

# THE BEST SCHOOL STORIES INSIDE!

Week Ending—  
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New  
Series.  
No. 137.

Greyfriars



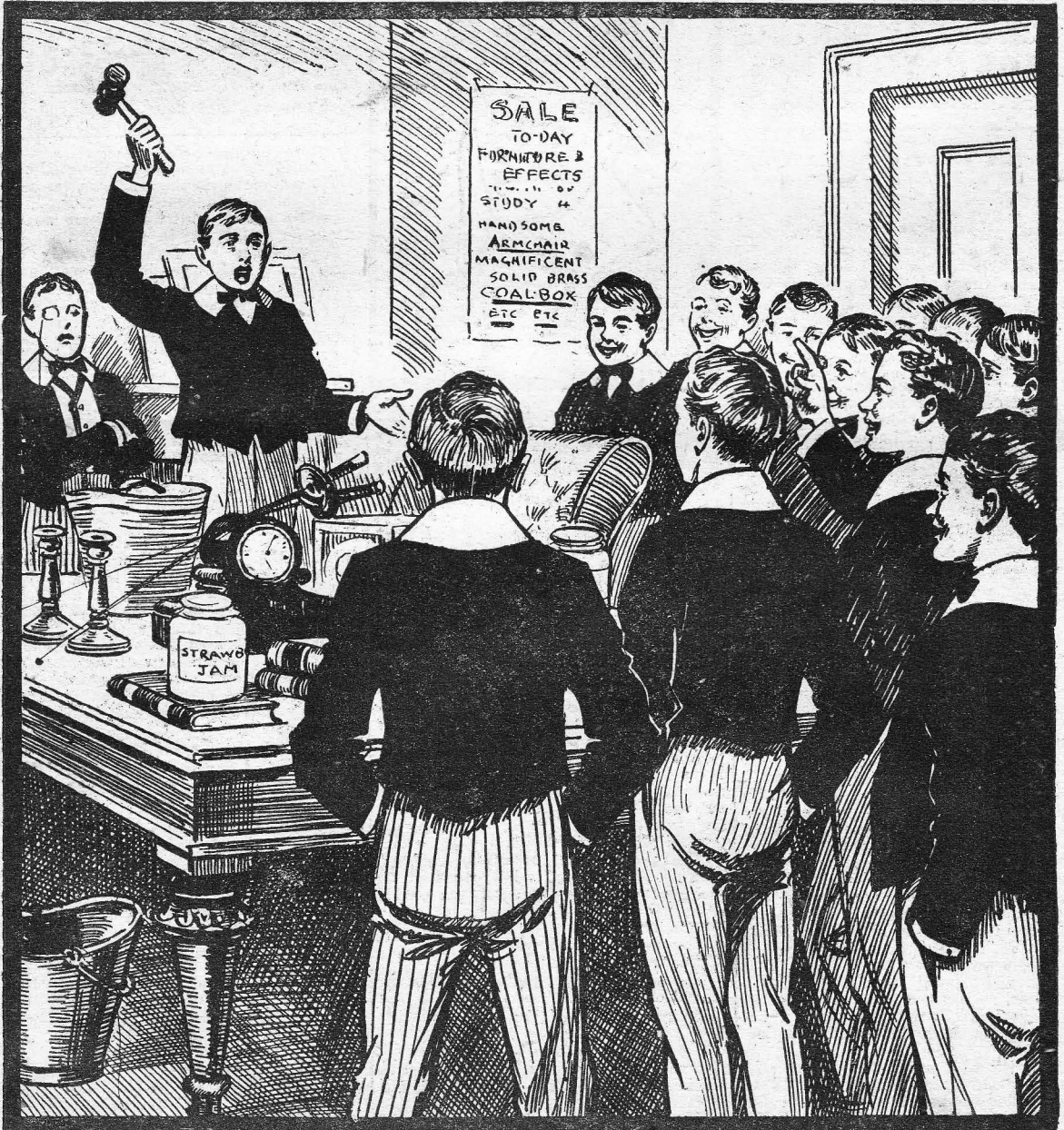
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# The POPULAR

Stories, Jokes & Pictures  
of Greyfriars, Rookwood & St. Jims

Rookwood

St. Jims



## THE SALE BY AUCTION OF MORNINGTON'S BELONGINGS!

(An amazing scene from the long complete tale of Rookwood inside.)

**TWO LONG  
COMPLETE SCHOOL  
TALES  
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S  
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement.  
Edited by WILLIAM GEORGE  
BUNTER of Greyfriars.

# THE ROAD TO RUIN!

A Long Complete Tale  
of **JIMMY SILVER &  
CO. and VALENTINE  
MORNINGTON** of  
:: Rookwood School. ::

By **OWEN  
CONQUEST.**

(Author of the Famous Rookwood  
Yarns in "The Boys' Friend.")

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Just Like Jimmy!

"**A** BOUT Mornny?"  
It was Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Rookwood Fourth, who spoke.

Lovell, Raby, and Newcome, his chums in the end study, replied with really remarkable unanimity:

"Bother Mornny!"

And Lovell added, with still more emphasis:

"Blow Mornny!"

It was quite evident that Mornington of the Fourth was not popular in the end study.

Jimmy Silver smiled serenely.

"About Mornny?" he repeated.

"Give us a rest!" urged Raby.

"Never mind Mornny. We're all fed up with Mornny. Erroll's about the only chap in the Fourth who can really stand him. What about the final with Bagshot, Jimmy?"

"Never mind the final with Bagshot," said Jimmy Silver. "About Mornny?"

Lovell grunted.

"I suppose we've got to have it," he said resignedly. "Well, what about Mornny? Cut it short!"

"I've been thinking about Mornny."

"Lots of pleasanter things to think about, I should say," remarked Raby.

"Mornny's down on his luck," said Jimmy.

"B-r-r-r!"

"I know he's rather rusty just now," continued Jimmy Silver tolerantly.

"But a chap must make allowances for a chap. Mornny was the wealthiest fellow in all Rookwood—rolling in money—reeking with banknotes. It never even occurred to him that riches take unto themselves wings, like aeroplanes, and fly away. Now all Mornny's money has gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream. He's poor."

"People have been poor before, and no bones broken," remarked Lovell. "In fact, I believe the majority of people in this country are poor. I believe it's the same in most countries. Bow-wow!"

"Only it's a bit rough on Mornny," said Jimmy. "He's always had everything he's wanted—more than was good for him. Now he's as poor as Tubby Muffin—worse off even than old Rawson, who has his scholarship, at least. He couldn't even stay at Rookwood at all, only his uncle Stacpoole pays his fees here."



"That's a heavy blow for Mornny. I can't help feeling sympathetic."

Lovell gave Jimmy Silver a look in which affectionate regard was curiously mixed with exasperation.

"Same old Jimmy!" he grunted. "I remember, when a Hun kid came here, you wanted to stand by him, and treat him like a human being; and you know how it turned out. Same with Mornny. He's the kind of bounder to bite the hand that strokes him."

"I'm not going to stroke him."

"Fathead! You know what I mean."

"And you know what I mean," said Jimmy Silver, rising. "Let's go and call on Mornington, and be civil to him. He's bound to like it, I should say. His pals have dropped him dead, and he's always been more or less on bad terms with all the decent chaps in the Form. Let's forget everything unpleasant, and make a fresh start. I'll offer him a place in the eleven for the Bagshot final. He's worth it."

"Oh, all right!"

"Put on your sweetest smiles," grinned Raby, "and mind you bow to the ground when you enter the study. Also, say 'Hail!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver frowned.

"No larks!" he said warningly.

"Sober as a judge," said Lovell.

"Lead on Macduff!"

Jimmy Silver led the way, and his chums followed him, grinning.

They had very little faith in Jimmy's idea of letting bygones be bygones, and making a new start with Valentine Mornington.

Jimmy Silver tapped at the door of Study No. 4, which Mornington shared with Erroll of the Fourth.

"Come in!"

The Fistical Four marched in.

Mornington was alone in the study. He was seated in the armchair, leaning back, with his elegant legs crossed, a cigarette between his lips. There was a slight haze of smoke in the study.

It was the best-furnished study at Rookwood. Mornny had spent any amount of money, in his wealthy days, on providing himself with luxurious surroundings. That beautiful, well-padded armchair alone had cost Mornny ten guineas in the old days. Now the one-time wealthy youth probably had not ten shillings in his pockets.

He did not rise as Jimmy Silver & Co. went in.

He looked at them coolly, through a bluish haze of smoke, with a sneer upon his well-cut lips.

Mornny's handsome face had assumed of late an almost perpetual expression of sneering.

Certainly, the conduct of his former friends, the merry nuts of Rookwood, had not been calculated to raise his opinion of human nature. But a fellow who had chosen such friends as Reele and Gower, and Smythe of the Shell, ought really to have known what to expect of them in the hour of adversity.

Mornington did not speak, and he did not remove the cigarette from his lips. He only looked at his visitors with a sardonic smile.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome grinned. It was not a promising reception, and they wondered how Jimmy Silver was going to deal with it.

Jimmy Silver, as a matter of fact, felt rather disconcerted himself, but he was not a fellow to be easily beaten. He assumed his most friendly smile.

"Not busy, Mornny?" he remarked.

"Not at all."

"Just dropped in for a chat," said Jimmy.

"Awfully good of you."

Mornny blew out a little cloud of smoke. He watched it curl upward with an air of great interest, and seemed to have forgotten that the Fistical Four were in the study at all. There was an awkward pause.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. "N. G."

**J**IMMY SILVER sat on the corner of the table, still with a cheery smile. He was determined to be friendly, if it was possible. He affected not to notice the smoke, though

It worried his healthy young lungs a little. He was willing to make every allowance for the bitterness in Mornington's breast that had been the natural result of his change of fortune.

"We're getting on to the end of the cricket," he remarked.

No answer.

"The last match with Bagshot comes off this week," remarked Jimmy.

"Does it?" yawned Mornington.

"Yes."

"Oh!"

"There's a place for you in the eleven, Morny, if you like."

"Thanks."

"Well, would you care to play?"

"Oh, certainly!"

"I'll put your name down if you like, then," said Jimmy. "We want a good bowler, and your bowling is really ripping, Morny."

"Kind of you to say so."

"Bless my hat! I forgot I had to speak to Oswald!" ejaculated Raby, and he left the study.

Raby had had enough of that interesting conversation.

"Wait a tick for me!" said Newcome. And he followed Raby.

Lovell glanced after them, hesitated, and remained. He felt bound to stand by his study leader.

Mornington threw away the stump of his cigarette, and yawned.

"There's a meeting of the Classical Players this evening," Jimmy Silver remarked. "We're going to get up a play that will knock the Moderns into a cocked hat!"

"How good!"

"You'll come along, Morny?"

"I'm not a member."

"No reason why you shouldn't be. Erroll's a member, and you may as well come along with him. I can find you a part."

"Thanks! I don't care for playin' the fool!"

Jimmy Silver coughed hard.

The amateur theatricals of the Classical Club did not appear to the amateur actors as "playing the fool." Morny's manners had evidently not been improved by adversity.

"You're playing the fool now!" broke out Lovell angrily. "Better acting plays, I should think, than smoking cigarettes like a silly ass!"

"Thanks for your opinion!" said Mornington, unmoved. "Thanks all the more as I didn't ask for it!"

"Ahem!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Lovell gave the dandy of the Fourth a glare, and stalked out of the study. He was fed up.

"Your friends have gone," said Mornington satirically. "Are you stayin'? I'm rather expectin' Lattrey to drop in for a game of cards."

"Oh!" said Jimmy.

"You're welcome to take a hand if you like. I'm sure Lattrey won't mind. Your money is as good as anybody's!"

Jimmy knitted his brows.

He realised by this time that the visit was a failure, that Morny was still the old Morny, with a new vein of sardonic bitterness in him.

"So you've made it up with Lattrey?" he said.

"Why not?"

"Plenty of reasons why not!" grunted Jimmy. "No bizney of mine, but you could do better if you liked."

"What rot! Lattrey's a sneakin' worm, but he's a rather amusin' worm, and beggars can't be choosers!" smiled Mornington. "Still, it's very kind of you to take an interest in my personal affairs."

Kit Erroll entered the study as

Mornington was speaking. He gave Jimmy Silver a friendly nod, evidently pleased to see him with Morny. Jimmy's face was growing crimson.

"Well, I won't bother you with any further interest in your personal affairs, Morny," he broke out. "I was a fool to come here, I can see that."

"You always were a fool!" said Mornington calmly.

"Oh!"

"Do you think you're goin' to patronise me because I'm down on my luck?" said Mornington, dropping his air of assumed nonchalance, and speaking with angry bitterness. "Going to be kind enough to take me up—what!—because dear old Smythe and his set have turned their backs on me? Confound your cheek!"

"I never thought of patronising you, as you put it," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I did think we might let bygones be bygones, and make a fresh start."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, I'm a poor chap, without a quid to bless myself with," he said, "but I'm not goin' round beggin' to be spoken to. I don't want your friendship! Keep it till I ask for it!"

Jimmy slipped off the table.

"I was an ass, and no mistake," he said—"a silly ass, to think that you'd ever be anything but a sneering, suspicious cad, Mornington, rich or poor! You won't see me in your study again in a hurry!"

And Jimmy went out, banging the door hard.

"Why can't you keep your temper?" growled Erroll. "I know Silver came here to be friendly. Why couldn't you treat him decently, Morny?"

"Hang his friendship!"

"You haven't so many friends that you can afford to insult every fellow who wants to be civil to you!" said Erroll tartly.

Mornington gave him a deadly look.

"So you're throwin' it in my face, too?" he sneered. "Do you think I care a rap about Smythe and Townsend, and the rest of that silly gang? I've got no friends here, an' I don't want any! I don't want you, for that matter!"

"Morny!"

"Oh, don't Morny me!" snapped Mornington. "I know what this means. You're goin' the same way as the others, because I'm hard up. A pal without a stiver in his pockets is no use to you!"

Erroll's handsome face paled.

"You don't mean that, Morny," he said, after a long pause. "You know that it doesn't make any difference to me whether you're rich or poor."

"Why shouldn't it?" sneered Mornington. "I know you've been rusty with me for the last few days, an' I know the reason."

"I didn't mean to be rusty. I certainly don't like Lattrey coming to this study, if that's what you're driving at!"

"Can't I ask a fellow to my own study if I like? I suppose it's still my study, even if I'm stony broke?"

"You can do as you like, of course. But that sneaking cad, Lattrey—"

"Not a more sneakin' cad than most of the others," jeered Mornington. "I know I've had hardly a civil word from anybody since my money went!"

"How do you treat a chap who wants to be civil?" demanded Erroll. "Your money makes no difference to anybody but yourself. If you insult a chap as soon as he speaks, and make out that he's trying to patronise you, how the dickens can you expect chaps to be civil? When you had money, you thought everybody

was after it; now you're poor, you think

everybody wants to patronise you because you're hard up. You think a jolly good deal too much about yourself, Morny!"

Mornington set his teeth.

"So that's what I get from you?" he said.

"You'll always get the truth from me," said Erroll. "It's not a pal's job to tell you lies. Ever since you've been hard up you've been edge-wise, looking for trouble with everybody. You suspect every word and every look, and keep on finding offence where none is meant."

"That's enough!" said Mornington. "I might have known you'd follow the rest, in the long run. Well, I'm not hangin' on to you, Erroll. You go your way, an' I'll go mine!"

"We're not going to quarrel, Morny," said Erroll steadily. "I'm willing to put up with your temper. I was only pointing out that the other fellows won't, and you can't expect them to."

"Not now. I'm on my uppers!" sneered Mornington. "Hang them all, you included! I was an idiot to think I had a pal left. But I'm not goin' to stand lecturin', I can tell you! Go and eat coke! You needn't trouble to speak to me again!"

Tap!

The door opened, and Erroll moved away from it. Lattrey of the Fourth came in. He glanced at the two juniors, from one to the other, and his eyes gleamed. It was easy to see that he had interrupted a quarrel.

"Am I in the way?" grinned Lattrey. "Not at all," said Mornington. "Come in, old scout! I've got the cards here, an' there's a few smokes left."

"Right-ho!" said Lattrey.

Erroll left the study. His face was clouded, and his heart was heavy.

Mornington had been so "touchy" since the loss of his money that Kit Erroll had had to walk very warily to avoid a quarrel with him. Now the quarrel had come.

But there was no resentment in Erroll's heart for Mornington's bitter words. More than that would have been needed to shake his loyal friendship. He was only too willing to make allowances for the embittered junior.

