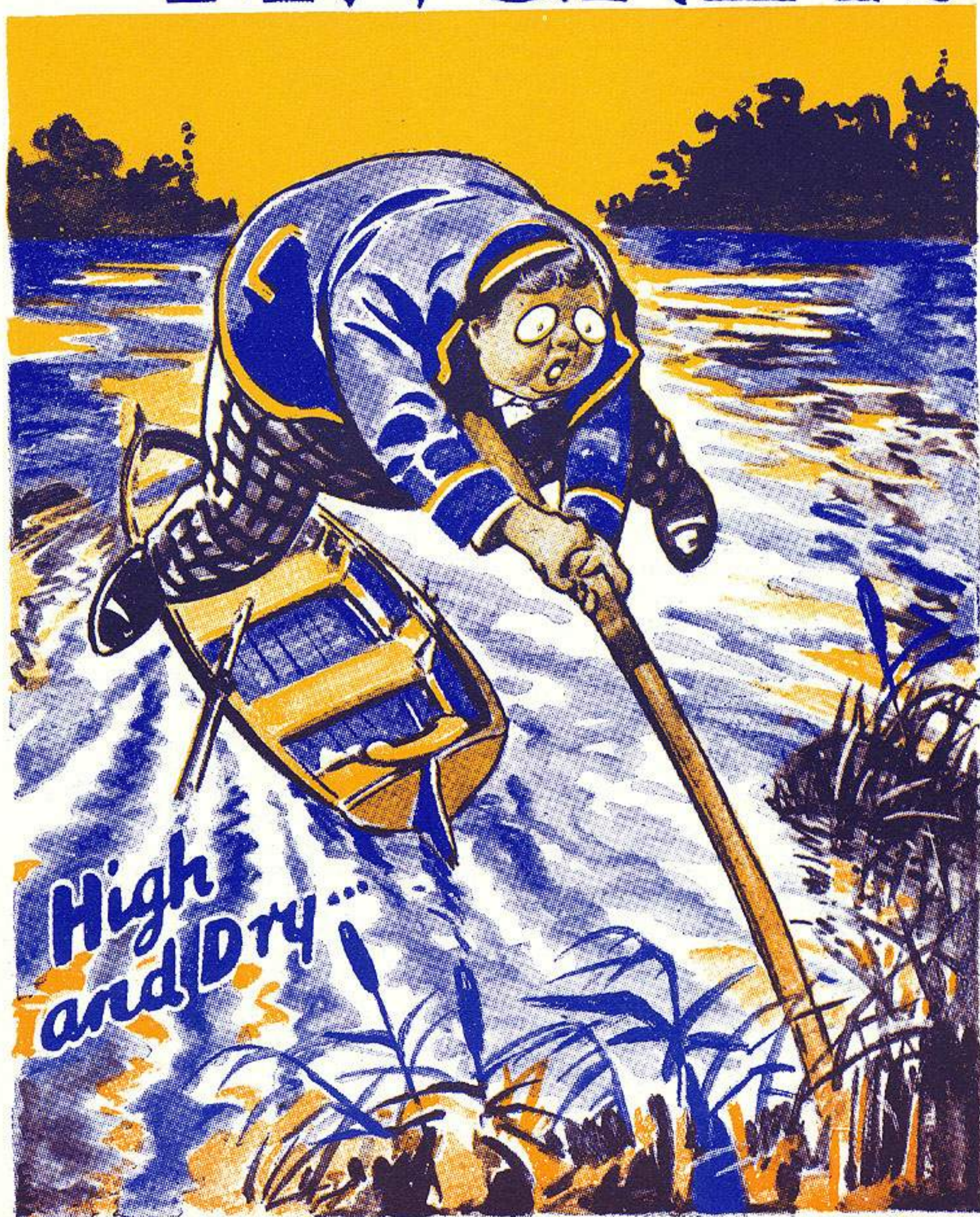


**"THE MAN FROM THE STATES!"**

Sensational School-Adventure Story of Harry Wharton & Co—Inside!

# *The* **MAGNET** 2<sup>D</sup>







# Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address:  
The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

**W**HENEVER you have been overlooking the waters of a harbour or a river, I wonder if you have given a thought to the question of how the captain of a strange vessel finds his way through the channels that lead between the various shoals and shallows? One of my Derby chums asks me to tell him something about

### MARKING THE SEA'S STREETS.

You must have noticed the various buoys that dot the entrance to a harbour, but do you know that, to the experienced navigator, they are as familiar as street name-plates are to landmen? For instance, when a sailor sees a conical-shaped buoy on the water, he knows at once that he must pass it on the starboard side—that is, keep it on his right hand. Similarly, a can-shaped buoy is always kept on the left hand. Thus, even if the sailor hasn't a chart of that particular harbour, he can still tell which way he has to enter the channel.

Whenever he sees a spherical buoy, he knows that he must keep clear—for spherical buoys are always used to show where there are shallow patches. In some parts of the world, where proper buoys have not been placed, the channels are marked by small spars, or branches of trees stuck in the mud to mark the channel.

At night-time, of course, lights are shown on the important buoys—but here is an interesting thing: No buoys ever carry a fixed light! All lights carried by buoys are either "Flashing," "Occulting," or "Alternating." The difference is important. A "flashing" light, for instance, is one which has a greater duration of darkness than light, while an "occulting" light is a light which goes out every now and again, the duration of darkness being always less than, or equal to, that of the light. An "alternating" light is one which changes colour. This information is worth remembering if you are likely to go out boating this coming summer.

**T**HE next question I have been asked this week concerns

### BLUE-COAT SCHOOLS.

Alfred Barker, of Kendal, asks me if there is only one Blue-Coat school in this country. No, there are several. The principal one is Christ's Hospital, at Hove, Sussex, but there are other Blue-Coat schools for boys at Birmingham, Nottingham, Westminster, and Chester. There are also Blue-Coat schools for girls at Hertford and Greenwich. The picturesque long blue coats have been worn by boys at these schools since the time of Edward VI. They also wear yellow stockings, but no hats, although they used to wear blue caps until the year 1850.

I suppose most of my readers have wished, at some time, that they could go for

### A TRIP ON AN ATLANTIC LINER,

and it might be a surprise to know that a short trip can be taken on one of these magnificent vessels for quite a small sum. A year or two ago I had a wonderful

trip on the luxurious Canadian Pacific liner "Empress of Scotland," from Southampton to Hamburg. Now a chum of mine who lives at Guildford asks me what is the shortest trip that can be taken on an Atlantic liner, and how much it will cost.

He can, if he wishes, go from Southampton to Cherbourg for 30s., or as far as Queenstown for £2 10s. This includes meals and sleeping accommodation, and passengers on these short trips have full use of the same luxurious public rooms and all other facilities available for Atlantic passengers. Trips to Antwerp and Hamburg can also be had, and I assure my chum that the experience of modern Atlantic travel is one that is well worth having. The Empress of Scotland, which is on the Southampton-Cherbourg run, is the twentieth largest ship in the world, and has a displacement of over 25,000 tons.

Incidentally, when one comes to consider the largest steamers in the world, it is easy to see

### WHERE BRITAIN LEADS.

Nine of the twenty largest steamers in the world are British; Germany comes next with four; Italy has three; France, two; and Holland and the United States one each.

**I** AM still waiting to hand out free gifts to you fellows! Don't forget that there are penknives, pocket wallets, and magnificent story books for you to earn without much trouble. All you have to do is to send along a good joke, a Greyfriars limerick, or a story of some unusual experience which has occurred to you. The senders of the best will receive one of these magnificent free gifts.

S. Owen, of 58, Cambridge Street, Stanmore, Sydney, N.S.W., gets a splendid book for the following joke:

**Teacher (addressing class):**  
"I want you all to understand that it is the law of gravity that keeps us on the earth."  
**Small Boy:**  
"Please, sir, how did we stick on before the law was passed?"



**BOOKS, PENKNIVES, and POCKET WALLETS,** offered for storyettes and Greyfriars limericks. All efforts to be sent to:

c/o MAGNET,  
5, Carmelite Street,  
London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

**DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY OF WINNING SOMETHING USEFUL!**

Can you beat that? If so, let me hear from you—and you'll hear from me with a free gift before long!

**O**f course, you are interested in dogs—what boy isn't? Tom Taylor, of Greenock, wants to know **HOW THE BLOODHOUND GOT ITS NAME.**

It was so called because of the persistence with which it follows the scent of blood, and is one of the oldest breeds of British dogs. It was formerly known as the "stealth-hound," and was greatly used in this country for hunting. But, contrary to the usual belief, it has proved disappointing so far as tracking criminals is concerned. It is a very intelligent and affectionate dog, and stands about twenty-four inches high at the shoulders.

Now for a clever Greyfriars limerick, for which E. Dodd, of Tunisfree, Gordon Avenue, Bognor Regis, Sussex, gets a splendid book:

**Said Bunter to Todd, in disgust:**  
"Since dinner I've not had a crust."  
**And Toddy replied:**  
"If in your inside  
You stuff any more—you will bust!"

Catch the next mail with a Greyfriars limerick or an amusing ribtickler, and see if you can win one of our useful prizes. I've got plenty more in stock.

Just to finish up with, here is a curious sentence which a reader has sent me:

### RISE TO VOTE, SIR.

What's curious about it? Well, read it backwards, and you will find that it reads exactly the same! Then write it down as follows:

R  
R I R  
R I S I R  
R I S E S I R  
R I S E T E S I R  
R I S E T O T E S I R  
R I S E T O V O T E S I R  
R I S E T O T E S I R  
R I S E T E S I R  
R I S E S I R  
R I S I R  
R

Now, how many times do you think it is possible to read the sentence, starting at any R, and going up and down, in and out, backwards or forwards, in any direction you like?

You will be very surprised to know that there is no fewer than 63,504 different ways of doing so! If you like, you can work them out for yourselves, but I advise you to take my word for it!

**N**EXT week's programme—forward! Here's a ripping yarn from the pen of Frank Richards. It is entitled:

**"THE MYSTERY OF THE MILL!"** and it will hold you enthralled from the first line to the last. It's chockful of good stuff, and guaranteed to raise more chuckles to the square inch than you could find in half a dozen other yarns. You'll like this story, chums!

You'll also find that Stanton Hope is still going strong in next week's instalment of "The Island of Slaves," while the staff of the "Greyfriars Herald" have done their best to get out a really tip-top issue.

The shorter features will be in evidence, as usual, so don't miss next week's issue, unless you wish to miss a good thing!

Au revoir until next week.  
YOUR EDITOR.





# The Man from The States!

Out of a hollow oak popped the startled face of an American—and from that strange first meeting Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, found themselves plunged into an adventure of unending thrills.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

“Going—Going—!”

“**B**LOW it!” Harry Wharton & Co. smiled.

Coker of the Fifth seemed to be getting excited.

“Bother it!”

It was a lovely spring afternoon. A balmy breeze blew from the sea. Fleecy clouds dotted an azure sky. And it was the last half-holiday of the term before Greyfriars School broke up for the Easter holidays. For all these reasons the Famous Five of the Remove were looking merry and bright. They came out in a cheery bunch, heading for the river, the programme for the afternoon being a picnic on Popper’s Island. But they stopped when they came on Coker. They had a few minutes to spare; and Coker of the Fifth was always entertaining when he was dealing with his motor-bike.

Coker looked neither merry nor bright. He looked cross, warm, perspiring, and exasperated. Coker’s jigger was propped by the roadside, and Coker was examining it with a gleaming eye and a crimson face.

“Hang it!” hissed Coker.

Coker was taking his motor-bike for a run that fine afternoon. At all events, that was Coker’s intention. But the motor-bike did not seem to be playing up. Coker pulled and pushed, poked and punched, and said things. The jigger declined to stir. Just as if it was trying to irritate Coker, it stood there regardless.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo!” said Bob Cherry cheerily. “Won’t it go, Coker?”

Coker looked up, and glared at the chums of the Remove. It might have been guessed, from Coker’s looks, that he did not want an audience. But the Famous Five only smiled.

“If I had a donkey that wouldn’t go—” chanted Johnny Bull.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Clear off, you fags!” snapped Coker. “Don’t hang round here, getting in the way! Sheer off!”

“Perhaps we might help?” suggested Frank Nugent.

“Don’t be a young ass!” growled Coker. “What do you know about motor-bikes?”

“Next to nothing, old bean—in fact, only a little more than you do.” answered Nugent cheerfully. “But if we all shoved behind—”

“Shut up!” roared Coker.

He turned to the machine again. Something was amiss with that machine. So far as Coker could see, everything was in order. Yet something must have been amiss, for it wouldn’t go. Pulling and pushing, poking and punching, had no effect on it whatever. It just stood there, regardless of Horace Coker.

“Blow it!” hissed Coker.

“After all, this may be a stroke of luck for you, Coker,” remarked Harry Wharton seriously.

Coker glared up.

“What do you mean, you young ass?”

“You’re safer off that bike than on it!” explained Wharton. “Safety first, you know. The more it doesn’t go, the more likely you are to turn up alive at call-over.”

Coker of the Fifth breathed hard.

“If you fags want me to smash you—” he said.

“If we do, we’ll hang around when you get that jigger going,” said Bob Cherry. “I understand that when you’re on that jigger, Coker, you’re warranted to kill at forty rods.”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

Coker looked for a moment as if he would leave the exasperating jigger and bestow his whole attention on the exasperating Removites.

The grinning juniors drew together, ready to dust up the road with Horace Coker if he asked for it.

But the great man of the Fifth turned back to the jigger. Several more fellows were gathering round; Coker’s audience was increasing. He was anxious to get off. Coker liked the limelight in some ways, but he did not like to be the cynosure of all eyes when he was wrestling with a motor-bike that wouldn’t go.

“Blow the thing!” yapped Coker. “Blow it! Why doesn’t it start? Why won’t the brute go? Blow it! What the thump’s the matter with it?”

“The owner!” suggested Bob Cherry.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“My esteemed Coker—” began Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the dusky member of the famous Co.

“Shut up!” roared Coker.

“But I was about to make a suggestive remark,” said the Nabob of Bhanipur mildly.

“You silly idiot!”

“I was about to remark suggestively that perhapsfully—”

“Cheese it!”

“Perhapsfully you have forgotten to—”

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"Dry up!"

"To fill up with the harmless and necessary petrol!"

Coker started!

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

There was a howl of merriment from the Famous Five. The expression on Horace Coker's rugged face at that moment was worth a guinea a box.

Evidently Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh had put his dusky finger on the mystery. Coker had forgotten the juice. Of course, a fellow couldn't think of everything. Coker had thought of everything but that.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" repeated Coker.

He grabbed a petrol-can, while the Removites yelled.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "You can't expect a horse to go if you don't give him his oats, Coker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up!" bawled Coker. "I'll jolly well lick you all round if you don't shut up and clear off, you cheeky fags!"

"Well, I like that!" said Bob. "If we hadn't stopped to see the performance you might have been hung up here all the afternoon. It might have taken you hours and hours to think of the juice with a brain like yours."

"The mightfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

Coker snorted savagely, and proceeded to fill up with juice. He was not looking grateful. The expression on his face was like unto that of a demon in a pantomime. He was more anxious than ever to be off now—now that he had found the mysterious trouble and was setting it right. A score more Greyfriars fellows had gathered round by this time to look on, and they were all grinning.

He was ready at last.

He cast a homicidal glare round at a circle of grinning faces, and prepared to mount.

"Get out of the way, you young sweeps!" he snorted.

"Run for your lives!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chug! Chug! Chug! The jigger was talking at last! It was music to the ears of Horace Coker.

The Greyfriars fellows cleared back. When Coker of the Fifth was on a motor-bike, and the bike was a going concern, Coker needed plenty of scroom. Coker, by a series of miracles, had never yet been guilty of manslaughter; but there was no telling when he might begin.

All was ready—a few more moments and Horace Coker would have been chug-chugging merrily away, leaving the laughing crowd behind him and scattering terror before him. But it was not to be, for in those moments the unexpected happened.

Five did not seem in a hurry to appear. As a matter of fact, they were occupied just then in admiring Horace Coker and his motor-bike; and they did not even know that Billy Bunter was waiting for them. Had they known it, probably it would not have made them hurry down to the river.

"Beasts!" repeated Bunter. "I say, Smithy, have you seen those rotters?"

Vernon-Smith was coming down to the raft with Tom Redwing. On that glorious spring afternoon, many Greyfriars fellows were having boats out. The Bounder and his chum were carrying out Smithy's own handsome and expensive skiff from the boathouse. Smithy glanced at the Owl of the Remove and grinned.

"I've seen only one rotter," he answered. "A fat one in specs!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter blinked up the path again. Bunter seemed to be getting anxious. Bunter knew that the Famous Five had planned a picnic on Popper's Island for that afternoon. Bunter had his own ways and means of acquiring information. He knew that the chums of the Remove were going up the Sark in a boat; he knew that there was a basket containing good things for the picnic on the island; and he knew that he was going to share in the picnic—if he could. Now a dreadful doubt smote him that Harry Wharton & Co. might have decided to picnic somewhere else. Bunter had rolled down to the raft to wait for them there, sure that he could not miss them on that spot. But they did not come.

"Beasts!" said Bunter, for the third time.

Patter, patter, patter!

It was a sound of running feet on the towpath, and Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles. A dozen other fellows looked round also. From down the river, the direction of Friar-dale Bridge, a man came running.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in surprise. For the moment he forgot the Famous Five, and even the picnic. The Bounder and Redwing, who had slipped the skiff into the water, looked round, holding it to the raft instead of pushing off.

"That sportsman's in a hurry," remarked Smithy.

"Looks like it," agreed Redwing, his eyes curiously on the man who came pounding up the towpath.

It was a strange enough sight. The man was fat, but he was running with breathless, desperate speed. On his nose, which was fleshy and beaky, a pair of horn-rimmed glasses caught the rays of the sun, and fairly flashed as he came on. His hat was on the back of his head, exposing a bald forehead which was streaming with perspiration. Perspiration trickled down his fat face. Obviously, at a glance, he was out of condition, and unaccustomed to athletic exertion.

But he was running as if he fancied himself on the cinder-path. Twice the Greyfriars fellows round the boathouse saw him glance back over his shoulder, as if in fear of a pursuer in the rear. But the towpath behind him was empty; there was no one to be seen along the river, all the way to the village bridge.

Patter, patter, patter! came the pounding feet.

"That jolly old sport will burst a boiler, if he doesn't ease off!" grinned Smithy. "What on earth is he putting it on like that for?"

"Looks as if he thinks somebody is after him!" said Redwing, puzzled. "Can't make it out!"

"Who the dickens could be after him?"

"Goodness knows!"

The fat man in the horn-rimmed glasses came pounding on to the raft, a score of pairs of eyes staring at him. He slacked speed a little, and glanced round him, with a hunted look, and every fellow there could see that there was fear in his face. What the man could be afraid of in broad daylight was a mystery; but that he was afraid there was not a shadow of doubt. He gasped and panted, almost groaning for want of breath.

After one quick glance round, he headed straight for the skiff, in which Smithy and Tom Redwing stood.

The two juniors stared at him blankly. They could not imagine what the man wanted with them. He halted, and tried to speak, but his breathless panting choked his voice for a moment or two.

"Say," he gasped at last. "Say, bub, give me a lift across the river in that boat! I guess I'm all out!"

The words came out with a rush, with a strong nasal accent. Evidently the horn-rimmed man belonged to the other side of the Atlantic.

"Give you a lift?" repeated the Bounder.

"Yep! Yep! And sharp! Say, I'm in a hurry! Give me a lift across the river, bub! I'll give you twenty dollars for a lift across!"

The Bounder simply stared at him. The American glanced back down the towpath, the way he had come, evidently in fear of seeing a pursuer there. But there was no one in sight, and he gasped with relief, and turned to the skiff again.

"I guess you'll row me across, bub!" he gasped. "I'm surely in a doggoned hurry!"

"You're in a hurry to get across the river—and you've just come away from the bridge!" said Vernon-Smith, eyeing him. "You could have walked across if you'd gone the other way. Is there a bobby after you?"

It was a very natural suspicion, for there really seemed no other way of accounting for the man's desperate haste and his startling request. Unless he was some law-breaker in flight from a man in blue, his actions seemed quite unaccountable. If that was the case, Herbert Vernon-Smith certainly had no intention of helping him to escape.

