

HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN FRANCE!

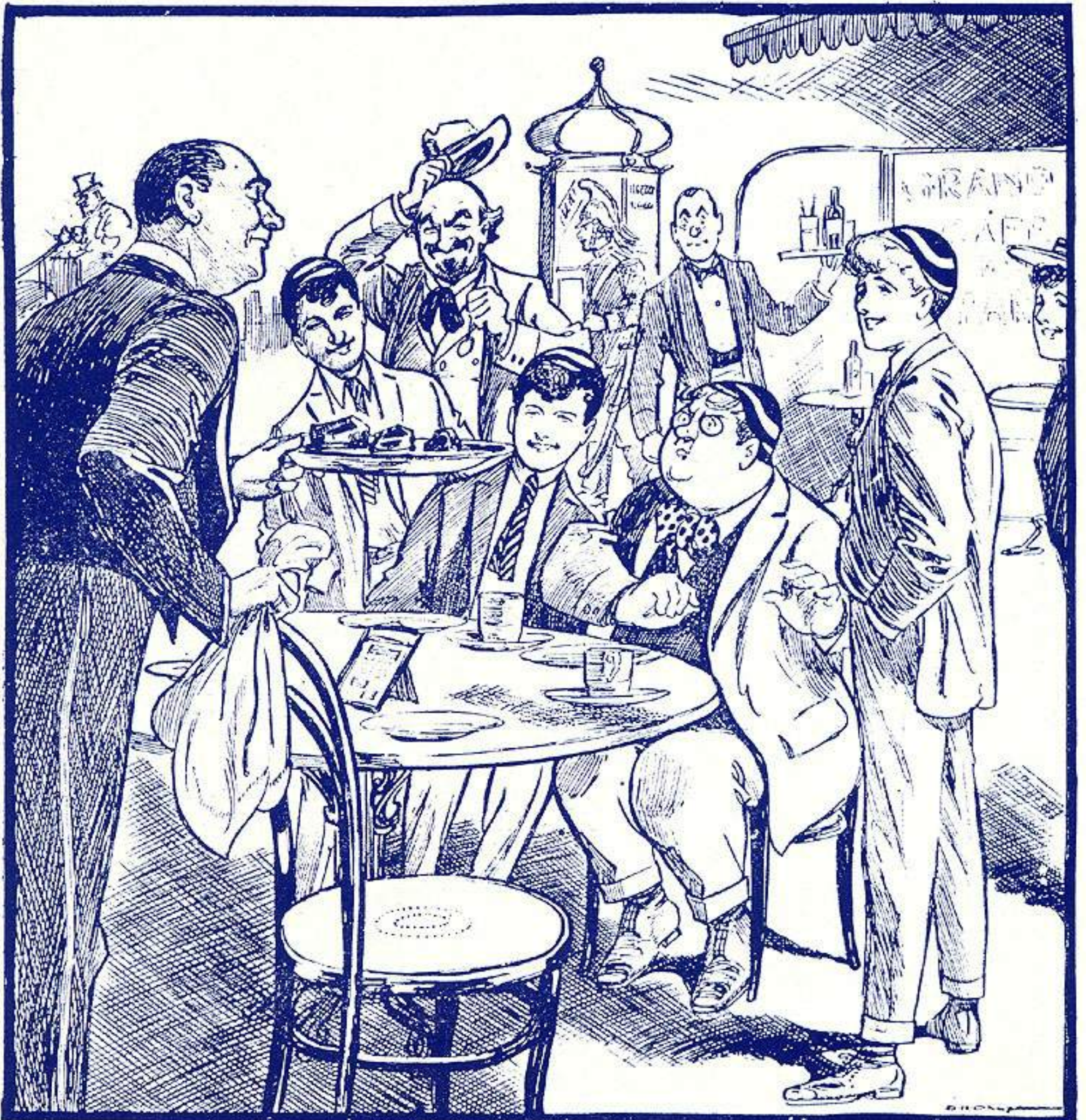
See the Long Complete Story, "Caravanners Afloat!" in this issue!



No. 708. Vol. XX.

FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT INSIDE.

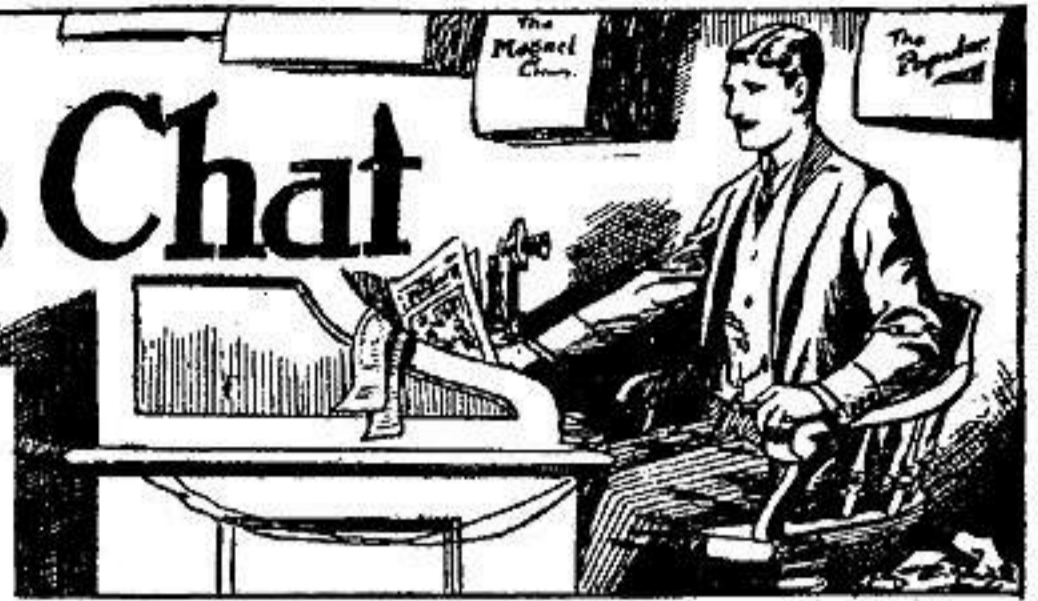
September 3rd, 1921.



BILLY BUNTER DIDN'T WANT COAL—BUT HE ASKED FOR IT!

(An amusing incident which occurs when Bunter speaks French!)

The Editor's Chat



Address all your letters to:
The Editor, "The Magnet Library,"
The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.
I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

FOR NEXT MONDAY.

"GREYFRIARS CARAVANNERS ABROAD!"

By Frank Richards.

That is the title of our next grand long complete tale of the chums of Greyfriars. Needless to mention, they are in France. And in France they come up against many queer people—including William George Bunter! But they come up against the fat junior in quite a different manner to that which he appreciates, and as Billy really does go the pace a little too much whilst in France, the juniors have to take it out of him.

The taking-out process serves to keep Billy Bunter in check until the juniors eventually arrive back at Greyfriars—ready for another term's sports and pastimes, but not too anxious to get to work!

A WARNING!

At this time of the year, boys and girls all over the country take more to reading. The evenings are shorter, and games in the parks and open spaces are bound to end up earlier in consequence. The boys and girls therefore want something to do whilst at home, and take to reading.

This means that there are thousands of casual readers of the famous Companion Papers every week. Soon you will be greeted with the old, old cry: "Sold Out!" if you do not order your copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY to be saved for you.

I have a magnificent programme ready for the winter, and I do not want any of my regular readers to miss a single issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY. I have printed a sufficient number of copies to meet the orders, and I am not able to judge the number of casual readers.

To every boy and girl who has taken this issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY, and has made the acquaintance of Harry Wharton & Co. for the first time, I suggest that the best thing to do is to order a copy to be saved at the newsagent's shop. Don't be disappointed next week when you go for a copy and find that the newsagent has sold out. Order a copy, and you are sure to have it!

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT NEXT WEEK.

Harry Wharton informs me that next week's issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" will be a Special Competition Number. This strikes me as being quite a good idea, and I am looking forward to something really great. As I am also informed

that the following week's issue will deal with prizes and prizewinners, the two of them should appeal to all my chums.

THE POPULAR "POPULAR."

I have had every reason to know that my chums who are keen readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY are finding that our famous Companion Paper, the "Popular," is the ideal paper for the week-end. Certainly I take an enormous interest in the "Popular," for therein is contained a long complete story of the early adventures of my chums, Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.

The recent addition of Mr. Sidney Drew's new serial, "The Invisible Raider," has, to my way of thinking, greatly improved the "Popular," for I must say that I like reading the adventures of Ferrers Lord and his indomitable friends, Prince Ching Lung, Rupert Thurston, and Hal Honour, the "man of silence," as he is called.

Then readers of the "Boys' Friend" have a story of Jimmy Silver & Co., and all readers have a chance to win pocket-money. If you have not seen the "Popular," let me persuade you to get a copy of the issue, now on sale at all newsagents.

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Your Editor.

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Caravanners Afloat!

A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., dealing with their Adventures on a Holiday Tour with a Caravan.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Has a Brain-Wave!

BOB!"

"Bob Cherry!"

"Supper's ready!"

For once, Bob Cherry did not seem ready for supper.

The Greyfriars caravan was halted on the open dusky down, and the camp-fire danced and glimmered against the shadows. Round the fire Harry Wharton & Co. were gathered for supper, just dished up by Billy Bunter, the cook of the party. But Bob Cherry stood at a little distance, leaning against a tree, and looking out across the sea.

Within a quarter of a mile of the caravanners' camp the Channel rolled, and glimmered back the light of the rising moon. Far across the waters the revolving light of Cape Gris-nez flashed and died and flashed again as it turned. Bob Cherry was watching it, and the faint line that showed in the moonlight and indicated the cliffs of France.

"Why don't you come, Bob?" bawled Johnny Bull. "Bunter will scoff your supper if you don't look sharp!"

"Oh, really, Bull—" protested William George Bunter, with his mouth full.

"Star-gazing, Bob?" called out Frank Nugent.

"The star-gazefulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh, with a curious glance towards the junior standing under the tree. "My esteemed and ridiculous Bob, are you not terrifically hungry, as usual?"

"Bob!"

Bob Cherry looked round towards his chums at last, but he did not come to the camp-fire. Instead, he called out to the juniors:

"You fellows, hop along here a minute!"

"What for?" called back Harry Wharton.

"Because I want you to, fathead!"

"Oh, all right!"

The Co., in some surprise, left their

supper, and crossed over to the tree under which Bob Cherry was standing. Billy Bunter did not follow them. Bunter was busy with his supper, and at such a time nothing short of an earthquake would have shifted the Owl of the Remove.

"Well, what's on?" asked Wharton, as the juniors joined Bob.

Bob Cherry raised his hand and pointed towards the winking light in the far distance across the waters.

"That's a light on the French coast," he said.

"Cape Gris-nez, I think," said Harry Wharton, with a nod.

"If you look hard you can make out the French cliffs across the Straits," went on Bob.

"That's so."

"Well," said Bob Cherry, "that's put an idea into my head."

"Did it hurt?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Fathead!"

"Well, anyhow, there was room for it!" said Johnny, with a grin. "There must be some giddy magical influence in that searchlight if it's put an idea into your head, Bob! Has anything of this kind ever happened before?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be a funny ass!" said Bob Cherry. "I've got an idea. You see how jolly near we are to France—it doesn't occur to you every day, does it, that we're only twenty miles or so from a foreign country? Now, we've been caravanning over England this vac, and it hasn't come into our heads to get across the water and go caravanning in France."

"In France!" ejaculated Wharton.

"That's it!" said Bob. "That's the idea!"

"Swim over, and carry the caravan on the backs of our necks?" asked Johnny Bull, with an air of enthusiasm which could only have been meant sarcastically.

"One of us would have to carry the horse!" grinned Nugent.

"And what about the esteemed Bunter?" asked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "He would be a more hefty

proposition than the caravan or the ridiculous horse!"

"Look here!" said Bob Cherry crossly. "Be serious! I'm making a serious suggestion!"

"I'll make another," said Johnny Bull.

"What's that?"

"Let's have supper; it's getting cold!"

"Fathead!"

"Passed unanimously!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Come on, Bob! Bunter will bag all the supper if we let him!"

The Famous Five of Greyfriars returned to the camp-fire. Billy Bunter looked up from a large plate piled for the second time, and blinked at them through his big spectacles.

"This is a jolly good stew," he said. "If you fellows would prefer the sardines, you can have them, and I'll finish the stew."

"Just about enough for you, I suppose," said Johnny Bull. "It's a good allowance for six fellows."

"We shouldn't prefer the sardines—quite!" said Nugent. "Pile in, you chaps, before that fat cannibal burghly the grub!"

The chums of the Remove started supper. Undoubtedly it was an excellent stew. Bunter could cook, if he could do nothing else. Bob Cherry did full justice to the stew, but his thoughts were busy. Evidently Bob was greatly taken with his idea of caravanning on the opposite side of the Channel.

"Why not?" he said argumentatively. "We've been funning this excursion fairly cheap, and we've got some money left."

Bunter blinked up from his plate. "You said to-day that you couldn't advance me a quid on the postal order I'm expecting at Dover, Bob Cherry."

"Dry up, Bunter—"

"Well, I think—"

"No, you don't!" said Bob. "You can't—you haven't got the apparatus, my fat pippin! As I was saying, we've got some money left, you fellows, and

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"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed a voice close at hand; and the juniors spun round from the pond, gasping. "Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Colonel Wharton!" Colonel Wharton stared at his nephew's chums and at the fat junior in the pond. "Gad!" he said. "Is this the way you amuse yourself caravanning, Harry?" (See Chapter 2.)

I believe things are rather cheap in France, too. The exchange, you know—francs to the pound, and all that. They used to give you twenty-five francs for a quid before the war, and now they give you forty-six. That must make things cheap."

"Unless prices have gone up in proportion."

"Anyhow, there's the exchange," said Bob. "That's something. And we could get the van across the Channel on a ship—"

"Hem!"

"Think of the fun of vanning it in France!" said Bob. "No end of an adventure! Something to brag to the fellows about when we get back to Greyfriars next term!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Dry up, Bunter!"

"But I say, you know, I think it's a good idea. I should come in very useful with my splendid knowledge of French," said Bunter. "I should be willing to act as interpreter for the whole party. I think there ought to be a small fee—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You'd find a fellow jolly useful speaking French like a native—"

"Like a native of England!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Fellows have been jealous of my French before now!" said Billy Bunter disdainfully. "I speak French with a better accent than Monsieur Charpentier at Greyfriars—I know that! Lots of times he doesn't get the same pronunciation that I do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I had a holiday in Paris once!" roared Bunter. "I spoke French all the time! People used to smile with pleasure to hear me speaking their own language just like one of themselves!"

"I've no doubt they smiled!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But to come back to our mutton, if

Bunter will shut up for a minute or two," resumed Bob Cherry. "Why not buzz across the Channel and do some vanning in France before the vac's over? It will improve our French, and please Mossoo in the French class next term. I don't mean that that's the only object—"

"Ha, ha! Probably not!"

"Still, it's something. And it will be no end of fun."

Harry Wharton & Co. looked thoughtful. The idea of caravanning in a foreign country appealed to their sense of adventure. But they realised that there were difficulties in the way.