But if that friendship was broken off, what remained to keep Mornington from falling back into all, and more than all, his old shady rascality? Erroll's heart was heavy for his friend.

Lattrey of the Fourth locked the door after him. Cards were shuffled and cigarettes lighted. Mornington was at his old pursuits—but in a different way.

In former days, Morny had gambled to kill time, and had taken a pleasure in the wretched pursuit, as much because it was forbidden as for any other reason. But it was not mere perverseness now that spurred him on.

There was a hard greed in the handsome face now. Money was an object to him. As the two young rascals sat over their cards, the once superb dandy of the Fourth and the shady Lattrey, there was little to choose between them.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Downward Path!

JIMMY SILVER did not waste any more efforts to get on a friendly footing with Mornington of the Fourth.

He had made the attempt in sheer kindness of heart, and it had failed.

He let the matter drop from that point.

THE POPULAR.—No. 137.

Mornington had never been popular in his wealthy days, though he had his following.

He was even more unpopular now. Kit Erroll made more than one attempt to get on the old footing with his chum, but he found Mornington hard and repellent.

Indeed, the black sheep of Rookwood seemed to take a perverse pleasure in outraging all the ideas and feelings of the junior who had always been his best friend.

Lattrey of the Fourth, whom he really despised and disliked, was almost his only companion now.

His tastes were in common.

When Mornny broke bounds after lights out, which he did more frequently than of old, Lattrey was always his comrade in rascality.

Lattrey was unpopular, and he had no friend in the Classical Fourth, and that was probably part of his reason for attaching himself to Mornington. But the desire to exasperate Erroll whom he bitterly disliked, was part also of his motive. And Mornny's reckless blackguardism was quite in keeping with Lattrey's own nature.

It was not long before the eye of authority was attracted to Mornington. Mr. Bootles detected tobacco-stains on his fingers in class, and caned him severely before the Fourth.

A suspicious prefect found a pack of cards in his study, and Mornington was taken before the Head, and severely lectured and caned. Yet even the reckless black sheep had not lost all his good qualities; he had owned up immediately that the cards were his, and not Erroll's.

The general opinion in the Classical Fourth was that Mornington was booked for the sack, sooner or later, and that it was likely to be sooner than later.

He did not play in the last Bagshot match when it came round.

Jimmy Silver held to his offer of putting him in the eleven; but Mornny either forgot the match, or affected to do so, and another man was put in at the last moment.

After that Jimmy Silver did not waste any thoughts on Mornington in making up the team for the few remaining matches of the season.

Mornny had chucked cricket.

"That poor rotter is going to the dogs as fast as he can!" Lovell remarked, in the end study, about a week after the futile visit to Mornington. He used to gamble because he was a silly ass; now I think he's trying to make money by it. One way of getting pocket-money, I suppose!" he added, with a snort of contempt.

"Mornny won't get much that way!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Lattrey does!" said Lovell. "He sucks up to Smythe & Co., and keeps in with them, and wins their money. I know that."

"Mornny won't put his pride in his pocket to that extent. As for making money out of it, it can't be easy; and Mornny's not the sort to do it. If he keeps up that game his merry gold watch will go!"

Jimmy Silver's prediction was verified. A couple of days later Mornington was seen with a cheap gunmetal watch in the place of the handsome gold "ticker" all the Fourth had known and admired.

Some of the juniors chipped him on the subject, and received such savage replies that they soon let the matter drop.

Kit Erroll had noted the circumstance, and thought over it. That evening, at THE POPULAR.—No. 137.

tea in the study, he made one more effort to break the ice. Mornington was eating in silence. Tea in No. 4 was always a very silent meal now.

"Mornny!" said Erroll quietly.

"Hallo?"

"Hasn't this gone on long enough?" asked Erroll. "Can't we be friends, Mornny?"

Mornington laughed.

"What's the good?" he said. "You don't want to be friends with a penniless bouncer. I don't want your compassion, thanks! Besides, I should shock you—in fact, I'm always shocking you!" He laughed again. "I suppose you've noticed that my watch is missin'?"

"Yes," said Erroll. "Where is it, Mornny?"

"Pawned."

"Oh!"

"Up the spout!" jeered Mornington. "The last resource of a poor rotter down on his luck, you know. Lattrey kindly introduced me to a pawnbroking friend—a relation of his, I believe, by gad!" Erroll compressed his lips.

"I've got a good tip for a race, and I'm goin' all out to win a pot of money," said Mornington coolly. "If I have any luck with that gee-gee next Tuesday I shall finger twenty-five of the best!"

"It means the sack from Rookwood in the long run."

"Let it!" said Mornington.

Erroll said no more.

But when Tuesday came round he was anxious to know what had happened as a result of Mornington's latest plunge. Mornington hurried down to Coombe immediately after lessons, keen for news.

Erroll was in the gateway when he came in. And his face when he came was so white that the junior had no need to ask him what his news was. Mornington gave him a bitter smile.

"Same old luck!" he said. "Gee-gee came in seventh. Ha, ha! One of the merry 'Also rans,' you know! Fifteen quid out, Jolly, isn't it?"

"Mornny, you know you can depend on me—"

"Fifteen quid in your trousers-pocket?" grinned Mornington.

"Well, no. But—"

"I haven't come down to sponging yet," said Mornington. "I can raise the money. Ta-ta!"

How Mornington, whose allowance was now only a few shillings a week, proposed to raise such a sum as fifteen pounds was a mystery to Erroll. But the mystery was soon explained. When Erroll came into the junior Common-room an hour later he found half the Fourth gathered round a paper pinned on the wall.

The paper was in Mornington's elegant hand, and it ran:

#### "NOTICE.

Sale of Study Furniture!  
Great Bargains!

"Sale will be held in Study No. 4, Fourth Form, at seven o'clock. Bargains for cash!"

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### Sale By Auction!

**B**EFORE seven o'clock there was a considerable crowd of juniors in and around Study No. 4 in the Fourth.

The news of the "Sale of Furniture" had spread.

Classicals and Moderns came along, to look on if not to purchase. Mornington, the lofty and superb dandy of the Fourth, in the character of an auctioneer, was likely to be interesting and entertain-

ing. It was known, of course, that Mornny must be very hard up to resort to such an expedient, and some good-natured fellows were prepared to help him out by buying his superfluities.

Others were there with an eye to a bargain. Leggett of the Modern Fourth came along with all the ready cash he could muster, prepared to offer a sixth part of its value for anything.

Lattrey was there with the same object. Friendship, in Lattrey's case, was not likely to affect his keenness for a bargain.

The nuts came along in a crowd. Smythe and Howard and Tracy arrived together, and Townsend and Topham, Peele and Gower, of the Fourth, followed them in. Most of the Nuts had money in their pockets, and they had often envied Mornny's magnificent surroundings. Half the Fourth and the Shell, in fact, crowded the study and the passage outside.

Erroll was there, with a quiet, grave face.

It was his study as well as Mornny's, but Erroll had only lately become a member of the study, and he had found it ready furnished, and nothing had needed to be supplied.

Peele and Gower had formerly shared the study with Mornington, and when they had changed out they had taken their belongings. All that remained—the major and expensive part—belonged to Mornington, with the exception of the table, which was provided by the school.

"Goin' to be sold up—what?" smiled Adolphus Smythe, tapping Kit Erroll on the arm.

"It seems so," said Erroll.

"Leave you rather stranded, won't it?" grinned Adolphus. "I understand that most of the things are Mornny's."

"All of them," said Erroll.

"Oh, Erroll's got lots of money!" said Townsend. "He never spends any, so he must have plenty left—what?"

Rap!

Higgs, the biggest fellow in the Fourth, struck the table with a coal-hammer.

"Gentlemen—"

"Hallo! Are you the giddy auctioneer?" asked Tommy Dodd, the Modern junior.

"That's it," said Higgs. "Can't you see my hammer?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mornington broke in, with a drawl.

"Higgs has been kind enough to undertake the sale for me," he said.

"Higgs will sell off everything, without reserve. It's very kind of Higgs."

"Well, you're standing me your old cricket-bat as a fee," said Higgs. "It's worth my while."

There was a laugh.

The lofty Mornington evidently did not intend to demean himself in the role of auctioneer.

Probably he could have made a more profitable sale by undertaking it himself, and attending to his own business. But his lofty pride came first.

Higgs had been quite willing to undertake it, partly from his usual desire to bring himself into prominence, and partly because he was to have Mornny's old cricket-bat as a present for his trouble. Alfred Higgs was not bothered at all by considerations of lofty dignity.

Rap, rap!

"Walk up, gentlemen!" said Higgs.

"Lemme see. Here's a fine lot of study furniture going, first-class value, bought by a gentleman of well-known aristocratic taste, who is compelled to sell up owing to a pressing demand for cash—"

"From a bookie!" said Topham.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen, here is a handsome armchair," said Higgs, quite in the manner of a professional auctioneer. "That armchair cost ten guineas. Check action, ball-bearings, gilt-edged, electric light, and all modern conveniences—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "What offers for this handsome study armchair?" asked the auctioneer. "Any gentleman might be proud to squat in that armchair."

"Sixpence!" squeaked Tubby Muffin.  
 "This is not a joking matter, gentlemen. Silver, would you mind wheeling that splendid armchair forward? This armchair has been reposed in by a gentleman connected with all the titled families in the kingdom, from the Prince of Hunstein to the Marquis of Tilbury Docks. What offers? Now, then, gentlemen!"

"Quid!" said Adolphus Smythe.  
 "Gentlemen, I am offered a quid for that handsome armchair."

"Thirty bob!" said Townsend  
 "Thirty-five!"  
 "Two quid!"  
 "Two-ten!" said Erroll.

Mornington started as his study-mate made the bid. He gave Kit Erroll a very curious look.

Rap, rap!  
 "Gentlemen, I am offered two-pounds for this splendid armchair, as used by the nobility. Two-ten! What advance on two-ten? Going at two-ten—going—going—gone! Erroll, old scout it's yours."

Erroll glanced at Mornington, who had his hands in his pockets and did not remove them.

"Drop the money in this coffee-pot," said the auctioneer. "The gentleman holding this sale is too aristocratic to touch money."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Erroll dropped two pound-notes and a "ten-bobber" into the coffee-pot on the table. Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

Rap, rap, rap!  
 "Gentleman, here is a handsome marble clock, real marble, made at Rheims before the bombardment; first-class works; actually keeps time!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Silly ass gave fifteen guineas for this clock in the days when he had guineas," continued Higgs.

"Oh, cut that out!" growled Mornington.

"I'll conduct this sale my own way, or not at all," said Higgs. "Gentlemen, what offers for this marble clock, an ornament to any gentleman's mantel-piece?"

"Five bob!" said Topham.  
 "Ten!"  
 "Fifteen!"

"Quid!" said Erroll.  
 "Dash it all," said Adolphus Smythe, "I'm havin' that clock! Thirty bob!"  
 And the dandy of the Shell gave Erroll a lofty look of disdain.

"Two pounds!" said Erroll.  
 "Dash it all! Two-ten!" shouted Adolphus.

"Three!"  
 "Look here, Erroll, blow you—"  
 "Going—going at three quids, this handsome marble clock—"

"Three-ten!" shouted Smythe angrily.  
 "Four!" said Erroll.  
 "Guineas!" yapped Adolphus.  
 "Four-ten!" said Erroll calmly.

"Going—going at four-ten this handsome marble clock—going to Mr. Erroll at four-ten—going—going—gone!"

"My hat, you're made of money, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver, as Erroll dropped a five-pound note into the coffee-pot, taking out a note for change.

Erroll smiled.  
 Mornington regarded his study-mate very curiously. He knew that Erroll's father was well off, and made his son a good allowance, but he had not expected Kit to produce quids in this lavish way.

Mornington did not seem wholly pleased, either, at Erroll being the purchaser.

"Are you buying up the lot, Erroll?" he muttered.

"Why not, if I want to?"  
 "Oh, nothin'!"  
 The sale proceeded.

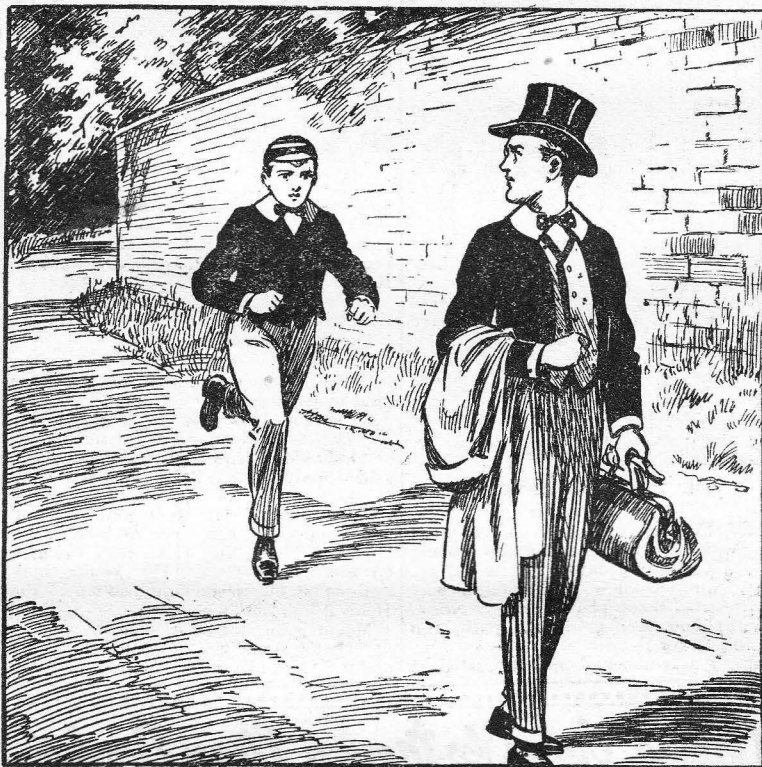
But it really was not much of an auction, as few of the fellows had money

Both Leggett and Lattrey gave Erroll dark looks as they went. They had not secured any of the bargains they had come for, and they had not had the pleasure of seeing the lofty Morny's home broken up.

Mornington kicked the door shut, and turned to Erroll.

"Look here, what does this mean?" he demanded. "What have you bought up the whole study for?"

"Well, it's my study, you know," said Erroll, with a smile. "I should have had to furnish it, or at least, stand half, if the things had been cleared away. May as well leave them as they are."



Bag in hand, Mornington walked down the lane, his head held high. There was the sound of hurried footsteps behind him, and he turned his head and frowned. Kit Erroll came breathlessly up. "Morny!" he panted. "Why are you leaving Rookwood? Jimmy Silver told me you'd gone!" (See Chapter 5.)

enough to offer anything like the value of the articles; and in every case Kit Erroll chimed in with a top bid.

Article after article was knocked down to Erroll, and in each case he produced the money, and dropped it promptly into the coffee-pot.

Curtains and carpet, desk and sofa, vases and tea-things, and other articles were sold off one after another; and in each case Kit Erroll proved to be the purchaser.

By the time the sale was concluded the sum which Erroll had produced in ready money.

Higgs of the Fourth gave a final rap on the table, and pitched the hammer into the fender with a crash.

"Gentlemen, the sale is over. Where's that old cricket-bat, Morny? Thanks! Gentlemen, you can go and eat coke!"

And Higgs departed with his bat. The juniors, grinning, cleared out of the study, some of them glancing very curiously at Erroll, who remained with the dandy of the Fourth.

"You've paid more than the others would have paid."

"Must make top bid, you know, at an auction, to secure the goods."

Mornington gave him a grim look.

"Come, don't be an ass, Morny!" said Erroll cheerfully. "I raised no objection to sharing the study when everything in it was yours. You needn't mind the things being mine. It's the same thing the other way round."

"Well, I suppose that's so," said Mornington, after a pause. "I haven't got much choice, anyway. But where the dickens did you get that twenty pounds from?"

Erroll laughed.  
 "You know I don't spend much money," he said. "I had saved a good bit out of my allowance, and my pater sent me a fiver for a birthday present."

"That didn't make twenty," said Mornington. "You went out on your bike after tea."

Erroll coloured.  
 "Well, I took a leaf out of your book,

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Morny," he said. "I biked over to Rookham, and—and left my watch there—the gold ticker my father gave me. I didn't want you—I mean, I didn't want the study cleared out. It's all serene. I've got twenty-five pounds in the Post Office Savings Bank, and I can draw it out in a few days, and get my watch."

