

FREE PLATE OF H.M.S. HOOD INSIDE!

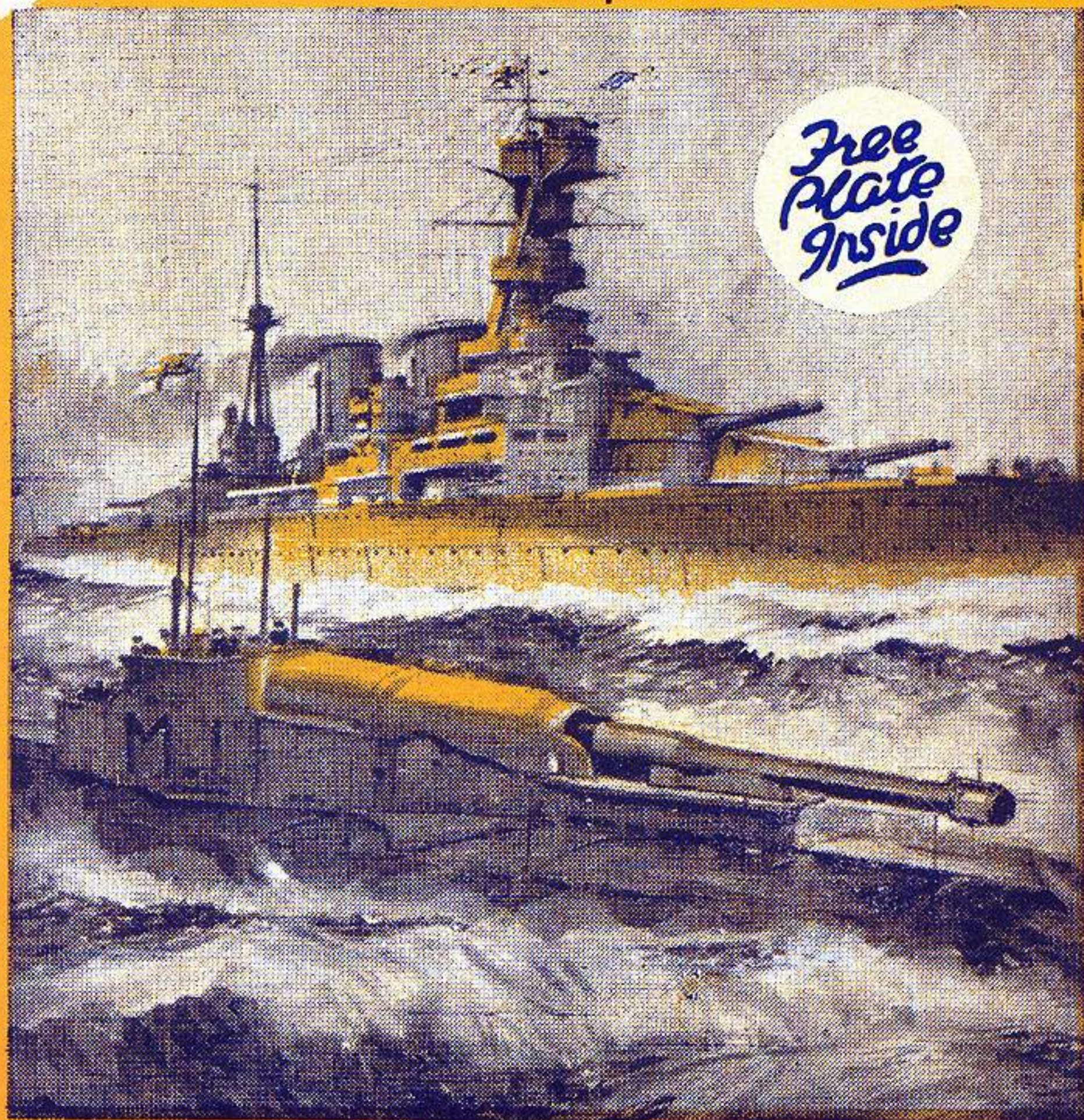
No. 873. Vol. XXVI. Week Ending November 1st, 1924.

The Magnet 2^d

Library
of
Complete School Stories.

EVERY
MONDAY

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inside



**A Real Scream—"BOTH BUNTERS!"—This Week's Complete School Story,
"THE TRIALS OF STORRYDENE VILLA!"—Grand New Series of Footer Stories.**



OUR FIGHTING FLEET!

THIS WEEK
H.M.S. HOOD.

By JACKSTAFF (THE WELL KNOWN NAVAL WRITER).

H.M.S. Hood, mightiest of battle-cruisers, is regarded with pride by every officer and man in it as the show ship of the British Navy. That view is held by the Government also, for they recently placed the Hood at the head of a Special Service Squadron that was sent round the Empire to give Britons overseas an idea of what the Navy that defends them is like. And a wonderful reception was accorded her everywhere. Huge crowds of people flocked down to look at her. Nor was that in anyway surprising, as the Hood is admittedly the finest battle-cruiser in the world.

Moreover, she is the largest vessel ever built for the British Navy. Probably the largest that will ever be built for it, since the Maritime Powers have agreed to limit the size of cruisers in future. None are to displace more than 10,000 tons. That's less than one-fourth the weight of the Hood. It is a custom in our Fleet to name important ships after famous admirals. Thus the Hood is "christened" after that doughty old sea-dog Admiral Lord Hood of Avalon. She is the second vessel so named. The first was a battle-ship.

When fully loaded for sea—that is, when she has crew and all her stores on board, the Hood displaces 44,600 tons. Without the full load her displacement is 41,200 tons. Subtract these figures and you will get an idea of what a great weight in men and stores a warship has to carry. Of oil fuel alone (she burns no coal) the Hood normally "bunkers" 1,200 tons, and she could, in an emergency, stow away much more, whilst her crew numbers in round figures 1,500, or the equivalent to a battalion and an half of soldiers.

The extreme length of the Hood is 860 feet, and measured from the outside of her bulges (these are an under-water protection against torpedo attack) she is 105 feet wide. So enormous are her

dimensions that we have few dry docks big enough to put her in. The Hood has engines in keeping with her mammoth proportions. They are of 144,000 horse-power, and can drive her giant hull through the water at a speed of 35 miles an hour, which is faster than many trains go. As befits such a leviathan, the Hood is powerfully armed. The eight guns which you see sticking out in pairs from her barbettes are all 15-inch, and can throw a ton of steel for more than twenty miles. Those along her beam (six on each side) are 5.5 inch. All of these weapons are director-controlled. This means that they are aimed and fired from the cabin which you see at the top of the foremast. In addition to them she has many smaller guns, and no less than six torpedo tubes for firing the 21-inch torpedo, a formidable weapon that is propelled by heated air and has a very long, effective range. As the Hood was laid down in war-time for the special purpose of fighting such German ships as the Graf Spee she is heavily protected by armour plating. As a general rule cruisers are not. She cost over £6,000,000 to build and nearly £600,000 a year has to be spent on keeping her in commission.



Next Week:
H.M.S. QUEEN ELIZABETH.

NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME!

H.M.S. QUEEN ELIZABETH.

MAGNETITES can look forward to another superb FREE ART PLATE in next Monday's bumper issue of their favourite paper. No. 2 of this series of Free Gifts is a wonderful photographic reproduction of Earl Beatty's flagship, the Queen Elizabeth. Tell all your pals about these fine art plates, clams, and persuade them to place a regular order with their newsagent for the MAGNET so that they can collect the complete set.

Each one is worthy of a frame; each one is a masterpiece of modern photography. To those of my loyal readers who have missed previous announcements concerning these Art Plates, I would point out that TWELVE of the absolute latest types of warships are represented in this series. Most of you are interested in Cruisers, Submarines, Mine-layers, Torpedo-boat Destroyers, Battleships, Patrol-boats, Aircraft-carriers, etc., for it was thanks to these walls of steel and the gallant men who lined them that Britain was never invaded during the Great War. Undoubtedly this splendid series is both enlightening and interesting. One becomes at once familiar with the "lines" of these monster walls of steel, their armament, horse-power, tonnage, speed, etc. Make sure of obtaining No. 2, boys, by visiting that newsagent of yours right away. This is an offer that should not on any account be missed.

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"GIVING BUNTER BEANS!"

By Frank Richards.

This does not take the form of a feed—not a bit of it! The fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove starts some more of his ventriloquial stunts, and he is not too particular in his choice of victims. There is a limit in all things—even ventriloquism. The great William George steps over the borderline, rather contemptuous of the trouble he is bringing over his own head. But when Bunter is in trouble he likes to be surrounded by a host of sympathetic fellows who are willing to take his trouble on their shoulders. What happens to Billy Bunter I will leave you to discover next week. Make no mistake about it, boys, this coming Greyfriars story is a real treat, sweeping along on a tide of exciting interest. Don't miss it!

"THE ONE-LEGGED GOALIE!"

By Walter Edwards.

From the moment you commence to read this second yarn in the powerful footer series which has just started you will begin to hate Nugent Beasley Allen more than ever. His snobbish ideas of social distinction cut no ice with the major portion of the Storrydene Villa, however; they're real men. Another new character is introduced in the team—Hoppy Hawkins, so named on account of his wooden leg. You'd never believe a fellow so handicapped could keep a goal intact against a furious bombardment, would you? Well, Hoppy is a surprisingly agile young chap—a real find in the way of goalkeepers. Mind you, make his acquaintance next week.

BURNING THE GUY!

This ancient historic custom still obtains at Greyfriars—guys there are in plenty. And where there are guys there is smoke—and fireworks! Even lofty seniors take part in the celebrations on the glorious Fifth of November. What better, then, than a special Supplement dealing with Guy Fawkes Day? The "Herald" staff has got down to brass tacks with a will. Their efforts will cause explosions of mirth throughout the land.

28 BIKES FOR THREE WORDS.

That's an offer which is familiar to most of you by now. Our "Characters" Competition is going great guns. This is just a reminder that Your Editor still has a number of splendid bicycles waiting to be won. See if you can't do the trick, chum! The coupon's on page 27.

YOUR GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

Talking about the Queen Elizabeth reminds me that there will appear in next week's MAGNET an interesting and instructive article about this famous warship. You will find in this article just what you want; for, of course, every Magnetite is going in for the prizes offered by the "Boys' Friend." The old "Green 'Un" is giving away a Five-pound Note and Six Footballs to those readers who solve the history of the great ship. Get hold of the MAGNET article and go ahead!

Your Editor.

NATURE'S WAY! It is unfortunate for Wally Bunter that he bears an extraordinary likeness to his cousin William George. That, and a tangle of circumstances, plunge Wally into a regular sea of trouble.



Both Bunters!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, with William George Bunter in the Limelight.

By famous FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

For Sale!

LETTER for you, Bunter!" Billy Bunter did not heed. Generally Bunter was quite keen on such things. After the post was in, the fat junior would haunt the rack, blinking at the letters stuck there, in the faint hope of finding one addressed to himself, with a remittance in it.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast; and Billy Bunter was still expecting a postal-order!

But he did not even look round when Bob Cherry called out that there was a letter for him. Perhaps it was because he was deep in conversation with Lord Mauleverer. He was explaining to Mauly that a certain remittance, long-expected, was bound to materialise the next morning at the latest; and that, in the meantime, the loan of a currency note would tide him over great difficulties.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Didn't you hear me say there was a letter for you?"

"Oh, don't worry!" said Bunter, without turning his head.

"But there really is a letter," said Bob, in surprise. "Don't you want it, fatty?"

"No; dry up! Now, look here, Mauly, old man—" went on Bunter, in his most persuasive tone.

Lord Mauleverer glanced at his watch. "Oh gad! I'm late!" he ejaculated.

"I say, Mauly—" "Sorry, I can't stop!"

Lord Mauleverer almost ran for it. He did not mention what he was late for; perhaps it was that he was late in escaping from Bunter.

Billy Bunter blinked after him wrathfully through his big spectacles. "Boast!" he murmured.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Getting deaf, Bunter?" bawled Bob Cherry. "Don't you want this letter? It's got the French postmark on it."

Bunter sniffed. "I know that, ass! I've seen it there! Nothing in it."

"Isn't it from your cousin Wally?" asked Bob. "It looks like his fist."

"Yes, it is. Blow it!" said Bunter. "No hurry to open it, that I can see. I say, Bob, old man, do you remember my mentioning that I expected a postal-order to-day—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes." "There's been a delay in the post," said Bunter dolorously. "It hasn't come."

"Not really?" asked Bob. "No, really—"

"It's time it came," said Bob, with a serious shake of the head. "That postal-order must be growing whiskers by this time."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Anyhow, here's a letter for you," said Bob cheerily, taking down the foreign letter from the rack. "Open it, old bean, and tell us how Wally Bunter is getting on abroad. I'd like to know."

"What rot!" said Bunter. "Look here, Bob, never mind that silly letter—now, about my postal-order—"

"Never mind your silly postal-order," grinned Bob. "Now, about this letter that—"

"Blow that letter!" hooted Bunter. Family affection was not the strong point of the Bunter family.

Billy Bunter of the Remove, Sammy Bunter of the Second Form, and Bessie Bunter of Cliff House School, were all far above any such weakness.

Evidently William George Bunter was not keen to hear the news from his cousin Walter Gilbert, who was a clerk in an office in Paris—a poor relation, in William George's estimation.

A rich relation would have called forth all the affection in Bunter's fat nature. But a poor relation was quite a different proposition.

The Owl of the Remove was apparently not going even to take the trouble to read the letter which his cousin had written him from Paris.

Bob Cherry eyed the fat junior.

Wally Bunter was known at Greyfriars, and the Famous Five of the Remove had liked him, and chummed with him. The fact that he was exactly like Billy Bunter to look at, was against him, no doubt. But it was only on the

outside that he resembled Billy. Inside, he was quite a different Bunter. So the chums of the Remove had liked him very much; and they had been quite sorry when his employers sent him to their office in Paris, and they saw no more of him.

Naturally, they were interested in hearing how he was getting on abroad. Generally, Bunter and his affairs had not the slightest interest for Bob Cherry. But for once he would have been pleased to hear what was in Bunter's letter.

But Bunter was not interested at all. His fat intellect was concentrated on a more important matter.

He was hard up—not an unusual state with Bunter. The postal-order, long-expected, was still delayed in coming. All his rich relations—and their name was legion, according to Bunter—seemed to have forgotten his existence. So Bunter's thoughts were centred on the problem of raising the wind—a problem he very often had to deal with, and which he had often solved with success. At such a time a letter from a poor relation was not likely to make much impression on him.

"Look here, old man," said Bob persuasively. "Open the letter, and tell us about old Wally, there's a good chap."

"Bother Wally!" grunted Bunter. "I dare say he's hard up in Paris, and wants to borrow money of me."

"Rats!" snapped Bob. "Wally never borrowed any money of you. You borrowed from him, though, when he was here—I know that."

"I suppose I can raise a small loan from my own cousin if I like," sniffed Bunter. "Besides, I did a lot for Wally—he's only a poor relation, but I've always been kind to him—taking notice of him, and treating him as an equal, and all that."

"You fat owl!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Coming along, Bob?" called out Harry Wharton, from the end of the passage. The captain of the Remove came in sight there, with Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

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"Hold on a minute!" called back Bob. "There's a letter here for Bunter—"

"What the thump does a letter for Bunter matter?" asked Johnny Bull.

"It's from old Wally."

"Oh! Good!"

The Co. came up at once. Billy Bunter blinked at them morosely through his big spectacles.

Bunter never could understand what the fellows saw in Wally, when they failed to see anything at all in him—William George; ever so much nicer a chap.

True, Wally might be considered good-looking—he was just like Bunter! That much William George had to concede.

But, really, Wally Bunter had no other qualifications that Billy knew of, and he simply could not see why Wally should have become so popular with the Remove fellows. Billy Bunter, fascinating fellow as he was, wasn't popular!

"Let's hear the news, old fat bean," said Frank Nugent cheerily. "How's old Wally getting on?"

"Blessed if I know—or care!" grunted Bunter.

"Well, that's jolly nice and affectionate, I must say!" remarked Harry Wharton. "But if you don't care, Bunter, we do, so tell us."

"Oh, rats!"

"The fat bounder isn't even taking the trouble to open the letter," said Bob.

Snort from Bunter.

"You seem jolly keen on hearing from Wally," he said sarcastically. "The fact is, you fellows, I'm not too jolly well pleased at having a relation in an office, and I don't like it being talked about up and down the school."

"Oh, don't be a silly ass," said Johnny Bull unceremoniously.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"The asininefulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Well, are you going to open the letter?" demanded Bob Cherry impatiently.

Billy Bunter grinned.

For the first time in history his affairs had become a matter of interest to Harry Wharton & Co. They wanted him to open the letter, to tell them how their old pal Wally was getting on in a foreign country. That was a sufficient reason for the amiable Bunter not to open it.

"No hurry," yawned Bunter.

"How do you know there isn't a remittance in it?" said Frank Nugent temptingly.

Bunter sniffed.

"More likely cadging," he answered.

"He's a poor relation. He's worked in a dashed office since he was a nipper, except for the time when he was a master here. It's only my kindness of heart that makes me take any notice of him at all. But I always was a generous fellow."

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's really rather like Wally's check," pursued Bunter. "He can't suppose I want to hear vulgar details about office life and office work, and such things. I really don't quite like his writing at all. But I'm an easy-going chap."

The Famous Five looked at Bunter. They were disposed to stuff the letter down the back of his podgy neck, sit him hard on the floor, and leave him there. But they really did want to hear about the progress of their old friend in his new surroundings, so they restrained that natural desire.

"I say, you fellows, I'll tell you what," continued Bunter. "You're jolly keen

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on that letter. I'm not. Well, you can have it for half-a-crown."

"What?"

Bunter gave a fat chuckle.

"That's a tanner each for you," he said. "That isn't much, as you're so jolly interested in Wally! He, he, he!"

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, blow your silly letter!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Rot!" said Nugent.

"You said there might be a remittance in it, Nugent, you know," chuckled Bunter. "Well, then, there you are! The letter's yours for half-a-crown. As you're so jolly friendly with my poor relations, it's really cheap at the price. He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter chuckled explosively. He considered that he had "caught" the Famous Five; and certainly he would have preferred half-a-crown to any number of letters from Walter Gilbert Bunter.

"You fat bounder—" began Wharton.

"He, he, he! Not so fond of Wally now—what?" chortled Bunter.

"Oh, stop cackling!" growled Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he! There may be all sorts of news in that letter. Wally may have got a rise, or he may have got the sack," grinned Bunter. "Don't you want to know now? Aren't you interested in the news?"

Bob Cherry took the letter from the rack.

"You mean it?" he asked.

"He, he, he! Yes, rather!" chuckled Bunter.

"Done, then!" grunted Bob. "Shell out your tanners, you chaps. We'll have the letter, if Bunter doesn't want it."

Billy Bunter's eyes glimmered greedily behind his big spectacles. He had not expected his offer to be taken. It really seemed too good to be true. At this rate, he was prepared to receive letters from Walter Gilbert Bunter daily, indeed hourly.

"Shell out!" he exclaimed eagerly.

"Rot!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, play up!" said Wharton, laughing. "We really want to hear about old Wally. Here's your tanner, Bunter."

Five sixpences were forthcoming. Billy Bunter clutched them in his fat palm. His little round eyes were fairly dancing. He made a movement to go. When Bunter had cash in his possession his immediate destination was the tuck-shop, by the shortest possible route, in the shortest possible time.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Bob. "Don't you want me to read out the letter, fatty?"

"Well, buck up, then!" said Bunter.

Bob Cherry opened the letter—now the property of the Famous Five. He slit the envelope, drew out a folded letter from inside, and unfolded the letter. And from the letter he extracted, with a surprised whistle, an engraved slip of paper. It was a postal-order for one pound!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Sold!

"A—A—A postal-order!"

"My hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter from the Famous Five; and from five or six other fellows who were standing round, rather interested in the peculiar transaction.

"A postal-order!" roared Bolsover major. "Bunter's postal-order has come at last!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A pound!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "Bunter's sold us a pound for half-a-crown!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter's face was a study.

Not for a single instant had he supposed that there could possibly be anything in the nature of a remittance in the letter from Paris.

Why cousin Wally should be sending him a pound was a mystery! Naturally, it had never occurred to Bunter that Wally was doing anything of the kind.

But there it was!

Bob Cherry held up the postal-order and flourished it. Bunter blinked at it, with his little round eyes almost starting through his big spectacles.

"A—a—a postal-order!" he gasped.

"My-mum-mum-my postal-order!"

"Ours!" roared Bob. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ours!" chuckled Nugent.

"We're the giddy owners now!" roared Johnny Bull. "You sold it to us fair and square, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fair and squarefulness was terrific, my esteemed, disgusting Bunter!" chortled Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The honourable remittance is our esteemed property!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Thanks, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "Many thanks, old fat bean! This will see us over tea-time nicely."

"I—I say—"

"The thankfulness is terrific!"

"I—I—I was only joking, of course!" gasped Bunter. "I—I was only pulling your leg, you know."

"Pulling your own, I think," chuckled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I never meant that—"

"You've done it now!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"I haven't done it!" shrieked Bunter.

"I—I—I was just joking. I—I wouldn't part with old Wally's letter for worlds. You fellows know how fond I am of old Wally!"

"We know—exactly!" assented Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gimme that letter!" howled Bunter. "It's mine! You can have your measly tanners! Gimme that letter. I—I—I'm awfully anxious to hear how old Wally is getting on. I—I've been anxious about him quite a lot. Gimme that letter!"

