

THE FIRST CHAPTER Five in a Hurry!

WHERE'S that ticket?"

"Where's that blessed ticket?"

" What?"

"Where's that blinking ticket?"

Bob Cherry seemed a little excited.

His voice, which was powerful in his calmest moments, now bore a striking resemblance to the roar of the celebrated Bull of Bashan. It awoke all the echoes in No. 13 Study, and most of the echoes in the Remove passage.

Bob was in a hurry.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars; and his chums were waiting for him on the Remove staircase. The Famous Five were going down to Courtfield that afternoon, where a new and attractive show was on at the Courtfield Coliseum. They had reserved seats for the show—or rather, Harry Wharton, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh had reserved seats. Bob Cherry had had one. The pluperfect tense made all the difference.

Seats being reserved, it was not necessary to start early. The chums of the Remove gave themselves just time to walk down to Courtfield before the show started at the Coliseum. Four of the five were ready, with tickets numbered 20, 21, 22, and 23, Grand Circle, in their pockets. Ticket numbered 24, Grand Circle was in No. 13 Study—or should have been. Apparently it wasn't.

Bob Cherry distinctly remembered placing that ticket on the mantelpiece, with the clock on it to keep it safe.

The clock was still there. The clock in No. 13 was not likely to go. It never did

go. But the ticket had gone.

Some ass, evidently, had shifted that ticket. Bob rooted about the study after it. He searched the study right and left, up and down and round about. And still the ticket did not materialise. The study was soon looking as if an earthquake had happened to it. Books and papers, football boots, and foils, all sorts and conditions of things, were strewn in all directions. Had the ticket been there, Bob's exhaustive search could scarcely have failed to unearth it.

It was not there! Hence Bob's growing excitement.

Harry Wharton looked in at the study door, with an expression of mild impatience.

"We're waiting," he remarked.
"Where's that thumping ticket?"

"Lost your ticket?"

" No."

" Then come on."

"But I can't find it."

"You haven't lost it, but you can't find it?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Some ass has shifted it—or rather, bagged it," roared Bob Cherry. "It's not in the study at all. It's gone."

"Better ask your study-mates---"

"They've gone out, bother them, except Inky! Inky, you dummy, have you shifted my ticket?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dusky, smiling face looked in over Wharton's shoulder.

"The shiftfulness was not terrific, my

esteemed Bob."

"Somebody's borrowed it," grinned Johnny Bull. All the Co. had gathered now at the doorway of No. 13. "You should have kept it safe, old bean."

"Come without it," said Nugent.
"Can't get in without it, fathead."

" We shall be late,"

"We haven't much time left, and that's a fact," said Harry Wharton. "If you can't find the ticket, Bob, better come without it, and we may be able to get another at the Coliseum."

"Three and six!" said Bob. "I haven't

another three and six to blow."

"Let's all look for it."

"I've looked!"
Let's look again!"

The Famous Five all joined in the search for the missing ticket. It is said that many hands make light work. It is said, with equal wisdom, that too many cooks spoil the broth. Certainly, after five juniors had rooted about the study for five minutes, it would have been difficult for anybody to have found anything in the general havoc.

"N.G.," said Bob, at last. "You fellows get on, and I'll come and have a shove for the shilling gallery. I don't want to miss the show if I can help it. 1 want to see the boxing turn specially."

"That's the best we can do, I suppose,"

said Wharton.

"Buck up, then," said Nugent. "We're late already."

And the Famous Five hurried out of the study, scudded along the Remove passage, and went down the Remove staircase three steps at a time.

They were in a hurry—anyone could have seen that they were in a hurry, excepting Billy Bunter. Bunter was coming up the stairs. Bunter was short-sighted, and his spectacles, big as they were, did not warn him in time that five juniors were coming down like a cyclone.

Crash!

"Whoooooop!" roared Bunter, as he was strewn on the middle landing.

"Oh, my hat!"

"You fat duffer!"
"Yarooogh! Help!"

Bunter rolled and roared. Harry Wharton & Co. were in a hurry, but they stopped to pick up Bunter.

They did not pick him up gently. There was no time to waste on ceremony. They grabbed him where they could, and set him on his feet. Bob grasped his ears, Nugent his hair, and Johnny Bull his collar, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh his nose. Bunter did not express any gratitude for the help thus rendered. He roared protest.

"Yaroogh! Leggo! Beasts!"

"There you are!" growled Bob Cherry. "What do you butt into the way for, you fat duffer? No harm done."

"Yow-ow-ow! I'm hurt."

"Luckily, that doesn't matter. Come on, you fellows."

Billy Bunter clung to the banisters and gasped for breath. Harry Wharton & Co. turned down the lower stairs.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

The Famous Five did not stop.

"I say!" roared Bunter. "Hold on a minute! It's important."

Harry Wharton paused for a moment.

"What is it, fathead? Sharp-we're in a hurry."

"You're going to the Coliseum?"

" Yes."

" I'm going, too."

"Well, go, and don't bother."

"I'm going in a taxi---"

" Eh ?"

"I was coming up to offer you fellows a lift in my taxi."

" Oh!"

The Famous Five turned back. They were late for the show at the Coliseum, and a lift in a taxi to Courtfield was a boon and a blessing. Certainly they would not have cared to waste money on a cab fare, and they considered that Bunter was an ass to do so. Still, the offer was certainly an agreeable one, and very useful in the circumstances, and they felt that Bunter was entitled to thanks, at least.

"Sorry we floored you, old fat bean," said Johnny Bull. "It's jolly decent of you, fatty. Is the taxi here?"

"That's all right—I'm going to telephone for it. Lots of time in a

taxi."

" Come on, then."

Bunter, still gasping, rolled down the lower staircase with the Famous Five.

"I can use Quelchy's 'phone—Quelchy is out," he said. "The taxi won't take long to get here. But I say, you fellows——"

"Well?"

"I told you I was expecting a postalorder this morning—"

"Never mind that now, ass!"

"I've had a disappointment," explained Bunter. "My postal order hasn't come."

"That's all right-it never does come."

"Oh, really, Cherry-"

"Get a move on."

"You see, I was going to stand myself a taxi out of my postal order," Bunter further explained.

" What?"

" As it happens, I'm stony-"



Harry Wharton and Co. were in a hurry, but they stopped to pick up Bunter. There was no time to waste on ceremony. They grabbed him where they could, and Bunter roared protest, (See Chapter 1.)

"Stony?"

"Yes. I suppose one of you fellows can lend me the taxi fare, and I'll settle out of my postal order—when—when it comes."

For a moment, the Famous Five stood and stared at Bunter, as if bereft of the power of speech. The Owl of the Remove's generous offer of a lift in his taxi was explained now. The Co. were to have the privilege of paying for "his" taxi—to be indemnified at some later date—some very much later date—when Bunter's celebrated postal order arrived.

"You fat villain!" roared Bob Cherry, finding his voice at last. "If we could raise the tin for a taxi, we could do it without pretending that it was your taxi, you

fat spoofer."

"Oh, really, Cherry-"

"You-you-you-" gasped Wharton. "We haven't a minute to spare, and you

stop us to spin a yarn about a postal order!
Bump him!"

"I say, you fellows-yaroooooooo !"

Bunter, grasped in five pairs of exasperated hands, bumped on the lowest stair, and sat there spluttering. Harry Wharton & Co. left him to splutter, and spel on their way. They came out of the House with a rush—and met Coker of the Fifth coming in. Coker fancied, for a moment, that a bombshell had hit him fair and square. He was reclining on his back, gazing dizzily at the clouds, as the Famous Five rushed on to the gates.

They did not stop to inquire whether Coker was hurt. Perhaps they knew he was! Leaving Coker of the Fifth star-gazing, the heroes of the Remove rushed out of the gates—fortunately without meeting anyone else. They then proceeded at a rapid trot down

the road to Courtfield.

THE SECOND CHAPTER Bunter, Too!

"Just in time!"
"Just!"

"The justfulness is terrific!"

Four juniors settled down in the reserved seats at the Courtfield Coliseum numbered 20, 21, 22, and 23. The show was just going to begin.

Grand Circle No. 24 remained empty

Somewhere in the crowded gallery, Bob Cherry had pushed for a place, it being impossible to claim his reserved seat in the Grand Circle without a ticket to show.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked round for him as they sat down; but it was impossible to pick out Bob in the gallery. The variety show at the Coliseum was quite a popular one, and the house was full. The gallery was a mass of faces, among which Bob Cherry's ruddy countenance was not to be distinguished.

It was quite a decent show at the Court-field Coliseum—and the various items, conjuring, clog-dancing, trick cycling, and so forth, were quite entertaining to the Grey-friars juniors. But the turn that had chiefly drawn them to the place was a boxing affair, which appeared rather late on

the programme. Bob Cherry, the champion boxing man of the Remove, was keenly interested in that turn—and his chums hoped that he had succeeded in pushing into a place in the crowded gallery to witness it. It was shortly before the boxing turn was announced that a late-comer came shoving along the row of seats where the chums of the Remove were sitting.

"Bunter!" ejaculated Wharton

Billy Bunter glanced at the juniors and grinned, and progressed towards them, amidst expostulatory grunts from the people he was disturbing. There was not much room to spare between the rows in the Grand Circle at the Courtfield Coliseum—and Bunter's circumference was against him. He came on very slowly towards the juniors.

"What is that fat duffer butting in here for?" asked Johnny Bull. "There's no

seat here."

"No. 24, sir?" came an attendant's voice, addressing Bunter. "There, sir—just in front of you."

Bunter squeezed on, and dropped into the vacant seat—vacant because Bob Cherry had

lost his ticket.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him.

There was the half of a ticket in Bunter's fat fingers—the other half, evidently, had been given up when he entered.

Bunter's unexpected appearance in the

Grand Circle was explained now

And the disappearance of Bob Cherry's ticket was explained also!

"Why, you—you—you villain!" gasped Wharton. "You've got Bob's ticket."

Bunter grinned.

"You bagged it from Bob's study!" exclaimed Nugent.

Bunter chuckled.

"You — you — you fat burglar!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

Bunter chortled.

Evidently the Owl of the Remove found something entertaining in the situation.

He settled himself down comfortably in the seat which should have been occupied by Bob Cherry.

"Bit late," he remarked. "Have I

missed anything good?"



There was not much room to spare between the rows of the Grand Circle at the Courtfield Coliseum; and Bunter's circumference was against him! He came on very slowly towards the Juniors.

(See Chapter 2.)

"You've got Bob's ticket!" breathed Wharton. "It was you bagged it off the mantelpiece in Bob Cherry's study."

"What's the next turn?"

"You've got-"

"Oh, give a chap a rest, Wharton," urged Bunter. "You keep on saying the same thing over and over again."

"You-you-" gasped Wharton.

"I'm jolly late," said Bunter crossly.
"I had to walk to Courtfield, owing to you fellows being so mean about the taxi. As for the ticket, I shall pay for that, of course. I intend to settle with Cherry for it immediately my postal order comes."

"You fat villain! I fancy Bob will settle with you before that," said the captain of

the Remove.

"Oh, really, Wharton-"

"I've a jolly good mind to kick you out now."

"I hope you're not going to make a shindy here, Wharton. Greyfriars fellows are expected to behave themselves in a theatre," said Bunter. "You might think of your manners, as you belong to my school."

Wharton breathed hard and deep.

Somewhere up above, Bob Cherry was crammed in the gallery, if he had succeeded in getting into the Coliseum at all. And here was Bunter, comfortably ensconced in a comfortable seat for which Bob had paid three-and-sixpence. Had it been practicable, the captain of the Remove certainly would have ejected the fat junior neck and crop from the seat. It really was too thick, even for William George Bunter. But it was not feasible to create a shindy in a place of entertainment, and the captain of the Remove had to consume his wrath as well as he could.

"Fellows shouldn't leave tickets lying about, if they don't want to lose them," said Bunter.

"That ticket wasn't lost."