The man made no answer, but stood breathing in great gasps. Again he looked back along the river, and then his eyes turned on Vernon-Smith again, with a desperate gleam behind the horn-rimmed glasses. His hand flew to his hip-pocket under his coat.

"Look out!" exclaimed Redwing.

There was a shout from the fellows by the boathouse—a shout of amazement and alarm. The spring sunshine gleamed on the barrel of a revolver, as the panting man's hand came out from under his coat. The Bounder stared at the man, stupefied, as he came to the edge of the raft, the deadly weapon in his hand.

"I guess you'll take me across in that boat, or—"

Crash!

Tom Redwing had a boathook in his hand. The threat was still on the panting man's lips when Redwing struck, and the revolver went flying through the air. It splashed into the water two or three yards from the raft, and disappeared.

"My hat!" gasped the Bounder. "Here, you men, collar him! Get hold of him!"

He leaped out of the skiff. Redwing

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Man Who Fleed!

"BEASTS!"

Billy Bunter made that remark.

Bunter was waiting; and he had been waiting some time. Standing by the school raft, on the bank of the shining Sark, Bunter blinked through his big spectacles in the direction of the school—and blinked in vain. Billy Bunter was waiting and watching for Harry Wharton & Co.; but the Famous



after him the next moment. A dozen Greyfriars fellows crowded up. Who the man was, what he was, was a mystery; but that it was the police he was fleeing from, nobody doubted now, and the Greyfriars fellows were quite ready to take him in hand.

The man sprang back, his teeth gritting. Three or four pairs of hands were almost upon him when he leaped away, and ran desperately up the path from the river. Billy Bunter was directly in his way, staring at him with eyes wide open behind his big spectacles. There was a roar from Bunter as the fugitive crashed into him.

"I guess you'll take me across in that boat, or——" The American broke off suddenly as Redwing struck with the boathook and sent the revolver flying through the air.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Gone!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry.  
 "What the thump——" gasped Harry Wharton.  
 "Look out!" yelled Nugent.  
 "Great pip!"  
 "My only hat!"

The fellows by the roadside were watching Coker, most of them laughing. They were taken quite by surprise when a running man came hurtling out of the path under the trees into the road,

"Why—what—who—— Yooohoop!" spluttered Coker. "What the thump—who the dickens—how the dooce—— Yooohoop!"

Coker sat up and stared. Chug-chug-chug! Up the road towards Courtfield Common went the motor-bike, with the horn-rimmed man sitting in the saddle. Coker stared after it like a man in a dream. Coker seemed scarcely able to believe his eyes; indeed, he hardly could believe them. Under his very nose a stranger had hooked his jigger away from him, and was fleeing on it—letting it out with a roar.



"Yaroooh!" The fat junior spun over and sprawled. He sprawled and roared, and the desperato man, leaping over him, ran on, panting.

"After him!" shouted the Bounder.  
 "Collar him!"  
 "Yaroooh! I say, you fellows— Whoooop!" yelled Billy Bunter. "I say, you beasta, don't tread on a chap! Yarooooooop!"

Bunter was considerably trodden on as the excited crowd rushed in pursuit of the horn-rimmed man. Heedless of Bunter, the Greyfriars fellows tore on up the path from the river to the road. Ahead of them the fugitive was running desperately, and ahead of the fugitive was a sound of chug-chugging from Coker's motor-bike that had just got into action.

bursting through the crowd like a battering-ram. Bob Cherry was knocked over. Frank Nugent staggered in one direction, Hurree Janset Ram Singh in another. Other fellows jumped out of the way, and there was a roar of indignant surprise and protest.

The man in the horn-rimmed glasses did not heed it. At a desperate rush, he made straight for Coker. Horace Coker was running the motor-bike along, and was about to swing his leg over it. But Coker's leg never swung over that bike.

A sudden grasp was laid on the back of Coker's neck, and he was torn away from the bike.

"Urrrrrrgggh!" gurgled the astonished Coker, as he was strewn along the road.

The panting man's grasp was on the bike the same second. He leaped on it as Coker sprawled.

Coker scrambled up, spluttering wildly.

"Stop!" shrieked Coker. "That's my bike! Stop, thief! My hat! I'll smash you! Stop, thief! Oh crikey!"

The Fifth-Former started at a frantic run in pursuit. Chug-chug-chug! echoed back from the motor-bike. Coker ran at a frantic speed; but it was not much use to enter into a race with a motor-bike. Coker's bike, and the man in the saddle, vanished in a cloud of dust in the distance, Coker still pounding and yelling in pursuit.

"My only Aunt Sempronia!" gasped Bob Cherry, staring after Coker. "What—what—who—who—— Oh, my hat!"

"What a neck!" stuttered Nugent. "Bagging Coker's bike right under Coker's silly nose."



"The neckfulness is terrific!" gasped Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

The Bounder ran out into the road, a crowd of fellows at his heels.

"Has he got away?" he gasped.

"He's bagged Coker's stink-bike, and bunked on it!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Who is he? Were you after him?"

"Yes, rather!" The Bounder stared along the road. The motor-bike and its rider vanished in the distance, Horace Coker still plugging frantically along far behind. "My hat!"

"But who—what—" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Who is that esteemed motor-thief?"

"Goodness knows!" said Smithy. "I suppose the police are after him, whoever he is; he was in a mighty hurry to get away. He wanted us to take him across the river in our boat, and pulled a revolver—"

"Oh, great Scott!"

"Only Reddy whipped it out of his paw with a boathook! Just like Coker to let him get hold of the bike."

"Well, Coker was rather taken by surprise," said Harry. "It all happened in a second. But if the police are after him, where are they?"

"He came up the river from Friardale—they must be coming that way."

There was a rush down to the river. But if the police were after the horn-rimmed man, they had not put in an appearance. There was nobody to be seen on the towpath.

"Well, this beats it!" said Smithy.

"There seems to have been nobody after him—but he looked like a man running for his life. If he came through Friardale Wood, he may have dodged them there; but—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Blessed if I can make it out," said Harry Wharton. "Looks to me like some giddy lunatic."

"I say, you fellows, I've been waiting for you—"

"No good going after him," said Johnny Bull. "He must be nearly at Courtfield by this time. But this ought to be reported."

"I think I'd better cut in and tell Quelch," said Harry Wharton. "He can phone the police station. If he goes through Courtfield they may get him, and get Coker's bike back."

"I say, what about the picnic?" howled Billy Bunter, as the captain of the Remove turned away. "I say, Wharton—"

But the fat Owl was unheeded. Four members of the Co. took the boat down to the water, while Harry Wharton hurried back to the school. Whoever and whatever the horn-rimmed man was, it was obvious that the sooner he was reported to the police, the better. That he was some law-breaker fleeing from justice seemed fairly certain; and, at all events, he was a motor-thief, in possession of Horace Coker's jigger. Wharton lost no time in getting to the House, and to Mr. Quelch's study.

Meanwhile, his comrades waited in the boat by the raft. Smithy and Redwing had already pulled away in their skiff. Other fellows stood in groups, discussing the startling episode. Billy Bunter, however, was not interested in the horn-rimmed man. Bunter was interested in the picnic on Popper's Island. Bunter rolled down to the boat in which the Co. sat waiting, and rolled into it—a proceeding that was regarded with stares by the occupants of the boat.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Want anything, Bunter?" inquired Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Roll away, fatty!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"The esteemed and ridiculous Bunter is superfluous!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"I'm going to steer for you, you fellows!" explained Bunter.

"But we don't want to run down all the other craft on the river," said Nugent, shaking his head.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"How did that fat villain know we were going on a picnic?" asked Bob.

"I didn't know anything about it, old chap," said Bunter. "I never saw you packing the basket in the study—and never heard you say you were going to Popper's Island. I—I just thought I'd like to steer for you, you know, and—and save you trouble. Besides, I knew you'd like my company."

"Oh, my hat! What on earth put that idea into your head?"

"He, he, he!" Billy Bunter decided to take that remark as a joke. "I say, you fellows, Wharton's wasting time. Look here, what about going without him?"

"Wha-a-t?"

"After all, Wharton's rather a wet blanket," said Bunter. "We don't want to waste time hanging about. You don't really want Wharton—you've got me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, there's jolly old Coker!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "He looks cross!"

"The crossfulness is terrific," grinned Hurree Singh.

Through an opening of the trees the burly form of Horace Coker was sighted, tramping back along the road. Coker had apparently made the discovery that he could not catch the motor-thief on foot. Coker looked cross—there was no doubt about that. He was dusty, and perspiring, and crimson with exertion; and like the Alpine gentleman in the poem, his brow was set, his eye beneath flashed like a falchion from its sheath.

Really, it was hard luck on Coker. After long trouble with that motor-bike he had got it to go! Now it had gone! Coker was anxious to get hold of his bike again. He was still more anxious to get hold of the bike-thief. But both were gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream. Coker of the Fifth tramped in at the school gates with feelings that could not have been expressed in any known language.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Sat. On!

"SCANDALOUS!" said Mr. Prout. "Oh, quite!" remarked Mr. Quelch.

"An unmitigated scoundrel!" said the master of the Fifth. "An absolutely unscrupulous villain, Quelch!"

"Ah!" said the Remove master. "Quite!"

"A hundred pounds!" continued Prout in almost a hollow voice.

"I sympathise, my dear fellow!" said Mr. Quelch. His glance lingered on the pile of papers on his study table, and he coughed.

The cough was lost on Prout. Mr. Prout had dropped into the Remove master's study to talk, and he was talking. Quelch had that heap of papers to correct for his Form that afternoon. He

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could not help wishing that Prout had dropped into Hacker's or Capper's study instead. But no doubt those members of the staff were going to have their turn when Prout had finished with the Remove master.

Of course, Quelch sympathised. A hundred pounds was a large sum for a Form master to lose, and Prout had, apparently, lost it. Still, Mr. Quelch could not help thinking that Prout ought to have had more sense. A gentleman of Prout's mature years ought really to have taken more care of his cash. If Prout heeded circulars sent out by share-pushing firms in the City, and placed his cash in the hands of sharpers, what could he expect? Really, Prout had asked for it.

Still, it was hard on Prout. Quelch felt that it would be only kind to let him blow off steam, if that was any comfort to him. Apparently it was! Prout liked the sound of his own voice.

"Simply scandalous!" resumed Prout. "What are the police doing? Allowing American share-pushers to come into the country and fleece the public. They should be kept out, sir! A gang of rascally foreigners—"

"Quite!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I have consulted my solicitor," said Prout. "He tells me that I have no remedy, as I bought the shares. And the shares, sir, are absolutely worthless—hardly worth the paper they are printed on, sir. Quelch, if I should ever meet this rascal, this scoundrel, this—this dastard, Elias Poindexter, I would horse-whip him, sir. I would take the law into my own hands, sir, and horse-whip the scoundrel."

"No doubt he would deserve it, sir!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I am landed," said Prout, "with a bundle of shares worth absolutely nothing, which cost me, sir, a hundred pounds. Doubtless I am only one of this wretch's many dupes—one of thousands. Yet his circulars, sir, were so extremely plausible, that I cannot blame myself for being taken in."

"H'm!" said Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Prout clenched his plump hands. "I should like," he said, "I should dearly like to meet this man Poindexter. I am not so young as I was, sir; but I should not hesitate to chastise him as he deserves. I should not hesitate, for one moment, sir."

The door of Mr. Quelch's study was half-open. In the aperture, a Remove junior appeared. Harry Wharton had arrived at his Form master's study; while Mr. Prout was there, in the full flow of eloquence. Wharton paused for Mr. Prout to come to a stop.

Mr. Quelch glanced at the junior, and was about to speak, when Prout restarted after the interval; a very short interval.

"That is his name, sir—Elias J. Poindexter—though it is probably only one of many names. A scoundrelly share-pusher—a rascally bucket-shop keeper! An alien who ought never, sir, to have been admitted to the country! He has now disappeared, sir. I learn that he disappeared from his office some days ago. No doubt he has gone with his pockets well lined. Is it not scandalous, sir? I ask you, Mr. Quelch, whether it is not scandalous?"

"Quite," said the Remove master. "You may come in, Wharton."

Harry Wharton was careful not to smile as he entered the study. He guessed that his Form master welcomed his arrival, as a relief from Mr. Prout's eloquence.

The Fifth Form master glanced round at Wharton, and grunted. He did not

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Lady: "Go away, or I'll call a policeman."

Pedlar: "'Ere you are, lady, p'leace whistles sixpence each!"

Set to work and win a prize to-day, chum!

like the interruption. But he was interrupted; and he gave Quelch a nod, and rolled out of the study, no doubt to bestow his further eloquence on Capper, or Hacker, or Twigg; and to give them, at great length, his opinion of that iniquitous transatlantic share-pusher, Elias J. Poindexter.

"What is it, Wharton?" asked Mr. Quelch, breathing more freely. He was sorry for Prout; but he could not help feeling that it was time that the other members of the staff had their turn.

"I think I ought to tell you, sir, of something that has just happened," said the captain of the Remove. And he gave a succinct account of the strange occurrence by the Sark.

The Remove master listened in astonishment.

"Upon my word!" he exclaimed, when the junior had finished. "This is very extraordinary, Wharton! You say the man, whoever he was, threatened Vernon-Smith with a deadly weapon."

"So Smithy told me, sir; and I saw him collar Coker's motor-bike," said Harry. "He cleared off towards Courtfield. We thought the police must be after him; but we saw nothing of them. I thought I had better tell you, sir—"

"Quite so, Wharton!" Mr. Quelch rose from the table. "I will telephone at once to Inspector Grimes, at Courtfield; the man may be stopped, if he passes through the town. Give me the best description you can of the man."

"A rather fat man, sir, with a bald forehead, and horn-rimmed glasses," said Harry. "He was dressed in ordinary lounge clothes, with a Homburg hat. Smithy told me that he spoke like an American."

"That should be sufficient for the police," said Mr. Quelch, and he took up the receiver and rang up Courtfield Police Station. Harry Wharton left the study and hurried out of the House again. As he went down to the gates he passed Coker of the Fifth coming in. Coker gave him a thunderous look.

"He got away, Coker?" asked Harry.

"You young ass! Did you think I could catch him on foot?" snorted Coker.

"I've told Quelch, and he's rung up the police station. They may get him in Courtfield," said Wharton. "The police will be looking for him, anyway."

"Fat lot of good that will be!" grunted Coker ungratefully. "I'm going to borrow Blundell's motor-bike, and get after him myself. And when I get hold of him—" Coker hurried into the House, without detailing what was going to happen to the motor-thief when he got hold of him. Evidently it was going to be something drastic.

Harry Wharton walked down to the river. The expedition to Popper's Island had been considerably delayed by the exciting happenings.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" boomed Bob Cherry. "Hop in!"

"Yes, jump in, for goodness' sake!" said Billy Bunter peevishly, as Wharton came down to the boat. "We've been waiting for you, Wharton. I can tell you, I shouldn't have waited much longer."

"No need for you to wait at all, old fat bean," said the captain of the Remove, as he stepped into the boat.

"What the thump are you doing here?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—" Billy Bunter hastily seized a boat-hook and shoved off. The boat rocked away from the raft. The Owl of the Remove was anxious to get going, and save argument.

"Oh, you ass!" gasped Wharton, staggering as the boat suddenly rocked. "You silly chump—oh, my hat!"

Crash! Perhaps it was fortunate for Wharton, as he pitched over in the boat, that he fell on Billy Bunter. Bunter did not seem to regard it as fortunate. His yell rang far and wide along the Sark.

"Ow! Wow! Gerroff! You silly ass! Yoooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Wow! Gerroff!" shrieked Bunter. "Yooop! Gerroff my tummy, you silly ass! Whooooop!"

Harry Wharton sat up—on Bunter's waistcoat. The boat rocked wildly, and a wash of water came over the gunwale. There was a spluttering howl from Billy Bunter.

"Grooogh! Ooooooch! I'm wet! Woooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give way, you men!" said Wharton. "I'll sit here for a bit—"

"Yaroooooh!"

"The sitfulness on the esteemed Bunter is the proper caper!" chuckled Hurreo Janset Ram Singh.

"Yooooooogggh!"

"Keep quiet, Bunter! I can't sit on you if you keep on wriggling!"

"Whooooohoop! Gerroff! You're sq-sq-squashing me!" gurgled Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, draggimoff! Yoooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The boat pulled out into the shining Sark. Bunter wriggled and roared.

"Ow! Boast! Gerroff! I jolly well won't come with you now! Boast! I say, you fellows—Grooogh!"

Harry Wharton chuckled, and detached himself from Bunter's waistcoat. The fat junior scrambled up, gurgling for breath. He sat in the stern, and glared at the grinning five.

"Ow! You rotters, I've a jolly good mind not to come with you after all. I've a jolly good mind to turn you down! Grooogh!"

"Good," said Wharton. "Pull in, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,207.



you men—Bunter wants to step ashore—”

“Oh, really, Wharton! I—I’m coming—I wouldn’t turn my old pals down on the last half-holiday of the term. It’s all right, old chap—I’m coming.”

And Bunter came.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The Man on the Island!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. pulled up the sunny river, in cheery spirits. Popper’s Island lay at a good distance from Greyfriars, opposite the park pulings of Popper Court, where they bordered the towpath. The island was out of school bounds; but that was a little circumstance that the chums of the Remove had dismissed from consideration. Sir Hilton Popper, of Popper Court, was away in town, and it was a case of the mice playing while the cat was away.

According to the view of the Greyfriars fellows, there were public rights on that island in the river. According to the lord of Popper Court, there were no rights but his lordly own. The Head had placed the island out of bounds, to avoid disputes; but disputes occasionally cropped up all the same. The little wooded island was a choice spot for a picnic. It was adorned with a board which announced, in large letters, that trespassers would be prosecuted, and Bob Cherry cheerfully suggested that that board would come in useful for a camp-fire.

But as the boat drew nearer to the island, the chums of the Remove kept a wary eye open along the banks. Sir Hilton was very particular about his island—if it was his—and if a keeper was in the offing, it was necessary to give the island a miss. But the towing-path was deserted, and no man in velveteens was to be seen in the Popper Court woods. Bob Cherry stood up and scanned the bank, and nodded with satisfaction.

“All serene,” he said.

“The serenity is terrific,” remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. “But let us lose no time, my esteemed chums. A stitch in time saves ninepence, as the preposterous English proverb says.”

The boat pulled in to the island. Now that they were on the spot it was only judicious to get out of sight from the bank as soon as possible. The boat slid under thick branches, bright with the green of spring, into a tiny creek, where there was just room to moor it out of sight from the bank. Harry Wharton made fast the painter and jumped ashore, and his comrades followed him.

“Hand out that basket, fatty!” said Bob.

“I say, you fellows—”

“Shut up, old bean, and hand out the basket.”

“I say, you fellows, hadn’t you better make sure there isn’t a keeper on the island?” asked Billy Bunter. “You can’t be too careful.”

“Rot!” said Bob. “The keepers never come across here. The Popper Court boathouse is half a mile up the river. They never look at the jolly old island when old Popper’s away.”

“Still, you can’t be too careful!” said Bunter. “We don’t want to be reported to the Head for trespassing. Look here, you fellows, take a look over the island, and I’ll wait here and—mind the basket—I mean the boat.”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

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“Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I tell you you can’t be too careful, you fellows—”

“We’re going to be jolly careful—of that basket!” chuckled Bob Cherry. “It’s just barely possible that there might be nothing left in it if you minded it. Hand it out, you fat villain! You can mind the boat.”

“Oh, really, Cherry!”

Bob Cherry reached over and lifted the picnic-basket out of the boat.

“Now you can stay there and mind the boat, old fat man,” he said.

“Yah!”

Billy Bunter seemed to have no desire to mind the boat now that it no longer contained the picnic-basket. He scrambled out after the Famous Five.

The chums of the Remove pushed through thickets and brambles towards the centre of the island, where there was a clear space under the branches of an ancient oak. It was almost the only clear spot on the little island, the rest being thickly overgrown.

“Hold on!” exclaimed Harry Wharton suddenly.

“What—” began Nugent.

“Hark!”

Wharton stopped and held up his hand. As the party halted the rustling they had made in the thickets ceased. But from farther on came a sound of rustling, evidently caused by someone pushing hastily through the clinging brambles.

“Oh, my hat!” murmured Bob. “Somebody’s here!”

“We’ve run into one of old Popper’s keepers, after all!” breathed Nugent. “What rotten luck!”

