned out.

"Gimme my jacket!" shrieked Bunter.

"Whose jacket?" demanded Bolsover major.

"Mine!"

"Mine, you mean! I want it."

"I'll have this one," said Skinner.

"How many have you got, Bunter?"

"Only these two, you beast!"

"Then we'll have one each!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, divide up fairly!" exclaimed Snoop. "If you're going to have the

jackets, I'll have the waistcoats—and the socks."

"The boots for me!" said Stott.

Billy Bunter blinked at his humorous Form-fellows, with a blink that endangered his spectacles, as they divided up his property. Of course, from the Bolshevik point of view, it wasn't his property any more than it was anybody else's. But Bunter did not seem to be able to apply his own principles to his own belongings—a weakness shared by many advanced reformers.

"You—you—you rotters!" gasped Bunter. "What am I going to put on, you beasts?"

"Anything you like," grinned Skinner. "Not this clobber! This clobber is ours. I say, you chaps, we can pawn this stuff to-morrow, and raise the wind. I dare say we can get ten bob from old Lazarus on the lot."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You are not going to pawn my clobber, you thieves!" howled Bunter.

"It's our clobber now, my pippin! Where are your principles?"

Skinner & Co. marched out of the dormitory, laden with Bunter's clothes. The fat junior blinked after them in helpless wrath. They had not even left him a pair of socks.

The unfortunate Bolshevik had no alternative but to remain in the dormitory. He turned into bed; and he was glowering there when the Removites came up at half-past nine.

There was a general chortle among the juniors at the sight of the Owl of the Remove.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's your clobber, Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "We're going to lend it to you for to-morrow."

"Lend it me, you beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Yes lend it. Mind, we're not giving it to you!" said Bob warningly.

"You—you rotter, it's mine!"

"Not at all. We're going to lend it to you; but next time you begin Bolsheviking we shall take it off you again. See?"

"The take-off-fulness will be terrific, my esteemed fat idiot!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Have you given up being a Bolshevik?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"No!" yelled Bunter.

"Then look out for squalls next time you begin!"

"Yah! Rotters!"

And with that Bunter rolled over to go to sleep. He was greatly comforted by the return of his "clobber," however. Skinner & Co. had not brought back their loot; and if Bob Cherry had not relented Bunter would have been in difficulties about going down the next morning.

But Skinner had not finished yet. After the other fellows were asleep, the humorist of the Remove slipped out of bed, and he was busy with Bunter's clothes for some minutes.

He chuckled softly as he returned to his bed. There was a surprise—not an agreeable one—waiting for the Owl of the Remove in the morning.

When the rising-bell clanged out in the sunny morning, and the Removites turned out of bed, Billy Bunter regarded them with a sour blink. He was feeling morose. Instead of his intellectual superiority being recognised and admired—instead of being elected the great leader of a great movement—he was the butt of mockery and practical jokes. And his new wheeze, instead of turning out a source of profit, seemed likely to turn out

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a source of decided loss—which caused a suspicion to dawn in Bunter's fat mind that perhaps, after all, there was something amiss with Bolshevism.

Sharing Lord Mauleverer's wealth was quite attractive—but having his own "clobber" collared by humorous juniors was quite another thing. As Hurree Janset Singh expressed it in his wonderful English, it was a boot on the other leg.

Bunter was last out of bed, as usual. He indulged in the brief ablutions which were customary with him—and which Bob Cherry described as a "cat-lick"—and looked round for his clothes.

Most of the Remove had gone down by that time; but Skinner and Snoop and Bolsover major remained. They were watching the Owl with deep interest.

Bunter set his glasses upon his fat little nose, and blinked round for his clothes in vain. Even his trousers had vanished.

"I say, you fellows, have you seen my clobber?" he asked.

"Your clobber!" repeated Skinner. "I've certainly not seen your clobber, Bunter. I didn't know you had any."

"I thought it had been redistributed," remarked Snoop.

And Bolsover major chortled.

"Look here, you beasts, where's my clothes?" roared Bunter.

"If you've got any clothes, you can look for them," grinned Skinner. "My idea is that your wealth—in the shape of clothes—has been redistributed, and that you won't see it again. Come on, you chaps; time we were down!"

"Gimme my clothes!" shrieked Bunter.

"Ta-ta!" answered Skinner.

The juniors left the dormitory.

Billy Bunter gasped with wrath and dismay. He had left it late, as usual, and it was near breakfast-time. He did not want to be late for breakfast—Bunter was the soul of punctuality at meal-times. Besides, there would be trouble with Mr. Quelch if he was late.

He rolled out into the dormitory passage in his pyjamas, and yelled after Skinner & Co.

"Will you gimme my clobber, you rotters?"

Skinner & Co. disappeared downstairs. "Oh dear!" gasped Bunter. He rolled back into the dormitory. "Wha-a-at am I going to do? I—I shall be late for brekker! Oh dear!"

It was quite certain that he couldn't go down in his pyjamas. In a state of desperation he made a round of the other fellows' boxes, looking for clothes to borrow.

Most of them were locked; but he found Lord Mauleverer's box open. But that did not help him much. The garments of the slim Mauly were not of much use to Billy Bunter.

In desperation, he tried them, and there was a long, rending sound as he strove to squeeze on a pair of Lord Mauleverer's lower garments. With a snort of wrath Bunter pitched the burst "bags" across the dormitory.