- "Well, it might have been, if I hadn't taken it off the mantelpiece in No. 13," argued Bunter. "Might have dropped into the fire. Might have been swept away. I saved it from being lost."
 - "Well, my hat!" murmured Nugent.
 "Not that I expect any thanks," said

"Thanks?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Well, a chap might thank a chap for saving a three-and-sixpenny ticket from being lost," said Bunter. "But I don't expect anything of the sort from Cherry—I'm accustomed to ingratitude."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"The thankfulness of the esteemed Cherry will probably not be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the thrashfulness will be a boot on the other leg."

"Oh, really, Inky! One of you chaps

might lend me a programme-"

"It's the boxing turn next," said Johnny Bull. "Shut up, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Bull--"

"Save your breath till after the show," said Johnny. "You'll want it all then, to express your feelings when Bob begins on you."

The juniors chuckled.

Billy Bunter looked a little uneasy.

"I—I say, you fellows, d-d-do you think Cherry will cut up rusty about this ticket?" he asked.

"Just a few!" grinned Nugent.

"He will give you the licking of your life, and serve you jolly well right, you fat rascal," said the captain of the Remove.

"I-I say, I-I don't want to have to

lick him, you know."

"Don't worry about that. You'll get the licking."

"You fellows can mention to him that I

"What?"

"Swear it, you know," said Bunter.

"We're to swear that you weren't here!"

said Wharton dazedly.

"Yes, that's it. Then there won't be any fuss, see? I don't want any trouble with Cherry about a paltry three-and-sixpenny ticket. I hope I've got a mind above such sordid trifles."

"Oh, dear!" said Wharton. Really, William George Bunter was too much for

him.

Bunter calmly annexed Wharton's programme, and blinked at it through his big

spectacles.

"Battling Benson!" he read out.
"That's the boxing turn! I say, you fellows, I believe that is a good show. That man Benson has been in the ring in his time. He gives boxing lessons at his rooms in Courtfield—I've seen the advertisement in the "Courtfield Gazette." I——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

The "turn" was beginning, and Billy Bunter shut up at last, and fixed his gaze upon the stage.

This item was the most interesting on the programme, to the Greyfriars fellows at least, who were keen on the manly art of

self-defence.

Battling Benson, the boxer, a thick-set man with a square jaw, had been a fightingman in the roped ring in his time; but his fighting days were over. Now he turned an honest penny by giving boxing displays in music-halls, and boxing instruction to pupils when he could secure any. On the present occasion, Battling Benson and a stubby gentleman, called on the programme the Game Chicken, were putting up a tenround contest, for the delectation of the patrons of the Courtfield Coliseum.

They were well-padded gloves, and there was no real harm done; but the way Mr. Benson knocked the Chicken about showed that he must have been a hard hitter in the days when he had fought for prizes and

purses.

It was quite a good turn, and Harry Wharton & Co., who knew something about boxing, watched it with interest.

Two or three times Wharton glanced up at the gallery, wondering whether Bob had succeeded in getting in there. It was really hard lines if Bob had to miss the boxing show, after he had booked a seat for the especial purpose of witnessing it.

But nothing was to be seen of Bob, and Wharton could not help thinking that he had probably failed to get in. All the unreserved seats had been crowded before the Famous Five had arrived at the Coliseum.

"Looking for somebody, old chap?" asked Bunter.

"For Bob," said Wharton curtly. "I'm afraid he never got in."

"He, he, he!"

"You fat villain! Is that something to ackle at?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"Well, poor old Bob's rather an ass, you

know," said Bunter. "Just the ass to get left. He, he, lie!"

" He didn't have a chance of pilfering another fellow's ticket, you see," remarked Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm.

"Oh, really, Bull

"Shut up, Bunter !"

The boxing turn was completed, and the other items followed on in due course. Billy Bunter lounged in his comfortable seat and quite enjoyed the show. Bunter's only worry was that Bob Cherry might make an unreasouable fuss about the ticket later on. But Bunter was not accustomed to meeting troubles half-way-or at all, if he could help it. He dismissed Bob from his mind, and enjoyed the entertainment.

THE THIRD CHAPTER The Way of the Transgressor!

" LIALLO, hallo, hallo!" It was Bob Cherry's cheery voice, as Harry Wharton & Co. came out of the Courtfield Coliseum after the show.

Bob was waiting for them outside.

"You got in?" asked Nugent.

Bob shook his head, with a grimace. "Too thick," he answered. "Packed

like sardines before we got here. Was the boxing turn good ?"

"Pretty good," said Wharton. "What

have you been doing !"

"Oh, just strolling around and waiting for you fellows to come out," said Bob good-



Bunter, secure in the presence of a prefect, crawled out from under the bed. "What the thump were you doing under your bed, you young ass?" Wingate demanded. (See Chapter 4.)

humouredly. "No good grousing. But I'm going to find out who bagged my ticket, and punch him hard."

"Oh, really, Cherry-"

" Hallo, hallo, hallo! I didn't know Bunter was with you," said Bob. "Did you let him stick you for a ticket?"

"No; he stuck you for a ticket."

"Me!" ejaculated Bob.

"I-I say, you fellows, there's no need to go into that now," said Bunter hastily. "I-I owe you three-and-six, Bob Cherry. I'm going to settle out of my postal order." "What?"

"I suppose that's satisfactory," said Bunter, blinking at him. "Dash it all, I'll make it four bob if you like. Nothing mean about me."

Bob Cherry stared at him.

"What is the fat image burbling about?" he asked. "Oh! My hat! Did Bunter come in on my ticket?"

"Just that," said Wharton.

"You bagged the ticket from my study, Bunter?" roared Bob.

Bunter backed away.

"Nothing of the kind," he exclaimed. "I-I hope I'm not the fellow to bag a fellow's ticket. You shouldn't have been careless with it. I-I took it off your mantelpiece to-to save it from getting lost. Of course, I-I didn't want to waste a threeand-sixpenny ticket. So- Yaroooh! Keep off!"

Billy Bunter went down Courtfield High Street as if he mistook that thoroughfare

for the cinder-path.

"Why, the-the-the fat rotter!" gasped Bob, in burning indignation. "Sitting in there with my ticket, while I was kicking my heels outside. I-I-I'll burst him."

Billy Bunter had vanished.

Somehow or other, he had worked it out to his own fat satisfaction that his proceedings in the matter of that ticket were fully justifiable. Bunter's podgy intellect had its own mysterious processes. But it was clear, even to Bunter, that Bob Cherry was not equally satisfied, and that after the feast there was the reckoning to come. So Bunter, like the guests in "Macbeth," stood not

upon the order of his going, but went at once.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked back to Greyfriars; Bob furning with indignation, and his chums fully sympathising.

· As a rule, the Famous Five erred upon the side of patience in dealing with William George Bunter. They had never been able to make up their minds whether the Owl of the Remove was more fool than rogue, or more rogue than fool. It was certain that he was a good deal of both. Generally they gave him the benefit of the doubt, and bore with him.

But there was a limit; and on this occasion it was agreed that Bunter had exceeded the limit. What Bunter wanted, in the opinion of the Co., was a record thrashing, to teach him the difference between "meum" and "tuum," and to keep his fat paws from picking and stealing. And it was Bob Cherry's fixed intention to bestow upon W. G. Bunter the thrashing he so evidently needed.

Bob's usually sunny face wore a grim frown when the Famous Five arrived at Greyfriars and came into the Remove quarters.

"Seen Bunter?" Bob called out to the fellows in the passage.

"I don't think he's come in yet," said

Peter Todd.

"I'm going to slaughter him when he does."

"What's Bunter done?" asked Peter.

"You mean, whom has he done?" remarked Skinner of the Remove.

"He's done me," growled Bob. bagged my ticket for the Coliseum, and went in on it, leaving me to cool my heels."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner.

"It's not a laughing matter, Skinner," growled Bob.

"My mistake!" said Skinner politely. "I thought it was. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rats!"

The Famous Five went to No. 1 Study

After tea, Bob Cherry walked along to No. 7, the study in the Remove that had the honour—or otherwise—of harbouring William George Bunter.

He found Peter Todd there, and Peter grinned as he looked in.

"Looking for Bunter?" he asked.

"Yes. Hasn't he

"Come and gone!" grinned Peter. "He doesn't seem to want to meet you. Your society seems to have palled on him, old bean!"

"Br-r-r!"

Bob Cherry proceeded along the Remove passage looking in all the studies for Bunter.

But he found him not.

Evidently, the Owl of the Remove was keeping out of the way.

Prep. claimed Bob at last, and he went to No. 13 to work; but he finished prep. early, and came along to No. 7 to look for Bunter there again.

The door of No. 7 was locked on the inside.

Bang!

Bob Cherry smote the door with his fist, with a smite that rang the length of the Remove passage.

"Who's there?" called out Peter Todd.

"Me, you ass!"

"I, you ass!" corrected Peter. "Where's your grammar, old man?"

"Fathead! Open this door."

"It's locked."

"Unlock it, then, ass."

"I—I say, Peter, tell him I'm not here!" came a quavering squeak.



Bunter was not a sprinter. But fear lent him wings. Right along the dormitory he went, with Bob Cherry on his track brandishing the fives bat!

(See Chapter 4.)

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Toddy-"

"Bunter says he's not here, Cherry," called out Peter Todd. "I suppose you can take his word for it."

Bang!

"Let me in, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "I'm going to thrash you."

"I-I say, old chap-"

" Open this door!"

"I—I say, I'll make it five bob, when my postal order comes. That's generous, you know."

"I'll leave it till dorm.!" growled Bob Cherry, through the keyhole. "I'm going to make an example of you this time, you fat villain. I'm going to wallop you till you can't crawl."

"Oh, dear! I say, old chap-"

Bob Cherry bestowed a final thump on the door, and went down to the Rag to join his friends.

In No. 7 Study, Billy Bunter blinked

dolorously at his study-mate.

"I—I say, Peter, old chap——" he mumbled.

"You're for it!" grinned Peter. "Can't say I'm sorry. You've asked for it, old fat

bean!"

"I—I say, Peter, you oughtn't to put up with a fellow thumping at your study door that way," urged Bunter. "You could lick him, you know. Look here, I'll hold your jacket."

Peter Todd chuckled.

"It's cheek, you know," urged Bunter. "It's up to you to lick that cheeky cad. Toddy, old chap."

" Go hon!"

"1—I say, Peler, what am I going to do?" ground Bunter "The beast is going to pitch into me."

" More power to his elbow!" said Peter

unfeelingly.

"He makes out that I bagged his ticket for the Coliseum, you know—"

" And didn't you?"

"Oh, really, Peter! You're as big a beast as he is. I've a jolly good mind to complain to a prefect."

"And tell him about pinching Cherry's

ticket?" asked Peter

"Of—of course, I shouldn't think of sneaking to a prefect." said Bunter. "I'm not that sort of fellow, I hope. But I say, Peter, that beast really means to pitch into me. What would you do if you were me, Peter?"

"I'd leave other fellows' property alone," grinned Toddy. "I'd keep my

pr ws from picking and stealing."

" Beast!"

Peter went on with his prep. Bunter was not giving much attention to prep. that evening. Much weightier matters occupied his fat mind.

"I-I say, Peter-"

"Shut up, old fat man. You talk too much."

"But what's a fellow to do, Peter? You

might advise a chap! D-d-do you think I could lick Bob Cherry?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.
"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You might lick him if he were blindfolded and had both hands tied," chuckled Peter. "Not otherwise."

- "I—I wish I'd taken up boxing now," groaned Bunter. "I'm just the build for a boxer, you know, if I'd taken the trouble."
- "Oh, my sainted aunt! Are boxers built like barrels?" asked Peter.
- "I'm accustomed to fellows being jealous of my figure," said Bunter. "That's nothing new. I've never had the time to give to it—a fellow with so many engagements can't do everything. If I took the trouble to go into training a bit, I'd make rings round you, Peter."

" Ye gods!"

"I'm rather a hefty chap, you knowactive, agile, springy, quick, and all that," said Bunter. "And boxing needs pluck, too."

"That leaves you out, then."

"If you had as much pluck in your whole body as I've got in my little finger, Toddy, you'd do," said Bunter.

" Fan me!" murmured Peter Todd.

"But there it is—I've never had the time to give to it," said Bunter. "It's rather rotten."

"Nothing else necessary but the time?"

asked Peter blandly.