"Oh, I'll read out the letter, and set your anxiety at rest," chuckled Bob. "I know how anxious you are—just!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I mean—"

"Yes, I know what you mean. Here's the letter," said Bob, and he proceeded to read it out, while Bunter glued his eyes on the postal-order, and fairly squirmed in his anxiety to get his fat fingers on it.

"Dear Billy,—Just a line to tell you that I've got my holiday, and shall be coming over to England for a fortnight. I'm sure you'd like me to run down to Greyfriars and see you; and, of course, I want to see the chaps. Tell them I'm coming. I'll make it a Wednesday, as that's a half-holiday with you."

"Now, old chap, I know how hospitable you are, and I know you will want to stand me a feed in the study in the old style. So I've got a postal-order at Cook's, to send along, in case there's a shortage of cash at the time."

"See you soon, old boy."

"Your affectionate cousin,

"W. G. BUNTER."

"Hurrah!" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"Jolly glad to see the old chap when he comes," said Harry Wharton. "This is good news."

"The goodfulness is terrific."

"Jolly thoughtful of him to send the quid along," grinned Nugent. "It's very likely there'll be a shortage of cash at the time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter was almost dancing with anxiety. He made a jump at the postal-order, clutching at it; but the grinning Bob held it high above his head.

"Gimme my postal-order!" yelled Bunter.

"My dear chap, you've sold it."

"Sold again!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The soldfulness is terrific. The esteemed Bunter had better save up the half-crown to entertain the excellent and execrable Wally."

"I—I—I—I'll go to Mr. Queleh if you don't give me my postal-order!" raved Bunter. "I—I'll go to the Head!"

"We'll all go," chuckled Vernon-Smith. "We're all witnesses to the sale."

"Yes, rather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter fairly gasped with dismay. The postal-order was there—a real postal-order had arrived for him at last! And now it was to disappear from his gaze like a beautiful dream!

"I—I say, you fellows, gimme my postal-order," he pleaded. "I didn't know there was a remittance in the letter, of course. Besides, I was only joking. Look here, you can have the letter, if you gimme the postal-order! That's fair."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I'll jolly well punch your head, Bob Cherry—"

"Go it!"

"Beast!"

"We'll get this postal-order cashed, and stand no end of a spread in the study," chuckled Bob Cherry. "Half-a-crown wouldn't have gone very far. But a whole quid—"

"Oh, good!"

"It's my quid!" yelled Bunter desperately.

"How can it be your quid when you've sold it?" asked Bob, in surprise. "You've got the half-crown in your paw now."

"Beast!"

"Well, come along," said Bob. "This is a windfall, and no mistake. Good-bye, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

He blinked despairingly after the Famous Five as they walked away, laughing.

The sorrow in his fat face might have melted a heart of stone. But there seemed to be no sympathy for the unhappy Owl in the Remove fellows around him. They roared with laughter.

At the corner of the passage Bob Cherry stopped. He glanced back, and grinned at the sight of Bunter's woe-begone countenance.

He came back along the passage—and Bunter's fat face brightened. He trembled with renewed hope.

"Sorry you sold the letter now, fatty?" asked Bob genially.

"Ow! Yes!" groaned Bunter.

"Wish you'd been a bit more affectionate towards a giddy absent relative, what?"

Another groan.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. "You silly owl, do you think we'd keep your silly postal-order? Give me those tanners, and take it."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Bob Cherry walked away chuckling, with five sixpences in his hand, and rejoined his comrades. Billy Bunter was left standing with the postal-order in his fat fingers, and a dazed expression on his face. He really could scarcely believe in his good luck.

"Oh!" he gasped again.

Skinner of the Remove clapped him on the shoulder.

"I say, Bunter, you owe me a bob—"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"You owe me two-and-six!" said Bolsover major.

"You owe me seven-and-six!" hooted Peter Todd. "Shell out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I'll get this postal-order changed, and—square all round!" gasped Bunter in alarm.

And he scudded away, as fast as his fat little legs could carry him. The postal-order was promptly changed, in Mrs. Mimble's tuckshop. It was changed for precisely twenty shillings' worth of tuck—which Bunter proceeded to consume on the spot. Bunter had many creditors in the Remove, and many claims were likely to be forthcoming now that a postal-order had actually materialised—and really Mrs. Mimble's till seemed the safest place for it!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

To Cash!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. had been glad to hear that Wally Bunter was proposing to pay a visit to Greyfriars. They were really quite keen to see "old Wally" once more.

Certainly it was not on his looks that Wally was popular. He was so exactly like Billy Bunter to look at, that he might easily have been taken for him—in fact, had been taken for him many times. Only the fact that Billy wore spectacles, and Wally did not, distinguished them from one another. So Wally's best friend—and he had many good friends in the Remove—would not have referred to him as a handsome chap.

But he had many good qualities. He was an agreeable fellow in his manners, he was intelligent, he was a first-class footballer, and he was good nature itself in disposition—indeed, he was as unlike Bunter in everything but looks, as he well could be.

But in looks, undoubtedly, the resemblance was amazing. On one occasion, as the juniors knew, Wally had taken Bunter's place in class, in order to get the Owl of the Remove an extra holiday. Even Mr. Queleh's gimlet-eyes had been deceived.

But, as Bob Cherry said, a fellow shouldn't be judged on appearances. Appearances, everybody but Bunter agreed, were against Wally.



"Gimme my postal-order!" yelled Bunter, making an ineffectual jump at the slip of paper in Bob Cherry's hand. "My dear chap, you've sold this quid postal-order for half-a-crown," grinned Bob, holding the P.O. high above his head. "Sold again!" chuckled the Bounder. "I'll go to the Head—I—I'll go to Queleh about it!" raved Bunter desperately. "We'll all go," chuckled Vernon-Smith. "We're all witnesses to the sale!" (See Chapter 2.)

He was remembered with kindness by many of the Remove. Bolsover major remembered how, taking Wally for Billy, he had once ragged him—and had been promptly floored by Wally, who was a great fighting-man. So even Bolsover major remembered him kindly—having a great respect for anybody who could "floor" him. Even Skinner and Snoop, who were not over-endowed with the milk of human kindness, had a kind memory of Wally Bunter, who had done them good turns during a stay at Greyfriars.

So the news that Wally Bunter was coming was welcome all along the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter was quite perplexed and irritated.

That his poor relation, a fellow whom he regarded with lofty patronage mingled with contempt, should be liked like this, surprised and exasperated him.

In his own fat way he rather liked Wally a little. He even carried his liking so far as to borrow money of him whenever he met him, though he never carried it far enough to return any of the borrowings.

But it was very annoying for Wally to be liked and admired in this way by fellows who did not like William George himself and saw nothing in him to admire, and said so with painful frankness.

It was, in fact, rather a cheek of Wally to wedge in like this, Bunter considered. His proper place was that of a humble and grateful follower of William George, who was kind enough to take notice of him. It really showed a "neck" to get popular at Greyfriars on his own account. He was in an office, too—actually had to work for his daily bread—quite a horrid circumstance in Bunter's lofty estimation. It really was too thick for an office chap to give himself airs.

What "airs" poor Wally gave himself Bunter would have found it rather difficult to explain, but that was how he chose to look at it. So the forthcoming visit of his cousin did not excite much affectionate interest in William George's plump breast. Rather, it put him into a state of perpetual annoyance.

Fellows asked him when Wally was coming—what day he expected him; warned him not to let them miss seeing old Wally—fellows who could see Billy every day if they liked, and didn't want to. Even Lord Mauleverer found energy enough to express a wish that Wally would give him a look-in when he came along.

Wally, as an office chap and a poor relation, ought to have been glad to bask in a little reflected glory from Bunter. Instead of which, Bunter realised that his only importance just now consisted in the fact that he was Wally's cousin.

It really was annoying.

Still, Bunter realised, on reflection, that there might be something in it for his fat self. Wally being so popular, the fellows would be bound to rally round and stand him a feed, at least, when he came. In that feed, as the distinguished visitor's cousin, Billy Bunter would have a chance of annexing the lion's share. There was consolation in that.

The pound so thoughtfully forwarded by Wally for the "study spread" on his arrival had already gone. Really, Wally Bunter seemed to have forgotten some of his fat cousin's manners and customs during his absence. Riches take unto themselves wings and fly away, and especially was that the case with any riches that came into W. G. Bunter's fat hands. The pound had lasted just so

long as it took Bunter to consume twenty shillings' worth of tuck.

The next day William George rolled into Study No. 1 in the Remove at tea-time. The Famous Five were there, and Bob Cherry picked up a loaf as he sighted the fat figure in the doorway.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Two to one in doughnuts that I catch him on the watch-chain!" said Bob, poisoning the loaf in the air.

"Oh, really, Cherry—" Bunter eyed the playful Bob warily. "I say, you fellows, about Wally, you know—"

Bob put down the loaf.

"Prot in, old fat top! News of old Wally? Is he coming this Wednesday?"

"Take a pew, Bunter?" said Harry Wharton cordially.

Bunter snorted. He drew a box up to the tea-table and sat down. But he was not pleased. Obviously he was welcome in Study No. 1 not as William George Bunter, but as the cousin of Walter Gilbert Bunter.

Still, there was an ample tea on the table, and Bunter had had only two teas that afternoon so far—one in Hall and one with Peter Todd. He was more than ready for a third.

"When is he coming?" asked Harry.

"Eh? Who?" asked Bunter, with his mouth full of cake.

"Old Wally, of course, ass!"

"Oh, Wally! I don't know yet."

"Why, you ass," exclaimed Bob Cherry indignantly, "haven't you heard from him again yet? You're wolfing that cake under false pretences, then!"

"Oh, really, you know—" Bunter gulped down the cake and clutched at another slice. "I say, you fellows, Wally may be staying a day or two here when he comes. Old Quelchy seems to like him, for some reason, and he's willing."

"Good egg!"

"Old Quelchy's actually made the offer," said Bunter. "He told me that if my cousin wishes to stay on a day or two, a bed may be put for him in the Remove dormitory."

"Good old Quelchy!" said Nugent.

"Well, while my cousin's here I want to look after him," said Bunter. "It's up to me, as a rich relation, you know. Wally's done a lot of roughing it, and I don't suppose he's had anything decent to eat in Paris—you know the French live on skinny kickshaws and don't know the taste of real grub. First of all I want to stand him a good spread in the study the day he comes. I dare say I could do it on a quid."

"Well, you've got the quid," said Bob.

"Wally sent you a quid."

Bunter coughed.

"That's gone," he said. "You see, I really had to settle my little account with Mrs. Mimble."

"You've settled an account!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in astonishment.

"Certainly," said Bunter, with dignity.

"I paid Mrs. Mimble the pound. I handed it over entire."

"Well, my hat! Wonders will never cease!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Now, Wally may come along any day," said Bunter. "I happen to be stony. I dare say the money will come in before he arrives. I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'm expecting a postal-order from one of my titled relations. But if it doesn't come I shall be in rather a hole. Wally will expect a study spread—in fact, he's bound to expect it. In the circumstances, I hope I can rely on my friends to see me through."

"I hope so," agreed Bob Cherry. "Hadn't you better go and see your friends about it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Apparently Bunter considered that he was with his friends now. On that point there was a difference of opinion.

"Oh, don't be a funny ass, you know," urged Bunter. "You don't want to disappoint old Wally, do you? Now, which of you fellows is going to lend me a pound?"

"The whichfulness is terrific!"

"I'm going to ask you to the spread, you know."

"We can ask ourselves if we stand the spread!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Cut it out, Bunter!" said the captain of the Remove. "Wally sent you a quid, and you've blued it already. If we handed you another it would go the same way. But don't worry about Wally. When he comes this study is going to kill the fatted calf for him."

"Hear, hear!"

"That's all very well," objected Bunter. "But I'd rather have the arrangements in my own hands."

"You can help as much as you like with the giddy arrangements, old chap."

"I—I mean, the cash—"

"The cashfulness is a boot on the other foot, my esteemed Bunter," said Hurrec Janset Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"My dear man," said Bob cheerily, "you can have the cash in your hands if you like—"

"Oh, good!"

"If you raise it yourself—"

"Eh?"

"Not otherwise," said Bob.

"Beast!"

The chums of the Remove chuckled, and Bunter made a fresh inroad on the cake. He found the Famous Five the same set of suspicious, distrustful rotters that he had always found them—fellows who wouldn't trust a chap with money. But the cake was good.

"Don't you worry, old fat bean," said Bob. "We'll stand a feast of the gods when Wally comes. We'll let you come, too. There! Only, let us know the date in advance, so that we can get ready."

"Wally mayn't come till next week," grumbled Bunter. "I'd rather have the quid in hand now."

"What's the good of the quid in hand now, if it's not to be spent till next week?" chuckled Bob.

"I—I— You—you see—" stammered Bunter.

"We do—quite plain."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter grunted.

"I say, have you fellows got another cake?" he asked.

"No; that's the lot."

"Measly sort of tea to ask a fellow to," said Bunter, rising from the box. "I'd have done better to accept a pressing invitation I had from Temple of the Fourth. You can go and eat coke, the lot of you!"

And having thus gracefully expressed his thanks, William George Bunter rolled out of Study No. 1, leaving the Famous Five grinning.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter has a Brain-Wave!

"HE, he, he!" Thus William George Bunter suddenly, unexpectedly, in the Remove Form-room the following morning.

The Remove fellows looked round.

Mr. Quelch fairly jumped.

Really, it was a surprising interruption to lessons. Fellows seldom found anything to chuckle at in the Form-room

with Mr. Quelch. Rather they found occasion for seriousness, and sometimes for sorrow. But any fellow who found anything to chuckle at in lessons with Mr. Quelch was not likely to venture to chuckle.

Yet Bunter had burst into a sudden unmusical cachinnation that fairly echoed through the Form-room.

The Removites stared—Mr. Quelch seemed petrified, after his astonished jump.

Bunter's fat face was irradiated by a broad grin.

Something of an excessively humorous nature was evidently working in the fat intellect of the Owl of the Remove.

It couldn't have been the Latin verse that the Remove were then engaged in construing. Nobody had ever been known to find anything amusing in the "Æneid."

As a matter of fact, Bunter was not heeding the lessons; he was following his own train of thought, whatever it was. His fat body was in the Remove Form-room, but his fat mind was far away.

"Bunter!" gasped Mr. Quelch, finding his voice at last.

It was Bunter's turn to jump.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" he gasped. He remembered where he was, and gave his Form master a startled blink.

"You laughed, Bunter!"

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all."

"What! I heard you!"

"I—I mean, just so, sir! Exactly!" stammered Bunter. "That—that's what I meant to say, sir. Quite so, sir."

"You find something of a comic nature in Virgil's verse, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Then at what, Bunter, were you laughing?"

"Nothing, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean, sir, I—I was thinking—"

"Gammon!" murmured Skinner, and there was a subdued chuckle somewhere in the Form. It died away into frozen silence under the glare of Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye.

"You were thinking, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"You were not thinking about your lessons, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. Of—of course. I—I'm awfully keen on lessons, sir," said Bunter, in dismay. "I don't think this Latin verse all silly rot, sir, as most of the fellows do. I don't really, sir."

"Bless my soul! Do you consider the Form-room, Bunter, a proper place for a sudden and unseemly explosion of ill-timed merriment?"

"Oh, my hat! I—I mean, yes, sir—"

"What?"

"That is, no, sir," gasped Bunter. "Certainly not, sir. I wasn't."

"Eh?"

"I mean, I didn't—that is to say—Oh, dear!"

Mr. Quelch picked up his cane.

"This is a serious place, Bunter, and the work we are engaged upon is serious, little as its seriousness seems to appeal to you. It is my duty, Bunter, to impress its seriousness upon your mind. Hold out your hand, Bunter."

"Oh, lor'!" Bunter would have been satisfied with a less dutiful Form master.

"Kindly do not utter ridiculous ejaculations in my presence, Bunter," thundered Mr. Quelch. "Hold out your hand at once."

Bunter's fat hand came reluctantly out. Swish!

"Yaroooooooh!"

"Cease that absurd noise at once, Bunter!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"



"I—I say, you fellows—oh!" ejaculated Bunter, as his cap was suddenly knocked off. He stooped and clutched it, and as he did so Ponsonby let out a boot. Bunter was fairly caught bending. Instead of picking up his cap he plunged forward and sprawled on it. "Yaroooh!" he roared. (See Chapter 5.)

"And if you laugh again in this Form-room, Bunter, during lessons, I shall punish you much more severely."

"Ow! Wow!"

Bunter did not laugh again. He was not feeling inclined to laugh any more. He sat at his desk and dismally rubbed his fat paw.

The Owl of the Remove remained quite serious while the morning's lessons lasted.

But by the time the Remove were dismissed, the fat junior had recovered his spirits, temporarily damped by Mr. Quelch, and he was grinning as he came out of the Form-room.

"What's the giddy joke, old fat man?" asked Peter Todd, clapping him on the shoulder in the passage.

"He, he, he! That's telling!"

"Well, I suppose you can tell me, can't you, fathead?" asked Peter, staring at him.

"He, he, he!"

That cachinnation was Bunter's only response, and he rolled away, still grinning, evidently hugging to himself some screaming joke. Peter Todd shrugged his shoulders. He was not particularly interested in Bunter's joke, whatever it was.

Bunter's face wore a fat smile at dinner. After dinner, he rolled out into the quad after the Famous Five.

It was Wednesday, and that day was a half-holiday at Greyfriars. Harry Wharton & Co. were thinking of football. There was no match on; the idea was a practice game to get into form for the matches that were coming along. Billy Bunter joined the chums of the Remove in the quad.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Coming down to the footer, old top?" asked Bob Cherry, with a grin. "Do

you good, old man—bring down your fat, you know. You'd be all the better for losing a ton or two."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, I'm in rather a fix," said Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five very seriously. "You see—"

"We see," grinned Bob. "You're expecting a postal-order, and your titled relations have forgotten to play up. Your uncle, the duke, is too busy playing golf, or playing the barrel-organ, whichever it is—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And your cousin, the marquis, is rather bothered with having the bailiffs in—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's really too bad," said Bob sympathetically. "The nobility really seem to be losing their memories, Bunter. It's really as bad as having no titled relations at all."

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know!" said Bunter. "I've got to get over to Lantham this afternoon."

"Well, get!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"And my cousin Wally is coming—"

"Coming this afternoon!" exclaimed Wharton. "Good! I didn't know you'd had a letter from him."

"It wasn't exactly a letter," said Bunter cautiously. "I may have had a telephone call. Anyhow, he's coming—and the rotten part of it is, that I simply must go over to Lantham."

"That's all right—leave him to us," said Bob. "We'll do the honours. Rely on it, old fat top."

"Well, that's all right, of course," said Wharton. "But Bunter ought really to be here when his cousin comes. Can't you put off Lantham to-day, Bunter?"

Bunter shook his head.

"The fact is, I can't," he said. "My pater expects me at Lantham this afternoon—it's an old engagement—"

"Oh, in that case—"
"That's how it is, you see. I say, you fellows, it's rather rotten. Will you look after Wally a bit till I come back?"

"Certainly," said the captain of the Remove. He was rather surprised by Bunter's concern for Wally. It would have been more like Bunter to march off to keep his appointment at Lantham, regardless of the arrival of his "poor relation."

"You'll stand him a bit of a spread?" asked Bunter anxiously. "He's bound to be hungry after his—his journey."

"We'll look after him all right."
"He's specially fond of jam-tarts," said Bunter.

"We'll lay in jam-tarts," said Wharton laughing.

"And cream puffs—better have some cream puffs. And don't forget the dough-nuts. I'm fond of dough-nuts."

"Eh! You won't be here, if you're going to Lantham."

"I—I mean—" stammered Bunter.

"Well, what do you mean?"

"I—I mean, Wally's fond of dough-nuts, and I—he—he'll be hungry, coming all the way from Lantham—"

"Is Wally at Lantham now, then?"

"I—I mean London. He's coming from London, of course. I wonder what made me say Lantham! I—I say, I can trust you fellows to look after him all right—especially about the grub?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"That's all right! Wally is as fat as you are, but he's not such a glutton," said Bob. "No need to sack the tuck-shop to feed Wally."

"Oh, really, Cherry, if you're not going to stand him a decent spread!" exclaimed Bunter.

"That's all right, fatty, there shall be jam-tarts, and cream puffs, and dough-nuts galore. Blessed if I know why you're so particular about Wally's tea—especially as you're not taking the trouble to stay in and see him."

"I—I would, you know, only my mater expects me at Lantham—"

"Your mater?"

"Yes, and I couldn't disappoint her—"

"Didn't you say your pater?"

"Did I? I—I mean—" Bunter stammered. "I—I meanter say, my mater and my pater, you know—both of 'em."

Bob Cherry looked at him suspiciously.

"Look here, Bunter, if you haven't really got any appointment with your people at Lantham, it's rather rotten to clear off when your cousin's coming," he exclaimed.

"But I have, you know—I simply couldn't disappoint my uncle—"

"Your uncle?" yelled Bob.

"I mean my pater—that is, my mater. In fact, all of them," said Bunter hastily. "They'll all be there—sort of family gathering, you know."

"Oh, my hat!"

Harry Wharton & Co. eyed Bunter curiously. Fibbing came very easy to the Owl of the Remove; indeed, he lived and moved and had his fat being in an atmosphere of fibs. But there was one weakness in Bunter's system: generally his fibs were rather too palpable. He often forgot that a certain class of persons should have good memories.

"You—you see how it is," stammered Bunter.

"I see," said Bob Cherry gruffly.

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"You don't care to meet old Wally, and you're going out. Well, I dare say he won't miss you—anyhow he's got plenty of friends here. Go out if you want to, and be blowed."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Dash it all, Bunter, whatever you're going to Lantham for, you might put it off when your cousin's coming, after a jolly long absence," exclaimed Nugent.