He rolled to the door again, and looked out—in the faint hope that Skinner would return with his clobber. But there was no sign of Skinner. The humorist of the Remove was evidently keeping up the joke.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter. "The—the awful beasts! I'm late for brekker, and Quelch will be in a wax! Oh dear! I—I—I wish I'd never heard of Bolshevism! Ow!"

The breakfast-bell was ringing, and it

ceased as Bunter blinked out of the dormitory.

The fat junior thought of breakfast and groaned.

He almost made up his mind to go down as he was. But not quite! In a state of simmering fury he rolled back into the dormitory, and sat on his bed and waited. And while he waited he made remarks, not loud, but deep.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Blanketed!

MR. QUELCH glanced along the Remove table, and frowned. He noted at once that Billy Bunter's place was empty.

Harry Wharton & Co. had noted it, too, and they wondered why Bunter had not come. It was very unusual for the Owl of the Remove to be late for breakfast—or any other meal.

"Wharton!" rapped out the Remove-master.

"Yes, sir?"

"Do you know why Bunter has not come in to breakfast?"

"No, sir!"

"You may go and tell him to come in, Wharton. I presume he is in the quadrangle."

Harry Wharton left the breakfast-table, and went out into the sunny quad to look for Bunter. He wondered whether the fat junior was recommencing his Bolshevik tactics—now that the lesson he had received in the Form-room was wearing off.

Skinner & Co. exchanged a covert grin. They knew that the captain of the Remove would not find Bunter in the quad.

Harry Wharton came back in a few minutes. He came back alone. Mr. Quelch looked at him.

"Have you not found Bunter?" he asked.

"No, sir. He doesn't seem to be out of doors."

"Have you no idea where he is?"

"None at all, sir," answered Harry, who was puzzled himself.

"Very well. You may sit down, Wharton."

Wharton sat down.

Breakfast proceeded, and William George Bunter did not appear. Mr. Quelch glanced at the door once or twice, and his frown deepened. It was pretty clear that the Remove-master remembered Bunter's previous remarkable outbreak, and suspected that this was another sample.

"Does anyone here know where Bunter is?" Mr. Quelch asked at length, breaking a silence that was growing ominous.

There was no answer.

"I suppose he came down from the dormitory?" said Mr. Quelch.

"I haven't seen him down, sir," said Harry.

"Bless my soul! He cannot still be in bed, surely!" exclaimed the Remove-master. "Did you speak, Skinner?"

"I—I don't think Bunter came down, sir," said Skinner.

"That is very extraordinary. I suppose Bunter is not ill?" said Mr. Quelch.

"I—I think not, sir."

The Remove-master knitted his brows more grimly.

"This appears to me to be an act of impertinence on Bunter's part!" he exclaimed. "Trotter!"

"Yessir?"

Trotter, the page, came up.

"Kindly go to the Remove dormitory, Trotter, and ascertain whether Bunter is there. Tell him to come at once!"

"Yessir."

Trotter left the dining-room.

The Remove fellows waited rather breathlessly for his return. Bunter's absence astonished them—with the exception of Skinner & Co. Those humorous youths were well aware why Bunter did not come.

All eyes were on the school page when he returned, with a lurking grin on his chubby face.

"Well, Trotter?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Master Bunter says he can't come, sir."

"What?"
"He can't come, sir, 'cause—"
"Return to Bunter at once!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Tell him to come down immediately, Trotter!"

"He says, sir—"
"You need not tell me what he says. Inform him that if he does not come down immediately he shall be taken before the Head to be flogged!"

"Oh, lor'! I—I mean, yessir!" gasped Trotter.

And he departed again.
"Why the thump doesn't the fat duffer come?" murmured Bob Cherry.

"What's his game now?"
"Potty, I suppose," grunted Johnny Bull. "He's playing Bolshevik again. Quelch will skin him, I think."

There was breathless attention now. Fellows from other tables were looking across, realising that there was something amiss in the Remove. The murmur of voices at the Remove table died away as Mr. Quelch glanced round with a glitter in his eyes. Nobody was anxious to catch Mr. Quelch's glance just then.

Trotter came back at last, and the Remove-master rapped out, before the page could speak:

"Is Bunter coming, Trotter?"
"Yessir. He says—"
"That will do!"
"Yessir."

Trotter moved off, and the juniors could see the grin that lurked on his face. They wondered what was the cause of it.

As they continued their breakfast a good many surreptitious glances were cast at the doorway. Bunter seemed to be taking his time, though Trotter had announced that he was coming.

But there was a footstep outside at last. It was accompanied by a dragging, swishing sound.

"What on earth's that?" murmured Nugent.

"Silence, please!"
All eyes turned to the doorway. There was a gasp of astonishment as Billy Bunter appeared there.

He was enveloped from head to foot in blankets, which were swathed round him, and trailed on the floor as he walked.

The fat junior's face was crimson and furious.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Wha-a-at's the name of that game?"
"Is he mad?"
"The madfulness must be terrific!"

Mr. Quelch's eyes seemed to bulge from his head as they were fixed upon the startling apparition in the doorway.

"Bunter!" he gasped.