Mornington moved restlessly about the study.

He knew quite well that Erroll had done this to save him from losing the luxurious surroundings he dearly loved. Erroll himself cared nothing for silken sofas and padded armchairs and Persian carpets.

The "lots" would have been cheap at six or seven times what Erroll had given for them certainly; but, as a matter of fact, Erroll did not want them. He had bought them so that Morny should not lose them. And Morny knew it.

"You're a silly ass, Erroll!" said Mornington at last.

"Thanks!" said Erroll, smiling.

"You'd have bought a few old crocks for a couple of quids for yourself. You don't care for these things."

"Oh, rats!"

"You'll clear out the money your pater put in the Savings Bank for you for a lot of rubbish you don't want!"

"Oh, I sha'n't clear it all out!" said Erroll, with a smile. "I shall have fifteen quids left in the bank nearly."

"You're an ass!"

"Just as you like, Morny. Let's do our prep."

Mornington grunted, and they settled down to work.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.  
The Last Plunge!

JIMMY SILVER eyed Mornington rather curiously sometimes during the following days.

Jimmy knew well enough why that sale had taken place in Study No. 4. Morny had been going the pace, and had to pay for it.

Jimmy was shocked and disgusted at

the peculiar new traits in Morny's character that had come to light; but he could not help feeling interested in him.

He spoke to Mornington a few days after the sale. He did not like Morny—he could not pull with him. But Morny had good qualities, and Jimmy would have been sorry to see him kicked out of Rookwood.

And it seemed pretty clear that that was what it was coming to. Mornington stared when the captain of the Fourth came up to him in the quad; but Jimmy did not heed his stare.

"Just a word, Mornington," said Jimmy quietly. "You told me once you didn't want me to chip into your personal affairs!"

"I don't!" said Mornington, with a cool nod.

"I'm going to give you a tip, all the same."

"Keep it till I ask for it!" suggested Mornington.

"It's this," continued Jimmy, unheeding. "Every fellow in the Form knows what you've been selling things for."

"They're welcome to the knowledge," said Mornington, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I don't care a rap what all Rookwood thinks."

"It's to pay debts you get into at the Bird-in-Hand," said Jimmy calmly. "The chaps all know it."

"Quite so!"

"Well, sooner or later you won't be able to pay up."

"I sha'n't ask you to lend me the money," said Mornington satirically.

"I shouldn't lend it to you if you did," said Jimmy Silver. "But this is the tip I was speaking of. If the time comes when you can't pay Hook and his gang what you owe them, you're booked for trouble. That rotter Hook isn't the man to lose his money. He would think nothing at all of showing you up to the Head if you didn't pay him."

Mornington started a little.

"That's what I wanted to warn you about," said Jimmy. "Hook has you

there if you don't square him. And you can't in the long run. You can't sell up your study twice over, you know."

"I don't see that it matters to you, anyway," said Mornington, with a sneer.

"It doesn't. Only it would mean the sack for you, and I should be sorry for that."

"Awfully kind of you! Would your mind keeping your sympathy and advice another time till I ask for them?"

And Mornington walked away before Jimmy could reply to that.

Jimmy Silver breathed hard through his nose.

That Jimmy's warning had had no effect was quite clear that same night. Mornington was out of bounds after lights-out. All the Classical Fourth knew it, and wondered how long Morny would be able to keep up this game without being spotted, in which case the chopper would come down with a vengeance, and Rookwood would see the last of the fallen dandy of the Fourth.

The next day Mornington seemed to have lost some of the cool, mocking nonchalance with which he had girded himself as with armour.

He was absent-minded in the Form-room, and Mr. Bootles was very severe with him. He answered the Form-master insolently, and was caned before the class, and went back to his seat with white face and burning eyes.

Lattrey joined him when the Fourth were dismissed.

"How did you get on last night?" he asked, when they were safe out of hearing in the quad.

Mornington's lip curled.

"I had a plunge at poker," he said.

"That merry game you taught me to play, Lattrey. Rippin' game—what?"

"What luck?"

"Lots—for Joey Hook and his pals!"

"Cleaned out?" asked Lattrey, laughing.

"Exactly! With the merry addition of fourteen pounds in I O U's held by the gentlemanly company."

Lattrey stopped dead, staring at him.

"You—you ass!" he gasped. "You've run up fourteen quid, and given your signature on it?"

"I couldn't have gone on playin' otherwise."

"But you can't pay it!"

"Not a tenth part of it," said Mornington calmly.

"Hook thinks you can pay up, as you've always paid," said Lattrey. "He will be as mad as a hornet if you don't!"

"No doubt."

"But what are you going to do?" asked the cad of the Fourth. "If you ask Hook to wait, he won't wait long. And you've got no prospects. Will your guardian stand it, do you think?"

"I don't think—I know he won't!" said Mornington coolly. "And I've got nothin' more to sell. It was a last plunge to set me on my feet. As I can't pay, I shall be reluctantly compelled to swindle Hook. After all, he's swindled me often enough, dear boy. My conscience is quite easy."

"Only he's not the sort of merchant to be swindled," said Lattrey grimly. "If you don't pay up he'll send your I O U's to the Head. The Head wouldn't take his word against a Rookwood fellow, but he'll have to take it backed up by your handwriting."

"Quite so! Lend me fourteen quid!" said Mornington.

"Are you potty?"

"I should be, if I thought you'd lend me the money!" said Mornington, laughing.

"I couldn't, of course."

(Continued on page 16.)

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A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Story, dealing with the Early School Adventures of HARRY WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Not an Enemy!

"PHEW! This silence is worse than being in a row!"

Bob Cherry, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, said that in tones of disgust. With him were Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Johnny Bull, and they were aboard the stranded ship, *Aspasia*, which they had claimed as a derelict.

In a way they were sorry they had seen the deserted steamer run ashore, for their subsequent tour of inspection had led them to trouble.

There was not a person aboard the ship. Yet there must have been at one time. In the state-room they had come across a camera. With commendable promptness, Harry Wharton had developed the plate the camera contained. On that plate they caught a fleeting glimpse of a face—a face distorted by terror.

Even there their troubles did not stop. Keeley, a burly ruffian from Pegg, had brought a number of equally rough companions to the ship, with the intention of forcing the Greyfriars juniors to leave it so that they themselves could claim the salvage money. They had been repulsed by the four juniors, and had departed across the rocks, hurling curses and threats at the victorious Removites.

Alone once more, the juniors had again become impressed by the mystery surrounding the disappearance of the crew of the *Aspasia*. It was not only the unknown fate of the crew—it was the face on the plate which racked their nerves.

What had happened to bring that terrible terror to the face of the man who had been photographed? The camera had belonged to a Professor East. There were papers to prove that. Why had he dropped the camera to the floor of the state-room, where the juniors had found it? Was it because the professor had been terrorised by the same mysterious enemy that had terrorised the man whose photograph had been taken—and taken, perhaps, by a spasmodic pressure on the shutter-spring by the terror-stricken professor?

It was all a mystery, and the juniors were glad to leave the state-room and get on deck, and sit down.

The light of the stars fell clearly upon the slanting deck of the *Aspasia*, but on shore, under the shadow of the great Shoulder, and amid the big rocks, the darkness was thick. Round the grounded

steamer the tide flowed with a low murmur; save for the sound of the water the silence was deep and oppressive.

The face of which they had caught so short a glimpse in the negative was still before the juniors' eyes—it seemed to haunt them.

They had left several lamps burning below, in case they should have to go down. But in the dark recesses of the steamer—in the hold, which they had not entered—their excited imagination peopled the shadows with strange shapes.

Harry Wharton broke the silence suddenly.

"Hark!"

He held up his hand.

From the shore came a sound of a boot grinding upon soft sand.

The juniors were upon their feet in a moment.

"The longshoremen!" muttered Nugent. "They're coming again!"

"Get ready!"

"Right-ho!"

The juniors were almost glad of the interruption of the deadly silence. A human foe was something they could face, and the excitement of approaching combat drove from their minds the thought of the hidden horror of the deserted steamer.

They lined the rail towards the big rock, weapons in hand, ready for the longshoremen when they came near.

The heavy footstep ground into the sand again, and there was a splash in the water, as if the newcomer had plunged into it in the darkness.

Then a muttered exclamation came to the ears of the listening juniors.

"There's only one of them!" muttered Nugent.

"Keeley himself, most likely, spying to see if we're gone," muttered Wharton. "I expect the others are hanging back in the dark there."

"Quiet!" murmured Johnny Bull. "Let him think we're asleep, and as soon as he gets near we'll collar him. If we can get him tied up, it will prevent the brutes troubling us again to-night."

"Good!" murmured Wharton, his eyes gleaming. "If he comes along, let him get on board, and then collar him."

"I've got a rope here."

"Quiet!"

The juniors crouched behind the port rail, listening, with beating hearts.

They distinctly heard the sound of boots scraping on the rocks.

Then a dark shadow loomed up in the starlight, and their hearts beat faster at

the sight of the dim form moving on the big rock near the side of the grounded ship.

The dim figure paused, looking towards the steamer, and then they heard a faint chuckle. The figure advanced, and reached the rail, and stepped over it upon the slanting deck.

Harry Wharton sprang up.

"Collar him!" he shouted.

There was a sudden gasp of affright from the newcomer.

But before he could make a movement the four juniors were upon him. They leaped at him like tigers, and bore him crashing to the deck.

"Groo!" gasped the prisoner.

"Got you!" said Wharton. "Keep still, or you'll get this boathook across your napper. Tie up his hands, Johnny."

"What-ho!"

"Groo! Oh!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "This isn't one of the longshoremen!"

"Groo!"

"I thought he was too small for Keeley!" exclaimed Nugent. "Who is it?"

"Groo! Yoop!"

"My hat!"

"It's Coker!"

"Yow! Lemme go!" groaned Coker, of the Fifth.

"Coker!"

"The silly ass!"

"That fathead Coker!"

The Famous Four released their prisoner. Coker, of the Fifth, sat up, and glared at them, and gasped for breath.

"You—you silly chumps!" he stutted. "What do you mean by piling on a fellow like that?"

"What do you mean by coming here?" demanded Wharton, in his turn.

"Groo!"

"We took you for one of the longshoremen—they've tried to board us!" Bob Cherry explained. "It's your own fault."

"Groooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker staggered to his feet. He looked inclined to rush at the chums of the Remove for a moment. But he realised that he would be roughly handled if he did, and he refrained.

"You silly chumps!" he growled. "I came here to stay with you. I got old Prout's permission to come; I explained

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to him that you kids wouldn't be safe without a senior to look after you. And this is the thanks I get. Groo!"

Bob Cherry snifled.  
"It's all the thanks you deserve," he growled. "Now you've come you'd better buzz off again. We don't want any of the Fifth here."

"No fear!"  
"Rats!" said Coker. "I'm going to stay! I've a jolly good mind to give you cheeky kids a licking each, all round."

"Rats!"  
"I'm jolly well not going back," said Coker. "I think it's good fun to camp out here. I'm not going to make any claim to share your rotten salvage. I wonder some of the longshoremen in Pegg don't shift you, and rob the steamer."

"They've tried—Peter Keeley and his gang."

"Why didn't they do it, then?"

"We licked them."  
"Oh!" said Coker. "Well, if they come back again, I'll take the command, and we'll give them a good hiding."

"We'll give them a hiding," said Harry Wharton. "But you jolly well won't take the command, Coker. I'm captain of the Remove, and this ship belongs to us."

"Bosh!" said Coker. "As a Fifth-Former—"

"As a silly ass, you mean—"

"Look here—"

"Go and eat coke!"

Coker glared at the Famous Four. But they were evidently ready to toss him over the side of the steamer if necessary, and he controlled himself.

"Well," he said more amicably, "I didn't come to row with you fellows, but to help you. As a matter of fact, I thought that some of the roughs from Pegg might give you trouble after dark, and I came to lend a hand."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Wharton. "We'll be glad to have you so long as we don't have any of your Fifth Form swank."

"Hear, hear!"

Coker grinned faintly.

"All serene!" he said. "Got anything to eat?"

"Yes, rather! Here you are!"

Coker attacked cold coffee and sandwiches with a good appetite. In spite of the hostility generally subsisting between Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove, and Coker of the Fifth, the Famous Four were rather glad than otherwise of the arrival of Coker.

Coker was certainly a duffer—at all events, Harry Wharton & Co. hadn't any doubt about that—but he was a big, powerful fellow, with plenty of pluck, and he would be very valuable if there was another fight with the longshoremen, especially if Peter Keeley brought help with him, as very probably he would. And Coker's high spirits had the effect of relieving the minds of the Removites of the unpleasant, uncanny thoughts that had been working in them, after the sight of the negative.

"What are you chaps camping on the deck for?" asked Coker.

"Fresh air!"

"Must be more comfy in the berths down below, surely," said Coker. "I fancy I shall turn in in a state-room, and one of you chaps can call me if the longshoremen come."

The juniors looked at one another. Not one of them wanted to go below; but they hesitated to explain their reasons to Coker. The Fifth-Former was pretty certain to laugh at their uneasiness.

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NEXT FRIZAY! "STICKING UP FOR GUNNER!" A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. By OWEN CONQUEST.

Coker observed the expression upon their faces.

"What's the trouble?" he asked. "Nothing wrong with the berths below, is there?"

"Ahem—no!"

"What are you looking queer about, then?"

"Well, it's better to camp on deck."

"Why?"

"There's something uncanny about this ship," Wharton confessed. "We don't like being below."

"Well, of all the funks—"

Coker chuckled.

"You young asses! Are you afraid of the dark? Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know we're not!" said Wharton angrily.

"Then, why are you funky about sleeping down below?"

"We're not funky."

Coker chuckled again.

"Only it's—it's queer!" said Nugent.

"What's queer?"

"Well, about the crew having disappeared," said Nugent uncomfortably.

"What's become of them?"

"Gone off in the boats," said Coker.

"The boats are still here."

"Oh!" said Coker. "All of them?"

"Yes; and all the lifebelts, too."

Coker's face became very thoughtful.

"That's jolly odd!" he said. "Still, if the ship's deserted, and there's nobody but ourselves on board, I don't see anything to be nervous about."

"We're not nervous, you ass! Only that isn't all."

"What else is there?"

Harry Wharton explained the circumstances of the photograph. Coker grinned as he listened.

"Oh, rot!" he said airily. "Got that negative?"

"It's in the state-room. I left it there to dry after the washing."

"I'd like to see it. I expect you fancied that look on the face of it, you know. Negatives look queer sometimes, owing to the lights coming up as darks, and the darks as lights."

"I know that; but—"

"Well, let's see the negative," said Coker.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"You'd better go and fetch it yourself, as you're not nervous," he remarked. "You can show that you're not in a blue funk, you know."

Coker laughed.

"I'll go fast enough," he said. "Tell me the number of the state-room, and the place where you left it."

"Hang it all, we'll come with you!" said Wharton.

"No, you won't!" said Coker.

"You'll jolly well see that I'm not afraid to go alone! I'm going down now!"

"Hold on, Coker—"

"Rats!"

And Coker went below.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### The Mystery Deepens!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stood on the starlit deck listening.

Coker had insisted upon going below by himself, and the juniors were glad enough not to go. But, after all, what danger could there possibly be? They had been below a dozen times already, and nothing had happened. What possibility of danger was there in the interior of the deserted ship?

And yet a strange feeling of uneasiness was upon them. Bob Cherry called out to Coker.

"Are you all right, Coker?"

There was no reply.

"Coker!"

"Coker!"

A rush of footsteps, a horrified gasp, and Horace Coker reappeared. He leaped into view, and dashed towards the side, and did not stop till he reached the rail. The juniors ran to him in strange terror.

"Coker!"

"What's the matter?"

"What did you see?"

Coker panted.

"My Heaven!" he muttered. "What—what was it?"

"What was what?" cried Harry Wharton, grasping the Fifth-Former by the shoulder, and shaking him in his excitement. "What are you saying?"

"What did you see, Coker?" panted Nugent.

Coker's teeth chattered.

"I—I didn't see anything!" he stammered. "I—I heard something! I—I think there was something moving—but—but—"

His voice trailed off huskily.

The Greyfriars fellows stood grouped together by the rail, looking back with starting eyes. If anything had appeared on deck in pursuit of Coker, they were ready to leap over the rail and take refuge on the rock alongside.

But there was nothing.

The silence was unbroken. Coker gradually recovered his nerve. The colour that had fled from his cheeks came back slowly, and his limbs ceased to shake.

