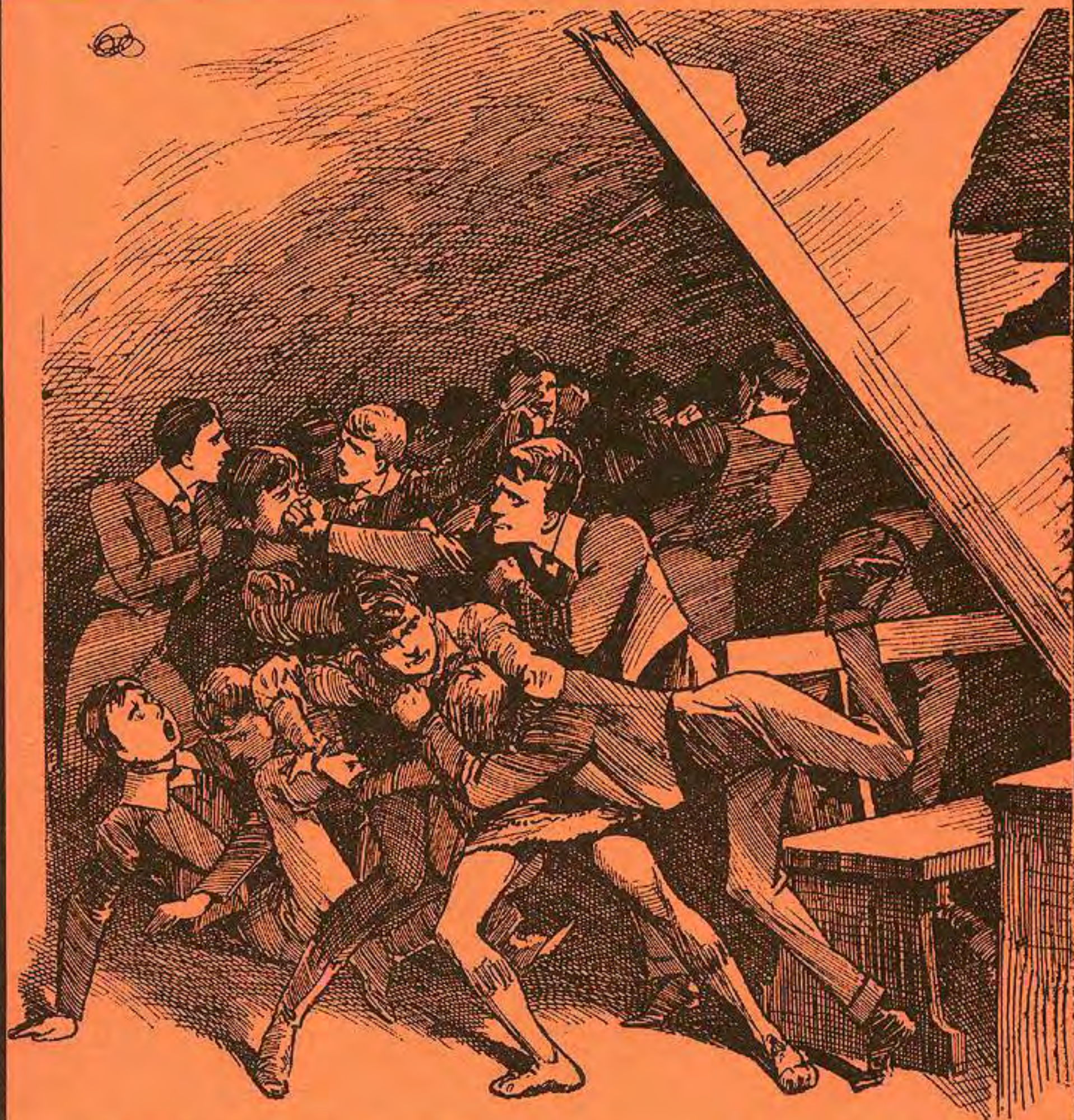


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VOL. 4.

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Complete School Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co.
at Greyfriars.

- - BY - -

FRANK RICHARDS

.....

THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Eve of Breaking-Up.

"T-O-MORROW is the last day of the term!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We're breaking-up——"

"Hurrah!"

"And——"

"Bravo!"

Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, paused. The pause was filled in by another shout from the excited juniors in the Remove Form-room.

"Hurrah!"

"Gentlemen, I thank you for your applause," said Wharton, in his best manner, "but——"

"Hear, hear!"

"But——"

"Bravo!"

"But if you would be kind enough to shut up for a bit, and let me get to the point, I should take it as a personal favour."

And the juniors laughed.

On the eve of breaking-up everybody was excited, and everybody was in a good temper. Even Bulstrode wore a good-humoured grin. There were a dozen Removites in the Form-room, and when it was understood that Wharton had something to say, everybody was willing to cheer, if not to listen.

Wharton had mounted on a form.

"Gentlemen of the Lower Fourth——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Order!" said Bob Cherry, rapping on a desk with a cricket-stump. "Order!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen, as we are breaking up, I have a suggestion

to make for winding up the term in a really ripping and satisfactory manner. As the most important Form at Greyfriars—"

Quite a roar of cheering interrupted the speaker. That the Remove was the most important Form at Greyfriars was a fact undoubted by any fellow in the Remove. The Sixth Form might assume grave and reverend airs, and regard themselves as the "giddy Palladium," as Bob Cherry put it, of the school. The Fifth might "swank" around as half-fledged seniors, and the Shell might think no small beer of themselves. The Upper Fourth might hold their noses high in the air, and affect to look down on the Remove as fags. All these things might be, without in the least shaking the serene conviction of the Remove that they were the most important Form at Greyfriars—in fact, that they were Greyfriars.

"Hurrah!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

Rap, rap! went the cricket-stump.

"Order!"

"The orderfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Pray moderate the esteemed transportfulness, my worthy chums."

"Hear, hear!"

"As the most important Form at Greyfriars," went on Harry Wharton, as soon as there was a lull, "it behoves us—"

"Well, that's a jolly good word!" said Frank Nugent.

"Order!"

"It behoves us," went on Harry calmly—"it behoves us to give the term a good wind-up, and I've got an idea. You are aware, of course, that the Sixth are in the habit of giving a giddy Greek play at the end of the midsummer term."

There was a groan for the Sixth and their Greek play. Most of the fellows present had sat out the Sixth Form Greek play, for their memories of it were painful.

"Oh, don't talk of that on an occasion like this," said Ogilvy. "What's the good of calling up horrid memories just before breaking-up? There's no Sixth Form play at the end of Christmas term, thank goodness!"

"Exactly!" said Wharton. "And my idea is that the Junior Dramatic Society should give a play to wind up this term, and that the Sixth should come and hear us. We have to listen to the Sixth Form play whether we like it or not."

"Hear, hear!"

"We can send invitations to the Sixth, pointing that fact out," said Bulstrode. "I suppose you fellows will be acting in the play?"

"Certainly!" said Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, and Hurree Singh together. They were the most prominent members of the Amateur Dramatic Society.

"Good!" said Bulstrode. "It will serve the Sixth jolly well right."

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

"It will serve 'em right," repeated Bulstrode. "The Sixth are a nuisance, and this will make us even with them for the trouble they've given us all the term."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If that hooligan persists in interrupting the meeting, he will be thrown out," exclaimed Wharton warmly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Order!"

"I say, you fellows," exclaimed Billy Bunter, jumping on a form near Wharton—"I say, I've got a suggestion to make."

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton, I don't see why I shouldn't get up and talk sense, when you're allowed to get up and talk rot."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Well, I think Wharton's right in suggesting a sort of celebration to wind up the term," said Billy Bunter, blinking round upon the grinning juniors through his big spectacles, "but instead of a dramatic entertainment, I suggest that it should take the form of a feed."

"Hear, hear!"

"I think that's a jolly good idea," said Bunter. "You see, it will make the business easier in issuing the invitations. Nobody ever goes to an amateur dramatic entertainment if he can help it, but anybody will come to a feed. In fact, there's sure to be a rush."

"And you'll be the first rusher," grinned Ogilvy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think it's a good idea—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I sha'n't shut up, Wharton. The fellows all approve of my suggestion, and I think you ought to stand down," exclaimed the fat junior.

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"Bunter can stand the feed after the entertainment," suggested Bob Cherry with a grin.

"Good egg!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I should be only too glad to stand a feed to the whole Form, but I've been disappointed about a postal-order."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I was expecting a postal-order for a considerable amount this morning, but it hasn't come, owing to some delay in the post. It will be here to-morrow morning, and then I shall be pleased to settle for any little loans you fellows make me to-night. On those conditions I'll stand the feed willingly enough."

"I dare say you will," grinned Bob Cherry. "But you won't find anybody else willing, I think. Got down!"

"Look here—"

"Shut up! You're interrupting the meeting."