Billy Bunter rolled into the dining-room. At every table fellows were craning their necks to stare at the remarkable figure of the Owl of the Remove. There was a howl of laughter from one end of the dining-room to the other.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Prout, at the Fifth Form table. "This is—is very odd! Is that boy out of his senses? Very odd—very!"

"Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.
"Ow! Yes, sir?" gasped Billy Bunter.
"What does this mean, sir? What do you mean by coming here enveloped in— in blankets? Are you out of your senses?"

"Nunno! I—I—"
"Take off those blankets at once!" shouted the Remove-master, jumping to his feet. "How dare you! Take off those blankets!"

"But I—I—I—"
"Do you hear me, Bunter? Take them off!"

"I—I can't! I—"
"Boy, what insolence is this? Do you venture to disobey me?" exclaimed the Form-master. "I command you to take off those blankets immediately!"

"I—I—I can't! I—I—" stuttered Bunter.
"Wharton! Cherry! Take those blankets from Bunter at once!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"
Wharton and Bob Cherry jumped up to obey the Form-master's command. Billy Bunter backed away.

"Lemme alone!" he howled. "I tell you I haven't— Oh crumbs!"

The two juniors grasped the blankets, and dragged at them. They came off, whisking, and William George Bunter was revealed—his fat form encased in a set of highly-coloured pyjamas. The reason he had come down in blankets was explained now.

There was a wild howl of merriment in the dining-room. Fellows were standing up now at all tables to stare at Bunter.

Mr. Quelch seemed transfixed.
He glared at the Owl of the Remove as if he could hardly believe the evidence of his eyes.

Wharton and Bob Cherry dropped the blankets in sheer astonishment.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh crumbs! Bunter takes the cake!"

"Bunter!" cried Mr. Quelch. "What—what—what do you mean by this? How dare you come downstairs, sir, without your customary attire! Have you become utterly insane?"

"You told me to!" howled Bunter.
"What! I told you to?"

"Yes, you did!" hooted Bunter. "I didn't want to come! Yaroooh! Gimme those blankets, you beasts! I'm c-c-cold!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Put those blankets on at once, Bunter!" stuttered Mr. Quelch.

"I didn't want to take 'em off, did I?"

"Bunter! I shall deal with you—"
"Twasn't my fault—was it?" howled Bunter, clutching the blankets round his rody person. "I didn't want to come down like this—did I? I haven't got any clothes—"

"What? Where are your clothes, Bunter?"

"They've been taken away!" howled Bunter.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "I—I understand! Were you left in the dormitory without any clothes, Bunter?"

"Yow-ow! Yes, I was! I'm c-c-cold!"
"Bless my soul! This is some foolish practical joke, I presume! I was not aware that you had been deprived of your clothes, Bunter! Return to the dormitory immediately!"

"Yessir!"

Billy Bunter was only too glad to return to the dormitory immediately. He clutched the blankets round him, and rolled out, grunting and gasping, leaving the whole dining-hall rocking with laughter as he disappeared.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Exit Bolshevism!

SKINNER tossed a bundle into the Remove dormitory after breakfast, and departed chuckling. Five minutes later Billy Bunter came downstairs, clothed at last, to be greeted

by howls of laughter. He shook a fat fist at the howling juniors.

"You silly chumps!" he roared. "There's nothing to cackle at! I've jolly nearly caught cold coming down in my pyjamas—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I've a jolly good mind to give you a thumping licking, Skinner—"

"Go ahead!" grinned Skinner.
"Only you ain't worth the trouble!" said Bunter. "Yah!"

"There'll be a row when we get into the Form-room!" Bolsover major murmured to Skinner. "Quelch's sure to want to know all about it. What are you going to say?"

"The facts!" answered Skinner airily. "Having acted from a sense of duty—"

"Eh? I thought it was a joke on Bunter!"

"Not much good telling Quelch that! Having acted from a sense of duty, I shall admit it fearlessly, like a really upright fellow!" yawned Skinner.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bolsover major. Skinner seemed quite easy in his mind when the Remove went into their Form-room. Billy Bunter gave him a ferocious blink, devoutly hoping that a caning was coming for the humorist of the Remove.

Mr. Quelch, as he took his place at his desk, certainly looked as if he intended to cane somebody.

"Bunter!" rapped out the Remove-master. "Come here!"

Billy Bunter rolled out before the class, giving Skinner another ferocious blink as he passed him. Harold Skinner winked in response.

"It appears, Bunter, that your clothes were taken away in the dormitory this morning," said Mr. Quelch.

"They were taken away overnight, sir!" grunted Bunter. "I couldn't find them when I got up!"

"In that case, Bunter, I do not blame you for not coming down. I require to know who deprived Bunter of his clothes!" said Mr. Quelch, looking round over the Removites. "Such an action is far beyond the limits of a joke, in my opinion! Who was it?"

Harold Skinner rose in his place.
"If you please, sir—" he began.

"Was it you, Skinner, played this foolish and inconsiderate trick?"

"It wasn't a trick, sir," said Skinner calmly. "I was acting from a sense of duty, sir."

"What?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

The Removites stared at Skinner. This was the first they had heard of Skinner's sense of duty. If he possessed such a thing, he had certainly kept it very dark hitherto.

"That's how the matter stands, sir," said Skinner. "I'm sure you'd approve, sir, if you knew the facts."

"I certainly do not approve of such a foolish practical joke, Skinner!"