"I can't very well disappoint my aunt—"

"Your what?"

"I mean my uncle—"

"Oh, cheese it," said Bob Cherry. "Get off to Lantham as soon as you like—in fact, the sooner the quicker. We'll look after Wally—when will he be here?"

"About three."

"We'll meet him at the station," said Harry. "Is he coming to Courtfield or Friardale?"

"I—I couldn't say. I fancy he'll just walk in" said Bunter. "About three o'clock, you know. I—I say, you fellows, could you lend me my fare to Lantham, till—till my postal order comes."

"Dear man, I'd be glad to lend you your fare to Timbuctoo, or Tierra del Fuego," said Bob Cherry. "Anything so long as you didn't take a return ticket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Eighteenpence was sorted out by the Famous Five. Billy Bunter took it in his fat palm, and blinked at it. As a matter of fact, Harry Wharton & Co. were by no means displeased, personally, that Bunter was to be out of gates during Wally's visit. They wanted to see Wally: but undoubtedly they didn't want to see Billy.

"I say, you fellows, what's this?" asked Bunter.

"The fare to Lantham, fatty."

"I always travel first class," said Bunter, with dignity. "If you fellows think I'm going to travel third, you're jolly well making a mistake. All very well for you chaps, of course—"

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows—"

But the fellows were fed up. They walked away, and Bunter was left blinking after them, and blinking at the eighteenpence. He frowned; but his frown relaxed into a grin.

"After all, one and six is one and six!" murmured Bunter. "And anyhow I'm jolly well not going to Lantham. He, he, he!"

Bunter rolled away grinning. He was still in possession of his great joke—the great joke which had caused him to burst into that sudden and surprising cachinnation in the Form-room that morning. It was in the Form-room that the idea had flashed into Bunter's fat brain—a real brain-wave—a scheme that was, in Bunter's estimation at least, a real "corker."

A little later, William George Bunter rolled out of gates with a bag in his hand, and a fat grin on his face. His wonderful scheme, whatever it was, was in process of execution—and it was a scheme that would have made Harry Wharton & Co. jump, had they guessed it. But they didn't!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Painful for Ponsonby!

CECIL PONSONBY, of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe, smiled.

It was not a pleasant smile. That smile was called to the face of Cecil Ponsonby by the sight of a fat figure plodding along Friardale Lane, carrying a bag.

"Dear old Bunter!" remarked Ponsonby, to his companions—Gadsby and Monson of the Highcliffe Fourth.

Gadsby and Monson grinned.

The three slackers of Highcliffe were loafing about the lanes that half-holiday, with nothing special to do. Football did not attract them; cycling seemed too much like work; and a dearth of cash barred them off from some of the shady occupations they often found on a half-holiday.

They were killing time, in ways that were their own. They had pelted Mr. Giles' chickens from a safe distance; they had stuffed a village boy's cap down his back and sent him weeping away; they had opened two or three field-gates to allow the cattle to wander. Now they were looking round for some other amiable form of amusement, and they sighted Bunter. At such a time the sight of Bunter was quite a wind-fall to the three young rascals.

"Greyfriars cad!" said Monson, grinning. "This is where we come in."

"What-ho!" grinned Gadsby.

"The blind owl hasn't seen us yet," smiled Ponsonby. "Come on! Quite a pleasure to meet Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was undoubtedly a pleasure to meet Bunter—Bunter was somebody to rag, without any fear of retaliation. That exactly suited Ponsonby & Co.—they were looking for a victim, not for a scrap.

They bore down on William George Bunter. They were quite close at hand by the time William George recognised them.

Bunter halted in dismay.

He glanced to right and left, but there was no escape for the Owl of the Remove. Ponsonby & Co. closed in on him with grinning faces.

"Fancy meeting you, old top!" said Ponsonby agreeably.

"Such a pleasure!" said Gadsby.

"Such a long time since we've seen you, old scout," said Monson. "What sort of hols did you have?"

"I—I say, you fellows—" stammered Bunter.

"Did you like it at Southend in the vacation?" asked Ponsonby.

Bunter blinked at him.

"I went abroad for the vac—" he answered with dignity.

"Dear me! Are they still running those half-guinea trips to Boulogne?" asked Ponsonby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, I'm in rather a hurry—"

"That's too bad," said Ponsonby regretfully. "We're not in a hurry at all. Bunter, and we were quite lookin' forward to a little chat with you. So long since we've seen you, you know; and you're so nice. Can't you spare us a few minutes?"

"I—I'm afraid I can't," stammered Bunter uneasily. "You—you see, I—I'm rather pressed for time. Another day, old chap."

"Another day won't do," said Ponsonby gravely. "Now we've got you, old bird, we're not partin' with you. You're so fascinatin', you know."

Bunter blinked from one grinning face to another. He knew that he was "for it," now that he had fallen in with these three rascals, with no help at hand.

"I—I say, you fellows— Oh!" ejaculated Bunter, as his cap was suddenly knocked off.

He stooped and clutched up his cap. As he did so Ponsonby let out a boot, and Bunter was fairly caught bending. Instead of picking up the cap, he plunged forward and sprawled on it.

"Yaroooh!"

"Man down!" grinned Monson.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Bunter sat up in the dust and roared.
"Beasts! Lemme alone! You wouldn't be so cheeky if Bob Cherry came along! Beasts!"
"Roll him over," grinned Ponsonby.
"Yaroooh! Leggo! Oh, my hat! Whooooooop!"

The hapless Bunter was fairly in the hands of the Amalekites. He was rolled over in the dust till he was breathless and dazed. Then the Highcliffe trio left him gasping in the grass by the roadside, while they gave their attention to his bag.

Ponsonby jerked the bag open, and poured out the contents on the grass. Those contents rather made the Highcliffians stare. There was a lounge suit of grey, and a soft hat of the same colour, and several other articles of attire. For what reason Bunter could be carrying about a suit of clothes in a bag, on a half-holiday, was a mystery to Ponsonby & Co.

"By gad! What a find!" said Ponsonby. "What are you takin' those clobber about for, Bunter?"

"Ow! Wow!"
"Goin' to pawn them, perhaps," suggested Monson.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You let my things alone," roared Bunter. "You cheeky rotters, let my clobber alone!"

"Dear man!" said Ponsonby, with a chuckle. "We'll string 'em up on a tree, and you can climb after them—the exercise will do you good. Chuck them up, you chaps."

Ponsonby took the grey trousers, and swung them in his hand, to toss them up to a high branch. Monson grabbed the waistcoat, and Gadsby the jacket.

Bunter jumped to his feet.
Once the clothes were perched on the high branches they would have been out of Bunter's reach for ever. He was not great at climbing: he had too much weight to carry.

"Gimme my clobber!" he yelled.
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter made a desperate rush. He clutched up the empty bag, and using

it as a weapon, he smote desperately at Ponsonby.

That attack was quite unexpected. The bag crashed on Ponsonby's elegant and well-fitting waistcoat, and the dandy of Highcliffe sprawled in the road, with a roar.

"Oh, gad!" ejaculated Monson.
Dropping the waistcoat and jacket, Gadsby and Monson jumped at Bunter. In a second he was down on his back, yelling with apprehension.

Ponsonby scrambled up, crimson with rage.

"My hat! I—I—I'll burst him for that!" he gasped. "Just let me get at the fat cad."

"Yaroooh! Help!"

It was fortunate for Bunter that help came. Certainly he would have fared very badly at the hands of the enraged Ponsonby, otherwise. But just then there was a whir of bicycles on the road, and two cyclists came in sight from the direction of Greyfriars. They were Herbert Vernon-Smith, and Tom Redwing, of the Remove.

Bunter's wild roar caught their ears at a distance. Vernon-Smith grinned as he saw the fat junior struggling in the grasp of the Highcliffians.

"Fatty's found trouble!" he remarked.
"We're going to chip in," said Redwing.

"Right-ho—if you like."

The cycles rushed on, and in a few seconds the two Removites were on the spot. They jumped down.

"Look out!" shouted Gadsby. "Greyfriars cads!"

"Yaroooh! Help! Rescue!" roared Bunter, squirming frantically under a series of furious punches from Ponsonby.

"Look out, Pon—"

"Back up!" gasped Monson.

Gadsby and Monson faced the newcomers; Ponsonby was too enraged to leave Bunter for the moment. He punched and punched, as if he mistook the Owl of the Remove for a very fat punchball.

Vernon-Smith and Redwing did not waste time in words. They came on with their hands up.

In about three seconds, Gadsby and Monson were strewn in the grass, and they remained there, gasping. They did not want any more. Ragging Bunter was all very well; facing the iron fists of the Bounder of Greyfriars was quite a different proposition.

Ponsonby leaped up from Bunter, to find his two comrades sprawling, and Vernon-Smith coming at him.

"Here, hands off, Smithy!" exclaimed Ponsonby, jumping back. "I don't want a row with you."

"Yaroooh! Punch him, Smithy!" roared Bunter. "Stand by a Greyfriars chap, old fellow! Mop him up, Smithy!"

"Sorry, Pon, old man—but you're for it!" said Smithy politely.

"Look here— Oh, gad! Ow!"

The Bounder's clenched fist jarred on Ponsonby's nose, and the dandy of Highcliffe went spinning.

He crashed into the hedge, yelling.

Vernon-Smith looked round with a grin.

"I say, this scrap isn't over, is it?" he asked. "You Highcliffe chaps can't be finished yet?"

Redwing grinned. The scrap was over, so far as Ponsonby & Co. were concerned. They were soon satisfied.

"Oh, go away, you ruffians!" groaned Gadsby.

"Sure you've had enough?"

"Ow! Get out!"

"I say, you fellows, don't leave them here with me," howled Bunter, scrambling up. "Clear them off."

"Right-ho!" assented Redwing.

"Now, you three, get a move on."

"We're stayin' here," hooted Monson.

Vernon-Smith shook his head.

"Your mistake—you're not," he said.

"You're goin' on. We'll see you as far as Friardale—we're going that way. Hop it!"

"Sha'n't!"

The Bounder laughed.

"I give you one minute to start," he said. "Then I'm goin' to begin with my boot."

"You—you rotter—"

"Time's goin'!" grinned the Bounder.



"Gimme my clobber!" yelled Bunter desperately. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Highcliffe nuts. Bunter made a savage rush. He clutched up the empty bag and, using it as a weapon, he smote desperately at Ponsonby. The bag crashed on Pon's elegant and well-fitting waistcoat, and the dandy of Highcliffe sprawled in the road, with a roar. (See Chapter 5.)

The three Highcliffians picked themselves up. They exchanged infuriated looks, but they did not want any more scrapping. The Bounder of Greyfriars was far too tough a customer for them, and Tom Redwing was a good fighting-man. Ponsonby held his handkerchief to his nose, and scowled over it ferociously. The Bounder was a hard hitter, and Ponsonby's handsome nose had suffered—and it did not look so handsome now.

Bunter was clutching up his property, and repacking it in the bag. Vernon-Smith glanced at the clothes curiously.

"What on earth are you carrying clothes about for, Bunter?" he asked. "Looking for an old-clothes merchant?"

"Eh? Oh, yes!" stammered Bunter. "You fat ass!" said the Bounder.

"Look here, Bunter, if you're up to some silly game, take my tip, and chuck it. If you're thinkin' of goin' to Lantham Races, you can change your clothes, you ass, but you can't change your fat chivvy or your blinkers. Cut it out!"

"I—I—it isn't that!" gasped Bunter. "Nothing of the kind, you know!"

"Then what's your silly game?"

"Oh, nothing!"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "Well, it's your own funeral," he said.

"Now then, you Highcliffe cads, get goin'. Time's up."

With furious faces, Ponsonby & Co. stamped out into the road. It was deeply humiliating for the nuts of Highcliffe—it was a terrific fall for their lofty pride. Unfortunately, there was no help for it. The Bounder of Greyfriars meant business, and they had had enough of the Bounder's hard hitting.

"Trot!" said Vernon-Smith cheerily. "If we overtake you, we shall run you down! Trot's the word."

With deep rage, Ponsonby & Co. trotted. Vernon-Smith and Redwing remounted their bicycles, and rode after them at a leisurely pace. Just ahead of the bikes the three Highcliffians trotted on, red with rage, panting for breath. But there was no help for them—unless they faced round on the enemy and asked for another scrap. And they preferred trotting to scrapping.

Right down the lane they went, in a state of simmering fury, till the village of Friardale came in sight.

"Now you can clear!" called out the Bounder. "Ta-ta!"

And Ponsonby & Co. were allowed to slink to the roadside and halt, while Vernon-Smith and Redwing rode on, laughing, into the village.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Change of Identity!

BILLY BUNTER blinked after the retreating figures, while he gasped for breath.

But he did not waste time.

The Bounder was seeing the Highcliffians safe off the scene. But Bunter was well aware of what Ponsonby would feel like when the Bounder had done with him. It was not safe for the Owl of the Remove to linger. His life would scarcely have been safe had Ponsonby found him alone again, after escaping from Smithy.

Bunter hurriedly repacked his bag, and, leaving the lane, plunged through the hedge, and took a field-path across the meadows.

He plodded and panted on at a good speed, and in a few minutes was out of sight of the spot where he had so unfortunately encountered the Highcliffe trio.

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He came to a halt under the trees in a patch of woodland, and for some time he sat on a projecting root, and gasped and gasped, till he had recovered his breath.

When he rose at last the fat grin had returned to his face. He blinked round him, and picked up his bag again, and went farther into the wood.

It was a quiet and solitary spot, and the Owl of the Remove was in no danger of observation there. He set down the bag at last, and opened it, and sorted out the grey lounge suit that had had so narrow an escape.

Both Ponsonby and Vernon-Smith had been puzzled by the sight of the clothes in Bunter's bag. Really, it was very unusual for a fellow to walk out on a half-holiday, carrying a bag stuffed with clothes. Smithy had suspected an intended visit to the races. In his own wild days Smithy had more than once performed such exploits, changing his clothes out of gates, and making himself look as little like a Greyfriars fellow as possible. But William George Bunter was not thinking of any such exploit.

After a cautious blink round him, the Owl of the Remove stripped off his Etons and dressed himself in the grey lounge suit and the soft hat.

The change of clothes made a very great difference in his appearance. He changed even to the socks and shoes and necktie.

The discarded garments he packed carefully in the bag, and the bag he concealed under a heap of bracken.

Then he perched a pocket-mirror on a tree-trunk, and blinked at his reflection in it.

He grinned with satisfaction.

"Topping!" he murmured.

He took off his glasses and blinked again.

Without his glasses the reflected face was almost exactly that of Wally Bunter, his cousin. Bunter knew that it was so; but without the assistance of his spectacles the reflection in the mirror was little more than a blur to him.

But he nodded with satisfaction.

"It's all right!" he murmured. "I shall have to manage without glasses somehow. That's the only difficulty. I'll keep 'em on till I get near the school, anyhow."

He looked at his watch.

It was turned three o'clock. By that time Harry Wharton & Co. would be expecting Wally at Greyfriars. Probably by that time the Famous Five were hanging about the gates, waiting for their old pal to arrive.

Bunter chuckled at the thought.

He left the copse, and walked across the fields towards the school, taking care to avoid the lanes, lest Ponsonby & Co. should still be in the neighbourhood.

He came out into the road again only a hundred yards or so from the school gates. There he removed his glasses, and slipped them into the case in his pocket.

Then he marched on towards Greyfriars.

That was Bunter's wonderful scheme! Harry Wharton & Co. were expecting Wally Bunter—and they fully believed that Billy Bunter was in the train for Lantham. The two Bunter cousins were so exactly alike that the deception was easy enough. When they stood together little differences could be noted; but, seen apart, there was little danger of detection.

The chums of the Remove were waiting to welcome Wally. They were going to kill the fatted calf for him. All the kind attentions that Bunter felt to be his due, but which he never received, were going to be bestowed on Wally—and chief

among them, in Bunter's estimation, was a spread in the study. And Billy Bunter, by turning up at Greyfriars as his own cousin, was going to bag the hospitable welcome intended for Wally Bunter! It really was a brain-wave!

Bunter rolled on contentedly towards the school.

Five fellows were lounging about the old gateway, and as the fat figure came in sight there was a shout.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Wally, old man!"

Bunter grinned.

The Famous Five came out cheerily to meet him. Not for an instant did they suspect that it was William George. William George had walked away in Etons and a Greyfriars cap, and was supposed to be in the train for Lantham. This Bunter came along in a grey lounge suit and a soft hat, and without glasses. His close resemblance to Billy Bunter, in form and features, was, of course, expected.

"Here we are again!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Jolly glad to see you, Wally, old man!"

"The gladfulness is terrific!"

Bunter grinned amicably, and shook hands all round with the Famous Five.

"No end of a pleasure to see you fellows, after—after being abroad so long!" he exclaimed. "Is Billy about?"

"He's out of gates this afternoon," said Harry Wharton. "He told us that some of his people are at Lantham today, and he had to go over and see them."

"Oh, that's too bad!" said Bunter. "Still, I really came to see you chaps as much as Billy."

"Hear, hear! We're jolly glad to see you," said Bob Cherry. "How have you been getting on among the Froggies?"

"First-rate," said Bunter calmly. "I say, I'm rather hungry after my journey, if you don't mind my mentioning it."

There was a grin among the Famous Five. In appetite, as well as in looks, they remembered that Wally Bunter resembled his cousin Billy.

"Trot in," said Wharton. "It's rather early for tea; but the tuckshop's open. This way, old fellow."

"What ho!"

Bunter rolled in at the gates with the chums of the Remove. Bolsover major was strolling in the quad with Skinner, and he stared across at Bunter.

"Hallo! What's this game?" called out Bolsover. "What are you got up like that for, Bunter?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's Wally Bunter," he said.

"Oh, my hat!" Bolsover came over to the new arrival and held out a large hand. "Glad to see you! Blessed it I didn't take you for Billy—you're as like as two peas."

Bunter grinned and shook hands with Bolsover.

His little scheme was working admirably. He had expected it to be a success; it was not the first time he had played such a trick. But really he had hardly expected it to be so easy as this. Even Skinner, the sharpest and most suspicious fellow in the Remove, glanced at him without suspecting the deception.

"This way, Bunter," said Bob Cherry cheerily.

The fat junior was led into the tuckshop. Mrs. Mimble stared at him.

"Why, Master Bunter—" she exclaimed.

"It's Bunter's cousin, Mrs. Mimble," explained Bob Cherry. "You remember Wally Bunter, who stayed here once."

"Oh, yes, I remember," said Mrs. Mimble. "How do you do, Master Wally? Dear me, you're wonderfully like your cousin."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Yes, old chap?"

"I'm rather hungry."

"Pile in, old man. Any old thing you like," chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Good!"

Billy Bunter drew a deep, deep breath.

He was prompt to accept the invitation. Harry Wharton & Co. stood round with smiling faces. They knew that Wally Bunter was a powerful trencherman, and they were more than willing to foot the bill for a handsome spread. They expected Wally to dispose of enough tuck for two or three fellows. But undoubtedly they were not prepared for what Billy Bunter could do in that line. There was a surprise coming for the Famous Five.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Something Like!

"OLD Wally!"

"Good man! Glad to see you here!"

"How do you do, old chap?"

Fellows strolled into the tuckshop when they heard that Walter Gilbert Bunter was there, and greeted him cheerily. That is, they supposed that they were greeting Walter Gilbert Bunter. Certainly they would not have wasted cheery greetings on William George of that ilk.

Bunter grinned and nodded, what time his plump jaws kept busily at work. At the same time he was feeling more and more annoyed secretly. All this gladness to see Wally Bunter struck him as simply ridiculous. What the thump was there in his poor relation to make the fellows all so glad to see him—as they supposed?

Neither was Bunter very pleased by this testimony to the exact likeness between himself and his cousin. He always admitted the resemblance, but he always also persuaded himself that he was considerably the better-looking of the two. It suited him admirably, on the present occasion, to be mistaken for Wally. But he did not feel flattered thereby.

But he concealed his annoyance, and grinned and nodded as affably as he could. Meanwhile, there was the feed to solace him.

The hospitable chums of the Remove had, naturally, given him carte blanche. They were only too pleased to see "old Wally" seated on the high stool at Mrs. Mimble's counter, and enjoying himself with the good things provided by that good dame.

Nevertheless, they began to feel a little serious as Bunter proceeded. Their hospitality was unbounded; but—as usual with fellows in the Lower Fourth—their financial resources were limited.

It was easy enough to raise a "quid" among the five, and nobody would have supposed that any fellow could consume more than a pound's worth of tuck at a single sitting. Certainly Walter Gilbert Bunter, good trencherman as he was, had never been known to consume so much.

But this, as Hurree Singh would have said if he had known the facts, was a boot on the other leg! Billy Bunter was able to perform gastronomic feats of which his cousin would never have dreamed.

Fellows came in and greeted him and strolled away; it was quite a reception. And all the time Bunter's jaws scarcely rested for a moment.



Billy Bunter perched a mirror on a tree-trunk and blinked at his reflection in it. He grinned with satisfaction. "Topping!" he murmured. He took off his glasses and blinked again. Without them the reflected face was almost exactly that of Wally Bunter, his cousin. "It's all right," he muttered. "But I shall have to manage without these blessed glasses!" (See Chapter 6.)

He had had a very light dinner—Mr. Quelch had stopped him at the third helping. Indeed, at dinner Bunter had eaten scarcely twice as much as any other fellow in the Remove. So he was in trim to distinguish himself in the tuckshop.

And he did!