"Are people allowed to take caravans into France?" asked Nugent.

"Of course! They take motor-cars," said Bob. "We saw them shifting a big car on the boat in Dover yesterday."

"That's so; but a caravan—they have tariffs, and customs, and things, and the whole bag of tricks," said Frank Nugent. "At every port in every country there's custom houses, and a set of fellows playing the goat to worry travellers."

"I suppose there's a tariff on imported caravans," admitted Bob. "The French are nice people, but they haven't much sense. But we shouldn't be importing a caravan. We should bring it away with us. We should have to deposit the value of the tariff charge, and collect it again when we leave—same as you do on a car or a bike. That wouldn't cost anything, as we should get the money back."

"That's so," agreed Wharton.

"What about passports?" asked Johnny Bull. "You can't travel without passports now. They stick you for a fee on them; I suppose that's why they keep them up."

"That's not much," said Bob. "And we can get them easily, with an elder to apply for them. Wharton's uncle would be the man—he's a very obliging old gent. Or my pater—"

Wharton nodded thoughtfully.

"I doubt if we should be allowed to cross the Channel with the van, unless there were an elder in the party," he

said. "And certainly they wouldn't give us passports on our own at the Foreign Office. My uncle would manage it for us—if we were going—and he would cross the Channel with us and see us through, I think."

"We could talk to him nicely, and get round him," said Bob. "What price getting him down here to camp, and then putting it to him? We'll make a lot of fuss of him and work him into a good temper."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's worth thinking of," he said.

"Write to him to-night," said Bob. "Strike the iron while it's hot, you know. I'll bike into Dover and post the letter."

"Better think it out first—"

"My dear chap," said Bob Cherry, "if we spend the rest of the vacation thinking it out, we shall have to go back to Greyfriars instead of going over to see Johnny Crapaud on his native heath. Don't you want to see the Froggies at home?"

"Yes; but—"

"I've got a fountain-pen," said Bob.

"Anybody got any paper?"

"There's a writing-pad in the van," said Nugent. "I'll get it."

"Good!"

"No good looking for that writing-pad," said Bunter, blinking round. "I had to make the kettle boil for the cocoa."

"Why, you fat bounder—"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"A leaf from my pocket-book will do," said Bob Cherry. "Colonel Wharton won't expect ceremony from caravanners. Here you are, Wharton!"

"But—"

"Begin 'Dear Nunky'—that sounds affectionate—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton took the fountain-pen and the pocket-book. And after some further discussion, the letter was written, and Bob Cherry mounted the bicycle to ride into Dover with it.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Great Preparations!

"BUNTER ought to wash!"

"Hear, hear!"

It was three days later. The Greyfriars caravan was still camped on the downs, looking on the sea. It was a fresh sunny morning, and Bob Cherry had ridden into Dover to inquire for letters at the post-office. Harry Wharton had asked his uncle to reply "Poste Restante," Dover. And he had brought back a reply from the colonel.

It was brief, but very satisfactory:

"Dear Harry,—I will certainly run down and see you and your friends in your camp. I shall, in fact, be very pleased to do so. Expect me on Thursday afternoon.

"Your affectionate uncle,
"JAMES WHARTON."

That was extremely satisfactory, so far as it went. And in honour of the distinguished visitor, the chums of Greyfriars were anxious to make the camp as neat and bright as a new pin, just to let Colonel Wharton notice what really orderly fellows they were, even when they were caravanning. The colonel was known to be a very kind and good-tempered gentleman, and open to persuasion; but the juniors were agreed that a lot depended on the impression they made on him during his visit. The

caravan was getting a little grubby, as caravans will; and the Famous Five set to work and swept it out, and washed it out, and made it look really dazzling. And the horse was given an extra-special rub-down, and clothes were sorted out, and hats were brushed, and boots were carefully cleaned. Then the juniors turned their attention to lunch, feeling that they had earned it. And over lunch Bob Cherry came to the subject of Bunter.

"Bunter certainly ought to wash," said Bob, with conviction. "We've washed everything else. After lunch we'd better wash Bunter."

"The washfulness is the necessary and proper caper," assented Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yah!" was Billy Bunter's rejoinder. "If he wasn't the laziest as well as the fattest slug known to natural history," said Bob, "he would have a dip in the sea every morning, as we do. We ought to have rolled him in this morning."

"Yah!"
"But it's never too late to mend," continued Bob. "There's a pond close by here, and Bunter can have a good wash there."

"Yah!"
"We'll give you one hour to get yourself nice and clean, Bunter," said Bob. "If you haven't done it by then, we're going to do it for you. We can't have a dirty fellow about the camp when the colonel comes."

Billy Bunter blinked ferociously at the grinning juniors. Bunter was on a holiday; and his idea of a holiday did not include bathing. Even at school he "cut tubber" as much as he could; and during the caravan excursion his daily ablutions had grown smaller by degrees and beautifully less. Of late, his washes had consisted of a dab at his face after dressing, and the dab did not make much difference to his soiled complexion. He really was in need of a good wash.

"I'm going to have a nap in the van now," he said, rising. "I need a bit of rest after lunch, considering the amount of—"

"Lunch?"
"No, you beast; the amount of work I put in," said Bunter. "A fellow who does practically all the work wants some rest."

"Why, you fat bounder, you've been sprawling in the grass all the while we've been fagging away this morning!" exclaimed Johnny Bull indignantly.

"Yah!"
Bunter rolled away to the van without pursuing the argument. He rolled in and closed the door, and felt for the key to lock it. But the key was no longer in the door. Apparently Bob Cherry had taken it away—being resolved that Billy Bunter should get a wash that day, whether he wanted it or not. The Owl of the Remove blinked wrathfully out of the van.

"I say, you fellows!" he roared.
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
"Where's the key?"
"Oh, where and oh where can it be?" sang Bob Cherry, cheerfully if not musically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Don't you fellows start any tricks, that's all!" said Bunter. "If there's any silly rot, I can tell you one thing—I shall refuse to come over to France with you!"

Bob Cherry took out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes. Nugent gave a sob. Those signs of grief ought to have pleased Bunter; but somehow they did not. He snorted, and turned into the van again. And although he certainly

was feeling some misgivings, his powerful snore soon announced that he was getting his much-needed repose.

"I think everything looks nice excepting Bunter," said Bob Cherry, glancing round the camp, "and we'll see that Bunter gets a wash. Mind you fellows behave yourselves while the colonel's here. We want him to see that we're not a rowdy lot of vanners."

"Yes, rather!"
"No ragging, or scragging, or anything of that sort," said Bob thoughtfully. "The colonel's a jolly decent old card, but you never can tell how a grown-up is going to take things. They ain't reasonable—not what I call reasonable. I got into a row with an uncle of mine simply for knocking over a beehive accidentally with a cricket-ball. Some of the bees stung him. It wasn't my fault—pure accident, you know. But you'd hardly believe how ratty he was about it."

Bob Cherry's chums nodded with sympathetic understanding. All of them had had their trials with grown-ups.

"But Wharton's uncle has got a lot of sense, considering that he must be nearly fifty," said Bob hopefully. "We'll be jolly careful, and treat him like the prodigal son coming home. I've mended the camp-stool carefully, too, so that it won't let him down. I put plenty of nails in it to make sure. And I've brought him a cigar from Dover. I gave the tobacconist ninepence for it, and it's a big one, with a gold band on it. I think he will be pleased. There's no telling, of course; but after all, a fellow can only do his best."

"That's all!" agreed Nugent.
"My dear chaps," said Wharton, "you can rely on my uncle. So long as we behave ourselves, he will be as good as gold."

"That's what I want—you fellows have got to behave yourselves," said Bob. "Any ragging or yelling would make him think we're a rowdy crowd, and he mightn't like to take us in hand and trot us across the Channel. We've all

got to act just as if we were going to tea with the Head."

"That's the idea," agreed Johnny Bull.

"The reposeful calmness of our honourable manners shall be worthy of the ludicrous caste of Vere de Vere," said the nabob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Bob Cherry wandered round the camp, putting in a masterly touch here and there to make it look merry and bright. Even the oil-stove and the spirit-stove glittered and shone in the sun; and the firewood was neatly stacked for the evening camp-fire.

Everything was perfectly satisfactory, and calculated to impress an old gentleman in the most favourable manner—excepting Bunter. And Billy Bunter was to be brought to book. He had been given an hour's grace, and he had spent it in snoozing in the caravan. As soon as the hour had elapsed, Bob Cherry looked into the van.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he roared, in a voice that might have roused the envy of the celebrated Stentor himself.

Billy Bunter came out of the arms of Morpheus with a jump. There was a crack as his head knocked, and a yell. "Yaroooooh."

"Ha, ha, ha! Don't smash up the happy home!" roared Bob. "Turn out, Bunter! Time to wash!"

"Yow-ow-ow! I'm brained."
"Rats! You can't damage what's not there."

"Yow-ow-ow! Beast!"
"Turn out!" bawled Bob Cherry. "Now, then, get a move on! Show a leg there!"

"Yah! Beast!"
"I say, Bob," yelled Frank Nugent, "is that quiet and orderly behaviour, suitable for a respectable middle-aged gent to witness?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh, rats!" retorted Bob Cherry. "I'm bound to wake up Bunter, I suppose, and it's no good whispering to him. Come out, Bunter!"



As the flame of the match ignited the cigar there was a sudden flash and whizz and a bang. The cigar flew out of the colonel's mouth and the old gentleman started back with a loud startled exclamation. "Good gad! This is too much. How dare you!" (See Chapter 4.)

"Sha'n't!" yelled Bunter.
 "Lend me a hand with this fat porker, you fellows. He's got to be washed before the colonel hops in."
 "Hear, hear!"

The Famous Five crowded into the caravan. William George Bunter was hoisted out in the grasp of five pairs of hands. He rolled out of the van, struggling in the midst of the quintette.

"Beast! Leggo! I washed this morning!" howled Bunter. "I'm not going to keep on washing all day! I don't need it—I'm not so dirty as some fellows! Yah! Leggo!"

"Kim on!"
 "Leggo! Help! Fire! Murder!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter ran down the hillside in the midst of the laughing juniors. He did not want to run, but Bob Cherry had hold of one fat ear, Johnny Bull held the other, and they were running. Bunter's ears had to go; and it was only natural that Bunter decided to accompany them. Wharton and Nugent and the nabob helped the fat junior from behind—and their help was of a kind that made him put on speed.

With a rush, the whole crowd came down into the lane at the bottom of the hillside, where the pond glistened in the sunshine.

The pond was at the corner, where the lane entered the Dover road. Right at the pond the Famous Five rushed with the fat unwashed.

Bunter had refused to wash himself. There was only one thing to be done—he had to be washed! The method adopted by the chums of the Remove was simple and effective.

Splash!
 The Owl of Greyfriars went headlong into the pond, with a mighty splash. The water was only a foot deep, and the fat junior was not in danger—but

he would have been almost as willing to be in danger as in water. He sat in the pond, with the water swirling round him, and roared.

"Yaroooh! Help! Murder! Help! Police! Fire!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.
 "Yoop! Rescue! I'm drowning! I'm catching cold! Yaroooh! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Here's some soap, Bunter," roared Bob Cherry. "Catch!"

"Yarooooooogh!" roared Bunter, as he caught the soap with his fat little nose. "Oooooooch!"

"Now strip and wash. Your duds want washing, too; and it's time you changed them! Go ahead!"

"Help! Fire! Police!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wash!" roared Bob Cherry.
 "Wash!" howled Johnny Bull.

"You've got to be finished washing before the colonel comes."

"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed a deep voice, close at hand; and the juniors spun round from the pond, gasping. And they gasped again as they met the astonished glance of a bronzed-faced gentleman, who had come striding along the road from Dover, and arrived on the spot unseen while they were busy with Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!" stuttered Bob Cherry. And Harry Wharton gasped:
 "Uncle!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Nice for the Colonel!

COLONEL WHARTON stared at his nephew, and his nephew's chums, and at the fat junior floundering in the pond. He seemed surprised. Harry Wharton & Co. blinked at the old military gentle-

man. They had been making great preparations in honour of that distinguished visitor. Unfortunately he had arrived before the preparations were quite completed. Bunter's wash was not even begun.

"Gad!" said the colonel. "May I inquire what this extraordinary game means, Harry?"

"I—I—we—" stammered Wharton.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, groping for his glasses, and setting them straight on his fat little nose. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove had not seen the colonel yet. "Yoop! Gurrgrgh! Help! You awful beasts! I'm not going to wash in this beastly pond, and I don't care a rap for any silly old colonel, either. Blow the colonel!"

"Shut up, you ass!" gasped Nugent.

"I won't shut up!" yelled Bunter. "Colonel Wharton can go and eat coke, and be blown to him!"

"Oh dear!"

"Bother him!" raved Bunter. "Blow him! I don't care a rap for him, and if he talks to me I'll jolly well tell him so! Yah!"

"Cheese it, you fat idiot!" shrieked Bob Cherry, almost hysterically. "He's here!"

"Eh?"
 "Here, you fat dummy!"

Bunter blinked round, but his spectacles were wet and almost opaque. He scrambled to his feet in the pond.

"Eh! Is Colonel Wharton here?" he ejaculated. "I say, sir, make those beasts lemme out of this pond! I've been nearly drowned! Your nephew is the worst of the lot. I believe he wanted to drown me so that he could pinch my valuable gold watch."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm catching my death of cold, and my leg's broken, and the back of my neck dislocated in two places—"

"Come out of the water, you fat idiot!" growled Johnny Bull.

Billy Bunter crawled out of the pond. He had had a wetting, but not a wash; the colonel's arrival had saved him from the dreaded contact of soap along with the water. He rubbed his spectacles, and set them on his fat little nose, and blinked round at the dismayed juniors, and at the colonel's stern face, and grinned. Billy Bunter felt that matters had taken a turn in his favour.

"So this is how you amuse yourselves caravanning, Harry?" said the colonel.

Wharton's face was crimson.

"You—you see, uncle—" he stammered.

"Bunter, you had better change your clothes at once, or you may catch cold," said Colonel Wharton.

"I believe I've caught cold already!" grumbled Bunter. "If I get pneumonia, and die in agony, Wharton will be responsible. Bob Cherry can't help being a savage hooligan—"

"Why, you fat rotter!" gasped Bob.

"And Inky is only a black cannibal, and doesn't know any better!" pursued Bunter victoriously, feeling quite secure in the colonel's presence.

"My esteemed and disgusting Bunter, I—"

"And Nugent's a born idiot—"

"Why, you—"

"And Bull, just a Hun, and nothing else!" continued Bunter. "It's all Wharton's fault! Wharton ought to know better! I'm surprised at Wharton. Treating me like this, after all I've done for him, too! Ingratitude! That's the word—ingratitude!"

"Hadn't you better go and change your clothes?" asked the colonel.



In his wrath the white-whiskered old gentleman shook a gold-headed cane at the captain of the Remove. Wharton jumped back. "You don't understand—!" he stuttered, "I wasn't—!" "I saw you, sir—I saw you giving this unfortunate lad that dastardly concoction. Don't talk to me!" (See Chapter 9.)

"Yes, I had. And somebody will have to pay for these, ruined by the water!" said Bunter. "I shall expect a complete new outfit. And I give twenty guineas for my lounge suits!"