"But it wasn't a joke, sir—not at all! It was a lesson for Bunter. Bunter's a Bolshevik—"

There was a chortle in the Remove, which died away as Mr. Quelch glanced round.

"Kindly do not talk such nonsense, Skinner!" snapped the Form-master.

"But it's a fact, sir," said Skinner. "Bunter's a Bolshevik, and he says he believes in community of goods, and helping himself to other people's property whenever he wants their things. He's been doing it lately, as Wharton knows."

Harry Wharton frowned.
"Is that the case, Wharton?" asked Mr. Quelch quietly.

"Bunter's always playing the fool, sir," said Harry uncomfortably. "He's rather a bigger fool now than usual—that's all, sir!"

"Indeed! But what has that to do

with your taking Bunter's clothes away, Skinner?"

"It was to give him a lesson in Bolshevism, sir," explained Skinner. "I thought that if he had his own things taken it would open his eyes, sir. I acted quite from a sense of duty, of course. I felt bound to open Bunter's eyes to his—ahem!—folly, if I could, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave Skinner a sharp look. "I hope your motives were as you say, Skinner," he said.

"Oh, yes, sir—quite so!"

"You may sit down! Bunter!" The Remove-master turned to the fat junior. "A few days ago you were uttering impertinent nonsense in this Form-room. Am I to understand that the correction I then administered to you was not sufficient to cure you of your folly?"

Bunter jumped.

"Oh, no, sir—I mean, yes—quite sufficient, sir—more than sufficient, sir. I assure you! I—I don't want any more, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, if you have carried your absurdity to the point of dishonesty, I—"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Not at all, sir! I—I wasn't in Wharton's study at all last evening, sir. I—I never said anything about the redistribution of

wealth. "I—I've never even heard the expression, sir!"

"The what?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "The—the redistribution of—of wealth, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I think it's all rot myself, sir—at least, when it's applied to a fellow's own things—"

"What nonsense have you been reading, Bunter?" demanded Mr. Quelch. "You must have picked up that nonsensical expression from some absurd paper. Give it to me at once!"

"I—I—I—"

"Give it to me, Bunter! Do you hear?"

The fat junior's podgy hand went into his jacket, and the "Weekly War-Whoop" was extracted and handed over to the Remove-master. Mr. Quelch's eyes opened wide as he took it.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "Have you been reading this pernicious nonsense, Bunter?"

"I—I just looked at it, sir," said Bunter cautiously, with one eye on the Remove-master's cane. "I think it's all rot myself! Utter hosh, in fact! I—I never thought about it being applied to a fellow's own things, of course!"

"Put it in the wastepaper-basket, Bunter! Tear it across first!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

The valuable journal was torn across,

and deposited in the wastepaper-basket—the appropriate receptacle for such lucubrations. Mr. Quelch picked up his cane.

"Bunter—" he began.

"I—I say, I—I ain't a Bolshevik!" groaned Bunter. "I—I can see that it's all rot now, sir! I can really, sir! Utter rot! Why, under Bolshevism a fellow's own cake wouldn't be safe! I can see that now, sir! I—I believe in hanging Lenin and Trotsky, sir! I do really!"

There was a pause, and then Mr. Quelch laid down his cane.

"You may go to your place, Bunter! But if I hear anything more of this ridiculous nonsense—"

Mr. Quelch did not finish; he left the rest to Bunter's imagination. The Owl of the Remove was glad to roll away to his place. Billy Bunter had profited by his lesson—and nothing more was heard in the Greyfriars Remove of Bunter the Bolshevik!

THE END.

(Don't miss "THE GREYFRIARS SWIMMING SPORTS!"—next Monday's grand complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., by FRANK RICHARDS.)



Goggs Grammarian

By Richard Randolph

SYNOPSIS.

Johnny Goggs comes to Rylcombe Grammar School from Frankingham with his chums Trickett, Blount, and Waters.

Goggs is a ju-jitsu expert, a clever impersonator, and the organiser of many brilliant japes. He leads an expedition of Grammarians to St. Jim's, and accomplishes one of the most daring night raids ever perpetrated.

(Now read on.)

Paying For It!

THE Head desires to see you, Goggs. And you, Monk."

It was Mr. Adams who spoke in the Fourth Form-room on the morning after the raid upon St. Jim's, and the adventure of the roof.

Goggs and Frank Monk arose and walked solemnly out.

They felt solemn. It was no joke to have to face the Head, knowing, as they knew, that upon them depended the keeping of a dozen or so of others out of a big row.

They themselves were in for it, and they knew it. But they could not, as Goggs put it, confess everything, and throw themselves upon the mercy of the Court. On the contrary, they must be very careful what they said. They were not prepared to tell lies; but this was certainly not an occasion when the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, was advisable.

"It's worse for me than it is for you, Goggles," said Monk.

"And why, my dear Gorilla?"

"Because the Head's my pater. Oh, I know

well enough that he won't talk to me from that standpoint. He'll call me 'Monk—'

"You have been called by much worse names, dear boy."

"I know that, chump! That's not the thing. I'm only trying to make it clear to you that I can't expect any favour because I happen to be his son."

"On the other hand, you do not anticipate worse treatment on that account?"

"Of course not. The old bird's always fair."

"Then I really do not see how it can be worse for you than for me."

And Goggs could not see it. But Monk could. When he was called up in this way he could never manage to forget the Head's paternal authority.