"But I say, you fellows—"

"Do shut up, Bunter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "There's no time to waste, and we want to get to business, if we're to give a show this evening."

"Yes, but—"

"Order!"

"Ow!" roared Billy Bunter.

Someone had hurled an apple from the crowd, and it caught Billy Bunter under his double chin. The fat junior gave a jump, and missed his footing on the form.

The next moment he was rolling on the floor.

There was a yell of laughter.

"Do that again, Bunter!" shouted Bob Cherry, with the tears in his eyes. "Do it again! I didn't know you were such a giddy acrobat."

The fat junior sat up, gasping, on the floor. His sudden downfall had knocked all the wind out of his plump carcass.

"Ow! Oh, really—" he gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Order!"

"Gentlemen, is my suggestion adopted?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Is there to be a performance by the Junior Dramatic Society this evening?"

"Yes! Yes!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo!"

"Rats!" said Bulstrode.

But his voice was lost in the general roar of approval. Nugent called for a show of hands, and every hand but Bulstrode's went up.

"Passed unanimously!" said Frank Nugent, ignoring Bulstrode. "Gentlemen, we shall now proceed to arrange for the performance, and it will take place this evening in the Form-room here at eight o'clock precisely."

"Hear, hear!"

And the meeting broke up, leaving Harry Wharton & Co. to make their arrangements for the evening's performance—a performance which was to lead to more fun than any member of the Amateur Dramatic Society at present anticipated.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter Apologises.

"I SAY, you fellows—"

Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Bob Cherry were in No. 1 Study in the Remove passage, when Billy Bunter came in. Wharton had a pen in his hand, and the three juniors were wrinkling their brows over a paper he was drawing up. They looked up impatiently as the fat junior came in and interrupted them.

"Oh, get out!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We're not going to stand a feed, and we're not going to lend you anything off an imaginary postal-order," said Nugent. "Get out!"

"It's another matter—"

"Shut up!"

"I wasn't going to speak about the feed. I know you're too jolly mean to stand one," said Bunter. "I'm half-starved in this study, and I've given up expecting you chaps to act decently. It's another matter, and it's rather important."

Wharton laid down his pen.

"Oh, buck up, for goodness' sake!" he said resignedly.

"You see, to-morrow's the last of the term—"

"Yes, we know that already."

"I mean we shall be breaking up—"

"You'll jolly well get broken up this evening if you don't buzz out of this study soon," said Nugent.

"Oh, really Nugent! What I mean is, I had a jolly good invitation for the Easter holidays, you know—a titled friend of my father's—"



"Ow! Ow! I—I won't apologise—I—I mean all right, I will!" And Billy Bunter flopped heavily down upon his fat knees before the Lancashire lad.

"Rats!"

"I was invited to spend the vacation at his splendid mansion—"

"Rubbish!"

"Where he has at least thirty liveried servants, and I should eat off gold and silver!" said Billy Bunter, glowering with rage.

"Well, I hope you've accepted the invitation?" said Bob Cherry.

"It's fallen through—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Owing to my titled friend having an attack of gout, the invitation's fallen through," said Bunter. "I think I might as well come to your place, Wharton. You haven't told me THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 114.

NEXT
WEEK:

"THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

your plans for the vac., but I suppose you're having a party of friends home?"

"Not at all!"

"Oh, really—"

"I'm spending the vac. away," said Harry, laughing; "and as I can't ask you to another chap's house, Bunt, you'll have to look further."

"Oh, very well! After all, I don't particularly want to come to Wharton Lodge. I'd just as soon spend the vac. with you, Nugent—in fact, rather!"

"I wouldn't, though!" said Nugent. "Besides, I'm going away for the holiday."

"Oh dear! I'll come home with you, if you like, Cherry?"

"You jolly well won't!" said Bob. "I'm not going home,

**A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.**

for one thing; I'm spending the vacation away, with Wharton and Nugent and Inky."

"Oh! You're all going to the same place?"

"Yes."

"I suppose you could get an extra invite for a chum?" said Billy Bunter, in a wheedling voice. "Of course you'd be glad to have me!"

"Well, you've had us often enough!" remarked Nugent.

"You have nearly everybody you meet, don't you, Bunt?"

"Oh, really—"

"But we can't invite you to another chap's house," said Wharton, "and we jolly well wouldn't if we could! You're too much trouble, and you're always making your friends feel small by your rotten tricks! That's plain English!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him. The fat junior of the Greyfriars Remove had a pretty thick skin, and it was not easy for his feelings to be hurt.

Bunter did not intend to go home for the vacation, if he could help it. His people did not fully understand the necessity of feeding him as well as he liked to be fed. And Bunter senior often found him work in the garden during the vacation. Billy did not like work.

His people were not rich, but Bunter had expensive tastes. He was fully determined to spend that vacation, as he spent most of them—at another fellow's house. The only question was, how was it to be worked.

"What chap are you staying with, Wharton?" he inquired, after a pause.

"What do you want to know for?" said Wharton bluntly.

"Oh— You see— I—"

"You want to get an invitation out of him?" said Harry. "I sha'n't tell you! Now, buzz off; we're busy!"

"You might tell me the chap's name."

"Rats! Get out!"

"Is it Ogilvy?"

"Get out!"

"It can't be Linley," said Bunter musingly. "Linley's as poor as a church mouse, and his place can't be fit to ask decent chaps home to. I should refuse his invitation. I'm not snobbish, but I believe in a gentleman keeping up his class, and, after all, Linley is only a factory chap! I owe something to myself as a gentleman!"

"You owe something to jolly nearly every chap in Greyfriars, I believe!" said Nugent brutally.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

Bob Cherry rose, and took the poker, and put the end of it in the fire. Then he stood beside the firegrate, waiting for it to get hot.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in a very doubtful way.

"I suppose it's not Linley?" he said. "Of course I should bar Linley! I couldn't consent to forget my dignity sufficiently to pass a vac. with a cad— Ow!"

A handsome, sturdy junior had just entered the study. It was Mark Linley, the lad from Lancashire—the scholarship boy of the Remove. He could not help hearing Bunter's remarks, and the colour flushed into his face, but he gave no other sign.

Wharton rose to his feet, and took Bunter's ear between his finger and thumb. That was the cause of Bunter's anguish. "Ow!"

"Ow! Leggo! Yow!"

"You rotten cad!" said Harry angrily. "I've warned you before about it! Ask Linley's pardon at once!"

"Oh, it's all right!" said Mark Linley.

"It's not all right! Bunter belongs to this study, and he disgraces it from every day by being a cad, a snob, and a rotter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Beg Linley's pardon at once!"

"Ow! Yow! All right! I—I beg your pardon, Linley! Ow! I really didn't mean that, you know. What I—I really meant to say was, that I admired you awfully, you know, and— Ow!"

Mark Linley gave the fat junior a glance of contempt.

"Ow! Leggo, Wharton, you beast! Ow! I've told the rotter I'm sorry! Ow!"

"Get on your knees, porpoise!"

"Ow! I won't!"

"Down, dog!" said Nugent.

"To your knees!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Ow! I—I won't—I—I mean, all right, I will!" And Billy Bunter flopped down heavily upon his fat knees.

"Ow! Yah!"

"Now, apologise properly!"

"Ow! I won't! Yow!" Wharton's finger and thumb tightened upon the fat junior's ear, and Bunter howled with anguish. "Ow! All right!"

"You will say I'm sorry I'm a snob and a cad—"

"Ow! I'm sorry Wharton's a snob and a cad—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Nugent.

Wharton flushed red.

"What's that?" he roared.

"That's what you told me to say!" stammered Billy Bunter.

"Ass! You're to speak in the first person, that's what I meant!"

"But you were the first person to speak, and—"

"Ass! Say I'm sorry I'm a cad—"

"I'm sorry you're a cad—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He doesn't seem to understand," said Wharton. "I'll jolly well squeeze his ear till he does! There's nothing like it!"

"Ow! Yow! I—I think I understand! I—I'm sorry I'm a cad and a snob, Linley!"

"So am I!" said Mark. "I suppose you can't help it?"

"Ow! Ow! Leggo!"

Harry Wharton released Billy Bunter's ear, and the fat junior staggered to his feet, rubbing the damaged auricular appendage ruefully.

"Ow! Beast! I'm hurt!"

"Now get out!"

Bunter rubbed his ear, and blinked savagely.

"I've got to settle about that holiday yet. Look here—"

"It's settled! Buzz off!"

"It's not settled! I'm a businesslike chap, and I want to get things definitely fixed up for the vac.!" said Bunter.

"Where are you going—"

Bob Cherry drew the poker from the fire. The end was red-hot.

"Are you going, Bunter?" he asked politely.

"Oh! Keep off! Yah! Yaroo!"