"Cut off, before I massacre you!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Yah!"
Billy Bunter rolled away at last, and trotted off to the camp. In the blazing sunshine he was not in much danger of catching cold; indeed, he was almost dry by the time he reached the camp.

Harry Wharton & Co. remained by the pond, and looked at the colonel, and the colonel looked at them.

There was a rather long and painful silence.

Bob Cherry's idea of impressing Colonel Wharton by nice and carefully-considered behaviour, and a total absence of ragging and scragging, had evidently been a failure. Wharton's uncle could not have arrived at a more inopportune moment for the carrying out of Bob's excellent plan.

"Well," said the colonel, at last, "perhaps we had better walk to your camp."

"Yes, uncle," said Harry meekly.

They walked off together up the hillside. Colonel Wharton did not speak, and the juniors remained silent. They could not help feeling that they had made a rather unfortunate impression on their distinguished visitor.

They arrived in camp. Bunter had disappeared into the van, and from the van, as soon as they arrived, there proceeded a deep, anguished groan. The colonel gave a start.

"What is that?" he exclaimed hastily.

"Only Bunter!" said Bob, between his teeth.

"Is anything the matter with him?"

"Oh, no!"

"It sounded as if he were in pain."

"Only his gammon," said Bob.

"Beast!" came a howl from the van.

"I'm in awful pain! I can feel the fearful pangs of pneumonia coming on already!"

"Shut up!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Sha'n't! I'm not going to die in agony without saying a word! Like your cheek to expect it, I think!"

Colonel Wharton smiled faintly. It was quite a faint smile, but it had an encouraging effect on the Greyfriars caravanners.

"You see, uncle," said Harry, venturing on an explanation, "We—we weren't ragging Bunter—"

"Not at all—nothing of that sort," said Bob.

"There was not the remotest scent of ragfulness in our esteemed and ridiculous actions, honoured sir."

"Really?" said Colonel Wharton drily. "I accept your assurance, of course; but I must say that it looked uncommonly like it."

"You see, sir—" said Johnny Bull, and stopped.

"Well?"

"Bunter won't wash!" said Bob Cherry at last, desperately. "We gave him time, and he wouldn't! So we were going to wash him in the pond."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the colonel.

"Liar!" came in a yell from the van.

"I'm the only fellow in this party that does wash! You're dirty, Bob Cherry!"

"Why, I—I'll—"

"You're a dirty crowd!" continued Bunter. "I'm the only clean chap among you, and that's why you were ragging me. Yah!"

Bob Cherry breathed very hard. He yearned to step into the van and



Bunter, finding that all his precious medicine was gone beyond hope of recovery sank down on the deck and leaned wearily against a cabin bulk head, groaning, and longed for instant annihilation. (See Chapter 9.)

slaughter the Owl of the Remove. But the respected presence of the colonel made Bunter safe from slaughtering. Bob had to stifle his yearnings.

"It was really on your account, sir," said Nugent.

"On my account?" repeated the colonel.

"Yes. We wanted Bunter to be clean for once, because you were coming this afternoon."

"Oh!"

"That's how it stands, uncle," said Harry hopefully. "D-d-don't judge us by—by—by that, you know. As a rule, we're as quiet and—and orderly as—as a Sunday-school treat."

"Quite!" said Johnny Bull. "Nothing rowdy about us!"

"Oh, what a whopper!" came from the van. "Only yesterday you were fighting with some tramps."

"Shut up!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"And last week you got into a row at Ashford with some fellows at a coconut-shy—"

"Dry up!" hissed Johnny Bull.

"And before that—"

Bob Cherry slammed the door of the van. Bunter's revelations were quite superfluous, in the circumstances.

"Won't you sit down, sir?" asked Bob, proffering the camp-stool. "You—you must be tired after walking up the hill from Dover—"

"Mind," whispered Nugent, "that stool's got a gammy leg—"

"I've mended it!"

"Yes; but—"

"Here you are, sir!" said Bob, unheeding Nugent.

"Thank you, my boy!"

Colonel Wharton sat down. The good old gentleman was a fair weight, and perhaps the many nails that Bob had driven into the "gammy" leg of the camp-stool had somewhat failed of their intended effect. The colonel reposed on

the camp-stool for precisely the thousandth part of a second, and then it collapsed.

"Oh!"

And the next moment the horrified juniors were treated to the unexpected and almost terrifying sight of an old military gentleman sprawling headlong in the grass, over the jagged wreck of a camp-stool that bristled with nails.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Accidents Will Happen!

"O H! Ah! Wooooop! Oh gad!"

"Great Scott!" gasped Bob Cherry, staring with horrified eyes at the sprawling colonel, too horrified even to think of helping the old gentleman up.

"You ass, Bob!" shrieked Wharton.

"I—I—"

"I knew that chair was gammy!" panted Nugent.

"The gammyfulness was terrific!"

Harry Wharton had rushed to help his uncle. Colonel Wharton waved him back. He rose to his feet without assistance, breathing very quickly, and with a deep red in his tanned face.

The colonel was a well-dressed man, but his clothes had suffered now. There was dust on his light coat, and there was the jagged tear of a nail in his well-cut grey trousers. And there was gathering wrath in the brow of Wharton's uncle. It was evident that an earthquake was at hand.

"So this—this—this—!" The colonel gasped. "Boys—boys, this—this—"

"Oh, sir, we're awfully sorry—"

"Quite an accident, sir—"

"You—you see—"

"This is what you call, at school, a jape, I think," said Colonel Wharton, more quietly.

"Oh, no, sir—an accident—"

"A terrific and ludicrous accident, esteemed sahib—"

"It was that ass Bob!" gasped Wharton. "He mended the chair. Uncle, you—you couldn't possibly think that we should play a practical joke on you like that!"

It was pretty clear that that was what the colonel had thought. But the genuine distress in Wharton's face touched him and convinced him. His frowning brow cleared, and his grim features relaxed.

"Well, well, if it was an accident—"

he said. "My fault, sir," said Bob Cherry humbly. "I thought that chair was all right. I put eleven nails into that weak leg of it, sir—anybody would have thought that was enough!"

"Too many, perhaps," said the colonel. The old gentleman had certainly found one of the nails too many, at least.

"We've got another camp-stool," said Nugent.

"Thank you! I think I will sit on the bank."

"Here's a comfortable place, sir," said Bob Cherry. And the colonel sat down again on a sloping bank of grass, much more safely and comfortably than he had sat on the camp chair mended by Robert Cherry.

"You'd like some tea now, uncle?" asked Harry.

"Thank you, my boy, I should," said the colonel genially.

The signs of returning good-humour were very welcome to the juniors. The visit of the distinguished guest was going to be a success, after all. Harry Wharton & Co. busied themselves getting tea. Everything was in order, and the supplies were ample. The kettle boiled on the spirit-stove, the eggs boiled on the oil-stove. From the caravan, for some time, came a series of heart-rending groans, indicating that Billy Bunter was suffering severe pangs; but as no notice was taken of the groans, they ceased at last—the pangs apparently easing off. Billy Bunter came out of the van at last, as he heard the sounds of clinking teacups and saucers, and knives and forks. If he had been suffering from real maladies, the fat junior would probably have recovered sufficiently to take part in a feed.

The juniors gave him grim looks. But Billy Bunter did not heed them. The ramrod figure sitting on the grassy bank was his security.

"I say, you fellows, better leave that to me," he said. "I can make tea better than you fellows can!"

"Make it, then, and dry up, you frabjous porker!" growled Johnny Bull, in a deep undertone.

"What did you say, Bull?" asked Bunter loudly.

"Br-r-r-r!"

"If you're calling me names, Bull—"

"Make the tea, you flabby brute!"

Billy Bunter blinked round at the colonel.

"I say, sir, do you think it's civil for Bull to call me a flabby brute?" he asked.

Johnny Bull choked.

"Really, Bunter, I will not venture to pass an opinion," said Colonel Wharton drily.

"Don't you think, sir, that the fellows ought to be a bit more careful in their language?" said Bunter. "I try to set them an example. I keep on reminding them that they ought to act just as if we were at Greyfriars, with old Quelch's eye on us."

"Are you referring to Mr. Quelch,

your Form-master at school?" asked Colonel Wharton.

"Eh? Oh, yes!"

"Kindly do not refer to him as 'Old Quelch' when speaking to me, Bunter!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, quite flattened. And the Removites grinned.

Bunter blinked at them morosely, and removed the kettle from the stove to make the tea. Perhaps it was by accident that he jerked it towards Johnny Bull, and that a stream of boiling water jerked from the spout and swamped over Johnny's leg.

The yell that rose from Johnny Bull could have been heard almost as far as Dover Castle.

"Yaroooooooooop!"

"I say, what's the matter?" asked Bunter innocently.

"Yow-ow-wooop! I'll spifficate you!" roared Johnny Bull. He made a frantic rush at Bunter.

Bunter jumped back, and the kettle swung round. There was a fiendish howl from Hurree Jamset Singh, as he caught a scalding stream from the spout.

"Ooooooooooch!"

"Bunter, you idiot!" shrieked Wharton.

"Keep him off!" yelled Bunter, waving the kettle wildly. "What's the row, anyhow? Keep off, Bull, you beast!"

Johnny Bull kept off, because the kettle was rather too dangerous at close quarters. But he eyed Bunter wolfishly as he rubbed his leg.

"Accidents will happen," said Bunter.

"I hope you're not hurt, Inky!"

The nabob groaned.

"Ow! The painfulness in my esteemed leg is ridiculously terrific! Wow!"

"Don't you fellows wedge round when I'm making the tea," said Bunter.

"Just give a chap room."

Bunter was given plenty of room while he made the tea. Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh retired to rub their injuries and to vow blood-curdling vengeance on Bunter at a more convenient time.

Colonel Wharton was eyeing the fat junior rather curiously. Perhaps he had his own opinion about Bunter's accident with the kettle.

A fragrant cup of tea, boiled eggs and ham, and carefully-cut bread-and-butter were presented to the colonel on a tray, in quite an elegant style. Bunter wanted to carry the tray, but Wharton shoved him aside; he had a suspicion that there would be an accident with the tray if Bunter carried it.

The juniors had their own tea in a more rough-and-ready fashion, but the honoured guest was looked after with sedulous care. The colonel and the caravanners were soon chatting away cheerfully and amiably, and evidently the bad impression of his reception had been removed from the mind of the distinguished guest. When tea was over Bob Cherry went to the van, and returned with something that was carefully wrapped in tissue paper. He carried it with great care, and with equal care unrolled the tissue paper.

"Something for you to smoke after your tea, sir," said Bob.

"Oh!" said the colonel.

Bob Cherry threw the wrappings aside, and disclosed a big, black cigar. The colonel looked at it rather fixedly. He was fond of a good cigar, but it was possible that he had some doubts about the weed that was presented by Bob Cherry. Bob was not, perhaps, exactly a connoisseur in cigars; but the junior was so evidently pleased with this

pleasant surprise that he had prepared for the visitor that Colonel Wharton did not feel it possible to decline the cigar.

"He, he, he!"

There came a sudden fat chuckle from Billy Bunter as he blinked at Bob Cherry's cigar. Bob glanced at him. Bob could see nothing to chuckle at in that cigar.

"What's the matter with you, Fatty?" he snapped.

"Eh? Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily.

"Then don't go off like an alarm-clock!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Here you are, sir!" said Bob, presenting the cigar. "I think you'll like it, sir, really. It's got a beautiful gold band!"

"Thank you very much, my boy!"

Colonel Wharton took the cigar. He snipped off the end rather slowly and thoughtfully, and placed the cigar in his mouth. The juniors watched him with smiling faces, prepared to see the kind old gentleman enjoy himself, and feeling that this really was a master-stroke of hospitality, and remarkably thoughtful of Bob Cherry.

Possibly the colonel would have preferred to keep that famous cigar unlighted; but the general expectation was too much for him. He struck a match and applied it to the cigar, hoping for the best.

What happened next was a surprise to the colonel and to his entertainers as well.

As the flame of the match ignited the cigar there was a sudden flash and whizz and a bang.

The cigar flew from the colonel's mouth, and the old gentleman started back with a loud, startled exclamation.

"Good gad!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Via's of Wrath!

"WHAT—" "Great pip!"

Colonel Wharton sprang to his feet. His face was black with anger. The juniors almost shrank from his stern, angry stare.

"This is too much!" thundered the colonel. "How dare you!"

"Uncle—"

"Colonel—"

"How dare you!" thundered the colonel. "I was willing to believe that your former foolish trick on me was an accident. But it is not by accident, I presume, that a charge of gunpowder has been placed in that cigar!"

"Gig-gig-gunpowder!" gasped Bob Cherry faintly.

"Impossible!" stuttered Wharton.

"The—the tobacconist wouldn't put gunpowder in a cigar!" said Nugent faintly.

"No, sir!" roared the colonel. "The tobacconist certainly did not; but one of you young rascals did!"

"Oh, sir!"

"We—we didn't! We—we—"

"Enough! Harry, I am surprised at you! From my own nephew I expected at least respect, whatever I might expect from his friends. I am surprised at you, and very much shocked! I shall not remain here another moment!"

"Uncle—"

"Enough!"

Colonel Wharton jammed his hat on his head, picked up his stick and his bag, and strode away down the down-side.

(Continued on page 13.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 36.
Week Ending Sept. 3rd, 1921.



Assisted by BOB CHERRY (Fighting Editor), VERNON-SMITH (Sports Editor), MARK LINLEY, TOM BROWN, and FRANK NUGENT.

Harry Wharton
Editor

Address all letters to HARRY WHARTON, c/o The Magnet Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

HALF-HOLIDAY HINTS!

By FISHER T. FISH.

Say! If you want to hire a bike, and spend the next half-holiday a-wheel, apply to the Fishy Cycle Company, Ltd. Bikes of every description hired out at a penny an hour, at hirer's risk. If anything goes wrong with the works, hirer must make good the damage. A whole afternoon's joy-riding for fourpence! Guess you can't afford to let this opportunity slip.

If you want to spend the next half-holiday on the river, hire a punt from the Fishy Rowing, Sailing, Punting, and Crab-catching Society. Glide down the river at your leisure, happy in the knowledge that your punt is only costing you a halfpenny an hour! Head offices of the society will be found at the back of the boathouse.

If you want to spend your half-holiday at the nets, playing cricket, buy a "Fishy" Driver. Wingate of the Sixth used one of these bats in a recent first eleven match, and hit the ball into Friedale! Even the feeblest batsman will become a Trojan if he uses one of these drivers. Apply: The Fishy Cricket-Bat Company, Study No. 14.

If you decide to go for a long country walk, purchase a pair of walking-shoes from the Greyfriars Non-hobnailed Footwear Company (Fisher T. Fish, proprietor). These serviceable shoes will last a lifetime (provided you don't live to be more than twenty-one!). Price, three-and-sixpence per pair. Shoes will be resoled and heeled with best brown paper for a tanner.

If you want to spend your half-holiday fishing, or golfing, or motoring, or playing snakes-and-ladders, come and consult Fisher T. Fish. Guess he'll put you wise as to the best and most economical way of getting your sports gear. Your half-holidays won't be a frost, because F. T. Fish is hot stuff. Yep!