"Exactly. But there it is—as the matter stands, I think very likely I couldn't lick Bob Cherry"

"Very likely indeed, I think," chortled Peter. "As Inky would say, the likeliness

is terrific."

"But I'm jolly well not going to be licked. Peter Todd, over a sordid dispute about a paltry three-and-sixpence."

"Looks to me as if you are," chuckled Peter, "and if you're bursting with pluck, as you say, why not unlock the study door?"

Billy Bunter did not unlock the study door. If he was bursting with pluck it was evident that he preferred to do so on the safe side of a locked door.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER A Challenge to Combat!

"PUZZLE—find Bunter!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry stared round the Remove dormitory.

Very thoughtfully, Bob had brought a fives bat up with him.

The bat was for the benefit of Bunter.

Bunter, however, plainly did not want to be benefited. He was not to be seen.

"Where's that fat villain?" demanded Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The wherefulness is a mystery," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The fat and esteemed rotter came into the dormitory,"

"He's here somewhere," said Harry Wharton. "Look under his bed, Bob."

"Ow! I'm not here!" came a startled squeak from under William George. Bunter's bed.

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

"Come out!" roared Bob.

"Oh, really,

"Come out, you fat brigand."

old chap—,"

chuckled Russell. "Here comes Wingate."

gate."

Wingate of the Sixth looked in at the doorway. Bob Cherry hastily shoved the fives bat out of sight in his bed.

"Now, then, turn in," said the prefect.
The Removites proceeded to turn in.
Bunter, secure in the presence of a prefect,

crawled out from under his bed.

Wingate stared at him.

"What the thump were you doing under your bed, you young ass?" he demanded, "N-n-nothing!" stammered Bunter,

"Turn in!"

"Oh, dear!" mumbled Bunter

Bunter had only postponed the evil hour. He had no choice about turning in now that the Sixth Form prefect had arrived on the scene; and he knew what to expect after Wingate had put out the lights and left the dormitory.

The Owl of the Remove was strongly tempted to demand protection from the



The Owl of the Remove explained to Battling Benson that he wanted lessons in boxing, being booked for a fight the following week. "I fancy I'm rather the build of a boxer, what?" (See Chapter 6.)

prefect. Certainly, Wingate would not have allowed a batting to take place in the Remove dormitory. Equally certainly, he would have taken a very serious view of the purloining of the Coliseum ticket. Buntar might satisfy his own fat conscience on that subject; but he had a feeling that a prefect would not be so easily satisfied.

Indeed, he was well aware that had Wingate of the Sixth become acquainted with the affair he would have reported it to Bunter's Form-master. And the bare idea of standing under the gimlet-eyes of Mr. Quelch, and explaining to that severe gentle-

man, made Bunter shiver.

So Bunter resisted the temptation to call on Wingate to stand between him and his just punishment. It was better to deal with Bob Cherry than with Mr. Quelch, as a matter of choice.

Bunter turned into bed in the lowest

possible spirits.

Not for the first time in his fat career, he had discovered that the way of the transgressor was hard.

Wingate put out the lights, and left the Remove to repose. So he supposed. As a matter of fact, the Removites were not thinking of repose just yet.

Five minutes were allowed to clapse, and Bunter began to hope. Then his hopes were dashed to the ground, by the sound of a

fellow getting out of bed.

A match was scratched, and a candle-ordiguited. A dim illumination glimmered through the dormitory.

" Bunter!" boomed Bob Cherry.

Snore!

"He's asleep!" chuckled Peter Todd.

"BUNTER!"

Snore!

"You're asleep, ain't you. Bunter?" asked Toddy.

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll wake him up," said Bob Cherry grimly. And he started for Billy Bunter's bed, with the fives bat in his hand.

Bunter promptly rolled out of bed on the other side. He landed on the floor in a tangle of bedclothes, with a howl. " Ow!"

"Bend over the bed," said Bob cheerily.
"I'm going to give you six, Bunter—hard!
May as well get it over."

"Keep off!" yelled Bunter.

Bob Cherry came round the bed. Bunter scrambled to his feet in a hurry, and dodged away.

All the Removites were sitting up in bed. looking on with grinning faces. So far from sympathising with the hapless Owl of the Remove, they seemed to be enjoying the entertainment.

"Go it, Bunter!" chuckled Vernon-Smith, as Bunter streaked along the dormi-

tory, with Bob in pursuit.

" Put it on!" chortled Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter was not a sprinter. He had much too much weight to carry. But fear, as a novelist would say, lent him wings. He fairly flew.

Right along the dormitory he went, with Bob Cherry on his track, brandishing the

fives bat

At the end of the long room, Bunter dodged desperately, and just escaped a swipe of the bat as he twisted and fled again.

" Stop!" howled Bob Cherry.

"Yarooh!"

Bob rushed in pursuit again. Again Bunter was nearly cornered, but he dodge I among the beds, and plunged across Skinner's bed headlong. Again he just escaped a swipe of the bat as he rolled off the bed—but the swipe was not `wasted. Skinner caught it.

There was a fiendish vell from Skinner.

"Yow! You silly idiot!"

"Sorry!" gasped Bob. "I meant—"
"You dangerous maniac!" velled

Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop, you fat villain!" gasped Bob Cherry, dodging among the beds after Bunter. "Do you think I'm going to chase you up and down the dormitory all night, you fat villain? Stop!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter dodged again, and plunged across

Vernon-Smith's bed to escape. The Bounder grasped him as he plunged, and pitched him back.

Bump!

Bunter landed on the floor fairly under Bob Cherry's feet. He squirmed and roare I as a hefty grasp was laid on him.

" Now, you fat burglar-"

" Yaroooh!"

"Bend over!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Keep that bat away!" roared Bunter, in dire apprehension. "1 -I-I'll fight you if you like. Put that bat down! Fair play!"

"You fat dummy-

"You fellows see fair play!" shrieked Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll fight you, you rofter!" roared Bunter. "Put that bat down. Put up your hands! Yah!"

"Fuf-fuf-fight me!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You silly owl. I've no time to attend

inquests."

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold on," said Peter Todd. "Fair play's a jewel. If Bunter's prepared to fight you, old bean, it's up to you."

"Hear, hear!" chorused the Removites. "Give Bunter a chance!" chuckled Ver-

non-Smith.

" Go it. Bunter!"

"You silly asses!" exclaimed Bob. "I'm going to lick him for bagging my ticket. Bunter couldn't fight a bunny rabbit."

"Yah!" roared Bunter. "Funk!"

"What?"

" Funk!" velled Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's up to you. Bob," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Bunter's entitled to fight it out if he likes. Chuck the bat away."

"Rot!" growled Bob Cherry, greatly exasperated. "The fat dummy would burst

if I hit him."

" Yah!"

"Fair play's a jewel," repeated Peter Todd. "It's up to you. Let him off, or else fight him."

"I'm not going to let him off-and I'm

not going to fight a fat frog!" roared Bob. "I'm going to lick him."

"Yah! Funk!"

"Oh, come on, then!" exclaimed Bob angrily, throwing down the fives bat. "Come on, if you prefer it that way."

And Bob put up his hands and advanced

upon the fat junior.

Bunter promptly backed away. "I'll fight you—"

" Come on, then."

"In the gym., with the gloves on," said Bunter.

"You fat fraud!"

"On Wednesday," said Bunter. "I'm a bit out of training, and I'm not sure that I could lick you at the present moment."

"Lick me!" said Bob dazedly. "Oh.

my hat!"

"You'll be my second, Toddy," said

"Certainly, old bean," chuckled Peter

" Ha. ha. ha!"

"Look here, you're not getting out of a licking like that, Bunter," roared Bol

Cherry.

"Yah! You come up to the scratch in the gym. on Wednesday, and I'll give you more than you want," said Bunter valorously. "You won't be allowed to crawl out of it, Bob Cherry."

"Kik-kik-crawl out of it!" gasped Bob.

"Yes. If you don't show up in the gym., I'll jolly well come after you, and thrash vou."

"Oh, crumbs!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"That settles it," said Bunter. "We can't fight in the dorm. I don't want Quelchy or a prefect to come in and interrupt me when I'm thrashing you."

"Thrashing me?" stuttered Bob. "Oh

gum!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leave it till Wednesday. I shall expect you in the gym. Now shut up and let a fellow get some sleep."

Billy Bunter rolled to his bed.

Bob stood staring after him. Removites were howling with laughter. That Bunter had the remotest intention of facing the champion boxer of the Remove with the gloves on, nobody believed for a moment. Obviously, it was a trick to gain time.

"Look here," roared Bob. "If you think you're getting out of a licking by a

dodge like this, you're mistaken."

"Yah!"

"Bunter's within his rights," chuckled Peter Todd.

"Rats! You know that he doesn't mean to turn up on Wednesday in the gym. It's all spoof!" hooted Bob.

"You can keep him to it," grinned Peter. "Besides, he's asked me to be his

second. I'll jolly well keep him to it."

"And I jolly well will!" exclaimed Bob, in great exasperation. "Look here, Bunter, you're for it on Wednesday Mind that!"

"I'm going to lick you on Wednesday," said Bunter. "Look out for the thrashing of your life."

"Ila, ha, ha!"

Bunter rolled into bed. Bob Cherry followed his example, amid the chuckles of the Removites. Obviously, Bunter hoped that the trouble would blow over before Wednesday; Bob's wrath never lasted long. But the Owl of the Remove was within his rights in claiming a fight to settle the dispute. Bob turned in, resolved that when Wednesday came round Bunter should find that the trouble had not blown over, and that his last state was worse than his first.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER "For It!"

BILLY BUNTER wore quite a cheerful countenance on the following day.

He had enjoyed the matthee at the Courtfield Coliseum, and it had cost him nothing. He had escaped the licking that was due to him for his sins. So Bunter was feeling satisfied.

Indeed, he was prepared to dismiss the whole matter from his mind. He had other matters to think about. His celebrated postal order had not arrived, and funds were short. That was quite enough to

occupy Bunter's fat mind, without wasting time on thinking about Bob Cherry and the absurd fuss he was making over a trifle.

But that afternoon Bunter had an

unpleasant reminder.

"What time in the gym. on Wednesday?" asked Bob Cherry, joining the Owl of the Remove when the Form came out after class.

Bunter blinked at him.

" Eh?"

"Forgotten that you're booked for a fight, what?" asked Bob sarcastically.

"Oh, really, Cherry"

"Would you rather take the batting now?"

"Of—of course, I'm going to fight you," said Bunter. "I—I hadn't forgotten. I'll

lick you all right."

And he rolled away, with the cheerful expression gone from his podgy countenance. Bob Cherry's memory was longer than he had supposed. For once, the most goodnatured fellow in the Remove seemed implacable. Bunter had overstepped the limit, and Bunter was to have a lesson. For his own sake, if for no other reason, Bunter was to have impressed upon his mind some realisation of the rights of property.

The Owl of the Remove was looking quite thoughtful when he went into No. 7 Study to tea.

Peter Todd eyed him with a smiling face

"Feeling fit?" he asked.

"Wha-a-at?"

"You've taken on a rather hefty job for next Wednesday," said Peter. "Of course, you'll be licked—"

"Oh, really, Toddy-"

"But I expect you to put up a good fight, for the honour of the study," said Peter. "No. 7 Study never funks, you know."

" I_I_I__"

"1'll put you through a few rounds with the gloves, if you like," said Peter kindly. "I shall hurt you a bit—you'll have to get used to that. I shan't hurt you so much as you'll get hurt on Wednesday."

"The—the fact is, Peter—" stammered

Bunter.

"Burning for the fray?" asked Peter blandly.

"Ye-e-es, exactly," gasped Bunter. "But—the fact is—I—I've been thinking of letting Cherry off."

"I thought you had," assented Peter. "Give it a miss, old man. You can't let Cherry off now. He won't be let."

"You—you see—"

"I see—quite!" assented Peter. "But you're for it, old man. You're too forgiving, Bunter."

"The—the fact is, I'm a forgiving chap, Peter."

"Oh, quite!" said Peter. "After Bob's called you all sorts of names!"

"I—I can overlook

"And chased you up and down the dormitory with a fives

" 1—1 forgive him,"
Peter Todd shook

his head.

"It's generous of you, Bunter—" he said gravely.