Billy Bunter backed away from the glowing tip of the poker. Bob Cherry made a pretended lunge at him, and the fat junior fled into the passage. Bob laughed, and slammed the door.

"I shall be jolly glad to get a rest from that chap this vac.," he remarked.

"Same here!"

"It's about the vac. I've looked in to see you," said Mark Linley. "Hazeldene has spoken to me about it. It seems that he's going to spend part of the holiday at a place in Devonshire, belonging to an uncle of his—a chap who lives in an old house on the coast. He's asked me to come, and says you chaps are coming."

Wharton nodded.

"That's so. Hazeldene's sister Marjorie will be there, and one or two of the girls from Cliff House," he said. "We should make up a rather jolly party. The girls are coming a day or two later, but we shall go down with Hazeldene as soon as we break up here. I'm jolly glad you're coming, Linley."

The Lancashire lad coloured.

"I thought I'd speak to you chaps before I accepted," he said.

"Why?"

Mark's colour deepened.

"Well, you see, you fellows have always treated me decently, though I'm what Bunter so elegantly terms a factory cad!"

"Don't take any notice of that worm! However modest you may be, you must know that you are worth whole cart-loads of Bunters!"

Mark Linley laughed.

"Well, I might think that without being very conceited," he remarked. "But, look here, if you fellows don't like the idea of my coming, just say so, and I sha'n't feel offended. I'm poor, and can't afford the same things as you have. I don't dress so well, and I don't have half so much pocket-money. I'd like you to say out in plain English what you think about the matter."

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ONE
HALFPENNY.

"I think you're an ass!" said Bob Cherry.
 "Exactly!" said Nugent. "My opinion, too!"
 "And mine precisely!" said Wharton. "Of course we shall be glad to have you with us! That's settled!"
 "Good! Then I shall accept!"
 "I should say so! And now, sit down and help us make up this blessed notice! It's got to go up on the board before tea!"
 And the four juniors were soon busy over the paper.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Programme.

"**M**Y hat!"
 "More Remove cheek!"
 "The Lower Fourth want a licking all round!"
 "Yes, rather!"
 Such were some of the remarks passed by a little crowd of Fifth and Sixth-Formers gathered, after tea, before the notice-board in the hall.

There was a new paper pinned up there, and it was in the handwriting of Harry Wharton, the head boy of the Remove, and president of the Junior Dramatic Society.

The seniors grinned or frowned as they read it, according to the way they looked at the matter.

Wingate, the Greyfriars captain, laughed, and so did Courtney, and they walked away still laughing. Loder and Carne scowled. Blundell and Bland, of the Fifth, looked extremely indignant.

"The cheek!" said Blundell.

"The nerve!" said Bland.

Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Upper Fourth, were standing at the back of the crowd, greatly interested, and trying to get a look at the notice. But the crowd of seniors was too thick at present, and the Fourth-Formers had to wait.

The seniors read the notice, and their remarks were more emphatic than complimentary to Harry Wharton and his Junior Dramatic Society. The notice ran as follows:

"NOTICE!"

"To the juniors, seniors, and masters of Greyfriars.

"This evening, to celebrate the eve of breaking-up for the Easter holidays, a performance will be given by the Junior Dramatic Society.

"The performance will take place punctually at eight o'clock in the Remove Form-room, and all are invited.

"The play given will be 'Hamlet,' and the cast will be as follows:

Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark	H. Wharton.
Laertes	F. Nugent.
Horatio	R. Cherry.
The Ghost	P. Hazeldene.
The King	M. Linley.
Polonius	D. Morgan.
The Queen	Omitted.
Ophelia	Omitted.
Courtiers, Soldiers, Gravediggers, &c.....	The Remove.

"Owing to the shortness of the time, it is impossible for lady members of the Dramatic Society to be present, and the parts will, therefore, be omitted, with regret.

"Everybody is welcome, and the Sixth are expected to honour the occasion with their presence if they expect the Remove to turn up for the Greek play at the end of next term.

"Signed, H. WHARTON, Pres. D.S."

"Of all the nerve!" said Loder.

"The cheek!"

"The young sweeps!"

"The Sixth are expected to turn up, are they?" said Carne.

"I've a jolly good mind to turn up and bust the show, for their impudence."

"That's a jolly good idea," said Blundell, of the Fifth.

"We'll back you up."

"What-ho!" said Bland.

The seniors moved on, indignantly discussing the cheek of this latest wheeze of the Remove, the Sixth-Formers seeming to feel especially keenly the remark about the Greek play.

Then the Fourth-Formers had a chance of reading the notice.

They were quite as loud in their condemnation as the seniors—indeed, more so, because Temple, Dabney & Co. had a feeling of rivalry towards the Lower Fourth, and they felt that Harry Wharton had outgeneralled them.

"The cheek of it," said Temple.

"Oh, rather," said Dabney.

"Seems to me we're a bit in the shade this time," remarked Fry. "Why couldn't we think of giving a play or something at the end of the term?"

"Oh, I wouldn't," said Temple loftily.

"Rats!"

"Eh!"

"Rats!" repeated Fry coolly. "You would—if you'd thought of it, but you didn't. Wharton is ahead of us again, as he generally is—that's because we've got such a jolly good leader."

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NEXT WEEK: "THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

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ONE
PENNY.

"Look here, Fry——"

"No good jawing," said Scott of the Fourth. "The question is, are we going to allow the Remove to swank about with their rotten dramatic entertainments like this."

And like a chorus came the answer of Temple, Dabney & Co.

"No."

"Then what's to be done?"

Temple grinned.

"We're all invited," he said. "We'll go. We'll take rattles and mouth-organs, and things of that sort, and supply the music for the occasion."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Incidental music rounds off a dramatic entertainment," grinned Temple. "We'll supply the incidental music."

"Oh, rather."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Upper Fourth fellows discussed the idea, and the more they discussed it, the better they liked it, and they were soon busy making their preparations. There was a great deal of packing done that evening; but the Junior Dramatic Society found time for a hurried rehearsal of "Hamlet," and at eight o'clock they were all ready in the Form-room.

Temple, Dabney & Co. were ready too.

On the last night of the term, a considerable amount of license was allowed, and, besides that, Temple knew that the Remove wheeze had got the backs of the seniors up. The Sixth didn't like the allusion to the Greek play, and they felt that the whole affair was a sort of disrespectful imitation of their own doings at the end of the midsummer term. As for the Fifth, they were averse to the Remove bringing themselves into public notice at all. Whatever the Upper Fourth did that evening, they were not likely to be interfered with unless they carried it very much too far.

Temple, Dabney and Fry came up to the Form-room together, with a crowd of their Form-fellows, ten minutes early. They meant to have good places, whence they could boo and rattle and hoot to advantage. Billy Bunter met them at the door. The fat junior was blinking discontentedly.

"Hallo, aren't you in the cast, Bunter?" asked Temple, with great apparent astonishment.

"No. I'm left out."

"Why?" asked Fry solemnly.

"Jealousy," explained Bunter. "There's an awful lot of personal and petty jealousy goes on in my study. They want to keep me in the shade, you know. They know that if once I showed what I could do, they wouldn't loom much in the public eye again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. I offered to take the part of Hamlet, and Wharton was simply rude about it."

"Rotten."

"I said I would take the part of Laertes if he liked, and Nugent said he would punch my head if I mentioned it again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The cast's made up, and I'm out of it," said Bunter. "Of course, I wouldn't act if they asked me now."

"Of course not. By the way," said Temple seriously, "it seems that one fellow is taking two parts at once."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh?"

"Look at the programme," said Temple, pointing to one that was pinned on the Form-room door for the general benefit of the public. "The Queen—omitted; Ophelia—omitted."

"Omitted, whoever he is, is taking both parts, I suppose," said Fry solemnly.

"Oh, that means that the parts are left out," explained Billy Bunter. "Omitted means left out. Oh, you rotters, you're rotting, are you?" he broke off, as the Upper Fourth-Formers burst into a roar. "Go and eat coke."

And Bunter marched into the Form-room.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Playing "Hamlet."

HARRY WHARTON looked out from behind the "scenes." The curtain was down, but there was a gap where it did not meet in the middle, and he could see into the auditorium. The end of the Form-room had been curtained off, many curtains having been pinned together to make one large enough, and slung on a cord across the room. Two Removites were in charge of the curtains, with orders to draw them aside—it was impossible to raise them—at a given signal—on pain of death if they blundered.

The scene on the stage represented that of the opening of "Hamlet"—the ramparts of the Castle where the Ghost appears.

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Two Removites were already doing sentry-go in sentinel costume. The costumes of the Junior Dramatic Society were really good, and in a case like this the juniors eked out their own supply by borrowing from the costumier's in Friardale.