Supplement i.]

EDITORIAL!

By HARRY WHARTON.

Schooldays—without half-holidays—would be unthinkable.

Just as Billy Bunter regards tuck as the spice of life, so does the average healthy fellow regard half-holidays. A Wednesday afternoon spent in the Form-room doesn't bear thinking of.

Who was the merchant who invented half-holidays? He deserved the O.B.E., the Freedom of the City, and every honour that King and State could possibly confer upon him. At any rate, he was a fellow who believed in the saying that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

Of course, the long holidays—the vacations—are the real goods. It's simply glorious to be on holiday for weeks together. But we mustn't despise the shorter breaks—the half-holidays—without which we should absolutely pine away!

If there were no half-holidays, there would probably be no "Greyfriars Herald," for we always devote at least a couple of hours on Wednesday afternoons to the production of this journal. It is pleasant work, and it doesn't interfere with our cricket and other sports.

The idea of a Special Half-holiday Number has been in my mind for some time. When I suggested it to the members of my staff, they fairly jumped at it; and Bob Cherry, Dick Penfold, and the immortal Tom Brown immediately got busy. The mere mention of a half-holiday acts as an inspiration! If Penfold's song and Brown's article fail to raise a few smiles I shall be mightily surprised.

The "Greyfriars Herald" has now been appearing in supplement form for nearly eight months, and I am pleased to say that it is even more popular at this stage than it was at the beginning. I owe my best thanks to all those who have helped to spread its fame, and I hope they will redouble their efforts to rope in new readers. The more the merrier!

Billy Bunter continues to describe the "Herald" as "a beastly rag." But it's the sort of rag that dusts the floor with "Billy Bunter's Weekly," anyway! When it comes to a question of journalism, W. G. B. must take a back seat!

Au revoir until next week, chums all!

HARRY WHARTON.

SONG—TO MR. QUELCH!

By DICK PENFOLD.

(With apologies to the author of "The Sunshine of Your Smile.")

Grim face, that holds so dark a frown for me,

Were you not near, how thankful I should be!

I know no frown that ever could replace That fierce expression on your grim, stern face.

Give me your smile, for which my spirit pines.

Give me bright looks—and not five hundred lines!

Give me the right in class to slack awhile.

Scatter, dear Quelchy, the sunshine of your smile!

Pointers may fall upon the hand and knee,

Impots to all the class may given be. I shall not care, e'en though I'm dubbed a dunce,

If only you will smile, sir—just for once!

Give me your smile, or I shall grow insane!

Beam on me fondly, put away your cane.

Look pleasant, please! Your frown, dear sir, is vile.

Scatter, dear Quelchy, the sunshine of your smile!

Ask your newsagent to let you see a copy of
THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL.

WHY I HATE HALF-HOLIDAYS!

By Archie Howell.

MOST fellows seem to regard a half-holiday as a sort of oasis in the dreary desert of school-life.

I don't!

If the Head were to suddenly decree that there should be no more half-holidays, I shouldn't turn a hair. In fact, I should probably utter a thanksgiving.

A half-holiday ought to be a nice, restful time. But it isn't!

Last Wednesday afternoon I lay down on my study couch in order to sleep, and forgot all my cares and worries.

But before I could take forty winks—I'd got up to about thirty-nine, I think—old Prout pops his head round the door.

"Howell, my dear boy," he said, "I am glad to find you here. Put on your cap and accompany me to the golf-links. I want you to caddy for me."

"Oh crumbs!"

With a groan, I heaved myself up from the couch, donned my cap, and tramped down to the links with the master of the Fifth.

The sun was simply scorching, and I felt like a baked chestnut long before we reached our destination.

Then I had to sling a bag of golf-clubs across my shoulder, and trot round the course with old Prout. To see him attempt to chastise the inoffensive little ball was pathetic. The first time he struck at it he uplifted a clod of earth, and an avalanche of dirt spattered into my face.

At his second swipe Prout committed assault and battery on his ankle. Then he hopped around on one foot, clasping the injured member, and uttering the most unscholarly language.

"Ha, ha, ha!" I roared.

"Howell! You impertinent young rascal! How dare you snigger at my misfortune?"

"Sorry, sir!" I spluttered. "I was—ahem!—laughing at my thoughts, sir!"

"Then you had better divert your thoughts into more serious channels!"

So saying, Prout swung his club for the third time, and on this occasion the ball trickled about half a dozen yards.

"A magnificent drive, that!" he murmured. "Worthy of Abe Mitchell himself!"

And so the merry game went on.

Prout took about two hours to get round the course, and he did it in three hundred and seventy-nine strokes.

"Only one man has ever beaten that!" he confided to me. "The professional, Tom Niblick, went round the course in seventy-eight strokes. But, of course, these professionals learnt the theory of golf before they left the cradle. You are looking very tired, Howell. Would you like some tea?"

I replied that I should like nothing better. Whereupon, Prout took me along to the clubhouse, and I was given some tea in a cup which was little bigger than a thimble. Prout also treated me to a solitary pat-a-cake biscuit. He evidently didn't mean me to make a beast of myself!

After tea—if such it could be called—I fagged all the way back to Greyfriars, and proceeded to my study, with a view to resuming the slumber which Prout had so rudely interrupted.

I was in the act of dozing off when Wingate of the Sixth looked in.

"I say, kid, you might do me a favour. Take this note over to Highcliffe, and hand it to Langley of the Sixth. It's a reply to a cricket challenge!"

"I'm feelin' tired, Wingate," I murmured.

"A brisk walk will soon shake off that feeling!" said Wingate cheerfully. "Off you go!"

Once again I heaved myself up from the couch, and set out on the long, long trail to Highcliffe. I felt more like a baked chestnut than ever by the time I had carried out my mission.

"Now, I shall get some peace, I hope," I muttered, on my return to Greyfriars.

But, just as there is no rest for the wicked, so there is no rest for the school-boy on a half-holiday.

I am about to make a third attempt to take forty winks, when in marches Harry Wharton.

"Hallo, Archie, old man! You look somewhat fed-up!"

"I feel it, dear boy."

"What's the trouble?"

"I've been rushin' around all the afternoon, an' my frail an' delicate constitution won't stand it."

Wharton nodded sympathetically.

"I've come to ask you something," he said. "We're just going to press with the 'Greyfriars Herald'—it's a special half-holiday number—and there are two columns to fill."

"Run away an' fill 'em, then!"

"Ahem! I've written my editorial, and I don't feel equal to doing anything more. Now, if you'll let me have an article—on any subject under the sun—I'll be awfully grateful."

"It's a beastly fag writin' articles—"

"Rats! It won't take you an hour. Bring the manuscript along to my study after tea, will you? Thanks!"

And Wharton departed, having taken it for granted that I would write him an article.

This is the article. And now you can see why I hate half-holidays.

Talk about drudgery! I do more work on a half-holiday than all the rest of the week put together!

I think I shall petition the Head, and ask him to cancel all future half-holidays. They are luxuries that I can easily do without.

When the next half-holiday comes round I shall clear off directly after dinner to some quiet spot about a dozen miles from Greyfriars, that I may sleep undisturbed.

No more golf-caddying—no more running errands—no more journalistic work for this child.

Enough is as good as a feast!

OUR LIMERICK CORNER!

Conducted by Dick Penfold.

There was a young lady of Leicester
Who found that love stories depressed her.
Her young brother Gerald
Recommended the "Herald"—
Her gloom vanished, and gladness possessed
—her!

When Skinner was travelling to Stroud
He boarded the train with a crowd.
He started to smoke,
And to splutter and choke.
The guard shouted, "No smoking aloud!"

I know two young schoolboys of Birmingham,
And a very sad story concerning 'em.
They each lit a "fag"
By way of a rag,
And their fingers were scorched; they were
burning 'em!

The vicar of Friardale—Lambe,
Once went for a ride on a trambe.
They charged him six pence,
He said, "It's immense!
I would rather be pushed in a prambe!"
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 708.

MY FOOTBALL KORNER.

By BILLY BUNTER.

Having conducted the weakly Cricket Kollum in the "Greyfriars Herald" with such success, it's not altogether surprizing that I should be selected by the editor to tackle the Football Kollum.

My nollidge of sport is like Sam Weller's nollidge of London—eggstensive and pikku-lar, and when Wharton came to me on bended cheeks, and with the tears streaming down his neeze (I'm afraid I've got this rather mixed) and implored me to kontribewt a weakly Football Kollum to the "Herald," I replide:

"Sertingly, my deer fello! I'm kwite an eggspert on football matters, and you've come to the rite! By the way, what are you going to give me for doing these artikels?"

"A narf-krown a weak if they're good, and a thick ear if they're not up to standerd," said Wharton.

"You may rely on yore Unkle Billy to delliver the goods!" I said, with a cheery larf. "I shall rite the Football Kollum in the same sort of strauze that I rote the Cricket Kollum."

"You jolly well won't!" said Wharton nastilly.

"Eh? What was rong with my Cricket Kollum?"

"Their was two much Bunter about it. It was Bunter this, and Bunter that, and noboddy else got a show."

"That was unforchinit," I replide. "But as I was the best player in the team, it was only natcheral that I should have most of the limelite."

"Bough-wough!" said Wharton.

"Look hear," I said, with sun feeling. "I take it I shall have a plaice in the side?"

"No; we don't want kweer fish like you."

"But I am an eggcellent golekeeper—"

"Ratts!"

"And a dashing sent-her-forward—"

"In yore dreems!"

"I'm a fool-back, too—"

"A verry fool-back, espeshully after you've eaten a harty meel!" said Wharton, with a sniggering larf. "Now, lissen to me, Bunter. You can rite the Football Kollum evvery weak in the "Herald," but you're not going to play for the Remove—unless by any charnse we have to meat a blind skool, or a team of infants in long close. You understand?"

"Oh, all rite!" I said sullingly.

So we left it at that. And although I am bard from the team, deer readers, you can rely on me to konduct this Kollum each weak in a proper jernalistiek stile. I shall state my views without feer or faver, as a certain pollytishun wonce said. And those who doubt me will do well to bare in mind the words of another famus pollytishun:

"Weight and sea!"

[Supplement ii.]



The Unofficial Half-Holiday!

By BOB CHERRY.

"HALLO, the Head's dropped something!"

It was Skinner of the Remove who uttered that exclamation. Dr. Locke, the worthy Head of Greyfriars, had just gone along the passage, and a slip of paper had fluttered out of the pocket of his gown on to the floor.

The Head walked on without noticing what had happened. And Skinner did not call after him.

The cad of the Remove was curious to see what was written on the piece of paper. He waited until the begowned figure of the Head had disappeared, and then he stooped down and picked up the paper.

On it appeared the following, in the bold, clear handwriting of the Head:

NOTICE!

To-day being the third anniversary of the day on which Colonel Hartley Chambers, an Old Boy of Greyfriars, was presented with the Victoria Cross, the school will be given a half-holiday.

(Signed) HERBERT H. LOCKE,
Headmaster.

"Oh, how ripping!" exclaimed Skinner. "It isn't often we get a half-holiday on a Monday—only once in a blue moon, in fact. I suppose the Head was about to put this announcement on the notice-board? Well, I'll save him the trouble."

So saying, Skinner proceeded to the hall, and affixed the slip of paper to the notice-board.

It didn't take long for the joyful news to spread through the school.

Billy Bunter was the first to see the notice, and his shrill voice could be heard up and down the passages.

"I say, you fellows, it's a half-holiday!"

"Gammon!"

"I tell you it's a fact! It's on the notice-board, in the Head's own fist."

"But we never get a half-holiday on a Monday!" said Monty Newland.

"This is a special occasion," said Billy Bunter. "It's the third anniversary of the day that a Greyfriars Old Boy got the Victoria Cross."

"Oh!"

At that moment the three Dicks—Russell and Penfold and Rake—came dashing up.

"It's quite true, you chaps! We've just been in the hall, and feasted our optics on the joyful announcement," said Penfold. "Three cheers for Colonel Hartley Chambers!"

"Hurrah!"

"And three more for the Head!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

Everybody was in great spirits at the prospect of an afternoon's immunity from lessons.

"Topping afternoon for a river picnic!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll make up a tuck hamper, and sally forth and enjoy ourselves."

"Good wheeze!"

It was a glorious afternoon, and everybody—even the slackers—decided to spend it out of doors.

There was a county cricket match being played at Tonbridge, which was within biking distance of Greyfriars; and crowds of fellows set out in order to see it. Coker of the Fifth led the way on his motor-bike, and at least fifty cyclists toiled along behind him.

Other attractions were the river and the seashore.

Within an hour of the announcement being posted up on the notice-board, Greyfriars was practically deserted.

And then—to the utter amazement of the one or two who had not yet left the school premises—the bell rang for afternoon lessons!

The Form-masters went into their respective Form-rooms, and were flabbergasted to find them empty.

Supplement iii.]

After waiting in vain for their pupils to turn up, they met together in the Sixth Form-room for a consultation.

"This—this is positively amazing!" gasped Mr. Prout, looking very flustered. "What can have happened to the boys?"

"From my study window, I saw large numbers of them proceeding out of gates," said Mr. Hacker. "I am not an alarmist, but it looks to me very much like a rebellion!"

"A rebellion!" echoed Mr. Quelch. "What nonsense! The boys have no cause whatever to break out in revolt."

Mr. Hacker shrugged his shoulders. "It is an astounding affair!" exclaimed Mr. Lascelles. "I will go and ascertain if there are any boys still on the premises."

On going out into the Close, the young mathematics master sighted Micky Desmond, of the Remove. The Irish junior was in the act of pumping up his bicycle.

"Desmond!" rapped out Mr. Lascelles.

"Sir?"

"Why are you not in your Form-room?" Micky Desmond looked astonished.

"Faith, an' it's a half-holiday, sir!" he said.

"What!"

"Haven't you seen the notice, sir?"

"Indeed I have not."



The juniors crowded round the notice board. "Hurrah!" said Monty Newland. "A special half-holiday! Gammon!"

"Well, it's on the notice-board, shure, in the Head's own handwritin'."

Mr. Lascelles strode away in the direction of the hall, with Micky Desmond at his heels.

The notice was there, even as Micky had said. And there could be no questioning the Head's handwriting and signature.

"I cannot understand why Doctor Locke sent no notification round to the masters," said Mr. Lascelles. "On other occasions, when there is to be a special half-holiday, the members of the staff are duly notified in the morning. Where are all the boys, Desmond?"

"There's a crowd on the river, sir, an' a big party's gone over to Tonbridge, to see Kent play."

Mr. Lascelles nodded, and went to rejoin his colleagues in the Sixth Form-room.

"Well?" interrogated Mr. Quelch. "What have you discovered, Lascelles?"

"It is a half-holiday," was the reply.

"What!"

"We have had no intimation—" began Mr. Prout.

"Nevertheless, the school has been given a half-holiday. There is an announcement on the notice-board to that effect."

"But—but why were we not informed?" gasped Mr. Twigg.

Mr. Lascelles shook his head in bewilderment. "I give it up," he said. "Still, I am not sorry it is a half-holiday. We will have a round of golf capper."

"Very well!" said Mr. Capper.

And the assembly of masters dispersed.

The afternoon passed very enjoyably for all concerned.