The chums of the Remove looked at one another rather blankly. They had not expected for a moment to find anyone on Popper’s Island.

The place was always deserted; seldom or never visited even by one of the Popper Court keepers. Sir Hilton Popper was fiercely determined to keep trespassers off it; rather in the manner of the dog in the manger, for he hardly ever set his own lordly foot there. As the threat of prosecution kept members of the public away, the island was generally as solitary as Robinson Crusoe’s lonely abode. But it was clear that someone was there now; the rustling in the bushes ahead could mean nothing else.

“Rotten!” grunted Johnny Bull.

“The rottenness is terrific.”

There was an alarmed squeak from Billy Bunter.

“I say, you fellows, let’s get off! I say, we can have the picnic somewhere else! I say—”

“Shut up, Bunter!”

“Look here, I’m jolly well not going to get into a row with the Head to please you!” hooted Bunter. “I’m jolly well going!”

“Go, then, you fat ass,” growled Johnny Bull—and the sooner the better!

“Beast! Gimme the basket—”

“Kick him, somebody!”

“Yaroooooh!”

“Look here, you men, that can’t be a keeper!” said Harry. “If it was a keeper he would pounce on us. Whoever it is, is backing away. He’s trying to keep out of sight.”

“What-ho!” exclaimed Bob Cherry, in great relief. “Only some jolly old picnicker like ourselves very likely.”

“Might be a Greyfriars man,” said Nugent. “Anyhow, it can’t be a keeper. A keeper wouldn’t be backing out of sight.”

“Come on!” said Harry.

The rustling in the thickets was dying away towards the middle of the island.

It was obvious that the unseen man, whoever he was, was retreating before the juniors. That—on a moment’s reflection—was proof enough that he was not one of Sir Hilton Popper’s keepers.

“I say, you fellows, it’s all right,” said Bunter. “Don’t get frightened about nothing—”

“Why, you fat sweep—”

“Oh, really, Cherry—”

“Come on!” said Bob.

And the juniors pushed on through the clinging thickets. Again they heard the rustling ahead of them as the unseen man on the island retreated farther.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

“If it’s some picnicking johnny, he may think we are keepers and after him,” he said. “Can’t see why he should be scooting off otherwise. Let’s give him a hail. Ha’lo, hallo, hallo!”

Bob Cherry’s powerful voice rang through the wooded island and echoed far out over the Sark.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo!” shouted Bob again. “It’s all serene, whoever you are; we’re not keepers! You can show up!”

The rustling ceased; but there came no reply to Bob’s shout. The juniors listened, but silence reigned on the little island after the echo of Bob’s powerful voice had died away.

“Who the dickens can it be?” exclaimed Wharton, puzzled. “Anyhow, we shall soon see. Here we are!”

The chums of the Remove came out into the open space round the tall oak-tree in the centre of the island. There they expected to see the unknown who had been retreating before them through the bushes. But the clearing was empty; there was no sign of him.

“Well, my hat!” ejaculated Bob Cherry, staring round him. “He’s not here! Who the thump is he? And what’s his game?”

“Goodness knows!” said Wharton, looking about him in perplexity. “Might be some tramp. Still, I don’t see why he shouldn’t show up. He must be hiding somewhere.”

“But what the jolly old dickens—” said Johnny Bull blankly.

“I say, you fellows, I think—”

“You think you know where he is, fatty?”

“Nunno! I think we’d better have the picnic, and never mind him—”

“Fathead!”

“My esteemed and ludicrous chums, I—” began Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

“Can you see him, Inky?”

“The answer is in the ridiculous negative. But I rememberfully recall that the esteemed oak is hollow, like the preposterous napper of the ludicrous Bunter—”

“Oh, really, Inky—”

“Oh!” exclaimed Bob, and he ran round the broad, massive trunk of the oak.

Massive as it looked on the side the juniors had approached, it was split on the other side, a great hollow extending almost through the trunk. There was more than room for a skulking man to hide in the hollow oak and the next moment a yell from Bob announced that he had made a discovery.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!”

“In the hollow oak!” exclaimed Wharton.

“Yes, rather!”

The juniors ran to the spot. Why the man on the island should dodge away from them through the bushes and squeeze into the hollow trunk of the oak to escape discovery was a mystery; and they were naturally curious to know what that mystery meant.

A rather ample form seemed to be



squeezed in the space in the hollowed trunk, and Bob Cherry gave it a playful dig with the toe of his boot.

"Show up, old bean!" chuckled Bob. "We've jolly well found you! What are you playing hide-and-seek for?"

"Aw, snakes!" gasped a nasal voice. A head, with a rather crushed Homburg hat on it, a bald forehead gleaming under the hat, was projected from the hollow oak, and a fat and flabby face with a hawkish nose, adorned by a large pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, stared with startled, blinking eyes at the Greyfriars fellows. There was a shout of astonished recognition from the

clothes were damp. They had seen no sign of any boat but their own on the island, and they wondered whether the man had swum across from the tow-path.

They gathered together, with rather grim looks. Who the man was, what his game was they could not imagine, but he had seized Coker's motor-bike; though, apparently, he had soon abandoned it. Certainly he was liable to be run in as a motor-thief. And his attempt to hide from sight on the island confirmed their suspicions that he was a law-breaker of some sort.

But he did not look dangerous. He

harder. Apparently he did not recognise the juniors as the fellows who had been standing round Coker when he seized on the bike. Probably, he had not even glanced at them then.

"I don't get you," he answered. "We saw you bag that motor-bike," said Harry. "The fellow you bumped over belongs to our school. The Courtfield police are looking for you and that bike. What have you done with it?"

"I get you," assented the horn-rimmed man. "Say, did you calculate I was stealing that machine? Forget it!"

"What else did you expect us to calculate?" asked Bob.

"Waal, I guess it looked like it," said the fat man. "But I was in a durned hurry, and I kinder borrowed it. I left it standing by a tree, safe and



"Urrrrgggh!" gurgled the astonished Coker, as he was strewn along the road. The next moment the panting man had leapt into the saddle of the motor-bike and was speeding up the road towards Courtfield.

Famous Five as they stared at the flabby face, the beaky nose, and the horn-rimmed spectacles.

"It's him!" gasped Bob Cherry breathlessly, and ungrammatically.

"Great Scott!"  
"That merchant!"  
"The motor-thief!"  
"My only hat!"

It was the fugitive; the desperate man who had threatened Smithy with a revolver; the man who had hurled Coker of the Fifth over and seized on his motor-bike! And the chums of the Remove stared at him as if he had been a ghost.

### THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

#### The Hunted Man—and the Hunter!

"YOU!" gasped Harry Wharton. The flabby man emerged from the hollow of the oak. He was discovered now and further concealment was impossible. He panted for breath as he squeezed out. The juniors noticed that his

leaned on the trunk of the big oak, gasping for breath. Even as he gasped he seemed to be listening; and his narrow, sharp eyes behind the horn-rimmed glasses went to and fro like those of a watchful dog.

There was fear in his shifting eyes; fear in his keen, tense listening. The man was badly frightened, and the juniors could not help observing it.

"Say, you kinder scared me!" he stammered. "Say, I guess you're schoolboys, on your looks. What?"

"I kinder guess and calculate that we're sure something of the sort," answered Bob gravely. "I reckon it's a cinch!"

The man stared at him, and the other fellows grinned. It was evident that he was an American; and Bob was playfully answering him in his own language. The juniors had heard a good deal of the American language from Fisher T. Fish of the Remove.

"And what have you done with Coker's bike?" demanded Wharton. The man started and looked at him

sound after a couple of miles; I guess the owner will get it back all right. I reckon you can see I ain't got it about me."

"I say, you fellows—"  
"Shut up, Bunter!"  
"But what about the picnic?"

"Go and eat coko! Look here, my man," said Harry Wharton, "I was thinking that we'd better collar you and walk you off to the police station. But if you didn't really steal the bike and—"

"I'm telling you, I left it on the road, standing agin a tree. I guess I had to borrow it, with that hoodlum after me."

"That—that what?"  
"I'm telling you, there's a guy with a gun after me!" panted the horn-rimmed man. "I guess I got to give him a wide berth."

"Oh, my hat! We thought the police were after you!" exclaimed Bob.

"I guess the police wouldn't make me run. I guess I'd rather have the



police after me, than that hoodlum. Say, you seen him?"

The narrow eyes puckered with anxiety behind the spectacles.

The Famous Five regarded the man with increasing astonishment. If his statement was to be believed, he was fleeing, not from the police, but from some private vengeance. That statement was borne out by the fact that they had seen nothing of the police in pursuit. It was borne out, too, by his looks, for the fear in his face, in his shifty eyes, seemed to hint that he was in dread of something more dangerous than a constable's hand on his shoulder.

"You seen him?" he repeated.

"Him—whom?" asked Wharton blankly.

"A man with black hair and a jaw like a vice! He was in a car—a little two-seater—when I spotted him, and got away through the wood to the river. I guess that's why I chucked the motor-bike; he'd have run me down in the car if he'd seen me on the road. And I reckon he'd have seen me. Say, you seen that hoodlum?"

The juniors shook their heads.

"We've seen nobody answering that description," said Harry. "Mean to say you were running away from him when you bagged that bike?"

"Sure! I reckoned he was at my heels!" panted the horn-rimmed man. "He saw me from the car—I know that! I reckoned he'd follow me through the wood to the river. If he's lost the track—" he broke off and mopped his bald brow with a damp handkerchief.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob with a whistle.

It dawned on the juniors now that it was not from the law but from a lawless enemy that the fat man had been fleeing. Certainly his own methods had been lawless enough, but there was, perhaps, some excuse for that if he was in fear of his life. But this new discovery only made the whole affair more strange and surprising. That a man could be fleeing for his life from a "guy with a gun" in that quiet and peaceful English countryside was utterly amazing.

"You mean to say that a man is after you to shoot you?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Yep!"

"Then why the thump don't you go straight to the nearest police station?" exclaimed Nugent.

"I guess that wouldn't help a whole lot! I guess that guy would put a bullet through me if I was sitting on the chief commissioner's desk at Scotland Yard!" groaned the horn-rimmed man. "I got to give him a miss. I got to blind my trail and throw him off!"

"Say, you sure you ain't seen him?"

"We've not seen him."

"I reckoned it was him when I heard you coming on this pesky island," groaned the horn-rimmed man. "I reckoned he'd run me down, though I left that motor-bike on the road and cut across this way, and swam out to this pesky place. I guessed I'd lie doggo here till dark and then make a get-away. I sure reckoned it was him when I heard you."

The juniors understood now why the wretched man had dodged them through the bushes and crammed his fat form into the hollow oak.

They did not doubt his statements now; the haunting fear in his face showed that he was telling the truth. At the same time, they found it difficult to feel any compassion for him. The shifty eyes, the lines of cunning

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in the flabby face did not escape their attention; and it was difficult, too, to feel anything but contempt for a man who gave way so utterly to fear.

If the man was not, as they had at first supposed, a law breaker, they had little doubt that he was a rogue of some sort; indeed, roguery and cunning were imprinted in his face.

They could not help thinking that the man who was hunting him might have some good reason for his enmity, though that, of course, was no excuse for intended crime. But they found it hard to believe that this wretched man's life really was in danger.

But, whether his danger was real or not, there was no doubt that his terror was very real. Obviously, he had swum out to the island in his clothes, and had been soaked to the skin, though the hot sunshine had almost dried him since.

And though he was relieved by the schoolboys' assurance that they had seen nothing of his pursuer, his manner was still that of a hunted animal, watching and listening; starting at the fall of a leaf, or the murmur of the wind in the oak boughs above.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry at last. "The best thing you can do, old bean, is to get to the police station at Courtfield. We'll ferry you across to the towpath, if you like."

"Not with him hanging about." The man shivered. "I guess I ain't hitting the bank till dark." He gave a groan. "I tell you, that man is a bloodhound. I got a safe hide-out, a long way from here, and I came round through Kent to throw him off the track. But he got after me; and, I tell you, if I hadn't jumped lively when I saw him in the car this afternoon he'd have shot me up. I'm telling you!"

"But that's all rot!" said Harry Wharton. "Things like that don't happen on this side of the Atlantic."

"Aw, if I was only back in New York!" groaned the flabby man. "I guess I got friends there that would shoot up that guy before he could say 'no sugar in mine!' But he'll sure get me before I hit a steamer."

"Rot!" said Bob. "The police would protect you. People aren't allowed to blaze away with guns in this country."

"Look here!" The man moved his damp Homburg hat and showed a half-healed scar along the side of his head. "I guess that one went close! I'm telling you, that happened in my office in London."

"Oh, my hat!"

The juniors stared at the mark, which was only too clearly that of a bullet that had barely missed.

"Say, you," went on the fat man, replacing the hat, "you want to keep it dark that you seen me here. Anybody asks you, you don't let on that you seen me. Once it's dark, I guess I'll get clear, and when I get to that hide-out that durned hoodlum won't find me. I guess it's a good step from here, but I'll make the grade, once I drop him off the trail. You ain't saying anything about seeing me here?"

"Not to the man who's looking for you, certainly!" said Harry. "That is, if we fall in with him—which isn't likely."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"Look here, you beast, I can tell you I'm jolly hungry—"

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I think we'd better clear off this island, you fellows," said Wharton

abruptly. "We can picnic somewhere else—"

"Yes, rather!" agreed Nugent.

"The ratherfulness is terrific," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The esteemed company of this worthy and benighted fellow is not gratefully comforting, my ridiculous chums."

The fat man looked relieved as he heard them. Evidently he desired to be left alone on Popper's Island, perhaps fearing that the presence of a crowd of schoolboys there might draw attention.

"Say, you ain't letting on, if you see that guy?" he asked anxiously.

"You can rely on that," said Harry. "But you'd act more sensibly if you let us ferry you to the bank and went to the police."

"I guess not!"

Wharton looked at him sharply.

"According to what you say, the man you speak of has attempted your life. He can be arrested for that, if it's true."

"All you have to do is to give information to the police," said Johnny Bull. "They'll collar the man, fast enough, and keep him out of mischief."

"I guess I know my own business best," said the horn-rimmed man. "You guys light out, and don't you let on if you see that hoodlum."

"Come on, you fellows!" said Harry.

And the juniors turned away, Billy Bunter eyeing the picnic-basket almost wolfishly.

At the same moment there came a splash from the river—the splash of an oar. The flabby man started convulsively and gave a cry. He caught Harry Wharton's arm with a grasp so convulsive that the junior uttered a sharp exclamation.

"He's coming!" he breathed. "I'm a dead man!"

"Oh, pull yourself together!" snapped Wharton, shaking off the grasping hand. "Dozens of boats pass this island—"

"Look out and see if it's him!" breathed the fugitive. "A guy with black hair and a square jaw. Look and see!"

"Oh, all right!"

"Don't let him see you—don't let him see there's anybody on the island—" The man's voice broke off in a quaver of dread. "He's stopped. He knows. I'm a dead man!"

The wretched man slumped helplessly against the oak. The sound of oars had ceased, close under the overhanging thickets of the island's edge.

Harry Wharton pressed through the bushes and looked out on the sunny river. A boat was nosing into the rushes, and a man standing up in it was staring keenly at the island.

Wharton felt his heart beat as he watched him. The man was young—scarce thirty—with a handsome, well-featured face, black hair, and a square jaw—a jaw that told of determination. It was a face that Wharton would have liked, but for the expression on it—an expression of almost savage grimness. As he looked at the black-haired man—evidently the pursuer of whom the American was in fear—he saw him tie the painter to a low bough. The next moment he had jumped ashore.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Hand to Hand!

HARRY WHARTON stepped quietly back and joined his chums under the branches of the oak. They looked at him with mute inquiry, and he nodded. The man  
(Continued on page 12.)



# "Half-Time" Gossip!



Stuck over any Soccer problems, chums? Then write to "Old Ref" for his expert opinion. He's at the disposal of all MAGNET footer enthusiasts.

**D**URING this season the Soccer International tournament has indeed fallen flat. Nobody need be surprised that such is the case, for it was obvious when the Football League clubs of England decided they would not release their players for Saturday International games that the contests would lose much of their significance.

In their games against Ireland and Wales, England had things pretty much their own way, and it was fully expected that the same remark would apply to the Scotland v. England game on the programme for March 28th. Possibly by the time these notes reach some of my readers they will know whether the anticipations of a comparatively easy win for England have proved correct, for the result of the match may be in your possession. It is not in my possession at the time of writing. But I shall be surprised if England have not won at Hampden Park.

My thoughts were set running on these lines by two or three letters I have received from Scottish readers during recent days, asking me whether I can account for the decline in the quality of Scottish football. It must be emphasized that Scotland's chances of beating England were lessened by the fact that they could not call upon Scottish-born players with English clubs.

*Even so, however, Scottish football has gone back, and I know quite a lot of officials connected with clubs over the Border who are worried about the future of the game in the country which, at one time, had the reputation for producing the best.*

**A**S I see it the Scots made a mistake in regard to football. They imagined they could have their cake and the ha'penny, too, to use a well-worn metaphor. During the last few years many of the best Scottish players have been transferred to English clubs, and the stars have not been found in Scotland to take their places. How much better would be the Scottish forward line, for instance, if they could have those two famous Alocs in it—James, of Arsenal, and Jackson, of Chelsea?

In every sport it is the best players who act as the inspiration. The young players coming along set their standards by the best and try to copy the best. If the best are only moderate, then the general tendency will be towards moderation. I admit that the foregoing sounds a bit deep, but I hope it won't be too deep for you to follow.

Perhaps I can make it easier to follow with an illustration. If nobody had ever driven a motor-car at more than a hundred miles an hour, that speed would have been considered quite good. But first one motor-car driver, and then another, set up a new record, and to-day there are people with their minds set on beating Sir Malcolm Campbell's record. In due course it will be broken, too.

**I**T is the ambition of every footballer to be better than the best. If the best which he sees or knows about is an indifferent standard, then he doesn't strive so hard; has not so far to go.

*It is only when he comes up against wonder-players that he realises his weaknesses, and is thereby inspired to try to improve.*

English football is all the better for the importation of Scottish players, and Scottish football is all the poorer. That, in my view, is all there is to it. In other words, it would have been a very good thing for Scottish football if Scottish clubs had kept their players at home.

One other query in regard to International matches has to be answered. The players in these International games—provided they are professionals, of course, receive six pounds each, plus a cap and a jersey. Several players I know, who have appeared in several International matches, exchange caps and jerseys with other players after the games are over.

**W**HY is there such a long time to wait between the English Cup Semi-Finals and the Final-tie? That is another question which reaches me. This season the interval between the Semi-Finals and Final-tie is longer than usual—a full six weeks. I do not know that there is any real reason for this increase, except the difficulty of arranging the dates of the Semi-Finals to suit all parties. I do know, though, that the authorities like to keep the Final-tie back as late as possible. They regard it as a sort of grand climax to the season.

Perhaps it was the idea of the authorities, too, that in compelling the players to wait for a few weeks between the Semi-Finals and the Final they would make it a test of nerves as well as of football skill. I happened to run into one of the players just after his team had got through the Semi-Final, and this is what he said to me:

*"I wish we could play the Final next Saturday. I don't like waiting so long."*

This player know, as we all know, that the period of waiting is an anxious one. The players can't keep the coming big game out of their minds. It affects their exhibitions in the League games, and they are worried as to whether they will be able to keep themselves thoroughly fit. It is a nerve-racking time, this period of waiting, for with everybody discussing the coming Final from every possible angle it is difficult, if not impossible, for the players concerned to carry out the very good advice which is given to them—forget about it for a while.

**M**ENTION of the Semi-Finals and Final reminds me that the Football Players' Union—the body which looks after the welfare of the players in general—have recently expressed the view that the financial reward to the footballers who do well in the Cup is not big enough. The winners of the Semi-Finals get four pounds each as bonus. The winners of the Final get eight pounds each as bonus. The Players' Union say that this is not enough—

*That it is a ridiculous proportion, seeing that as much as twenty-five thousand pounds may be the "gate" at the Cup Final only.*

I am all out for the player getting a fair return for services rendered, for we have to remember that to the "pro" football is a means of livelihood. I should be very sorry, indeed, however, if a change was made so that the players got a big cash payment for victory in the later stages of the Cup competition.

**I**LIKE to think of the sport side of Cup-winning. The players themselves think of that side of it, too; of the honour and glory of victory. When they have earned those gold medals they point to them with pride; they are mementoes of a wonderful occasion. It wouldn't be quite the same if the players said, after winning a Cup Final, "we have got fifty pounds in cash."