Harry Wharton was in Hamlet's garb, and his face was very well made up as that of the sad and doubting Prince of Denmark. Nugent was ready as Laertes, and Bob Cherry as Horatio. Hazeldene, behind the scenes, was rigging up a sheet to serve as a ghost with himself inside it.

Bob Cherry viewed his proceedings with a grin, and Morgan, who was acting Polonius, looked on in grim disapproval.

"It won't do," said Morgan.

"What's that?" said Hazeldene.

"It won't do."

"What won't do?"

"The ghost has to be clad in complete steel. Even an amateur audience couldn't take that blessed sheet for a suit of armour."

"Oh, rats," said Hazeldene, "we haven't any armour except the breastplates on the blessed sentries."

"I don't care. The ghost ought to be in armour."

"Well, he jolly went can't be, and that settles it."

"The sheet's all right," grinned Bob Cherry. "There are more ghosts in sheets than in armour, and very likely Shakespeare wrote the armour business because they had some medieval props on hand, you know."

"Ass!" said Nugent.

"Anyway, it will have to do," said Hazeldene. "I think it looks convincing myself."

"But the lines," said Morgan.

"Oh, they can be altered."

"I don't approve of gagging in Shakespeare."

"Can't be helped."

"It's rot," said Morgan obstinately, "I tell you—"

"Oh, cheese it."

"Look you—"

"Rats!"

Harry Wharton turned round.

"Stop that row," he said. "The room's nearly full. You fellows ready with the curtain?"

"Yes," said Russell and Lacy, a little dubiously, however.

"They're all coming in," said Harry, with a look of satisfaction, as he glanced out into the room again. "There are at least a dozen of the Sixth. Wingate isn't there, or Courtney, but there are a dozen or more. Half the Fifth, too, and nearly all the Upper Fourth."

"The room will be crammed."

"The cramfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—who was a gravedigger for the occasion.

"All the better," said Nugent. "We'll show 'em what acting really is."

"Yes, rather."

"Ready, then."

"We're ready."

"Hurry up with that curtain," sang out Temple from the front seats. "Peep-bo! I can see you, Mr. Hamlet."

There was a roar of laughter. Wharton turned red, and popped back out of sight.

Nugent wrinkled his brows.

"Hang it, that isn't the way to begin a tragedy," he said. "They ought to take it seriously. That cackling spoils the effect."

Temple's voice could be heard from the auditorium. The chief of the Upper Fourth was evidently not inclined to take matters seriously.

"Peep-bo!" he called out again. "Where are you, Hamlet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What I want to know is, how they're going to play without Ophelia or the Queen," said Blundell, of the Fifth.

"That's what I want to know."

"Oh, that's all right," said Loder. "The trouble is, that there's not enough parts omitted. That's the real trouble."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If it were something like this—Hamlet, omitted; Laertes, omitted; Polonius, omitted; Horatio, omitted—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better get the curtain up at once," said Harry, his cheeks very red. "That sort of rot will spoil the show. I almost wish we had chosen a comedy now."

"This will be comic enough, before we get through with it," said Morgan. "With a ghost in a sheet—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Raise the curtain there!"

"We can't raise it," said Lacy. "You know that."

"I mean pull it aside, idiot!"

"Who are you calling an idiot?"

"Quick, I say, yank that curtain away!"

"Oh, all right!"

The curtain was dragged aside. Lacy managed his side very well, but Russell's caught; perhaps the pins had some-

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thing to do with it. Russell tugged and tugged, and the curtains sagged and swayed, but would not come to him.

"I—I can't do it!" gasped Russell. "It won't come!"

The audience yelled with delight.

Their yells were almost frantic when Hamlet was seen to rush from the scenes, and help the invisible scene-shifter to drag back the curtain.

It came back at last, and the stage was revealed.

Remove fellows in the audience turned the lights low, to make the proper effect on the stage; an acetylene bicycle-lamp behind the scenes playing the part of the moon, and casting beams of more than lunar brightness across the stage.

"Go it!" called out Temple.

"Hurrah!"

"Buck up!"

The two sentinels opened the scene with some diffidence, under the circumstances. Not a word that they said was heard, but nobody cared for that. They forgot half their lines, and stammered and muttered. Then Bob Cherry entered as Horatio, and, in spite of his make-up, the audience greeted him by name.

"Here comes Cherry!"

"Good old Bobby!"

"On the ball!"

"You asses!" roared Horatio. "Shut up, and give a chap a chance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the audience, delighted with that original line.

"Don't be an ass, Bob," came a whisper from behind the scenes. "They're trying to wreck the performance. Sit tight, and go ahead!"

"Oh, all right!" granted Bob Cherry.

"Go ahead!" shouted Temple. "On the ball!"

"Kick off, there!"

"Your innings, Cherry. Get to the wicket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry, with a very red face, began to speak his lines. The scene between Horatio and the soldiers was got through in a hum and buzz of voices. Then at the words "Look, where it comes again—" a sheeted figure entered.

"The ghost!" shrieked Temple.

"Oh!" roared the Upper Fourth. "The g-g-g-ghost! Help! Rescue!"

"The ghost!"

"Help!"

The affected terror of the Upper Fourth made the rest of the audience yell. In the midst of the din someone turned up the lights, and a blaze of illumination descended upon the stage and the ghost. Hazeldene's chalked face blinked at the audience under the folded sheet.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton ran to the front of the stage.

"You rotters! Order! Fair play!"

"Go it!" shrieked Temple.

And the Fourth-Formers began to stamp on the floor. Rattles, mouth-organs and whistles were produced to add to the din; and the noise was terrific.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Wrecked.

WHARTON stood with a frowning brow, undecided how to act. Seniors as well as juniors were joining in the disturbance, and it was pretty plain that all the audience—with the exception of the Remove members—had come there with the special intention of making a row and "mucking up" the performance.

Rattle! Thud!

Stamp! Bang! Shriek!

The Fourth-Formers had fairly let themselves go now.

The characters in Hamlet gathered on the stage, and held a muttered consultation, in utter dismay.

"What on earth's to be done?" muttered Nugent. "They won't let us go on."

"No; it's a plant."

"We can't go on."

Rattle! Bang! Crash! Thump!

"Play up!" yelled Temple. "On the ball!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

"Where's Hamlet?"

"To be or not to be, that's the giddy question!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump! Crash! Bang!

"The rotters!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We'll jolly well turn 'em out, and play the play to only the Remove!"

"That's a good idea; we oughtn't to have admitted them."

Fancy Sixth Form fellows behaving like this, too!"

"Rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

Rattle, bang, crash! Bump!

"Turn them out!" shouted Elliott, of the Remove.

"That's the music!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Turn them out!"

And the Remove members of the audience rose as one man to turn the disturbers out. Down from the stage came Hamlet & Co. to help.

That was just what Temple wanted.

All the Fourth-Formers were ready for ructions, and they only wanted the shadow of an excuse for wrecking the place.

Temple jumped up as Nugent seized him.

"Rally, Upper Fourth!" he shouted. "Suck it to them!"

"Hurrah!"

"Give 'em socks!"

"Yah! Go it!"

"My hat!" gasped Loder, as a flying cushion smote him on the ear and made him reel. "It's time the Sixth got out of this."

And the seniors scrambled towards the door. But the Fifth did not go. Most of them remained and made common cause with the Upper Fourth—and the odds were against the Remove.

"Turn them out!" roared Bob Cherry.

But it was not so easy to turn out a party that outnumbered them. Instead of being turned out, the disturbers gained ground.

They drove the Remove back towards the stage, and invaded that sacred precinct, and the tussle went on among the scenes.

The result was inevitable.

The scenes went crashing to right and left, and a number of combatants being rolled up among the curtains, dragged them down with their weight.

The curtains came swooping down, enveloping the stage, and putting out the moon—in other words, the acetylene lamp which served the purpose of the lunar orb. And the smell that arose from the extinguished moon was terrific.

In the midst of the wreck the tussle went wildly on.

There was a sudden shout as the Form-room door opened.

"Cave!"

"The Head!"

But most of the combatants were too excited to hear or to heed.

The Head stood in the open doorway, looking into the room.

Blank amazement was upon his face.

"Bless my soul!" he gasped. "Most extraordinary!"

He strode forward with rustling gown.

"Boys, cease this disturbance instantly!"

"My hat! The Head!"

"Phew!"

"Oh!"

"Cease this at once, boys! You hear me?"

They heard him now, and they obeyed. Looking very red and sheepish, the combatants separated. Dr. Locke eyed them sternly.

"Boys! Blundell! Temple! Wharton! What does this mean?"

"You—you see, sir—" gasped Blundell.

"You see—"

"You see, sir—"

"I see a scene of most disgraceful riot!" said the Head severely. "What does it mean, Wharton?"

"You—you see, sir, we—we were giving a Shakespearian performance, and—"

"Indeed! Is this the way you give a Shakespearian performance?"