When Harry Wharton & Co. returned from their picnic, just before locking-up time, they found Skinner of the Remove holding forth to a crowd of fellows.

"It was I who put that announcement on the notice-board," he was saying.

"What!"

"The Head dropped it going along the passage, and I picked it up and pinned it to the board. The half-holiday might not have been intended for to-day at all."

"Oh, my hat!"

"In fact it couldn't have been intended for to-day, because all the masters turned up in the Form-rooms as usual, thinking we should be there for afternoon lessons. So I've got the school half-holiday."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Skinney!"

But the laughter and applause died away as the Head stalked on the scene.

An expression of alarm came over Skinner's face.

"My boys, began the Head, "I have to make an announcement, which I shall repeat later on before the whole school. As I was proceeding to my study after dinner to-day, I happened to drop a sheet of paper announcing that there was to be a half-holiday. It appears that some misguided boy picked up the paper, and pinned it to the notice-board, with the result that the whole school took the afternoon off."

The speaker paused. It seemed to Skinner that the Head's eyes were piercing him through and through.

"The half-holiday was not intended for to-day at all, but for to-morrow," the Head went on, "and I was about to alter the announcement, making it a whole day's holiday instead of merely a half. As you have already taken a half-holiday, however, lessons will proceed as usual to-morrow. I regret that you should all be punished because of the unwarranted action of one single boy; but I have no alternative."

"Oh, crumbs!"

There were deep groans on every side. And those who had congratulated Skinner were the first to turn upon him, after the Head had gone.

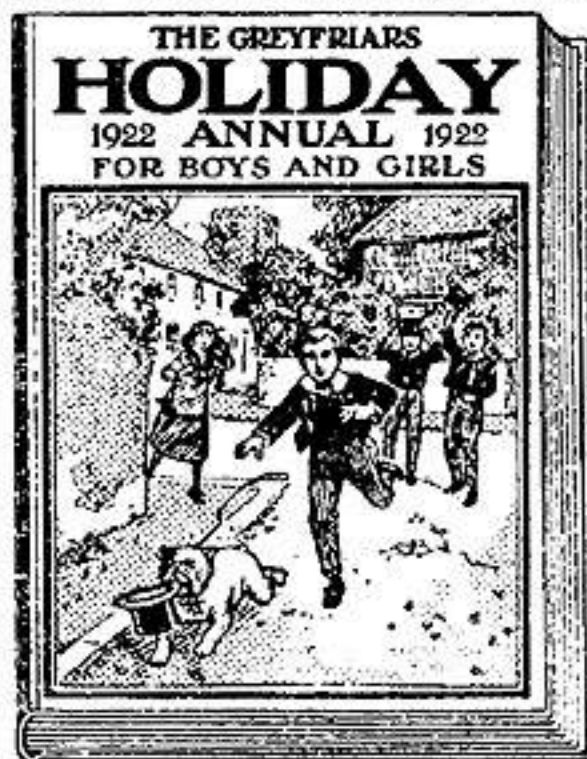
"You duffer!"

"You've done us out of a whole day's holiday!"

"Bump him!"

And the unfortunate Skinner, who thought he had been doing the community a good turn, was soundly bumped on the flagstones. And he found it a very painful climax to the unofficial half-holiday!

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 1st!



THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 708.

HOW TO SPEND A HALF-HOLIDAY!

By TOM BROWN.

(EDITORIAL NOTE.—It is useless to try to stop Tom Brown from being ridiculous. One might just as well attempt to stop Charley's Aunt from running, or Walker of the Sixth from walking, or Peter Todd from Todd-ling! No amount of "bumping" or "ragging" can cure Browney of his perverted sense of humour. He continues to write tommy-rot each week; but so long as my readers regard it as such, and refuse to take it seriously, there will be no harm done.—Ed.)

HALF-HOLIDAYS are useless innovations unless you know what to do with them when you get them. I remember spending one Wednesday afternoon with that friend and companion of my youth, Donald Ogilvy. And this is how we spent it. We sat in the study and stared at each other, and kept repeating the following asinine questions:

"What shall we do?"

"Where shall we go?"

"When shall we go?"

"How shall we go?"

When we had repeated this formula about ten thousand times, we discovered, to our horror and dismay, that the half-holiday was over! We had done nothing; we had gone nowhere. It was a complete "wash-out."

Always have some cut-and-dried plan at the outset. Adhere faithfully to that plan, and all will be well.

Now, I have noticed that ninety-nine fellows out of a hundred devote their half-holidays to pleasure-seeking.

This is all wrong.

Nobody is fonder of pleasure than I am. I could swim in the sea, and row on the river, and smite at the nets until the cows came home. I could sit at a theatre matinee all the afternoon, and disport myself in the cinema all the evening, witnessing the merry antics of Fatty Arbuckle—the Billy Bunter of the films.

The object of a half-holiday, however, should not be to see how much money you can spend in an afternoon, but to see how much you can save!

No, I'm not setting up in business as a miser. Neither is my name Thomas MacBrown, and my nationality Scotch (though, as a matter of fact, it's all tommy-rot about the Scotch being mean. They're as generous as you or I).

I repeat, the object of a half-holiday should be to save money.

Think it over for a moment. At the present time you are in the habit of spending your substance in riotous living when Wednesday afternoon comes round. At the end of the day you are in the state known as "stony." You have nothing but regrets. You begin to wish that half-holidays had never been invented. You sigh for the pounds, shillings, and pence which you have frittered away in foolish pleasures.

"But what else could I have done?" you will say. "I couldn't stick indoors and mope!"

Certainly not, dear boy. But you could have earned a nice little sum of money, which could go towards that new cricket-bat you've been hankering after, or that noisy auto-wheel, which would convert your bicycle into a cheap imitation of a motor-bike.

I can imagine you saying, "Confound that fellow Brown! How the merry dickens does he think I can earn money on a half-holiday?"

In divers ways, my friend. No, I'm not suggesting that you should dive for pearls in the bed of the ocean. I mean this. You could get a temporary job as a grocer's assistant, at Uncle Clegg's—or even a grosser grocer! You could ride about on a box-tricycle, delivering packages of groceries. You could sweep out the shop, clean the windows, and make yourself generally useful. Why, I've known a fellow earn as much as

ninepence-halfpenny in a single afternoon by this method!

If you are smart at "cutting" lessons, you ought to be equally smart at cutting hair. Go, therefore, to the local barber, and offer him your services. After you have scalped a few of his pet customers he will probably relieve you of the scissors, and set you on to sweeping up the premises. But it's all in the day's work, and at the end of the afternoon you will be able to draw a nice little sum (besides getting a free haircut, shave, shampoo, and face massage for yourself!).

Or you can go to the undertaker, and say, "Please, Mr. Undertaker, I wish to undertake a job of work!" But this is rather a gloomy business. You will fare better in the local cinema, dispensing chocolates and programmes, and seeing all the finest films for nix.

There are scores of other money-making opportunities. You can act as golf caddy to Mr. Prout, or as tea-caddy to a party of seniors who are going on a picnic.

Verily, of money-making schemes there is no end. You can act as typist to Mr. Quelch. If you type twenty pages of his "History of Greyfriars," at a halfpenny a page, you will have done well.



You can act as caddy for Mr. Prout!

You can help Dame Mimble in the tuck-shop, thus ensuring a free tea.

If Mr. Prout doesn't happen to be playing golf, you can help him shoot the rabbits, afterwards proceeding to the River Sark in order to shoot the rapids.

Last, but not least, you can devote your half-holiday to writing an article for the "Greyfriars Herald." This is very remunerative work, and if only you stick at it long enough you will be able to buy yourself a new bicycle by the time you are fifty!

I tell you, there are scores of ways of making money on a half-holiday. If I were to enumerate them all, they would fill this issue, besides leaving a considerable overflow.

So when the next half-holiday comes round, don't go plunging into a reckless whirl of pleasure. Say to yourself, "Instead of coming back to school in a stony-broke condition, I shall return with several coppers" (not of the P.-c. Tozer variety!).

Good luck! And don't forget that it was Tom Brown who put you in the way of making a fortune.

Remember me, if you will, in your will. You will?

Splendid!

PLEASE
LEND THIS COPY OF THE
"MAGNET" TO A NON-
READER WHEN YOU HAVE
FINISHED WITH IT!

A TRAGIC MISTAKE!

By Terrors Shocke, Detective.



YOU will doubtless have wondered, dear readers, why my exploits have not been recorded in the "Greyfriars Herald" by my trusty friend Shaker for some weeks.

The fact is, there have been no exploits to record. For I have been excommunicated from my fellows; I have been ostracised by Society. I have been cast into Hanwell Lunatic Asylum—into one of the padded cells which are specially reserved for the more violent cases!

I can imagine you chuckling, dear readers. Don't do it! It is a bitter tragedy—a matter for briny tears rather than merriment.

The authorities have made a ghastly mistake!

There is no saner man living than I, Terrors Shocke. Not even my worst enemy can honestly accuse me of having bats in my belfry. Yet here I am—and here I am likely to remain for some weeks, at any rate.

I will tell you what led up to my capture and confinement.

Last Wednesday afternoon I decided to treat myself to the unusual luxury of a half-holiday.

I had been working particularly hard on the Case of the Poisoned Doughnut, and I was aware that my brain needed a rest. So I borrowed Shaker's bicycle, and pedalled down to Southend-on-Sea.

Arrived there, I endeavoured to rest on the sands. But my brain was so active that I was obliged to find some outlet for my mental energy. I therefore decided to count up the number of pebbles on the beach.

I had been engaged upon this congenial task for some hours, and had got up to three millions ninety-seven thousands eight hundred and sixty-eight, when the arm of the law descended in a cruel grip upon my shoulder.

"You had better come with me, my man," said the policeman who had thus apprehended me. "I've been watching you for some time, and I've come to the conclusion that you're off your rocker!"

"Nonsense!" I retorted. "I was engaged upon a highly scientific research—to wit, counting up the number of pebbles on the beach. I had got up to three millions ninety-seven thousands—Dash it all! You've made me forget the rest!"

"Come with me!" repeated the constable sternly. "I will arrange for you to be taken to Hanwell under escort."

"Hanwell!" I shrieked. "You—you must be mad!"

"On the contrary, it's you who are afflicted with that complaint. Come along!"

"But, my dear man, don't you know me? I am Terrors Shocke, detective!"

The constable grinned.

"Funny how madmen always hug delusions of that sort," he said. "There's a man at Hanwell at the present time who imagines he's the Prime Minister. You'll meet him."

"I refuse to go to Hanwell!"

"You've got no choice in the matter. This way!"

I was taken to the local police-station, and from thence conveyed to Hanwell.

And here I am, waiting for somebody to come along and testify to my sanity.

Doubtless Shaker will arrive soon, and then I shall get my release. But it is a terrible ordeal to be placed in an asylum when one is perfectly sane.

If I remain here much longer I really shall go mad, and then I shall be here for life.

{Supplement iv.

Caravanners Afloat!

(Continued from page 6.)

The juniors stared after the tall figure as it went.

This was a "bolt from the blue" with a vengeance! The happy party was broken up with startling suddenness.

"My hat!" murmured Johnny Bull. "All the fat's in the fire now! Go after him, Wharton."

"I—I—" stammered Wharton. "What—what—Bob, you howling ass, what did you play that idiotic trick on my uncle for?"

"I didn't!" roared Bob Cherry, indignantly. "Do you think I'd treat a guest like that, even if I were idiot enough! The cigar was all right—at least I thought it was all right."

Wharton picked up the ruined cigar. The smell of gunpowder about it was very distinct. It was only too clear that a hole had been pierced in the outer end, and a small quantity of gunpowder introduced, to catch fire as soon as a light was applied to the cigar. It was an old trick, and a very foolish and dangerous one. The captain of the Remove held the cigar up for his chums to see.

"You can see what's been done," he said. "Somebody's put gunpowder into the end of the cigar. There's some crackers in the van—we bought some at the fair at Ashford, and that's where the gunpowder's come from. I want to know who's played this trick on my uncle."

Wharton's look was very grim now.

The colonel was stalking away in great dudgeon, firmly convinced now that he had been deliberately "japed" by the juniors who had asked him to visit the caravan camp. With that impression in his mind, it was no wonder that the old gentleman was in a towering temper. He had come down to see his nephew and his nephew's friends, with his heart full of the milk of human kindness, and he had been treated with utter disrespect—that was how he looked at it. And he had shaken the dust of the camp from his feet, and was gone—in a rage.

The trickster was certainly booked for severe punishment when Wharton found out who he was; even if it was his own best chum. His glance went from one face to another.

Bob Cherry flushed angrily.

"No good glaring at me," he said tartly. "If you think I'd play a trick like that on a guest, you can think so, and be blowed."

"I want to know who did."

"Well, I didn't!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I shouldn't be likely to, I hope," said Nugent tartly.

Wharton's glance rested on the nabob of Bhanipur. Hurree Janset Ram Singh met it reproachfully.

"My esteemed chum," he murmured, "you surely could not suspectfully think that I would pull the august leg of the honourable visitor in this way? Such a thought would neverfully enter my excellent brain-box."

"It was somebody!" said Wharton.

Bob Cherry gave a sudden yell.

"Bunter!"

"Bunter!" repeated Wharton.

"He was in the van all the time, and the cigar was left on the shelf!" howled Bob Cherry. "It was Bunter, of course."

"Bunter!" roared Wharton.

The Owl of the Remove had withdrawn to a little distance, and appeared

to have gone to sleep in the grass. But the juniors remembered now his fat chuckle when Bob had presented the cigar to the colonel. There was not much doubt as to the identity of the culprit.

Five enraged juniors rushed across to Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove kept his eyes shut, as if asleep, but he was seen to wriggle apprehensively.

"Bunter!" bawled Bob Cherry, furiously.

"What? Eh! I'm asleep."

"I'll jolly soon wake you up, then."

A sudden contact between Bob Cherry's boot and Bunter's ribs woke the fat junior up quite effectually. Billy Bunter sat up with a howl.

"Yaroooh! Stoppit! Wharrer marrer?"

"You put the powder in my uncle's cigar, you fat villain."

"Ow! I didn't."

"You did!" roared Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You were in the van!" hooted Johnny Bull. "You did it! Only you would play a rotten trick like that."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Serag him!"

"Yaroooh! Leggo! Hands off! Murder!" roared Bunter, as he was dragged to his feet. "I didn't! I wasn't! I never!"

"Lynch him!"

"I never touched the cigar!" yelled Bunter. "I didn't see it lying on the shelf, and I never unwrapped it. I didn't take the cracker out of the box at all—never thought of such a thing; and as for putting the gunpowder in the cigar, I'm incapable of it. Besides, I didn't know you were going to give it to old Wharton, and it was only a joke! Yaroooh!"

"Bump him!"

"Yoooooop!"

"You fat villain!" gasped Wharton. "My uncle's gone off in a huff because of your silly trick."

"Let him go, and be blowed!" howled Bunter. "Bother the old donkey. Ow!"