"You do the chinwag, Goggles," he said appealingly, as they reached the door of the Head's study.

"I will be eloquent, Chimpanzee. It is my strong point."

"Don't be too jolly eloquent, though! There's quite a lot that had better not be said. And, look here, don't you talk to the old bird as you talked to Adams last night. He won't stand it. They say you cheeked Adams no end."

"I am sorry that anyone should imagine me capable of such a thing," replied Goggs, as he tapped at the door.

"Come in!" called Dr. Monk.

The two entered.

Rylcombe's Head looked at them with severe displeasure.

"I have received a surprising complaint against you two boys," he said.

Monk waited for Goggs to answer that. But no reply came. To Goggs it hardly seemed a cheerful conversational opening.

He would have preferred a few chatty remarks about the weather as a starter.

"What could have possessed you to do so foolish and dangerous a thing as to go upon the roof?" snapped Dr. Monk, coming straight to the point.

"Now that I reflect upon it, sir," answered Goggs, "I perceive that it was indeed both foolish and dangerous, and I am quite sure that Monk agrees with me."

"Oh, yes!" mumbled Frank Monk, looking very much confused.

"That is hardly an explanation, Goggs!" snapped the Head. "I did not send for you in order that you might express regret for what you did. It is my intention to use means to make you regret it."

"It was such a very fine night, sir," said Goggs mildly.

"And you went upon the roof because it was a very fine night, did you, Monk?"

The query was fired at Frank Monk's head almost like a shot out of a gun, and it made him still more confused.

"I—yes—er— That is, no, sir," he replied. "You see, we—"

Buzz, buzz, buzz!

The sound was as that of a bee buzzing around Dr. Monk's head. His son stopped short, and watched with almost fascinated eyes the Head trying to wave away that invisible bee. For the moment it did not occur to him that there was no bee—that the buzzing was the work of the demure-looking Goggs. And, of course, that did not occur to the Head, who knew nothing of Goggs' ventriloquial powers.

Buzz, buzz, buzz!

"Can you see a bee near me?" demanded Dr. Monk.

"No, sir," replied Goggs. "Is there one?"
 "Of course there is! Can you not hear it?"
 Buzz, buzz, buzz!

Frank Monk had time to think. He realised that he had been on the point of explaining too much, and that that was why the buzzing had begun.

It ceased suddenly. Goggs saw that his object had been achieved. The look on Frank Monk's face showed that.

The Head looked around him in rather a bewildered way. He could see no bee. But he did not really want to see it; that it should cease from buzzing round him was enough.

"Ah! What was I saying?" he asked.

His son kept silence. Goggs, after a momentary pause, said:

"You were asking whether it was only the fineness of the night that tempted us on to the roof, sir. I think that the answer must be in the negative. There were other contributory causes."

"Other contributory causes were there, Goggs? Such as recklessness, idle folly, a desire to brag to other juniors, and the like?"

"Possibly, sir."

"And you both fell from the roof into the water-butt? Why, you might have broken your necks!"

"It was only from the lower part of the roof, sir, and the drop is not really very far. It is true that we broke the skylight. But that was afterwards."

"For the broken pane in the skylight you will pay jointly out of your pocket-money. For your folly in going upon the roof at all I shall cane you both. Hold out your hand, Goggs!"

Frank Monk wondered whether the bee would begin to buzz again now, or whether there would be some other manifestation of the ventriloquial powers of Goggs.

But there was nothing of the sort. Goggs saw no need for it. He was quite satisfied if they could get away without involving any of their fellow-adventurers; and to that end he was prepared to take cheerfully any punishment that might come to him.

He held out his hand meekly.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Now the other."

The left hand was extended.

Swish, swish, swish!

"That will do, Goggs."

Johnny Goggs rather thought it would; he yearned for no more.

The Head looked at him curiously. He had not even winced. For all that he showed those six strokes might not have hurt him at all.

But they had!

"Your hand, Monk!"

Frank Monk took the same dose as Goggs, and took it equally well. But his father had long known that Frank could take punishment without whimpering, and would have been greatly disappointed if he had shown up worse than Goggs.

"You can go. Let this be a warning to you for the future. If you had broken your backs upon the edge of the butt, or had been suffocated in it, as might well have happened, the school would have suffered damage from which it might never have recovered."

"I was not aware that our respected Head placed so much value upon our unimportant existences," remarked Goggs, in the corridor.

"Ass! He doesn't! He only means that there would have been an inquest, and everything would have got into the papers; and, of course, that would have been most rottenly bad for the school."

"It would, I admit. And yet an inquest would be quite an interesting experience, Monkey!"

"A caning is enough for me!" growled Monk.

"And too, too much for me!" agreed Goggs. "Your venerable progenitor, Orang-outang, has well-developed biceps. I consider his execution superior to that of Adams. You may tell him so, with my compliments, when you next take tea with him on a family footing."

"You are the biggest idiot I ever came across in some ways, Goggles. But you aren't all idiot. You played that buzzing trick just in time. In another minute I might have let out too much."

"Was there not a bee, Gorilla?"

"Don't you know there wasn't, fathead?"

"Your paternal relative appeared sure that there was, and I value his opinion."

"Oh, rats! I'm jolly glad we came through it without letting any of the other fellows in for it, anyway. And that was due to you, rather than to me. Goggles, old bird, I approve of you!"