"You see, sir—"

"The audience didn't like the acting, sir," said Temple, who was the first to recover his coolness. "We thought we were within our rights to testify our disapproval of bad acting, sir."

"You ass!" exclaimed Bob Cherry wrathfully. "What do you know about acting?"

"Silence, Cherry—"

"Yes, sir, but that duffer—"

"Silence! Is it your custom, Temple, to disapprove of acting in this mann—by wrecking the place?"

"I—I think we were a little excited, sir."

"I think you must have been," said the Head grimly. "If it were not the last day of term, I should cane every boy connected with this disturbance!"

"Oh, sir!"

"As it is, you will clear up this confusion, and then go to bed at once!"

"Oh, sir!"

"And if there is any further disturbance, you will hear from me. I shall keep an eye on this Form-room till you are gone to bed."

"To—to bed, sir!" gasped Temple. "It's—it's not half-past eight yet, sir!"

"It is your own fault!"

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ONE
PENNY.

"But, sir—"

"Not a word more, Temple."

And the Head marched majestically from the room. The juniors looked at one another in dismay. To be sent to bed like naughty children was not gratifying. And they were to lose the rest of the evening, too. Temple, Dabney & Co. began to wish that they had testified their disapproval in a somewhat less boisterous manner.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.

Temple broke into a chuckle.

"Never mind; it was funny!" he exclaimed.

"We've got to go to bed," growled Fry.

"But we've got out of hearing the rest of the play."

Fry brightened up.

"By George, so we have! I'd forgotten that."

The Removites did not speak. Their feelings were too deep for words. But the members of the Junior Dramatic Society, as they set about collecting up the overturned scenes and props, vowed inwardly that before the last night of the term was over, Temple, Dabney & Co. should repent them of the mischief they had done.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Lights Out!

"BED!"

"It's rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific."

"Why, it's hardly half-past eight yet!"

"Can't be helped," said Wingate. "You should have thought of that before you kicked up such a dickens of a row. The Head's sent me to see you off to your dormitories—and sharp's the word."

"It was all the fault of that ass Temple!"

"It was all the fault of that duffer Wharton!"

Wingate laughed.

"I don't care whose fault it was, or wasn't! Off to bed!"

And the juniors obeyed. There was nothing else to be done. And the captain of Greyfriars was not a fellow to be argued with.

They crowded upstairs at the unaccustomed hour, and went into their dormitories. Courtney, of the Sixth, went to put the lights out for the Upper Fourth, and Wingate paid that attention to the Remove.

"I shall be back in three minutes," he remarked significantly. "I should recommend you youngsters to be in bed then."

Wingate did not add that there would be liberal spanks for those who were not in bed—that was understood. Most of the juniors began to undress. Harry Wharton & Co. kicked their boots off, but made no further movement to undress.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I say you know, aren't you going to bed?" asked the fat junior, who was "peeling" at express speed. "You'll be licked, you know."

"Blessed if I'm going to bed so early, and all on account of a rotten play!" said Bulstrode.

"You'll be licked—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"We've got to turn in," said Wharton. "No need to go to sleep, though, even if we could. We can get up after lights out, and stay up to the usual time, if we don't make too much row. The Head wouldn't mind, if he knew—on the last night of the term."

"Something in that."

"I'm jolly well going to, anyway! We can turn in with our clothes on for Wingate."

"Good egg!"

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter, as he turned in half dressed, "I don't want to say I told you so, but I must say that this wouldn't have happened if you had played me as Hamlet. You couldn't expect the Upper Fourth to stand a cast with the best actor left out—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I attribute the whole trouble to personal jealousy," said Bunter, blinking from his bed. "I should say—Yow!"

Bunter did not really intend to say "Yow!" but he did it because a pillow whirled through the air, and squashed him flat on his bed.

"Oh! Ow! Beast!"

"Go to sleep!"

The door of the Remove dormitory reopened. There was a wild scurry of the juniors who were still out of bed to get in. Wingate looked into the room grinely.

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By FRANK RICHARDS

"In bed?"

"Yes, Wingate!" came in obedient chorus.

"Good-night!"

"Good-night, Wingate!"

The captain of Greyfriars turned out the gas, and retired, shutting the door after him. The next moment three-quarters of the Remove were sitting up in bed, and kicking the clothes off.

"I say, you fellows, I don't think I shall get up," said Bunter. "I suppose you're not thinking of standing a dormitory feed, or anything of that sort?"

"No, porpoise!"

"Then I sha'n't get up. I've got a delicate constitution, and sleep is almost as necessary as good nourishment to keep up my strength. I'm going to sleep."

"Who's game for leap-frog?" asked Bob Cherry, lighting a candle-end. "Or shall we have chasing over the beds—every fellow who falls on Bunter to pay a forfeit."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Good egg!" exclaimed Ogilvy heartily. "Bunter is to call out every time he's fallen upon, so that we shall know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you beasts! I—I say—"

"I'll begin!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, taking a quick run towards Bunter's bed. "Remember, Bunter, if I land on you, you're to call out. Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's gone!"

Bunter had rolled out of bed on the opposite side in a twinkling.

"Oh!" he roared. "Keep off, you—you dangerous ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter squirmed on the floor in the tangled bedclothes. He had rolled out of bed in a great hurry, in the belief that Bob Cherry was about to jump on him. As a matter of fact, of course, Bob had really intended nothing of the kind.

"Let me help you," said Skinner kindly, coming towards the struggling Owl of the Remove. "Lend a hand, Stott."

"Certainly!" said Stott.

The two juniors grasped the bedclothes, but instead of helping Bunter out of them, they wound them tighter round him, so that Billy Bunter's last state was worse than his first.

"Help!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'm suffocating! Pull them the other way!"

"Here goes!" said Skinner, giving the blankets a yank which brought Bunter rolling heavily along the floor.

"Ow, ow!"

"Help him, Stott."

"I'm helping him," said Stott, who was busily engaged tying knots in the twisted sheet, so that Bunter could not possibly escape from the bedclothes.

"Good!"

"Ow! Help me!" spluttered Bunter.

"We're helping you."

The sheets were knotted round Bunter and the blankets, and the fat junior rolled on the floor a helpless prisoner.

Skinner and Stott rose to their feet, and grinned.

"Blessed if I can help him out!" said Skinner.

"Same here," remarked Stott.

"You—you beasts! You've tied me up on purpose!" spluttered Bunter.

"Oh, come! Is that what you call gratitude?" demanded Skinner.

"Yah! Lemme out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Inky, come and help me!"

"The helpfulness is great," remarked the good-natured Nabob of Bhanipur, as he came towards the struggling and kicking junior. "Prayfully keep still, my worthy chum, and— Oh!"

Bunter did not keep still. He kicked out fiercely in the attempt to rid himself of the bedclothes, and his foot crashed into Inky's chest as he knelt down.

The Nabob of Bhanipur gasped, and rolled over backwards, bumping heavily on the floor. There was a roar of laughter from the Remove.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"Cave!"

There was a footstep in the passage.

In a twinkling the candle-ends were blown out, and the juniors made wild dives for their beds. All excepting Billy Bunter, of course, who could not move except to wriggle and kick.

The dormitory was plunged into darkness, and the juniors had got into their beds, when the door swung open.

Someone looked in. Who it was the juniors could not see in the gloom. But as soon as the new-comer spoke they recognised the voice. It was that of Mr. Quelch, their Form-master.

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"What is this noise here?"

Dead silence!

Even Billy Bunter had ceased to wriggle and gasp in his terror of being discovered by the master of the Remove.

Mr. Quelch listened for a moment or two. He knew his Form too well to be deceived by the silence. With a grim smile he advanced into the room, taking a match-box from his pocket to light the gas. In the darkness he walked straight upon Billy Bunter.

Bunter gave a gasp, and squirmed as the Form-master's foot trod upon his fat leg, and Mr. Quelch uttered a startled exclamation.

"Bless my soul, what is that?"

"Ow!"

"What—what is it?"

"Yow!"

Scratch went a match, and a light flared out. Mr. Quelch deliberately lighted the gas, and then looked at the fat figure wriggling on the floor. At the sight of Billy Bunter wriggling in the twisted bedclothes, he gave a jump.

"Bunter, what do you mean by this?"

"Do you think I'm doing it for fun?" bawled the fat junior, quite exasperated. "I've had a rotten trick played on me!"

"That is not the way to address your Form-master, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, sternly.

"Well, sir, I—I've been rottenly treated, sir," said Bunter. Look here—"

"Dear me, you are fastened up in the bedclothes. I suppose this is a joke—what you would call a jape?"

"I don't see any blessed joke in it, sir! Skinner—"

"Well, Bunter—"

"And Stott—"

"You need not tell me anything, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, pretending not to hear. "On the last night of the term I shall not take any notice of this."

"Yes, sir; but—"

"That will do!"