"It was nothing," he said, a little unsteadily. "I—I suppose it was nerves, owing to what you fellows had been saying. Look here, there isn't anybody on board playing tricks, is there?"

"No!"

"You are sure you are the only chaps on the ship?"

"Quite sure."

"You've searched?"

"From end to end."

"In the hold?"

"Well, no. But there can't be anybody in the hold. We've looked in, and it's cram full of cargo," said Bob Cherry.

"Then I can't understand it. I'll almost swear that something moved, but—but I didn't exactly see anything," muttered Coker. "There might be a cat or a dog on board."

"They'd have shown up before now," said Nugent. "They'd be hungry, I should think, and would come out for grub."

"Quite certain," said Wharton.

"Well, I—I don't catch on to it," said Coker. "I suppose it was nerves. All the same, I—I think I'll leave that negative where it is. I'll stay on deck with you chaps. I—I'm blessed if I half like staying here at all."

"We're going to stay," said Harry Wharton grimly. "I'm not going to run away from a shadow. There can't be any danger, and if there is I don't care. I'm going to see it through."

"Same here!" said Bob Cherry determinedly.

"Oh, I'm going to see it through with you!" said Coker. "But—but I think it's a good idea to stay on deck."

"You haven't seen the negative."

"Never mind. I don't specially want to see it."

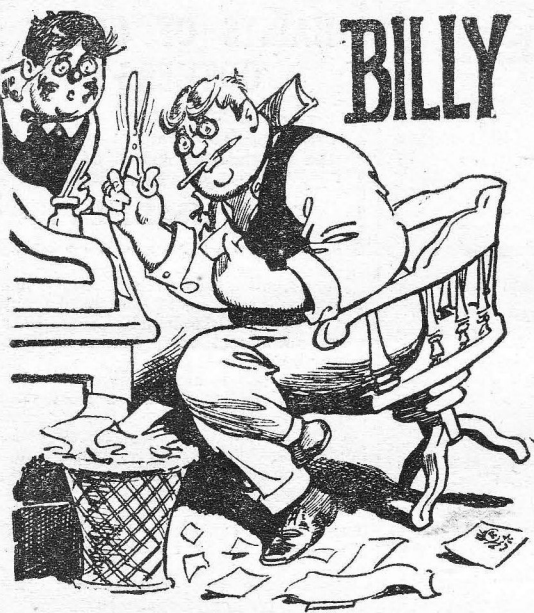
The juniors might have retorted upon Coker his remarks about a blue funk, but they did not. As a matter of fact, they were feeling uneasy, and far from being in a jesting mood. The mystery of the deserted ship was weighing upon their minds and upon their spirits.

The lights of the fishing village across the bay had disappeared now, and with

(Continued on page 13.)



# BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!

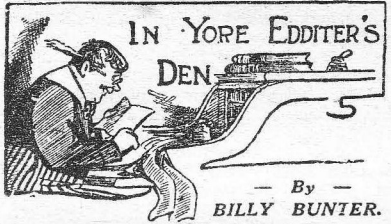


## A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

Edited by  
**WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER** of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by  
**HIS FOUR FAT SUBS—SAMMY BUNTER** of Greyfriars, **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE** of St. Jim's, and **TUBBY MUFFIN** of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.



My Deer Readers,—This Speshul Staff Number duzzent refer to the masters, or to sticks and staves. It allods to the edditorial staff of my "Weekly."

What is the objekt of such a number? you will ask. Why, to give you an insite into the way in which our paper is run. I have four fat subbs under my kommand, and I am sure you will be interested to here eggactly how they go to work each weak.

My staff has been loyal to me for menny munths. They are not always bickering and kwarrelling, like the staff of the "Greyfriars Herald." They are as pieciful as duvs, in spite of the fackt that they get "the bird" from me sumtimes!

Their is my miner Sammy—an eggcellent fello in every respekt. He cleens out the edditorial sancktum every mourning, and gets a hansom sallery for it. He also writes a kollum a weak, and gets another hansom sallery for that. I tell you, Sammy's in clover. Not menny felloes of his age are making a hundred a yeer—pense, of corse!

Then their is Fatty Wynn of St. Jim's. A fine fello is Fatty, despite the fackt that he eats more than is good for him. He isn't such a brilliynt jernalist as yores trewly. At the same time, I shudder to think how my "Weekly" wood get along without him.

Their is also Baggy Trimble, of the same skool. Baggy is rather an ass in menny respekt, but he can write all-write, and that's the mane thing. Yes, I Trimble to think what we should do without our Baggy. (Joak!)

Last, but not leest, comes Tubby Muffin, that brilliynt and brainy produckt of Rookwood. Tubby is a fello after my own hart. His gratest joy in life is a good skware meel. Same hear!

You will reed all about my four fat subbs and there methods in this issev, which I trussed will raise menny a harty larf.

Since I started this artickle my staff has got a fit of grumbles. I'll grumble 'em!

*Yore Edditer*

## THE EDITOR IN HARNESS!

By **DICK PENFOLD.**  
*(With profuse apologies to the shade of Thomas Moore.)*

The Bunter-bird to his nest has gone,  
In his sancktum you will find him;  
His working coat he has girded on,  
And his fat subbs stand behind him.  
"Now, then, boys!" cries the bustling Bill,  
"Obey my orders meekly,  
And help your noble chief to fill  
Twelve columns of his "Weekly"!"

He toiled and moiled, but the midnight chimes  
Could not keep his energy under;  
He scribbled prose and concocted rhymes  
Which would fill the world with wonder.  
"Work like the dickens!" is Bunter's cry,  
And his editorial maxim.  
Half the night he slogs, and then wonders why  
Old Wingate comes and whacks him!

## FOOTBOWL AGAIN!

Readers of this wonderful "Weekly" will be glad to heer that I have wunice more taken up my pen to write artikkelles on the all-important subject of footbawl. These artikkelles, being the mainbrace—or is it mainstay?—of my rival contemporary, the "Greyfriars Herald," it wood not do to leave them out too often.

So, under pressure, I have koncented to write an artickle every now and then for Harry Wharton's paper, and they will appear in the "Magnet Library." Knowing what a folloing I have, I ask all my reeders to watch for my artikkelles. I'm sure I shall be giving you some usefule hints on the rite way to play footbawl, for I am a dab at the game myself, as you all no.

## PEEPS BEHIND THE SEENS!

By **SAMMY BUNTER.**

I have been ordered to give the reeders of this "Weakly" an insite into the work of which I do on the staff.

Well, I do everything, eggsept the actual edditng. I scrubb the floor of my major's sancktum; I dust the chares and the hornyments; and I blacklead the fire-great with whitewash.

My fello subbs call me a charwoman, but, of corse, that's all Tommy Rott. How can a member of the mail seek be a charwoman?

Besides, a charwoman gets a fare day's wage for a fare day's work, whereas I only get a bob a weak, and out of that I have to pervide my own skrubbing brushes, brooms, pales, blacklead, and so 4th.

I go into the edditor's den before my major gets up in the mourning, and I go threw his korrispondense. If their are any postle-orders, I take them down to the post-offis to cash them. Sumtimes my major nose about it, and sumtimes he duzzent!

I simply luv reeding all the reeders' letters, because they say such nice things about myself.

"We think Sammy Bunter's kollum is worth the rest of the issev put together." That is a frase which is konstantly used.

"Sammy is a deer littel fello, and I only wish they wood make him edditor." That is another frase which gladdens my eyes whenever I go threw my major's male-bagg.

Of corse, it is hard work skrubbing the floor, and I've alreddy got a bad attack of housemade's nee. Still, I'd far rather scrubb floors than scrubb myself! That wood be paneful in the eggstreem.

Every mourning I have to make a bonfire of all the rejekted kontributions. This is a jolly warm jobb, but my major is very cool about it. He says I ought to feel jolly bukked at the privilege of cleening up his offis.

When pay day comes round I am in my ellement. A hole bob to spend! (Matter of fackt, it generally does have a hole in it!) I adjern to the tuckshopp, and drown my sorroes in jinjer-popp.

If ever their was a hard-working fello worthy of his plaice on the staff of "Billy Bunter's Weekly," that fello is myself!

But we are permitted to do a littel grumbling during the "grouse" sezoon.

# A SLIGHT MISUNDER- STANDING!

By KIT ERROLL.

"PLEASE take over my 'Weekly' right away! You'll do that? Thanks! Good-bye!"

Billy Bunter, who had been speaking to Tubby Muffin on the telephone, rang off.

Tubby Muffin stood still, receiver in hand, trembling from head to foot with excitement.

He had not heard the first portion of Billy Bunter's remarks owing to a deafening buzzing on the line. But he had distinctly heard the words: "Please take over my 'Weekly' right away!"

What did it mean?

There were two possible explanations.

Either Billy Bunter was tired of his job, and wanted Tubby Muffin to take it over, or he was about to be expelled from Greyfriars, and therefore could not continue to edit the "Weekly."

It was a stupendous moment for Tubby Muffin.

Billy Bunter was relinquishing the reins of office. He was handing over the editorship of the paper to his fat "sub" at Rookwood!

Tubby Muffin became conscious of a feeling of great exultation.

This was what he had longed for and hoped for and sighed for—to be given supreme control of "Billy Bunter's Weekly." Hitherto, he had been kept in the background. The full glare of the limelight had been directed upon Billy Bunter.

But all this was changed now.

No longer would the paper be known as "Billy Bunter's Weekly." It would be "Tubby Muffin's Weekly"—and Tubby had already decided upon a sweeping change of policy.

"Plenty of pirate stories—plenty of adventure—and not nearly so much school stuff—those are the lines I'm going upon!" he murmured, as he hung up the telephone-receiver. "Isn't this perfectly stunning news? I'm an editor—a full-blown editor!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. stood in the doorway of the prefects' room—where Tubby Muffin had taken the telephone-call—and they overheard the fat junior's remarks.

"What's wrong with Bunter?" inquired Jimmy Silver.

"I don't know. But he wants me to take over his job right away."

"My hat!"

"Might have been somebody spoofing you on the telephone, Tubby?" suggested Lovell.

"No. It was Bunter speaking. I'm positive of that. He said: 'Please take over my 'Weekly' right away.' Isn't it great? The paper's in my hands now. I shall give Sammy Bunter and Fatty Wynn and Baggy Trimble the sack, and get you fellows to help me with the first number of 'Tubby Muffin's Weekly.' Is it a go?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Will you write me a pirate serial, Silver?"

"Yes; but I shall expect something for my trouble."

"I'll pay you a tanner a column," said Tubby Muffin generously. "Will you do me a Buffalo Bill story, Lovell, on the same terms?"

Lovell nodded.

"Do you think you can tackle a Robin Hood yarn, Baby?"

"Certainly!"

"Can you write a tale of mystery and horror, Newcome?"

"I'll do my best," said Newcome, with a grin.

"That's good! Go right ahead, you fellows, and we'll get the first number out in a couple of days."

Jimmy Silver & Co. set to work with a will. They were rather pleased to know that the supplement in the "Popular" was in future going to be run by a Rookwood fellow. It

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was high time that Greyfriars took a back seat, they reflected.

Tubby Muffin himself worked with tremendous energy. His editorial was a masterpiece—especially the spelling!

Just as the issue was being prepared for press, and Tubby Muffin was running through the contributions, a fat and breathless figure rushed into his study. It was Billy Bunter of Greyfriars.

"I say, Muffin, you slacker, why haven't you sent me your contribution this week? The printers are waiting for it!"

"Eh?"

"You're all behind, you chump!"

Tubby Muffin stared blankly at Billy Bunter.

"I don't understand you," he said. "Your 'Weekly' is dead and defunct."

"What?"

"It's 'Tubby Muffin's Weekly' now. I've taken over your job."

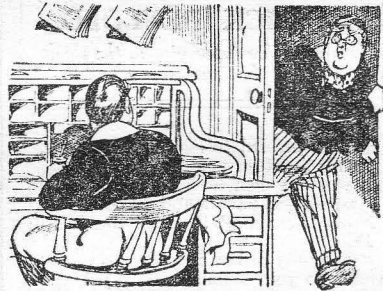
"You—you—" Billy Bunter was almost foaming at the mouth. "Who said you were to take over my job?"

"You said so yourself on the telephone! I remember your actual words. You said: 'Please take over my 'Weekly' right away.'"

"Oh, you blundering idiot! Didn't you hear what I said before that?"

"No. There was a buzzing on the line."

"Well, this is what I said: 'Tommy Dodd,



*A fat and breathless figure came running into the study. It was Billy Bunter of Greyfriars.*

of the Modern Side, has been complaining that he can't get hold of a copy of my paper; Please take over my "Weekly" right away."

"Oh!"

Tubby Muffin's jaw dropped. All his rosy dreams of running a paper of his own were ruthlessly shattered.

He had been asked to take a copy of the "Weekly" over to the Modern Side. That was all. There was no question of a change of editorship.

"I—I thought you were fed-up with your job?" he stammered.

"No jolly fear!" said Bunter. "I love my job, and even if I did get fed-up with it, I shouldn't dream of handing it over to a burbling chump like you!"

"But I—I've commissioned stories and articles from Jimmy Silver and the others for—"

"More fool you!"

"They'll be awfully annoyed when they find that the stuff's not going to be published," said Tubby Muffin.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were simply furious when they learnt that their literary labours had been in vain. And Tubby Muffin, in addition to the shock of discovering that the "Weekly" was not going to change hands, received a record bumping. And as he picked himself up, and limped sadly away, he was reminded of Shakespeare's lines:

"When troubles come, they come not in single spies,

But in battalions."

# HABITS OF GREAT ORTHERS!

Showing how Baggy Trimble, the sellybrated writer of ficksun, goes to work.

By HIMSELF.

Neerly all grate orthers have there own peculiar habbits. Sum karn't write on an empty stommach; sum karn't write on a fool one; and sum karn't write at all!

Personally, I always like to lay a solid foundashun before I start doing any littery work.

I have often tride to write an artikle before brekker, but inspirashun simply won't come. But when I have had a fride Dover soul, a cupple of rashers, ½ a duzen fride eggs, and sum toast and marmelaid, I can always weeld a flewent pen. It makes all the differense in the world.

Sum grate writers can work under almost any konditions. In a railway karridge, on the top of a buss, or even in an airoplaine, they can proseed merrily with their work. They do not find that a noyse annoys them. Even if a jazz band is playing in the vissinity, it does not worry them in the leest.

Other grate orthers, however, must have absolute kwiet, and I am one of them.

Alone, in the solly-chewed of my studdy, I can tern out yards and yards of stuff—stuff which reaches a high littery standerd, too! But when that noisy fello Talbot comes in and starts wissling "My Littel Grey Home in an Old-fashioned Town," or sumthing like that, it puts me right off my stroke.

Gore is another noisy fello. He's always playing "We've Coom Up From Summerset" on his mouth-organ. Gore isn't a native of Summerset, but he kicks up such a row that I should like to Suffolk-ate him. This is a drastick statement, but menny feloes will endorse it.

The best time for working is at nite, when the other feloes have gone to bed.

I always prefer nite work to mourning work. In other words, the nite watches are better than the mourning alarm clox! Har, har, har! That joak of mine is worthy of a plaice in "Punch."

Sum grate orthers use a typewriter. Others use there fists. I don't mean that they are boxers, but they write all there stuff by hand.

I have been klammering for a type-writer for sum time, but Billy Bunter, my additer, tells me that funds won't run to it. When the serkulashun of the "Weekly" has increased by another billyun, he says I can have a typewriter. This means that I shall have to weight about ninety yeers. Perrish the thort!

Sum grate orthers have what they call a sekkertary, to whom they dictate everything. I should like a sekkertary very much, but I karn't get one for luv or munney. I should be prepared to pay him a hansom sum for his services, too.

So I suppoze I've got to carry on in the same old way, doing all the donkey-work myself, like a silly ass. But their's no help for it.

Of the four fatt subbs on Billy Bunter's staff, I am by far the most industrious, and the most popular, too.



# Bunter's Fighting Editor!

By Dick Rake.

**W**ANTED—a Fiting Edditer. Must be at least six feet in statcher, and be able to ejectt all un-welcome kontributors. His services will only be rekirowed on Press Days, and then only for two hours. Sallery—a tanner an hour. No undersized or deformed weeklings need apply. This is a man's jobb. We don't want a Fiting Edditer who karn't fite!—Apply in person to W. G. BUNTER, edditer of the 'Weekly' which bares his name, Study No. 7, Remove Passidge, Grey-friars."