Before classes were over all the sharers in

(Continued on page 16.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:

THE MAGNET. THE GEM. THE BOYS' FRIEND. CHUCKLES. THE PENNY POPULAR.
 Every Monday. Every Wed. Every Monday. Every Friday. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

For Next Monday:

"THE GREYFRIARS SWIMMING SPORTS!"

By Frank Richards.

All my chums, whether swimmers or non-swimmers, will fairly revel in next Monday's grand long complete story of the chums of Greyfriars. Happy memories of "School and Sport" are revived when we read how Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, Frank Courtenay & Co. of Highcliffe, and Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood, come to Greyfriars to participate in a Grand Swimming Tournament. Two silver cups are presented—one to the winning junior side by Dr. Locke, and the other to the winning senior side by Dr. Holmes. Of course, there is plenty of comic relief—mainly supplied by the one and only Horace Coker. Great is the excitement when

"THE GREYFRIARS SWIMMING SPORTS"

actually commence; and that this rousing story of school and sport will make a big hit is assured in advance.

HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN HAMPSHIRE!

The Greyfriars stories now appearing in the "Penny Popular" describe, as most of you know, a Great Sports Tour, conducted on alternate weeks by Harry Wharton and Vernon-Smith.

The first three counties to be visited by the Greyfriars juniors were Lancashire, Surrey, and Kent; and the stories have excited tremendous popularity in those counties.

Last week it was the turn of Essex to be visited. And this week Harry Wharton & Co. are going to Hampshire, to compete with the leading junior sportsmen of that famous Southern shire.

No. 22 of the "Penny Popular," on sale this Friday, contains a grand long complete story, entitled

"HAMPSHIRE HEROES!"

By Frank Richards.

This story is of especial interest, since it features Jimmy Silver and Tommy Dodd of Rookwood. These enterprising schoolboys are included in the Hampshire team; so my chums will guess that the Friars find themselves fairly "up against it."

How do they acquit themselves? This you will learn on Friday morning, when you emerge from your newsagent's with a triumphant smile and a copy of the "Penny Pop."

By the way, I should appreciate a line from my Hampshire chums telling me how they like this story.

THE COMPANION PAPERS ANNUAL.

At the time of going to press letters are pouring in on this subject.

Perspiring postmen are staggering through the marble halls of the Fleetway House, dragging bulging post-bags behind them.

When my office-boy has succeeded in sorting out the many hundreds of letters for my perusal I shall be able to make a definite statement concerning the suggested Annual.

Watch this page next week for developments!

YOUR EDITOR'S SERIAL!

A CHORUS OF APPROVAL!

From near and far I have received enthusiastic letters urging me to write a serial in one of the Companion Papers, setting forth the history of our bright little journals, and giving my chums an insight into the lives and habits of Frank Richards, Martin Clifford, and

the other gentlemen of genius who write for these papers.

Jimmy R., of Repton, who always voices his comments in verse, bursts into the following spasm:

"Now, then, Mr. Editor,

Wherefore hesitate?

Write that merry serial—

It will be first-rate!

Write the first instalment—

Do it right away!

This is what we all meant

First of all to say!

Tell us all the details

That we long to know!

Where does Frank Richards

Sojourn here below?

Does he live at Bristol,

Or in London town?

Does he own a pistol?

Is he pale or brown?

Where does Martin Clifford

Make his sung retreat?

Does he live where traffic

Thunders through the street?

Does he write his stories

Mid the merry strife?

Does he know what war is?

Has he got a wife?

Tell us all these items—

Tell us hundreds more!

All your gay adventures

Will not prove a bore!

Show your readers clearly

What you do and are;

I am—yours sincerely,

Youthful Jimmy R.!"

Well, Jimmy R., your appeal—and that of your thousands of fellow-readers—is irresistible.

I have bowed my head before the storm, so to speak, and have yielded to the demands of the multitude.

The serial in question shall be written; and a further announcement as to when and where it will appear will be made on this page next week.

H. A. H. (YOUR EDITOR.)

NOTICES.

Cricket.

GRAHAM'S ELEVEN, strength medium, require matches; ten miles radius Coventry.—L. Bedder, 9, Fleet Street, Coventry.

Correspondence, etc. Wanted.

Miss Harding, 104, Argyle Road, W. 13, would like to hear again from the Fistical Four (R.A.F.).

W. Davis, 20, Sykefield Avenue, Leicester, wants to form a "Magnet" and "Gem" Club in Leicester. Hopes to hear from someone who will act as partner and representative in one of the big centres.

H. Cleminson, 498, Stretford Road, Old Trafford, Manchester—with readers in the East, especially Persia.

Walter Munn, 216, Norman Street, Stratford, Ontario, Canada—with readers anywhere, over 17.

Back Numbers Wanted.

K. Smith, 5, Brunswick Road, Cowes, I.O.W., offers "Magnets" from Jan. 1916 to Jan. 1919.

Cyril Bell, 15, Hastings Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester—"Bunter the Boxer," "Bunter the Postman"; also 544, 540, 523. 3d. offered.

W. Marsh, 6, Shaftoe Street, Haydon Bridge, Northumberland—"Magnets" and "Gems" containing lists of stories which have appeared.