Mr. Quelch stooped and untied the knots. Bunter mumbled, and staggered up.

"Now get into bed, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch. "Good-night, boys! You must not make any more noise in this dormitory."

"Yes, sir! Good-night, sir!"

And Mr. Quelch turned out the light and retired.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Pillow Fight.

"CAD!"

"Sneak!"

"Worm!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton angrily. "You're not fit to be spoken to! If Mr. Quelch would have listened to you, you would have given Skinner and Stott away."

"The measly worm!" said Skinner. "Quelch is a decent sort. He can allow a jape on the last night of the term. But Bunter—"

"Mean rotter!" said Stott. "Let's rag him!"

"Good egg!"

"Oh, I say, you fellows—"

"Worm!"

"But—but I didn't mean to sneak!" said Bunter in alarm. "It—it just slipped out, you know. And Mr. Quelch didn't take it up, so it doesn't matter."

"You fat Judas!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"If it wasn't the last night of the term," said Harry, "we'd rag you baldheaded! As it is, go to sleep!"

"Yes; but I say—"

"Another word, and we'll have you out of bed and frog's-march you up and down the dorm.," exclaimed Wharton.

And Bunter did not utter the other word. He snorted, and turned over to go to sleep.

"Mr. Quelch says we're not to make any more noise in this dorm.," said Bob Cherry. "We must do as he says, especially as he's been so decent. But he didn't mention any other dorm."

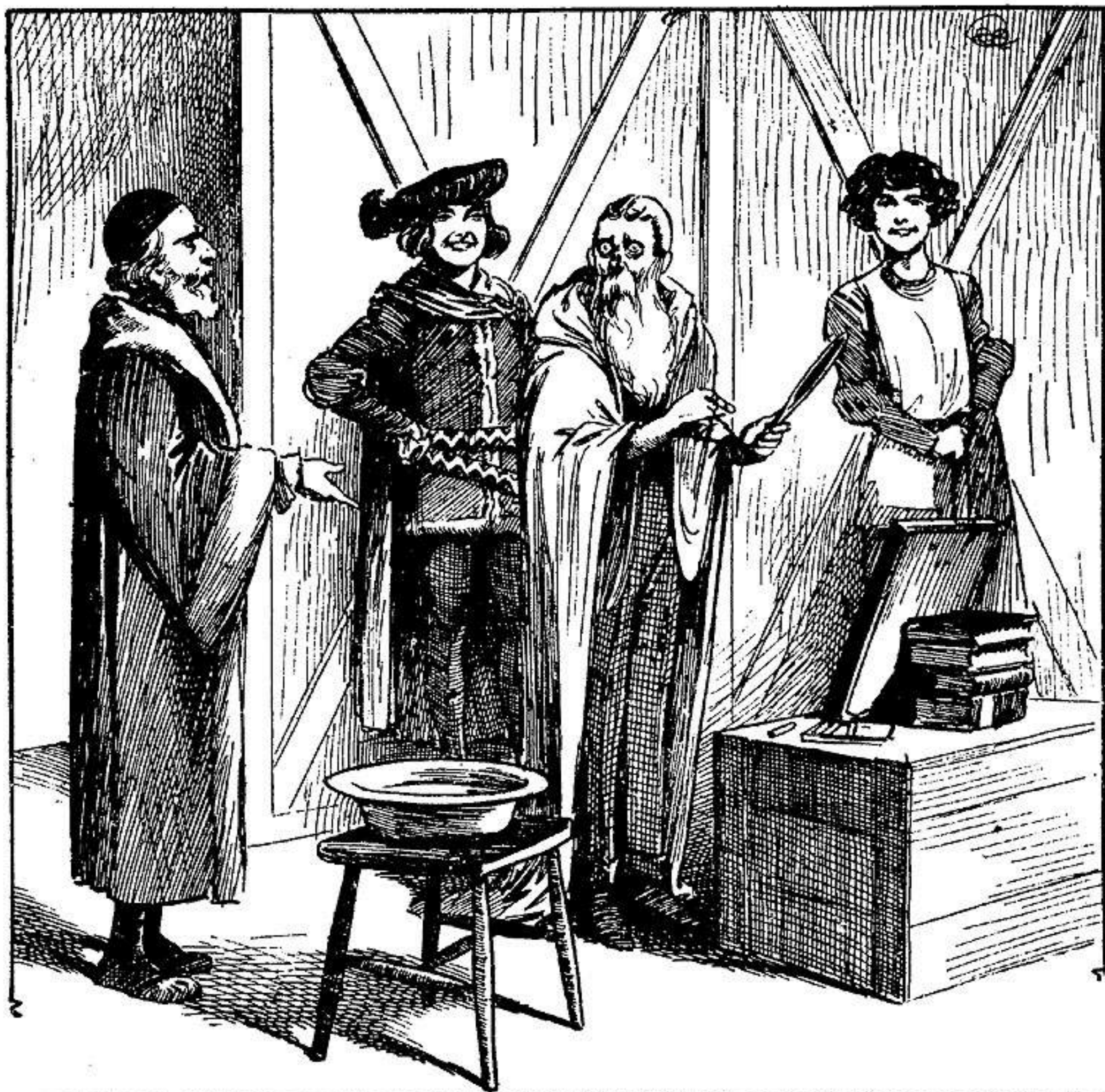
"What are you driving at, Cherry?"

"I was thinking of the Upper Fourth. They're the cause of our being sent to bed early; and, of course, we can't go to sleep at this hour. What do you say to paying the Upper Fourth a visit?"

"Good business!"

"Hurrah!"

"Jolly good idea!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, turning out of bed. "It will fill up the time beautifully, and put Temple, Dabney & Co. up to a wrinkle about wrecking a performance of the Junior Dramatic Society. Come on."



Hazeldene, behind the scenes, was making himself up as a ghost. Bob Cherry looked on with a grin, and Morgan, who was acting Polonius, looked on with grim disapproval. "It won't do," said Morgan.

The Remove were soon ready for the raid. Nearly the whole of the Form took part. They seized pillows and bolsters, and stuffed socks for weapons, and followed Harry Wharton into the passage.

There was a dim glimmer of light in the dormitory passage, from a burner turned half on. Wharton stepped along to it quietly, and turned it out. The passage was plunged into darkness at once.

"Now come on," he muttered.

"The comcomfulness is terrific."

Quiet as mice, or almost so, the Remove stole away towards the Upper Fourth dormitory. There was a light glimmering under the door of the Upper Fourth room. Wharton laughed softly.

"They're up, too," he muttered.

"Looks like it!"

"Listen!"

A voice could be heard from within the dormitory. It was the voice of Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth.

"Get your pillows. Pillows are all right. And mind, you're to give the Remove just the biggest licking they've ever had in their little lives."

"Oh, rather!"

"We shall take them by surprise, and they'll simply be

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knocked into a cocked hat. Mind, they're to have a licking they'll remember all through the vac."

"What-ho!"

Harry Wharton chuckled.

"Do you hear that?" he muttered.

"I didn't catch it," said Hazeldene, from behind.

"Temple, Dabney & Co. are just going to raid us."

"Wait till they open the door to come out," said Bob Cherry, in a whisper. "Then we'll rush in."

"Good egg!"

The Remove, with suppressed chuckles, waited in the dark passage. A couple of minutes later the door of the Upper Fourth dormitory swung open.

Temple, Dabney & Co., half dressed, armed with pillows, came marching out.

There was a general gasp as they marched right into the waiting Remove.

"Go for them!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Give 'em socks!"

"Hurrah!"

The Remove made a rush, and the astounded Fourth-Formers went whirling back into the dormitory, and the Lower Fourth followed them fast, swiping right and left with pillows and bolsters.

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Wharton kicked the door shut.

"Go for them!" he shouted.

"Hurray!"

"Play up, Remove!"

And the Remove played up manfully. The Upper Fourth, taken wholly by surprise, and wholly disconcerted by the sudden and vigorous attack, gave way in all directions.

Swipe, swipe, went the pillows, and the Upper Fourth fellows sprawled in all directions. The odds were on the side of the Remove, too. They were a more numerous form, and nearly all were there. They scoured up and down the dormitory, smiting hip and thigh.

"Down with 'em!"

"Give 'em socks!"

"Hurray!"

"M-m-m-my hat!" gasped Temple. "M-m-my only hat! Rally up there!"

"Oh, rather!" stammered Dabney, sitting up on the floor, where a swipe of Bob Cherry's bolster had laid him. "Oh, rather!"

"Go it, Remove!"

"Hurray!"

Temple rushed to his washstand. He seized the jug of water, and swept it round upon the Removites. The water came out in a long stream, and there were yells from half a dozen juniors as they were soaked to the skin by it.

"Oh, oh! Groo!"