Again the eight pounds bonus which the players of the side get in a Cup Final is not usually the sum and substance of their reward. It is the customary thing for the officials of the successful club to apply to the F.A. for permission to make a present of some kind to their players.

*Last season, after Arsenal had won the Cup, the club had permission to give each man a present, and twenty-five pounds was spent on each player so that he should have some lasting memory of the day when he was on the winning side in a Final.*

There are some things more precious than money; the medals which are given to Cup winners are priceless.

"OLD REF."



## THE MAN FROM THE STATES I

(Continued from page 10.)

in the horn-rimmed glasses gave a low groan.

"You seen him?" he breathed.

"Yes," said Harry. "It's the man you've described."

"I'm a dead man!"

The words came in a husky whisper. The wretched man slumped down at the foot of the oak, overcome with terror. Wharton gave him a glance of contempt, but there was compassion mingled with his contempt. It was obvious now that the danger was real—terribly real—and that a desperate deed might be done on the little green island set in the midst of the shining Sark.

"We've got to chip in here, you men," said Harry, in a low voice. "We don't know the rights or wrongs of the affair, but—"

"It—it's the man!" muttered Nugent.

"Yes; a man with black hair and a square jaw, anyhow. If—if what this poor wretch says is true, he means—murder!"

The juniors breathed quickly. The wretched man slumped at the foot of the oak was evidently incapable of self-defence. It was impossible to abandon him to the man who was hunting him for his life. The same thought was in the minds of the Famous Five—to bar the other man off before he could catch sight of the man he sought.

Harry Wharton led the way and they pressed through the bushes towards the spot where the black-haired man had landed. He was standing on a little strip of grass under the trees. The island was small, and he was not a dozen yards from the oak. His quick, keen eyes flashed round at the rustling made by the juniors as they came through the thickets, and they saw his hand flash to a hip-pocket. But if he had thought of drawing a weapon he relinquished the idea at the sight of the schoolboys. He stared at them with a puzzled and curious look. Evidently they were not what he had expected to see.

"Who are you?" he rapped out sharply.

"Just going to ask you that, old bean," answered Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Didn't you see the board?"

"The—the board?"

"Yes. Trespassers will be prosecuted!" explained Bob. "You're a jolly old trespasser here. Liable to be prosecuted. Forty bob or a month!"

The young man stared at him and his face broke into a smile. It was rather a pleasant smile, and it made the handsome face look still more handsome. The juniors, looking at him, could hardly believe that the wretched fugitive's fears were well founded. It seemed impossible that that good-looking fellow, with his cheery smile, could really be hunting down a fellow-being with the terrible intention of taking his life. In spite of their uneasiness, they felt relieved.

"I am afraid I did not notice the board, my young friend," said the black-haired man, "and I do not think I should have taken much notice of it had I done so. I am looking for someone—a friend!" The glint that came into his eyes as he uttered that word was in startling contrast to the smile. "Perhaps you have seen him."

"The perhapsfulness is terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous friend," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

The young man stared at him and

smiled again. It was not uncommon for a smile to be evoked by the wonderful English that Hurree Singh had learned from Mook Mookerjee, the wisest moonshee in Bhanipur.

"What sort of a Johnny are you looking for?" asked Bob.

"A fat man, in horn-rimmed glasses, with a face like a fox, or a wolf," was the answer.

"Oh, my hat!"

"His name is Poindexter; if you've heard it—"

Harry Wharton started.

"Poindexter!" he exclaimed.

"I see you know the name," said the young man quietly. "Please tell me where you have seen him. I'm very anxious to find Mr. Poindexter."

Wharton's chums looked at him in surprise. The name was strange enough to them.

"I've never heard the name before," said Bob. "Have you heard it, Wharton?"

"I can see that the name is familiar to you, my young friend," said the black-haired man, his eyes keenly on Wharton's face.

"I heard it to-day for the first time," answered Harry. "Mr. Prout, a master of Greyfriars, was speaking about somebody named Poindexter when I went to my Form master's study. I think he said he was a swindler of some sort—a share-pusher—one of those rotters who get mugs to buy worthless shares in rotten companies and—"

"That's the man!" said the young man, with a nod. "Elias J. Poindexter, of Sharp Street, in the City. What do you know of him?"

"Only what I heard Prout saying to Mr. Quelch," answered Harry. "Prout said he wanted to horsewhip him."

The black-haired man smiled grimly. "Probably your Mr. Prout is one of his victims," he said. "I am another. I want very badly to find Mr. Poindexter. Tell me what you know of him."

Harry Wharton was silent. Until the name was mentioned he had forgotten Mr. Prout's booming in Quelch's study. But now, of course, he could have no doubt that the fat man in horn-rimmed glasses, crouching under the oak on Popper's Island, was the swindler of whom Prout had been speaking.

The black-haired man made a step forward. There was no trace of a smile on his face now. It was set hard. The jaw looked squarer than ever, and the keen eyes glinted like steel.

"You know something of the man," he said. "You know something more of him than the mention of his name at your school. You have been on the river this afternoon. He fled towards the Friardale road. I lost him in the wood. But you have seen him. I fancied that he might have obtained a boat. I am searching the river for him. Tell me what you know of him."

"Tell me, first, what you want with him," said Harry quietly.

"That is no business of yours. But I will tell you this: the man is a thief, a swindler. He has fled from his offices in the City, with his pockets full of money that does not belong to him. He is a foreigner, who came to this country to live by swindling, and he has lived by swindling for years. Now tell me where you have seen him."

"What right have you to ask?" said Harry. "You are not a detective."

"Never mind that. Answer me!"

There was a threatening note in the black-haired man's voice, and he came another step nearer to Wharton. The captain of the Remove faced him

calmly. His comrades drew closer to him. It looked as if trouble impended now, and the chums of the Remove were ready for it. There was a rustle in the bushes as Billy Bunter beat a retreat to the other side of the island. But no one heeded Bunter.

"Will you answer me, boy?"

The man's voice was almost a snarl.

"I will not answer you," said Wharton. "If what you say is true, it is a matter for the police to deal with."

"I am dealing with it. Tell me where you have seen the man."

"I will tell you nothing."

"Is the man on this island?"

"Find out!" answered Wharton coolly.

The young man clenched his hands hard. For a moment he looked as if he would spring at the captain of the Remove, and the Famous Five watched him grimly. But he controlled his rage.

"The rascal fled along the river," he muttered. "If he could get hold of a boat he would do so, to throw me off the track. I stopped at this island to search it for him. It is quite likely—" He broke off. "What are you school-boys doing here?"

"We came here to picnic," answered Bob cheerfully. "Only we're having a jolly old conversazione instead."

"I shall search the island. That was my intention when I stopped. After all, you can tell me nothing that I cannot see for myself."

The black-haired man made a movement to stride into the bushes. The Famous Five bunched in his way immediately.

"Stop!" said Harry Wharton quietly.

"Stand out of my way!" It was a savage shout. "I know that he is here now. Your action tells me as much. Stand aside!"

"The stopfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed friend," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Otherwise the collarfulness will be the next item on the absurd programme."

"He is here. I know now that he is here. Stand aside!"

"Not in your jolly old lifetime!" said Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat! Look out! Collar him!"

The black-haired man made an angry rush to break through the bunch of juniors in his path. As they grasped at him he struck out fiercely, and Bob Cherry staggered back. He gave a yell as he dropped in the grass, and Frank Nugent staggered across him.

But the other three juniors had their grip on the enraged man, and he was dragged over in his turn and bumped into the grass.

"Pin him!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"You bet!" panted Johnny Bull.

The black-haired man went down heavily. Wharton and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh fell with him, holding him fast. As they struggled on the ground, Bob and Nugent scrambled up and joined in again.

"Collar the brute!" panted Bob. "My hat! He's a jolly old wild-cat! Pin him down!"

"Let go!" The man's voice came in a husky gasp. "You young fools! You young scoundrels! Let me go!"

"No jolly fear!" gasped Bob.

The man struggled frantically. He was rather under than over medium size, but he was strong and wiry and muscular. The Famous Five had plenty to do to hold him down, heavy as the odds were on their side. He was hitting out furiously, evidently careless of the damage he did in his rage. Johnny Bull, as he caught a fierce jab with his nose, gave a gasp and promptly grabbed the man's thick, black hair with both





"Oh, you ass!" gasped Wharton, staggering as the boat suddenly rocked. Crash! The next moment he pitched backwards and his heel caught Bunter clean under the chin!

hands and thumped his head forcibly on the earth.

Bang, bang!

"Oh! Oh! Ooooh!" came in a gasp from the struggling man.

"Now chuck it, you silly ass, if you don't want some more!" snapped Johnny.

The man still struggled furiously, breathlessly.

But the Famous Five were too many for him. He struggled till he was spent, and then he lay exhausted, in the grasp of the breathless juniors.

"Got him!" growled Johnny Bull. He sat on the young man's heaving chest, grasped both his wrists, and dragged them together. Bob Cherry slipped a twisted handkerchief round them, and knotted it securely.

"All right now!" gasped Bob.

"The rightfulness is terrific!"

With his hands bound, pinned down by Johnny's weight on his chest, the black-haired man stared up at the juniors, his eyes burning with rage. And Harry Wharton & Co., winded by the fierce struggle, panted for breath.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### The Upper Hand!

"WHAT a go!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Oh crumbs!" said Frank Nugent, dabbling his nose, from which came a thin trickle of crimson. "Some tussle! We've got him now!"

"The gotfulness is terrific!"

From the thickets a fat, flabby face looked, and narrow eyes gleamed through horn-rimmed glasses at the scene.

The juniors did not notice for the moment that the American was watching them. They supposed him to be still

under the oak, where they had left him. For several minutes they could do nothing but pant for breath. The Famous Five had been through a good many tussles, but seldom one so desperate as this.

The black-haired man had fought almost like a wildcat, and not ceased to struggle till he was quite spent. Yet the juniors were aware that he had a deadly weapon in his possession, and he made no attempt to touch it. He was the "guy with a gun" to whom the horn-rimmed man had alluded, and his intentions towards the fugitive swindler were plainly lawless; but towards others it was equally plain that he did not dream of such measures. Certainly, the schoolboys would have had no chance against him had he chosen to use the firearm which they knew was in his hip pocket.

"Well, you've given us a tussle, old bean," said Bob Cherry, breathless but genial, "but we've got you safe now. I dare say you'll feel obliged to us later, when you're cool."

"Meddling fool!" panted the fallen man.

"Thanks, old bean! You can pay us all the compliments you like, so long as you don't do any mischief."

"Will you let me go?"

"No fear!"

"The no-fearfulness is preposterous, my esteemed fat-headed friend," said Hurree Singh. "You are not safe to let go."

"We shall keep you safe till that man is out of your reach," said Harry Wharton quietly. "Unless you're potty, you'll be glad later that we've prevented you from committing a crime."

"Fool!"

"Blow off steam as much as you like," grinned Bob, "but we're holding you tight while that jolly old American clears off."

"Fool!" panted the prisoner. "I tell

you that man has robbed me and a hundred others. His pockets are full of stolen money. You are helping a thief and a swindler to escape justice."

"That's all rot!" answered Wharton. "If it's as you say, it's a matter for the police. Who the dickens are you to take the law into your own hands?"

"Fool!"

Wharton smiled faintly. He had been damaged in the desperate struggle, like all the Co. But he was feeling no ill-will towards the man who lay panting in the grass. Now that he knew the identity of the fugitive rascal on the island, he had no doubt whatever on which side the wrong lay. Evidently this man, like Mr. Prout, was one of the share-pusher's many victims. He suspected, too, that the man's head had been turned a little by his wrongs and by brooding over them; for it was plain that he was a decent man enough, apart from his savage thirst for vengeance on the rascal who had wronged him.

But the bare thought of a man, however wronged, taking the law into his own hands to the extent of bloodshed, was revolting. For the man's own sake, if for no other reason, the juniors would have done their best to prevent him from carrying out his terrible purpose.

He was prevented now; the Greyfriars fellows had the upper hand. With his hands bound by the knotted handkerchief and Johnny Bull lodged on his chest, he was helpless.

"Well, we've got him," said Bob, "and the sooner that fat old blighter bunks the better."

"I'll fetch him," said Harry. "He can take the boat this fellow came in and get away. Oh, here he is!"

The horn-rimmed man emerged from

(Continued on page 16.)

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## THE MAN FROM THE STATES!

(Continued from page 13.)

the thickets. His fat face was white as chalk, and his narrow eyes turned on his enemy, dilated with dread. Evidently he had thought of the boat himself; for without heeding the juniors he hurried across to it.

The black-haired man's eyes blazed at the sight of him, and he made a wild effort to rise. Johnny Bull coolly squashed him down in the grass again.

"No, you don't!" he remarked.  
 "Say, you keep him safe!" panted the man in the horn-rimmed glasses. "You keep that guy safe while I get away. You don't want to let him get after me. I tell you that guy means murder!"

"Get into that boat and clear, Mr. Poindexter, if that's your name," said Harry Wharton.

"I guess you'll be keeping that guy safe—"

"We'll keep him safe till you've had time to get away. Don't lose any time!"

"I guess—"

"Shut up and clear!"

The juniors had saved the rascal's life; there was little doubt on that point. They would have taken any risk and any trouble to keep the self-appointed avenger from carrying out his purpose. But their feelings towards the man they had saved were of the deepest repugnance and scorn. The mere sight of his cunning face and shifty eyes was repugnant, as well as his cringing cowardice. They were anxious for the miserable wretch to get out of their sight.

Elias Poindexter scrambled into the boat. It was a small two-oared skiff; and Poindexter handled it clumsily enough. But he pushed off, as Wharton cast loose the painter and got the oars out.

The black-haired man raised his head and looked after him as he went, with burning eyes.

"Look out for me, Elias Poindexter!" he shouted huskily. "I will follow you—I will find you yet!"

The horn-rimmed man made no reply. He rowed away, clumsily but swiftly, down the rolling current of the Sark. The current helped him, and he was soon at a distance from the island.

The juniors watched him till the skiff and its occupant were out of sight in the windings of the river. It was a deep relief to see the last of him.

"Thank goodness he's gone!" said Nugent.

"The thankfulness is terrific."  
 "Now let me go!" came in a husky mutter from the prisoner. "Let me go, you young fools!"

Wharton shook his head.

"You're not going yet," he said. "We're not giving you a chance to get after that man till he's reached safety."

When you're cool you'll be glad that we collared you in time and stopped you."

"What is the man to you, you young rascal? What has he paid you to help him escape with his plunder?"

Wharton flushed hotly.

"The man's nothing to us! We've stopped you as much for your own sake as his, as you'd know, if you had the sense of a bunny rabbit. I'd be glad to see such a rogue sent to prison. If you can prove what you say against him he can be arrested and punished."

"I could prove it easily—I could send him to prison! That would not satisfy me."

"Well, then, you must be a little bit off your rocker and you want taking care of," said Wharton. "I'm blessed if I know whether we ought to let you loose at all or take you to the police station."

The man gave a scoffing laugh.

"Take me there, if you like! Do you think they could detain me when Poindexter makes no charge or complaint?"

"I—I suppose they couldn't!" said Wharton slowly. "It beats me why the man doesn't have you taken into custody. He could."

"He could—and face imprisonment for what he has done! He prefers to take his chance of skulking away and sneaking back somehow to his own country where he will be safe."

"Oh!" said Wharton.

"Let me go! It is not for you to interfere, if the scoundrel does not choose to place himself under the protection of the law."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I suppose he would be safe in chokey—but he's saving that up as a last resource," he remarked. "Save your breath, old bean; you're not getting loose till that fellow has cleared off. But I'll tell you what—we're picnicking here and you can join us in the picnic if you like."

"Fool!"

"It's a jolly good picnic," urged Bob. "We've got ham sandwiches, and ginger-pop, and a cake—"

"Fool!"

"And two kinds of jam—"

"You young idiot!"

"Well, if that's the polite way you refuse an invitation, you can go and eat coke!" said Bob. "Look here, you men, we've got to keep this sportsman safe for an hour at least; and Johnny can't sit on his waistcoat all the time. What about tying him to a tree?"

"Good egg!" said Wharton.

"Sorry, old bean," said Bob politely. "But you're asking for it, you know. Later on you'll be bursting with gratitude to us for saving you from making a fool of yourself."

The man did not speak again. He lay with a sullen face and a black brow while the juniors secured him. With the painter from the juniors' boat, and odds and ends of string and some

handkerchiefs, his wrists were safely fastened to a sapling; and having made sure that he had no chance of getting loose, they left him.

"Now for the jolly old picnic!" said Bob. "I really think we've earned it! Where's Bunter?"

"And where's the basket?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Bunter and the picnic-basket had been forgotten—till now. Now they were remembered. Both had vanished from sight. And with a deep misgiving as to what had happened to the contents of the basket, Harry Wharton and Co. proceeded hurriedly to look for Bunter.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### After the Feast, the Reckoning!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"You fat villain!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

A fat, shiny, jammy face looked guiltily at the Famous Five.

Bunter was found—sitting under a tree on the further edge of the island, leaning back against the trunk, with the picnic-basket at his feet. Bunter and the basket were both on view—but it was rather a different matter with what the basket had contained. That, undoubtedly, was still there. But it was not on view. X-rays would have been required to discover it. What had been packed in the basket was now packed in Bunter. Evidently, the Owl of the Remove had been improving the shining hour. The Famous Five had been busy—and so had William George Bunter.

Five wrathful faces stared at Bunter. There had been so many delays to that picnic that it was now well past tea-time; and the chums of the Remove were decidedly hungry. No doubt Bunter had been hungry, too; and he had got in early and avoided the crush.

"You—you—you—" stuttered Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I knew you wouldn't mind me having a snack!" gasped Bunter. "I—I was fearfully hungry, you know. I never had enough dinner—that beast Quelch wouldn't let me have more than three extra helpings. And—and I've had nothing since except a cake I found in Smithy's study, and Ogilvy's bullseyes—except the coconut ice I found in Squiff's study, and—"

"Squash him!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

Harry Wharton picked up the picnic-basket. There were a few crumbs left in it. That was all.

"Why, you—you—" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "That was a feed for five fellows, and you've scoffed the lot!"

"I—I was going to leave you the

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Pat Bunter the tuckshop invaded. And jam tarts and cream puffs were raided.



cake," stammered Bunter. "I—I did leave it, as a matter of fact—"

"Where is it, then?" roared Nugent. "I—I thought I'd have just a taste, as—as you didn't come! Just a bite!" stuttered Bunter. "Then—then you still didn't come, so I—I had another bite! And—and then another, and—and so—"

"Burst him!" roared Bob. "The burstfulness is the proper caper!"

"Scrag him!" "I—I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter scrambled to his feet in alarm. "I—I say, it's all right! I—I'm going to stand you fellows a study spread as soon as we get back to the school! Honest Injun!"

"Collar him!" "I say, you can take a fellow's word, can't you?" howled Bunter. "I'm going to stand you a ripping spread; really tip-top. I'm going to spend a whole pound on it—there! Honest Injun! I say—"

"And where are you going to get the pound, you fat frump?"

"That's all right!" gasped Bunter. "I'm expecting a postal order—"

"What?" yelled the Famous Five. "A—a—a postal order!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mentioned to you fellows before that I was expecting a postal order!"

"You frabjous, fozzling fathead—"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I—I expect my postal order will have come by the time we get back to Greyfriars! Let—let's get off, shall we? N-n-n-no good wasting time fooling round this island—"

The Famous Five glared at Bunter as if they could have eaten him. They were hungry; and the picnic was gone from their gaze like a beautiful dream. They were not likely to derive much comfort from the prospect of a study spread when Bunter's celebrated postal order should arrive. The date of its arrival was altogether too uncertain.

"Scrag him!" said Bob Cherry. "Yarooop!"

Billy Bunter made a desperate rush to escape. Seldom were Bunter's movements rapid; but fear, as a novelist would say, lent him wings. He vanished through the thickets, grunting and snorting and panting.

"After him!" yelled Nugent. "Collar him!"

"We'll jolly well duck him!" "Stop, you fat villain! Stop, you frowsy freak! Stop, you burbling burglar!"

But William George Bunter did not stop. Bunter was not a bright youth, but he was much too bright to stop, with five hungry and infuriated picnickers behind him. He tore on frantically, with the chums of the Remove crashing through the bushes in pursuit.