"1-I mean to be generous, old chap."

"Oh, I'm sure of it. Generous and kind and forgiving, and all that," said Peter.

" Just so."

"Only it won't wash, old bean," said Peter cheerily, "You're standing up to Bob with the gloves on, on

Wednesday. I'm your second."

"I--I won't trouble you, Peter."

"No trouble at all," said Peter, "You're taking it on now, as you've asked for it. This study never backs down, You see, if you dodge fighting Bob Cherry, after all your gas, I shall lick you myself."

"Look here, Peter Todd-"

"I'm looking," said Peter. "I'm looking after you, old fat pippin. I'm seeing

that you don't funk and disgrace the study."

"I'm not funking, of course____"

"Of course not. Only feeling forgiving, and generous, and so on. Cut it out, old man. It won't wash."

"Oh, dear!"

That evening, the cheerfulness of William George Bunter had departed.

He realised that he was " for it."

It was not only that Bob Cherry was deter-



"I'm sorry, but you're for it! I've got two or three more fellows on the list," said Bunter, with a ferocious blink. "I'm beginning with Bob Cherry. I hope he won't have to be taken away in an ambulance!" (See Chapter 7.)

mined that the pilfering Owl of the Remove should not escape punishment by so palpable a trick.

Peter Todd, as Bunter's record, was determined that his principal should come up to the scratch

And all the Remove were keen on it. The prospect of watching a fight between Bob Cherry and Billy Bunter was entertaining A contest between the champion fighting-man

of the Remove and the fat and fatuous Owl could not fail to entertain. The Removites would not have missed the show for any ronsideration. So Bunter, to his dismay, found the whole Form keen on it, and all of them looking forward to Wednesday afternoon.

Bunter was "for it."

He had brought it on himself, and now

there was no escape for him.

His fat knees knocked together at the bare thought of standing up to Bob Cherry's hefty punches. At supper that evening he ate only enough for four or five fellows. Worry was affecting his appetite.

In the Remove dormitory that night a general chuckle greeted Billy Bunter. For once, the Owl of the Remove was in the limelight, and all the Lower Fourth were inter-

ested in him.

"Made your will, Bunter?" inquired Johnny Bull.

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better sign the 'Daily Mail' coupon, at least, before Wednesday," remarked the Bounder.

And there was another chuckle.

"I say, you fellows—" Bunter blinked at the Removites. "If you think I funk it, you're mistaken. Only, as it happens, my pater wants me to go home on Wednesday, so it will have to be put off."

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

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at.
It will have to be put off, of course—"

"Not at all," said Peter Todd cheerily. "It will have to be put on."

" Eh?"

"We'll make it Tuesday after class, instead of Wednesday afternoon. That suit you, Bob?"

" Quite!" grinned Bob Cherry.

- "I—I say, you fellows, I—I—I think I can put off my pater on Wednesday, after all——"
 - " Ha, ha, ha!"

" Beast!"

And Bunter went to bed in such a worried frame of mind that it was fully five minutes before his deep snore resounded through the Remove dormitory.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER A Brain-Wave!

" I've got it!"

Billy Bunter uttered that ejaculation suddenly in morning break the next day.

Bunter had been thinking.

In the extraordinary and unpleasant situation in which he now found himself, Bunter had been putting in an unaccustomed amount of thinking. It was quite unusual on his part. But he was up against it now, and he pondered and pondered on the matter, seeking a way of escape from the scrape in which he had landed himself.

"I've got it, Toddy."

"Well, what have you got, old fat bean?" asked Peter.

"I'm going to lick Bob Cherry."

" Hem!"

"That's the only thing now," said Bunter seriously. "I've offered to let him off, and he's refused."

"He has!" agreed Peter.

"So the only thing is to give him a jolly good hiding," said Bunter. "I've told you more than once, Toddy, that I should be the best boxer in the Remove if L took the trouble."

"Better take the trouble, then," advised Peter. "Otherwise, you will want a new set of features after next Wednesday."

"I'm going to train," said Bunter. "The difficulty is, that it will cost money. I depend on my old pal to see me through about that."

"Good! Go and speak to him about it,"

said Peter. "Who is he?"

"Oli, really, Peter—"

"Anybody I know?" asked Peter blandly.
"Look here, Peter Todd, if you're not going to lend me a quid or two, you'd better say so plainly," said Bunter wrathfully.

"So plainly!" replied Peter.

Evidently Peter was not going to lend Bunter a quid or two, even now he had discovered that he was the old pal to whom the Owl of the Remove had referred.

"After all, I can run it on tick," said Bunter thoughtfully. "Man is bound to

trust a Public-school chap for a small sum—a mere trifle."

"Not if he knows you,"

said Peter.

"Well, he doesn't know me, if you come to that," said Bunter peevishly. "That will be all right. I'm going down to Courtfield after classes, to see that man Benson."

"Who on earth is Benson?" asked Peter, mystified.

"Battling Benson," said the fat junior. "He gives a boxing show at the Courtfield Coliseum. He used to be in the ring. He takes pupils for boxing lessons."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm going to him for a few lessons," said Bunter determinedly. "I'm the very fellow to make a splendid boxer, as you know, Peter. Strong and sturdy, lithe and active, no end plucky—""

"Oh, my sainted Sam!"

"All I need is a little training, and some really good professional instruction," said Bunter. "It's merely a question of taking the necessary trouble. Well, it's up to me to take it."

"Oh, crikey!"

"I'll jolly well lick Bob Cherry, and Wharton, too," said Bunter, with a warlike look. "I've stood a lot of cheek from those fellows, as you know, Peter"

"You have!" agreed Peter. "Lots! They've kicked you, and cuffed you, and you asked for it every time. Certainly you've had a lot to stand."

"Beast! I'll jolly well lick you, too,

Peter, when I get into form."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're not much good, anyhow," said Bunter, blinking at him. "A skinny sort of scarecrow, Toddy."

"What?"



"Keep off, Bunter!" exclaimed Bolsover, in alarm. "You've been jolly checky to me, a lot of times!" said Bunter, full of courage now. "You're a bully!" (See Chapter 7.)

"You'd break in two pieces if I hit you really hard, you know," said Bunter. "You've given me a lot of cheek in the study. That's got to stop."

"Oh, that's got to stop, has it?" asked

Peter, with a glare.

"Yes—from now on," said Bunter firmly. "A few lessons from a professional pug will bring out all my natural abilities."

"If any!" murmured Peter.

"Don't be cheeky, Toddy. I warn you that I'm not going to stand any more cheek, from you or anybody else," said Bunter, with a scornful blink through his big spectacles. "I've stood all I'm going to stand from cheeky rotters in the Remove. In future, look out for a licking if you're cheeky."

"Aren't you counting your chickens rather early?" inquired Peter, with a

chuckle. "You're not Battling Bunter yet, you know."

"Shut up!"
"Wha-a-a-t?"

" Shut up!" said Bunter.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Peter. "If you really could fight anything bigger than a bunny rabbit, Bunter, I think you would be a nice, pleasant sort of chap to have about the place. But as you can't, you'd better learn to be civil, or I might collar you—like that—"

"Yaroooli!"

"And kick you, like that--"

" Yoooop !"

"And sit you down like that."

Bump!

Peter Todd strolled away whistling, leaving Bunter sitting on the hard, unsympathetic ground, and gasping for breath.

"Ow, ow! wow!" gasped Bunter.

He picked himself up, and shook a fat fist after the retreating form of Toddy.

"You wait a bit!" he murmured darkly. "You wait till I'm in form! Bob Cherry first—then that cheeky ass Wharton—then you, you cheeky rotter! I'll lick the lot of them in turn."

Billy Bunter did not need to imitate the gentlemen in the story, who prayed to be given a good conceit of himself. Billy Bunter was already endowed with that.

A brave, strong, sturdy, mauly fellow like Bunter only needed a little professional instruction—which, of course, would be easily assimilated by a fellow of such keen intelligence! That was how the Owl of the Remove looked at it.

It was quite a simple way out of the difficulty, and Bunter grinned a fat grin as he thought it over.

It was quite a glorious prospect.

To knock out Bob Cherry, or any other fellow in the Remove, Bunter only needed to take the trouble to go into training a little. He was going to take the trouble!

In his mind's eye, he saw himself standing up to the hefty Bob, and knocking him right and left like a skittle. In his mind's eye, he saw himself thrashing the captain of

the Remove, and putting him in his place—where he ought to have been put long ago, in Bunter's opinion. He saw himself the champion boxer of the Remove, monarch of all he surveyed—fellows trembling at his frown—Peter Todd reduced to order and submission in the study!

Bunter saw all this in his mind's eye. Unfortunately, he was never likely to see it with the eye of the flesh. But the fat and fatuous Owl was not yet aware of that.

After dinner that day, Billy Bunter borrowed a bicycle—without mentioning the circumstance to the owner thereof—and pedalled down to Courtfield to interview Mr. Benson.

He found that rather battered gentleman in his lodgings near the Coliseum, dining elegantly off a kipper, in an untidy room that had an unmade bed in the corner.

Battling Benson had a standing advertisement in the "Courtfield Gazette," to the effect that he was prepared to take pupils for boxing lessons. But he did not seem to secure many pupils. His look was anything but prosperous.

So he was glad to see Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove explained to him that he wanted lessons in boxing, being booked for a fight the following week.

Mr. Benson eyed him over the kipper.

What he thought of Bunter's possibilities as a boxer he did not state. He did not want to lose this pupil.

He gave Bunter hearty encouragement.

Business was business.

"I fancy I'm rather the build of a boxer, what?" said Bunter.

Mr. Benson gasped a little.

"You think so?" asked Bunter.

"Oh, yes! Jest the figger, sir," said Mr. Benson.

"I thought so. I saw you handling the Chicken at the Coliseum the other day." said Bunter. "I want to be able to handle a fellow like that—see?"

"I see," gasped Mr. Benson.

"There's no doubt about my abilities. The question is, whether you can bring 'emout."

" Oh!"

" Can you do it?" said Bunter.

"My eye!" said Mr. Benson. "Hem! Rely on me, sir! I'll put you through it. My tooition, sir, will bring out anything you've got in you, sir."

"That's all I want," said Bunter.

So it was easily arranged.

Neither was there any difficulty about fees. Mr. Benson—in the innocence of his heart—supposed that that would be all right, when he learned that Bunter belonged to Greyfriars. Bunter agreed cheerfully to half-a-guinea a lesson, one lesson daily. The whole amount was to be paid in a lump at the end of the lessons. Perhaps Bunter thought that his long-expected postal order would arrive by then. Perhaps he did not think about it at all. Sordid considerations of lucre could not be allowed to stand in the way of William George Bunter's development as a champion boxer.

When Bunter was gone, Battling Benson remained deep in thought for some minutes before he resumed operations upon his kipper

Then he ejaculated:

"Well, of all the young idjits!"

Mr. Benson grinned.

"If he pays a bloke 'arf-a-guinea a time for a-pulling of his silly leg, why shouldn't a bloke pull his silly leg?" said Mr. Benson, as if answering some objection of his conscience.

Which was a mode of reasoning that not even Mr. Benson's straitened financial circumstances could excuse.

Mr. Benson, however, appeared satisfied with it, and he attacked his kipper with renewed zest. Bunter, too, was satisfied as he pedalled back to Greyfriars. As in a glorious vision, he saw himself "Battling Bunter," the terror of the Remove. And when Ogilvy kicked him for having borrowed his bicycle without leave, Billy Bunter only murmured darkly:

"You wait a bit!"

And Ogilvy's name was added to the list of the fellows whom Bunter was going to lick.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER Battling Bunter!

"BATTLING BUNTER!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter in the Rag.

Billy Bunter looked surprised.

He did not see why his arrival in the Rag should be the signal for that irresistible outburst of merriment.

But it was!

Peter Todd had told the story of Bunter's ferocious intentions. He had told it with tears in his eyes—tears of mirth. Bunter, indeed, made no secret of his intentions. He was willing to let the fellows know what was in store for them—hard-heartedly condemning them to all the terrors of anticipation.

It was known that Bunter had started taking boxing lessons with Mr. Benson, who in his days in the ring had been known as Battling Benson. It was natural that that awe-inspiring title should be passed on to Bunter by his convulsed Form-fellows. "Battling Bunter" took the Remove by

storm.