Mrs. Mimble was kept quite busy supplying him. She kept a running account of the items with a stump of pencil on a sheet of wrapping-paper. Once or twice she looked up at Harry Wharton, and each time the captain of the Remove nodded encouragement, implying thereby that he was responsible for the bill, and that the good dame need have no doubts.

But at last Mrs. Mimble thought it better to push the sheet of paper across the counter, to acquaint the captain of the Remove with the extensive liabilities he was incurring.

Wharton started a little as he noted that the total was already twenty-seven shillings and sixpence.

But hospitality was hospitality. Bunter evidently was hungry after his journey, and it was not Greyfriars' style to grudge a guest.

Wharton nodded again, with a cheery smile to Mrs. Mimble. That good dame was satisfied; Wharton's credit was good at the school shop.

But Harry began to be a little thoughtful. He had ten shillings in his pockets,

and his comrades were more or less well-provided. But it began to look as if all their resources would be called upon.

They were determined not to find any fault with Wally, their old friend whom they had not seen for so long a time. But for that determination they might have felt that he was acting rather thoughtlessly, to say the least. For he could not fail to know that pocket-money was a limited quantity among Lower School fellows—they were not millionaires. And Bunter was choosing the most expensive things in the most reckless way. In spite of themselves, the Famous Five felt a little less glad that Wally had come, when they noted that Mrs. Mimble's bill amounted to two pounds. This was rather a considerable sum in the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars.

But they stood the test manfully.

Bunter blinked round at them, and saw no sign of "weakening" in any of the quintette of smiling faces. But they were beginning to wonder when he would have done. They had hoped to show him round Greyfriars, to have some pleasant chat, and to get up some pick-up match at football to entertain him. Bunter, apparently, was content to pass most of the sunny afternoon in the tuckshop. It really was not like Wally, though it was marvellously like Billy! But the Famous Five showed real "grit"—they grinned and bore it, and they still bore

it when their grins grew a little forced and mechanical.

And Bunter was still going strong.

Where he was putting it all was a mystery to the fellows who saw him doing it. His stowage capacity seemed unlimited. Already anyone would have said that he was loaded far beyond the Plimsoll line. Still, he showed no sign of exhaustion.

The Owl of the Remove had never enjoyed himself so much.

It was the feed of the term; it was a feast of the gods, such as seldom came his way. It was such a feed as he often dreamed about, when he had happy dreams. And added to that was the satisfaction of "doing down" the Famous Five. They were glad to see "old Wally," and they were never glad to see Billy. Bunter was resolved that they should be less glad by the time he had done with them.

Even Bunter's appetite was cloying at last. He began to toy with his provender. Really, a suspicious fellow might have suspected, even, that he was intentionally running up a bill for his kind entertainers to pay. That thought, of course, did not occur to Harry Wharton & Co.

Bunter would begin on a cake, or a pastry, and leave it after a bite or so. He would have a bottle of limejuice opened, and then a bottle of currant wine, and then change his mind and take lemon squash instead. And all the things he started on and left untouched, or almost untouched, had to go on the bill.

So it was not surprising that the account went up by leaps and bounds.

It was rather difficult for Wharton to keep the hospitable grin on his face when he noted that Mrs. Mible's bill reached the formidable total of three pounds ten shillings.

That meant the total expenditure of all the cash possessed by the Famous Five, and a debt to hang over their heads the following week.

Really, if it was a pleasure to see Bunter, it was rather an expensive pleasure. Indeed, it might be classed as a luxury.

And still Bunter was going on.

He had entered the tuckshop about half-past three. It was now nearly half-past four, and he was not finished.

Harry Wharton & Co. had not had the remotest intention of spending a half-holiday in a stuffy little shop watching a greedy fellow feed and grow shinier and greasier and stickier.

In spite of their determination to be kind and hospitable, they could not help feeling that they had been a little mistaken in Wally, or else that he had changed considerable since they had last seen him.

Really, it was growing alarming.

Bunter blinked round at them as he toyed with his tuck, and grinned as he noted how mechanical their smiles were becoming.

"I say, you fellows, it's jolly decent of you to stand me a spread like this," he remarked.

"Go ahead, old chap!" gasped Nugent.

"Thanks, I will! Of course, I don't want to overdo it, though. I don't want to spoil my appetite for tea."

"For—for what?"

"Tea."

"Oh!"

How a fellow could possibly think of tea to follow a feed like that was a mystery to the Famous Five. It was also rather a mystery where the tea was to come from, unless they went up and

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down the Remove borrowing money to feed their guest.

"Hallo, I hear that Wally Bunter's here!" Vernon-Smith came into the tuckshop with Tom Redwing, both of them cheery and ruddy after their cycle spin.

"Here he is, Smithy!" answered Bob Cherry.

The Bouncer glanced at the fat junior perched on the high stool. He gave a violent start.

"Is—is—is that Wally Bunter?"

"Yes," said Harry.

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

The Bouncer roared, Tom Redwing grinned. Both of them recognised the grey lounge suit, and the soft hat, which Ponsonby had turned out of Billy Bunter's bag in Friardale Lane. They knew now why the Owl of the Remove had gone out with a bag containing a suit of clothes.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bouncer.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at him, puzzled by his outburst of merriment.

"What's the joke?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Vernon-Smith.

"Look here, you ass!"

"What's the joke, you duffer?"

But the Bouncer simply couldn't answer—he only yelled, while Harry Wharton & Co. regarded him with puzzled amazement, and Bunter blinked at him in alarm from the top of the high stool.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Little Mistake!

WALTER GILBERT BUNTER stepped out of the train at Friardale Station, and glanced about him with a cheery smile.

But for his clothes, any Greyfriars fellow who had happened to be at the station would have supposed that he was Billy Bunter of the Remove, at the first glance, at least.

But he was dressed in a dark lounge suit, and Billy Bunter, of course, would have been in Etons. And at a closer inspection, too, one might have noted that Wally's face, though equally fat, was a good deal healthier in complexion than Billy's, and that his eyes were clear and steady. His movements, too, were active and brisk, and he wore no glasses.

Quite oblivious of the trick Billy Bunter was playing that afternoon, Wally was arriving on his visit to Greyfriars. He would have been considerably astonished had he known that a fellow supposed to be Wally Bunter was in those very moments, seated in Mrs. Mible's tuckshop at Greyfriars performing amazing gastronomic feats in his name.

Walter Gilbert Bunter strolled out of the station and came cheerily out into the High Street of Friardale.

His fat face was bright and happy; he was glad to find himself in his native land again after a long sojourn in a foreign city. Like most fellows who have to keep hard at work, Wally Bunter was enjoying his holiday, and he was making the most of his fortnight off. And chief among his pleasures he reckoned his visit to Greyfriars. His cousin Billy was not the chief attraction, that was certain, though officially his visit was

paid to Billy Bunter. Wally was very keen to meet again his old friends in the Remove—the fellows whom he had known and liked during his previous stay at Greyfriars. But he was looking forward even to seeing Billy after so long a parting. In one respect Wally differed from other members of the Bunter clan—he was not insensible to the claims of relationship.

He sauntered contentedly down the High Street and out into the lane that led to Greyfriars. He had a little bag in his hand, which he swung to and fro as he walked along, whistling as he went.

On the outskirts of the village stood the Cross Keys, a rather disreputable place that was strictly out of bounds for Greyfriars fellows. It was out of bounds for Highcliffe, too, so far as that went. But just then there were three Highcliffe fellows in the billiard-room—Gadsby and Monson having a hundred up, and Cecil Ponsonby smoking a cigarette and staring out of a dirty window.

Ponsonby's eyes glittered as he saw the fat figure swinging along in the sunshine.

"Bunter!" he ejaculated.

If Ponsonby had ever seen Wally Bunter before, he had long ago forgotten his existence. It did not even occur to his mind that this fat fellow, with Bunter's features, was anybody but Billy Bunter of Greyfriars.

He turned quickly to his friends.

"Chuck that, you fellows! Here's Bunter again."

"Oh, blow Bunter!" said Monson. "I'm just beatin' Gaddy."

"Never mind that." Ponsonby rubbed his nose, still swollen and smarting from the Bouncer's hard knuckles. "Chuck it! Come on, I tell you!"

Gadsby joined him at the window. Monson grumbled and followed. The three Highcliffians stared out at the unsuspecting fat youth who was sauntering along past the inn.

"By gad! The fat frog's changed his clothes," said Gadsby, puzzled. "Is he off his rocker this afternoon? You remember he had a grey suit in his bag. Now he's dressed in dark brown. Is it a game?"

"Oh, he's been somewhere," said Ponsonby. "The races, perhaps. He wouldn't want to go there in Etons."

"He doesn't seem to care if anybody sees him now."

"Well, we see him," grinned Ponsonby, "and we're jolly well going after him. Come on!"

"I was just beatin' Gaddy!"

"Oh, rats! Come on, I tell you!"

Ponsonby led the way, and the three young rascals quitted the inn. By that time Wally Bunter was well past, and swinging on cheerily on his way to Greyfriars.

Ponsonby & Co. broke into a trot after him.

This was a stroke of luck, from Ponsonby's point of view. His swollen nose did not look handsome, and it had a pain in it. Vengeance on the Bouncer was rather too strenuous and dangerous an undertaking to suit Cecil Ponsonby. But vengeance on Bunter was easy and almost as satisfactory. The fat junior of Greyfriars was booked for the ragging of his life now.

Unconscious of the pursuit, Wally Bunter stepped over a stile, and started to follow a field-path, a short cut towards the school. Ponsonby gave a chuckle.

"After him!" he murmured.

And the Highcliffians grinned and followed. The fat youth was fairly

(Continued on page 16.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2!



Supplement No. 197.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON

Week Ending November 1st, 1924.

HOW TO BE A HERO!

By Billy Bunter.

HEROISM is a hobby. Just as some fellows save stamps for a hobby, or save cigarette-cards, others save lives. And saving lives is the most paying hobby of the lot, bekwase people who are reskewed from watery graves or burning bildings generally fork out a fiver for the gallant reskewer.

I have heard it said that heroes are born and not made. That's all tommy-rot. You're not born a hero, any more than you're born a footballer, or a singer, or a ventrilloquist. You have to learn footer and singing and ventrilloquism, and you also have to learn how to be a hero. You aren't born a hero ready-made.

It is the purrpus of this artikle to tell you how you may become a hero. In the first plaice, you must cultivate a cast-iron nerve, and learn to keep your head in a crysis. This is what King Charles the First never learned to do. When he came to the scaffold he completely lost his head!

Now, as soon as you have developed a cast-iron nerve and a cool head—and you can only do this after long pracktiss—you must look around for opportunities of displaying your heroism.

Ruffly speaking, deeds of valler may be classified as follows:

1. Saving people from drowning.
2. Saving people from burning bildings.
3. Frustrating attempted berglaries.
4. Stopping runaway hoorses.
5. Dragging people off railway lines when they are lying unconshus on the mettles.

Saving people from drowning is the most common of these events. Personally, I always spend a week at the seaside every summer, and I go to a spot where the bathing is very dangerous. As soon as a person gets out of his depth, I plunge boldly to the reskew, and save him from the tretcherus currant. If he is a man of means, he usually gives me a hansom reward. Of corse, you can't hope to do this sort of thing unless you're a jolly good swimmer—like me!

Saving people from burning bildings is a difficult and delliket task. There is a risk that all the hare will be singed off your head, and that your clothes will catch on fire. However, if you avoid that part of the bilding where the flames are feercest, and enter one of the rooms which is not affected by the fire, you will come through all right. But you must pracktiss ladder climbing. I once knew a fellow who fell from a height of ten thowsand feet, bekwase he stepped on a rung that wasn't there!

Frustrating attempted berglaries is very simple, when you know how. When the berglar is neeling in front of the Head's safe, about to perloin the plunder, you creep up behind him with a cricket-stump, and give him a fearful crack on the crumpef, which nocks him unconshus. You then telly-fone for the perlice, and tell them that you have caught a berglar pink-handed.

Stopping runaway hoorses is a work of art. It's no use standing timidly in the middle of the road, and saying to the bolting hoorse, "Whoa, there! Will you k-k-kindly s-s-stop?" You must make a lightning leap at the animal, and grab it by the ears, and

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refuse to let go. It will probably drag you along for a few miles, but it's bound to stop sooner or later.

Dragging unconshus people off railway lines just as the express comes thundering up at sixty miles an hour, is a tricky bizzness. You mustn't stand still and think about it. Make one bold dive, seize the person by the scruff of the neck, and haul him to safety. Don't delay a second, or it will be fatal for both of you.

Some people consider it the proper thing for a hero to walk off without giving his name and address to the person he has reskewed. This is ridiculous. What's the good of reskewing people if you get no reward for it? Never be afraid to axcept a wad of banknotes or a big fat check. And when the newspaper reporters come on the scene, always give a glowing account of your heroism, and the more you exaggerate it, the more fame you will reap when the story is given to the world.

THE HEROES!

By Dick Penfold.

SING a song of heroes.

Twenty-two, all told:
Braver than the Spartans
Of the days of old.
Wharton, Nugent, Cherry,
Bulstrode, Bull, and Brown:
These, and many others,
Heroes of renown!

Rain was pelting madly,
Stormy winds did blow;
Prophets all predicted
Blizzards, sleet, and snow.
But these dauntless spirits,
Valiant twenty-two,
Had a football fixture,
Meant to see it through.

In the drenching downpour
Wharton made a start;
Not a fellow wavered,
Not a soul lost heart.
Pools of muddy water
Gathered at their feet;
But they played up gamely,
Passing swift and neat.

Water splashed and soaked them,
Pluckily they played;
Squeiching through the puddles,
Heroes undismayed!
Referee was missing,
Not a soul to cheer;
But they played the match out,
Then they all felt queer.

Sing a song of sneezes,
Doses of quinine;
Two-and-twenty heroes
In the sanny seen.
Down with influenza,
Coughs and colds and chills;
But they'll bear right nobly
These resultant ills!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

IT was Mark Linley who suggested that we should have a special number dealing with heroes and heroism. I jumped at the idea at once, because I know how popular such a subject is with the fellows of to-day.

Most of us have our heroes. Sometimes they are living heroes; sometimes they belong to the past. I pity the fellow who has no hero—nobody he can look up to and strive to emulate.

Skinner, of the Remove, declares that he hasn't a hero. And he says that hero-worship is all "tommy-rot."

I agree with Skinner up to a point. When hero-worship is misplaced or carried to extremes it becomes merely silly. A lot of fellows choose their heroes from persons who have no heroic qualities at all. I know a certain fag whose "hero" is Loder of the Sixth. But Loder is not of the stuff of which heroes are made, and I tell him so bluntly, knowing full well that this issue will get into his hands.

But the most glaring instance of misplaced hero-worship that I can recall is that of Bobbie Severn, the devoted fag who worshipped the ground Coker walked on, and who eventually lost his life in saving Coker's. Now, Horace Coker is by no means a bad sort of fellow, but he certainly isn't the hero that Bobbie Severn imagined him to be. Like all of us, Coker has many faults, of which bumpitiousness is the chief. But Bobbie Severn was blind to Coker's defects, and he hero-worshipped him to excess. Coker has often told me since that he wished he could live up to the loyal fag's exalted conception of him.

The point I am trying to drive home is this: Hero-worship is all right within limits; but we must not carry it too far, or we shall be rudely disillusioned some day, on finding that our idol is but common clay, after all.

I seem to have struck rather a serious note in this Editorial, and the "Greyfriars Herald" is renowned for its fun and frivolity—not for its seriousness. So I will at once proceed to cheer you up by drawing your attention to the humorous contributions in this issue. You would hardly think that our tame humorists would be in their element on the subject of heroes, but they are. Turn to Dicky Nugent's story and Billy Bunter's article, and if you can read them without a chuckle I shall be mightily surprised. The scream of it is that Dicky Nugent's story is intended to be a perfectly serious one!

HARRY WHARTON.

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My Favourite Hero!
A Page of Confessions,
Comical and Otherwise,
of our Contributors

TOM REDWING:

Lord Nelson—and I dare say he is the favourite hero of many others besides myself. I've read Southey's "Life of Nelson" over and over again, and I can't help feeling a twinge of regret that I didn't live in "the brave days of old," when our gallant sea-dogs of Britain performed their wonderful feats of valour and endurance. I have visited the Victory several times. It's an unseaworthy hulk now, of course; but my heart beats faster when I gaze at it and think of the "mighty seaman, tender and true," who once strode its decks.

ALONZO TODD:

Cardinal Wolsey is one of my favourite heroes. I fancy he is the man who invented underwear, and I always believe in being well wrapped up during the bitter winter months. Warm woollen vests are indispensable to shivering humanity. And that reminds me. I must hurry over to the hosier's in Courtfield in order to make some investments in vestments!

DICK PENFOLD:

I'm asked to name my favourite hero. Well, certainly it isn't Nero! I sometimes feel distinctly pally towards that brave knight, Walter Raleigh. I also think Sir Francis Drake was a true Briton—no mistake! I would not hesitate one sec., in praising Wolfe, who won Québec. Then I consider General Gordon the finest man who had a sword on. That great explorer, Captain Scott, I always have admired a lot. I hope his fame will ne'er diminish. But there! I must buck up and finish.

BILLY BUNTER:

My favorite hero is Wellington Cromwell Bonypart, the fellow who won the Battle of Bunter's Hill—sometimes misprinted "Bunker's Hill." But nobody barked on that occasion, I can assure you. Our gallant soldiers fought on till they could no longer stand on their legs, and were obliged to lay down their arms. Wellington Cromwell Bonypart was a really fine fellow, and I'm getting up a subscription for a monument to be erected to his memmery in the Close at Greyfriars. All donations—or, rather, dough-nations—should be sent to me at Number Seven Study. I faithfully promise to go ahead with the good work, and not blue subscriptions at the tuckshop!

HORACE COKER:

My favorite hero is a certain hansom and distinguished fellow in the Fifth Form at Greyfriars. He is a wonderful chap in every way, and I think the world of him. He is a brainy skoller and a splendid sportsman, and he is very modest about his achievements. In short, my favorite hero is myself!

HAROLD SKINNER:

I've no use for heroes. They only exist in the story-books—not in real life. These fine, fearless fellows who plunge into raging torrents, and dash boldly into burning buildings, and stop runaway horses, and all the rest of it, are only to be found between the covers of weekly periodicals. Hero-worship is all tommy-rot, in my opinion. (Naturally, a craven cad like Skinner cannot be expected to understand heroes, or to have any admiration for them.—Ed.)

DICKY NUGENT:

My favorite hero is Sir Walter Scott, the man who nearly discovered the south pole. I greatly admire his curridge, and hope to be an eggsporer myself one of these days. It will be a proud moment for me, when I tie
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the jolly old union jack to the top of the pole. the greyfriars fellows will be given a whole day's holiday to sellybrate the event. I shall be a grate hero myself then; but if any tablets are going to be raised to my memmery, I shall prefer acid-tablets!

GERALD LODER:

It is only natural that my favourite hero should be the Emperor Nero, the merchant who fiddled while Rome was burning. Nero devised some beautiful tortures, and I always endeavour to model myself on him when I'm dealing with refractory fags. I don't claim to be an heroic sort of fellow, but I am certainly a "Neroic" one! It's a great pity they're trying to stamp out bullying. It's the only thing that keeps fags in their places. And that reminds me. The little brat who is supposed to look after me has not yet laid my tea. I'll go forth and seek him with an ashplant!

SAMMY BUNTER:

My favorite hero is the boy who stood on the burning deck when Sawbuttee had fled. I think Sawbuttee was an awful worm to run away from danger like that. Every time I recall the opening verse of "Casabianchor," the tears spring to my lips:

"The boy stood on the burning deck
When Sawbuttee had fled,
Devouring doughnuts by the score,
While flames devoured his head."

There's a picture for you! You don't find curridge like that nowadays—eggsept-in the Bunter fambly!

LORD MAULEVERER:

I'm a bit hazy on the subject of my favourite hero, begad! It's the ancient Greek chappie who ran from somewhere to somewhere, and broke the news about something or other, and then fell dead. Something to do with Marathon, I believe. Anyway, that chappie will always be my favourite hero. Fancy a fellow running twenty-six miles! Personally, I couldn't manage twenty-six yards—even with a mad bull bellowing behind me!

MR. QUELCH:

The most heroic figure in history, in my opinion, is Joan of Arc, who perished so valiantly at the stake. It is a mistake to think that all the great heroes and heroines of history were British. St. Joan, as she is now called, was a French peasant-maid, and, although I am not a sentimental person, I cannot read of her wonderful devotion and high courage without a thrill of emotion.

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Wot I says is this 'ere—my favourite 'ero is an Old Boy of this institution, who came 'ero the other day to 'ave a look round the old school, an' tipped me a ten-shillin' note when 'e left. 'E ain't my favourite 'ero because 'e gave me such a 'andsome tip. Don't run away with that impression. 'E did lots of brave things durin' the War, an' won the V.C. An' 'e sat in my parlour, 'e did, an' chatted to me about 'is war experi-

ences. Fought 'is battles over again, so to speak. A proper 'ero, 'e was—an' a real gent into the bargain!

BOB CHERRY:

My favourite hero is the fellow who chalked a caricature of old Quelchy on the blackboard, and then had the colossal nerve to ask Quelchy if he didn't think it a wonderful likeness! This gallant hero then took six "stingers" with the cane without so much as the flicker of an eyebrow. Who says the age of heroes is past?

ENGLAND'S UNKNOWN HEROES!

By TOM BROWN.

The daring youth who came into the Remove Form-room for morning lessons, attired in his football jersey and shorts!