This extraordinary advertisement appeared in the "Agony Column" of the "Courtfield, Friardale, and Wapshot Gazette."

The advertisement manager, who evidently possessed a sense of humour, had not attempted to correct Billy Bunter's weird spelling. He allowed it to stand.

The local paper was published on Friday, which also happened to be press day so far as "Billy Bunter's Weekly" was concerned.

When afternoon lessons were over, a visitor was ushered into Study No. 7 by Trotter, the page. He was a very pale, anemic-looking man, with a lean, scholarly face and rounded shoulders. His clothes were shabby; he seemed to be no stranger to adversity.

Billy Bunter looked up from the editorial he was writing.

"What do you want?" he growled.

"I have come," said the visitor, in a high-pitched voice, "in response to your advertisement."

Billy Bunter blinked at the man in amazement.

"W-what's your name?"

"Pewny—Mr. Percival Pewny."

"My hat! You look it, too! Can you fight?"

"No," said Mr. Pewny, looking shocked at the suggestion. "Warfare is repellent to me. Bloodshed I abhor!"

"Then why," demanded Billy Bunter, in wrath, "have you applied for the post of fighting editor on my staff?"

"Fighting editor! Surely you did not advertise for such a person? The word was spelt 'f-i-t-i-n-g,' and I therefore took it to mean 'fitting.' Believe me, I should make a very fitting editor. My journalistic experience extends over thirty-three years and—"

"Then it's time you were put away in the Home for Faded Journalists!" said Billy Bunter.

And there was a cackle from Sammy, who was present.

Mr. Pewny looked distressed.

"Then you are not in need of an editor—a fitting editor, I mean?"

"Great Scott, no!" said Billy Bunter. "It would be impossible to get a more fitting editor than me. You can buzz off—quickly, or I'll set the editorial mastiff on you!"

There was no editorial mastiff, but Mr. Pewny was not to know that. He imagined that a ferocious canine creature was concealed behind the screen, and he promptly took to his heels.

"Precious fine Fighting Editor that fellow would make!" said Billy Bunter, with a snort. "Why, he couldn't fight a fag in the Second!"

"I'm jolly certain he couldn't!" said Sammy warmly. "If he tried to tackle me, there would be pieces of Pewny lying around! Hallo! Here's another caller, Billy!"

Billy Bunter had added barely a couple of words to his editorial, when a giant of a man strode into the study. His appearance was suggestive of massive, rugged strength. His jaw was thrust forward aggressively, his huge fists were clenched, and he did not seem a desirable sort of person to encounter on a dark night, or, indeed, at any other time.

Billy Bunter quaked with alarm.

"W-w-what can I do for you?" he faltered.

"You can give me my first day's salary right now!" said the burly one. "I've come to take on the job of Fighting Editor!"

"Oh, good! Sammy, hand this gentleman a bob from the funds!"

"But there's only tenpence in the box!" protested Sammy.

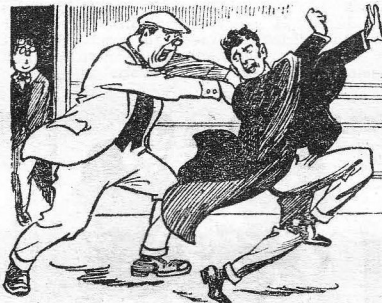
"Well, give him that, and steam the twopenny stamp off that envelope which hasn't been properly postmarked. Now, Mr.—er—"

"My name's Gentle," said the stranger. "And so I am—till I'm roused!" Then somebody's got to go through it!"

"Well, Mr. Gentle, your duties here will be jolly light. It's easy money. All you've got to do is to crouch behind that screen, and when anybody intrudes into this study with contributions put them out on their necks!"

Mr. Gentle nodded, and retired into obscurity.

Five peaceful minutes passed. During this time nothing could be heard save the



Mr. Gentle seized Mr. Quelch by the collar, and frog-marched him through the doorway and along the passage.

busy scratching of Billy Bunter's pen, and an occasional chuckle from the infant Samuel, who was glancing over his major's shoulder.

Then the door of the study was thrown open without ceremony, and Skinner of the Remove came in.

"I say, Bunty—"

"Buzz off!"

"I've brought you an article on how to smoke cigarettes without staining your fingers—"

"Get out!"

Skinner did not budge. And the next moment he had the shock of his life.

From behind the screen emerged a gigantic figure, with coat off and sleeves uprolled.

Mr. Gentle's appearance at that moment suggested Tarzan of the Apes. He advanced towards Skinner, lifted the cad of the Remove bodily in his arms, and bore him out of the study. He took him along the passage to the fight of steps which led into the Close, and rolled him gently down.

Skinner alighted at the foot of the steps with a bump and a yell. And after that humiliating experience he was careful to give the editorial sanctum of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" a wide berth.

Mr. Gentle returned to his post. The two Bunters fairly beamed at him as he entered.

"That's the stuff to give 'em!" said Billy. "You're worth every penny of your tanner an hour!"

"Thanks!" said Mr. Gentle gruffly. "I always endeavour to give satisfaction to my employers. But I'm not getting a great deal of work to do as yet. Wish somebody else would come along."

Mr. Gentle's wish was gratified.

After a brief interval the door again opened.

This time it was no less a personage than Mr. Quelch who came into the editorial den.

"With regard to those lines I gave you, Bunter—" began the Remove-master.

He got no further. The Fighting Editor was upon him.

Mr. Gentle knew nothing of public school life, and he could not be expected to differentiate between Form-masters and common or garden contributors to Billy Bunter's paper. It was his duty to eject all intruders, and he carried out that duty with great thoroughness.

Mr. Quelch's eyes started out of his head as the Fighting Editor advanced upon him.

"Who—who are you, my man?" he gasped.

Mr. Gentle ignored the question. "Out you go!" he said.

And he seized Mr. Quelch by the collar, and frog-marched him through the doorway and along the passage.

"Ruffian! Unhand me! How dare you molest me in this manner? Unhand me, I say!"

The Fighting Editor hung on grimly. It is probable that Mr. Quelch would have shared the fate of Skinner, and been rolled down the steps, had not help arrived in the shape of half a dozen sturdy Sixth-Formers.

Wingate and Gwynne and Faulkner, and three other members of the first eleven, were coming along the passage in their cricket flannels. They saw what was happening, and promptly rushed to Mr. Quelch's assistance.

Mr. Gentle fought like a madman after he had been dragged away from his victim. But his struggles were unavailing. He was marched away to the school gates, and despatched through the gateway with half a dozen buckskin boots behind him.

"Speeding the parting guest, hegorrah!" chuckled Gwynne.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am much obliged to you, my boys!" panted Mr. Quelch. "You have taught that ruffian a lesson, and I hardly think he will venture to show his face here again. Will you be good enough, Wingate, to ask Bunter major to report to me in my study?"

"Certainly, sir."

When Billy Bunter rolled into the Form-master's study five minutes later he found Mr. Quelch awaiting him with a frown which was positively terrifying.

"Bunter, who was that—that person who attacked me in such an aggressive manner?"

"Ahem! That was my Fighting Editor, sir."

"What!"

"I employed him so that he could turn out all unwelcome intruders, sir!"

"Indeed! And you regard your Form-master as, an unwelcome intruder?"

"Nunno, sir! You—you're always a most welcome visitor, sir. I only wish you'd drop in and see me more often."

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I will endeavour to teach you, Bunter," he said, "that it is very wrong of you to import Fighting Editors from outside the school, and to encourage them to make unwarranted attacks upon all and sundry. Hold out your hand!"

Billy Bunter reluctantly obeyed.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Now go!" panted Mr. Quelch. "And do not dare to transgress in this way again!"

Billy Bunter limped back to his study, and despatched the following note to the advertisement manager of the "Courtfield, Friardale, and Wapshot Gazette":

"Dear Sir,—I rekwested you to insert my advertisement for a Fiting Edditer three times. Please cancel this order, and don't insert it no more! I'm fed-up with Fiting Edditers!"

"Yores trewily,

"W. G. BUNTER."

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## TUBBY MUFFIN TO BILLY BUNTER.

Dear Bunter,—I have worked for you  
For munths without sessation;  
And now I think the time is ripe  
For more remuneration.

Wear wood yore preshus "Weekly" be  
Without my priceless stuff in?  
No Brittish boy wood reed the ragg  
Eggssept for Tubby Muffin!

My stories and my artikles  
Are absolutely famus.  
Yore Rookwood representative  
Is not an igneramus!

I sit and bern the midnite oil  
Till early in the morning.  
I work my fingers to the bone,  
Despite the dockter's warning!

He tells me I am getting thin,  
And waiting to a shaddo.  
And yet before yore ragg was lornched  
I was a bonnie lad, oh!

I karn't kontinew to eggstist  
On such a paltry pittanse;  
So send me, Bill, without delay,  
A jolly fat remittanse!

Then to the tuckshop I'll repara,  
My figger will grow wider;  
And I shall drink yore health, deer Bill,  
In drafts of cooling cider!

But if you tare this letter up  
In anger and veggsation.  
I must rekwest you to axsept  
At wunce my ressignation!

Think of the work I've dun for you!  
Think of my toils and labers!  
When all the time I mite have been  
At cricket with my neighbours!

Send that remittanse rite away  
That I may do sum stuffin'.  
I now remane, for wheel or whoa,  
Yores trewly—TUBBY MUFFIN.

## STOP PRESS.

Since I sent the kopy for this weak's issew of my "Weekly" to the printers, I have herd many roomers konsarning my staff. I don't take any heed of roomers as a rool, but as I know for a sert, that various members of my staff are begining to get swelled heds as a result of the komplimentary letters reseved from reeders, and think they are wurth more munney every weak, I am tying up my bootlace—I mean, I shall take steps to diskover if there is any trooth in the roomers that they are going on strike.

Anyhow, I promiss my reeders that necks weak's issew of my "Weekly" will be as brite as ever.

Of corse, they may be nothing in the roomers. Roomer is a fibbing jade, I've herd. But, taking the advice of a grate general—or poet, I forget wih—I am adopting that motto—Be prepared!

W. G. Bunter.

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## FOR SERVICES RENDERED!

By FATTY WYNN.

**B**Y the midday post on Wednesday afternoon came a letter for me, in the familiar handwriting of Billy Bunter, my editor-in-chief.

Letters from Bunter are not rare. They arrive by almost every post, and I often wonder how he manages to procure his two-penny stamps.

Usually he sends me brief notes asking me to let him have a column feature, or a two-column feature, as the case may be, for the next issue of his "Weekly."

This particular letter, however, was different. It was a letter which caused my eyes to light up with pleasure, and my heart to beat a little faster than usual.

The missive was worded as follows:

"My deer Fatty,—You have now been a good and faithful servant of mine for menny moons.

"My wonderful 'Weekly' has owed not a little of its suckness to yore splendid feechers. I don't mven yore face (that woodn't bring suckness to anybody!). I mven the kontributions you have ritten from time to time for my 'Weekly.'



*I had the satisfaction of anointing Billy Bunter's head with the contents of the treacle tin.*

"Without yore loyal co-operashun, my deer Fatty, I should have been in the soop. At any rate, I should have been in a frightful stew!

"You have given me valuable assistanse, and I feel that the time is ripe for you to reseve a hansom reward.

"If you will come over to Greyfriars this Wensday afternoon, I will bestoe a great reward upon you.—Yores sincerly,

"BILLY BUNTER."

That letter gave me immense satisfaction. I read it over two or three times, and my satisfaction grew.

It was true that I had put my shoulder to the wheel, and helped to make "Billy Bunter's Weekly" a success.

I had received a very small salary in return for my efforts—a sum that was scarcely sufficient to keep me in ginger-ooop—and it was very cheering to know that Billy Bunter contemplated giving me a reward.

My name was down to play cricket for the New House that afternoon, and I love cricket. Nevertheless, I decided to give the game a miss, and to run over to Greyfriars.

Under pressure, Figgy lent me his bike. And—also under pressure—the machine nearly collapsed, for I am no light weight.

It is a far cry to Greyfriars, and the afternoon was sultry. But I was buoyed up by the knowledge that I should receive a substantial reward when I reached my journey's end.

I was more dead than alive by the time I got to Greyfriars. I hadn't sufficient energy to jump off my machine. I rolled off.

Then, leaving my jigger in the Close, I made my way to Study No. 7 in the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter was there. So was his minor Sammy. So, also, was Tubby Muffin, of Rookwood.

Tubby was looking very woebegone.

"Hallo! Another victim!" he said, as I entered.

"Eh? What do you mean?" I demanded.

"You're going to be let in, just the same as I was. Billy Bunter sent me a long letter, thanking me for having served him faithfully all this time, and promising me a reward if I came over to Greyfriars."

"Well?"

"He's had his reward, and he isn't satisfied," chimed in Billy Bunter. "But I know you'll appreciate the honour that I'm about to confer upon you, Fatty. Kneel down!"

"W-w-what!"

"Down on one knee, there's a good chap! I'm going to anoint you with treacle, and make you one of the Nobs—that is to say, a member of the Noble Order of Bunfighters, of which I'm the president."

"You—you—" I spluttered. "Is this your handsome reward?"

"Certainly!"

Billy Bunter plunged a spoon into the treacle-tin.

"Kneel down, and I'll anoint your napper," he said. "Tubby Muffin's already been made a member of the society. If you look at his hair, you'll see that it's matted with golden syrup—and now it's your turn, Fatty."

"Why, you—you— Do you think I fagged all the way over from St. Jim's for this?" I hooted. "From your letter I imagined I was going to get a substantial cash reward, or at least a free feed! And now, when I get here, you calmy say that you're going to make me a member of some tinpot society!"

"Calm yourself, my dear Fatty! Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

"I'll let my fist go down upon your cranium!" I snorted.

And I promptly suited the action to the word.

I was beside myself with rage, and I pommelled Billy Bunter's head as if it had been a punching-ball.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

"Yaroooooh! Chuckitt! Stoppit! Give over! Yow-ow-ow!"

"You'll be knocking all the sawdust out, Fatty!" chuckled Tubby Muffin.

I continued to commit assault and battery upon my editor, and he plunged wildly round and round the study, sending the furniture flying. On one occasion he put his boot through the bookcase, and there was a splintering of glass.

Fortunately for Billy Bunter, Harry Wharton & Co. came in at that moment, and rescued him from my clutches. Otherwise it would have been necessary to send for the ambulance.

But before they could get Bunter clear of the study I had the satisfaction of anointing his head with the contents of the treacle-tin. And it was a very sticky and sorry specimen of humanity that was dragged out into the passage.

Having let off steam somewhat, I returned to St. Jim's, still breathing maledictions upon Billy Bunter and his Noble Order of Bunfighters, the admission to which was to have been my "substantial reward!"

**THEIR UNSEEN ENEMY!**

(Continued from page 8.)

their being extinguished a new and deeper solitude seemed to fall upon the Greyfriars fellows on board the *Aspasia*.

"Blessed if I like the idea of going to sleep!" said Bob Cherry, after a long pause. "But—but I suppose we shall have to."

"I'll keep watch!" said Coker.

"Oh, I'll do that!" said Johnny Bull. "I was going to offer!" remarked Nugent.

Harry Wharton smiled faintly. "I don't think any of us feel inclined to go to sleep," he said. "Let's all stay awake and watch."

"Good egg!"

"What about a sing-song?" suggested Bob Cherry.

The suggestion was not received with favour. A sing-song would certainly have dispelled the oppressive silence and drowned the low, faint murmur of the waves round the ship, but the juniors did not feel inclined for it. As a matter of fact, they were listening all the time.

A silver crescent of moon showed over the summit of the Shoulder. Nugent and Johnny Bull began to nod. It was close upon midnight now, and the silence and stillness were conducive to slumber, in spite of the state of their nerves.

Coker stood leaning against the rail. Harry Wharton was seated on the steps of the bridge, and he was still listening. Once or twice it seemed to him as if he heard a faint sound from below.

Suddenly he started.

He leaped to his feet, and stood quivering from head to foot, holding up his hand to the other fellows as a sign to be silent.

"Hark!" he breathed.

The juniors were all on their feet now.

They listened with straining ears.

From the deep silence of the ship there came a faint sound—a sound as of a soft body dragging along the floor.

The juniors listened spellbound.

What was it?

Whence came the sound?

It died away.

Dead silence reigned upon the ship. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another with blanched faces.

"Good heavens!" muttered Nugent huskily. "What—what was that? There's—there's something alive on board!"

"Oh, heavens, what—what—"

"Listen!"