Bunter was known, in the Lower Fourth, to be every sort and kind of an ass. The Remove fellows had supposed that they knew every sort and kind of an ass Bunter was. But it transpired that they still had something to learn about their Bunter. Nobody had been aware previously that he was this particular kind of an ass. It seemed that there was always something fresh to learn about the Owl of the Remove. Bunter as a boxer—Bunter as a champion with the gloves—made the Removites fairly howl.

So when Bunter rolled into the Rag that evening he was greeted vociferously and hilariously.

"Battling Bunter!" sobbed Bob Cherry, "The Game Porpoise!" chuckled Smithy.

"The Greyfriars Pet!" chortled Peter

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"What next, Bunter?" asked Harry

Wharton, wiping his eyes.

Billy Bunter gazed at the Removites. He gazed at them with lofty contempt. His very spectacles gleamed with scorn.

"You can cackle!" he said.

"Thanks, we will! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll laugh in a different style when I begin on you!" said Bunter darkly.

"Will the beginfulness be terrific, my esteemed ludicrous Bunter?"

"You wait and see," said Bunter. "I've stood all the cheek I'm going to stand from this cheeky Form. I'm thrashing you on Wednesday, Bob Cherry."

"Help!"

- "Thrashing you within an inch of your life!" said Bunter impressively.
 - "You won't let me off?" moaned Bob.

" Never!"

" Mercy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I offered to let you off once," said Bunter. "You refused. That did it. You're for it now. And after I've licked you I'm going to lick Wharton."

"Poor little me?" ejaculated the captain

of the Remove.

"Yes. After you, Bull."

" Me, too!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"And then Nugent."

"Oh, dear!" gasped Nugent.

"And then Inky," said Bunter. "The lot of you, one after another. Then you, Toddy."

"Save me!" gasped Peter Todd.

"Then you, Ogilvy---'

"Spare me!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You kicked up a fuss about my borrowing your bike," said Bunter. "I'm sorry, but you're for it. Make up your mind to it."

Ogilvy wept.

"I've got two or three more fellows on the list," said Bunter, with a ferocious blink at the Removites. "I'm beginning with Bob Cherry on Wednesday. I hope he won't have to be taken away in an ambulance."

" Phew!"

"Bravo, Battling Bunter!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"Isn't he a nice lad?" said Peter Todd. "Wouldn't he be jolly if he could really

knock fellows about? How lucky he only fancies he can."

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all you know," said Bunter, with a lofty sneer. "It may interest you to hear that Battling Benson says I'm the aptest pupil he has ever had."

"Has he ever had any others?"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"He says I've got a drive with the left that would surprise any old prizefighter."

"What did he charge you for that?"
"I've knocked him down in practice."

"You've knocked down that old pug?"

roared Bob Cherry.

"Yes." Bunter grinned complacently. "He stood up to me all he could, but I was too much for him. I knocked him spinning."

"He must have charged extra for that,"

said Bob.

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can jeer," said Bunter. "I know what I know, and I know what I can do. You can beg on your bended knees, now, Bob Cherry, and I won't let you off. You're for it."

And Bunter shook a fat and admonitory forefinger at Bob Cherry, and rolled cut of the Rag, turning his podgy back contemptuously on the hilarious Remove.

Bob Cherry wiped his eyes.

"Jevver hear of such a born idiot?" he inquired.

"Never!" said Harry Wharton,

laughing.

"Well, hardly ever!" chuckled Toddy.

"That old pug is pulling Bunter's leg, of course," remarked the Bounder. "He's hard up, and he's willing to lead the fat duffer on by the nose so long as Bunter will pay fees to be made a fool of."

"Pulling his own leg, too, if he thinks he is going to get any fees out of Bunter,"

said Nugent.
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors yelled again. Bunter being in his usual impecunious state, it was fairly clear that he was getting the boxing instruction "on the nod." No doubt Mr. Benson, knowing that Bunter belonged to a big

Holiday Joys-4.



TREASURE HUNTING!

In the dark caves beneath the cliff,
Rare prospect of adventure is;
Where smuggling men had many a tiff
Back in the bygone centuries:
They say that old oak chests lie hid
Containing golden treasure;
The ill-got gains of Captain Kidd—
Locate them at your leisure!

Whether the tale be false or true,
It claims investigation;
We sally forth, a cheery crew,
Intent on exploration.
We carry lantern, spade, and pick,
Our party numbers twenty;
We fondly hope to "get rich quick,"
By finding spoils in plenty!

"How shall I spend a thousand pounds?"
Soliloquises Bunter;
A thousand! what a lot it sounds
To every treasure-hunter!
And so we dream our golden dreams,
And dig with vim and vigour;
The light from swinging lanterns gleams

But though we dig with might and main,
Until our arms are aching;
No golden harvest do we gain,
Our labours we're forsaking.
The only "treasure" we unearth
After our toil and trouble,
Is an old sea-boot, which is worth
No more than seaside rubble!

On every crouching figure.

school, considered that his money was safe, and was piling up a considerable bill for the Owl of the Remove.

If he was pulling Bunter's leg to the extent of letting Bunter knock him about, and knock him down, there was no doubt that he was going to charge Bunter for that satisfaction. Whether he would ever receive the sums he charged was a more doubtful matter. But, as yet, Mr. Benson was in blissful ignorance of that.

There was no doubt that it was easy for the unscrupulous Battler to pull Bunter's fat leg. Only flattery was needed—it was only necessary to play up to Bunter's egregious vanity and fatuousness. The Battler had earned money in harder ways than that, in his time.

Perhaps he could not afford to be particular. Perhaps he was not a particular gentleman, anyway. At all events, there was no doubt that he was fooling Bunter to the top of his bent, and that the fatuous Owl believed he was, by this time, more than a match for the old pugilist himself.

Obviously, Bunter was now looking forward to Wednesday's combat with complete confidence. It was not to be the terrific licking he had at first anticipated. It was to be the first of a series of sweeping fistical victories, which were to land Bunter in his proper place—as boxing champion of the Remove.

Naturally, in the circumstances, William George Bunter was disposed to swank.

He walked away from the Rag with his fat little nose in the air, already feeling monarch of all he surveyed.

He left the Remove roaring.

Of all the jests that ever had been jested, as Bob Cherry remarked, Battling Bunter was the best. Battling Bunter was a scream—a real shriek. And the Remove fellows laughed till they almost cried over Battling Bunter.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER Bunter the Bully!

Skinner was responsible for the next development.

Skinner of the Remove was a humorist.

Sometimes Skinner's little jokes did not find favour in the Form; they were not always good-natured, and sometimes they led to Skinner finding his head in chancery, or held under a flowing tap.

But on this occasion the whole Remove rallied round Skinner like one man. It was passed, nem con., that Skinner's wheeze

was the goods.

Why, Skinner wanted to know, should Mr. Benson have the sole pleasure of pulling Bunter's egregious leg? Why shouldn't the Remove share that entertainment with the battered gentleman at Courtfield?

The Removites agreed that there was no reason why they shouldn't. And they did.

Bunter, of course, fell into the trap with his eyes open. Bunter could always be relied upon to take the bait like a gudgeon.

In his firm and fixed belief in the wonderful development of his boxing powers, Bunter was already growing lofty and domineering in his manner. That pleasant development of Bunter's fascinating character made Skinner's scheme easy.

But for Skinner's scheme, Bunter's new manners and customs would probably have found a rapid cure, for in point of fact there was not a fellow in the Remove who could not have licked Bunter with one hand tied behind his back. Skinner's scheme came in time to save Bunter from learning the unpleasant truth on that subject.

"Don't shove!" snapped Bunter, as Skinner pushed against him in the Remove passage. "Do you want a licking?"

Skinner assumed a look of alarm.

"Keep off!" he exclaimed.

He backed away hurriedly.

Bunter grinned.

"You're too cheeky, Skinner," he said loftily.

"Sorry, Bunter," said Skinner meekly.

"I-I-I wouldn't offend you for worlds.

Don't hit me, old chap."

"I've a jolly good mind to knock you along the passage!" said Bunter, his courage expanding as Skinner backed off with a scared look. Bunter was always brave as a lion when there was no danger. And to judge by Skinner's looks, there was

no danger now. Harold Skinner was quite a creditable member of the Remove Dramatic Society, and he played his part well.

"I-I'll call for help!" gasped Skinner.

"Yah! Funk!"

"I'm not a funk," said Skinner indignantly. "But I'm not going to tackle a fellow who can knock out prizefighters."

Bunter purred.
"Well, mind your p's and q's, that's all," he said. "I'm not taking any back-chat from you, Skinner, or anybody else."

"Very well, Bunter," said Skinner

meekly.

Billy Bunter swaggered down the passage in a state of great elation. Bolsover major was lounging by the stairs.

"Get out of the way!" rapped Bunter.

Bolsover major gave him a look. For a moment, the Owl of the Remove quailed. Bolsover was a hard and heavy hitter, and his temper was not good. But the next moment Bolsover, as if remembering something, jumped back.

"Keep off, Bunter!" he exclaimed, in

alarm.

"You've been jolly cheeky to me a lot of times, Bolsover," said Bunter, full of courage now. "You're a bully."

"Sorry, Bunter," said Bolsover major

neekly

"I've a jolly good mind to lick you."

" Please let me off."

" Take that!" said Bunter, in a bullying tone.

And he gave Bolsover major a shove, and walked past him, with his fat nose in the air.

For a moment Bolsover major clenched his hands. Billy Bunter never knew how near he was, at that moment, to being lifted off his feet by a drive of Bolsover's right. But the burly Removite remembered the rag, and Bunter passed him unbashed.

The Owl of the Remove rolled into No. 1 Study. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent

were at tea there.

"Anybody ask you here, Bunter?" inquired the captain of the Remove.

"No!" snapped Bunter.

"Thea shut the door after you."



Bob Cherry was entering the gym, with Harry Wharton on one side of him and Johnny Bull on the other. They were holding his arms, and apparently helping along his slow and reluctant feet. "Buck up!" chortled Bunter derisively. "It's only a licking!" (See Chapter 10.)

"I've come to tea," said Bunter.

"Ask next door."

"I've come to tea here," said Bunter, pulling a chair up to the table, "and I don't want any cheek. I never stand cheek."

" Oh!"

"If you want a licking, say so. If not, you'd better be civil."

" Phew!"

"I mean it," said Bunter, with a truculent glare at the occupants of No. 1 Study. "I've just cuffed Bolsover major for cheek——"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And I'll start in and mop up this study at a moment's notice. Now then, you needn't grin at Nugent, Wharton—this isn't a laughing matter."

"Isn't it?" said the captain of the

Remove. "My mistake."

"I've said I don't want any cheek!" roared Bunter. "Now then, do I stay to tea or don't I?"

"Please stay to tea, Bunter!" said the captain of the Remove meekly.

"Oh, do!" implored Nugent. Bunter sat down victoriously.

He had tea in No. 1 Study—and he made a good tea of it. More and more was Bunter satisfied with himself and his new stunt. He only wished that he had taken up boxing seriously before. It was turning out better than he had dreamed. Bullying fellows, like Bolsover major, sometimes asked themselves to tea with timid juniors who did not care to argue the point with them. It was Bunter's turn now.

Instead of being a hanger-on, dodging into a study at tea-time, warily prepared to dodge out again if the owner reached for a loaf or a cushion, Battling Bunter could now, if he liked, walk into any study and have his own way by the sheer terror of his glance. It was new, and surprising, and very pleasing. No more would the grubhunter be kicked out of studies. He would be asked to stay, in fear and trembling. It was really a glorious prospect.

Wharton and Nugent looked at one another, after Bunter had gone.

" Nice boy!" grinned Nugent.

"Ripping!"

"Bunter's improving. But how can he be ass enough to swallow it?"

Wharton shook his head.

"Ask me another," he said. "I give

that one up."

There was no doubt that Bunter was swallowing it whole. There was nothing surprising in it, from Bunter's point of view. He had set out to become the terror of the Remove. He had become the terror of the Remove. That was all there was about it.