He reached the boat in the little narrow creek under the trees. He landed in it with a desperate bound,

rolled over, howled, picked himself up, and grasped an oar. The painter had been taken away to tie up the black-haired man, and the boat only needed shoving out of the creek into the river. Bunter grasped the oar with both hands, and jabbed desperately at the bank.

"Stop!" roared Bob. Bunter did not heed. With all his strength, he drove the oar at the bank and the boat glided out. Unfortunately for Bunter, the blade of the oar, as he drove it frantically, sank about a foot in soft mud. He dragged at it to pull it out for another desperate shove, and it refused to come.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. The oar clung to the mud, and Bunter clung to the oar, while the boat shot away from under him.

"Whooooop!" spluttered Bunter. Splash!

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

William George Bunter disappeared in shallow water and thick mud. The Famous Five halted on the margin, their wrath changed to merriment as a fat face and a pair of muddy spectacles goggled up at them from the ooze.

"Oooooogh! Groooooogh! Help! Ugh! Gug! Oooooogh!" spluttered Bunter.

"Oh lor'! Oh crikey! Ooooooooooch!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Woooch! I say, you fellows— Groooooogh! Help! Grooooooch!"

The boat was rocking away to the river. Harry Wharton ran quickly along and jumped into it, seized an oar, and brought it back into the creek. Billy Bunter, standing up to his knees in oozy mud, and up to his fat equator in swishing water, wriggled and yelled for help. Water and mud streamed down his fat face.

"I say, you fellows, help a chap out!" shrieked Bunter. "I say, I'm wet! I say— Groooooogh! I say— Ooooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Beasts! I—I won't stand you that study spread now!" yelled Bunter.

"Ow! I'm all wet! I'm smothered with mud! Groooooogh!"

"You can jolly well stick there, you fat porker!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The stickfulness is the proper caper!" chortled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "You can wriggle out, you fat worm!" said Harry Wharton, as he stepped from the boat. "Serve you jolly well right!"

"Beast! Wow! Beast!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

"The servefulness right is terrific, my esteemed greedy Bunter! You should keep your ridiculous hands from the pickfulness and the stealfulness!" "Ow! Beast! Wow!"

Splashing mud, the hapless Owl of the Remove clambered out at last. He

squelched mud and water as he crawled up the bank, gasping and spluttering. He blinked, with a muddy blink, at the yelling juniors through muddy spectacles.

"Oh, you beasts! Look at me!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "This is the last time you'll get me on a picnic with you fellows!" roared Bunter. "The very last time—see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "And I've a jolly good mind not to come with you for the Easter hols, Wharton! A jolly good mind!"

"Good!" chuckled Wharton. "I've exactly the same jolly good mind, old fat bean; so that's all right!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Beast!"

For the next hour or so William George Bunter was busy, squeezing water out of his clothes, and scraping off mud. He had enjoyed the feast; but after the feast had come the reckoning, which was not nearly so enjoyable.

The picnic being off, the chums of the Remove had no desire to linger on Popper's Island. But they had resolved to wait an hour, to give the horn-rimmed man plenty of time to get clear. They might have waited longer had the picnic been still available; but being hungry and anxious to get back to the school for a late tea, they agreed that an hour would be enough. After the lapse of an hour, therefore, the black-haired man was untied, and allowed to step into the boat with the juniors. They rowed across to the bank and allowed him to land on the tow-path.

"Now you can cut, old bean," said Bob Cherry. "Sorry we had to handle you, but you ought to be glad of it! Ta-ta!"

Without a word, the young man tramped away by the towpath and disappeared from sight. He went down the river, possibly hoping yet to get on the track of Elias J. Poindexter. The juniors were satisfied, however, that there was little likelihood of that; and they dismissed the matter from their minds as they put out the oars and pulled home to Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter, still damp and muddy, sat with a frowning brow as the boat pulled down the Sark. He gave the chums of the Remove wrathful and scornful blinks; which did not seem to affect their equanimity very much.

But as the boat drew near the school raft the fat Owl's frowning face relaxed and his podgy brow cleared. "I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" "Ring off, fatty!" "I'm a forgiving chap!" said Bunter. "You've treated me rottenly, after all I've done for you, too! But I'm a forgiving chap! I'm coming home with you for Easter, all the same, Wharton!"



He imbbed ginger-beer



Till he felt very queer.



And ate ninety doughnuts unaided.



"You're jolly well not!" answered the captain of the Remove ungratefully.

"I mean it, old chap!"

"So do I!"

"Beast!"

The boat pulled in, and Harry Wharton & Co. walked up to the House for a late tea. That late tea was going strong in Study No. 1 in the Remove when a fat face looked in at the door.

"I say, you fellows——"

Whiz!

A cushion flew—and Bunter flew! And tea in Study No. 1 proceeded without the assistance of William George Bunter.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Breaking-Up!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. had plenty of matters to occupy their minds during the last two or three days of the term; and the adventure on Popper's Island faded from their thoughts. They never expected to see again either the fugitive swindler or the man who was hunting him—though they hoped that the latter, for his own sake, would not get again on the track of Elias J. Poindexter. They heard mention of the name of Poindexter several times, however, in those two or three days.

Mr. Prout, who had lost a hundred pounds through dealing with the share-sharper, bored Common-room almost to tears on the subject; and the news spread through the school that Prout had invested in the shares of the Solid Nugget Gold-mining Company—shares which he had discovered, too late, to be worth exactly the value of the paper they were printed on, and no more.

Prout, like Rachael of old, mourned for that which was lost, and could not be comforted. He confided to every other member of the staff his intention of horse-whipping Elias if he should ever come into touch with that elusive gentleman. Indeed, Prout told Common-room that he would pay a special visit to Mr. Poindexter's offices in the City with a horse-whip under his arm, but for the fact that Elias had disappeared from those offices, and nobody knew where he had gone. Prout was wrathful and indignant, and inexhaustibly eloquent; and the Greyfriars staff looked forward to the Easter vacation more keenly than ever as the only escape from Prout's eloquence.

"Silly old ass!" said Coker of the Fifth in the games study, alluding thus disrespectfully to his Form master. "Frightful old ass! Ought to have more sense at his time of life!"

To which the Fifth Form men fully agreed.

"All the same, the man's a frightful villain!" said Coker. "Old asses like Prout ask to be diddled! But it seems to be that very man, from what I hear, who collared my motor-bike! That's the limit! I've got it back; but if ever I come across that American I'll make him wish he'd stayed on his own side of the Atlantic! I hear that some Remove kids actually saw the man on Popper's Island the same day—so that fat idiot Bunter is saying all over the school. I wish I'd been there! I'd have given him solid nuggets!"

Coker of the Fifth had recovered his motor-bike; a Courtfield constable had found it standing under a tree on Courtfield Common, where the borrower

had left it. The horn-rimmed man was not, after all, a motor-thief, though he was evidently several other kinds of a thief. But Coker had been very disturbed and anxious about that jigger, and he yearned to get within hitting distance of the fat face and the beaky nose of Elias J. Poindexter—a yearning that was unlikely to be gratified.

Everybody at Greyfriars had now heard of Elias J. Poindexter, owing to the inexhaustible eloquence of Mr. Prout and the chatter of Billy Bunter concerning the happenings on Popper's Island. Everybody at Greyfriars agreed that Elias would be all the better for the horse-whipping that Prout wanted to bestow on him—with the exception of Fisher T. Fish, of the Remove.

Fisher T. Fish did not exactly approve of Elias' methods of gathering cash from mugs; but he told the fellows in the Rag that Elias was surely some guy, and that a boneheaded population must expect to miss their dust when they got in contact with a live American.

Fisher T. Fish chuckled over the Solid Nugget Gold-Mining Company and the shares in that valuable concern that were held by poor old Prout. But Fishy was alone in his opinion; and he forbore to express his admiration of Elias' spryness and cuteness, after his head had been knocked on the wall in the Rag.

Billy Bunter had, of course, talked far and wide of the thrilling adventure on Popper's Island. But that matter was dismissed from Bunter's fat mind at the approach of break-up. A much more important matter was exercising Bunter's podgy intellect now. It had been arranged by Bunter that he should spend the Easter vacation with his old pals. This arrangement had not been confirmed by the old pals—who even went to the length of denying the existence of the old pal-ship! On the last day of the term the matter was still in doubt.

"What train are you fellows catching?" Bunter inquired after breakfast that morning, finding Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh in the quad.

"Echo answers, what!" replied Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"The esteemed echo answers that the whatfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I suppose you're going home with Wharton, Inky?"

"The supposefulness is a boot on the right leg!" assented the nabob.

"Well, look here, old chap," said Bunter, "Wharton doesn't seem to know his own mind on the subject. You tell him that you want me to come—that you would hardly care to go to Wharton Lodge without me, see?"

Hurree Singh shook his head.

"Like the excellent and ludicrous George Washerman, I cannot tell a lie, my esteemed Bunter," he answered.

"Oh, really, Inky——"

"What about your jolly old titled relations, old fat man?" asked Bob. "Are you going to give the nobility the go-by?"

"The fact is, most of my titled relations are on the Riviera," said Bunter. "So, you see—— Look here, you beasts, if you think it's good manners to walk away while a fellow's talking to you, I——"

Good manners or not, the two juniors did walk away, leaving William George Bunter snorting. A little later he ran Frank Nugent down.

"I say, Franky, old chap, what train are you going by?"

"The one that takes me home, old bean," answered Nugent gravely.

"Eh? Oh, yes! Well, what train is taking you home, then?"

"The one I'm going by."

"Beast!"

Johnny Bull, when Bunter rolled down on him, made a significant motion with his right foot; and Bunter, like the deep and dark blue ocean in the poem, rolled on, leaving Johnny unquestioned. He looked round anxiously for Harry Wharton, but for some time in vain. Wharton was not equally anxious for an interview. There was one class that morning, and it was not till the class was over that Bunter succeeded in tracking down the captain of the Remove.

"I say, Harry, old chap, I've been looking for you," said Bunter reproachfully. "Are you going from Courtfield or taking the local train to Lantham Junction?"

"Is that a conundrum?" asked Wharton.

"No!" roared Bunter. "Look here, if you're going from Friardale I'll be there on time."

"Be there by all means!" agreed Wharton.

"Then you're going from Friardale?"

"Not if you're there."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Coming!" called out Wharton, in response to an imaginary call; and he scudded away, leaving Bunter still in a state of painful doubt.

From the answers he had received any fellow but Bunter might have supposed that his company was not yearned for. Such trifling considerations as that, however, did not worry Billy Bunter. A fellow had to fix up his vac—that was certain—and all Bunter's thoughts were concentrated on the important business of fixing it up; minor considerations had to go.

For some time afterwards a large pair of spectacles was specially directed on the Famous Five. The beasts had not even confided to their old pal, Bunter, whether they were all going together or not. This made the matter still more difficult for their old pal. But in matters like this, Bunter was not easily beaten.

Those watchful spectacles noted that the baggage of the Famous Five was loaded on a brake that was leaving early. The brake was crowded with Remove men and their belongings; and Bunter, having ascertained beyond doubt that some of the baggage belonged to his old pals, crammed his fat person into the vehicle.

But when the brake started the Famous Five were not on board. Bunter blinked round in alarm.

"I say, 'oddy, old chap, where's Wharton?" he asked.

"Ask me another!" answered Peter Todd.

"Aren't they coming in this brake?"

"Looks as if they're not."

"I say, Smithy, have you seen Wharton?"

The Bounder chuckled.

"Yes; he walked out of gates some time back."

"Why, the—the awful rotter!" gasped Bunter. "But, look here, if their baggage is going to Courtfield they must be going to Courtfield. I say, did all the beasts start walking, or only one beast?"

"The whole jolly family!" chuckled the Bounder. "I'm looking after their baggage for them."

"Then they're not going from Courtfield?"

"I wonder!"

"The awful rotters—letting a man down, after begging him to come!"





"Get into that boat and clear, Mr. Poindexter, if that's your name," said Wharton. "But that guy, I guess you'll be keeping him safe—"  
 "We'll keep him safe, (till you've had time to get away."

said Bunter. "I'll jolly well throw them over now, and come with you, Smithy."

"Chance would be a fine thing!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy! That's not the way to treat a pal who's willing to turn down many invitations to spend Easter with you."

"I don't think!" grinned Smithy.

"If you think I'd spend my Easter vac with you, Smithy, you're jolly well mistaken!" said Bunter. "I say, Toddy—"

"Don't!" said Toddy.

"Rely on me, old chap," said Bunter. "I've never been able to give you much time in the hols; but the fact is—"

"Stick to Bunter Court," advised Toddy. "Dash it all, you don't want to miss all the dukes and marquises."

"The fact is, old chap, a fellow gets rather fed-up with that sort of thing," said Bunter. "For a change, old fellow, I'm going to put in a few days at your humble home."

"You're jolly well not!" answered Toddy, with emphasis.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Chuck it, old fat bean!"

"On second thoughts, though, it would hardly do—a fellow must draw a line somewhere," said Bunter. "I could hardly be seen in a poor solicitor's house in Bloomsbury! Sorry, old man, but there it is. I don't mind being friendly at school; but coming home is rather a different matter. There's a limit!"

And Bunter dropped out of the brake, leaving Peter Todd with a quite extraordinary expression on his face. The brake rolled away, leaving William George Bunter to search anxiously for his old pals.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Black-Haired Man Again!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"My hat! That sportsman again!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were walking cheerily along Friardale Lane, their faces merry and bright. Leaving their devoted and attached pal Bunter to his own devices, the chums of the Remove were walking to the village station, to take the local train for Lantham Junction.

Half-way to the village a little two-seater was drawn up by the roadside, and a young man with black hair and a square jaw was standing by it, smoking a cigarette. It was the man whom the Famous Five had handled on Popper's Island.

They looked at him curiously as they came up. His glance was on them, and it was evident that the recognition was mutual.

He stepped away from the car, and made them a sign to halt.

"You still here?" said Bob Cherry.

"As you see!"

"Still looking for that merchant Poindexter?" asked Bob, with a grin.

"Exactly."

"Well, I hope you won't find him," said Harry Wharton. "But surely you don't suppose he is still hanging about this neighbourhood. I should imagine he's got far enough away by this time."

"He doesn't want to meet you, you know," remarked Nugent. "The pleasure of the meeting would be all on your side."

"Do you boys know where he is?" asked the black-haired man abruptly.

"How the thump should we know?" asked Wharton, in astonishment.

"The knowfulness is not terrific, my esteemed friend."

The man's eyes were searching the schoolboys' faces, keenly, suspiciously. There was a grin on each of the five faces. Harry Wharton & Co. had never expected to see the black-haired man again; they had supposed that he was far away long ago. But it dawned upon them now that he had drawn an erroneous impression from the happenings on Popper's Island, and that he suspected them of knowing something of the movements of the man they had protected.

"You look as if you would tell the truth," said the young man quietly. "I bear no malice for what you did the other day; if the man I am seeking is a friend or a connection of yours, it was natural for you to act as you did. That makes no difference to my intentions."

"What the thump do you mean?" demanded Johnny Bull angrily. "Think we've got any connection with a swindling rogue?"

"If you have not, why did you protect him?"

"I should think that was easy to answer," said Harry Wharton. "You were threatening to commit a fearful crime; and we should have stopped you for your own sake, if for no other reason."

"The man was a stranger to you?"

"Of course he was!" snapped Wharton. "We'd never seen him before that day, and we never expect to see him again, and we certainly don't want to. I'd be glad enough to see him taken up by the police."

"The gladfulness would be terrific!" Bob Cherry chuckled.



"Have you been hanging about here, thinking that we know something about that johnny?" he asked.

"I think some of you know something of him," answered the square-jawed man, setting his lips. "It is not likely that you would have risked your lives for a stranger—a man you know to be a fugitive scoundrel."

"We did not risk our lives, if you come to that," said Harry.

"Do not be so sure of that! I should not stop at much to get at the swindler who has ruined me," said the square-jawed man quietly. "You were taking a greater risk than you understood."

"Well, we should take it again, in the same circumstances!" said Wharton, his lip curling.

"Then you know where he is?"

"We know nothing whatever about him." Harry Wharton laughed. "If you've been hanging about to see us, thinking that you could pick up news of Poindexter from us, you've been wasting your time. We know nothing whatever of the man; and if we did, we certainly should not tell you, knowing what your intentions are."

The man stood silent, eyeing the juniors with doubt. It was plain that his bitter vendetta against the fugitive rogue was an obsession in his mind, and that upon that subject he was scarcely reasonable.

Evidently Poindexter had escaped his search, and left no clue behind him, and the hunter had come back to the vicinity of Greyfriars, with the delusive hope of picking up a clue where he had lost the trail.

"You have not seen the man since?" he asked, at last.

"Of course not!"

"You are not going to see him now?" The juniors laughed.

"We are going to the railway station, to take the train for home," answered Wharton. "Our school breaks up to-day for Easter."

"Oh!"

There was black and bitter disappointment in the man's face. His hope of learning something of his quarry from the Greyfriars juniors had probably been very faint. Such as it was he had lost it now.

He stepped back to the car; and the juniors, with smiling faces, walked on their way. Bob looked back a few minutes later, at the sound of a car behind.

The two-seater was following them.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob. "That johnny is following us; he's going to make sure that we've told him the truth."

"The silly ass!" growled Wharton.

"I opine that that esteemed sportsman is a little loose in his worthy and ridiculous crumpet!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"He must be, if he's really planning to shoot the man who welched him," said Johnny Bull. "That sort of thing is all right for the films."

It was clear that the black-haired man was doubtful. The two-seater followed at a crawling pace, keeping behind the juniors as they walked into the village. When they reached the village station the man left the car, and followed them in.

He was standing at their elbows when they took their tickets. Even that did not seem wholly to satisfy him, for he took a platform ticket, and followed them on the platform.

"Some sticker!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The stickfulness is terrific!"

The juniors laughed, rather amused by the pertinacity of the hunter. When

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the train came in, the chums of the Remove packed themselves in a carriage, the black-haired man watching them from the platform.

Bob Cherry waved his hand to him.

"Like to come on to Lantham and see us change trains?" he called out.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The man scowled at them across the platform without replying. The door slammed, and the train moved on out of the station. Standing with a scowling face, the man watched it go, and Bob Cherry cheerily waved his cap in farewell.

"Well, we're done with that sportsman!" said Bob, as he sat down.

"The donefulness is a boonful blessing."

"Thank goodness!" said Harry.

The chums of the Remove little dreamed at that moment how far they were from having done with the black-haired man.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### A Lift for Bunter!

"OF all the rotters——"

Billy Bunter breathed indignation.

He had lost his old pals. And they had lost him.

He had a strong suspicion that it was their intention to lose him. Bunter, at such a time, was not easily lost. But the chums of the Remove, seemed to have got by with it, as Fisher T. Fish would have expressed it.

They were gone. They might have walked to Friardale for the local train—as, in point of fact, they had done. But they might have taken the motor-bus for Courtfield, or even for Lantham. They might just be strolling about, intending to catch a later train after Bunter had gone. There really was no telling what fellows might do when they were blessed with a devoted and attached pal like William George Bunter—a pal who would stick to his friends like glue and decline, if he could help it, to come unstuck.

Bunter had a problem to think out—and he thought it out with the help of refreshments, liquid and solid, at the tuckshop. These refreshments did not help him much in the cogitation line, but they were grateful and comforting in themselves.

Unfortunately, Bunter's supply of cash was limited to his journey money; and Mrs. Mumble froze like an iceberg at the bare suggestion that the item of payment should be left over till the next term. Bunter had to pay, and as he had done himself rather liberally he had the moderate sum of ninepence left when he rolled out of the tuckshop. Ninepence is said to be a nimble sum, but it was absolutely certain that Bunter could not get home on ninepence. It was more important than ever, more pressing than ever, for Bunter to find his old pals. Even if he was going home he had to have a railway ticket. And he was not going home if he could help it. Bunter Court was somehow lacking in attraction.

"Of all the beasts——" groaned Bunter.

He was left in the lurch! He was done to the wide! Fellows were still leaving, though most of them were gone by this time. Billy Bunter stood in the road and blinked this way and blinked that way, his problem still unsolved.

"Beasts!" groaned Bunter.