They listened, with throbbing hearts and bated breath.

But there came no new sound. The silence of the deserted ship was unbroken.

But as they stood listening, with throbbing nerves, there was a fresh sound—this time from the shore—the sound of rough boots on the sand; and there was a shout from Coker.

"Look out, they're coming!"

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**  
**A Sudden Attack!**

COKER shouted the warning as he caught sight of flitting dark forms on the shore. The alarm of the coming attack roused the juniors from their state of almost spellbound horror.

Whatever it was that made that strange sound on board the steamer, they had no time to think of it now; they had real and material foes to deal with.

Five or six roughs were clambering over the big rock towards the ship, with Peter Keeley at their head.

The longshoremen had crept silently as far as the water's edge along the shore, intending to take the grounded steamer by surprise, but the shout of Coker, as he caught sight of them in the moonlight, warned Keeley that further concealment was useless.

And he led a swift rush towards the ship over the big rock on the port side, the only point where it was possible to clamber aboard.

Roused by the sudden attack, the juniors rushed to the side.

They were only just in time.

Keeley and his gang reached the rail as soon as they did, and tried to clamber over it, at the same time slashing with heavy cudgels.

Keeley had evidently come prepared for a struggle this time. There were six of the longshoremen now instead of three, and they all carried cudgels.

But the juniors faced them bravely.

Harry Wharton & Co. had the advantage of position, as they were at a greater height than their assailants.

But the longshoremen came on fiercely. The prospect of rifling the cabins of the grounded ship, even if they could not claim the vessel as salvage, was quite sufficient to stimulate them.

Along the rail a fierce fight was waged. Peter Keeley had one leg over when a slash from Bob Cherry's stick hurled him back, and he rolled on the rock.

At the same moment Doggett tumbled on the deck.

Coker seized him before he could rise, and the ruffian returned grip for grip, and dragged Coker down, and they rolled on the deck together.

Keeley staggered to his feet on the rock.

"Get on!" he roared. "Bash them! Smash them!"

"Buck up, Greyfriars!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah! Give 'em socks!"

The juniors gallantly manned the rail, keeping off the attack of the roughs, while Coker was struggling with Doggett on the deck.

But the longshoremen were using their cudgels freely, and Keeley succeeded in getting one leg over the rail, and he clung there, slashing round with his cudgel, and keeping the place he had gained.

Another and another of the longshoremen followed his example, lashing out savagely, and Keeley slipped down to the deck.

He gained a footing now, and he held his ground while the rest of the gang boarded and backed him up. Doggett hurled Coker away from him, and sprang up, and joined his confederates.

The juniors backed away towards the bridge. The odds and the superior strength of the ruffians had told in the combat, but the Greyfriars juniors were by no means disposed to yield.

Keeley waved his hand to them.

"You're beat!" he exclaimed. "Clear off the ship, and we won't hurt you!"

"You've hurt me already!" growled Bob Cherry, rubbing a great bruise on his forehead. "And we're not going to clear off!"

"No fear!"

"You'll go to prison for this, you rotters!" panted Coker.

Keeley grinned.

"We'll risk that," he remarked.

"This 'ere ship is ours, and we was on it first. You kids kem on to it while we wasn't lookin'!"

"Why, you lying rascal—!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"One yarn is as good as another, and we've got plenty of witnesses," said Keeley, with a wave of the hand towards his gang. "Are you goin'?"

"No!"

"Mind, if you don't go we're going to chuck you off the ship," said Keeley, "and you'll get 'urt!"

Harry Wharton & Co. set their teeth. Outnumbered as they were, pitted against grown-up men, powerful ruffians all of them, they had little chance, now that the longshoremen had gained a footing on the steamer.

But they did not mean to yield possession of the derelict.

Whether the longshoremen would be able to make their claim good was a question; but, as Keeley had said, one yarn would be as good as another. At all events, if the longshoremen obtained undisputed possession of the ship for the night, they had nine points of the law in their favour when it came for the matter to be decided, and they would certainly pocket all the portable articles of value in the vessel.

"We're not going!" said Harry Wharton fiercely.

"Then you'll be put!" said Keeley threateningly.

But the ruffians were in no hurry to make the final rush. Most of them had received hard knocks already, and if the juniors fought to a finish they were likely to receive a good many more before Harry Wharton & Co. were got rid of.

And Keeley, too, did not wish to cause serious injury by some unlucky blow in a desperate affray with cudgels. He had no desire to risk a sentence of penal servitude.

"Now, you'd better go!" said Keeley. "You ain't got an earthly agin' us. We're six, and you're five, and we're men and you're boys! Cut!"

"Rats!"

"I give you two minutes!"

"Go and eat coke!"

Harry Wharton gritted his teeth. However hard the Greyfriars fellows struggled, it was certain that the rush of the longshoremen could have only one result—the juniors would be beaten, and hurled over the rail upon the rocks or into the water. Not one of them flinched; but it was useless to fight a losing fight. Not that Wharton had the

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faintest idea of yielding the possession of the derelict to their unscrupulous foes.

His brain was working rapidly as he stood there panting.

"We can't stop them!" he said, in the faintest of whispers. "There's only one chance. If we lock ourselves in a cabin they can't shift us!"

"Good!"

"Follow me!"

The horror the juniors had been feeling, their reluctance to go below, had been driven away by the excitement of the fierce struggle with the longshoremen. Wharton's idea was the only possible way of remaining on board; and the juniors had forgotten for the moment that strange sound below, and Coker's terror of the unknown Thing.

Wharton made a sudden rush to get below. Keeley made a forward movement, divining his intention; and Wharton hurled his boathook full at the ruffian's face. Keeley staggered back with a yell of agony, and the juniors rushed below. The longshoremen were after them a moment later; but in that moment the Greyfriars fellows had dashed into the professor's state-room, and closed and bolted the door.

"Open this door!" yelled Doggett.

"Go and eat coke!"

"Hurray for us!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Go and chop chips!"

The juniors yelled defiance at their foes through the fastened door.

Crash, crash!

"The table—quick!" exclaimed Wharton.

The table was rushed across to barricade the door, and the juniors held it in position, tight against the door. Crash, crash! But the door was stout enough to resist the blows of the cudgels.

The assault died away.

The angry voices of the longshoremen were heard outside, and presently Keeley joined them. The leader had been half-stunned by the crash of the boathook in his face. He struck at the door with his fist.

"Let me in!" he said, in a voice hoarse with rage.

"Rats!"

"Will you open this door?"

"No!"

"Then we'll smash it in!"

"You'll find us ready for you!" said Harry Wharton resolutely. "The first man who gets his head in at that door will get it cracked!"

"We'll soon settle you, you young hounds!"

"Well, try it!"

Crash, crash, crash!

Keeley and his gang were evidently in deadly earnest. Their cudgels crashed again and again upon the door, and the door groaned and creaked.

Within, the juniors stood, weapons in hand, prepared to strike as soon as the door yielded to their foes. They fully intended to resist to the very end. The swinging lamp, which had been left alight, lighted the state-room. There was no furniture save the little table and a chair with which to barricade the door. But Harry Wharton & Co. still hoped to be able to hold their own, for there was not sufficient room for all the gang to rush in at once when the door should open.

But the door did not open.

There was a sudden lull in the crashing blows from outside. Crash—crash—crash, and then, a sudden cessation!

A wild, fearful yell was heard, and a sound of desperate running, and then—silence!

Thud, thud!

It was the sound of men leaping from the deck of the steamer to the rock alongside.

Further off, the sound of boots grinding upon the wet sand—the sound of splashing in the water, gasping cries of terror from the distance.

Then silence.

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at one another in silent horror.

The enemy had fled.

Why?

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### The Thing Unseen!

SILENCE reigned upon the mysterious ship.

To the terrific din of a few moments before, the most deathly stillness had succeeded.

The last sound of the fleeing longshoremen had died away. Silence, stillness!

Why had the attack so suddenly ceased? Why had the raiders fled?

"Good heavens!" muttered Bob Cherry, wiping the perspiration from his brow. "What does it mean? Why did they go?"

Coker muttered hoarsely:

"They've seen it!"

"Seen what?"

"The Thing!"

"But—but there's nothing—there's nobody!" said Harry Wharton desperately.

"There's something—it wasn't fancy—I know there was something when I came down," said Coker huskily. "And—and they've seen it—perhaps plainer than I did!"

"But—but—"

"Something must have frightened them," said Johnny Bull, in a strained voice. "They wouldn't have run for nothing."

"Let's go out and see!" exclaimed Harry Wharton resolutely.

"No, no!"

"Keep the door shut!"

Wharton hesitated.

"Look here—" he began.

Nugent interposed between the Remove captain and the door.

"Keep back, you ass!" he said hoarsely. "That door's not going to be opened. It might get into here."

"It! What?"

"Whatever it is," said Nugent, with blanched cheeks. "Whatever it is that frightened that man we saw in the photograph—whatever it is that has destroyed the crew of this ship—whatever it is that's made Keeley and his gang run."

The junior panted.

It seemed impossible to doubt it now.

There was something—something strange, mysterious, intangible—some hidden horror on board the derelict—something that had destroyed the crew, and was still on board!

Still on board!

The mere thought of that made cold shivers run through their limbs.

The Thing, whatever it was, must have been on board all the time. They might have chanced upon it at any moment while they were searching the vessel!

What was it?

Before a human foe, even supposing that some man had remained hidden in the hold, the longshoremen would not have fled. There were six of them, all hardened ruffians, and in an excited and desperate mood. They would not have fled from a man, or from two or three men!

From what, then, had they fled?

What was it that had appeared in the corridor outside the state-room door, and put the rascals to sudden and panic-stricken flight?

It was impossible even to surmise.

But one thing was certain, that there was something—human or not, there was some fearful thing on board the derelict, and it was close at hand. Only the door of the state-room interposed between the juniors and the unseen, fearful enemy.

"We—we shall have to stop here!" muttered Coker, between his pallid lips.

"We mustn't open that door! We—we can't go on deck again!"

Wharton shook his head.

"We'll stop here," he said.

Nugent held up his hand.

"Listen!" he muttered.

"Oh! Good heavens!"

With bated breath and throbbing hearts the juniors listened.

From the deep silence came a sound—a slight, almost indefinable sound—the same that they had heard from the deck before the attack of the longshoremen.

A low, faint, dragging sound as of a soft but heavy body dragging itself along the floor.

It came closer to the door of the cabin, the juniors listening with freezing blood.

Closer and closer.

Then it stopped.

Silence!

The juniors' eyes met. They were silent, frozen with horror. The Thing—

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NEXT FRIDAY: "STICKING UP FOR GUNNER!" A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.



There was a rush of footsteps and a horrified gasp, and Horace Coker reappeared. He leaped into view, and dashed past the juniors. "Coker! What's the matter? What have you seen?" said Harry Wharton in a hoarse whisper. (See Chapter 2.)

the unknown, mysterious Thing—was outside the state-room door.

Harry Wharton glanced at his companions in frozen silence.

There was a soft rubbing sound on the door itself—and it shook. Then the dragging sound again, passing away into silence.

Silence again, deep and still.

It was many minutes before the juniors moved or spoke. The horror of it was strong upon them; their faces were white; their breath came in short, sharp gasps.

But the deep silence remained unbroken.

Harry Wharton was the first to speak.

"You—you heard that?"

"Yes," muttered Bob Cherry.

"What was it?"

"Heaven knows!"

"It—it was something," muttered Coker. "It—it was the Thing I—I saw! I don't know what it was—a moving shadow. But—but—but that's what has cleared out the crew of this ship, whatever it is."

"What can it be?"

There was no reply possible to that question. The juniors still listened with straining ears, but no sound came. Once or twice they fancied they heard the slow, dragging sound again, but it was only fancy.

"We—we can't stay here," Nugent muttered, between his trembling lips.

"We've got to get out, you fellows."

"We can't—we mustn't open the door!"

"We can't stay here. I—I think I should go dotty if we had to stay here all night," said Nugent huskily.

"We've got to," said Wharton, his own voice shaking. "I wouldn't face that—that Thing, whatever it is, for worlds. We daren't open the door."

Nugent nodded.

All the Greyfriars fellows were eager to escape from the state-room; to leave the mysterious ship; to get away from that mysterious, hidden horror which had been fatal to the crew of the *Aspasia*, and might be fatal to them in their turn.

But to open the door, and face the Thing in the passage without—their hearts seemed to turn cold at the thought.

They could not do it. The bolted door was all that saved them from the eerie foe—it was their only protection. Indeed, who could tell if it would save them? The Thing might be able to penetrate into the cabin!

Wharton shuddered as the thought came into his mind.

"We've got to stay here," he said. "It's lucky that it—it wasn't here when we came down. We might have found it in here."

The juniors shivered.

"We can sleep here—if we can sleep at all," said Johnny Bull. "I don't think I shall close my eyes to-night."

"Not likely!" said Coker.

Wharton went to the porthole and examined it. It was closed with glass, but when open there was no room for a body to pass. There was no escape for the juniors that way. Wharton secured the catch. He had a horrible feeling that the unknown foe might seek to attack them from without.

"No getting out that way," said Nugent.

"No."

"We've got to camp here," said Bob Cherry. "It's horrible. But—but there will be people coming down here in the morning, and then—"

"I wish it were daylight!" said Johnny Bull, with a shudder.

"It will be in a few hours."

"But the—the Thing will be here if— if people come in the morning," said Coker, in a shaken voice. "They—they may run right into it, whatever it is!"

"We shall have to warn them, somehow," said Wharton.

"I wish I knew what it was! It wouldn't be so bad if we knew."

Crowded in the state-room, the juniors spoke in muttering tones, and with continual glances towards the door. The silence remained unbroken. It was stuffy in the state-room with the porthole closed, but none of the juniors ventured to open it.

An hour passed—two hours. No sound. And now weariness was overpowering the juniors. Coker was the first to stretch himself upon the floor, with a pillow from the bunk, and fall asleep.

Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry followed his example. Nugent lay down in the bunk and slept at last. Harry Wharton remained awake. He was sitting in the chair, nodding with weariness; but his nerves were too racked for him to sleep, for a long time. There was no need to keep watch, with the door bolted and the porthole closed. But for a long time he struggled with his drowsiness.

He awakened many times with a suddenness that made his head ache. He would not have cared if he could have seen the enemy. But the enemy was invisible. And never before did he long so much for the beginning of another day, with the comfort which light brings.

THE END.

(Another splendid long complete story of the *Chums of Greyfriars* aboard the *derelict* will appear in next Friday's issue of the *POPULAR*.)

**THE ROAD TO RUIN!***(Continued from page 6.)*

"You would not, any way. I dare say you could. But I shouldn't take it if you offered it!" said Mornington, disdainfully. "I shouldn't care to be under any obligation to a fellow like you."

Mornington left him, and Lattrey stared after him, with a curling lip. He knew that Morny had come to the end of his tether at last. Lattrey, as a matter of fact, could have found the money, but he had not the slightest intention of doing so. The cad of the Fourth had no use for a "lame duck."

And Mornington's supercilious insolence was not calculated to make his associate feel any keen regret at his ruin. For it was ruin!

Hook would wait a few days, perhaps, but non-payment would be followed by threats, and the threats would be carried out. Unless Mornington could raise the money the game was up for him at Rookwood School.

The next morning there was a letter for Morny in the rack.

Erroll took it from the rack and brought it to him, with a very grave face, in the quadrangle.

Mornington read it and laughed, and thrust it in his pocket.

"Morny," said Erroll in a low voice, "I know that fist. I've seen it before. Are you mad, to have letters from a book-maker here? Mr. Bootles might have opened it and seen what's in it."

"It wouldn't make any difference," said Mornington coolly. "Mr. Bootles will know all about Hook to-morrow."

"Morny!" exclaimed Erroll. Mornington strolled away, whistling. Erroll looked at him with deep trouble in his face. He felt a vague but deep alarm. Had the end come for the reckless blackguard of the Fourth?

It mattered little enough to any other fellow at Rookwood, but it mattered very much to Kit Erroll, for his steady friendship for the reckless junior had never faltered. Whatever Valentine Mornington was, Kit Erroll was his chum, and quietly ready to stand by him through thick and thin.

Mornington's face was very quiet and pale at dinner that day. After dinner he went up to his study. He came down with a coat over his arm and a bag in his hand.

"Hallo! Off for a merry week-end?" asked Jimmy Silver.

Mornington gave him a curious smile. "Exactly! Good-bye, Silver!" He paused. "I'm sorry I haven't pulled better with you, Silver. I've been rather an ass in some ways. Luck's been against me, too. Good-bye!"