Bunter had his faults—indeed, their name was legion. But he had never figured as a bully. His opportunities in that line had been small. Now a new and delightful side of his fascinating character came to light—brought to light by Skinner's wheeze, to which all the Remove were playing up.

Bunter was developing into a bully.

In the dormitory that night he ordered Peter Todd to take his boots off. Peter gave him an astonished glare for a second. The next moment he dropped humbly on his knees and unlaced Bunter's boots.

Bunter gave him a shove with his foot, by way of thanks. Peter rolled over on his

back.

"Why, you—you—" he gasped.

"Shut up!" snapped Bunter.

And Peter Todd shut up. It was agreed in the Remove that the jest should go on till Wednesday. But Peter wondered a little whether his patience would hold out so long.

"Poor old Toddy!" said Skinner.
"You'll have to mind your p's and q's in

No. 7 now."

Bunter sniffed.

"You'll all have to mind your p's and q's now," he said. "I don't mean to stand any rot from any of you. What are you laughing at, Snoop?"

"Eh? Nothing," said Snoop.

"I'll give you something to laugh at," said Bunter.

" I-I say-"

Billy Bunter charged at Snoop. Sidney James Snoop fled for his life, with Bunter in pursuit.

"Keep him off!" shrieked Snoop.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Less than a week before, Billy Bunter had been chased up and down the dormitory. Now he was the chaser instead of the chasee, so to speak. It was an exhilarating change.

Crash!

Wingate of the Sixth stepped in, and Snoop collided with him. The captain of Greyfriars grasped Snoop by the shoulder.

"You young ass! Where are you running to?" he demanded gruffly. "What are you scudding about the dormitory for?"

"Bunter's after me," gasped Snoop.

Wingate stared at him.

"Bunter! Are you afraid of that fat duffer?"

" Awfully!"

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" grinned Bunter. "But it's all right, Snoop—I'll let you off. You're not worth licking."

Wingate stared at Bunter, and then at the grinning Removites.

"What's this game?" he asked.

But nobody enlightened Wingate as to what the game was. Bunter, indeed, could not have enlightened him. Bunter the Bully was taking himself quite seriously.

Bunter sat up in bed when the prefect

was gone.

" I say, you fellows." "Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"When I've licked Bob Cherry on Wednesday——"

"When!" murmured Bob.
"The whenfulness is terrific."

"Don't interrupt me!" roared Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Don't cheek him, you fellows," gasped Skinner. "Don't make him angry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When I've licked Bob Cherry on Wednesday," went on Bunter, "I'm going to lick Wharton. Then there will be a new election for captain of the Remove. I shall put up for the job. I shall expect an unanimous vote for me. Any fellow who doesn't vote for me will be thrashed."

"Great pip!"

"I'm the man you want, if you only knew it," said Bunter. "You're going to



Bob's hands were trembling to such an extent that he seemed unable to don the gloves without assistance. Wharton helped him on with them. Bunter grinned cheerily. With an adversary in this state of funk, his task was even easier than he had anticipated! (See Chapter 10.)

have me, anyhow, whether you like it or not. Got that?"

"Yes, sir," said Skinner.

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all," said Bunter. "Now shut up—I want to go to sleep. Don't talk! I won't have any talk in this dormitory after lights out."

And Battling Bunter laid his head on his pillow in a mood of complete contentment. Bunter was cock of the walk in the Remove at last—as he realised that he ought to have been long ago. He felt that that was exactly as it should be—like the king coming into his own again, as it were. And he snored cheerily, and dreamed a happy dream of William George Bunter being hailed by a submissive Form as captain of the Remove.

THE NINTH CHAPTER The Day 1

"Wednesday"
"The day of doom!"
"The doomfulness is terrific."

And the Famous Five chuckled.

The great day had arrived, when William George Bunter, with the gloves on, was to stand up to Robert Cherry in the gym., and to bestow upon him such a licking as would break all Greyfriars records.

Bunter, in putting off the day of reckoning, had in the first place counted upon Bob Cherry's wrath being dissipated by the lapse of time.

As a matter of fact, he had calculated well.

Bob had almost forgotten, by this time,

Bunter's orginal offence, and though he had not changed his opinion that Bunter ought to be licked for bagging his theatre ticket, probably he would not have taken the trouble to lick him. Bob Cherry seldom let the sun go down on his wrath, and it was quite impossible for him to remain wrathful for a whole week.

But it was no longer Bob who was to decide the matter.

Bunter was keen on combat.

Had Bob Cherry desired ever so earnestly to let the matter drop, Billy Bunter would not have assented.

Bunter was out for scalps, so to speak.

Skinner's jest, in which all the Remove had played up to pull Bunter's fatuous leg, had had its effect.

Not the slightest doubt troubled Bunter. Remove fellows allowed him to slang them, to cheek them, to blink at them scornfully. It never even occurred to Bunter's obtuse brain that his leg was being pulled, and that a great surprise awaited him on Wednesday.

Bob Cherry, entering cheerily into the joke, had allowed himself to betray uneasiness in Bunter's presence, and once he had even asked Bunter whether he didn't think, after all, that he had better go home and see his pater that Wednesday.

To which Bunter had replied that the fight was coming off on Wednesday, and that Boo

was " for it " without mercy.

So Bunter was looking forward to Wednesday as keenly as any other fellow in the Lower Fourth.

The other fellows were looking forward to entertainment. Bunter was anticipating victory.

Bob was the champion fighting-man of the Remove. Once Bob was thoroughly licked, Bunter's position was assured. There would be nothing to prevent Bunter from "spreading" himself to his fat heart's content, and displaying his delightful character in all its fascinating charm. Fellows who had kicked him, and called him by uncomplimentary names, were to tremble at his frown. No feed in the Remove would be complete without Bunter. Not a Remove man would ever venture to say him nay

Billy Bunter carried his fat little nose high in the air these days. It was clear—to Bunter, at least—that he was the goods!

His confidence was unbounded. He had taken his last lesson from Mr. Benson—and in a round or two with that battered gentleman he had had decidedly the better of it.

Certainly, any fellow but Bunter might have felt surprised at getting the better of a hefty old professional "rug."

But there was nothing surprising in it to Bunter. It was simply the natural development of his great abilities. Merely that and nothing more. He had always known that he would be a crack boxer if he deigned to take the trouble. Now he had taken the trouble.

The way the Remove knuckled under to him was proof positive that they recognised, and dreaded, his wonderful prowess. At least, it was proof positive to Bunter. He did not yet know that he was the happy victim of a jape. That knowledge was to come later.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, here he is!" said Bob Cherry, as the Famous Five strolled in the quad. after breakfast on Wednesday morning. "Mind your eye, you fellows. Respect your betters."

The juniors chuckled. Bunter rolled up to them with a frown. He did not see why the fellows should chuckle at the sight of him. Certainly, he could not see himself swanking with his fat little nose in the air. Had he been able to see himself as others saw him, no doubt he would have seen reason for chuckling.

"I say, you fellows-"

"Good-morning, old chap!" said Bob Cherry meekly.

Bunter grinned.

"Jolly civil all of a sudden, what?" he said. "Well, it won't save your bacon. You're for it."

"You're not letting me off?"
"No!" said Bunter firmly.
Bob Cherry gave a deep sigh.

"Half-past three in the gym.," said Bunter.



They cater for all tastes at Greyfriars School on Sports Day!

"I-I'll try to remember. But if I forget-"

Bunter sneered.

"If you funk it, Cherry, I shall come after you. You may as well stand up to it like a man. You've got to have it."

"Suppose I apologise!" asked Bob

gravely.

"I refuse to accept any apology till I've licked you. You've wanted a thrashing long enough. Now you're going to get it."

" Nothing will stop you?"

" Nothing."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Bob Cherry. "Well, if I'm for it, I'll do my best, Bunter. Fellow

can't do more."

"Your best won't help you much," said Bunter scornfully. "If you'd seen the way I handled Benson yesterday, you'd be shaking in your shoes."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I fairly knocked him spinning," said Bunter. "He simply hadn't an earthly. And he's an old pugilist—he's earned his living in the ring. And I knocked him about just as I pleased. It's Benson I want to speak to you fellows about. I owe him some money."

"That's all right," said Nugent. "You owe everybody money. Why shouldn't

Benson be owed some, too?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't want any cheek!" roared Bunter.

"Sorry, my lord."

"I arranged to give him half-a-guinea a lesson," said Bunter. "But there's nothing mean about me. I'm paying the man handsomely. Not that he's done such a jolly lot for me, if it comes to that—I've simply developed my natural powers. Still, I'm not the fellow to be mean. I told him I'd put in a bit extra, if I got into form to knock him out. That was to make him put his beef into it, you know. I'm making it a total of five guineas for him—since I've knocked him out."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five

involuntarily.

If they had wondered how Bunter had succeeded in knocking out the old pug, they

would have been enlightened now. Double pay for being knocked out was quite good enough for Mr. Benson. Probably Bunter's knocks had not hurt him much.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter crossly. "Look here, shut up! I don't allow fellows to laugh at me. Do you want me to take the lot of you by the scruff of your necks, and bang your heads together? You're asking for it."

The chums of the Remove became grave

again-with some difficulty.

"About that five guineas," went on Bunter "I've been disappointed about postal order. I'm short of money."

" Not really?"

"Yes, really. I shall want you fellows to lend me the tin."

"The wantfulness will be terrific."

- "I'm relying on you for it," said Bunter calmly. "I've got to pay Benson this week. If you refuse me this little service, I shall take it as meaning that you want trouble."
- "And what will-happen then?" asked Harry Wharton gravely.
- "See what happens to Bob Cherry this afternoon, and you'll know," said Bunter disdainfully.

And he rolled away.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob. "If Bunter were really the terror he fancies he is, what a nice chap he would be to be at school with!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"But perhaps the dear lad will have a bit of a surprise this afternoon," chuckled Bob.

"The surprisefulness will be terrific."

But Bunter had no doubts—as yet. For the first time in his fat career, Billy Bunter was looking forward to a fight with keen anticipation. He expected to polish off Bob Cherry in a couple of rounds. Harry Wharton was to follow—Bunter had decided that he might as well handle the captain of the Remove while he was on the job. That would show the Greyfriars Remove who was who, and what was what. This was to be a great day for Bunter.

It was "der Tag!" Like the Huns before the Great War, Bunter was looking forward to "the Day!" And—though Bunter did not yet know it—the result was to be similar also.

THE TENTH CHAPTER The Great Fight!

"ROLL up !"

"This way for the show!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove fellows seemed in great spirits that afternoon. They crowded into

the gym. for the great combat.

Bunter was there early, with his second, Peter Todd. Peter wore a smiling face. Perhaps he was smiling in anticipation of a great victory for a member of No. 7 Study. Bunter supposed so. But possibly Peter was smiling for other reasons.

The Remove rolled up to a man, to witness the fray. Fellows of other Forms, who had heard of it, came in to see the combat. Bunter had a good audience, and he smirked with satisfaction as he saw the fellows crowding into the gym. The more the merrier, was Bunter's opinion. He would have liked all Greyfriars to be present, to witness his deeds of derring-do.

When the fight had first been arranged for Wednesday afternoon, no one had expected to see Bunter turn up in the gym.—unless he was carried there. Fellows had been prepared to head him off if he attempted to sneak out of gates, and to root him out if he concealed his fat person in a trunk in the box-room. But circumstances had changed since then. Now it was Bunter who was early on the scene, and Bob Cherry who was late. At half-past three, the Owl of the Remove was ready, and Bob had not arrived.

Lord Mauleverer, who was to keep time, looked at his watch and smiled.

"Cherry's late!" he said.

Bunter grinned.

"Some of you fellows go and root him out," he said. "He's hiding somewhere."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here he comes!" called out Ogilvy. Bunter blinked round.

Bob Cherry was entering the gym., with Harry Wharton on one side of him, and Johnny Bull on the other. They were holding his arms, and apparently helping along his slow and reluctant feet.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

"Buck up, Bob," said Wharton encouragingly. "After all, it's only a licking."

"Oh, dear!" mumbled Bob.

"Courage, old man!" said Johnny Bull. "Face the esteemed music manfully,"

urged Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"That's all very well for you fellows," groaned Bob Cherry. "But you haven't got to face Bunter."