"Why, you cheeky cad—"

"Leggo! I didn't do it; and besides, he ought to be able to take a joke, I suppose. I never thought it might burn off his silly white moustache—I didn't want it to—and it hasn't, anyway. I thought it might—I mean I didn't think anything of the kind. My belief is that Bob Cherry put the gunpowder in the cigar."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Or else it was Nugent! Very likely it was Nugent! Just like one of Nugent's silly tricks! I don't know anything about it. I suppose you can take a fellow's word!" gasped Bunter.

"Bump him!"

"Yaroooh! Help!"

"He's got to confess to the colonel!" said Bob. "Bring him along, and we'll catch nunky before he gets away. We shall have to hustle! Bring that fat scoundrel along, and make him own up."

"Yow! I won't! He'll lick me very likely! Wow!"

"Bring him along!"

"Collar him!"

"Yaroooh! Help!"

Harry Wharton looked round. In the distance the colonel's white hat could still be seen, progressing rapidly along the lane in the direction of Dover. There was still time to catch the colonel if the juniors put on speed, and not a moment was lost. And it was very important to catch the colonel, and make him understand how matters really stood.

The Famous Five started at a run

down the hillside—with Bunter. Bunter was firmly grasped, and he was made to run as he had never run before. Puffing and blowing and gasping, Bunter panted on, a heavy boot behind him bucking him up whenever he lagged—which was every minute.

"Ow! ow! ow! ow!" spluttered Bunter, as he ran. "Ow! you beasts! I'll chuck you after this! Ow! ow! I'm not going to stand it! Yow-ow!"

"Faster, you fat rotter!"

"Ow! I can't! Yaroooh!"

"Kick him a bit harder, Bob!"

"Yes, rather."

"Woooooop!"

If Bunter had been competing on the cinder-path for a valuable prize he could not have made more strenuous efforts. Bob Cherry's boot behind was a powerful persuader.

The juniors fairly raced down the lane after the colonel, and the tall striding figure came in sight again.

Colonel Wharton must have heard the pattering footsteps behind him, but he did not look round. He strode straight on, looking neither to the right nor to the left, evidently nursing his just wrath.

He even quickened his pace a little. But the juniors were running hard, and the dignified colonel, of course, could not run. So he was overtaken at last, by five fellows who were panting breathlessly, and one who was puffing and blowing like a whale, and steaming with perspiration. And as the breathless Removites surrounded him, the colonel had to halt.

"Uncle—"

"Stop a minute, sir."

"Just listen—"

"It was Bunter—that fat brute!"

"That oily jabberwock!"

"Enough!" said the colonel, sternly.

"I decline to hear a word! I—"

"But you must, uncle!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "We've found out that it was this silly idiot who played the trick on you. You must believe that we knew nothing about it!"

"Nothing at allfully, esteemed sahib."

"And we're going to serag him, sir, and—"

"Go it, you chaps! Bump him! Give him a dozen, hard!"

Bump!

"Ow, ow! Help!"

Billy Bunter was bumped—hard—right at the feet of the astonished colonel. The old gentleman tugged at his white moustache.

Bump!

"Fire! Murder! Help!" roared Bunter. "I didn't do it! It was only a joke! Stoppit! I apologise! I won't do it again! Help!"

Bump!

"Stop!" exclaimed the colonel.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Colonel Decides!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stopped. They were anxious to give William George Bunter the full dozen, but the colonel's word was law. At least, the old gentleman seemed convinced now that he had misjudged the caravanners.

Bunter sat in the dusty road and spluttered. Never had a practical joker repented so deeply and sincerely as the Owl of the Remove did at that moment.

"You believe that we knew nothing about it, uncle?" exclaimed Harry anxiously.

"Certainly, I accept your word, Harry.



The stout old French lady and Bunter reached the door at the same time. They caught and clicked, as it were, in the doorway. There was a gasp from both. "Yow! Leaving off shoving a chap!" roared Billy Bunter. "Gettez out of the way, you silly ass,—I mean shovez pas!" (See Chapter 10.)

Perhaps I was a little hasty," said the colonel.

"You were—I—I mean, not at all!" said Bob hurriedly.

"So it was you, Bunter, who played that foolish and dangerous trick?" demanded the colonel, fixing his eyes sternly on the fat junior.

"No!" howled Bunter.

"And the others knew nothing of it, I am sure now," said the colonel.

"Yes, they did! They knew all along!" howled Bunter. "They saw me put the gunpowder in the cigar. Yah!"

"Then you confess that you did it?"

"No, I don't! I believe it was Bob Cherry! Personally, I don't know anything about it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my word!" said the colonel, staring in amazement at Bunter. "This—this boy is rather extraordinary!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Besides, it was only a joke," gasped Bunter. "I never hoped that it would blow your moustache off, sir!"

"What?"

"I don't think that a white moustache looks idiotic, sir, and ought to be blown off. Not at all!"

"Bless my soul!"

"Shut up, you fat idiot!" hissed Wharton.

"Sha'n't! I'm going to explain to Colonel Wharton! You see, sir, I didn't know the cigar was for you," said Bunter, collecting his fat wits a little, and beginning to lie in a manner more worthy of his model, Ananias. "I—I thought one of the fellows was going to smoke it, and of—of course, I was shocked at such a thing, so I put the powder in it as a warning to him. That's the exact truth, sir!"

"The truth!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat!"

"I hope that what you state is correct, Bunter," said Colonel Wharton drily.

"Oh, yes, sir! You can take my word! Any of the fellows will tell you that I'm the most strictly truthful chap

at Greyfriars," said Bunter. "Old Quelchy—I mean, Mr. Quelch—has often complimented me, sir, on being the soul of honour. They were his very words, sir—the soul of honour."

"Bunter," said the colonel in a deep voice, "if I were your father, sir, I should give you such a thrashing, sir, as would impress upon your mind some sense of veracity!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Let us return to the camp, boys," said the colonel kindly. "I am sorry that there has been a misunderstanding."

And the colonel and the caravanners turned back up the lane, leaving Billy Bunter to follow if he chose. Bunter blinked after them morosely and indignantly.

"Beasts!" he murmured. "Rotters! After all I've done for them! And that old donkey actually had the cheek to doubt my word!" And Bunter gave an indignant snort at the idea as he started rolling slowly and painfully back to the caravan camp.

By the time Bunter arrived there peace and harmony were fully established once more. The colonel was smoking a cigar—one of his own—and looking very cheery and genial. The storm had blown over, much to the relief of the Greyfriars caravanners.

As Billy Bunter limped into camp Harry Wharton detached himself from the group surrounding the colonel, and joined Bunter. The fat junior blinked at him sourly.

"Just a word with you, Bunter," said Harry quietly.

Bunter sniffed, and waved a fat hand at him.

"Keep your distance!" he snapped.

"I want to say—"

"Don't talk to me," said Bunter loftily. "I want to have nothing to say to you, Wharton, at present, at least. Perhaps later on I may be able to overlook your rotten conduct. I'm a forgiving chap. For the present I'll be

obliged to you if you'll keep your distance."

"Listen to me, you fat fool—"

"I decline to do anything of the sort."

And Bunter turned his back haughtily on the captain of the Remove. The next moment he spun round again, turned by the grip of a finger and thumb on his fat ear.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"Listen to me! If there is any more trouble while my uncle is here, Bunter, you are going to be kicked out of the camp!" said Harry. "That's a tip! Any more accidents, and you get the order of the boot! That's all!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter rolled on his way, rubbing his ear. But his fat mind was at work, too; and he decided mentally that there had better not be any more accidents or trouble while the distinguished guest was present. Almost every day Billy Bunter threatened to desert the caravanners, and leave them in the lurch, but he never did; and it was pretty certain that he never would, if he could help it, until the end of the vacation. And even the Owl of the Remove was wise enough to know that he had now reached the limit.

The fat junior retired to the caravan like the sulky Achilles to his tent, and the caravanners were deprived of his fascinating company—which they did not miss.

As darkness fell over the downs the camp-fire was lighted, and the campers gathered round it. Billy Bunter turned up again for supper, but he was very morose, and did not honour the caravanners with any conversation. He was nursing wrath and indignation; but they did not interfere with his appetite, which was as keen as ever at supper.

Colonel Wharton smoked a cigar after the meal, sitting by the camp-fire, with the firelight playing on his kind old bronzed face, in an excellent humour.

And Bob Cherry exchanged a significant glance with his chums. It was time to refer to the scheme in which the colonel's assistance was needed. There would never be a more favourable moment.

"By the way, sir—" remarked Bob.

"Yes, my boy?"

"We've got an idea. At least, it was my idea, and all the fellows think it's a good one—"

"Not bad!" said Johnny Bull.

"You can see the lighthouse light on Cape Gris-nez from this hill, sir," said Bob. "Right across the Straits, you know."

The colonel nodded.

"That's what we're thinking of—"

"Of the Gris-nez light?" asked the colonel in surprise.

"I mean, of going over to France—"

"Eh?"

"With the caravan—"

"Oh!"

"We want to ask your advice about the stunt, sir," said Bob diplomatically.

"Ah!"

Colonel Wharton smoked his cigar thoughtfully, looking into the fire. The juniors regarded him anxiously and hopefully. During the time that had elapsed since the idea was first mooted the chums of Greyfriars had had time to think it over, and its many attractions, and they were now very keen on the scheme of caravanning in a foreign land. The decision depended on the colonel, so they waited anxiously for him to speak.

"I'm afraid you could not go caravanning in a foreign country without an

elder in charge of the party—at least, at first," said the colonel, after a very long pause.

"Couldn't you come, sir?" asked Bob boldly.

"Ah!"

"We'd be glad if you would, uncle," said Harry. "Caravanning in France would be great fun, and—and educational—"

"Improve our French a lot," said Nugent.

"We should learn the French names for all kinds of grub," remarked Johnny Bull.

"The cash would have to be deposited for the van in the Customs," said Bob, "but it would be returned when we leave."

"That is so," assented the colonel.

"We could leave the horse on this side, and hire another over there, too," Harry Wharton remarked thoughtfully.

"Quite so."

"Don't you think it a good idea, uncle?" asked the captain of the Remove hopefully. And the Greyfriars party hung on the colonel's reply.

Colonel Wharton smiled.

"I can see that you youngsters do, at all events," he said. "I will think it over, my boys, and decide by the morning, if that will suit."

"Right as rain, sir."

"Yes, rather!"

So the question was left, but the juniors felt pretty certain that the kind old gentleman's answer would be in the affirmative, when he had thought the matter over in his methodical way.

The bunk in the caravan was placed at the colonel's disposal for the night, room being found for Billy Bunter in the tent. When Harry Wharton & Co. turned out, quite early in the morning, they found their guest already returning from a dip in the sea. At breakfast the colonel smiled as he noted many anxious and inquiring glances turned upon him.

"Thought it over, sir?" Bob Cherry ventured at last.

"Yes, my boy."

"And the giddy verdict?"

"Negative or affirmative?" murmured Nugent.

"Affirmative!" said the colonel, smiling.

"Hurrah!"

And so the great question was settled.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were very busy during the following week.

There were plenty of preparations to be made for the trip across the Channel with the caravan.

The colonel was busy, too. Having entered into the "stunt" of the Greyfriars Caravanners, the kind old gentleman lost no time. There were passports to be obtained, and a dozen other matters to be attended to, and the colonel attended to them methodically, in his precise, military way. The green caravan remained camped on the downs near Dover while the preparations were going forward.

Billy Bunter was as keen as any member of the party on the coming trip. But—remembering a former experience—the Owl of the Remove had certain misgiving with regard to the chops of the Channel. He was observed many times staring at the sea, which was in full view of the caravan camp, and, though it

rolled smooth and sunny, Bunter had a rather doubtful expression at times on his fat face.

"We shall have to be careful to select a calm day, you fellows," he remarked at the camp-fire one evening. "That's important, you know."

"We'll telephone to the clerk of the weather, and ask him to arrange it for us," suggested Johnny Bull, with sarcasm.

"If he can't, we shall have to take our chance," grinned Bob Cherry.

"We'd better settle this now!" said Bunter firmly. "We've got to have a calm day, otherwise I shall refuse to get on the boat!"

"Let's all hope for a stormy day, then!" said Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course, I'm not thinking of myself," said Bunter.

"You never are!" grinned Bob.

"No. I don't think there's a more unselfish fellow in this party than I am," assented Bunter. "You fellows don't notice it, but that's because you're so selfish, you know. I shouldn't be seasick. I'm a splendid sailor. But I'm rather anxious about you, Harry, old chap."

"Don't worry," said the captain of the Remove cheerfully. "I can stand the Channel all right, Bunter."

"Then there's Nugent—"

"Don't worry about me, either," chuckled Nugent.

"And poor old Inky—"

"My esteemed Bunter, I have travelled across enormous and terrific distances from my native and esteemed country," said Hurree Singh. "I shall be able to tolerate the chopfulness of the Channel with ridiculous equanimity!"

"Don't you start being unselfish, Bunter, old top," said Bob Cherry. "It really doesn't suit your giddy complexion, you know."

"Look here!" roared Bunter. "We're jolly well going on a calm day, or I may be ill myself!"

"I'm afraid you'll have to chance it," said Harry Wharton. "My uncle is

arranging for the caravan to be taken across, and it will have to go on the day that a Calais steamer is available."

"Then I sha'n't come."

"Good!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I'd like to know how you'd get on in France without me to act as interpreter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't stuff too much before we start, and then you'll be all right," said Bob Cherry. "Make it a point to eat only enough for six on the day."

"That's rot, Bob Cherry! You want a square meal before starting on a sea voyage," said Bunter. "But there's some stuff a fellow can take—Snooker's Perfect Potions, you know—they're advertised to prevent seasickness. You take a dose going on board, and if you feel it coming on, you take another dose, and you're all right. According to the advertisement, it works like magic. I think I'll get a bottle. It's only six shillings."

"Might make you worse!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, you're an ass, you know!" said Bunter. "You don't understand these things, Bull. Anyone going into Dover to-morrow morning?"

"I'm going on the bike," said Bob.

"Bring back a bottle of Snooker's Potion for me, will you? You can get it at the chemist's."

"Six bob!"

"I'll settle for that, and a few other things, a little later," said Bunter. "I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"You can expect the bottle of Snooker's Magic Muck along with the postal-order, then," said Bob. "Perhaps they'll arrive together."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here!" exclaimed Bunter wrathfully. "I suppose you're not going to let me be seriously ill on the Channel to save six shillings? And, considering that I'm going to stand most of the expenses in France, I should think you could lend me a few bob now. I've asked my pater to send me a cheque, and I'm going to whack it out."



Harry Wharton & Co. harnessed their horse to the caravan, and the house on wheels started, amid great excitement on the part of a crowd of juveniles. Half the rising generation in Calais seemed to have gathered to watch "Les Anglais" start with their caravan. (See Chapter 10.)

"The whackfulness will not be great," remarked the nabob of Bhanipur, with a shake of his head.

"And the chequefulness won't be terrific!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I want that bottle," said Bunter. "Unless I'm treated with common decency, I sha'n't come. That's my last word!"

"Hear, hear!"

On the following morning Bob Cherry biked into Dover, but he returned without any bottle of Snooker's Perfect Potions, which were guaranteed to cure seasickness and a dozen other complaints at the low price of six shillings. Billy Bunter blinked at him more in sorrow than in anger, when he found that the Perfect Potions were not forthcoming.

"I shall have to go for it myself," he said. "It's rather rotten. I call you a beast, Bob Cherry."