Then Bob Cherry's bolster swept Temple's legs away from under him, and he sat down, and the jug went to the floor with a crash, and was smashed to pieces.

But the Upper Fourth were recovering themselves a little now, and putting up a good fight. In some places the excited juniors had abandoned pillows, and were resorting to fists, and several struggling couples rolled on the floor.

Still the Remove were getting the best of it. The Upper Fourth could only desperately resist, and whenever they rallied, a charge of the Removites broke them up and scattered them again.

The din was growing terrific.

All recollection of masters and prefects had faded from the minds of the juniors, as they rushed and ran and swiped and smote.

The noise they were making rang through the House, and reached even as far as the Head's study; but they gave it not a thought.

It was suddenly called to their minds when the door was thrown open, and Wingate and Courtney, and two or three other prefects, with red and angry faces, rushed in.

They had canes in their hands, and they did not stop to speak a word. They waded into the crowd, lashing right and left at backs and legs.

The din had been great before, but it was fearful now. Wild yells arose, and the juniors dashed frantically to and fro to escape the lashing canes.

"Here, buzz off!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Ow! Yah! Let's get out of this!"

The Remove made a break for the door.

Two or three of the prefects were upset in the rush, and left gasping on the floor. The Removites swarmed out into the passage, and ran.

Wingate gasped for breath.

"Now get to bed, you young sweeps!" he exclaimed, addressing Temple, Dabney & Co. And the Upper Fourth, sore and sad, turned in.

Wingate looked into the Remove dormitory a few minutes later. His face was very grim.

"If there's any more row to-night, there will be real trouble," he said, and went out and shut the door without waiting for a reply.

Bob Cherry chuckled softly.

"What ripping fun! Anybody hurt?"

"Ow!" groaned Nugent. "I'm smarting all over!"

"So am I!"

"Same here!"

"Oh!"

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Never mind, we've celebrated the last night of the term after all," said Bob Cherry.

But to judge by the groans and gasps from the Remove, they did mind!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Not Invited.

THE next morning many of the Remove were still smarting, and, in fact, Billy Bunter was the only one who was quite undamaged. The fat junior had slept through the pillow fight. Bunter had an almost infinite capacity for sleep. He was always first man in and last man out, as Bob Cherry put it. He was the last up that morning, and as he stood at his washstand, going through

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his apology for a wash, there was a thoughtful frown upon his fat face. The question of where he should spend the vacation was not settled yet, and the time was getting close.

Bunter cast many glances towards the chums of the Remove, but they did not seem to notice it. They were not inclined to help him out.

The fat junior had imposed so much and so often upon the kindness of his study-mates, that he had reached the end of their patience, and they simply did not want him to come and be a general trouble during their holiday. They had not told him where they were going, and Bunter had therefore been unable to fish for an invitation to the same place. But Bunter was not easily defeated in a matter of this kind. He could be very determined when it was a question of securing his own comfort.

"I say, you fellows," he remarked, as they left the dormitory, "have you finally settled about the vac.?"

"Long ago," said Harry curtly.

"I think you mentioned yesterday that you wanted me to come?"

"Something amiss with your thinker, then—we didn't."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

Harry walked on. Bunter blinked after him, and fastened himself upon Bob Cherry, trotting with his fat little legs to keep pace with Bob's long stride down the passage.

"I say, Cherry, did you say it was Ogilvy's place you were going to?"

"No, I didn't."

"Is it Russell's?"

"Find out."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Bob Cherry quickened his pace and escaped. Bunter turned upon Nugent, but Nugent hurried after Bob. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh hurried on, too, as he saw Bunter blink at him, but the fat junior caught his sleeve.

"Inky, old man, I think it's Lacy's place you're going to, isn't it?"

"The findfulness out would be the good dodge, my worthy chum."

And the nabob jerked himself free and fled. Billy Bunter snorted. He went downstairs, and blinked round in search of Mark Linley, whom he knew to be a member of the same party for the vacation.

Linley had been out early, and he was coming in for breakfast, looking very fresh and ruddy. Billy Bunter intercepted him. The sturdy Lancashire lad looked down upon the fat junior good-humouredly.

"I say, Linley, I've got something rather important to say," said Billy Bunter mysteriously. "It's about the vac, you know."

"Oh!" said Mark.

"You're going with Wharton's lot?"

"Yes."

"Good. I'm coming, too. I've really got an invitation," explained Bunter—"a—a sort of standing invitation, you know."

Linley looked at him in surprise.

"What, has—?" he began, and then he broke off suddenly. It struck him all at once that the fat junior was trying to trick him into betraying the name of the junior who had issued the invitations. He burst into a laugh.

"Yes," said Bunter eagerly, "you were going to say—"

"Nothing," said Mark, turning away.

"Yes, yes, you were—you were saying—"

"Rats!"

Mark Linley walked away, leaving the fat junior disconsolate. Hazeldene gave Bunter a clap on the shoulder, and he swung round with a start.

"Ow! Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, is it you, Hazeldene?" Bunter blinked at him. "I say, Hazeldene, I suppose you know that the fellows in my study are going off somewhere for the vac?"

"Yes," said Hazeldene, laughing.

"Do you know where they're going?" asked Bunter eagerly. Hazeldene laughed again.

"Yes, I do."

"Where?"

"Haven't they told you?"

"No," said Bunter, with a snort. "They haven't! They're keeping it dark, for some reason. They seem to think that I shall get an invitation to the same place, and then, of course, they'll be put into the shade, if there's any dancing or evening parties, or anything of that sort, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do tell me who it is that's asked them, Vaseline, old chap. Look here, I'll try to get you an invitation to the same place," said Bunter persuasively.

Hazeldene yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" growled Billy Bunter peevishly. "Where's the joke?"

Hazeldene did not reply. He walked away, still laughing. Billy Bunter blinked in a perplexed way. He did not see where the joke came in.

The chums of No. 1 Study were packing a bag in that famous apartment, when the fat junior strolled in after breakfast. Bunter blinked at them. They took no notice of his entering, and were apparently unconscious of his presence.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Pull that strap a bit tighter," said Bob Cherry.

"Right you are."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter! Do buzz off, Bunter!"

"I'll buzz off when you do," said Bunter. "As I'm going to the same place, I may as well pack some of my things in that bag."

"You're going to the same place?"

"Yes. I've just got an invitation, and I've accepted it."

"My hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Do you mean to say that Hazeldene has been duffer enough——"

"Hazeldene!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Shut up, Bob, you ass!"

But it was too late. Billy Bunter had made the long-desired discovery.

"Hazeldene!" he exclaimed. "Hazeldene! The—the rotter!"

"Didn't you know?" roared Bob Cherry indignantly.

"Why, you said——"

"I—I was speaking figuratively——"

"Why, you blessed Ananias——"

The wrathful Bob made a rush at Bunter, who skipped out of the study just in time. He did not stop in the passage. He bolted down the stairs, and blinked round below for Hazeldene.

Hazeldene was not to be seen. Bunter blinked to and fro, and inquired right and left, but there was no sign of Hazeldene.

"Hazeldene! Have you seen Hazeldene?"

"Faith, and he's gone!" said Micky Desmond, affording some information at last: though not of a very welcome kind.

"Gone!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Faith, and he has intirely! Did ye want him?"

"Of course I did. But he can't be gone! His box is in the hall!"

"He's gone over to Cliff House to see his sister," explained Micky. "They don't break up for a couple of days yet, you see. He's going to join us at the station again. Wharton's taking charge of his box."

"Oh!"

Bunter drifted into the house again. The fellows were all getting ready to leave; there was a brake waiting in the Close now, and a crowd of fellows were going by it. Some were going by later trains; but more than half the Remove were to go in that brake. And Billy Bunter meant to go in it, as Harry Wharton & Co. were going. But how was he to manage about the necessary invitation?

"Put my box in the brake along with Wharton's, Gosling," said Bunter, to the school porter. "You won't forget?"

Gosling grunted.

"I should like to give you a shilling, Gosling——"

The school porter brightened up.

"Thank you kindly, Master Bunter."

"But I've been disappointed about a postal-order, and I can't. But——"

Gosling grunted again.

"But Wharton is going to give you a decent tip, for both of us, and I shall settle it with Wharton later," explained Bunter. "Don't forget my box!"

Harry Wharton & Co. came downstairs. They were heavily laden with bags and travelling-rugs and mufflers. They came out to the brake, and Billy Bunter clambered into it with them. They looked at him curiously.

"You're going by the same train, Bunter?"

"Yes, certainly!"

"Oh!"

And the brake rolled off.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Off for the Holidays.

"HURRAY!"

"Off at last!"

"Hip-pip!"

The Remove brake rolled down the lane towards the village, and from it proceeded a noise that showed how extremely exuberant the Remove were at breaking up for the holidays. Every fellow had made up his mind to be jolly, and jolly they all were.