"You can't back out now, Bob," said Frank Nugent gravely. "You're for it.

old man."

Bob Cherry stopped. His heart seemed to fail him as he drew near the crowded ring, where Bunter awaited him.

" Come on!" urged Wharton.

"I—I—I think I—I——" stammered Bob.

"Oh, come on!"

And with a jerk, Bob Cherry's chums landed him in the ring, and the grinning crowd of juniors closed round him.

"Buck up," chortled Bunter derisively. "Have a little pluck, Cherry. It's only a licking. You'll be counted out in the second round."

"Oh, dear!"

"Be a man!" said Bunter scornfully. Like me!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

"Off with your jacket, Cherry!" roared Bolsover major. "Here's the gloves."

Bob Cherry fumbled with his jacket. Wharton helped him off with it, and handed him the gloves.

Bob's hands were trembling to such an extent that he seemed unable to don the gloves without assistance. Wharton helped him on with them.

Bunter was grinning cheerily. With an adversary in this state of funk, his task was even easier than he had anticipated.

"Ready?" asked Lord Mauleverev. "Seconds out of the ring! Pull yourself together, Cherry, old bean."



"Go it, Bunter!" roared the Removites. Bunter "went it." He charged at Bob Cherry, his fat fists thrashing the air. Bob Cherry backed round the ring, with Bunter following him up—still thrashing the air with his fists! "You funky rotter, stand up to it!" he spluttered. (See Chapter 10.)

"Oh, dear!"

"Come on, you funk!" hooted Bunter contemptuously.

Bob Cherry faced his adversary, his knees knocking together. Bunter handed his spectacles to Peter Todd, and blinked at Bob Cherry, with a truculent blink.

"Time!"

"Go it, Bunter!" roared the Removites. Bunter went it.

He charged at Bob Cherry, his fat fists thrashing the air. Bunter's idea was that he was going to finish the fellow off with one terrific drive—just as he had knocked out Mr. Benson.

Bob Cherry jumped back hastily.

He backed round the ring, with Bunter

following him up, still thrashing the air with his fists.

Whether the Owl of the Remove had learned to box or not, he was still as short of wind as in the days before he had developed into Battling Bunter. He was soon gasping, with bellows to mend.

"You funky rotter, stand up to it!" he spluttered.

" Ha, ha, ha!"

" After him, Bunter!"

"Go it!"

" Bravo, Battling Bunter!"

Bunter rushed on valorously. But his adversary dodged him somehow, and still backed off.

That terrific finishing drive had not been

administered. Bunter stopped in the ring, panting for breath.

"Gooorrrgh!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stand up to it, you funk!"

"Time!" rapped out Lord Mauleverer. Bunter sank on his second's knee. He wanted a rest, after all the strenuous exercise he had put in in the ring.

"Jevver see such a rotten funk, Toddy?"

he gasped.

Toddy chortled.

"I can't get near enough to the beast to hit him," said Bunter. "Wait till I do, that's all. I'm going to smash him."

"Poor old Bob!" murmured Toddy.

"I'm going to smash his nose right in," said Bunter ferociously "One drive will do the business for him, as soon as I get at him. Funking won't save him, I can tell you."

" Time!"

Bunter rolled up again promptly. But Bob Cherry had to be pushed into the ring by his second.

Bunter attacked ferociously.

This time Bob Cherry seemed unable to dodge. Bunter got to close quarters, and his boxing-glove tapped on Bob's chest. It was not a hard tap, but it had a surprising effect on Bob. He went down with a bump.

" Man down!" ehuckled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get up, you funk!" roared Bunter; Bob Cherry lay and groaned.

"Gerrup! You're not licked yet."

Groan!

"I tell you-"

Groan!

"Count him out!" jeered Bunter;

Lord Mauleverer was counting, keeping his face as serious as he could. The crowd of juniors were yelling with laughter.

"One—two—three—four—five—six— "Buck up, Bob!" called out Wharton.

"He's done," grinned Bunter "Hardly worth while counting him out. You next, Wharton."

"Seven-eight-" went on Lord Mauleverer.

" Can't you get up, Cherry?"

Groan!

" Nine!" said the timekeeper.

Bob Cherry rose to his feet. He seemed to rise without much effort, too.

"Just in time!" sneered Bunter.

The combat was resumed. Bunter rushed on to give the knock-out blow.

This time Bob Cherry did not back away, neither did he bump down under the truculent attack of Battling Bunter. Perhaps he considered that he had pulled Battling Bunter's egregious leg long enough.

He stood up to the attack with a smiling face.

Bunter's fat arms thrashed the air like the sails of a windmill. He was putting all his beef into it. His fat face was red with exertion, and he was gasping and panting for breath. But somehow—Bunter could not understand how—his terrific onslaught did not penetrate Bob Cherry's defence.

Bob did not seem to be funking now. Indeed, he was laughing. He stalled off the attack without an effort occasionally giving Bunter a gentle tap on the chest if he got too near.

The Owl of the Remove had bellows to mend with a vengeance now. His breathing came in stertorous gasps. Perspiration streamed down his podgy face. The Removites roared with merriment, as Bunter persistently attacked, with as much success as would have fallen to his lot had he been attacking a stone wall.

" Time!"

The call came in time to save William George Bunter from collapsing under the stress of his own exertions.

He dropped on Toddy's knee for a rest with a gasp that sounded like air escaping from a badly-punctured tyre.

"Groooooooooh!"
Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll finish him off in the third round!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, do," said Peter.

"Think I can't, you ass?"

" Hem!"

"He hasn't touched me yet."

"Perhaps he didn't want to," suggested Peter blandly.

"You silly chump !"

" Hem!"

"If you give me any cheek, Toddy, I'll thrash you next, instead of Wharton."

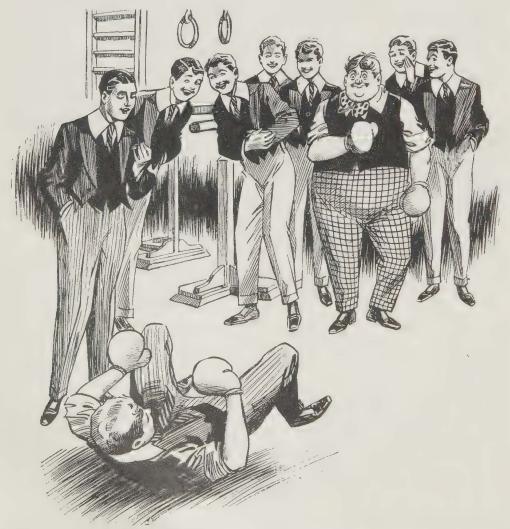
"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

"Time!" chortled Lord Mauleverer.

Bunter tottered into the ring. He was still confident, and still game. But there was no doubt that his wind was short.

Bob Cherry came on cheerily, greatly to Bunter's surprise. Still more to Bunter's surprise, he received a tap on his fat little nose that made him totter back.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.



Bob went down with a bump. "Count him out!" jeered Bunter. Lord Mauleverer was counting, keeping his face as serious as he could. The crowd of juniors were yelling with laughter. (See Chapter 10.)

A GREYFRIARS "RAG."

Strangely enough, the porter of Greyfriars School, in the days when George the Third was King, bore the same name as the present guardian of the School gates—Gosling. Between him and the village beadle of Friardale bitter rivalry existed. Many a little disagreement in public between the twain had enlivened the village.

But never had the Greyfriars boys been provided with such a spectacle, and opportunity for a joyous jape, as when the two actually came to blows in public and the beadle exercised his authority by promptly clamping the School porter in the massive wooden stocks which adorned the old market-

place!

With outthrust legs locked between the ponderous boards, almost exploding with amazed wrath, Gosling struggled for speech. With the key of the stocks poised in extended, podgy fingers, the beadle began to feel rather nervous at what he had done. His blown-up pomposity oozed rapidly away, and vanished completely as a troop of Greyfriars boys bore down the village street, obviously intent on rescuing their porter.

The boys ploughed through the laughing villagers and made straight for the troubled beadle. The key of the stocks was snatched from his fat hand, and—so swiftly was it done he thought he had been Black Magic'd there—the beadle found himself where a

moment before Gosling had been!

Pushing the rescued porter before them, pausing only to deposit a snowball or two in the region of the stocks and to fling away the key, the boys hurriedly departed for the School—where, an hour later, the beadle wended his way. All sorts of rumours gained credence concerning his interview with the Head.

But as the ringleaders in the escapade were never discovered, nor any really serious effort made by the School authorities to satisfy the beadle's impassioned craving for vengeance, it was presumed the Head of Greyfriars wisely rested content to treat the whole affair as a light-hearted "rag!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

Tap!

"Yarooooh!"

The juniors shrieked.

The taps on Bunter's nose were not very hard; but they were harder than Bunter liked He jumped back promptly, and as Bob followed him up he jumped back again. Bunter proceeded to circumnavigate the ring in a series of backward jumps, while the onlookers yelled.

Tap!

"Yoooop!"

Bump!

Bunter sat down.

He sat and blinked, in great amazement. This was not at all according to programme.

"Ow! wow! wow!" spluttered Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer began to count. "One, two, three, four, five-

Bunter staggered up again. He fairly hurled himself at Bob Cherry

Tap! Bump!

Bunter sat down again,

" Ha, ha, ha!"

The onlookers were almost in convulsions by this time. Battling Bunter had been expected to be funny. He was turning out a real shriek.

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Up again, old fat bean!"

"Up and at him!"

" Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter picked himself up somehow. Even upon the almost impenetrable brain of William George Bunter, it was slowly dawning that his leg had been pulled. But he made one more effort. He gasped, and spluttered, and hurled himself at Bob Cherry—hurling himself fairly on a boxing-glove that met him with a jolt.

Bump!

Once more Bunter sat down.

This time he continued to sit.

("Go it, Bunter!" shrieked the Removites.

" Up again, old man."

But Bunter did not get up. He sat and



Bunter sat and gasped and blinked. He was not a boxing champion. He realised it now! At last he was in possession of the joke that had entertained the Remove for days. (See Chapter 10.)

gasped and blinked. His fat leg had been pulled. He was not a boxing champion. He realised it now. He was now in possession of the joke that had entertained the Remove for days. But he found no entertainment in it.

"Ow! Beasts!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gimme my spectacles! Toddy, you beast—gimme my specs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Finished?" asked Bob Cherry.

" Beast!"

"You haven't licked me yet."

"I-I'm letting you ofi! Ow!"

"But am I letting you off?" chuckled Bob. "That's the question."

" Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter picked himself up at last, and jammed his spectacles on his fat little nose. He blinked round with an infuriated blink at the shrieking juniors.

you fellows, I—I

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Keep off, you beast!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry made a movement. That was enough for Bunter. He charged at the grinning ring of Removites, and burst his way through.

" Stop!"

" Hi!"

"Come back,
Battling Bun-

"You're not finished yet!"

But Battling Bunter knew better. He knew that he was finished. He disappeared from the gym. at top speed, leaving the Remove in convulsions.

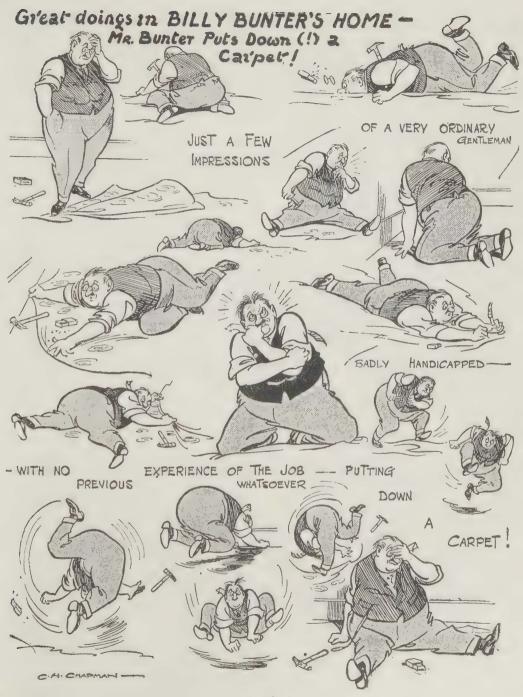
BATTLING BUNTER was no longer a Battler. He was no longer a bully.