"You can call me any old thing you like," said Bob affably. "But you can't stick me for six bob for a bottle of bosh, Bunter."

"Yah!"

After lunch, Billy Bunter wheeled out the bicycle from the camp and mounted it. Then he dismounted again, to put down the saddle to its fullest extent, to bring the pedals within reach of his fat little legs. Then he clambered on again.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, as he started. "How are you going to get the bottle of Boshy Bunkum without the bobs, Bunter?"

"Yah!"

With that scornful and monosyllabic reply, the Owl of the Remove pedalled away, and disappeared in the direction of the Dover road.

Bob Cherry rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"The fat ass can't be expecting to get it on tick," he said. "The stuff's not worth anything, but I suppose they don't give it away?"

"Perhaps he will collect an esteemed postal-order at the honourable post-office!" suggested Hurrce Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Perhaps!" grinned Bob. "If Bunter's relying on that, I fancy he's getting a bike journey for nothing."

The Famous Five were rather interested to see Bunter when he returned. That he was short of cash, as usual, they knew. Bunter never kept any money in his pockets for long. On the rare occasions when he had any it seemed to burn a hole in his pocket. Indeed, it was certain that so long as eatables were for sale, Billy Bunter would be in a perpetual state of shortness of cash. And though Bunter was a borrower of great and dreaded skill, it was not likely that he would succeed in borrowing a bottle even of a worthless patent medicine from the Dover chemist. That really was very improbable.

The Owl of the Remove came back at last—on foot. But there was a bulge in his pocket, showing a recent purchase there.

"Where's the bike?" demanded Bob.

"I left it at the bottom of the hill," explained Bunter. "Too jolly tired to wheel it up."

"You fat owl!" roared Bob. "Suppose some tramp comes along and annexes it?"

"Well, one of you fellows can fetch it, I suppose?"

"You cheeky owl—"

"Don't be selfish, old fellow," said Bunter. "You're always saying that a walk would do me good. Well, if it would do me good, it would do you

good; so you can walk down the hill and wheel up the bike. See?"

"Is this some more of your unselfishness, Bunter?" asked the captain of the Remove, laughing.

"Yes, exactly. I try to set an example to you fellows," said Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"And have you got the bottle of muck?" asked Nugent.

Bunter drew a large bottle from his pocket. The label on the bottle announced that it contained Dr. Snooker's Patent Perfect Potion, an infallible remedy for mal-de-mer, and most of the other ills that flesh is heir to. The Owl of the Remove held it up for inspection.

"There you are!" he said. "I'm sorry I sha'n't be able to let you fellows have any. After your selfish conduct, you can't expect it."

And Bunter rolled away to the van, and placed his treasure in safety, leaving the chums of the Remove very much puzzled. How Bunter had succeeded in inducing the chemist to part with that bottle of rubbish was a mystery.

"What about the bike?" said Nugent suddenly. "We've got to get it in. It might be pinched. Who's going?"

"Bunter's going," said Bob Cherry wrathfully. "We'll make Bunter wheel the bike in, for the principle of the thing."

"Good!"

"Bunter!" roared Bob.

"Shut up, Bob Cherry, please!" came a tired voice from the van. "I'm going to have a nap!"

"Roll out, you porpoise!"

"Rats!"

Bob Cherry made a rush for the van. Billy Bunter was out of the van in a twinkling, landing in a heap, roaring.

"Now go for the bike!" shouted Bob.

"Yaroooh!"

"Do you hear, you fat villain?"

"Yoooop!"

"Gather round, you fellows!" called out Bob. "All of you jump on him together when I say three! One—two—"

Billy Bunter was on his feet before Bob could say three.

"Keep off, you beasts!" he roared.

"I'm going for the bike, ain't I? I was just going to go—"

"Scat, you fat boulder!"

Bob Cherry lifted a large boot, and William George Bunter "scattered" at a great rate. He disappeared through the gorse down the hill, going strong.

It was nearly an hour later that he limped into camp, wheeling the bike. The expression on his fat face was one of the deepest indignation and injury.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where's the lamps gone off the bike?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he looked at the machine.

"The—the lamps?"

"And the pump!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"The—the pump?"

"And the carrier!" said Nugent.

"The—the carrier?"

"What have you done with the things, Bunter?"

"I—I suppose they fell off," said Bunter feebly.

"Fell off!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Yes. I—I remember now that I—I heard something drop!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"You fat Ananias!" exclaimed Bob. "How could two lamps fall off a bike, along with the pump, and a carrier that was screwed on behind? Are you dolly?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"What have you done with the things, Bunter?" demanded Harry Wharton. "We can't use the bike without lamps and a pump!"

"That's all right," said Bunter. "I'm going to buy a fresh lot for you. I won't ask you to share the expense. I'll stand the whole amount."

"When you get a postal-order?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Yes, exactly."

"You fat villain!" said Bob Cherry, in measured tones. "Tell us what's become of the things at once! They've got to be found and brought back."

"They—they can't be found!" stammered Bunter.

"Why not?"

"You—you see, I—I had to have some money to pay for the bottle of Snooker's Patent Potion," said Bunter argumentatively. "You refused to lend me six shillings—you know you did—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You remember distinctly that I asked you to lend me the money, and you wouldn't," said Bunter. "You can't deny that."

Bob Cherry gasped.

"You—you—you unspeakable worm, do you mean to say that you've sold the lamps!" he shrieked.

"I had to!" said Bunter warmly. "I called at the post-office, and there wasn't any letter for me. I was expecting a postal-order; but there's been some delay in the post; you know how the Government manages things. I had to have six shillings, so—"

"So you sold our outfit?" bawled Johnny Bull.

"I—I got two bob each for the lamps," said Bunter. "I thought it was rather decent of the cycle-shop man to give me two bob each for them—"

"They cost ten shillings each!" raved Bob Cherry.

"Well, they weren't new, you know," said Bunter. "And a bob each for the pump and the carrier was a fair price, I thought."

"You—you—" stuttered Bob.

The Famous Five stared at the Owl of the Remove. They were used to Billy Bunter and his little ways; but this was unusually rich, even for Billy Bunter. The fat junior blinked at them.

"I say, you fellows, you needn't worry," he said. "I'm going to buy you a fresh lot—new lamps for old, you know. He, he, he! I expect to get several postal-orders in a few days, as well as a cheque from my pater, and I say— Yarooooooooooop!"

Billy Bunter suddenly found himself seized by five pairs of hands, and bumped on the down. He tore himself away and fled into the van, with five furious juniors on his track. The door slammed. Fortunately for Bunter the key was in the lock, and he had just time to turn it.

Behind the locked door the Owl of the Remove gasped and palpitated, while round the caravan five juniors prowled like lions round a camp, uttering blood-curdling threats. And when, from the caravan window, Bunter caught sight of the tall figure of Colonel Wharton in the distance, he gasped with relief. Never had he been so glad to see the colonel. Not till Colonel Wharton had arrived in the camp, did the Owl of the Remove venture to unlock the door and leave his refuge; and then he came out grinning, quite undisturbed by the Hunnish glances of the Greyfriars caravanners.

THE EIGHT CHAPTER.

In the Chops of the Channel!

"A LIFE on the ocean wave!" trilled Bob Cherry. "A home on the rolling deep—"

Ocean waves were rolling at last round the Greyfriars caravanners. They were afloat on the rolling deep.

It had been a busy and exciting morning. From the pier at Dover the great cranes had swung the caravan to the deck of the steamer, where it was made fast. The Famous Five had watched the operation with great interest. Billy Bunter hadn't watched it—he was too busy filling the inner Bunter with a solid fortification against sea-sickness. As soon as Bunter's fat foot lighted on the steamer, he headed for the refreshment department, and he was busy there for quite a long time. By the time he came on deck, well-laden, the steamer was well out into the Channel. The long line of the white cliffs of England already looked like a white wall sinking in the distance.

It was a sunny summer's day, but there was a fresh wind from the north-west, and there were long rollers on the Channel. The steamer began to catch the roll as she left the land further behind; and Bunter's many and varied refreshments stirred uneasily within him.

But he was comforted by the knowledge that he had the six-shilling bottle of Dr. Snooker's Patent Perfect Potion in his pocket. Without that, the Owl of the Remove would have felt very uneasy indeed. With it, he was sure that he would brave the chops of the Channel with impunity. And he was quite prepared to grin patronisingly at the other fellows when they fell helpless victims to the dreaded mal-de-mer.

"I say, you fellows, feeling bad?" asked Bunter, with a grin.

"Not till you brought your features along, old top," answered Bob Cherry.

"Yah! Was that you singing when I came up, Cherry?"

"Yes."

"Oh, that was it, was it?" said Bunter. "I wondered at first what they were turning on the syren for."

"Why, you cheeky owl—"

"Sure you don't feel bad yet, Wharton?" asked Bunter.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Of course not, ass!" he said. "There's no sea to-day—only a few rollers. There won't be any sickness—"

"Unless some fat porker has been overstuffing himself," said Johnny Bull.

"Then there might be."

"You wait a bit," grinned Bunter. "You'll feel it presently. Wait till she gets to the middle and begins to catch it. Then you'll all jolly well come round for some of my Perfect Potions."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle now," said Bunter disdainfully. "But I tell you what—after the selfish way you've treated me, I'm not going to shell out doses of my potion for nothing. You can't expect it. I had to pay six shillings for a dozen doses in this bottle, and it's rather expensive—"

"Not very expensive to you, considering the way you paid for it!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I've put that down on the account," said Bunter loftily. "You needn't rake that up again, Bull. Now, under the circumstances, I don't feel that you fellows are entitled to doses for nothing. I shall charge you a shilling a dose. I may as well say plainly that I sha'n't let you have any without cash down on the nail. It will be a lesson to you not to be mean."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wait till the mal-de-mer comes on, that's all!" snorted Bunter. And he rolled away with his precious bottle in his pocket, leaving the chums of the Remove chuckling. They were not likely to trouble the fat junior for doses of his precious medicine, even if it was offered free of charge.

The engines throbbed, and clanked, and exuded the smell of hot oil, and the steamer thudded on through the Channel rollers, heading for the dim line that marked the coast of France.

Most of the passengers were strolling up and down the decks. Colonel Wharton sat in a deck-chair and smoked a cigar. The juniors roamed about the ship, feeling quite well and cheery. It was what a sailor would have called a very calm passage, and nobody seemed to be feeling any ill-effects from the "chopfulness" of the Channel, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh called it.

The Famous Five had gathered aft again, when William George Bunter rolled up to them. There was a slight pallor in William George's face, and he seemed to have some difficulties in breathing. Possibly he was beginning to feel that he had overdone his preparations for the voyage, in the buffet.

"You fellows getting queer yet?" he asked.

"Ha, ha! No!"

"I'm just going to take a dose," said Bunter. "We're nearly in the middle of the Channel now, and I feel a bit queer inside. You just watch the effect on me, and I think you'll be glad to take a dose each. A shilling a time, you know."

"Bow-wow!"

"You'd better let that muck alone," said Bob Cherry. "You've been stuffing too much already, and that may finish you off."

"Rats!"

Billy Bunter had provided himself, very thoughtfully, with a tin cup. He steadied himself on the rail, and poured out a dose of the marvellous medicine. He tasted it, and made rather a wry face. It smelled unpleasantly, and it tasted unpleasantly, but, after all, a medicine could not be expected to be a pleasant summer drink. Billy Bunter made up his mind to it, and tossed off the dose.

"Gurrrrgh!" he remarked, when it was finished.

"Feel better?" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Grooogh!"

"Grateful and comforting inside, what!" chuckled Bob.

"Oooch! I—I say, you fellows, h-hold this bottle for me—oh, dear—Woooooooooooch!"

Bunter spun round the the rail and leaned over it. Wharton kindly took charge of the bottle, which certainly would otherwise have crashed to the deck, and wasted the remaining eleven doses of the Patent Potion.

Bunter leaned heavily on the rail, clutching it for support; and the cruel sea smiled up at him. Bunter did not smile back at the sea. The expression on his fat face, as he hung over the rail, might have touched the heart of Neptune himself.

"Gug-gug-gug-gurgle!" Evidently the Patent Perfect Potion of the estimable Dr. Snooker was not quite "as advertised."

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Terrors of the Deep!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. did not laugh. They could not help smiling; but they nobly forbore to laugh aloud. There was an element of the comic in this startling result of a dose of the Patent Potion, though, of course, the humour of the situation was quite lost on Billy Bunter. Bunter could not have seen humour in the front page of "Chuckles" at that awful moment!

When he turned from the rail at last, with a ghastly countenance, the chums of the Remove contrived not even to smile. In moments of real trouble they could sympathise with even the exasperating Owl of the Remove.

"I—I say, you fellows—" said Bunter, in a feeble, far-away voice.

"Better now?" asked Wharton.

"Ow! No! I feel awful!"

"Try a glass of water, old top!" said Bob Cherry. "I'll get you one, if you like, Bunter."

"Nunno! That's no good. Where's my bottle?"

"I've got it," said Harry. "It's safe enough, Bunter. But you don't want any more."

"Yes, I do! One dose isn't enough, you know."

"Too much, I should think," said Nugent. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh murmured that the too-muchfulness was terrific.

Bunter shook his head obstinately.

"It says on the bottle that if one dose doesn't work a complete cure, a second should be taken, and if necessary a third!" he snapped. "Can't you read? Haven't you any eyes in your silly head?"

"But it's all rot," said Harry gently.

"Don't take any more, Bunter."

Bunter gave an indignant howl.

"If you think you're going to have my Patent Potion without paying for it, Harry Wharton—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Nice boy!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Such a trusting nature! Give him his muck, Harry, and let the fat duffer be as sick as he likes."

"Gimme my bottle, you beast!" howled Bunter. "I—I'll call the captain—I—I'll—"

"You awful ass!" said Harry, half-laughing and half-vexed. "Here's your silly bottle! Take it and shut up!"

Billy Bunter clutched the precious bottle, and blinked at it anxiously to see whether any doses were missing. But it was still nearly full; no one had surreptitiously deprived him of any of the eleven remaining doses. His suspicions relieved, the fat junior carefully poured a second dose into the tin cup.

Gurgle!

The second dose followed the first—and a few seconds later it again followed the first—with Bunter's head hanging over the rail.

Bunter's fat form heaved with emotion as he clung to the rail.

The sight was painful—but it was not so painful for the beholders as it was for Bunter. In a convulsive hand he still clutched the bottle as he clung to the rail and heaved and quaked, and groaned, and blinked glassily at the smiling, unsympathetic sea.

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Harry Wharton & Co. were moving away when the hapless Owl of the Remove turned a ghastly face on them again.

"D-d-don't go away, you fellows—" he gasped.

"Is there anything I can do?" asked Harry, stopping at once.

"Grooogh! Yes. Hold this bottle for me and pour out another dose!"

"Look here, Bunter—"

"I c-c-can't hold it steady!" stammered Bunter. "I—I'm feeling horrid! Pour it out for me, you beast. Can't you help a fellow when he's down on his luck? Beast! Pour out my medicine for me!"

"But the stuff's doing you harm!" exclaimed Wharton impatiently. "Can't you see that it's making you sicker, you ass?"