A two-seater, coming up from the direction of the village, came into sight. Billy Bunter did not observe the black-haired, square-jawed young man who was driving it; the Owl of the Remove

was short-sighted, and he was thinking of other matters. But the driver of the car observed Bunter.

Billy Bunter rather fancied that he was a distinguished-looking fellow, who, once seen, was likely to be remembered. And it was a fact that no one who had seen Bunter was likely to forget his circumference, at least.

The car had been moving slowly; now it dropped to a crawl, and the keen eyes of the driver were fixed on Bunter. The man in the two-seater recognised him at once as the fat fellow who had been with Harry Wharton & Co. on Popper's Island, and who had backed away through the bushes before the tussle began.

The car stopped, and then Bunter blinked at the man. At close range he recognised him and grinned.

The young man in the driver's seat gave him a nod.

"You did not go with your friends," he remarked.

Bunter blinked at him, rather surprised by the remark from a stranger. But he could guess from the remark that the man had seen the Famous Five, and his blink became eager.

"You've seen them?" he exclaimed.

"The boys who were on the island with you—yes," said the man in the car.

"Where?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"They took the train at Friardale Station."

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter's fat face fell. Evidently his old pals were safe out of his reach.

The young man in the car regarded him curiously, with a gleam in his eyes that Bunter did not observe. He had drawn Harry Wharton & Co. blank, but the suspicion lingered in his mind that the schoolboys could have told him more if they had chosen. This fat fellow had been on the island with them, and if the others know anything of Elias J. Poindexter it was possible that this fat fellow knew also.

"The rotters!" grunted Bunter. "I—I wonder whether Mauly's gone yet? I—I wonder whether he would lend me my fare? Oh dear!"

"Hold on a moment, my lad!" said the man in the car, as the Owl of the Remove was turning away.

"Eh?"

"You were on the island the other day with the boys I have just seen at Friardale."

"What about it?" grunted Bunter.

"They helped the man Poindexter to get away in my boat——"

Bunter grinned.

"Yes. Rather a sell for you, wasn't it?" he remarked. "He, he, he!"

"Have they seen him since?"

"Eh? How should I know?"

"Have you seen him?"

"No, of course not!"

Billy Bunter turned away again. He had no time to waste on this inquisitive stranger. His problem was more pressing than ever now. How was a fellow to get home when he had "blued" his journey money on jam tarts and ginger-pop? It was necessary, as the song says, for a victim to be found—and Bunter was anxious to find a victim before it was too late.

"Stop!" said the man in the two-seater quietly.

"I'm in a hurry!" grunted Bunter.

"Stop, I tell you!"

The young man stepped from the car. As Bunter did not stop he reached out and caught him by the shoulder.

Billy Bunter gave him a glare of wrath through his big spectacles.

"You cheeky ass!" he howled.

"Leggo my shoulder! What the thump do you think you are up to?"



"I have some questions to ask you."  
 "Go and eat coke!" retorted Bunter.  
 "I tell you I've no time to waste; I've got to look for a chap. Yow-ow-ow!" he added in a squeal, as the man's grip was compressed like a vice on his fat shoulder. "Ow! Leggo! Beast!"  
 "Stay where you are!"  
 "Oh!" gasped Bunter. "All right! I—I don't mind staying. Look here, I—"

"It was not by sheer chance that you and your friends were on the island in the river when Poindexter was there!" said the black-haired man in a low, menacing voice. "There is some sort of a connection."

"What rot!" said Bunter. "We went there for a picnic—"

"So the others told me; but I take nothing on trust. Is that man a connection—a relation, for instance—of any of the boys who were on the island?"

Billy Bunter stared blankly at the man. The suggestion that Elias J. Poindexter might be related to a Greyfriars man almost took his breath away. Certainly he might have been related to Fisher T. Fish, for all Bunter knew, but there was no other Greyfriars man who was likely to own such a connection.

"You silly ass!" gasped Bunter.  
 "Tell me the truth," said the black-haired man, compressing his grip on Bunter's shoulder till the bones almost cracked, and the fat junior gave a squeak. "The boy whose name I think is Wharton took the lead in helping that villain to escape. What is Wharton's connection with the man?"

Bunter blinked at the grim, menacing face, dark with suspicion. He was getting frightened, and there was no one at hand on the country road. It was Billy Bunter's way when in difficulties to tell the first "whopper" that came into his fat mind. In this case there was the excuse for the fat junior that his questioner, doubting and suspicious, would not have been satisfied with the truth.

"Oh! He—he's his uncle!" stammered Bunter.

The man's eyes blazed  
 "His uncle?"

"Yes, that's it! I say, lemme go!"

"Then the boy Wharton lied to me!" said the black-haired man between his teeth. "He looked truthful, but he was lying."

"Oh, he's a frightful fibber!" said Bunter. "Awful, in fact! I say, you leggo! I've got to look for a chap—"

"This boy Wharton has gone home for the holidays?"

"Yes."  
 "Tell me where he lives."

Bunter jumped.  
 "I—I say, you're not thinking of going there?" he gasped.

"That does not concern you. Tell me where this boy Wharton lives."

Bunter blinked at the grim, menacing face. He was feeling uneasy and alarmed; but he could hardly help grinning at the idea of the indefatigable hunter visiting Wharton Lodge in search of information concerning Elias J. Poindexter.

"In—in Surry!" gasped Bunter.  
 "Where—in Surrey?"

"About—about ten miles from Reigate—"

"Be a little more exact, please."

It was at that moment that Billy Bunter had his inspiration. It was quite a brainwave.

"Look here, if you're going there in the car—"

"Answer me!"

"You can give me a lift—"

"What?"

"You see, I was going home with Wharton," explained Bunter, "but he somehow missed me—I mean, I missed him—and he got off first. I can't exactly give you the address, but I could find the place. If you like to give me a lift in the car I'll take you there."

The black-haired man was silent for a moment or two, looking at him. Then his face cleared, and he nodded.

"Get in!" he said.  
 Bunter got in.

The young man sat down in the driving-seat, and the car leaped into motion again. Billy Bunter leaned back and smiled.

He was booked for Wharton Lodge now! That difficulty about the journey-money was solved by a lift in the car. Really, it was quite a master-stroke. Possibly there might accrue some trouble for Wharton, from the man-tracker's belief that Elias J. Poindexter was his uncle and in touch with him. But that could not be helped; besides, that would be trouble for Wharton, not for Bunter, so it did not matter, so far as Bunter could see. What mattered was that Bunter was getting a lift to Wharton Lodge; and the future he was willing to leave on the knees of the gods.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### An Unexpected Meeting!

HARRY WHARTON stepped from the train at the little station of Wimford, in Surrey. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh followed him out. The other three members of the famous Co. had gone to their various homes, and they were coming on to Wharton Lodge later. Inky, whose home was in Bhanipur in the shadow of the far-off Himalayas, generally spent his vacations at Colonel Wharton's house in Surrey.

Leaving their baggage to be sent on, the two juniors started walking for the lodge, which was little more than a mile from Wimford. It had been rather a long and tiresome journey, with several changes of trains. Another traveller for the same destination had done the journey more quickly by car—though Wharton was unaware of it so far. Whatever the captain of the Remove was thinking of as he swung cheerily along the green country road, he certainly was not thinking of the surprise that awaited him when he reached home.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Wharton suddenly.

He halted, staring, and almost rubbed his eyes. Half-way to Wharton Lodge a little, dark two-seater was drawn up by the roadside, and a young man in the driving-seat sat smoking a cigarette.

Wharton could scarcely believe his eyes as they fell on the black-haired man with the square jaw.

"My only esteemed hat!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, equally astonished.

"What the thump is that ass doing here?" said Wharton.

"The absurd goodness only knows!"

It seemed almost like black magic to the two Greyfriars

juniors. They had left the black-haired man at Friardale, far off in Kent; and here he was, with his car, on this quiet country road in Surrey, near Wharton's home. It was evident that he must have covered the ground at good speed to get there before the juniors, who came by train. But that was not so surprising as the fact that he was there at all.

The man in the two-seater took the cigarette from his mouth and glanced at the two juniors. A grim smile came over his face.

Harry Wharton knitted his brows, paused a moment, and then walked up to the car. The young man eyed him grimly.

"Look here, what does this mean?" demanded Wharton.

"I think you know!" answered the man in the two-seater coolly.

"You're not here by chance," said Harry.

"Quite so."

"Then what do you want? Are you here spying?" exclaimed Wharton angrily. "Are you fool enough to think that I know anything about that rascal Poindexter? Is that what you're after?"

"I do not think—I know!" answered the man in the car coolly. "You lied to me, Master Wharton—if your name is Wharton."

Wharton crimsoned  
 "You silly, insulting ass!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean? I told you I know nothing about the man, and it is true."

"You told me you knew nothing about him, and it is false," said the man in the car. "You will save yourself trouble by telling me where to find him."

"I should not tell you if I knew! I should be more likely to go to the police and put them on your track!"

"Go to them as soon as you like! Give them my name, if you like—it is Reginald Wilnot," said the man in the car with the same coolness. "If the police desire to interview me I have no reason to avoid them."

"No reason—when you've said quite plainly that you are looking for a man with the intention of committing a murder!" exclaimed Wharton.

"You may tell that to the police, if you choose!" drawled the man in the car. "They will probably tell you that unless Mr. Poindexter chooses to call them in, they are powerless to act. They will probably tell you that you are a silly schoolboy also."

Wharton set his lips. It was true enough; it was for the threatened man to claim police protection if he needed it, and if he wanted it. The police could hardly move in the matter, when

(Continued on next page.)

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the threatened man did not choose to ask for their assistance. They could hardly believe that Elias J. Poindexter was in danger, if he would not say so.

"The man must be a fool not to have you run in!" said Harry. "But anyhow, you've no right to doubt my word or spy on me. I've told you that we came on the fellow entirely by chance when we went to that island for a picnic."

"That was false!"

Wharton clenched his hands.

"I do not blame you for lying to screen your uncle," said the man in the car; "but I know now that you were lying, and that you know where that villain is to be found. I am here to find him."

Wharton stared at him blankly.

"My—my uncle!" he stuttered.

"I have learned that since I saw you last."

"You must be mad," said Wharton, too astounded to be angry. "My uncle is Colonel Wharton, of Wharton Lodge."

"I have already learned that, also," smiled Wilmot; "but you may have more than one uncle."

"I have no American relations," said Harry. "I suppose you know that that man Poindexter is an American? What on earth put the idea into your head that that shady rotter is an uncle of mine?"

"You deny it?" asked the man in the car, eyeing him.

"Certainly I do!"

"I repeat, I do not blame you; scoundrel as he is, you do not want him to meet his deserts. Pass on your way."

"This esteemed fathhead is off his ridiculous rocker," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us depart bunkfully, my worthy chum."

But Wharton did not move.

"So you fancy that that swindler is a connection of mine, and you are hanging round my home to look for him!" he exclaimed.

The man in the car lighted a fresh cigarette, without replying. But an answer was hardly needed. The thing was plain enough. Wharton compressed his lips with anger.

"I begin to believe you're hardly sane," he said contemptuously. "Will you tell me what put that silly idea into your head?"

"One of your schoolfellows at Greyfriars!" answered Wilmot. "I suspected something of the kind, from your determination to protect him the day I ran him down—now I know for a certainty!"

"My hat! A Greyfriars man told you so?" exclaimed Wharton in utter astonishment.

"Exactly!"

"Then he was pulling your leg. It is not true."

The black-haired man shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose you've been asking questions of some Greyfriars man, and he stuffed you!" said Wharton scornfully. "Anyhow, so long as you hang about here, you're not likely to find your precious Poindexter."

"We shall see!"

Wharton breathed hard.

"Do you mean that you're going to hang about here, watching and spying, because you fancy I know something about that rascal?" he demanded. "Do you think I'm going to stand it?"

"I do not see how you are going to prevent it," said the man in the car coolly.

"By Jove! I——" Wharton made a

stride towards him, his hands clenched, and his eyes blazing. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh caught him by the arm, and pulled him back.

"My esteemed chum——" murmured the nabob.

The young man in the two-seater made a gesture with a cigarette between his finger and thumb.

"Pass on your way," he said. "I have no concern with you, or you with me. I know what I know, and that is enough."

Wharton controlled his anger with difficulty.

"You won't keep up this game!" he said, between his teeth. "My friends will be staying with me in a few days, and we'll keep our eyes open for you. If we find you anywhere near my home, look out for squalls. You seem to think that you can take the law into your own hands, and you'll find that we can do the same, to the extent of choking off a spying, prying, suspicious rotter. Go and eat coke!"

"Let us proceed onfully, my esteemed chum!" murmured the nabob.

Wharton nodded, and walked on with the dusky junior. He did not glance back, and the windings of the road soon hid the juniors from the sight of the man in the car. Wharton's brow was angry and perplexed as he walked on his way.

It was irritating to be suspected of having any connection with the swindler, even by a man whom he suspected to be a little "cracked." It was still more irritating to think of the fellow hanging about Wharton Lodge during the Easter vacation, watching and prying and shadowing.

But the junior's clouded brow cleared as they reached the lodge, and he dismissed the black-haired man from his mind.

"After all, I dare say the silly ass will find out his mistake and clear off!" he said. "Bother him, anyhow."

"The botherfulness is the proper caper!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

And with that, the black-haired man was dismissed from consideration, and the two juniors walked up cheerfully to the lodge.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### The Man in Possession!

"AND Bunter——"

"Eh?"

"Your friend, Bunter——"

"What?"

"Oh, my esteemed hat!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, while Harry Wharton looked quite blankly at his affectionate Aunt Amy.

Colonel Wharton was not at home when the juniors arrived; but Miss Amy Wharton greeted her nephew very affectionately, and his school chum with great kindness. And when, after greetings were exchanged, she mentioned Bunter, the chums of the Remove jumped. Harry Wharton had been under the happy delusion that he was done with William George Bunter until the next term at Greyfriars. Apparently, however, he wasn't!

"Bunter!" he repeated. "What about Bunter? You haven't seen Bunter, auntie?"

"Yes, indeed," smiled Miss Wharton. "He arrived some time ago——"

"He—he—he arrived some time ago?" babbled Wharton.

"Yes; and he was so sorry that you missed him, somehow, leaving the school. I suppose there was a great

crowd," said Miss Wharton. "But, luckily, Bunter found a friend to give him a lift in a car; and, as it turns out, he arrived before you, Harry. You did not tell me he was coming, my dear boy——"

"Nunno! I—I——" stuttered Wharton.

"But you had so many matters to think of at the end of the term," said Miss Wharton, with an affectionate smile. "It does not matter in the least. All your school friends are more than welcome, Harry, and a room was very soon got ready for him. He is there now. He seems rather tired from his journey, and is lying down for a time."

"B-B-Bunter's here!"

"Yes; in his room, next to your room, Harry. He said that he would like to rest until supper."

Wharton breathed hard and deep.

"Well, I'll take Inky to his room," he said, "and—and call in and see Bunter. Come on, Inky!"

There was a dusky grin on Hurree Singh's face as he went up with his chum. Wharton was looking grim. He did not want to tell the unsuspecting Aunt Amy how matters stood, but he had something very emphatic to say to Bunter.

"The fat villain!" he muttered, as they reached the corridor on which the juniors' rooms opened. "I'll burst him!"

"The burstfulness is the proper caper!" grinned the nabob.

"How the thump can he have got a lift here in a car—jolly near a hundred miles?" said Wharton. "He can't have paid for the car. I can't make that out. But——"

He turned the handle of Bunter's door. But the door did not open. It was locked on the inside.

Wharton thumped on the panels. He began to understand why Bunter had professed to be tired after his journey, and to desire to rest till supper. The Owl of the Remove had retired to his room as to a fortress, and he was locked in there. Without a "row," such as Wharton certainly did not desire to make in his home, the fat Owl was not to be evicted.

Thump, thump!

Snore!

"Bunter! Are you there, Bunter?"

Snore!

"You fat scoundrel!"

Snore!

"By gum!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "I—I—I'll—— Bunter, you frowsy freak, I know jolly well you're not asleep! Open this door at once! I'm going to roll you down the stairs."

"Oh, really, Wharton——" came through the oak door.

"Oh, so you are awake, you podgy pirate——"

Snore!

"Bunter, you frabjous fat villain——"

Snore!

Bunter, apparently, had decided that he had better be asleep. Harry Wharton thumped furiously on the door.

There was a step on the staircase, and Wells, the butler, glanced up. He retired again, with a peculiar expression on his face. Wharton ceased to thump on the door. He was afraid Miss Wharton might come up next, and he did not want to have to explain to Aunt Amy.

"I—I—I'll——" gasped Wharton. "Bunter, you fat brigand!" He hissed the words through the keyhole. "I'm going to drop you out of the window!"

"Beast!"



"Ready, old bean?" said Wharton. "Beast!" mumbled Bunter, taking another mouthful. "Here's your hat and coat!" said Inky. "Rotters!" The Owl of the Remove's jaws worked like clockwork.



"Open this door at once, you frabjous owl!"

Snore!

"Will you open this door, you frowsy, footling fathead?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! If that's how you talk to a guest, I can't say much for your manners!"

Bunter, apparently, had not quite decided whether he was asleep or awake.

"Let me in, you fat scoundrel!"

"The fact is, I'm rather tired, old chap, and I'd rather not be disturbed. If you're anxious for my company—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"If you're anxious for my company, you'll see me at supper. Be patient, old chap. I'll show up at supper."

"I'll scalp you!"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you he-he-heing about, you podgy piffler?"

"He, he! I don't mind your little joke, old fellow. But I'll tell you what, Wharton, old chap—don't make jokes like that. I understand you, of course; but if the servants heard you, they might fancy that you meant it, and that I was not welcome here. I don't see how I could stay if you gave that impression, Wharton."

"You cheeky fat villain—"

"Draw it mild, old chap!" urged Bunter. "I know it's only your little joke; but it's in rather bad taste, you know."

"Are you going to get out?"

"If you really mean that you don't want me, Wharton, I shall certainly decline to stay. In fact, in that case I shall leave to-morrow."

"You'll leave to-day, you podgy porker!"

"It's rather too late to-day, old chap. I'm going to rest till supper, and after that I can't get a train. But I must say that this is a bit thick, Wharton, after all I've done for you."

"Are you letting me in?"

"No fear!"

"I'll burst you!"

"Yah!"

"You fat, frabjous, footling, footling, frowsy—"

"Cheese it, old man! You talk too much," said Bunter cheerfully from the safe side of the door. "I've often told you so at Greyfriars. If I wasn't a guest under your roof, I'd step out and lick you. Of course, I can't very well lick you for your cheek, as I'm your guest. But don't pile it on, you know. You're taking rather a mean advantage of your position as host!"

"You—you—you—" gasped Wharton.

He gave it up.

Billy Bunter was safely entrenched, and did not mean to leave his stronghold till it was too late for him to be kicked out of the Lodge. Bunter had to be left over till the morrow.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Handling the Man-Hunter!

"BUNTER down yet?"

Harry Wharton asked that question at ten o'clock the following morning. Wharton and Hurree Singh had breakfasted and gone out for a ramble and returned, with very decided intentions regarding William George Bunter.

"Not yet, Harry," answered Miss Wharton, with her placid smile. "Possibly he is still tired from his journey."

"I think I'll go and call him."

"Perhaps he would like to breakfast in his room," suggested Miss Wharton.

"I remember he liked doing so when he was staying with you before, Harry. You may ask him."

"Ah! H'm! Come on, Inky!"

Billy Bunter was evidently in a wary

state. The previous evening he had remained in his room till supper. Then he had emerged, the call of a meal-time being irresistible. But it was impossible then to deal with William George as he deserved. Wharton had a natural disinclination to kicking the fat Owl out under the astonished eyes of Aunt Amy and the colonel, and it was a late hour for travelling. Bunter had to be left till the morning, and in the morning drastic measures were to be taken. But it was clear that the Owl of the Remove was wary.

His door was locked when Wharton and the grinning nabob arrived there. Wharton knocked.

"I say, you fellows, is that you?" asked Bunter's fat voice from within.

"Yes, you fat villain!"

"Well, is it all right, old chap? I hope you've got over your temper," said Bunter. "You're always rather bad-tempered after a journey. But you've had time to get over it now. I say, I want my brekker!"

"Well, come out," said Wharton.

"I'd have rung for it before this, only so long as you're keeping up this lark, old chap, I think I'd better keep my door locked. You see, larks are all very well in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, but a fellow doesn't like a lot of fag horseplay in the hols."