He held out his hand. Jimmy Silver shook hands with him cheerily enough, but he looked at the dandy of the Fourth in surprise and some concern.

"Going to be long away?" he asked. "You speak as if you were going to the world's end!"

"Some little time, I think," said Mornington. "I hope you'll have good luck with the cricket, and win no end of matches. Sorry I shan't be here to help you. Ta-ta!"

He nodded and walked down to the gates.

Bag in hand, Mornington walked down the lane, his head held high. There was a sound of hurried footsteps behind him, and he turned his head and frowned. Kit Erroll came breathlessly up.

"Morny!" exclaimed Erroll, panting.

"Hallo!"

"I heard what you said to Jimmy Silver." Erroll breathed hard. "Morny, tell me what's the matter! Don't try to fool me! I know you're intending to clear out of Rookwood, and that you're not going home."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Isn't it so?" exclaimed Erroll.

"Well, yes, it is so!" said Mornington impatiently.

"You were going without speaking to me?" said Erroll reproachfully.

"I didn't want any questions," said Mornington. "Still, I'm glad to say good-bye. You're a good chap, Erroll." His face softened. "You've been a better pal than I ever deserved. I—I'm sorry I'm leaving. Good-bye! I've got a train to catch, and—"

"You're not going to catch it, Morny! You can't leave Rookwood like this! The Head—"

"Bother the Head!"

"Your guardian—"

"I'm done with my guardian!"

"Morny, what are you going to do?"

"I don't know, and I don't care much. I've got to go!" said Mornington impatiently. "If I stayed I should be sacked before nightfall. Do you understand? It's the end—the merry end. I've played my game, and lost. It was a mug's game. But I've called the tune, and I've got to pay the piper!"

"If it's money, you know I—"

"I wasn't goin' to sponge on you, Erroll. An' it's too late now. That letter was from Joey Hook." Mornington laughed sardonically. "If I don't redeem my I O U's by three o'clock this afternoon they're goin' to the Head! You can guess the merry result—Head awfully shocked, sacked on the spot, angry guardian receivin' me home with frowns. Not good enough for me, old scout. I'm goin' out into the wide world. I'm not goin' home to be sneered at an' patronised by my merry cousins. No fear!"

"How much do you owe Hook?" asked Erroll quietly.

"Fourteen quids!" Morny laughed.

"And I've got six bob!"

Erroll breathed more freely.

"Thank Heaven it's no worse! You're not going, Morny! I've got the money—"

"In the bank?" grinned Mornington. "All serene. I knew you'd say that if you knew; and I'm not spongin' on you, I tell you. Too late now. It's pay up by three o'clock or the merry sack!"

"I've got the money in my pocket, Morny!"

"By gad!" ejaculated Mornington, in astonishment. "How the merry dickens—"

"I knew it must come to this in the long run," said Erroll very quietly. "It couldn't end any other way. I drew out all I had left in the bank to be ready for it."

"Oh gad!"

"I've got fifteen pounds-ten," said Erroll. "It's all I've got, and thank goodness it's enough to see you through!"

"I—I won't—"

"You will!" said Erroll. "Morny, old chap, we've been pals; we're pals still. You can't refuse."

There was a silence.

"Do you know what you are, Erroll?" said Mornington at last. "You're the biggest ass in Rookwood!"

"Good! Let's go down and see Hook and get your paper back."

"But I tell you—"

"Come on!" said Erroll, slipping his arm through his chum's.

And Erroll had his way.

An hour later Mornington had pitched his bag into a corner of Study No. 4. He did not want that now. The chums had walked back from Coombe in silence, but their thoughts were busy.

"You've had your way, Erroll," said Mornington, facing his chum. "You've brought me back, and you haven't asked me even to give up playin' the giddy ox. How do you know I shan't plunge in neck-deep in a couple of days, and begin it all over again? Are you goin' to sell your bike ready for the next emergency?"

"Yes," said Erroll quietly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Mornington's laugh was hearty and merry, and it made Erroll's face brighten. "Well, you're not goin' to sell your bike, old scout. Do you think I'd have taken your money if I was goin' on playin' the same fool game afterwards? I'm not quite such a worm as that! It's over an' done with, you ass! It's ancient history, and there's goin' to be no more of it!"

"Morny," said Erroll, with a deep breath, "if you mean that—"

"Every word! Do you think that's worth fourteen quid, which I cannot possibly square in three terms?" grinned Mornington.

"Yes, or fourteen thousand, if I had them!" said Erroll.

"Well, it's a go, if it's any satisfaction to you," said Mornington. "I mean real biznez this time, honest Injun!" He laughed. "I say, old scout, do you think I've got brains enough to get a scholarship—what?"

"You could if you tried; and I'll help you," said Erroll.

"Done!"

During the next few days Mornington succeeded in astonishing the Fourth Form at Rookwood more than he had ever astonished them before. Morny had entered for a Founders' Scholarship, and he was "swotting" for the exam. It was a nine days' wonder in the Fourth.

THE END.

*(Another splendid Rookwood story next Friday, entitled "Sticking Up For Gunner!" By Owen Conquest.)*

NEXT WEEK'S GRAND ROOKWOOD STORY is entitled  
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**RUPERT THURSTON**, a young Englishman, and friend of Lord's.

**HAL HONOUR**, known as the man of silence, engineer of Ferrers Lord's wonderful submarine. Honour has invented a marvellous paint which causes things to become invisible when painted with it. He has also built a new kind of aeroplane which he calls a helicopter, and which is covered with this new paint.

**KARL VON KREIGLER**, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. He attempts to destroy Lord's new aeroplane, and unfortunately succeeds. After this attack, Ferrers Lord dispatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

Thurston obtains admittance into the Schloss Schwartzburg, where Von Kreigler is residing. The professor hears his message, but, until he can communicate further with Ferrers Lord, he refuses to allow them to return. They are imprisoned, but escape to a cavernous structure under the castle. As they move along, they hear the professor's voice.

(Now read on.)

### The Professor's Offer.

"GENTLEMEN," he said, "do I deceive myself, then, that you are within hearing? If I do not deceive myself, I implore you to an honourable surrender, without punishment or penalty. If you will not listen to reason, gentlemen, I must take the steps that are permissible and approved in every civilised community to secure escaping prisoners, dead or alive. Mr. Thurston, before it is too late, I beg you to surrender."

Von Kreigler appealed directly to Rupert Thurston, for, as he had told General Goltzheimer, he considered Thurston the least dangerous and resolute man of the three. Hal Honour put the captured rifle into Ching Lung's hands and took the holster. He tore the stout ticking apart with his strong hands, and felt for the hidden cloth.

"Keep on," he said. "I follow."

Then they heard General Goltzheimer's voice, angry and blustering, talking voluble German.

"I say no; I say it a thousand times!" he shouted. "I will not parley with these English pig-dogs and that Chinese hog. I do not understand such words, such whinings and implorings. I am a soldier, Excellency. I do not talk, but act. It is my duty to secure those men, and I'll do it. Swine! Have they not given enough trouble already? Must we talk butter to them? Ach, these ways are not mine! Ach, I am a soldier and I fight! Forward!"

NEXT FRIDAY!

"A NIGHT OF TERROR!"

A SPLENDID SCHOOL STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Rupert Thurston had waded farther into the darkness. The engineer dropped the bolster, and forced it under water with his foot. The cloth fell over him like a cowl; there were eyelet holes in it, and his arms were free. He scraped some of the black slime from the wall of the arch and rubbed it over his hands to darken them. Although a true Prussian of the bullying type, General Goltzheimer was not devoid of brute courage. Perhaps it was to impress Von Kreigler that for once he did not adopt the usual method of the German officer, that of leading his men from behind.

Revolver in hand, he waded forward. He had ten soldiers with him, six armed with rifles, the others carrying torches. As they advanced, blood-red ripples broke against the buttress where Hal Honour stood, utterly invisible. Flattened against the walls of the arch on either side, hoping to escape the expected volley of bullets, Ching Lung and Rupert Thurston were equally invisible.

"General," cried Professor von Kreigler, "I forbid you to fire until you have made every possible effort to take these men without bloodshed."

The general stopped and hesitated, his red moustache bristling. He was afraid of Von Kreigler, but he was in a ferocious temper, and too angry to listen to reason. He opened his mouth to give his men the order to fire down the tunnel, but the order was never given, for just then Hal Honour struck.

General Goltzheimer went backwards, as if a battering-ram had hit him, knocking over two of his men.

### A Little Music that Ended in a Fight!

"AND, by honey, that's that, you brigand!" said Mr. Thomas Prout triumphantly. "Your nap has gone clean west!"

Prout slapped down the knave of diamonds on Barry O'Rooney's ten, and looked very pleased with himself. The two mariners were terrible gamblers. They played Napoleon for enormous stakes, usually for a hundred pounds a trick. As neither of them paid, but merely kept an account of their winnings and losses in a little black notebook, there were no ruined homes so far.

"Ut's always the same whin Oi call on diamonds! Oi'm always pipped!" said Barry. "That's another foive hundred pounds you've robbed me of! No mather. Dale up, and Oi'll have another bang at ye! The O'Rooneys niver admit defeat! The throuble wid this oack pack is that there aren't enough aces in ut. D'ye moind turnin' up your sleeves, Tom? Oi'd be the last to think wrong of any man, but ut's a mysterious thing that Oi can't get hold of an ace. Oi'm not suggestin' that you kape them up your sleeve, Tommy, but—"

Hindlip, the wireless operator, put his head into the Glue Pot, and addressed one of the wretched gamblers.

"Wireless for the chief, Tom," he said. "I've been to his state-room twice, and tried the saloon 'phone twice, but can't get an answer."

"Give it to me, then, and I'll take it up,"

said the steersman of the Lord of the Deep. "Anything special, Sparks?"

"You'd like to get me shot at dawn, wouldn't you?" said the operator, and went off, whistling.

Prout examined the little notebook to make sure that Barry ha' not been putting down any wrong figures, and took the sealed envelope to the saloon. A steward, who was clearing the table where Ferrers Lord had dined alone, told him that the millionaire was on deck. Ferrers Lord was on the bridge. He broke the seal, and read the message by the light of the binnacle lamp. The wireless was from Professor Karl von Kreigler.

"Very well, Prout," said Ferrers Lord quietly. "I'll attend to this. Send the operator up to me."

He spoke as if he had just received an invitation to dinner or some trivial piece of news, and quickly pencilled a reply on a leaf of his pocket-book. Hindlip, the operator, shrugged his shoulders once or twice as he sent the reply winging into space.

And Gan Waga, the plump Eskimo, was lonely. He missed his beloved Ching Lung, and went mooning restlessly about the yacht. Nobody seemed to love him very much. Once he had ventured into the Glue Pot, only to be thrown out again rather violently by Prout and Maddox. Joe, the carpenter, was a kindly soul, but even Joe did not seem anxious for the Eskimo's company. Gan thought he would try the cook's galley.

The cook eyed the fat figure in the striped pyjamas very suspiciously as Gan Waga waddled in. The cook was French, and he wore a nice white jacket and a flat cap, a pointed black beard, and a waxed moustache to match. There was no look of rapturous welcome in his glance.

"Dears, dears!" said Gan Waga. "Yo' not ill, hunk? Yo' look quite paleness, cooksey! Yo' nots get enough of the butterfuss fresh airs, old sport!"

"If you vill tell me what eet is you vant, you can take eet and go queek!" said the cook, who had suffered.

"I think I likes a boiled leg of pork and smashed turnips!" said Gan Waga. "Yo' gotted any smashed turnips, hunk?"

"For you," said the cook, "I got nozzing—nozzing in ze vide world! You have fed me up! I tire of you, and you vorry me immense!"

Gan Waga smiled a sad smile that was quite seven inches wide. He said that if the cook had no boiled pork and turnips on the list a plate of cold beef, with pickled onions and marmalade, would do to keep body and soul together until breakfast-time. "Nozzing—nozzing in ze vide world!" said the cook. "You vas all ze time eat, eat, eat! Some day you go pr-r-rip, just like zat, and blow up!"

The Eskimo smiled a second weary smile. He glanced about out of the tail of his little black eye, but could see nothing eatable within reach that he could pounce on. The cook had something within reach, and that was a rolling-pin. Gan sighed, and waddled out again.

"If I not so tiredness, cooksey," he said from the doorway, "I gives you' one biff on the noses, and knock yo' silliness olds

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head into the middles of next week! Oh, dears, dears! It awful rotten withouts my butterfuss Chingy! Ohmi! 'Nozzings—nozzings in ze vide world!' If I couldn't speaks English better than that, I suicide myself, and goes 'Pr-r-rip, just like zat'! Ho, ho, hoo! Good-bye-e! Yo' mean badness olds galoompha!"

"Vat you mean—galoompha?" cried the cook. "I am not a galoompha, and vas nevaire zat! Call me galoompha again, and I blow your snub nose! I am insult! By you I will not be insult! Go away, you fat savage! I report zat I am insult! Galoompha! Call me galoompha twice, and for you I go! I strike you! Angaire boil inside of me! Galoompha—nevaire! It is one big, bad, black lie!"

As the cook had got hold of the rolling-pin, and Gan did not feel in a fighting mood that night, he thought it wiser to depart. Gan did not know what kind of an animal, vegetable or mineral, a galoompha was any more than the cook did, for he had invented the word on the spur of the moment. And the cook could not forget it. He turned up his well-thumbed French and English dictionary, but the compilers of that useful volume made no mention of a galoompha. It's absence from that respectable book convinced the cook that it must be some term of terrible abuse, and he did not intend to have abusive words hurled at him by any tallow-haired, snub-nosed, heathen, and let the insult go unavenged.

"Ar-r-r-r!" he cried, bursting into the Glue Pot. "Tell me! I am call a galoompha! Zat pig Eskimo call me galoompha! Vat is galoompha, yes?"

Prount and O'Rooney dropped their cards, and O'Rooney gave Prount a gentle kick under the table. Both mariners raised their hands in horror, and gazed stonily at the excited cook. Then, with trembling fingers, Barry pulled a large yellow handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his brow.

"Tom," he said, his voice shaking, "d'ye hear ut? D'ye hear phwat the blubberbirter called mossoon? O'ill lave the ship av Oi have to walk home alle the way to Bally-bunion! For the sake of Mike, let me get out of ut! O'ill never sthay on the same ship wid a human monster who can call another man such a name! The shameless villain! You mane to say, thin, that he called you a—"

"By honey, don't say it—don't dare to say it!" yelled Prount, pressing his hands over his ears.

"O! couldn't say it!" groaned Barry. "Wold horses, thraction-engines, tanks, and sthame-rollers couldn't dhrag such a word from these pure lips! Av any man called me that O'ld have his loife, and there's no judge in the land could hang me twice for ut! So he call you a shinpoofer, did he, the rogue?"

"Non, non!" said the cook. "Eet is not shinpoofer. Shinpoofer is nozzing. Shinpoofer angaire me nevaire! Ze name he call me vas gal—"

"Don't say it!" shrieked Barry O'Rooney and Tom Prount in tones of horror. "Oh, don't say it!"

"But vat eet mean? I am insult by ze pig Eskimo! He call me ze bad name, and you will not tell vat eet mean!"

"By honey, it's too awful!" said Prount, with a sly wink at Barry O'Rooney. "We can't tell you what it means, being good-living, respectable men—at least, I'm a good-living, respectable man. And when a rogue and a vagabond like O'Rooney daren't use the word, you can guess what sort of a word it is!"

"Bedad, you go a bit aisy wid your rogues and vagabonds!" said Barry. "You'd better go and ask Gan Waga, cook. That's phwat O'ld do, and av he didn't go down on his fat bended knees and apologise, wid salt tears in both oies, O'ld smoitie him wan har-rd swoite and cook his goose!"

"Cook his goose! Vat you mean—cook his goose?" demanded the cook. "I nevaire see Gan Waga have any goose!"

Before Barry could explain what was meant by cooking a person's goose a slow, thumping sound was heard. Prount and O'Rooney nearly turned pale. They had heard that sound before, and knew what generally followed it. When Gan Waga felt lonely and depressed it was his custom to sing in order to cheer himself up. It was a sad little song, and he lifted it in his own tongue, THE POPULAR.—No. 137.

the tongue of the frozen Northland, where the Polar bears come from. And twenty starving Polar bears, with their paws frozen to an iceberg, and a fat seal mocking their plight by putting its flippers to its nose, could not have made such a noise. As the first two lines of the song came floating down the alleyway, Prount buried his nose in the pack of cards and moaned.