"Yah! P-p-pour it out for me, you beast! I shall be better as soon as I've had a third dose. It s-s-says so on the bottle!"

"Bunter, old chap—" murmured Bob.

"P-p-pour out my medicine for me, you rotter!"

"Oh, all right!" said Harry Wharton resignedly.

Bunter held the tin cup in a shaking hand, and Wharton turned the bottle over to it. Bunter's hand shook and swayed, and the dose missed the cup and splashed on the deck, which was in all probability the best place for it. But Billy Bunter evidently did not think so.

"Oh, you beast!" he gasped. "You're chucking away my medicine, just because I won't give you any! You rotter!"

"You moved the cup, you silly owl!" howled Wharton.

"Yah! Beast!"

"You hold the cup for the silly idiot, Frank!"

"Right-ho!" said Nugent.

"Don't you drink it," said Bunter suspiciously, as Frank Nugent took the tin cup from his hand. "I'm not going to give you any, Nugent."

"Dry up, you precious idiot!" snapped Nugent.

The dose was poured into the tin cup, and Nugent handed it to Bunter. With a sudden jerk, Bunter disposed of it internally. The next moment the tin cup clinked on the deck, and Bunter reeled to the rail. Several passengers had gathered round now, looking on with interest and curiosity. A white-whiskered old gentleman caught sight of the bottle in Wharton's hand, and felt called upon to interfere.

"What is that stuff you are giving the poor boy?" he exclaimed, with great indignation. "Boy! You should have more sense than to give the poor lad this rubbish—a quack medicine, by gad! That is what is making him so sick."

"I—" began Wharton.

"You should have more sense!" thundered the old gentleman wrathfully.

"You must be a perfect fool, boy!"

"Look here—"

"Pah! Nonsense!"

The indignant old gentleman jerked the bottle from the junior's hand, and in his indignation tossed it over the rail into the sea.

"There!" he exclaimed.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Look here, sir—"

"You shall not poison that unfortunate boy with quack medicines under my eyes and in my presence, sir!" thundered the old gentleman. "If I were that lad's parent, I would chastise you—I would chastise you with the utmost severity!"

And in his wrath the white-whiskered old gentleman shook a gold-headed cane at the captain of the Remove. Wharton jumped back.

"You don't understand!" he stammered.

"I—I wasn't—"

"I saw you, sir—I saw you giving the unfortunate lad that dastardly concoction! Don't talk to me, sir!"

"But I—I—"

"Pah!"

The angry old gentleman stalked away along the deck, puffing with indignation. Several other passengers gave Wharton's crimson face glances of strong disapproval. They felt that the hapless junior had been acting inconsiderately, if not brutally.

Bob Cherry burst into a chuckle, and the captain of the Remove gave him a rather heated glare.

"What is there to laugh at?" he demanded. "That old donkey—"

"Nothing, old infant!" said Bob soothingly. "Mistakes will arise. The dear old gent is right, too—the sea is the best place for that bottle."

Bunter wheeled round feebly from the rail.

"I—I say, you fellows, I feel awful bad!" he groaned. "Three doses ain't enough. Gimme one more!"

"The bottle's gone overboard, ass!" snapped Wharton.

Bunter gave a husky yell.

"You—you've chucked my medicine away—"

"No, ass, another silly ass chucked it away, and a jolly good thing, too!" growled Wharton. "If you want it, you'd better dive for it! Go and eat coke!"

And the captain of the Remove walked away along the deck, not in the best of tempers. And his temper, already sore, was not improved when he heard a kind old lady murmur to her daughter close at hand: "That is the boy who was so cruel to the poor sick lad!"

William George Bunter went through his remaining sufferings without any assistance from Wharton.

Bunter, finding that his precious medicine was gone beyond hope of recovery, would probably have roused the echoes of the ocean caves with his howls of indignation—but the grip of mal-de-mer was too strong on him. He could only utter feeble gasps and groans.

He sank down on the deck, leaned back wearily against a cabin bulkhead, and longed for instant annihilation.

A steward kindly and thoughtfully brought him a large basin; but the sight of it, somehow, only seemed to make Bunter feel worse. A Frenchman strolled by him, smoking a big black cigar, and the scent of that cigar roused new and fearful emotions in Bunter's breast. He could not speak—but he kicked out feebly, and the French gentleman jumped in astonishment and stared down at him.

"Mon Dieu! Vat is it? You keeck me?" he ejaculated.

Bunter waved a fat hand at him speechlessly. The French gentleman understood.

"Ah! Pauvre garçon!" he said sympathetically. And he walked on, and took his fatal cigar to a safe distance.

Ten thousand centuries passed, while the whole universe rocked to its inmost foundations—at least, that was the impression on Billy Bunter's mind.

In point of fact, the passage of the Channel was made, of course, in a much shorter time than that.

But ages and ages of woe passed—for Bunter—before he felt a tap on the

shoulder, and Bob Cherry's cheery visage dawned upon his lack-lustre eyes.

"Buck up, old son—" Groan!

"We're nearly in—" Groan!

"Just coming up alongside the landing-stage," said Bob encouragingly.

"We're hardly moving now, Bunter. Cheer up!" Groan!

"Come, Bunter!" exclaimed the colonel, rather sharply. "We are waiting for you. I have been looking for you—"

"Just a minute or two, sir!"

"We have to go ashore now, Bunter. Kindly come at once!"

"Oh, very well, sir!" said Bunter, rising reluctantly from the deck.

"Would one of you chaps mind getting me some sandwiches?"

"Good old Bunter!" murmured Bob Cherry.

And for once Bunter's desire for food was sympathetically met.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter, the Interpreter!

"PASSEZ—passez par ici!"

"I say, you fellows—" "Passez par ici."

"I don't call it easy!" said Billy Bunter, gasping as he wedged in the crowd of passengers. "What does he mean by saying it's easy, Wharton?"

"Ass! He's not saying it's easy," said Harry, laughing. "He means we're to pass by here."

"He said easy, distinctly." Bunter blinked at the official who was shepherding the passengers towards the passport office. "There he goes again—passez par easy!"

"Fathead! Come on!"

"Hold on—I want to buy something." Bunter caught sight of a pedlar, with a tray of fruit. "Wait for me, you fellows. Lend me some French money, one of you. I'll square when I change my banknotes into French."

Harry Wharton caught the fat junior by the arm.

"Stay where you are, you ass; my uncle has the passports."

"Blow the passports!"

"Les passeports!" came a sing-song voice, and the passengers wedged through a narrow doorway, in a hot and perspiring crowd, to fulfil the formalities without which their fatherly Governments would not allow them to travel.

It was rather rough on William George Bunter, whose circumference was not convenient for thick crowds and narrow doorways. A stout French lady, with a passport and a bag and a shawl in one hand, and a large bundle in the other, wedged through the door just as Bunter was rolling in. They caught and clicked, as it were, in the doorway, which was not quite wide enough for both. There was a gasp from both.

"Yow! Leave off shoving a chap!" roared Bunter. "Gettez out of the way, you silly ass—no shovez pas."

"Ease off, Billy," chuckled Bob Cherry. "Ladies first."

Bunter blinked round.

"Call that a lady!" he snorted. "The Fat Lady out of a circus, if you like."

"Shut up, you Hun; perhaps she understands English."

Apparently the stout lady did understand English. She gave Billy Bunter a glare calculated to freeze the blood in

his fat veins. If she had not been so heavily laden, the Owl of the Remove would probably have been the victim of a case of assault and battery. But as neither of her hands was free, the plump Francaise could only use her tongue—which she did with vigour, and at great length.

"Fat ladeo!" she exclaimed. "Leetle fat rascal, si j'avais les mains libres—I hit you—I hit you wiz smack—hein? Leetle fat peeg—"

"Here, you come out of it!" exclaimed Bob, dragging Bunter out of the doorway. "Pardon, madame—passez s'il vous plait," added Bob, with great politeness. "Never mind this fat boulder—"

The stout lady continued to make remarks in mixed English and French till she was pushed on by the other passengers, and disappeared. Billy Bunter was glad to see her go.

"Blow these French!" gasped the fat junior. "They can never understand English if you want to speak to them, and they always understand it if you don't want them to. What's that silly ass grinning at—with his silly red bags?" added Bunter indignantly.

The soldier on duty at the barrier certainly was grinning, apparently having found something entertaining in the encounter between Billy Bunter and the stout lady. He ceased to grin as Bunter referred disrespectfully to his red trousers, however. He frowned. Evidently he was another who understood English.

"Shove that porpoise along!" said Nugent. "We shall be getting into trouble with him soon. We ought to have brought a gag for him."

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"This way, fatty!"

The juniors hurried Bunter on after the colonel. They emerged at last into Calais, after a long and perspiring delay in the "Douane" and the passport bureau. Colonel Wharton left them in the buffet, warning them not to wander away, while he departed to see about the landing of the caravan—a much longer and more troublesome process, involving an enormous amount of talk, and the signing of papers. His young charges waited for him, and improved the shining hour with a little lunch, at which Billy Bunter assisted. His feed on the boat before landing seemed to have left a little space, which he was eager to fill.

"We shall have to get some French money now we're here," said Billy Bunter, blinking across the table at his companions. "I'll see to that, if you like. I'll take jolly good care that they give us the full amount—forty-six francs and a half to the quid, you know. I looked it out in the paper this morning, to make sure. They try to chisel you on the exchange, if they can, you know. Better hand your banknotes over to me, and I'll get them changed. My splendid French will come in useful."

"So would our giddy banknotes, I've no doubt," grinned Bob Cherry.

"If you can't trust me with a few banknotes, Bob Cherry—"

"Not even with one, old fat tulip. But if you want to exercise your French, you can ask the waiter to bring us some sugar for the coffee."

"Oh, all right." Bunter was very keen to exercise his splendid French, and he blinked round for the waiter. "Gar-song!" he bawled.

"M'sieu!" said a voice at his elbow. The "garçon" was just at hand, only the short-sighted Owl had not observed him.

"Apportez—" began Bunter.

"Oui, m'sieu?" said the waiter inquiringly.

"Apportez some—some—what the

thump do they call sugar in this silly language, Wharton?"

"Ha, ha! Sucre!" said Wharton.

"Suko!" repeated Bunter. "I don't think so! Isn't it charbon?"

"Charbon's coal, you ass!"

"I think you're mistaken, Wharton. I'm pretty certain charbon is sugar," said Bunter, shaking his head. "You see, you don't know much French. Gar-song, apportez du charbon?"

"Comment!" ejaculated the astonished waiter.

That garçon had been asked for many strange things by English travellers in his time, but he had never been asked before for coal. It was not surprising that he was surprised.

"Charbong!" repeated Bunter. "Don't you comprenny? My hat! He doesn't seem to understand his own dashed language! Portez—apportez—bring—I mean cherchez—du charbong."

"Monsieur veut du charbon?"

"Oui, oui, oui!" said Bunter. "Hurry vous up, and apportez du charbon—for the coffee—pour le cafe, comprenny?"

"Mon Dieu! Le charbon pour le cafe!" said the waiter faintly.

"Oui, oui, oui! And buckez vous up!" snapped Bunter. "Don't keep us waiting all day for our dashed sugar."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up, you fellows!" said Bunter irritably. "How's a chap to interpret for you if you keep on cackling all the time like a lot of geese? Why doesn't that waiter get a move on? Hi, gar-song! Pourquoi ne cherchez vous pas le charbon pour le cafe?"

The waiter blinked at Bunter. The other juniors were grinning; but William George Bunter was in deadly earnest, and the waiter almost tottered away to carry out his order. The English often surprised him; but no British traveller had ever surprised him so much as Bunter. Still, he was there to carry out the orders of the customers, and if a customer wanted coal with his coffee, there was no reason why he shouldn't have coal with his coffee, if he paid for the coal.

"He understands now," said Bunter, as the waiter disappeared. "Hallo, there he is—talking to the femme in the desk—a woman's called a femme here, you chaps."

"Go hon," said Bob Cherry sarcastically.

"She is, really," said Bunter. "It's spelt femme, and pronounced famme—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows think you can pronounce French better than I can, you'd better do the interpreting," snorted Bunter. "I'll bet you couldn't have made that waiter understand that we wanted some charbon for our coffee."

"Ha, ha, ha! Probably not!" chuckled Wharton. "I wonder what he's saying to the lady in the desk. She's looking at you, Bunter."

Bunter smirked.

"I dare say she is," he answered. "These Frenchwomen have an eye for a good-looking chap."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"That blessed garçon is a long time coming," grumbled Bunter. "Takes him a long time to get us our sugar. I jolly well sha'n't tip him if he doesn't buck up. Can you fellows see him coming?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, good!"

The waiter came back. He carried a wooden platter, with several small knobs of coal reposing upon it. This he presented to Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove blinked at it.

"Wha-a-at's this?" he ejaculated.

"Comment?"

"Common!" repeated Bunter. "What the thump do you mean by common? He can't mean it's common to have coal with your lunch here, can he, you fellows?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What do you mean, gar-song?" snorted Bunter. "Take it away!"

"Comment?"

"There he goes again!"

"Plait-il?" ejaculated the waiter.

"Play till?" repeated Bunter. "The man's mad! Does he mean it's a game, you chaps, and he'll play till we stop him?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wish you fellows wouldn't cackle while I'm interpreting! Look here, gar-song—voyez vous, pourquoi have you apportayed this dashed coal?"

"Comment!" gasped the waiter.

Billy Bunter's French was too much for him. It was his own language certainly. But he had never heard it spoken like that before.

"Du sucre, garçon," said Wharton, as calmly as he could. "Monsieur se trompe—il ne parle pas le Francais, comprenez?"

"Ah ca, je comprends maintenant, monsieur," said the unhappy waiter, his brain clearing, as it were.

And he carried off the coal, and returned with sugar.

"Got it at last!" said Bunter. "I believe he understood all along that we wanted charbon, and brought that coal for a silly joke! I don't understand such jokes myself. By the way, what was it you said to him in your bad French, Wharton?"

"I told him you were mistaken, because you couldn't speak French, and that we wanted sugar."

"Well, you cheeky ass!" exclaimed Bunter, in great exasperation. "Is that what you call being grateful to a chap who does your interpreting for nothing? You can do your own interpreting after this!"

They did!

Colonel Wharton rejoined the Greyfriars party at last, looking a little tired, but still good-humoured. The kind old gentleman had seen to many things—the caravan was ashore, and free to proceed on its way, and a new horse was hired to draw it. And Harry Wharton & Co. started at once for their home on wheels; and in great spirits they harnessed the horse, and the caravan started, amid great excitement on the part of a crowd of juveniles.

Half the rising generation in Calais seemed to have gathered to watch "les Anglais" start with their caravan. The green van rumbled away over the low hills, and Calais and the sea were left behind.

That night the Greyfriars caravanners camped under a French sky, and for two or three days the colonel travelled with the van, till he felt assured that the schoolboy vanners could be trusted "on their own"—of which Harry Wharton & Co. had felt assured all along.

But they were grateful to the kind old gentleman, and they thanked him warmly when he left, and then the Greyfriars caravan rolled onward by the white roads of sunny France, where fresh adventures awaited the caravanners.

THE END.

(Another splendid story of Harry Wharton & Co. in France will appear in next Monday's issue of the MAGNET.)

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