The practical joker who placed a live hedgehog in Quelchy's desk, in order to give the Remove a little light entertainment.

The bold spirit who emptied a sack of flour from an upper window, and converted Loder of the Sixth into a snowman.

The fellow who bearded the Head in his den, and coolly asked if he might be excused lessons for the rest of the term, as he felt fagged and fed-up.

The Spartan who was awarded a dozen strokes with the birch in Big Hall, and half-way through the performance asked the Head to stop tickling him!

The fellow who did the Oliver Twist stunt in the dining-hall, and went up and asked for more after he had already had five helpings!

The fellow who went on fighting, and refused to take the knock-out after he had received a pair of beautiful black eyes, a couple of thick ears, and a nose swollen to double its normal size.

The budding musician who played a concertina outside the door of Quelchy's study while the Remove master was engaged on his "History of Greyfriars."

The stoical Removite who went for a dip in the sea at five o'clock in the morning while a blizzard was raging.

The fellow who boldly stepped on to the platform at the last school concert and started to recite Macaulay's "Ancient Lays." (Before he had got through a couple of verses he was forced to retire under a bombardment of "ancient lays" from the Friardale chickens!)

The budding author who stepped into the editorial sanctum of the HERALD on Press day and asked Harry Wharton to read a fifty-thousand-word serial!

[Supplement ii.

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A Football Hero!

Another Stirring Story of St. Sam's
— By DICKY NUGENT —

JACK JOLLY, kaptin of the Fourth and kaptin of football, looked anything but jolly. In fact, Jolly hadn't felt jolly for a jolly long time. He wore a worried look, in addition to his football togs.

The Fourth had a tuff match on that afternoon. They were due to play Little Mudford, the louts of the villidge.

Jack Jolly was not worried at the prospect of playing against hulking louts who stood over six feet in their sox. The Fourth would cheerfully have tackled a team of Goliaths or Herculeeses.

What worried Jack Jolly was the fact that one of his best players—Sammy Smyles—was in the sanny, and presoomably unable to play.

The names of the players appeared on the notiss-board as follows:

Gaye; Merry, Bright; Grynne, Chuckell, Snigger; Jolly, Joe Vial, Smyles, Happie, and Sunbeem.

And Smyles, the senter-forward, was in the sanny, suffering from fever. Weather it was scarlet fever, or pink, purple, or crimson fever, the writer is not in a position to say.

Anyway, it was a bitter pill for the Fourth. For Sammy Smyles was the finest senter-forward who had ever donned the St. Sam's cullers. Even as a baby he had won renown as a dribbler. As for passing, why, he learnt to pass the salt before he was three! He was a deadly shot, too, and could bang the ball into the net with either foot, or with both feet at the same time. He was what they call reprehensible. (The writer apparently means prehensile.—Ed.)

And Sammy was tossing in the sick bay, and reported to be sinking fast!

"The trubble is," said Jack Jolly to his chums, "there's nobody we can play in Sammy's place. That means we shall be a man short, and Little Mudford will simply wipe us off the earth."

Merry and Bright nodded gloomily.

"It's rotten!" said the former.

"Beestly!" groaned the latter.

At that moment a fag came running up.

"I say, Jolly! You're wanted in the sick bay. Smyles wants to speak to you."

Jack Jolly looked graver still.

"The poor chap's eggspiring, I eggspect, and he wants to see me before the end."

So saying, Jack Jolly hurried away to the sanny.

He found Sammy Smyles propped up on the pillers. His face was flushed and feverish. He had waisted away to a meer, shaddo of his former self; and a lump came into Jack Jolly's eyes, and the tears gushed to his throat, as he gazed at his unfortunate schoolfellow.

"Sammy, old man!" he cried brokenly. "It pines me to see you like this. How are you getting on?"

"I'm getting rapidly worse," said the patient faintly. "The matron's just taken my temperament, and it's a hundred and ten."

"My hat! Then you can't reezonably eggspect to live much longer. Fancy pegging out on the day of an important match! You might have shown a little more konsideration. I suppose you sent for me to bid me good-bye before you shuffled off this mortle coil?"

"Not at all!"

"Then what on earth—"

"I'm going to turn out for the eleven this afternoon!" declared Sammy Smyles.

"What!" almost shouted Jack Jolly. "With a temperament like yours!"

"I don't care about that. If I've got to die, I might as well die gloriously on the field of battle—I mean, the footer field."

Supplement iii.]

"But—but the matron won't let you get up—"

"She'll have no choice in the matter. The old dear's taking her afternoon nap now, in her room. I want you to go along and turn the key in the lock. Then she'll be a prizzoner—or, rather, a prizzoness."

Jack Jolly tiptoed along the corridore, and cautiously locked the door of the matron's room. When he returned to the sick bay he found Sammy Smyles in the act of getting out of bed. Sammy was so weak that he could hardly stand on his pins. His head was swimming; but he had made up his mind to take the plunge and play for St. Sam's.

"I feel a bit groggy at present," he eggplained to Jack Jolly, "but as soon as I plunge into the fray I shall forget that I'm a scarlet fever patient with a high temperament. Run and fetch my footer togs, there's a good fellow."

Jack Jolly did so, and with grate difficulty Sammy Smyles dressed himself. He was unable to walk, so Jack Jolly pushed him down to the football field in a bath-chair.

The Little Mudford team had arrived, and the grate match was about to start.

Crowds of St. Sam's fellows stood round the ropes, and a mity cheer went up when Sammy Smyles arrived on the scene.

At the sight of the football Sammy seemed to forget the fact that he had one foot in the grave. He jumped out of the bathchair like a jack-in-the-box.

"On the ball!" he shouted. And Jack Jolly & Co. echoed his war-cry.

Swotter of the Sixth was referee, and he stared at Sammy Smyles in astonishment.

"Why, I thought you were dying, kid!" he eggscclaimed.

"Smyles smiled.

"On the contrary, Swotter, I'm very much alive—and kicking!" he said, taking a lusty kick at the ball.

The teams had lined up for the struggle, and the next minnit it began in real Ernest.

The Little Mudford louts played a very ruff game. They did not stand on serremony. (Presumably they stood on their feet!—Ed.) They bowled their opponents over like skittles. But Merry and Bright, at back,

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played a sturdy game, and Gaye, the goalie, held the fort in fine stile.

Sammy Smyles led the St. Sam's forward line in his usual dashing manner. Nobody would have suspected that he had got up from his deathbed to take part in that stern tussle.

Jack Jolly, who was playing on the wing, sent across a fine pass. Sammy Smyles met the leather with his nose, and steered it safely into the net.

"Goal!"

"Good old Sammy!"

"That is the commodity to present them with!" said Swotter of the Sixth. What he really meant was, "That's the stuff to give 'em!"

The villidge louts began to lose their tempers. They fowled and tripped and lucked on every occasion, and the St. Sam's players were badly bashed and battered. Jack Jolly had two of his ribs broken, but he played up manfully. Gaye, the goalie, had his spinal collum fractured, but he stuck to his post.

But it was Sammy Smyles who reseved the worst injuries. His opponents made a dead set at him. One of his legs was broken, but he was able to hop about, and pass and shoot, with the other. That's the best of being a reprehensible player.

Little Mudford got a goal just before half-time, and at the interval the score was one-all.

The second half was remarkable for the herroism of Sammy Smyles. His other leg was broken, and he hadn't a leg to stand on, as the saying goes. But he crawled about on his hands and knees, and passed and shot with his napper.

The two teams played up despritly for the winning goal, but it was not until the last minnit that it was obtained.

Jack Jolly sent across one of his perfect passes, and once again Sammy Smyles nosed the ball into the net.

"Goal!"

The crowd went frantick with eggstement. When the final whistle rang out they swarmed on to the field, and picked up the poor battered body of their hero, and carried it off in triumph to the sanny.

There was only one toppick of conversation in the St. Sam's studies that evening—the wonderful herroism of Sammy Smyles.

"Poor old Smyles!" said Jack Jolly, wiping a tear from his face. "He'll never kick a football again!"

"Boo-hoo!" groaned Merry miserably. "He'll kick the bucket instead!"

Did Sammy Smyles shudder at the fate that awaited him, dear readers? Not he! There was a resined expression on his face when the doctor pronounced his deth-sentence.

"You're doomed, Smyles!" said the doctor. "No power on earth can save you!"

"I'm prepared!" replied Sammy in a weak voice. "I'd like to make my will to-day, doctor!"

Even at that moment Sammy was all konsideration for his Form-fellows. He drew up his will, bequeething all his effex to Jack Jolly & Co. And he even gave his footer-boots to the doctor. He told him the boots would come in handy to kick any malingers who malingered in his surgery.

Jack Jolly & Co. got up a subscription for a hansom toomstone to be erected for Sammy, with a sootable inscription saying that he died gloriously for his school. But that toomstone was never wanted, for a few days later Sammy Smyles made a wonderful recovery. And he will live, let us hope, to play many more gallant games for St. Sam's.

THE END.

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(Continued from page 12.)

placing himself in their hands now—once in the middle of the meadow he would be far from any possible help, and quite at their mercy. Ponsonby & Co. followed on, grinning.

They let the fat youth keep ahead, till he was in the middle of the field. Then they broke into a run and overtook him.

Wally glanced back at the sound of running feet behind him.

The looks of Ponsonby & Co. showed plainly enough that their intentions were hostile. Wally stepped to the side of the path, and dropped his bag into the grass. He recognised the Highcliffe fellows at once, and he was quite prepared for trouble.

"Here we are again, Bunter!" said Ponsonby rather breathlessly, as he came to a halt.

Wally nodded.

"Here we are!" he assented. "How do you do?"

"Smithy isn't likely to come by this way, what?" grinned Gadsby. "We've got you this time, you fat rotter!"

"Eh?"

"You won't get away so easily as last time," said Monson. "You're booked, Bunter!"

Wally stared at them. It had not occurred to him for the moment that the Highcliffians mistook him for his cousin Billy. Now he understood, and he burst into a laugh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, it's a laughing matter, is it?" sneered Ponsonby, rubbing his swollen nose. "I don't think you'll be laughing by the time we've done with you, you fat frog!"

"Collar him!" exclaimed Gadsby.

The three Highcliffians rushed together at Bunter. Fair play was not included in the code of Ponsonby & Co. Billy Bunter would not have been a match for any one of them; nevertheless, they preferred to deal with him three to one.

But the surprise of their lives was waiting for Ponsonby & Co.

They fully expected Bunter to turn tail and flee for his life—not that it would have been much use for the Owl of the Remove to run. But Wally Bunter did not turn, and he did not recede a step.

His plump hands went up, clenched, and he faced the rush of the three Highcliffians with perfect coolness.

The fellow who had stood up to Bolsover major of the Remove was not likely to quail before the nuts of Highcliffe.

They came at him with a crash; and there was a wild yell from Ponsonby, as his nose caught Wally's fat knuckles and he went spinning backwards.

The next second Gadsby captured Wally's left with his chin, and he was strewn in the grass.

Monson was the only one that actually reached Wally; and he reached him to his sorrow. He got in one drive, and then a pair of fat arms were thrown round Monson, and, to his amazement, he was swept off his feet. He hardly knew what was happening to him, till he was deposited in the grass, with a bounding bump.

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Wally Bunter stood and grinned down at the three astounded and breathless Highcliffians.

They sprawled in the grass, and stared up at him, in amazement. Pon & Co. had never been so astounded in their lives.

"Oh, gad!" gasped Monson. "What—what—what—"

"Is this a dream?" spluttered Gadsby.

Ponsonby clasped his nose in anguish. It had suffered from the Bounder. But now it felt as if it had been almost pushed through the back of Pon's head.

"Ow! Ow! Wow! Moooh!" mumbled Ponsonby.

"Have some more?" asked Wally cheerily. "There's lots to come, if you want any! Rush in, old beans!"

Ponsonby scrambled up. His nose streamed crimson, and his face was purple with fury.

"Come on!" he howled. "Smash him!"

Gadsby and Monson followed him, though in rather a gingerly manner. It was only too clear that Bunter was not going to be an easy victim—amazing as it was.

Wally grinned cheerily. He backed a little from the rush, side-stepped with a swiftness that Pon & Co. were not looking for at all, and then he came at them with left and right. Ponsonby caught Wally's left with his ear and collapsed—Gadsby turned on Wally just in time to get his right fairly in the eye. Monson jumped back—and as Wally made a movement towards him, took to his heels and ran for it.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally Bunter.

"Ow! Ow! Oh gad! Ow!"

Ponsonby sat up dazedly, his hand to his ear. His nose streamed red unheeded; his ear occupied him now. It felt as if it had been kicked by a mule.

"What—what—what—" stammered Ponsonby. "You—you beastly prize-fighter—you—you ruffian—what—what does this mean? Oh gad!"

"Keep off!" gasped Gadsby.

"Ha, ha, ha! Have I surprised you, old beans?" roared Wally. "Did you take me for Billy Bunter? Ha, ha, ha!"

Ponsonby jumped.

"What—what—"

"You see, I'm Billy's cousin Wally," explained the fat youth, with a grin. "Don't you remember meeting me a long time ago? You made the same mistake then. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" gasped Ponsonby.

"Oh dear!" moaned Gadsby.

Wally Bunter picked up his bag.

"If you don't want any more, I'll be pegging along," he remarked. "Sure you don't want any more, Pon?"

"Ow! Get out, you rotter!" groaned Ponsonby.

"Sure you don't want any, Gaddy?"

"Ow! Ow! Ow!"

Wally Bunter chuckled and walked on his way. Three dismal youths limped away to the Cross Keys to bathe their injuries; and they were still looking very dismal and wrecked when they limped home to Highcliffe. Wally Bunter, in the best of spirits, walked on cheerily to Greyfriars.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

After the Feast!

BILLY BUNTER, seated on the high stool in the Greyfriars tuck-shop, blinked with great uneasiness at the Bounder. Bunter was not a bright youth; but he was bright enough to see that Vernon-Smith was

not taken in by his imposture. That meeting in Friardale Lane, when the Owl of the Remove was in the hands of Pon & Co., had been very fortunate for Bunter—at the time. But it was turning out less fortunate now. But for that meeting, Smithy and Tom Redwing would undoubtedly have been taken in, like the other Remove fellows. Now it was clear that they were not taken in at all.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. "Well, this is rich! So this is the distinguished guest, is it?"

"What do you mean, Smithy?" demanded Harry Wharton angrily. "This is Wally Bunter, and he's a guest here—and if you think it's good manners to cackle like a hyena, you're mistaken!"

"The mistakefulness is terrific, my esteemed Smithy," said Hurree Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha! That's the fellow you've been killin' the giddy fatted calf for, is it?" roared Smithy. "I've just heard from Skinner that Wally Bunter is here, and sticking you for a record feed. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cut that out!" snapped Johnny Bull.

The Bounder wiped his eyes.

"It's not Wally!" he said.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"It's Billy Bunter, you fellows," said Redwing, laughing. "He's taken you in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Bounder again. "What a spoof!"

"What rot!" exclaimed Wharton. "I suppose you remember Wally, and know that he's just like Billy—"

"The likeness is terrific," said Hurree Singh. "Indeed, he is more like Billy than we rememberfully recollected."

The Bounder clucked spasmodically. "How much has he stuck you for?" he asked.

"Oh, rats!"

"I say, you fellows, don't you take any notice of Smithy!" exclaimed Billy Bunter, in alarm. "You know what a rotten fibber Smithy is. He—he's trying to pull your leg, you know!"

"What?" ejaculated the Bounder. "Are you going to try to keep it up to me that you're Wally?"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

Wharton turned a searching look on the fat junior. Certainly Bunter's conduct since arriving at Greyfriars had been more like Billy than Wally. But the Famous Five were slow to believe that the Owl of the Remove could have pulled their leg to that extent.

"It's all right, you fellows," said Bunter. "You know who I am. I say, Mrs. Mumble, I'll have some more of the tarts."

"Hold on a minute!" said Johnny Bull. "Look here, Smithy. What do you mean? What makes you think—"

The Bounder chuckled.

"I don't think—I know," he answered. "That's Billy Bunter. I've seen those clothes before. Bunter took them with him in a bag when he went out this afternoon."

"Bunter went to Lantham—"

"He jolly well didn't! Redwing and I came on him in the lane, and some Highcliffe chaps were ragging him. They turned a suit of clothes out of his bag—those clothes."

Redwing grinned and nodded.

"It's so, you fellows," he said. "Bunter certainly had that suit of clothes in his bag, and that hat. I know them again quite well."

Harry Wharton gave a gasp.

"Do you mean to say that Bunter went out of gates and changed his clothes, and came back here saying he was Wally?" he ejaculated.

"Just that!" grinned the Bounder.
"My hat!"
The Famous Five fixed their eyes on Bunter.

On his looks it was simply impossible to tell whether he was Wally or Billy. His clothes and the absence of his well-known glasses had settled the matter for the Famous Five, without question. But now they had very strong doubts.

"Look here, which are you—Wally or Billy?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"That sounds like Billy!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"That fat idiot Bunter couldn't have pulled our leg," said Johnny Bull, shaking his head. "He hasn't the brains."

"A jolly lot more brains than you have, and chanco it!" said Bunter warmly, forgetting for the moment the part he was playing.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I mean, of—of course I'm not pulling your leg!" stammered Bunter. "I—I mean, I—I'm Billy—I mean, Wally—Wally, of course! I went to Lantham, just as I told you—"

"What?"

"I—I mean, Billy went to Lantham!" gasped the Owl of the Remove, getting rather confused. "My pater—I mean, my uncle was there—I mean, Billy's uncle, of course— That is to say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"It's that fat villain Billy Bunter, and we've been spoofed!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Bump him!"

"Three-pound-ten to feed Billy Bunter!" said Johnny Bull dazedly. "Why, we ought to have guessed!"

"Three-pound-ten!" shrieked the Bounder. "Ha, ha, ha! Oh, my hat! This is too rich! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have him off that stool!" roared Bob Cherry. "Why, I—I—I'll burst him!"

"I—I say, you fellows, it's all right!" shrieked Bunter. "I—I say, it was only a joke! I haven't taken you in—and it was only a joke, too! Look here, you beasts— Yaroooh!"

Bump!

Bunter came down off the stool with a heavy concussion. He rolled on the floor of the tuck-shop and roared.

"Oh, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Mimble. "My dear boys—my dear young gentlemen— Goodness gracious me!"

"I say, you fellows— I say— Yaroooh!"

"Bump him!"

"Rag him!"

"Give him jip!"

That the fat junior was not Wally Bunter was clear enough now. Wally certainly would never have been ragged in that fashion without putting up a terrific scrap. Billy Bunter was not thinking of a scrap; he was thinking only of escape.

"Leggo!" he yelled. "I keep on telling you I'm Wally—and it was only for a joke, anyhow! Can't you take a joke, you beasts? Ow, wow! Help! Fire! Rescue! Yaroooh!"

"Give him beans!"

"Whoooooop!"

Billy Bunter had had the feast. After the feast came the reckoning. The Famous Five had a long bill to pay—there was no doubt about that. Mistake in identity or not, Mrs. Mimble's account had to be met. All the chums of the Remove could do was to take it out of Bunter—and that they proceeded to do with great energy.

The tuck-shop was crowded with fellows rearing with laughter. The "spoof" on the Famous Five seemed to strike the other fellows as humorous—though Harry Wharton & Co. were quite unable to see the humour of it. It was fortunate for Billy Bunter that Wingate of the Sixth came striding into the tuck-shop.

"Here, stop this row!" exclaimed the captain of Greyfriars. "What the tump are you fags up to?"

"Ow, ow! Help! Fire! Murder!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let him go—do you hear? Now then—"

Billy Bunter dodged behind the captain of the school. Amid roars of laughter, a dozen fellows explained to Wingate all at once; and the captain of Greyfriars chuckled. In the meantime, Bunter slipped out of the tuckshop. His wonderful scheme had gone awry, after all, and he was anxious to get going while the going was good.

But there was a rush in pursuit—the Famous Five were not satisfied yet; perhaps they felt that they had not had three pound ten's worth!

Bunter gave a squeak of alarm as they sprinted after him.

He headed for the gates, and ran for his life.

"Stop!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Come aback, and we'll burst you!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter did not stop—apparently he did not want to be burst. He went out of gates at lightning speed. Fellows who saw him go declared that Bunter would be an easy winner of the School Mile, if he put on the same speed. The Famous Five reached the gates and stopped. Bunter vanished from sight, going across country in great style.

"He'll have to come back at call-over, and then we'll rag him baldheaded!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

And the Famous Five gave it up. Bunter was gone, and he was not likely to come back till the gates were due to be locked; his only hope was that the Famous Five would let the sun go down on their wrath. Harry Wharton & Co. did not expect to see Bunter again before roll-call. But the unexpected happenings of that afternoon were not yet over.



Before they knew what was happening the Highcliffe nuts were swept off their feet. • Wally Bunter stood and grinned down at them. "Oh, gad!" gasped Ponsonby, clasping his rose in anguish. "Is—Is this a dream?" spluttered Gadsby. "Ow-wow!" wailed Monson. "Have some more?" asked Wally Bunter, cheerily. "Rush in, old beans!"
(See Chapter 8.)

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Rough Reception!

"LYNCHING'S too good for him!" growled Johnny Bull.

Johnny was speaking of Bunter, of course. The Famous Five had gathered in Study No. 1 at tea-time—a frugal tea. Ways and means were now a serious question to the chums of the Remove.

Bunter's "spoo" had been exposed, and the fat junior was still out of gates in a state of trepidation and apprehension. He had reason to be apprehensive, too; for to judge by their remarks, the Famous Five were far from intending to let their wrath evaporate before the sun went down.