R. B. Kramer, 259, Roy Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, has back numbers of Companion Papers for sale; 525 to current issue. Sent, postage prepaid, on receipt of 3d. per copy.

Edward McMahon, 2696, Mance Street, Montreal, Canada—"Magnets" before May, 1916. 1½d. each. He would exchange copies with other readers.

the expedition knew that the danger had been averted—provided that Mr. Adams did not get asking awkward questions on his own account.

But the Fourth Form master, having reported the matter to the Head, seemed to consider that it was no further concern of his, and said nothing.

Classes over for the morning, Gordon Gay and the two Woottons managed to get outside the Form-room first, though only just ahead of Larking, Carpenter, and Snipe, who seemed in rather a hurry.

Those three held up the three traitors, while the rest stood aside to let Mr. Adams pass out.

Snipe darted an appealing glance at the master as he went past; but Mr. Adams paid no heed. And even Snipe did not dare to ask openly for protection.

"I haven't anything to say to you, Gay, and I should prefer to move on," said Larking.

"But we've quite a lot to say to you, and we don't intend to let you move on until we have said it!" answered the leader of the Fourth.

A crowd gathered round the trio. Carker slunk past. He ought to have been in any punishment they were to take, and he knew it. He was rather afraid that Snipe would give him away. Larking and Carpenter could be trusted not to do that; but Snipe was not to be trusted a yard about anything.

"Let's have them back into the Form-room!" said Frank Monk.

The three were hustled back.

Carpenter was red with shame, Larking white with rage, and Snipe pea-green with fear.

"You're going to have a fair trial," growled Jack Wootton. "But we know jolly well you're guilty, so you haven't a dog's chance of getting off!"

The Trial of the Traitors!

"CONSIDER yourself appointed head-constable, Carboy!" Gordon Gay said. "Lane and Donaldson are your assistants. You three will see that the prisoners do not escape while we are arranging the details of their trial."

"Well see to that all serene, you bet!" replied Carboy. "I should think the best plan would be to sit upon them."

"Oh, you needn't think we funk it!" snorted Larking. "We've done nothing we're ashamed of."

"Speak for yourself!" said Bags. "Snipe isn't ashamed; he doesn't know how to be! You may not be, but I believe you are. And I know jolly well Carpenter is."

"Oh, dry up!" snapped Carpenter. "Whatever is to be done we're going through it together, and I don't want to have any different treatment from the other chaps, or have anyone believe that I think differently from them about it."

"We must have a judge who wasn't in last night's affair," said Gay.

"I am willing to act as judge, Gay," Tadpole said.

"Right-ho! Mind, you'll get it in the neck of you make any bones about finding them guilty, though!"

"After what I heard in our dormitory last night I do not think I am at all likely to make any bones about that," replied Tadpole.

"Sneaking cur!" sneered Larking.

"That's contempt of court, and if there's any more of it we shall make you sorry for yourself," said Carboy.

Tadpole took his seat on Mr. Adams' desk. "Prosecuting counsel, Goggs!" said Gay.

"And are we going to take all day and all night over this bizney?" asked Harry Wootton.

But no one paid any heed to him. It was generally felt that Goggs was quite a suitable counsel for the prosecution.

"Counsel for the defendants—let me see. Oh, Weird will do!" Gay continued.

"My hat! Worse than Goggles!" grumbled Wootton minor.

But Weird looked pleased, and no one else objected.

"Jury, all the fellows who weren't in the raid," said Gay. "That's fair enough, I think?"

Everyone agreed that that was fair enough, and a dozen or so fellows ranged themselves on one side as jury.

"Someone must be clerk of the court," said Gay. "You, Bags?"

"I'm on!" said Bags. "What do I have to do?"

"Oh, you have to say what the sweeps

are charged with, and ask them whether they're guilty or not guilty."

"That's no good," said Wagtail. "They'll lie about it."

"Lying won't pay them!" replied Gordon Gay grimly.

"You needn't expect us to fall in with your silly rot," said Larking. "We've got a bit beyond such kids' games, you know."

"Do you think we care a straw whether you fall in with it or not?" snapped Jack Wootton.

"You'll go through with it, anyway!" added his minor.

Bags took his place at the feet of Tadpole, as clerk of the court. Goggs and Jasper Weird had seats close at hand.

"I'll be usher!" said Morgan. "Silence in court, whatever!"

"Prisoners at the bar, you are charged with treachery to your School and Form!" Bags said in his deepest notes. "Do you plead guilty, or not guilty?"

"We don't plead at all!" answered Larking sullenly.

"Counsel for the prosecution will state his case!" said Bags.

"I believe you are saying the things that really belong to my part, Blount!" said Tadpole mildly.

"Well, why don't you do your own barking, stoopid?"

Goggs rose. Everyone expected a long speech, and Harry Wootton groaned aloud in anticipation of what he would be called upon to suffer.

But Goggs seldom did the thing expected of him.

"I accuse the miscreants at the bar of having traitorously, feloniously, and maliciously sought to muck up our raid on St. Jim's," he said, "and I propose to call evidence to prove their guilt."

And with that he sat down.

"Is that all?" asked Wootton minor in surprise.

"It is all that is necessary at the present stage of the proceedings, my dear Woodenhead!" answered Goggs.

"First time I ever knew you to shut up when you'd said all that was necessary!"