"Aren't you hungry, Bunter?"

"Frightfully! I should be famished if I hadn't thought of bringing up a cake after supper last night. But I've finished that, and I can tell you I'm ready for brekker. What about it?"

"You can have your brekker sent up."

"Good!"

"And then we'll walk to the station with you."

"I'm not feeling up to a walk this morning, old bean."

"We'll run you down in the car."

"The fact is, I'm rather fed-up with  
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motoring. I get such a lot of it at home. And your uncle's car is rather a crock compared with the pater's Rolls, you know. I don't care for it."

"Will you open this door, you villain?"

"Not till you make it pax, old chap!"

"Well, you won't get any brekker till you do! And as soon as the door's open, I'm coming in to drop you out of the window!"

"Beast!"

"Look here, Bunter——"

"Oh, shut up, Wharton! You talk too much!"

"As soon as this door's open——"

"It won't be open till you promise to stop larking. The fact is, Wharton, I don't care for these larks, and if you can't behave yourself a little better, I shall have to reconsider my promise to stay with you for Easter. You can't expect a fellow to stand this sort of thing!"

Wharton made a sign to the nabob and they tiptoed away, leaving the Owl of the Remove under the impression that they were still waiting outside the door. Both the juniors were grinning.

They descended the stairs quietly. Wells met them in the hall, and inquired whether breakfast was to be taken up to Master Bunter's room.

"Not till he rings for it," said Harry.

"Very good, sir!"

The two juniors strolled out of the House. Bunter was not likely to ring for breakfast while he supposed that they were waiting outside his door. But how long the fat junior could hold out without a meal was a rather interesting question. Sooner or later it seemed certain that famine would compel the uninvited guest to surrender, and probably rather sooner than later. Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh sauntered into the park, fresh and bright with the green of sunny spring.

"We'll give him an hour," said Harry. "He won't be able to hold out longer than that. Then we'll walk him to the station. The fat villain's jolly well not going to stick. It wouldn't be fair on the other fellows when they

come. We get enough Bunter at Greyfriars—too much, in fact."

"The too-muchfulness is terrific!" agreed the nabob.

At a distance from the house the juniors came in sight of Jessop, the colonel's keeper. He was standing by a fence that divided the park from a lane, talking to someone who was on the other side of the fence. Wharton glanced at him carelessly, and then gave a start.

"My hat! That rotter again!"

"The esteemed and ridiculous Wilmot!" ejaculated the nabob.

It was the face of the black-haired man that showed over the fence. Wharton looked at him with a gleam in his eyes, and hurried towards the spot. The man was evidently questioning the keeper, and Wharton could guess on what topic. His face was dark with anger as he hurried up.

The black-haired man glanced at him, smiled ironically, and turned away, with a nod to the keeper, and walked down the lane. Jessop looked round and touched his hat to the colonel's nephew.

"What did that man want, Jessop?" asked Harry.

"Can't make him out, sir," answered Jessop. "He's a very civil-spoken gentleman, sir. A stranger in these parts. He was asking me whether your American uncle was staying at the lodge, sir. I was telling him that he must have made a mistake. I told him that my master's nephew hadn't any American relations that I've ever heard of."

Jessop looked rather curiously at his master's nephew.

"The name he mentioned was Poindexter, sir. I'd never heard it before, though I've seen it in the newspapers. There's been a lot in the newspapers about a man of that name—a swindler of some sort, so far as I can make out. That gentleman thought he was staying here, perhaps; but I told him he was mistaken."

Jessop touched his hat again and moved away. Harry Wharton stood with compressed lips, his eyes gleaming.

"The cheeky blighter," he muttered,

"questioning the keeper! The cheek of it! We shall have it all over the place soon that that American swindler is a connection of the family. He's jolly well going to be stopped!"

"The stopfulness is the proper caper," agreed Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "What about the emphatic kickfulness?"

"That's what I was thinking of," said Harry. "Come on, Inky!"

He swung himself over the fence into the lane, and the Nabob of Bhanipur followed him. The black-haired man was sauntering away towards a two-seater that stood at the corner of the road. The two juniors broke into a run and overtook him in a few minutes.

Wilmot, as he had called himself, turned quickly at the sound of running feet behind him. He faced the two Greyfriars fellows coolly.

"You cheeky scoundrel!" exclaimed Wharton, his eyes blazing. "I've told you that your precious Poindexter is no connection of mine. As you choose to disbelieve it, you're going to get a ragging. Collar him, Inky!"

"The collarfulness will be terrific!" chuckled the nabob.

The black-haired man sprang back as the two juniors rushed at him. He had evidently not expected such drastic measures; but he put up his hands at once in defence. He was, as the juniors knew from previous experience, a sinewy and powerful fellow, probably a match for the two of them together. But they rushed him down with great determination.

"Stand back!" he panted. "Stand back, or——"

He had no time to say more. The two juniors were upon him; and though he struck out fiercely, he was overborne by the rush and went sprawling in the lane.

"Hands off!" he yelled furiously.

"Pitch him into the ditch, Inky."

"What-ho!" panted the nabob.

The black-haired man struggled fiercely; but the Greyfriars fellows were in deadly earnest. In spite of his desperate resistance, he was rolled over towards the ditch at the side of the lane. The spring rains had filled it almost to the brim.

"Hands off! Let go! Oh gad!"

Splash!

The black-haired man went bodily into the ditch, with a mighty splash. He rolled headlong in the water, which flowed over him and covered him completely for a moment.

The next moment his head came up, and he stood with the water to his armpits, spluttering for breath, and streaming with water and mud.

"You—you young scoundrels!" he panted.

"Now clear off, you rotter!" said Wharton. "If that lesson isn't enough for you, you'll get some more. Come on, Inky!"

And the two juniors walked away towards the gate of Wharton Lodge, leaving the drenched and dripping man shaking a furious fist after them as they went.

#### THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

##### A Short Farewell!

**T**AP! "Oh dear!" groaned Billy Bunter.

Tap!

"Beast!"

"H'm! Your breakfast, sir!"

"Oh!" said Bunter.

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BY STANTON HOPE.

## THE OPENING CHAPTERS RETOLD.

LIEUTENANT GUY EASTON, SUB-LIEUTENANT DUNN, and CHOTAJEE, a Bengali interpreter, of H.M.S. Falcon, having been ordered to board a suspicious-looking dhow heading a southerly course out of the Red Sea, are cut adrift during a storm and cast ashore on the Island of Khoof. Gathering information that slave-trading is being carried on between Sheikh Haji of Khoof and Ras Dhin, a giant Abyssinian, the trio, disguised as Arabs, succeed in boarding a mahala bound for Aden. The mahala is attacked by a villainous crew of cut-throats in the pay of the slave-traders, but Guy proves equal to the occasion and the enemy are consequently made prisoners and handed over to Captain Knox, of the Falcon. Realising the futility of trying to hunt down by means of patrol ships men as cunning as the terrible Ras Dhin, the Admiralty put Guy in charge of the Vixen, the fastest submarine in commission. Receiving a wireless message that a slave dhow has been seen making for the direction of Khoof Island, Guy follows hard in the wake of the enemy craft.

(Now read on.)

### Caught Red-Handed!

**T**HAT the dhow should not see the new submarine, Guy decided to dive.

"Down bridge gear!" he ordered.

With naval smartness, the ladder and the conning-tower became alive with bluejackets, who passed the canvas screens and rails down for stowage.

"Stations! Trim for diving!"

The young lieutenant shut down the conning-tower hatch and locked it. The Vixen was watertight.

Members of the crew stood by the hydroplane levers and the control wheels of the horizontal rudders. Each of these men had his eyes on a dial with a stationary brass indicator. Others stood by the levers for opening the valves of the ballast tanks.

Tony, who had not received so much keen training in the submarines as Guy had, was filled with a curious sense of awe.

The thumping and vibration died away as an artificer shut down the gas-engine. Except for the wish-wash of the water against the thin steel hull of this pocket submarine, there was a deathly silence. Then, suddenly, a musical hum, like bees in a meadow, fell on the ears. It rose in crescendo till it resembled a thoroughly disturbed hive. The electric motors had taken over the job of turning the propellers and driving the ship. A gas-engine needs air, and a submarine below the surface only has a limited amount of air which she takes down with her. If the gas-engine were run with the hatches battened down, every man on board would quickly be suffocated to death!

"Flood main ballast tanks!" commanded Guy.

An ugly gurgling arose as the sea rushed through the opening valves into special chambers. As its weight took away the buoyancy of the boat, the submarine sat lower and lower in the water. The heavy waves which had been buffeting her, thumped over the whole of the steel hull. The needles of the gauges quivered with life.

The voice of the coxswain boomed a warning: "Deep, sir!"

The Vixen was fully awash, and Guy ordered the sea-cocks to be closed.

"Dive to twenty feet!" he ordered. He peered into the eye-piece of the

periscope, while the hydroplane levers and rudder wheels were daintily moved over. And then the Vixen went down in a long oblique dive until she was brought up on an even keel more than three fathoms deep.

"My hat!" breathed Tony. "She's a great little craft!"

So far, Chotajee had made himself inconspicuous on board. He was bewildered; the crazy lurching of the small submarine in the heavy seas, a movement so different from the Falcon, had greatly upset his "cistern" as he called it. His face wore a greener hue than the faces of the two naval chums, who had not yet fully got rid of the effect of the stain.

The great waves swung and curled overhead, but down here was a marine world of peace and calm. The Vixen, with only her "eye"—periscope—showing, moved on a perfectly even keel in chase of the dhow.

"My honourable aunts!" babbled Chotajee. "Truly will I have many wonders to tell uneducated persons in the bazaars! Without doubts many, who have not had advantages of seamanlike upbringing as self, will deem it thumpful lie when I make information that I have undergone excursions to locker of esteemed Davy Jones."

Beside interpreter, Chotajee had been appointed storekeeper. This was not arduous, and, to his disgust, he had been told off also to act as additional

---

**Hidden away in some secret lair on Khoof Island are slaves and ammunition—and Guy Easton, of the British Navy, is determined to locate them!**

---

bawarchi, or cook. He helped to prepare the curry and rice on an electric stove for the evening meal, and by the time the meal was over, the submarine was hot on the heels of the dhow.

Tony relieved Guy at the periscope.

"I can make out the lights of Khoof dead ahead, sir," he reported. "The dhow's making for the place where we tackled Ras Dhin when he was going to give old Chota a larruping with a rhinoceros-hide whip."

"I distrust any beastly dhow that hauls into Khoof," remarked Guy. "We'll keep a sharp dekho on her. We can tackle that hooker any time, but it's old Haji that we want to catch red-handed!"

The Vixen, which was armed with the newest swivel torpedo-tubes and half a dozen twenty-one inch Whiteheads on the torpedo racks, kept about four cables' lengths astern of the dhow. Her four-inch gun was fitted with a tampion and a watertight cover over the end of the muzzle. She carried, moreover, a fine armoury of rifles, machine-guns, automatic pistols, hand grenades, and smoke bombs.

Seeing but unseen, the Vixen shadowed the dhow, which crept past the familiar cove at Khoof. Slowly she edged round the coast and put into another cove and berthed alongside a roughly constructed jetty, which the naval chums had not previously seen.

Guy left the second course of the meal—"Scotchful woodcock on toast" as Chotajee called it—and took over the eye-piece of the periscope from Tony. Cleverly, by a series of orders, he brought the submarine round to the far side of the jetty, and, after slowly cruising, hove-to.

For long he watched.

"Anything doing, sir?" inquired Tony impatiently.

Guy was too absorbed watching to heed him.

"My hat!" he breathed hoarsely.

Like a cat on hot bricks, Tony paced the narrow space of steel deck. The hull of the submarine was chiefly occupied by machinery and a forest of asbestos-covered pipes, but ratings who could find an excuse, lingered near the doors of the control compartment to hear what was going on.

"For the love of Mike, what's up, admiral—sir, I mean?" Tony pleaded. "Why the thump don't they fit these old boxes-o'-tricks with dual periscopes?"

"Smokin' Itaddocks!" breathed Guy.

"Here, take a dekho!" Tony took a dive for the periscope eye-piece which his senior relinquished to him.

### A Dangerous Landing!

**W**HOOH!" Tony drew a long breath as he gazed into what looked like a pair of field-glasses fitted to a movable stem, while he gripped two projecting handles by which the periscope could be moved round.

A circular picture was presented to his eye—a most amazing scene, such as might have done for an illustration to the "Arabian Nights." The rakish dhow, with her sail furled, was moored by heavy ropes to the jetty. Except for the Arabian stars, the only light was the mellow rays of two horn lanterns hung above a broad wooden gangway. Down this gangway and along the rickety jetty were filing a number of coal-black slaves, all bearing heavy oblong boxes, and urged on by the whips of their white-robed Arab masters!

A strained look in his face, Tony turned from the periscope.

"I think," he muttered, "old Haji has been caught red-handed this time." Guy nodded.

"No ordinary naval patrol ship could have got near enough to see this lot," he said. "If they'd been cornered, the Arabs aboard that dhow would have found some way of getting rid of that black cargo."

"But why the thump should they land slaves here?"

"Because, old son," Guy answered, "this dhow had the Falcon sitting on her stern earlier in the day. Probably she's got wind that there are other patrol ships not far away. She's come to land her cargo before dashing off to sea. When she's nobbled—as she's bound to be with both the Hawk and the Falcon in the neighbourhood, the Arab skipper will roll his eyes and innocently ask why an honest trader has to have his bales of dates disturbed by a search party of hoity bluejackets."

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"H'm! And when the coast is clear he'll come back, I suppose, and ship his 'black ivory' again?"

"That's the ticket, Tony! You can see now how the Hawk was diddled."

"Ay, old son—sir, that is to say."

"You can bet your sea-boots that the other dhow did the same trick as this one. She hopped into Khoof, unloaded her cargo, and shoved off again. The Hawk swooped down on her and found nix."

Chotajee, who had been listening around a watertight door, approached and gave his best imitation of a naval salute.

"May I make suggestions for trickful naval strategy, sahib?" he said. "As a grad of illustrious Indian University and 'Failed B.A.' I have achieved certain brainy competence and—"

"Buzz!"

"May I suggestfully point out, in words of Poet Shakespeare—"

"Beat it!" snorted Guy. "Don't shove your oar in till you're asked. When I want your advice on 'naval strategy' I'll send for you."

Then he turned to Tony.

"There's a deeper mystery about this island than we thought, old man," he murmured. "We'll put out to sea, and I'll give you a signal to send to the Falcon. She can be getting up to Khoof in readiness; then we'll push along round to the other side of the island."

"What for?"

"To find some landing-place. I'm going ashore to take a look-see round and find out where they stow these poor swabs of slaves."

"Better let me go, sir," ventured Tony.

"You'll remain on board in charge of the boat," Guy told him. "I shall take Chota as interpreter—not that I expect he'll have to do much except keep his ears open and listen."

"M-m-my s-s-assinted aunts!" stammered Chotajee. "I don't f-funkfully shirk visitations to shore, but in words of Poet AEsop, this is 'putting head in lion's den' with vengeance!"

The Vixen crept away and stood out for a couple of miles. Then Guy issued an order for her to go to the top.

"Surface! Blow main ballast!"

As if a nest of snakes had been disturbed, there was a fierce hissing as the compressed air from the flasks blew the sea-water from the tanks. The rudders and hydroplanes were put at a slant and the submarine went sliding at an angle to the surface. Her lean grey bulk, glistening wet with water, emerged, like some strange sea beast, from the depths.

A wireless signal was sent to the Falcon, and the Vixen crept round to the northerly side of Khoof.

Swiftly Guy made his preparations. He didn't trouble about Arab disguise, but wore dark clothes, and rubbed dark-coloured oil over his face and hands. The main thing was to avoid being seen.

A collapsible boat, brown in colour, was lowered into the water, and Guy and Chotajee entered it.

"Stay about half a mile out, Tony," ordered Guy. "If we're not back two hours before dawn, or you don't get signals, send a petty officer and a blue-jacket to look for us. Tell 'em they're not to waste much time. They're to get back before daylight, and you must submerge and watch the island from the periscope."

"Ay, ay, sir! If we don't see you or

get any signal we'll take it you've been stuck full of Arab knives."

"Brrrrgh!" shivered Chotajee.

Then Tony added:

"My aunt! I wish I were going with you, Guy!"

"To avoid d-disappointments," Chotajee spoke up, "I will make relinquishment of prior claim to stretch legs ashore. With reluctance I extend such privilege. As unremembered British poet has quoth, 'it brings more blessedness to give than to receive.'"

"Especially when the gifts are Arab knives!" Guy chuckled. "However, I'm afraid Tony can't take advantage of your giddy generosity. You're the interpreter, and if you do your job well I'll let you embroider another border of oak leaves round that 'kassab' badge of yours."

In another minute or two Guy was rowing strongly and noiselessly towards the shore, while Chotajee sat in the stern of the small collapsible boat, remembering with regret that he had left in his will the name of a certain cousin who had offended him. There were no lights on this rocky part of the coast, which Guy knew fairly well because the Falcon had once done some surveying work in the waters close in.

Numerous crags, gulleys and small caves worn by the sea in the softer rock abounded along this coast, and it took Guy some time to select a landing-place. Presently he found a ledge, and he and Chotajee landed, folded the boat, and carried it up to a place above high tide mark.

It was difficult to mark the spot, but Guy carefully noted the contours of the coast and decided that he could find it again by such light as was afforded by the Arabian stars. Then, with the reluctant Chotajee at his heels, he led the way over the rocky cliffs, across a worn and slippery incline, where the babu nearly took a giant-slide into the sea, and to the higher ground, where the going was easier.

A mile away they could see the lights of Khoof village, and they knew that a grim caravan of slaves was on the move by the repeated snap of whips and clank of chains.

"The despised slavers are coming this way," Chotajee whispered. "With respectfulness I suggest, sahib, that we emulate the feat of Brer Rabbit of fabled renown and respectfully lie low."

Guy nodded.

"We'll see where these Arab swabs are taking the slaves," he grunted.

With the scent of growing myrrh in their nostrils, they crouched among some coarse shrubs and saw the grim caravan approach. The negro slaves were staggering under the weight of ammunition boxes, and most of them had loose chains dragging from their ankles. They shuffled dismally along in single file, with the Arabs moving up and down among them exhorting them to greater effort, and at intervals cracking their whips across the slaves' bodies. Altogether there were fifty-five slaves, for Guy counted them, and nearly two dozen Arabs, all armed with knives, and many with modern rifles.

The sorry procession passed within twenty yards of where Guy and Chotajee were lurking. Almost opposite the watchers one negro uttered a gurgling cry and pitched from the file, the heavy ammunition box thudding down from his shoulder to the ground. An Arab leaped to him, beat the captive to his feet, and thrust him back into the

file, where he lurched onward, like a man in a stupor.

"By heaven!" Guy choked. "These Arab dogs shall pay for this!"

His hand was on one of the automatic pistols he had brought with him, and only strict self-discipline prevented him from putting a bullet through the hide of the brute with the whip.

The slave caravan disappeared over the edge of the cliffs, and when all the men were out of sight, Guy and Chotajee wriggled over the ground like snakes to see where they had gone.

The whole lot were gathered on a broad rocky ledge which was still wet from the ebbing tide.

This part of the coast was a good quarter of a mile from where Guy had hidden the collapsible boat. He felt puzzled that the ammunition boxes had been brought from coast to coast of the small island.

"Perhaps, sahib," Chotajee suggested in a low tone, "the debased Arabs desire transference of misfortunate slaves to certain other dhow."

Guy made no reply, but remained watching for some minutes, only to find that the slaves had definitely settled down on the ledge of rock from which the tide was receding, guarded by the armed Arabs.

"You stay here, Chota," Guy said at last, "and I'll go and take a look-see at the village. I'm anxious to find out if that brute Ras Dhin is still about."

Chotajee was startled.

"Sahib," he pleaded, "will not slaves remain intact here until our return if I respectfully take walk with you? With the submarine-boat on guard at sea, no debased dhow can approach without discovery, and of certainty the unfortunates cannot take peregrinations down into sea like esteemed Vixen."

"You're right there, Chota," Guy agreed. "It certainly looks as if the Arabs are waiting for someone to take them off. Hanged, though, if I can see what the game really is! Yes, Tony—I mean Sub-Lieutenant Dunn—can be trusted to keep a weather-eye open. They can't be embarked without him knowing about it, and it won't take long to get to the village and back. Come on!"