Mrs. Mimble's little bill had been partly squared, and partly left over to be settled the following week. Properly speaking, Billy Bunter should have been called upon to "square" it; but that, of course, was out of the question. Had that bill been incurred in entertaining Walter Gilbert Bunter, their old pal, the chums of the Remove would not have minded at all. But to be "diddled" to the tune of three pounds ten shillings by the fat Owl of the Remove was extremely exasperating. And they blamed themselves, too—they felt that they ought to have guessed. They felt that they ought to have known that "old Wally" would never have conducted himself in such a manner; and that fact should have enlightened them at the time. But they had been taken in—and taken in quite easily. It really was exasperating.

"A giddy plant from start to finish!" said Bob Cherry. "Of course, the fat villain never went to Lantham at all, and never intended to go. That was just a ruse to keep us from suspecting him of turning up here as Wally."

"Just that," grunted Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton laughed, rather ruefully.

"Well, we ought to have seen through it," he said. "Really, we asked for trouble. I noticed the fat bouncer blinking about, and wondered whether Wally was getting short-sighted like his cousin Billy. Of course, the fat villain had to leave his glasses off, to take us in."

"The spoofing rotter! Now we're cleared out of cash, and we still owe Mrs. Mimble two pounds," said Nugent. "My hat! We'll jolly well rag that fat toad when he turns up again."

"Yes, rather!"

"The cheek of it, you know!" said Bob Cherry indignantly. "He must really have taken us for a set of duffers, to play a trick like that on us."

"I'm afraid we were rather duffers," said Harry.

Vernon-Smith looked in at the study doorway, with a grin on his face. The Famous Five eyed him rather morosely. They had had quite enough grinning and chuckling on the subject of Billy Bunter's spoof.

"A visitor for you," grinned the Bouncer.

"Oh, blow!" said Bob. "We've had enough visitors for one afternoon. Who is it this time?"

"Bunter," said the Bouncer.

"What?"

"He's just come in—he's changed his clothes again."

"Changed his clothes again!" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Ha, ha! Yes—I suppose he thinks he can take you in again," chuckled Vernon-Smith. "But I should think that even this study wouldn't be caught twice by the same chaff."

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The Famous Five jumped up; their frugal tea was forgotten. It seemed really incredible that Bunter would attempt to play the same trick over again; but if he did, the chums of the Remove were ready for him, this time.

The Bouncer walked away, grinning; and Harry Wharton & Co. crowded out into the Remove passage. There was a sound of laughter from the direction of the stairs. Half a dozen Remove fellows were there, gathered round a fat youth who had just arrived on the landing.

"Bunter!" ejaculated the Famous Five, in an astonished chorus.

They stared at him.

The newcomer was dressed in a dark lounge suit; but with that exception he was just the same as the Bunter they had chased out of gates an hour ago.

"He—he—he's changed his clothes, and come back to spoof us again!" gasped Bob Cherry. "The frabjous ass—does he think that we can be taken in a second time?"

"Looks like it!" grinned Wharton. "We'll jolly well undeceive him on that point."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Skinner was yelling. "You're Wally Bunter, are you, Bunter? We've heard that before."

"Study No. 1 may swallow it!" chortled Snoop. "Try 'em! Here they come—ready to swallow anything."

The fat youth stared at them.

"I'm Wally Bunter certainly," he said. "Is my cousin Billy about anywhere?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll give him Cousin Billy, the cheeky spoofer!" murmured Johnny Bull.

The newcomer caught sight of the Famous Five, and came cheerily up the passage towards them.

"Hallo, you chaps—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You're Wally, are you?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Yes! I— Oh, my hat!"

Walter Gilbert Bunter had no time to get any further. Five pairs of hands were laid on him, and he was swept off the floor.

"Come into the study!" grinned Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooooh!" roared Wally. "What—what—what the thump—"

"Bump him!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Bump!

Walter Gilbert Bunter was landed on the carpet in Study No. 1. He sprawled on the carpet and roared.

The Famous Five roared, too, with merriment. It was their turn now—the spoofer had fooled them once, but he was not likely to fool them twice in the same way.

That this hapless youth really was Wally Bunter they did not suppose for a moment. They only supposed that the fatuous Owl of the Remove, having succeeded in pulling their leg once by his resemblance to his cousin, was trying the same game on again; not realising that this was a chicken that would no longer fight, as it were.

"You're Wally, are you?" chortled Bob.

"Ow! Wow! Yes—I'm Wally!" gasped the hapless visitor, blinking dazedly up at the Famous Five from the study floor.

"We'll give you Wally! Bump him again."

"Look here—"

"He's Wally!" roared Johnny Bull. "We'll bump him till he's Billy again, what?"

"Good egg!"

"You silly chumps!" shrieked Walter Gilbert Bunter. "You frabjous owls! Is this your way of greeting a visitor?"

"Ha, ha! Yes—your sort of visitor!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The bumpfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed spoofing Bunter," chuckled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Give him jip!"

"I tell you—" shrieked Wally.

"My dear man, we've heard it all before!" roared Bob. "Give him another!"

"Yooop!"

Bump!

Wally Bunter struggled desperately. But five pairs of sturdy hands were rather too many for him. Again he smote the study carpet with his plump person, and the dust rose.

"Now, are you still Wally?" demanded Wharton.

"Ow! Wow! Yes, you damn! Ow!"

"Hand over that cushion, Frank! Roll him over."

"I tell you—" raved Wally.

He was rolled over on the floor, and Wharton swept the cushion up into the air. Whack!

"Whooooooop!"

"Are you still Wally?"

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

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Ow! Ow! Yooop! You dummies, wharrer you at? Leggo! Oh, crumbs!"

"You're going to get it till you own up that you're Billy!" chuckled the captain of the Remove. "You see, once bit, twice shy! You can't pull our leg twice in the same style."

"You silly chump, I keep on telling you—"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better own up!" said Wharton. "You can keep up this game as long as you like, Bunter; but we'll keep it up as long as you do."

"Yes, rather!"

"You frabjous dummies!" roared Wally. "Where's Billy? Get Billy here, and he'll tell you I'm not him, you fat-heads."

"He's here already," grunted Bob Cherry. "and you're jolly well going to be walloped till you own up."

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Oh, my hat! Leave off!" yelled Wally, in anguish. "I—I'll own up to anything you like! I'm Billy! I'm anybody you like! I'm Lloyd George, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, if you like! Leave off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure you're not still Wally?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh! Wow! Anything you like—anybody you choose!" gasped Wally.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the hapless visitor was released at last, and allowed to scramble to his feet.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Doubting Thomases!

WALLY BUNTER stood gasping for breath, glaring at the Famous Five, and at the Remove fellows who were staring in at the doorway, grinning. He was in a state of the greatest bewilderment. More than once his resemblance to the other W. G. Bunter had caused mistakes in identity. But it never had caused so painful a mistake as this. Even if the fellows took him for William George Bunter, Wally could not see why they should resort to such drastic measures as these. He was quite unaware, of course, of the jape played by his fat cousin that afternoon.

He stood and gasped and gasped, while the Remove fellows roared with laughter.

"You silly owls!" exclaimed Wally, when he recovered his voice. "I jolly well wish I hadn't come along now!"

"I dare say you do!" grinned Bob Cherry. "You cheeky ass! Did you think you could take us in twice?"

"Once was enough," remarked Nugent. "Even a fathead like you, Bunter, ought to have known that the same trick wouldn't do twice over."

"What trick?" howled Wally.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's beginning again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Do you want some more cushion, Billy?"

"I'm not Billy!" shrieked Wally.

"Collar him!"

"Here, I say, hands off! I'm Billy, if you like!" shouted Wally, as the Famous Five made a movement towards him. "I'm anybody you like, you set of silly owls."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dash it all, Bunter, don't be such a goat," said Peter Todd, from the doorway. "Can't you see that it won't wash?"

"Where's Billy?" demanded Wally Bunter.

"You're Billy, and it's time to chuck playing the goat," answered Peter Todd impatiently. "Cut it out, fatty. You've fooled these fellows once by calling yourself Wally, but there is a limit even for these duffers."

"I tell you I'm Wally Bunter," groaned the unhappy visitor. "If Billy's been playing any tricks I don't know anything about it. Here, hands off! Yarooooooh!"

Bump!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him the cushion!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Going to own up again, old fat top?" grinned Peter.

"Yow-ow-ow! No—yes—anything! Leggo!"

Wally Bunter was freed again. He backed away from the Famous Five to the door. He realised that there was a mistake, that Billy Bunter was absent, and that there was no chance of setting the mistake right till William George appeared on the scene.

This was not the reception he had expected at Greyfriars! Really, it was rather a rough reception for a visitor who had expected a hearty welcome.

"You silly fatheads!" he gasped. "I'd jolly well clear off at once, only I know you'll be sorry for playing the goat when you find out your silly mistake!"

"Collar him!"

Wally dodged out of the study. He shoved a way through the laughing juniors in the passage, and ran for it.

Harry Wharton & Co. sat down to finish their tea, chuckling. Bunter had spoofed them that afternoon, and there was no getting out of that; but he had suffered for his sins; at least, they believed that he had. That Walter Gilbert Bunter had suffered in his place they did not yet suspect.

The hapless Wally, followed by hoots of laughter from the Remove fellows, went downstairs. He had come up at once to see his old friends in the Remove, little dreaming of the reception he was to meet with. But he had to pay his respects to Mr. Quelch, and he determined to visit the Remove master's study next, hoping that Billy Bunter would turn up soon.

But on the lower staircase he encountered Wingate of the Sixth. The captain of Greyfriars stopped him with a gesture.

"What does this mean, Bunter?" asked Wingate.

"Hallo, it's old Wingate!" said Wally cheerily. "How do you do, Wingate?"



"Have him off that stool!" roared Bob Cherry. "The fat spoofer! Why, I—I—I'll burst him!" "I say, you fellows—" began Bunter. "Yaroooh!" Bump! The Owl of the Remove came off the stool with a heavy concussion. He rolled on the floor of the tuckshop and roared. (See Chapter 9.)

The Sixth-Former stared at him.

"Off your rocker?" he asked.

"Eh? No!"

"Then don't talk as if you were! What are you doing in those clothes?"

"These—these clothes?"

"Yes! Why aren't you in your Etons?"

"Oh!" Wally realised that he was taken for Billy again. "It's all right. I'm not Bunter of the Remove! I'm his cousin Wally. I've come here to visit him."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from Skinner above. "He's trying it on with Wingate now!"

"What a neck!"

Wingate looked grimly at the fat youth.

"I suppose you think this is funny, Bunter?" he said. "I hear that you played this game on some Remove kids this afternoon, and spoofed them into standing you a spread at the tuckshop! But you mustn't try such games with a Sixth Form prefect. Bend over."

"Wha-a-at?"

Wingate had his official ashplant under his arm. He let it slip down into his hand.

"Bend over!" he rapped out.

"I—I say—"

"Are you going to bend over when I tell you, Bunter?" roared Wingate.

"No!" howled Wally. "I tell you I—"

"By Jove!"

Wingate grabbed him by the collar and spun him round. Then the ashplant came into play, and rang in resounding thwacks upon Wally Bunter's trousers.

The banisters above were crowded with Removites, yelling with laughter. Wally Bunter yelled in quite a different manner.

"There!" exclaimed Wingate. "Now go and change your clothes at once! Do you hear?"

"Yow-ow-ow! I've a jolly good mind to hack your shins!" howled Wally. "I keep on telling you—"

"Hook it!" snapped Wingate. "Get into your Etons at once—it's nearly time for roll-call!"

"I'm going to see Mr. Quelch—" "You're going to change into your Etons at once, and that's to help you understand it!" said the prefect. And the ashplant whacked again.

"Oh crumbs!"

Wally Bunter scuttled up the staircase again. Wingate frowned after him and went his way. He had no doubt that his order would be carried out. But Walter Gilbert Bunter, of course, had no intention of changing into Etons—indeed, he had no Etons to change into. He retreated dismally into the Remove passage, amid a crowd of chuckling juniors. Peter Todd dropped a hand on his shoulder.

"Chuck it, Bunter, old man!" said Peter. "There's a limit, you know! Stop playing the fool! Go and get changed before we have to go down to Hall."

Wally groaned.

"I'm not going in to call-over, ass, when I don't belong to the school, fat-head!" he answered. "Billy will turn up at roll-call, I suppose. Then you'll see—"

"Oh, can it!" said Peter impatiently, and he went into his study. He was quite fed-up with Bunter's extraordinary obstinacy, as he regarded it.

Wally Bunter was hopelessly non-plussed. It was evident that he was going to be regarded as Billy, until the Owl of the Remove turned up—and Bunter was not turning up yet. Wally was hungry after his journey—and he had expected a hospitable reception in Study No. 1. But there was no hospitality for the supposed spoofer. He hung about the Remove passage, simply not knowing what to do until Bunter should turn up. He did not want to risk another encounter with Wingate by going down. Bob Cherry came along the passage, heading for his own

study, No. 13. He grinned at the sight of the disconsolate Wally.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Call-over soon, Bunter," he said. "Hadn't you better get that clobber off?"

"You silly ass, I keep on telling you I'm Wally Bunter—"

"Chuck it! You'll really make me think that you're off your rocker soon, Bunter. Can't you see that that chicken won't fight?"

"I tell you—"

"Fathead!"

Bob walked on, laughing, and Wally cast a morose look after him. Really, he was rather sorry by this time that he had included Greyfriars in his round of visits during his holiday in England.

A little later there was a general crowding down to Hall for calling-over. Wally Bunter did not join in it.

Peter Todd shouted to him from the stairs.

"Come on, Bunter!"

"Rats!" called back Wally.

"You'll get into a row with Quelch!"

"Bosh!"

"Blessed if I'm not beginning to think that he's a bit balmy," said Bob Cherry. "I'd almost believe that he was Wally, if I didn't know that he wasn't." And he shouted: "Bunter, you ass! Come along!"

"Go and eat coke!"

And Wally Bunter was left in the Remove passage on his own. It was Bunter's own business, if he chose to cut roll-call, and the Removites cheerfully left him to his own devices.

Fellows were coming in from the quadrangle, and Harry Wharton & Co. stopped for a few minutes in the lower passage to speak with Squiff and Hazeldene. Then there was a general move into Hall, and some of the Remove fellows glanced round to see whether Bunter had turned up—but he was not there.

But just before the big doors were closed there was a hurried step and a stertorous gasping, and a fat junior bolted in and took his place in the ranks of the Remove.

"Bunter!" grinned Bob. "He's come!"

"My hat, he's changed pretty quick!" remarked Nugent, with a stare at the fat junior. For the Bunter who had just arrived so hurriedly was in Etons.

Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at the Famous Five as he edged towards them in Hall.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You've turned up," grinned Bob.

"I—I say, it's pax, isn't it?" asked Bunter, blinking uneasily at the chums of the Remove. "It was only a joke, you know—just a little joke. I—I say, it's pax, you know."

"Certainly!" said Harry Wharton, with a chuckle. "You've been ragged for it, and it's all over, you fat rascal!"

Bunter looked greatly relieved. He had stayed out of gates till the last possible moment, allowing as much time as he could for the wrath of his victims to evaporate. But he had hardly expected to find that it had quite evaporated.

When Mr. Prout, who was taking roll-call, called his name, Billy Bunter answered "Adsum" quite cheerfully. And when the school was dismissed he rolled out of Hall with the Famous Five, quite easy in his fat mind.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Both of Them!

BOB CHERRY jumped.

"My hat! What—"

Bob could scarcely believe his eyes. He had come up to the Remove passage soon after call-over. And as he came along the passage, the first object that met his eyes was a fat figure in a dark lounge suit. Bob stared at Wally Bunter as if the sight of the rotund figure mesmerised him. Wally stared back morosely.

"What—what—" stuttered Bob.

"Are you potty, Bunter?"

"Ass!"

"You've changed your clothes again!" gasped Bob. "What on earth are you playing this game for, Bunter? I didn't see you come upstairs either. What the thump—"

"Did Billy turn up for call-over?" asked Wally Bunter.

"You silly ass!" roared Bob. "You turned up for call-over in Etons, too. What do you mean by this?"

"I tell you I'm not Billy, you shrieking ass!" yelled Wally Bunter. "If you've seen him downstairs—"

Bob held up his hand.

"That's enough! You want some more, I see."

"I tell you—"

Bob Cherry, unheeding, turned back to the staircase.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he shouted.

"Come up here, you fellows. Bunter's at it again! Come up and lend a hand."

"What?"

Harry Wharton & Co. came up to the Remove passage with a run. They jumped at the sight of Wally Bunter.

"The crass ass is still keeping it up," said Bob. "He must have dodged up the back stairs and changed into those clothes again. Is he off his rocker, do you think?"

"We'll bump him on to it again if he is," said Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The bumpfulness will be terrific this time. We are getting fed up, my esteemed and idiotic Bunter."

"Collar him!"

Wally Bunter jumped back.

"You silly chumps! I tell you— Look here, call Billy! You crass dummies, I keep on saying— Whoooooop!"

The hapless double of Billy Bunter was in the hands of the Philistines again. What Bunter's possible motive could be in attempting to keep up a transparent deception was a mystery to the Famous Five; but on one point they had no doubt—they were fed up with it. This time Bunter was going to be made to understand that there had been enough of it, and that there was to be no more of it.

"Bring him into the study," said Wharton. "We'll jolly well make it clear to him this time!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Yaroooh! Leggo! I tell you—"

Wally, gasping and struggling, went into Study No. 1 with a rush, in the grasp of the Famous Five. He landed on the carpet with a bump and a roar.

"Now give him the cushion."

"Yes, rather!"

"Make it a fives bat this time!" growled Johnny Bull. "He's asked for it. Give him what he's asked for!"

"Good egg! Spread him out!"

Wally Bunter was spread out on the carpet, face down. Harry Wharton caught the fives bat Nugent tossed to him.

"Whack!"

"Yoooooop! Help! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Removites crowded round the study doorway, staring in. Among them appeared a fat junior, who blinked into the study through his big spectacles in great surprise.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Why—what—who—how— Oh, crumbs!" Harry Wharton, with the fives bat raised, stopped in time and stared dumbfounded at Billy Bunter.

Then he stared down at the struggling fat youth on the floor.

"Great Scott!"

"Bunter!" yelled Bob Cherry blankly. "What the thump— Then—then— then this chap—"

"He, he, he!" chorled Bunter. "Is that Wally? I say, Wally, old man, I didn't know you'd come. What are you rowing with these chaps for? He, he, he!"

Wally Bunter was released as suddenly as if he had become red hot to the touch. He sat up on the study carpet.

"Ow! You silly owls!"

"It's—it's—it's Wally!" babbled Bob Cherry. "It—it—it must be!"

"You dummies!"

"It's really Wally!" gasped Frank Nugent. "Then—then it must have been Wally all the time!"

"You blithering fatheads!"

"He, he, he!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "Did you silly asses take Wally for me? After taking me for Wally! He, he, he!"

Wally Bunter struggled to his feet. He was breathless and dusty and dishevelled, and he seemed rather cross. He glared at the dismayed chums of the Remove.

"You howling asses—"

"Oh dear!" gasped Wharton. "I—I—I say, sorry, old chap! We—we—we thought you were Billy!"

"I told you I wasn't!" roared Wally.

"I—I know. But you told us you weren't in the tuckshop this afternoon. I—I mean Billy told us he wasn't." stuttered Wharton. "We—we were taken in once, and—and—"

He broke off helplessly. It was only too clear now that a ghastly mistake had been made.

"He, he, he!"

"Shut off that cackling, Bunter, you fat villain!" roared Bob Cherry. "It was all your fault, with your rotten spoofing!"

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter almost doubled up with merriment. The mistake which so dismayed the Famous Five, and which had such painful consequences for Wally, seemed irresistibly funny to William George Bunter. He roared and he yelled.

But the dismayed chums of the Remove were not in a mood for Bunter's hilarity. There was a rush at the fat junior, and Bunter's ill-timed mirth was suddenly checked as he was collared and bumped in the doorway of Study No. 1.

"Whoooooop!" roared Bunter.

"Kick him out!"

"Yow-ow-woooooop!"

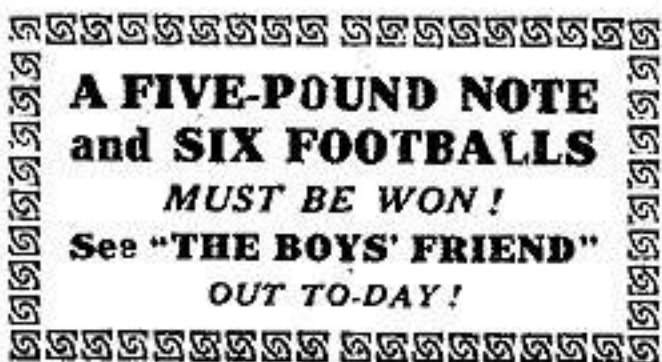
Billy Bunter fled for his life. Then Harry Wharton & Co. turned back to Wally, crimson and apologetic.

"Awfully sorry, old chap!"

"Quite a mistake!"

"You—you see—"

(Continued on page 28.)


**A FIVE-POUND NOTE
and SIX FOOTBALLS
MUST BE WON!**
 See **"THE BOYS' FRIEND"**
 OUT TO-DAY!

OFFSIDE! That's what you'll be saying when you have made the acquaintance of Nugent Beasley Ailen. There's no room in a First League footer team for a supercilious slucker. Play football? Why, he can't kick a ball for toffee!



STORRYDENE VILLA

Walter Edwards

No. 1.—THE DICTATOR.

The Amateur!