No longer did he swank with his fat little nose in the air. No longer did he dream of filling the post of captain of the Remove.

The jest had run its course, and Bunter was himself again.

All that was left for Bunter was the happy problem of settling his little account with Mr. Benson. And that problem Bunter was left to solve entirely on his own. And for quite a long time afterwards, to set the Remove in a roar it was only necessary to mention "Battling Bunter."

THE END



OUR CADET CORPS IN CAMP!

By SERGEANT HARRY WHARTON (Remove Battalion, Greyfriars Cadet Corps)

TT was a proud day for Honorary Colonel

Paul Pontifex Prout, Officer Commanding the Grevfriars Cadet Corps, when we went away to camp for our annual training. In the ordinary way, the master of the Fifth is plain Mr. Prout-merely that and nothing more. But when the call to arms is sounded, and the Grevfriars Cadets hold their annual Rally, he blossoms forth in all the glory of his colonel's uniform, and is saluted with great respect by all the lesser ranks. Mr. Prout

makes a very imposing figure in uniform-more so than in gown and mortarboard. If he should have his celebrated rifle with him, he makes not only an imposing figure but a terrifying one! Mr. Prout armed with a rifle is as real a peril to the community as an anarchist armed with a bomb. One never knows where the rifle will go off, or where the bullet will find a billet! "Safety First" is the motto of the Greyfriars Cadets, when

they see that their Commanding Officer is armed.

THE gallant colonel, however, is by no means a duffer at soldiering. He is well versed in matters military, having read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested the various manuals dealing with cadet training. He knows the difference between "forming fours" and "sloping arms," and he has grasped the subtle distinction between "Left wheel!" and "Eyes right!" Moreover, he is very efficient at skirmishing, trenchdigging, bayonet practice, and the like. He also knows how to organise and control a camp. There are no flies on Colonel Prout. so to speak—save on one memorable occasion

when a bluebottle alighted on his nose whilst we were "trooping the Colour."

Our camp this year was in Sussex, not many miles from our rivals of St. Jim's. This being the case, there were a good many "skirmishes" which were not included in the official programme! We encountered Tom-Merry & Co. on several occasions, and engaged in friendly warfare—if, indeed, such a thing is possible. Honourswere fairly even at the finish.

Mr. Prout blossoms forth in all the glory of his colonel's uniform,

I HAPPEN to be sergeant in the Remove Battalion, and my chums Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent are corporals. Hurree Singh once held non-commissioned rank, but he eventually had to revert to the rank of private, owing to his weird and wonderful way of giving orders. He used to say, "Mark the esteemed timefulness!" and "Stand easefully at ease!" Corporal Singh's

quaint rendering of the English language used to send the troops into convulsions; and Colonel Prout considered it "prejudicial to good order and discipline." So the Nabob of Bhanipur had to forfeit his stripes.

Most of us thoroughly enjoyed our camp manoeuvres. One of the few who failed to do so was Private William George Bunter. Route-marching and skirmishing are rather too strenuous for the corpulent Owl of the Remove. However, Private Bunter thoroughly enjoyed himself in the dry canteen. The slackers of the Remove—Privates Mauleverer. Skinner, and Snoop-were also unhappy in camp; but the majority of us look back upon our annual Rally with the keenest delight.

SCHOOLBOY CELEBRITIES VERSIFIED!

1. Tom Merry, of the Shell Form, St. Jim's.

Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
Shining in a handsome face,
Take a mouth that never lies,
Take a body full of grace,
Add to these a pretty wit,
Commanding mien, and noble mind—
You get a boy that's full of grit,
Tom Merry—kindest of the kind!
And yet—he's shown it oft and oft—
The very opposite of soft!

2. Harry Wharton, Captain of the Remove Form, Greyfriars.

He's a most obstinate fellow—
A boy of the old soldier's breed—
Let Bolsover growl and Bull bellow,
Harry Wharton will still keep the lead.
He's learned to control a quick passion,
Yet he knows how to use a quick fist—

Yet he knows how to use a quick fist— He can deal, in most summary fashion With a foe; yet knows when to desist! Harry Wharton—to put it in short— Is the best of all types—a good sport!

3. Jimmy Silver, Captain of the Fourth Form, Rookwood.
Full of fun and full of sense.

His head is great, his heart immense; He's known by the best of affectionate names—

He's called by his schoolmates—" Uncle James"!

4. George Alfred Grundy, of the Shell Form, St. Jim's.

In enterprise and jest,
In tournament and sport,
Competing with the best,
In games of every sort,
You'll find a lout of immense size
Who ne'er succeeds, how'er he tries!
GRUNDY!



Frank Nugent Johnny Bull Harry Wharton Hurree Singh Bob Cherry 5. Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form, Greyfriars.

Indeed, there's but one thing to say of you If Grundy's an idiot, you are two!

6. Adolphus Smythe, of the Shell Form, Rookwood.

Oh, Smythe, beloved! Adolphus dear! How glossy is your topper! The head inside is cracked, I fear! Look out! You'll come a cropper!

7. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form, St. Jim's.

Oh, weally, you know! He's wathah a swank!

He's plenty of ca h in the till at the bank!

He's vewy partic, in the choice of his socks, But he always will help a poah chap on the wocks!

8. Billy Bunter, of the Remove Form, Greyfriars.

He cannot help his feeble eyes,
He cannot help his form,
But he can help the tricks and lies,
That make him the butt of the dorm.

9. Valentine Mornington, of the Fourth Form, Rookwood.

A bit of a dandy, a bit of a rake, A bit of a reckless scamp; yet A bit of all right! He takes the cake! He knows "what's what," you bet!

A CONUNDRUM IN VERSE.

Attractive and smart this puzzle will be, I really think ('twas evolved by me!); And the person possessing the smartest brains

Might hit on the answer. This rhyme contains

A name, undoubtedly known to you all, And popular, too, for it never will pall. Whose name? A youth whose amazing whims

Continually amuse the boys of St. Jim's. He is clever at games, and though slim and slight.

He's reckoned as quite a luminous light.

He is recognised by seniors, and juniors, too As a sportsman that's trusted to dare and to do.

And all declare throughout the school That he's fine, though he's sometimes a bit of a fool.

His name is concealed here. Does anyone

The rightful solution? If so, answer "Yes!" No prize will be offered, I'm sorry to say, But the keen ones will solve this conundrum

May the joy of success now gleam on your way!

THE SOLUTION.

Attractive and smart this puzzle will be, I really think ('twas evolved by me!); And the person possessing the smartest brains

Might hit on the answer. This rhyme contains

A name, undoubtedly known to you all, And popular, too; for it never will pall. Whose name? A youth whose amazing whims

Continually amuse the boys of St. Jim's. He is clever at games, and though slim and slight,

He's reckoned as quite a luminous light, He is recognised by seniors, and juniors, too, As a sportsman that's trusted to dare and to do.

And all declare throughout the school That he's fine, though he's sometimes a bit of a fool.

His name is concealed here. Does anyone guess

The rightful solution? If so, Answer "Yes!" No prize will be offered, I'm sorry to say, But the keen ones will solve this conundrum to-day.

HAVE WE LIVED BEFORE?

A Lively Outbreak by the Humorist of St. Jim's—the Great Monty Lowther!

Toon't propose to discuss this subject seriously. It is a question which can never be satisfactorily answered, least

of all by a schoolboy.

I admit, however, that it is just possible that we may have had a previous existence in some remote, far-back age when the world was young. If this is so, we have, at any rate, forgotten what our first innings on earth was like! I personally have no recollection of being an Ancient Briton, painted with woad and garbed in goat-skins; though, of course, I might have been one. Nor can

I remember taking a hand in the Siege of Calais, or in chasing the Spanish Armada!

Those who have studied these things, and believe in them, declare that Napoleon Buonaparte was a resurrected Julius Cæsar. Certainly there is a marked similarity between these two mighty men. Both were ambitious, and chock-full of energy; and both were great warriors and leaders of men.

Cases of this sort, where people have a likeness to those who

lived long ago, are numerous. You even find them at St. Jim's; and that is my reason for writing this article.

I have been studying certain fellows here, and trying to fit them into the niches they would have occupied in past ages had they been alive. Of course, this is pure speculation on my part, and I don't expect anybody to take me seriously. But then, nobody ever does!

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the grandiose swell of St. Jim's, if he had a previous existence, was probably Beau Brummel, the dandy of Regency days. I have heard Gussy confess to a sneaking regard for Brummel's smartness and elegance; and he often says he wishes he had been alive then, when male attire was so much more picturesque. Perhaps he was!

Fatty Wynn fits quite easily into the

scheme of things. Look back through the pages of history, and whom does Fatty remind you of? The plump and genial Falstaff, without a doubt! I suggested to Fatty that he was a re-born Falstaff, but he would have none of it. He is certain he did not live in the spacious days of old; but he wishes he had done so.

done so.

"They knew how to eat in those days!" declared Fatty, with a sigh. "None of your miserable snacks which we now have three times a day, and

flatteringly call 'meals'; but big banquets and bumper celebrations! I was born about three hundred years too late!"

Big George Darrell—" The Fighting Prefect "—is possibly the duplicate of Tom Sayers, the lion-hearted prizefighter of the past—If I suggested this to Darrell he would



Monty Lowther thinks the role of King's Jester suited him very well!

probably laugh to scorn the notion that he is Tom Sayers come to life again; but "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

I will not go so far as to suggest that Gerald Knox, the bully of the Sixth, lived in a previous era under the name of Nero, Emperor of Rome. But it cannot be denied that Knox has inherited some of Nero's typeopical ways.

tyrannical ways.

Tom Merry, I should say, was one of the great leaders of history. He has a natural aptitude for leadership which seems to have been born in him. It is drawing the long bow to suggest that Tom Merry was formerly Sir Walter Raleigh or Sir Francis Drake.

Aubrey Racke was possibly an extremely wealthy landowner in the days of the Inquisition. It is possible he was tortured; his name suggests as much!

Carrying our speculations still farther, the fellow who discovered the laws of gravity, by lying under an apple-tree and studying the fall of a pippin, was probably Bernard Glyn—though in those days he would have been known as Isaac Newton.

And myself? Well, I should imagine that the rôle of King's Jester suited me very well; and, for all I know to the contrary, my merry wit may have sent many a Court into hysterics!

CRICKET GOSSIP OF ROOKWOOD

By GEORGE BULKELEY, Head of Games.

THE most remarkable cricket match ever played on Rookwood's historic ground took place in the summer of 1888. I cannot speak of it as an eyewitness, for there was no George Bulkeley at that time! There was, however, a James Bulkeley—my illustrious pater—and he played a prominent part in this very astonishing match.

"Past versus Present" was the fixture; and the Old Boys brought down a team of giants, which included a couple of County players and a sprinkling of M.C.C. men. They won the toss, and batted all day on a peach of a wicket piling up 420 runs. It was a two-day match. On the second day, the School went in to bat against this formidable total, and they were skittled out like rabbits, 90 runs being all they could muster. So the wise old greybeards who were looking on shook their heads sagely, and confidently predicted an innings victory for the Old Boys.

And then the fortunes of the game veered round in sensational fashion. The School took their second "knock," and this time they were not so easily disposed of. My pater, and a fellow called Forrester, broke the back of the Old Boys' bowling, and helped themselves to a century apiece. Others followed up the good work, and, when the total had been taken to 400, the School audaciously "declared," leaving their opponents only 70 odd runs to get to win. Time was short; and rather than allow the match to fizzle out in a draw, my pater, who skippered the School, made this apparently rash declaration.

You can guess what followed. By means of brilliant bowling, backed up by excellent work in the field-and aided, it must be confessed, by all the luck that was goingthe School skittled out their redoubtable opponents in record time. The Old Boys, driven to the wall, made desperate efforts to save the game, and several wickets were thrown away through over-anxiety. Trv as they might, they could only muster 64 runs; so that the School snatched a sensational victory on the stroke of time. In celebration of this great achievement, every member of the Rookwood Eleven was presented with a special medal; and my pater still cherishes his among his most treasured possessions.



A PORTRAIT GALLERY OF FOUR-LEGGED "CHUMS."