"Goozog ogsgogssky egrwagzan ooo-oo-oo! Shlaggsbaif choogukskon meggakok aaa-ah-ah!"

warbled Gan Waga.

O'Rooney reeled to the door and shut it, but the melody still trickled in through the ventilator. The cook had a musical ear. If he had possessed five hundred ears he would not have discovered one single note of music in Gan Waga's effort. He wrenched open the door. Gan was sitting outside, tapping a small drum with a spoon. In his eyes was a forlorn, far-away look, and his mouth was open. At that moment Gan Waga would not have moved out of the way for a motor-car. It was a useful drum. There was a hole in it, and although the hole rather spoilt its tone, it was useful to carry things about in. There were a few things in it already, left over from the millionaire's dinner-table, which Gan Waga had collected.

"Murdaire! Stop eet!" yelled the cook, dancing frenziedly in front of the performer. "Eet is torture! Ar-r-r-r! Stop eet, or I keel you!"

Gan paused, and that pause gave Prount and O'Rooney time to stagger out of the Glue Pot. The Eskimo smiled sadly at the cook.

"Galoompha!" he said.

To the cook this was even worse than the music. He clutched Gan Waga by the hair. It was not an easy thing to clutch, for the Eskimo kept his jet-black locks very well lubricated with hair-oil. Though it did not hurt much, it made the Eskimo forget all the joys of music that has charms to soothe the savage breast. He gave the cook a hard dig with the wooden spoon in the vicinity of the third button of his white jacket, and the cook doubled himself up like a half-closed knife and shrieked again. Then he took hold of Gan Waga by the ears.

"Let dogs delight to bark and boite, but, och, ut is a shameful soight whin grown-up men begia to foight," said O'Rooney, dropping into poetry. "Up wid ye, Gan bhoy, and put the Dempsey across him. Break away, there, and not so much clawin' and foightin' in holds! Is ut a foight or a wrestlin' match, Tom?"

Mr. Prount, whose high position on the yacht ought to have taught him better things, grinned. Gan Waga had lost the spoon, but he managed to get his elbow under the cook's chin. Then the cook got the Eskimo by the ears again, and Gan Waga embraced the cook round the neck. There was a great deal of puffing and grunting and snorting.

"Villain Eskimo! Ar-r-r-r! Call me galoompha—I keel you! Ooh! He try to bite me! I choke! Murdaire! I— Ar-r-r-r! I surrendaire nevaire! Rogue Eskimo, I teach you I am not galoompha! Eeeec!" gasped the cook.

"Ohmi! Helps! Chingy! Dears, dears! Ooh, badfulness! Leggo! What I done, hank?" roared Gan Waga.

There was a great deal more noise than damage. Barry O'Rooney picked up the drum. Noticing the slit in it, he looked inside. It contained a ghastly mixture of entables such as the Eskimo loved, chiefly jelly, custard, stewed fruit, and pineapple chunks. Gan and the cook were clutching each other, and their heads were very close together.

"Pace, gintle pace!" grinned Barry O'Rooney. "In all this world there's nothing so swate as pace, unless ut's saccharine. Let's have some."

With a quick, unerring movement, Barry inverted the drum, bringing the slit side undermost, and brought it down on the heads of the antagonists. From beneath it came strangled howls and horrid splutterings. And just as Prount and O'Rooney were holding their sides and watching the four-legged monster in the queer hat prancing about, a bell in the Glue Pot clanged twice.

"By honey, that's for me!" said Prount, sobering in an instant. "The chief wants me. Stop the fight, Barry, and give the two idiots a wash."

### A Rocky Refuge!

IN the confusion that followed the fall of General Goltzheimer and his men, Hal Honour pushed his way farther into the tunnel. No shot was fired. Again the tunnel twisted, and the light of the torches was visible no longer. The water grew shallower at every stride, and the fugitives could quicken their pace. At last they were on dry flags again, and Hal Honour's voice uttered one word—"Lamp!" Rupert Thurston lighted it.

"By Jove, Hal, that was a hefty punch of yours!" said Ching Lung. "I didn't see you hit him, but I saw him go down. You've made old Goltz our enemy for life, and spoiled his nice uniform. I don't think you hit him too soon, either. I'm sure he was going to order to shoot when you got him."

"I heard what the professor said, and that makes me wonder whether Von Kreigler is such a big pot as the Chief seems to think," said Rupert Thurston.

"You mean that Goltzheimer refused to obey him," said Ching Lung. "Goltzheimer is a heady beast who can't keep himself under control when there's any excitement, but I think our gentle professor is top dog. What's the next move on the board? Did you ever see such a rabbit warren? The whole show is honeycombed with tunnels and passages. It can't be possible that they're all artificial, unless they built the Schloss over a coal-mine."

"There was very little use for coal when Schloss Schwartzburg was first built, old chap," said Thurston. "I did read up the guide-book, but I only skimmed the ancient history part of it. I fancy there was some mention of cave-dwellings—a regular nest of them."

"Then I thank my lucky stars I lived later on, for I've no ambition to be a cave-dweller," remarked the prince. "Is there any way out? That's the great and important question. Before we're caught, I hope the general's nose will feel better. Old Goltz is sure to be a member of the Council of Safety, and to be tried by Goltz at any time wouldn't be very healthy. Goltz with a sore and swollen nose would mean boiling oil for us, at least."

The gallery they were following came to a dead end. As Thurston raised the lamp they saw an impassable wall of solid rock.

"Bad!" said the engineer.

To remain there was to be trapped. At the risk of running against the bayonets of the pursuers, they turned back. It was necessary to put out the lamp.

"It's odd they're so quiet," said Ching Lung. "Perhaps they're only resting, or waiting to bring up reinforcements. When they start in earnest they'll make a real round-up of it, and flood the place with men. We must be pretty near the water now, and yet I don't hear a sound."

"Left," said Hal Honour, whose hand had found an opening.

At last they felt secure enough to light the silver lamp again. Thirty yards farther on they received another check, another dead end. The floor of this gallery was not flagged. It was much loftier than the others they had traversed. Granite walls had given place to a light-coloured, hard sandstone. The surface was rough and broken, and, holding the lamp as high as he could, Hal Honour tried to pierce the gloom above.

"A cave," he said, in his brief way. Putting down the lamp, he quickly removed his boots, and began to climb. They lost sight of him, and then something dropped at Ching Lung's feet, and he picked up a pebble to which a string was fastened. The engineer always had a useful collection of articles in his bulky pockets.

"Lamp," he said from above. The lamp was hauled up, and once more the pebble fell, this time to be attached to the rifle.

"Your boots," came the instructions from above.

It was safer to climb without boots, for they might have left betraying scratches on the sandstone. The light of the lamp was streaming out from a hole in the cliff. Ching Lung and Rupert Thurston made the ascent without mishap, and found themselves in a low cavern that was littered with sandstone boulders. Without a second's delay, the engineer proceeded to block up the mouth of the cave with boulders. Over the screen he had built he hung the doped cloth. Then, uttering a satisfied grunt, he sat down and filled his pipe.

"It's rather a pity we forgot to bring the cigars of the All-Highest with us, for they were jolly good ones," said Rupert.

Hal Honour smiled, and at once produced a bulky handful of them.

"You're a bright and thoughtful youth," laughed the prince. "I prefer cigarettes, so Rupert may have the Kaiser's dried cabbage-leaves. Our luck seems to have changed for the better, and we may be able to give the genial professor and the irascible Goltz some sort of a run for their money. How's the harder, Hal? How much have you got in those astonishing pockets of yours, you human pantechnicon?"

The engineer was well loaded. He had two bottles of wine, eleven small rolls, a large black-skinned sausage, a roast chicken, and nearly half a boiled ham. With economy there was no danger of starvation for some time. He had also the tin of carbide of calcium for the lamp.

"I'm trying to get at what the professor is after," said Thurston, blowing out a cloud of smoke. "He doesn't seem to want us shot, though the general doesn't seem quite so particular. If we are shot there ought to be a pretty row. I don't see what the Chief could do except denounce our murderers to the Allies."

"If we do get shot, any old row they make about it won't do us much good, my son," said the prince. "If that message from the professor wasn't pure bluff, the Chief will be getting busy. But we must look facts in the face. The Chief will be in a tight corner before he asks the Allies to help, and march a few regiments into Schloss Schwartzburg. We all know that he can do the most astonishing things, but the greatest man in the world has his limitations. I don't believe that without our noisy and talkative friend Hal, even Ferrers Lord could build a helicopter in five days."

"Certainly not one like the last that Hal built, a wretched creak that wouldn't work," said Thurston. "What a wash-out that thing was."

The engineer only smiled. What he intended to convey by the smile was difficult to tell. When he had finished his pipe, he stretched himself and rose.

"Rest," he said, taking the lamp.

His gaunt shadow, grotesque and distorted, was flung upon the sandstone roof as he moved away to explore the cave.

"If there's one chap who never gets cold feet, Rupert, it's Hal Honour," said Ching Lung. "Nothing on earth ever knocks him out. Mind, I'm not sure that we've done a great deal of good for ourselves or for the

Chief by bolting, though Honour seems of that opinion. To my mind he—"

"Hush!" whispered Thurston quickly. "I seem to have heard that sort of music before. What do you make of it?"

"Red murder," said Ching Lung. "I wouldn't have believed it, Rupert, but I happen to be familiar with that ghastly musical instrument myself."

The muffled noise that came in through the crevices of Hal Honour's barrier was the unmistakable rattle of a machine-gun. The pursuers were deluging the dark galleries with bullets. That meant murder, relentless and remorseless. Either General Goltzheim had gained his way, or for some reason Professor Karl von Kreigler had changed his mind.

The engineer had also heard the noise. It brought him back hurriedly. This new method was pure assassination. The fuillades went on. They were bringing the machine-guns closer and raking the galleries with a stream of lead that nothing living could stand against. All at once the noises swelled into a roar. The pursuers were very close. A machine-gun opened fire, and bullets clicked and clattered and pinged below the cave. Belt after belt was fired, and then there was silence. Hal Honour lifted the cloth, and with great caution removed one of the smaller stones.

The air that came in was filled with dust and smoke, and the smell of explosives. As he peered down the beam of a powerful searchlight shone through the dust and smoke. Men with lamps and bayonets came running along. Behind them strode General Goltzheim, flourishing a revolver, and searching for the dead.

"Nothing, general."

The lieutenant clicked his heels together and saluted. With a bandage tied slantwise across his face, the general did not look a very imposing figure, though he had changed his uniform and put on a pair of rubber jack-boots. The watcher's eyes twinkled as he looked down.

"Nothing!" bellowed the general. "You tell me nothing! They are not here? You tell me that. Nothing, nothing? Are you mad, then?"

"We have searched every inch of the gallery, general, both with bullets and with our eyes, and there is nothing here," said the lieutenant.

"Nothing? Death and fire! We must have missed one of the tunnels. Is this the last of these infernal rat-holes? Are there no more?"

"Only one, general, and it is death, as

you know, to go there," said the lieutenant. "They have not passed that way; a mouse could not pass. I have looked, and the—"

The lieutenant sank his voice so low that Ching Lung and Rupert Thurston, who, listening eagerly at the engineer's elbow, could not catch his words. "But it is impossible. If you will come with me, I will show you; but no one else must come. It is forbidden to go there under the death penalty."

The bandaged general strode after the lieutenant, clenching and unclenching his left hand and cursing in guttural German. Hal Honour put back the stone.

"Whew! Rather exciting!" said Ching Lung. "I'll take back what I said about cave-dwellers. Am very glad to be a cave-dweller just now. They don't seem aware of the existence of this little snugery. They'd have riddled us if we'd been down there, bored us into human colanders, the brutes!"

"From what I've heard there's still another gallery, but man-shooting seems to be prohibited there," said Rupert. "The lieutenant has taken Goltz to look."

"Yes, I heard the Hun kid say so," said the prince. "For some reason there's a death-penalty attached to visiting it. What will they do next. Though brutes and assassins, I suppose we must give them credit for having some intelligence. They haven't found our corpses, and they know we haven't burrowed out through the rock, and therefore we must be hiding somewhere. We are not out of this mess yet by a long way."

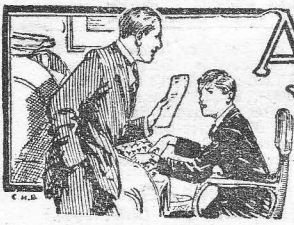
"Yes, they're intelligent, too intelligent, and that's what makes them worse than any kind of brute," said Rupert Thurston.

Ching Lung pondered.

"Von Kreigler didn't want us shot until every effort had been made to capture us without violence or bloodshed," he said, after a silence. "If those aren't his actual words they are very near it. What did he mean by effort? There wasn't an effort at all that we know of after Hal had knocked out the general. We never heard another sound till the machine-guns started. Why should the professor agree to have us exterminated all at once if he's head man?"

"I give it up," said Rupert. "My hair doesn't feel quite comfortable yet, and it's not very easy to think clearly, Ching, with one's hair trying to stand on end. Have those beggars gone yet? If they start shooting that searchlight about up this way, they'll very likely spot our wall and get suspicious about things."

(To be continued in next week's issue of the POPULAR.)



# A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FAREINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.

## For Next Friday!

### "A NIGHT OF TERROR!" By Frank Richards.

This grand complete story brings an end to Harry Wharton & Co.'s many adventures on board the derelict ship, and they are indeed very glad when everything is finished—including the mysterious Thing!

### "STICKING UP FOR GUNNER!" By Owen Conquest,

is the title of next week's grand, long complete story of the chums of Rookwood. In this you learn, for the first time, of a fellow who used to be at Rookwood and had gone to the dogs since he left. Jimmy Silver & Co. and Tommy Dodd & Co. have something to say about that!

## EXTRA-SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT NEXT WEEK!

There are vague rumours of a very discontented staff assisting William George Bunter in getting out the famous "Weekly" which bears the fat junior's name. I have heard all about it, and I think I can

promise you a very sensational number of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" in the "Popular" next Friday.

### "POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 31

Examples for the above competition:  
Wrong Way Up. Homework After Making Shift With— School.  
Helping Bunter Out. Hobbies Bunter Likes.  
Great Happiness. When Gussy's Annoyed.  
When— Selecting the Eleven.  
Checking Wingate. Being Always Discon-  
Dr. Locke's De- tented.  
cision. Looks Very Important.

Read the following rules carefully, and then send in your postcard. Readers should particularly note that TWO efforts can be sent in on one card, but no effort may contain more than FOUR words.

Select two of the examples, and make up a sentence of TWO, THREE or FOUR words having some bearing on the example. ONE of the words in your sentence must commence with one of the letters in the example.

1. All "Poplets" must be written on one side of a POSTCARD, and not more than two "Poplets" can be sent in by one reader each week.
2. The postcards must be addressed "Poplets," No. 31, The "Popular," Gough

House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

3. No correspondence may be entered into in connection with "Poplets."

4. The Editor's opinion on any matter which may arise is to be accepted as final and legally binding. This condition will be strictly enforced, and readers can only enter the competition on this understanding.

5. I guarantee that every effort will be thoroughly examined by a competent staff of judges, PROVIDED that the effort is sent in on a POSTCARD, and that it is received on or before September 8th.

TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH to senders of the ten BEST "POPLETS."

### RESULT OF "POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 24.

The Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each, offered in connection with "Poplets" Competition No. 24, have been awarded to the following readers:

- W. Lynch, 8, Greenhough Street, Ancoats, Manchester; F. Henton, 87, Blantyre Road, Wavertree, Liverpool; J. Johnson, 42, Andrews Street, Leicester; A. Kirby, 16, Chequers Lane, Dagenham Park, Essex; P. Charles, 519, Fishponds Road, Fishponds, Bristol; H. W. Thom, 26, Ruvigny Gardens, Putney, S.W. 15; J. Clucas, 41, Albert Street, Runcorn, Cheshire; H. Miller, 63, Gt. Cheetnam Street, W. Lower Broughton, Manchester; F. A. Wood, 22, Belmont Avenue, Palmers Green, N. 13; and William Scott, 424, Parliamentary Road, Glasgow.

I once again wish to point out that winning one prize does not preclude readers from entering another competition. The prizes are awarded to the readers who send in the best "Poplets," and the names and addresses of the senders are not looked at until the list of prizewinners is made out.

Your Editor,  
THE POPULAR.—No. 137.

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