FOUR pudgy fingers tapped an irritating tattoo on the surface of the blotting-pad, as Sir Aubrey Ailen waited for the sixth member of the party to take his seat at the baize-covered table in the chilly board-room of Storrydene Villa Football Club.

Sir Aubrey was not a man of sweet and equable temper at any time, but on this particular morning, when he had called a special meeting of directors, he showed quite plainly that it did not please him to be kept waiting for two minutes by an "obscure cheap-jack"—his mental designation of Mr. Jonas Trimble, the Storrydene auctioneer.

A florid, well-fed, prosperous-looking man of forty-five, the newly-made baronet was something of a dandy in his choice of clothes, and the fact that he was fast losing the graceful curves of his youth was a source of constant worry to him.

He could lay no claim to personal popularity, but the proprietors of fat-reducing nostrums must have blessed his name.

And neither could he lay claim to personal beauty, for his heavy features were mottled, and his close-set eyes a watery blue; and his short upper lip, which gave one a glimpse of ugly, square teeth, was adorned by a small black moustache with waxed ends.

A black silk ribbon encircled his thick neck, and, resting on his convex waist-line was a gold-rimmed monocle. Sir Aubrey seldom used that eyeglass, however, for he had not yet mastered the art of keeping it in position. But there were times when he tried to wear it, and on these occasions he distorted his bloated features until he looked almost monkey-like; and so, instead of impressing, he merely amused.

And Sir Aubrey disliked being laughed at.

Jonas Trimble's lateness called for the use of the monocle, and the baronet

coughed pompously as he made a heroic attempt to screw the refractory glass into place.

"H'm! Ah!" he began, his voice throaty; and his manner was that of a great man who was about to put a lesser mortal in his place. "Have you any clocks at home, Trimble?"

Jonas Trimble, a business man to his finger-tips, nodded his bald head.

"Plenty, Sir Aubrey," he answered, a trifle eagerly. "I can do you a splendid twenty-four-hour Dutch clock—hold-faced, plain figures, sweet chimes, expert workmanship, unequalled—"

Ailen, purple in the face, brought his pudgy fist down upon the top of the table with a force that jerked a spray of best blue-black out of the ink-well.

"I don't want to buy any of your mangy clocks, confound you!" he shouted, his monocle swinging on the end of its ribbon. "If you'd got the intelligence of a half-witted rabbit you would know that I was treating you to a bit of subtle sarcasm! I'm calling your attention to the fact that you've kept us gentlemen waiting for two and a half minutes! Time is money—"

"I know," smiled Trimble, the recognised wag at the local constitutional club; "that's why I wanted to sell you that clock!"

Strange noises escaped the purple-faced baronet as he glared across at the little auctioneer.

"This is no occasion for levity, Trimble!" he declared icily. "We will proceed, gentlemen."

The other directors, who were shocked at Jonas Trimble's behaviour, nodded a silent and respectful assent. They were business men in a small way—shopkeepers, for most part—and that the auctioneer should have treated a real live baronet with such a singular lack of deference seemed like sacrilege in their eyes. Besides, Sir Aubrey was reputed to be worth half a million of money, in addition to which he would certainly be the next mayor of Storrydene.

"As you know, gentlemen," began the chairman, his bellicose gaze upon the smiling Trimble, "we have not been

doing particularly well since the beginning of the season, and I think I am voicing the opinion of everyone present when I say that we are all disappointed at the manner in which our players are shaping. Kerryway, at centre-forward, is little better than a passenger. H'm! Ah!" Kerryway was a player for whom Jonas Trimble had the greatest admiration, but the little auctioneer did not rise to the baronet's bait. "Our four to one defeat on Saturday was nothing short of a calamity," continued Sir Aubrey, "for Durham United are a mediocre side at best. Something has got to be done—and done quickly, gentlemen—to stop the rot; and it is because I feel so strongly upon the point that I have summoned this special meeting. Gordon, our goalkeeper, is weak, whilst our backs are—H'm! Ah!—patchy, their form being of the in-and-out variety; and were it not for our half-backs we should soon be in Queer Street. The forwards aren't had as a whole, although Kerryway, as an individual player, does not shine. He lacks initiative; he has no dash; he is easily flurried. As you know, gentlemen, a centre-forward should be a born leader, a master of tactics, the spirit of the attack; yet I very much doubt whether Trimble's idol could lead a blind horse to its feed!"

"I take it, then, that you have your eye upon another centre-forward, Sir Aubrey?" asked the auctioneer. "You've spotted a genius—a kind of G. O. Smith, Vivian Woodward, and Danny Shea rolled into one?"

The baronet, who was obviously feeling very pleased with himself, nodded his sleek, black head. It was not often that he managed to score off Trimble, but he flattered himself that he was getting the better of matters on this occasion.

"That is so, gentlemen," he replied. "As chairman of Storrydene Villa, I have the interests of the club at heart, and for weeks past I have been looking round for a player who will make all the difference to the team. The young man I have in mind—he is a born
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gentleman, by the way—will save the situation, for he, like his father, is blessed with brains, courage, the supreme gift of leadership, and a magnetic personality."

"He's a kind of leather-chasing demi-god on wheels?" queried Jonas Trimble; and the irreverent remark made his fellow-directors gasp in horror. Did Trimble forget that he was speaking to a real live baronet?

As for Ailen, he appeared to be upon the verge of apoplexy, for his cheeks were purple, and his close-set eyes smouldering with fury as he turned upon the little auctioneer.

"I shall have to request you to leave the meeting unless you conduct yourself with the decorum due to my position as chairman and to my—er—social standing!" said Sir Aubrey pompously.

There followed a tense, expectant silence, and it was Tippett, the funereal-faced undertaker, who decided to step into the breach and save the situation.

"There—there is one—one point I should like to raise, Sir—Sir Strawberry—" he began, stuttering badly; and Jonas Trimble went off into a shout of laughter.

He laughed alone, however, for the other directors looked uncomfortable, their anxious gaze upon the baronet.

"Really," spluttered Sir Aubrey, glaring across at Trimble, "you appear to be easily amused, sir!"

"I always laugh at simple things, Sir Aubrey," declared the little auctioneer; and he looked straight at the baronet as he made the ingenuous remark.

Again there fell a tense silence, and then Sir Aubrey, with another pompous cough, scowled across at Tippett.

"Go on!" he grunted, his pudgy fingers tapping the blotting-pad.

"Financially," said Tippett, "we are not in a very sound position, our 'gates' having fallen off during the past few weeks—"

"Yes, yes! Go on!" said the chairman testily.

"Well, Sir Straw—er—Aubrey," finished the undertaker hurriedly, "we cannot afford to pay a big transfer fee for your new man."

The baronet's scowl vanished, giving place to a complacent grin.

"What you say is quite right, my dear Tippett," he declared; and his patronising manner caused the undertaker to flush with pride. "But you can put your mind at rest on the score of a transfer fee, for the player I have in mind—did I mention that he is a born gentleman?—is an amateur!"

The announcement created a sensation and brought forth a number of questions.

"Who is he, Sir Aubrey?"

"Where does he come from, Sir Aubrey?"

"What is his name, Sir Aubrey?"

The baronet was smiling broadly as he swung back into his chair and thrust his thumbs into the armholes of his fancy waistcoat.

"The new player is coming down from his 'Varsity, gentlemen," he announced at length, "and his name is Nugent Beasley Ailen!"

This was sensation upon sensation, and the board-room positively buzzed.

"Then—then the young gent is your son, Sir Aubrey?" gasped Tippett.

"Exactly," smiled the baronet, his mocking gaze fixed upon the amazed countenance of Jonas Trimble.

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Nugent Arrives!

A POWERFUL yellow motor-car purred down Storry Hill and came to a standstill outside the players' entrance of the Villa's ground, and the attire of the languid-looking young man at the wheel suggested that he was not in deep mourning for anybody.

He was dressed like a "sport" rather than a sportsman—although the shade of difference may not have been known to him—for his tight-fitting overcoat was bright yellow in colour, and the curly brimmed bowler that rested rakishly upon one protuberant ear was a study in dove grey. His gloves, like his overcoat, were yellow, and his feet were adorned with a pair of white spats that made a happy blend with his black-and-white check trousers.

The motorist was smoking a fat cigar. A black moustache sprouted manfully upon his short upper lip.

The "loud" young man was Nugent Beasley Ailen, who had been "sent down" from his 'Varsity over a particularly unsavoury betting scandal; and the 'Varsity was pleased to see the back of an incurable outsider, who had very few things in common with the other undergrads. He had proved himself a bouncer of the first water, a snob, and a braggart; and he could never forget that he was the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen, the newly created baronet, who had made a fortune out of "Ratto," a vermin-destroyer that was widely advertised as the "Rodents' Death-Knell."

Stiffing a yawn, Nugent Beasley Ailen opened the door of his car and stepped on to the pavement, and here he posed with absolute self-possession when he found a number of interested eyes looking in his direction.

It was only natural that his appearance in Storrydene would cause something of a stir, of course, for wasn't he the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen, the future mayor of the town?

Standing beside his car and removing his gloves in leisurely fashion, Nugent Beasley proved to be a little above medium height, and inclined to be bottle-shouldered, and it was at once obvious that he carried too much flesh for a lad of nineteen.

Strolling across to the players' entrance, he caught hold of the handle and turned it, and a grunt of annoyance escaped his lips when he found that the door was closed. Scowling and muttering, he aimed a vicious kick at the object of his displeasure, and matters were not improved when the force of his kick split the toe of his patent shoe and exposed a strip of bright yellow sock.

"Confound the thing!" he growled, dancing around on one foot and clapping his injured member. "The idiots must know that I'm coming! Confound—"

The door opened at this moment, and Nugent found himself in the company of one of the most extraordinary individuals he had ever set eyes on.

"What's the game, lad?" asked the stranger, watching Ailen's antics with interest.

"Game!" shouted Nugent, still dancing about on one leg. "Game! Can't you see that I've smashed my toes, you long-nosed, attenuated bit of string?"

The gentleman whom he likened to a bit of string was tall, lean-limbed, hatchet-faced, and completely bald, and so thin was he that his friends declared that they could not see him if he stood sideways.

The freakish-looking individual was known as Spudge Dixon, and he was trainer to the Storrydene Villa eleven.

He looked across at Nugent Beasley Ailen with a lugubrious eye.

"Did you knock, lad?" he asked. "Of course I knocked, you herring-bodied idiot!" shouted Nugent, his close-set eyes blazing. "Don't you know who I am?"

Spudge rubbed his narrow chin and looked thoughtful, a slight frown puckering his high forehead.

"You may be anyone," he said at length.

"Yes, and I may be the label on a jar of pickles!" shouted Nugent. "But it so happens that I'm the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen, your boss! Perhaps that item of news makes you sit up!"

Spudge bowed low, a big red hand upon his heart.

"Welcome back to the old home, sir!" he cried. "I have been the good and faithful servant, for I have shaved your silkworms and manicured the goldfish! Welcome back, say I—"

"What the blazes is the matter with you, you maniac?" demanded Nugent, wondering whether this solemn-faced freak was deliberately pulling his leg. "I want the Villa club-house, but it looks as though I've come to the lunatic asylum!"

A bright light of understanding dawned in the eyes of Spudge.

"Ah, I understand, sir!" he cried. "You will find the asylum at the end of the town. Pray hurry thither, sir, for they are doubtless expecting you!"

Nugent stood quite still, bewildered and irresolute, for he did not feel at all sure that he was not dealing with a maniac.

"Is Sir Aubrey in?" he asked suddenly.

"He is, sir," returned Spudge Dixon. "He is knitting a pair of mittens for the hands of the clock! Step inside, I prithee! You will leave the hearse where it is, sir?"

He nodded towards the bright yellow offence that was Nugent's motor-car.

"Of course I will, you idiot!" snapped the younger man, his fleshy features mottled. "What the blazes do you think I was going to do with it?"

"Use it as a tie-pin," answered Spudge, as solemn as an owl.

"Take me to Sir Aubrey!" ordered Nugent. "I shall report you for insolence!"

The trainer's narrow shoulders bowed as he heard the dread threat, and a great sob shook his attenuated frame.

"No, sir, not that, I prithee!" he begged, tears in his voice, a pleading look in his colourless eyes. "Think of my poor old mother, who will be a hundred and seventy-five next Pancake Day! Think of my poor wife, who would starve to death but for the food she eats! Think of my husband—"

"Lead on, you maniac!" roared Nugent Beasley Ailen, looking warlike. "I'll get you fired for this, my man!"

Spudge was a pitiable spectacle as he strode across to the door of the club-house, and it was a very angry and wild-eyed young man who was ultimately ushered into the private sanctum of Sir Aubrey Ailen.

The baronet was seated at his desk, a cigar between his thick lips, and his close-set eyes lit up at the sight of his offspring.

"Ah, you're here, my boy!" he cried, rising from his chair and advancing with outstretched hands.

"Of course I'm here!" growled Nugent savagely. "Trust you for making an idiotic remark, gov'nor!" He glanced over his shoulder, to find that his freakish guide had closed the door noiselessly and retired. "Who's the hungry-looking

idiot who showed me in—a fellow who's as fat as a bit of twine?"

A broad smile overspread the baronet's florid countenance.

"That's Dixon, our trainer, my boy," he returned. "Everybody in Storrydene calls him 'Spudge,' though why he's given the strange nickname I can't say. A most amusing character, is he not?"

The younger Ailen breathed hard, his eyes clouding with anger.

"Yes, he's about as amusing as a sick headache!" he growled. "I asked the idiot a few simple questions, and he gave me a lot of impertinence! We can't have that sort of thing, gov'nor! He's got to go!"

The baronet waved the remark aside with a pudgy hand.

"You'll soon get used to his playful ways, my boy," he declared. "And we can't spare him, anyway. He's the finest trainer in the country bar none! He's positively invaluable, although a bit eccentric maybe, and I'm sure we couldn't replace him."

"For my part," growled Nugent, "I wouldn't wish to. But I suppose you'd better have your own way for the time being. I warn you, however, that there will be some drastic alterations if matters aren't quite to my liking!"

"Quite so, my boy," smiled Sir Aubrey, his eyes filled with paternal pride as he took stock of his offspring. "The trainers, groundsman, and office staff are my concern, just as the players will be yours a little later on."

"You've told them that I'm going to sign forms for the Villa?"

Sir Aubrey nodded his sleek head.

"I called a special meeting of directors and suggested that you should lead the side, and I am pleased to say that every director was in favour of your playing in place of Kerryway; that is to say, they were all in favour with but one exception, an undersized little auctioneer fellow saying that you shouldn't be given a place in the team until you'd had a trial. That, of course, was sheer rot, and the other directors—hard-headed business men—promptly shut him up!"

"And what do the players think about it?" asked Nugent, throwing his cigar into the fireplace.

"I really can't tell you, my boy," said the baronet, a trifle uneasily. "But they've no say in the matter, anyway!"

"Of course not," agreed Nugent. "It will seem strange to me at first, I suppose, hobnobbing with these fellows! I don't know that I've ever met a professional footballer. What are they? Where do they come from? I've often wondered, gov'nor. Do they set out to be pros, or are they trained at Borstal or one of those places? It will be interesting, studying these crude types of humanity. I suppose they're the breed of social savages that eat peas with a knife and put dripping on their hair! It's all very droll, gov'nor, my turning out for the Villa! It's a pity they know who I am, for they'll be falling over themselves to be polite, and all that sort of thing! And that'll rather queer my pitch, for I want to see them in their raw state, as it were. But let's get along and see the queer animals; I'll soon put 'em at their ease."

"They may be tongue-tied and self-conscious at first," said Sir Aubrey, leading the way from the room, "and—"

"I'll soon put that right," said Nugent. "I don't want a lot of 'Yes, sir!' and 'No, sir!' and 'If you please, sir!' Is this the dressing-room?"

The baronet nodded, and his son rapped on the door.



Nugent aimed a vicious kick at the door and split the toe of his patent leather shoe. "Confound the thing!" he growled, dancing about on one foot and clasping his injured member. The door opened at this moment, and Nugent found himself in the company of the most extraordinary individual he had ever set eyes on. (See page 22.)

"Is anybody at home?" he asked, meaning to make a good impression. "Come inside, fathead!" shouted a gruff voice.

War!

IT was a very red-faced young man who kicked viciously at the door and burst into the dressing-room like a human tornado, and he was glowering and truculent as he came to a sudden standstill and glared round.

The place was filled with a crowd of healthy-looking youngsters in varying stages of dishabille—youngsters who were strong-limbed, clear-eyed, and good to look upon. Sir Aubrey's offspring had expected to find himself in the company of a band of semi-savages—creatures with no chins and receding foreheads—so his surprise was excusable, perhaps. A number of the players showed unmistakable signs of breeding, whilst two were wearing Old Miltonian colours.

Nugent Beasley Ailen noticed all these things at a glance—and marvelled. And then he became acutely conscious of the fact that these paid footballers were regarding him with undisguised amusement.

"You people don't seem to know me," he said, adopting the pompous manner so beloved of his father. "My name is Ailen. I am the new centre-forward."

The item of information was received in silence, and four of the players—Gordon, Hebble, Thirlboy, and Craye—nodded briefly and went on with their undressing. The others regarded Sir Aubrey and his son with servile eyes, for they could not forget that the baronet was reputed to be worth half a million.

It was Kerryway, the Villa skipper, who broke the somewhat strained silence. He was a broad-shouldered giant, with twinkling eyes and a cropped head, and his consideration and gentleness made him the most popular man in the team.

"I'm glad to meet you, old man," he said, his voice gruff and friendly. "I

understand that you're going to take my place at centre?"

He extended a muscular hand as he spoke.

"Yes, that's so," said Nugent Beasley Ailen, ignoring the proffered palm. "It seems that the team needs pulling together. You've been doing very badly of late, I hear."

Kerryway, a young man who never minced words, looked straight into the speaker's colourless eyes.

"Is there anything the matter with my hands?" he asked, speaking very quietly.

"Nothing—nothing, I assure you," said Sir Aubrey's offspring.

"Then why don't you shake?" demanded Kerryway. "Isn't it usual, seeing that we've got to pull together for the next month or so?"

The other young man waved the remark aside.

"The necessity for so doing does not arise," declared Nugent in his best platform manner. "It may be customary amongst the lower orders—I am a good judge of these things—but amongst gentlemen it is not done!"

Kerryway's great chest heaved. "You mean that I'm not good enough to shake hands with?" he asked.

"Oh, no," smiled Nugent, meaning to put these people in their place once and for all. "As I remarked, the necessity for shaking hands does not arise!"

Flushed and scowling, Kerryway turned his broad back upon the overdressed snob and walked across the dressing-room, for every instinct prompted him to send his fist crashing into the smug, self-satisfied features.

"Have it your own way!" he growled.

"I intend to," smiled Nugent, "and I will remind you that I wish to be treated with respect! Do you understand?" he asked quickly, turning upon the knot of players who were regarding him in open-mouthed silence.

"Yes, sir," said Grace, Sceptre, and Denning in breathless unison.

Nugent nodded his sleek head and looked very satisfied with the way in which he had handled the situation, and

he was about to make a further remark when the door was thrust open with great violence, and caught him in the middle of the back. Staggering across the room, Sir Aubrey's offspring barged into Kerryway, and that young gentleman, muttering savagely, swung round and gave him a vigorous push that sent him into the skinny arms of Spudge Dixon, the freakish-looking trainer.

"What's the hurry, lad?" asked Spudge, gazing down into Nugent's blazing eyes.

"Hurry, you idiot!" shouted the outraged young man. "What the blazes do you mean by opening the door in that mad fashion? You might have brained me!"

A watery smile flitted across the cadaverous face of Spudge Dixon, and the smile was so eloquent that Kerryway and one or two others went off into a shout of laughter.

"I want no insolence from you, my man!" cried Nugent, his face turning purple. He glanced at his gold wrist-watch. "Isn't it time these fellows were at practice?"

Spudge nodded.

"Yes, lad," he answered. "You'll have to look nippy! Slip out of those togs and get into shorts and a jersey!"

It was plain that Nugent Beasley Ailen could not believe the evidence of his ears.

"Eh? What's that you say?" he gasped.

"I told you to change, lad," answered the trainer quietly. "You're down to play against Newcastle Athletic on Saturday, you know." He ran his shrewd eyes over the fuming youngster. "You look as flabby as a pound of liver, but I'll soon alter that for you!"

Nugent could scarcely articulate as he swung round upon Sir Aubrey.

"Do you hear what this fellow says?" he demanded. "He's got the impertinence to order me about—to tell me what I shall do. Who does he think he is?"

"I'm merely the trainer, lad," said Spudge, "and I order you to change into footer rig and put in a couple of hours' practice with the other fellows."

"But I'm an amateur, you idiot!" shouted Nugent.

"And you're also a member of the Villa team," remarked the trainer. "Are you going to change?"

"Of course I'm not!" fumed the amateur. "Do you think I'm going to take orders from a bald-headed freak? I've consented to play on Saturday, so that's good enough for you. Come on, guv'nor, I'm dry!"

It was a somewhat bewildered baronet who followed his offspring out of the dressing-room, whilst the inmates of the dressing-room looked at each other in almost comical amazement.

The Fiasco!

THE news that the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen had signed forms for Storrydene Villa caused something of a sensation in Soccer circles, for the famous First Division club had not had an amateur on their books for many years. Nothing was known of Nugent Ailen's form, for he did not appear to have figured prominently in Public School football. But the local reporters who interviewed him were given to understand that he was a "dark horse"—a centre-forward who was going to put the much-needed ginger into the Villa attack.