"Oh, chuck it! Goggs knows how to do that when it suits him," Frank Monk put in. "He saved the whole giddy lot of you a couple of hours or so ago, when, if it hadn't been for him, I might have been ass enough to give you away."

"These unseemly interruptions must cease forthwith," said Bags, with a very close imitation of Goggs' usual manner. "Will the counsel for the prosecution have the good graciousness to call his first witness?"

Gordon Gay was called, and proceeded to relate briefly the schemes for the raid, including the getting of Goggs into St. Jim's as Phelim O'Hoggarty.

When he mentioned that Tricks broke out in excitement.

"My hat, Goggles, you'd no business here at all last night! You'd got leave, you silly fathead! I hope to goodness no one will remember that! You'd forgotten it, I suppose?"

"I did not exactly forget it, my dear Trickett," Goggs answered.

Some understood; some did not. But among those who understood were Frank Monk and Gordon Gay.

Goggs, locked out, had nothing to do but to find a resting-place for the night, and walk in at any time he chose the next morning. But he had taken more risk than anyone else, and it was he who had saved all but Monk from a big row. He stood by Monk in a special way, too.

They were beginning to think quite a heap of Goggs, these Rylcombe fellows. It was not only his cleverness and resource that mattered; what mattered even more was his loyalty. He was of the sort that never let down a friend at a pinch.

"More unseemly and irrelevant interruptions!" said Bags severely. "I thought you knew better, Tricks. Get on, witness!"

"I've finished," said Gordon Gay.

"You've proved nothing at all against us!" snarled Larking. "All you can say is that you had some piffling scheme against St. Jim's! What's that to do with us?"

"We all know that you tried to muck it up!" Carboy said hotly.

"How do you know? None of you saw us there!"

"Rot! I saw you, and so did Bags and Tricks!" cried Wagtail.

Larking's jaw fell. He had quite forgotten the trio for the moment. He ought to have remembered, for they had assisted him over the wall in a hurry. But his mind had been

so full of spite against Goggs that he had let that fact slip him. He had remembered that the only fellows besides Goggs who had been concerned in the woodshed episode all belonged to St. Jim's, and he had had a wild notion of setting up the defence that Goggs was lying, or, alternatively, that as prosecuting counsel he could not offer evidence.

It would not have paid him. There were many there who would have been more full than ever of resentment against Larking & Co. had they accused Goggs of lying. His word would have been taken against the oaths of all three of the traitors.

Tricks and Water gave their evidence. They had heard what had passed between the prisoners and Goggs, while Goggs was supposed by them to be Cardew, and that was quite enough to establish their guilt.

"Counsel for the defence may now speak," said Bags.

Weird arose. He looked at the three, and his look was not at all sympathetic.

But no one was quite prepared for what he had to say.

"I must confess I've not the face

Defence to set up in this case.

I look to see each measly sweep

The harvest of his treason reap.

Larking and Carpenter and Snipe

All seem to me for hanging ripe!"

Such were the words that came—or seemed to come—from the lips of Jasper Weird.

And only a few noticed the fact that during their enunciation Weird's face took on a look of utter surprise. He fairly goggled and gasped.

Bags saw that, and Tricks and Gordon Gay and Frank Monk—perhaps no one else. But those four knew that the voice was really that of Goggs.

For a moment they fancied that Weird would give the show away. It only needed that he should deny having spoken thus, and most of those present would get on to the fact that it was Goggs who had spoken for him.

"Hear, hear!"

"Dashed good!"

"Good old tame poet!"

Those cries, and more like them, settled the matter.

Weird beamed. It was seldom indeed that he got any credit for his foolish rhymes; and this taste of popularity, unearned though it was, pleased him. He was not above taking it to himself, the more readily, it may be, because, on the whole, the words had expressed his sentiments. No more than the rest did the eccentric Jasper like traitors.

He sat down—on the floor, for Tricks had removed the form while he had been on his feet. But even while sitting on the floor he beamed, for the fellows were still applauding; and he did not tumble to it that they were now applauding his fall.

"A pretty sort of defence—I don't think!" snorted Carpenter.

"What better did you sweeps expect?"

I can't regard you with respect."

replied Weird. And this time it really was Weird who spoke.

"Gentlemen of the jury, I ask you to consider your verdict," Tadpole said gravely.

As with one voice came the reply of the jury.

"Guilty!"

"And now the only question is about the punishment they're to get," Gordon Gay said.

"That's for the judge to say," answered Larking.

It was not a bad move. Tadpole, who was in the same dormitory as Larking & Co., and was not a pugilistic individual, was hardly likely to suggest anything very drastic, for fear of what might happen to himself later.

"I—really I do not know what should be done to them," said Tadpole, knitting his lofty brow portentously. "I should not consider that letting them off with a caution would quite meet the case—"

"I should jolly well think not!" snapped Carboy. "You won't get let off with a caution if you talk such rot, Taddy!"

"But I said that I should not—"

"Dry up, Taddy! Your job's finished," said Frank Monk. "We'll settle this little affair. I should vote for putting the bouncers head-foremost into the water-butt Goggles and I sampled last night, and holding them under until they gave up the ghost. Only I'm afraid that might give the school a bad name with people who don't know them. No one who does would object, I should think."

(Another grand long instalment of this magnificent school serial will appear in next Monday's issue. Order early.)