Second thoughts were best, he decided. Chotajee was not much good at playing a lone hand, and it was perhaps advisable to have him lest any odd scraps of conversation could be overheard in the village.

The greatest caution was needed in approaching the place, for veiled women water-carriers were moving between some dwellings and two or three wells among the date palms.

There seemed to be some kind of celebration going on, for a big striped marquee had been erected near the largest dwelling—obviously the house of Sheikh Haji.

"By the sound of it," Guy muttered, "there's a feast to-night, and the old sheikh's house isn't big enough to hold the guests. Let's try to take a peck into things."

Crawling on hands and knees, Guy and Chotajee made for the direction of the marquee.

*(The two chums are running their heads into danger, but Guy, at least, doesn't worry. He's determined at all costs to get to the bottom of the barbaric traffic in slavery and put a stop to it. More thrilling chapters next week.)*



**THE MAN FROM THE STATES!**

(Continued from page 24.)

He rolled to the locked door. The lure of food was irresistible.

"I say, Wells—"

"Sir!" answered the butler.

"I say, are those beasts there?"

Possibly Wells did not recognise that description as applying to his master's nephew and a prince of India. Possibly he did not choose to recognise it.

"Certainly not, sir!" answered Wells.

"Oh, good! Bring in the grub!"

Bunter unlocked the door and opened it. Wells entered with a well-laden tray in his hands. At his heels, Harry Wharton and Hurree Janset Ram Singh marched in. Bunter blinked at them.

"Wells! You awful beast! You said they weren't there!" he howled.

The faintest of smiles flickered over Wells' smooth, urbane countenance.

"Indeed, sir! Were you alluding to Master Harry and his Highness Hurree Janset Ram Singh, sir?"

"Oh, shut up, blow you!"

"Certainly, sir."

Wells placed the tray on a table and withdrew. Billy Bunter blinked uneasily at the chums of the Remove.

"I say, you fellows! No larks, you know."

"Better bag that brekker," said Harry. "You've got a journey before you."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Ten minutes!" said the captain of the Remove cheerfully. "Better make the most of it, old fat man!"

Bunter blinked at him morosely. Then he sat down to breakfast. That, at least, was so much to the good.

It was an ample breakfast. But it vanished in ten minutes. Billy Bunter would willingly have prolonged the meal. But there was danger of the meal being left unfinished if he did. He bolted it.

"Ready, old bean?" said Wharton.

"Here's your hat!"

"Beast!"

"Here's your coat!"

"Rotter!"

"Time, you know!"

"The timefulness is terrific; my absurd fat Bunter."

"The—the fact is, I—I'm rather

tired," said Bunter. "I—I think I'll take a little rest—"

"That's all right; if you're tired, we're willing to help you. Take his other arm, Inky!"

"The helpfulness of the esteemed Bunter is a preposterous pleasure."

Bunter walked out between two smiling but determined juniors. He blinked round him as he went.

"I—I say, I—I want to say good-bye to Colonel Wharton—"

"Colonel Wharton has gone out in the car."

"Well, I want to say good-bye to Miss Wharton."

"Miss Wharton has gone in the car with my uncle."

"Oh, you beast!" gasped Bunter.

The three juniors walked downstairs. Wells, in the hall, smiled faintly. They walked out at the door.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I'll wait till the car comes back," said Bunter.

"I can't walk to the station, you know."

"Try, old chap," urged Wharton.

"I'm going to kick you if you slack down. Try your hardest!"

"Beast!" Bunter found that he could walk. He walked down the drive to the gates. He walked down the road. With a smiling face on either side of him, and an arm through each of his fat arms, he walked on towards the village.

Billy Bunter did not seem to enjoy that walk to the village. His face was very morose. His companions were still affectionately holding his arms when he rolled into the village station. Harry Wharton bought a ticket, slipped it into Bunter's pocket, and walked him on to the platform.

"Change at Wimford," he said.

"Here's your train. Good-bye, Bunter!"

Bunter plumped into a seat in the railway carriage. Harry Wharton closed the door on him. A fat face glared at them from the window.

"Good-bye!"

"Rotter!"

The train rolled out of the station. Wharton and Hurree Singh watched it disappear down the line, and walked out of the station. They walked cheerily back to Wharton Lodge, with a happy feeling that they were, at long last, done with William George Bunter till

next term, though it really seemed too good to be true.

As a matter of fact, it was!

"Here comes the car!"

It was close on lunch-time when the car was heard on the drive. Harry Wharton and the nabob went out to meet Colonel Wharton and Aunt Amy as they came in. The car stopped at the steps. The chums of the Remove gazed at it. They had expected to see two occupants in the car. There were three!

"I say, you fellows!"

"Bunter!" said Wharton faintly.

"Lucky I happened to come across your uncle's car at Wimford, wasn't it, old chap?" said Bunter affably.

"Yes, was it not lucky, Harry?" said Miss Wharton. "It saved Bunter a very long walk back, and he is not, I think, a good walker. I think he would have been very tired if he had walked all the way from Wimford. So it was very fortunate we saw him there, was it not?"

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. "Oh, yes, frightfully!"

Billy Bunter kept very close to Miss Wharton as they went into the house. There was safety for him under Aunt Amy's wing, if nowhere else. The colonel gave his nephew a rather curious look, and followed them in. Harry Wharton and Hurree Janset Ram Singh looked at one another expressively.

"Done!" said Wharton.

"The donefulness is terrific!" agreed the nabob.

"I—I—I'll—"

Words seemed to fail the captain of the Remove. The juniors went in to lunch. Billy Bunter, packing away two or three lunches, one after another, grinned at them cheerily across the table. Bunter, at least, was satisfied; and, after all, that was all that mattered!

THE END.

(Next week's MAGNET will contain another topping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. Note the title, chums: "THE MYSTERY OF THE MILL!" and then get your newsagent to reserve you a copy. It'll save you being disappointed.)

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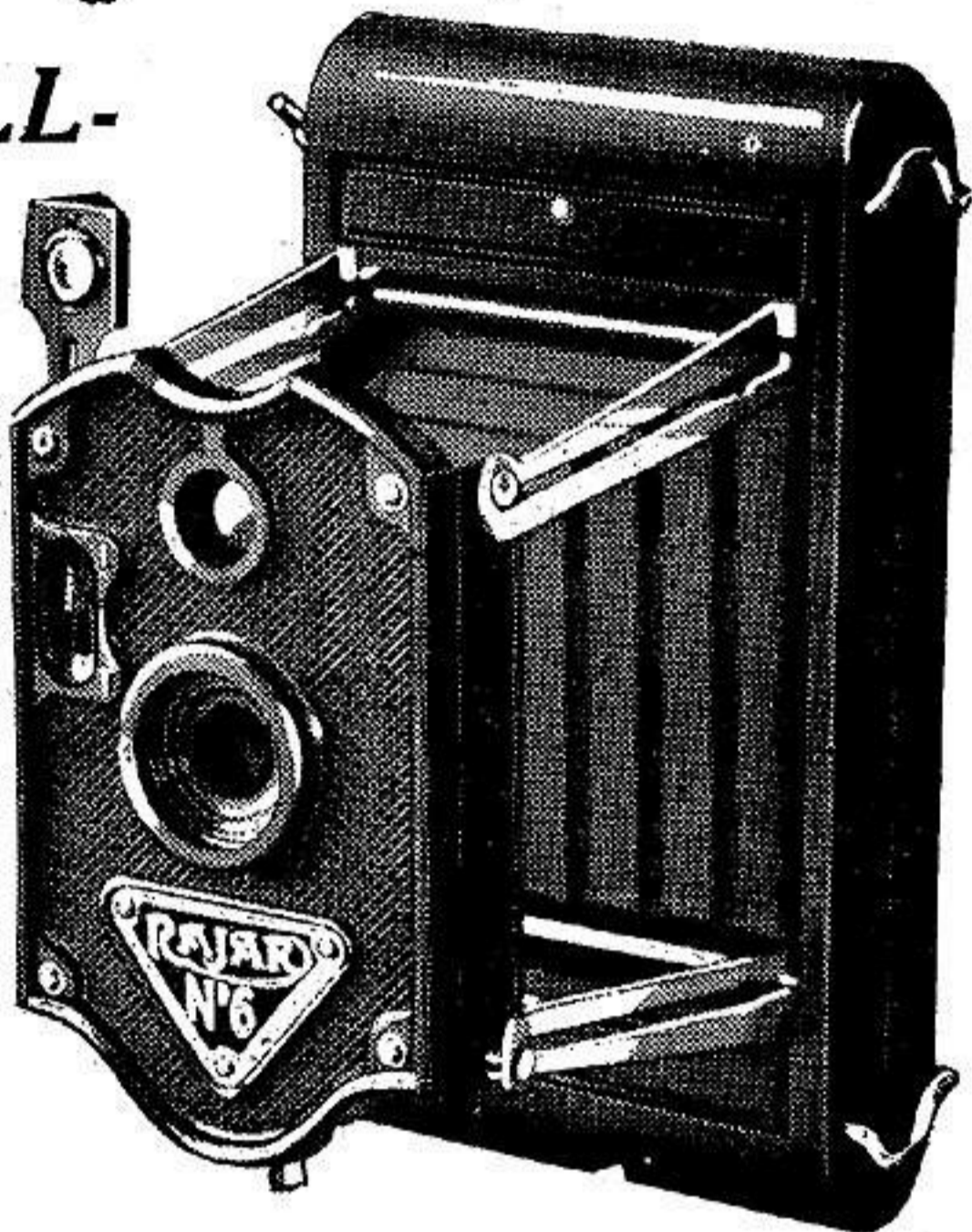


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**IF I AM CHUMP ENOUGH**  
to lend any more money to Bunter, I shall deserve to be kicked all round Greyfriars, and I hope I am.  
**LORD MAULEVERER (Remove).**

# Greyfriars Herald

No. 39.

LAUGH AND GROW FAT.

Edited by  
**HARRY WHARTON, F.R.S.**

**LATEST EXTRA GOOD EDITION**

April 4th, 1931.

**WANTED!**  
Information about the fendish tortures in China and Japan, or books dealing with the agonies of the Spanish Inquisition. My tag has been getting very cheeky lately.  
**GERALD LODER (Sixth).**

## "HOLIDAY ANNUAL" QUOTED IN LAW DISPUTE

### FATE OF THREE DOUGHNUTS

#### Fourpence a Week for Being a Judge

Before Mr. Justice Wharton in the Common-room Sessions, Sidney James Snoop, described as a professional sneaker, of no fixed abode, brought a petition to be discharged under the act. The petition was opposed by the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy (Mr. Johnny Bull), and by a large crowd of Snoop's creditors.

The Judge: "I'm dashed if I understand what all this is about. I don't know anything about the law, you know."

The Official Receiver: "The point is, your lordship, that Snoop has filed a petition in bankruptcy, with assets amounting to the sum of six pounds, six shillings, and sixpence, and liabilities spread among twelve creditors to the tune of two pounds eight. His only possession is three stale doughnuts, and the creditors want to seize and divide the said doughnuts."

The Judge: "Well, let 'em! You don't want me to divide them, do you?"

The O.R.: "Nunno, your lordship! But the position is, you see, that Snoop claims that he is entitled to hang on to

the said doughnuts, under the Sacred Personal Possession clause of 1931, and he refuses to whack them out to his creditors."

The Judge: "Like the deuce, he does! You put up with those doughnuts at once, Snoop!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith, K.C., counsel for the petitioner, rose hastily.

"But, your lordship, under the 1931 clause—"

"Bother the 1931 clause! I don't know anything about it!"

"If your lordship is ignorant of the elements of your lordship's business," continued Mr. Vernon-Smith sarcastically, "your lordship will find the Bankruptcy Law fully explained in the current 'Holiday Annual.' The passage runs:

"Fags may retain up to, but not exceeding, three cooked or uncooked herrings; also a bar of soap, in the unlikely event of such an article figuring in their personal property."

The Judge: "Sounds pretty much like driven to me!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith gasped.

"The articles explaining that law was written by no less a person than Mr. Peter Todd, K.C.—an eminent authority on the laws of Greyfriars," he said.

"And, whether your lordship likes it or not, the said doughnuts are sacred personal possessions, and may be retained by the petitioner. So your lordship may put that in your lordship's pipe and smoke it."

The Judge: "Produce the said doughnuts."

The said doughnuts were handed up to his lordship in a bag. He smelt them carefully.

"Grooogh!" he said. "I should think these doughnuts were made before the Flood. The best turn I can do Snoop's creditors is to sentence Snoop to eat them."

Snoop immediately put himself outside the said doughnuts, and was rushed to the cottage hospital for a hasty operation. His lordship summed-up.

"I don't know anything at all about the silly law," he said. "All I know is that I get paid fourpence a week for being a judge."

His lordship then left to draw his weekly stipendium.



Harold Skinner organised a most successful smoking meet in the woodshed last week, in aid of the Cottage Hospital. The admission was one shilling, and this entitled the donor to free cigars.

The cigars were a lot stronger than they left the audace. The air was blue when Skinner rose up to sing his comic song, and coughing and spluttering was the order of the day. When Mr. Whibley attempted to deliver Hamlet's soliloquy it sounded as though Hamlet had a severe cold in his chest. Thuswise:

"To be or not to be—that is the—whoo-hoo! Shhh! Whether 'tis—key-woosh!—in the mind to suff—suff-suffor the slings and—oo-oo-oo-oo! Hoo-wooo!—outrageous fortune, or tit-tit-take arms against a sea of—hoosh!—and by opposing, end them—hoo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo!"

It was quite interesting.

The guests were rolling about on the floor in joy as the concert concluded.

## SKINNER'S SMOKING CONCERT

### In Aid of Cottage Hospital

#### GUESTS "ROLL ABOUT" IN JOY

Mr. Skinner's final donation to the hospital consisted of the entire audience.

**BOOK NOW FOR EASTER!**

Jangleman's Son is arranging big House Party for Easter at his palatial ancestral home. Guests will have the chance of mixing with the landed gentry and nobility. Terms: 5 guineas each for the weak-end. Immaculate deposit of 5 bob secures your booking!—Apply, W. G. Bunter, Esq., Remove Passage. (Print address: Bunter Court, Little Bunterford, Bunkshire.)

## OUR GREAT SERIAL

### THE MOATED MANSION

By **GEORGE WINGATE**

#### Thrills Galore

(Note by George Wingate: Wharton has been bothering me to write a serial story for the Herald. I have been compelled to refuse, owing to being "too busy." But he would not take "No" for an answer, so here's the first instalment. Somehow, I think it'll be the last instalment also.—G. W.)

"Ha, ha!" snarled Baron Brisket, drawing himself up to his full height of eleven-feet-six, and staring into the circular orbs of the champion wrestler.

"So you want to marry the beautiful Lady Luuva Ducko, do you?"

He reached for a revolver, but before his frenzied fingers found it, Hi Jinx, the mysterious Chinaman, had jumped at his throat and clutched it with hands that looked like an eagle's talons or a frog's feet—in fact, anything but hands.

"Oonka - kunka - winka - wing!" he screamed.

"Exactly so!" agreed the Hon. Ayril Droopie, who had been staring with frantic eyes at his friend, the Dish-bon Lemmon Squash.

At this moment Robin Banks, the burglar, forced his way into the house, their society, the safe, and the cash-box, and stuffing it into his coat pocket he sneered cynically and went out.

Then he jumped up and clasped him, but he ran into a house and hid himself in a coal-cellar, while he fell over a rope in the road and sat down hard.

(Continued at foot of next column.)



## WAR WITH HIGHCLIFFE TERRITORIALS IN ACTION

### Dispatch from Battle Front

(By Our Special War Correspondent.)

The first, third, and fourth battalions of the Greyfriars Territorials were engaged in a sharp battle with Posenby & Co., of Highcliffe, yesterday. It seems that Posenby heard that the Territorials were going to have an afternoon's out-ing, and he determined to queer the game. Instead of that, it was Posenby who was queered.

Colonel Wharton, M.C., M.P., P.C., D.S.O., was in command of the first battalion when the battle opened. The first battalion were going to ambush Vernon-Smith's lot in Pegg Lane, and they commenced operations by walking into a Highcliffe ambush and getting pretty well bumped and frog-marched. Lieutenant-Colonel Cherry, V.C., P.T.O., blacked Posenby's eye, and is hereby mentioned in dispatches for valour.

The order came to the battalion to hide themselves in an ambush. Fanco-Corporation Bunter, I.O.U., L.S.D., hid himself away with such masterly strategy that he hasn't managed to find himself again yet.

## HOW TO KEEP PESTS

### Hints on Guinea-Pigs and Rabbits

Before saying anything else, I should like to draw the attention of the Editor to the fact that the title of this article contains a printer's error. The word is PESTS—not PESTS. It's a time something was done about this matter.

Many fellows at Greyfriars keep pets; but few of them take proper care of the poor creatures. This little advice will, I hope, help them to keep their pets in comfort.

Take dogs, for instance. Some fellows think that all a dog needs is a pound of biscuits and a bottle of Keating's Powder. But this is wrong. In the first place, a dog should be given a toothbrush and tube of paste. How can you expect the poor dog to keep its teeth in order unless you give it a toothbrush?

The dog should also be given a mild gargle with antiseptic fluid each day, to keep the gums away. It is necessary to bath the dog once a week, but you needn't worry about washing its face. A dog is quite capable of washing its own face. Provided you give it a

bit of soap and a clean towel.

**GUINEA-PIGS.** These little creatures are never entirely happy, owing to the fact that they are continually looking behind them and wondering what has happened to their tails. To obviate this, you should buy a patent non-dropping rubber, with electrical wagging equipment. Fasten this on to the creature's stern, and your guinea-pig will be as happy as the day is long. (The tails in question can be purchased from any "re-tailer.")

**RABBITS** are often a source of great trouble. One Greyfriars fag kept rabbits, and admitted that he had not changed the rodents' bedclothes for nearly a month. Think of it! Sleeping in the same sheets for a month on end!

Moreover, he herded his rabbits into one common dormitory, instead of giving them separate cubicles. This naturally made the sensitive creatures sickly.

Always give your rabbit a separate cubicle in the hutch, and change its bedclothes at least once a week. A rabbit is perfectly willing to make its own bed and wash up its own breakfast dish; but it does demand a little cleanliness.

**ELEPHIA**—(If thesee it!—Ed.)

## SOCIETY GOSSIP

### News from the UPPER SEVEN

Richard Penfold, the Poet Laureate, has just finished an epic poem of 1,629,933 lines, commemorating the victory of Greyfriars in the Public Schools' Challenge Cup. Fortunately, however, he has lost it.

A visitor to Courtyard recently complained that he could not find the Town Hall. "This is not surprising," Mr. W. G. Bunter was standing in front of it at the time.

Mr. Joseph Banks, of the Green Man in Friarale, has retired to a secluded spot for three weeks by order of his doctor. We understand, however, that his "doctor" called it twenty-one days.

Mr. Claude Hopkins, the musical genius of the Sholl, is suffering from an acute adagio in the sonata.

Mr. Horace Coker's monstrous new numbers seven hairs—a new hair making its appearance on Wednesday last. Mr. Coker is spraying his upper lip with garden fertiliser.

Mr. Paul Frost is cleaning up his gun in readiness for a bat-and-mouse shoot in April.

Mr. Quetch is preaching to use the cane to with his left hand, as he will inevitably soon jerk his right arm off its hinges.



(Continued from previous column.)

on the pavement, glaring at the house where he had disappeared.

"Traitor!" stormed Sydney, the Strangler, struggling terrifically. "I will have your life—or, failing that, your insurance policy!"

Giving him a steely glance and an "iron" -ical grin, he closed desperately with him and chewed his eyebrows to ribbons. Not stopping to do more than throw a passing glance and a house-brick at the policeman, he made his way to the Moated Mansion and was received by Miss Sonia Boomer.

"Have you discovered the fate of the golden dustbin?" asked the Dowager Duchess of Dumble, glancing at her husband, the Dowager Duck of Dumble.

"No," confessed Frederick, hanging his head so far down that it fell into his trousers pocket. "But," he added, untroublingly, "I'll do so, as sure as my name is Ronald!"

(To be continued—perhaps.)

(I say, Wingate, I've read this about forty times, and I'm blessed if I can see the slightest sense in it. What does it all mean? HARRY WHARTON.)