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The fixture against the Newcastle eleven was one of the most important of the season, for the Athletic had lost only one match since the beginning of September, and so their meeting with Storrydene aroused great interest up and down the country.

The game was advertised to start at two-thirty, but the vast ground was filling rapidly fully an hour before the kick-off.

Storrydene was a hotbed of football, the journey to the ground out at Bedwell Park being in the nature of a pilgrimage, and there were occasions when the tradesmen closed their shops in order to witness an important match. The ground was on the outskirts of the town, though nobody knew why it was called Bedwell Park—there was certainly no park there.

The gates had been closed for ten minutes when the home side trotted across the cinder track and took the field, and the mighty roar that greeted the appearance of the familiar black jerseys and white knickers suggested that the local "fans" were nowise down-hearted about the bad luck that had dogged the Villa for the past month or so.

"Here they are!"

"Villa! Villa!"

"Up, up, up!"

"Where's Ailen?"

"There he is! That's 'im! The chap with the ball!"

Nugent Beasley Ailen was at the head of the team, Sir Aubrey and his fellow-directors having voted the young man into the vacant captaincy.

"Good lad, Ailen!"

"Set 'em alight, lad!"

There was a smirk upon Nugent's face as he dropped the ball and aimed a kick at it, and the fact that he booted nothing more stable than the air brought a good-natured laugh from the spectators.

"Confound the thing!" growled the Villa's new skipper, and he took a running kick at the leather. He had better luck on this occasion, the ball doing a weary journey of half a dozen yards.

"Don't be nervous, old man!" shouted a "fan" from the stand, and again a rumbling laugh travelled round the enclosure.

The visitors did not keep the crowd waiting for more than a matter of seconds, and the tumultuous ovation they received proved that the special

trains from Newcastle had been well patronised. The cataclysm of noise was almost bewildering, and it must have been heard all over the town.

"Come on, the A's!"

"Let's hear from t' lads!"

Mr. Sullivan, of Burnley, was the referee, and he was wearing his well-known smile as he whistled the two captains to the centre.

Riggs, the visiting skipper, was a stocky little fellow with a pugnacious jaw and a closely-cropped head. He possessed the type of visage that one somehow associates with the hardened criminal, yet he was as gentle and modest as a girl.

Still smirking, and with his hands thrust deep into his pockets, Nugent Beasley Ailen strolled languidly across the turf and nodded to Mr. Sullivan, but he took not the slightest notice of the convict-like Riggs, whose big right hand was outstretched.

"It is usual to shake hands, Ailen," said the referee, a hard gleam creeping into his clear eyes.

"Oh, is it?" asked Nugent. "Sorry, Personally, I think it wholly unnecessary."

"You would!" grunted Sullivan, and he flicked the coin into the air.

Luck was with Nugent, and he made his first mistake in electing to play against the sun. The home "fans" were quick to notice this bad judgment, of course, and thousands of voices yelled in protest.

"What are you doing, Ailen?"

"Wake up, man!"

Nugent scowled as many remarks of a personal and pungent nature came to his ears; but he showed not the slightest sign of contrition for the mistake he had made. The other players knew only too well what his initial blunder might cost the side, for a glaring sun was beating straight into their eyes as they lined up for the kick-off.

The official programme gave the following teams:

STORRYDENE VILLA.

(Black shirts, white knickers.)

Goal: Gordon. Backs: Grace, Hebble. Half-backs: Denning, Thirlboy, Craye. Forwards: Sceptre, Coyne, Ailen (N. B.), Noyle, Battle.

NEWCASTLE ATHLETIC.

(Red-and-white jerseys, white knickers.)

Goal: Ellis. Backs: Boyd, Burgoyne. Half-backs: Decker, Riggs, Ryder. Forwards: Cross, Gains, Mellish, Townshend, Kaye.

Having taken an all-seeing glance round the ground, Mr. Sullivan blew a sharp blast on his whistle, and Mellish touched the ball to Townshend; and the inside man, dodging a rush by Noyle, made a fair amount of headway and passed out to Billy Kaye, on the wing.

And Kaye made no mistake.

Taking the ball on the run, he set off down the line with that wonderful turn of speed for which he was famous, and both Battle and Craye were outdistanced in the race for the corner flag.

Hebble, the smiling giant, ambled out to meet the visitor, and so ponderous were his movements that few people imagined it possible for him to get within three or four yards of the flying little winger; and so a gasp of surprise echoed round the ground when the massive fellow darted across the turf, shot out an accurate foot, and took the ball clean off Kaye's toe. Stepping nimbly aside, Hebble avoided Townshend and cleared, a mighty punt lifting the ball clean across the pitch. Sceptre was

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Nugent was about to make a remark when the door was suddenly thrust open, catching him in the middle of the back. Staggering across the room, Sir Aubrey's son banged into Kerryway, and that young gentleman, muttering savagely, swung round and gave him a push. "What's the hurry, lad?" asked Spudge mildly. (See page 24.)

practically unmarked as he trapped the leather and went off towards the visitors' territory.

"Up, the Villa!"

"Up, up, PUP!"

Sceptre's pigskin boots twinkled as he dashed down the line, beating Decker en route, and the clever manner in which he tricked Boyd and shot away towards the corner brought a wild yell from the Villa supporters.

"In with it, boy!"

"Centre, lad!"

A dozen players were pounding down the field like a herd of wild buffalo, for Sceptre's tear-away had taken everybody by surprise; and Ellis, between the sticks, looked anything but joyous as he jumped about on the goal-line, only the lower part of his face showing beneath his famous check cap.

Boomp!

Working himself into position, Sceptre swung his leg and dropped the ball a foot or so in front of the goal-mouth, and Ellis, giving a panther-like spring, pushed out two gloved fists in an effort to clear. He did no more than deflect the leather, however, and it went out to Burgoyne; and the back, losing his head, gave a mighty jump and touched the ball with the tip of his fingers. What mad impulse caused him to jump he did not know, and he certainly did not stop to reason the matter out at that moment. He was too busy calling himself names.

"Hands!"

"Penalty!"

Mr. Sullivan was already pointing a dramatic finger at the blob of white-wash, and the crowd was seething with excitement as "Hefty" Hebble ambled up the field to take the shot. The burly back had never been known to fail with a penalty kick, so the home "fans" had every reason for feeling sanguine about an early lead.

The goal was as good as scored.

The players had spread out on either side of Hebble when Nugent Beasley

Ailen strolled across to the big fellow and tapped him on the shoulder.

"What's the idea?" asked Nugent, with studied insolence.

Hebble's grin broadened as he looked down at the new skipper.

"I'm going to take the penalty kick," he explained.

"Who said so?" asked Nugent.

"Get on with it!" roared the crowd.

"Get out of the way, Ailen!"

Nugent's question rather floored the burly back.

"I always take the kick," he said. "I seem to have got the knack, you know."

"Well, I shall be glad if you'll get into the knack of waiting until you get your orders from me," said Nugent.

RESULT OF MAGNET "CHARACTERS" COMPETITION (William Gosling).

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"You can clear off, for I'm going to take the kick!"

Ailen was deaf to the thunderous roar that met his decision, and there was the old smirk on his face as he prepared to try his luck. A penalty kick had always struck him as being a singularly easy means of scoring a goal, and he thought this would be an excellent manner of covering himself with a little cheap glory. Not that he cared a hang about the crowd or his men; he was going to score for his own personal satisfaction.

A tense silence settled upon the thousands of spectators as the referee placed his whistle to his lips, and nobody seemed to breathe as a snappy blast cut the stillness.

Pheep!

Taking a short run, Nugent Beasley Ailen lashed out with all the strength of his leg muscles, and the ball, catching the full force of his toe, went sailing away into the crowd, passing over the cross-bar at a height of about forty feet.

The multitude was too flabbergasted to make a sound for the moment, but no sooner did the short period of stupefaction pass than every man, woman, and child in the crowd addressed a remark to Nugent Ailen.

"You idiot!"

"Take him home!"

"What's up, Ailen?"

That he should have been the cause of the pandemonium did not trouble Nugent in the least, for he seemed to be mildly amused as he turned leisurely and walked slowly towards the centre. The other players were not amused, however, and from that moment until half-time they managed to starve their skipper.

They could not equalise, however, and lemon time found them one goal down, Mellish having netted a goal from a corner kick.

Once inside the dressing-room, Nugent placed his back against the door, folded

his arms, and glared round at his mutinous crew.

"I suppose you think you've been very clever in freezing me out?" he asked. "Do you think I don't know that you've starved me? Do you think I don't know that you were working together to make me look a fool before the crowd? I've got to be fed during the second half, or there will be a deuce of a lot of trouble for some of you! You seem to forget that I've got a pull in this club. Sir Aubrey will have something to say about this business. Understand?"

He glared from Noyle to Battie as he snapped the question.

The outside man and his partner looked uncomfortable.

"Yes, sir," said the winger, and Noyle nodded.

"And you, Coyne," snapped Nugent, turning swiftly upon the inside-right. "You've got to feed me."

"Yes, sir."

Cheap bully though he was, Nugent Ailen had mastered the art of subjugation, for no sooner did the second-half start than Sir Aubrey's offspring was fed assiduously, Coyne and Noyle seldom touching the ball to their wingers. Every pass went to Nugent, who speedily

proved that he was a player of a very mediocre type. Time and again he over-ran himself or shot yards wide, and had it not been for the magnificent defensive work of Grace and Hebble the home side would have been swamped. As it was, the pair of backs managed to keep the Athletic at bay until ten minutes from time, when Mellish darted between the pair of tired stalwarts and beat Goalie Gordon with a rasping shot that made the rigging quiver like a mad thing.

The "fans" from Newcastle were almost delirious with joy and excitement, of course, but the same could not be said of the glum-faced Villa supporters. They were tight-lipped and angry to a man, for they had expected much of Nugent Ailen; and the fact that the smirking amateur appeared to be amused about the whole thing did not add balm to the wound of their acute disappointment. It looked as though he were letting them down deliberately; and the last player who did that had been carried through the streets of the town and thrown over the bridge into the River Stour.

Fate, aided ably by Nugent Beasley Ailen, decreed that Mellish should do the hat trick that afternoon, and it was

on the stroke of long whistle when the centre-forward put the ball past Gordon for the third time; and so ended the match in which the son of Sir Aubrey Ailen made his debut in first-class football.

The "Find"!

It was the Monday evening following the disastrous game against Newcastle Athletic, and the players and directors of Storrydene Villa had arrived at the ground in full force.

It was the occasion of a thirty-minute game between the Villa reserves and a team composed entirely of local talent, the latter being eleven likely lads who had asked for a trial; and the one player who stood out head and shoulders above his fellows was a youngster of seventeen or so. Of medium height and slim build, he had brown hair and steady brown eyes, and the easy, confident manner in which he "walked round" the Villa reserves was a positive revelation to even such leather-chasing veterans as "Hefty" Hebble and Stanley Kerryway.

The first eleven were sitting on a wooden form in front of the grand stand, and Kerryway's eyes were shining as he watched the brown-haired youngster cut through the defence as a knife cuts through cheese. It seemed that nothing human could stop the stranger in that individual effort, and when he finished the good work by beating the goalkeeper with a magnificent daisy-cutter, it looked as though Kerryway had suddenly lost his reason.

Grabbing Hebble's bowler-hat, he sent it flying into the air with a mighty kick, and "Hefty," wearing his usual broad grin, did not seem to resent the liberty in the least. Indeed, he was just as wild-eyed as his friend, and he gave Kerryway a playful punch on the nose from sheer high spirits. Kerryway did not mind, however, or he would not have embraced Sceptre until the winger yelled for mercy.

"He's simply great, man!" cried the centre-forward, dropping Sceptre into a patch of mud. "He's the greatest 'find' we've had for years! Nothing can stop him! He's a blessed little genius on wheels! Shades of Harold Fleming! He's Charlie Buchan with knobs on! Who is he, I wonder? Did anybody see him blow in? We must snatch him up at once! We must chain him up until he signs forms for us!"

Sir Aubrey Ailen and the other directors were standing on the balcony of the club-house, and it was obvious that they, also, were much impressed by the brown-haired youngster who had made the Villa reserves look like a lot of novices.

Four goals the unknown youngster scored in that thirty-minute match, and each one was a gem, the result of clever dribbling and perfect shooting. No sooner was the game over than the baronet told Spudge Dixon that he wished to have a few words with the prodigy.

Sir Aubrey and the directors were seated in the board-room when the brown-haired youngster was ushered into the room by the hatchet-faced trainer, and the newcomer showed no trace of nervousness as he looked round at the assembly.

It must have been a great moment in his life, yet he showed a most amazing self-possession. His features were tanned and finely chiselled, the curve of his lips

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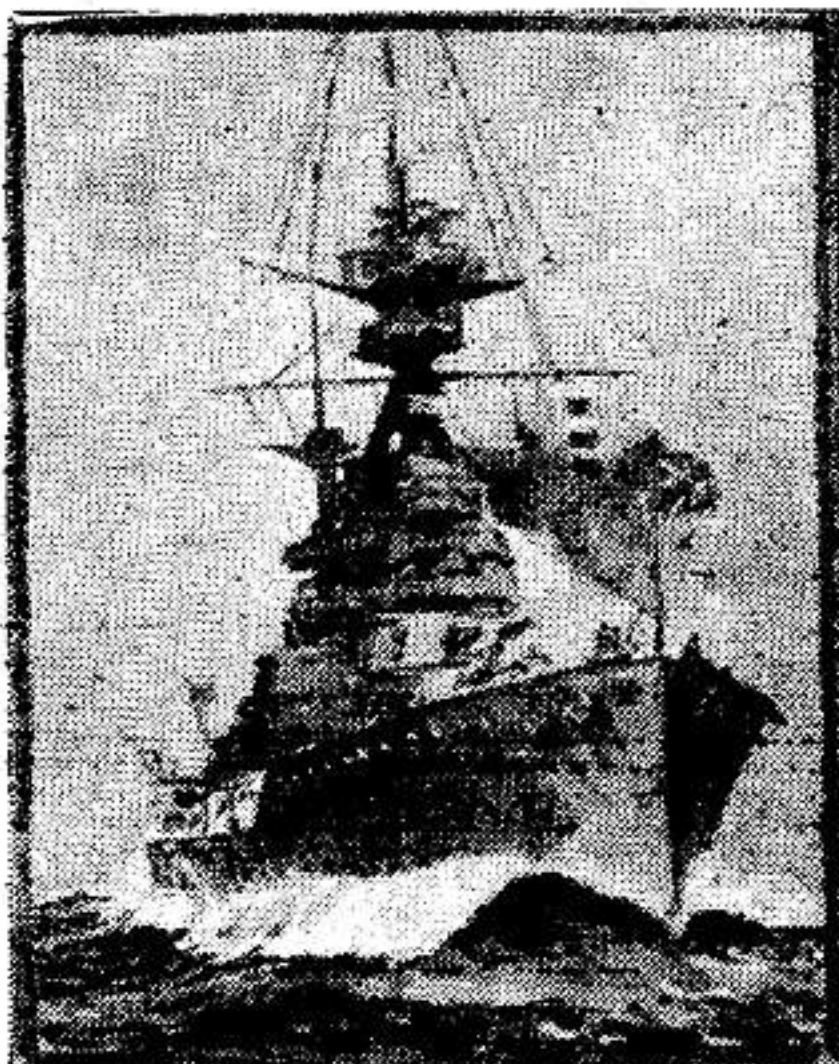
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suggesting that he was not without a sense of humour: and there was about him an air of quiet confidence that was not lost upon the directors.

Sir Aubrey, despite his newly-acquired baronetcy, was never wholly at ease in the presence of what he termed a "born gentleman," and he now coughed pompously and made an effort to jam his gold-rimmed monocle into position.

"H'm! Ah!" he began, flushing slightly beneath the brown-haired youngster's steady gaze. "You—ah—did very well this evening, my boy! Very well, indeed, I may say!"

"Thank you, sir!" said the youngster, his voice low and mellow.

"I take it," continued Sir Aubrey, "that you wish to become a footballer; that is, a professional footballer?"

The stranger nodded.

"Yes, sir."

"H'm! Ah!" Sir Aubrey, the shrewd business man, did not believe in rushing matters, even when he knew himself to be on a good thing. And the brown-haired youngster was undoubtedly the "find" of the season. "Well," he ran on, "I think we shall be able to find you a place in the reserves, but you will not, of course, get the maximum wage to start with. You understand that?"

"Yes, sir."

There was an official-looking form in front of the baronet, and he glanced down at it.

"I will take a few particulars," he said. "Name?"

"Peter Voyce."

"Age?"

"Seventeen."

"Have you played for any other team?"

"I was in my school eleven, sir," answered the youngster.

"Really?" said the baronet, looking up. "What school was that?"

"Rundle's, sir."

Sir Aubrey gave a start of surprise, and there was a new light in his close-set eyes as he placed his pen on the blotting-pad and looked fixedly at the new recruit.

"Really?" he said once more. "Then perhaps you knew my son? Nugent Ailen, you know."

A tinge of colour overspread Peter Voyce's fine features, as he nodded his head.

"Yes, sir; I knew him very well," he returned. "You see, I used to fag for him."

"Dear me!" said the baronet. "This is most interesting, is it not? Nugent went up to the Varsity after that, of course."

"So I understand, sir."

"But you—" Sir Aubrey only said two words, but they were a question.

"I did not go up, sir," said Peter Voyce; and there was something hard and metallic in his tone. He made it quite obvious that he did not wish to discuss his private affairs, and the baronet was shrewd enough not to press him for a confidence.

"The next question," pursued Sir Aubrey, his narrowed eyes upon the youngster, "is—"

His throaty voice trailed away before he completed the sentence, for the door was thrust open at this moment, and Nugent Beasley Ailen burst into the board-room.

"What's this rot I hear about your signing this fellow on?" he demanded, pointing a shaking finger at Peter Voyce. His mean little eyes were blazing as he looked straight at the quiet youngster.

Utter surprise was stamped upon the baronet's fleshy features as he glanced across at his white-faced offspring.

"I—I have been given to understand that you were friends, my boy," he said. "I thought you knew each other at Rundle's."

"And so we did!" shouted Nugent; "and it's because I know this sneaking rotter that I won't allow him to sign forms for the Villa! He's a wash-out, anyway; every goal he scored this evening was a fluke! Tell him to clear out, guv'nor! We don't want his sort in the club!"

"One moment, young man," put in

Jonas Trimble quietly, "just one moment!"

"Who the blazes asked you to butt in?" demanded the infuriated young man, turning upon the little auctioneer.

"My sense of fair play asked me to butt in," smiled Jonas; "and I say that this lad is going to sign forms for Storrydene Villa! It's pretty obvious that you've got a down on him for something, but your private quarrels have got nothing to do with the affairs of the club!"

"Hear, hear!" mumbled the other directors, forgetting Sir Aubrey for the moment.

"Voyce must certainly be signed on," declared Tippett, the undertaker. "We are all in favour!"

"And what have you got to say, guv'nor?" demanded Nugent.

"I must bow to the wishes of the other directors, my boy," said the baronet, after a tense pause. "Voyce will be asked to sign forms."

Nugent's pale face was distorted with hate as he swung round upon the brown-eyed Peter, and took three quick strides across the carpet.

"D'you hear that, you rotter?" he shouted. "You've got a chance of joining the club, but if you take my tip you'll clear out whilst you're safe! Don't forget that I can make things dashed hot for you, and if you've got a grain of sense you'll give me a wide berth! That's a fair warning, and now you can make your choice! What is it to be? Are you going to sign or are you going to clear out?"

"I'm going to sign," said Peter Voyce quietly; and his heart thumped exultantly as he made the choice.

But he would not have been so jubilant could he have raised the veil and peered into the future.

His troubles had not yet started.

THE END.

(Don't miss the second story in this splendid footer series, entitled: "The One-legged Goalie!" You'll like "Hoppy" Hawkins from the moment you meet him, boys.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 873.



(Continued from page 20.)

"You're satisfied now that I'm not my cousin Billy?" asked Walter Gilbert Bunter sarcastically.

"Oh, yes! Yes, rather! You—you see—"

"Oh dear! You see, old fellow—"

The dismayed five gasped out explanations and apologies all together, while Wally Bunter brushed his clothes and the Remove fellows in the passage roared with laughter.

Fortunately, Wally's plump good

temper was equal to the strain that had been put on it. He grinned at last.

"It's all right," he said. "All serene! My own fault really. I ought to have let Billy know I was coming this afternoon, only I never thought—well, it's all right. 'Nuff said!"

And all was calm and bright.

Harry Wharton & Co. made much of their distinguished visitor that evening.

They really were glad to see "old Wally," now that they knew he was Wally. And they felt that they couldn't do too much for that unhappy mistake in identity.

That evening there was a supper of the gods in Study No. 1. Credit at Mrs. Mimble's was strained almost to breaking-point. And Wally Bunter was sufficiently like his cousin Billy to enjoy thoroughly that mode of making amends.

Quite a number of Remove fellows

were asked to the feast, and Study No. 1 was crowded to the limit of its capacity. Wally's fat face beamed with good nature and contentment.

And when another fat face amazingly like it was put in at the door, and a pair of large spectacles blinked greedily at the feast, Bob Cherry was prompt to act. The largest boot in the Remove was promptly planted on Billy Bunter, and he vanished with a roar.

One Bunter was heartily welcome in Study No. 1, but there was not a welcome for Both Bunters!

THE END.

(There is another magnificent complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. next Monday, entitled: "Giving Bunter Beans!" Be sure and read it. Make a point, too, chums, of "Bagging" the Free Art Plate of H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth, given away with every copy of next week's MAGNET.)

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