Some of them sang, and some played tin-whistles. Some hurled catcalls and chirping remarks at passers-by, and some hurled nuts or oranges. Some of them simply cheered, again and again, exuberantly.

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NEXT
WEEK:

"THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

"Well, we're off!" said Bob Cherry.

"Nothing new for you!" remarked Skinner.

"Eh?"

"You've always been a little bit off, you know! I——"

"Oh, don't be funny, on breaking-up day," implored Bob Cherry. "Don't cast a shadow over the vac. What a ripping day!"

"Glorious!"

"Plenty of time for the train, too," said Bob, looking at his big silver watch. "Time for Hazeldene to get there and join us. Hallo, hallo, hallo, here are the Boy Scouts!"

A patrol of Boy Scouts in big hats came tramping along the lane. They were the Boy Scouts of Pegg, often on terms of warfare with the Greyfriars fellows. The brakelod of juniors hurled a vociferous greeting at them; and Trumper, the patrol leader, stopped and waved his hand.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" sang out Bob Cherry. "We're off!"

"Hope you'll have a jolly time," said Trumper. "And when you come back we'll give you some more lickings."

And the brake rolled on, the Boy Scouts looking after it, and laughing. The station came in sight, and the brake rolled up and halted.

"Train's in!" said Bob Cherry.

The juniors poured into the station. Harry Wharton & Co. secured a carriage for themselves; and, of course, Billy Bunter planted himself in it. Frank Nugent shook him by the shoulder.

"This isn't your train!" he exclaimed.

"Eh?"

Bunter blinked at him, apparently not understanding.

"This is the London train!"

"Well, what about it?" grunted Bunter peevishly. "I can go by the London train, if I like, can't I?"

"Ass! We've got to get to London to change for the Great Western; but you haven't. You're in the wrong train!" bawled Nugent.

"I'm going to change at London."

"Nonsense! You——"

"I think I ought to know best where I'm going to change," said Bunter.

"Oh, have your own way," said Nugent resignedly. "You're in the wrong train, that's all. It's your own look-out."

"There's Hazeldene!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

He leaned out of the carriage door and waved to Hazeldene, who came running up.

"Luggage all right?" he asked.

"Yes. We've seen to that."

"Good!"

Hazeldene climbed into the carriage. There were still crowds of Greyfriars fellows on the platform, waiting for the next train, which was leaving five minutes after the present one. On breaking up day at Greyfriars, extra "locals" were run on the local railway.

Nugent minor came up to the carriage to bid his brother good-bye. Frank shook hands with him.

"Hope you'll have a good time," said Dick Nugent. "Don't get into mischief."

Which advice, from a Second Form fag to a Removite, was received with a good-humoured grin.

Wun Lung, the little Chinese, also came to say good-bye.

"You havee goodee times," he remarked. "Me hopee, what you tinkee?"

"Thanks, Wun Lung; same to you."

"The samefulness is terrific."

"I say, Wun Lung," exclaimed Billy Bunter, catching the Chinese junior by the sleeve as he stood at the carriage door.

"I say, my postal-order didn't come before I left. I suppose it will be delivered after I'm gone. It's very annoying, because I'm rather short of money. Would you mind handing me a sovereign now, and having the postal-order when we get back next term?"

"No, savvy."

"You see, it's certain to be there, and——"

"No, savvy."

"If you hand me a sovereign now——"

"No savvy. Goodee-by-by!"

And Wun Lung walked away. Bunter sank back in his seat, and blinked at the grinning Removites.

"Blessed if they ought to allow a stupid heathen like that in a decent school!" exclaimed Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

ANSWERS

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! We're starting!"

The train gave a jerk. There was a slamming of doors along the train. Frank Nugent shook Billy Bunter by the shoulder once more.

"You're in the wrong train, I tell you, Bunter. There's still time to jump out."

"Rot! My box is in the guard's van."

"Well, I tell you—"

"It's all right."

The door slammed, and the engine shrieked, and the train moved out of the station. Nugent shrugged his shoulders and sat down.

"It's too late now!" he remarked.

Bunter did not seem to mind. He made himself comfortable in his corner seat, and calmly appropriated a rug belonging to Bob Cherry, to cover over his legs.

"I say, you fellows," he remarked presently, "did any of you think to order a lunch-basket to be put in the train for us?"

"No."

"Then what are we going to do?"

"Go without, I expect."

"I shall be awfully hungry."

"Go hon!"

"Luckily, I thought of bringing some sandwiches," said Bunter, groping in his pocket. "Yes, here they are. I had better have a snack now, I think. Mrs. Kebble makes jolly good sandwiches."

"Did Mrs. Kebble make those for you?" asked Nugent curiously; for the fat junior was far from being a favourite with the Greyfriars housekeeper.

"Well, she made them," said Bunter. "I suppose they were for me. I told her I should like some, and she didn't say anything. Then I saw her put this packet down by Wingate's bag, and I supposed they were for me."

"You young ass! They were for Wingate! He has a jolly long journey to make."

"Well, I dare say they can give Wingate some more," said Billy Bunter comfortably. "It's jolly lucky I thought of bringing them. I should have been awfully hungry before I got to London. I'm sorry you fellows haven't any."

"Oh, we'll have some of them!" said Bob Cherry.

Bunter blinked uneasily.

"Well, you see, there's only enough for one. I should like to share out with you chaps awfully, but I have my constitution to think of. I'm a delicate chap, and I can only keep going by having plenty of good nourishment. You wouldn't like to have me ill on your hands in London, would you?"

"We should jolly soon shift you off."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We could send you to the Dogs' Home at Battersea," said Nugent. "Or I dare say there's a Home for Sick Porpoises somewhere."

"Oh, really—"

"Who says a chorus?" said Hazeldene.

"Jolly good idea."

And the melodious strains of "Honey, Will You Lub Dis Coon?" rang out from the carriage windows while the train rushed on through the spring landscape. Billy Bunter didn't sing. He rather prided himself upon his voice; but he was too busy now.

He had said that he would have a snack. But when Bunter began eating it was difficult for him to leave off. He ate steadily till the last sandwich had disappeared, and then he sighed—like Alexander sighing for fresh worlds to conquer.

Then he curled himself up in his corner, with his feet upon the only foot-warmer in the carriage, and Bob Cherry's rug round his knees, and a muffler of Wharton's over his shoulders, and went to sleep—and slept soundly, in spite of the rocking of the train, and the vigorous choruses of the Removites, and did not wake again till the train stopped in a murky station, and Bob Cherry shook him by the shoulder.

Then Bunter started out of slumber, and blinked sleepily.

"Where are we?" he mumbled. "What are you waking me for? Where are we?"

"London!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Gets His Way.

"LONDON!"

Billy Bunter sat upright, and blinked round him. The juniors were crowding out of the train upon a crowded platform. There was a general crowding and jostling, and endless voices and rolling of trolleys.

Harry Wharton ran down the train to look after the baggage. It had to be changed to another platform for

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the Western train. Billy Bunter was the last out of the carriage. Bob Cherry looked up and down.

"When does the train start?" Nugent asked.

"Just an hour."

"Time for some lunch," said Nugent.

"Just what I was thinking."

"Yes, rather!" said Billy Bunter. "I'm awfully peckish, you know."

"With a dozen sandwiches inside you, and we've had nothing," said Nugent, with a sniff.

"Oh, really, I offered to share them with you, you know!"

"Shut up, Ananias! Where's the buffet?"

"This way," said Mark Linley.

Billy Bunter walked behind with Hazeldene as the party went towards the buffet. There was an ingratiating grin on his fat face.

"I say, Hazel, old chap—"

"Hallo!" said Hazeldene.

"Wharton wants to have me with him for the vac—"

"Rats!" said Hazeldene bluntly. "He doesn't!"

"I—I mean Nugent wants me—"

"More rats!"

"The fact is, Hazel, an invitation I had for the holidays has fallen through. A titled friend of mine—"

"Rubbish!"

"Oh, really—"

"Stop lying, then!" said Hazeldene unceremoniously. "What do you want? Speak plain English, and come to the point."

"Well, you see, I—I've lost my train now," stammered Bunter. "Some of the fellows might have told me I was in the wrong train, but—"

"Why, Nugent did tell you; I heard him."

"Ye-es, of course; but—but the fact is, I haven't told my people that the invitation from my titled friend has fallen through," said Bunter. "They're not expecting me home. I supposed, of course, that I should be going with Wharton. He kept it awfully dark about his spending the vac. at your place."

"It isn't my place," said Hazeldene. "It's my uncle's place, on the Devon coast."

"Well, your uncle's place, then. The fact is, Hazeldene, I shouldn't mind coming with you for the vac."

Hazeldene looked at him grimly.

"Does it matter whether I mind?" he said sarcastically.

"Oh, really, Hazel—"

"Stop calling me Hazel, you soapy rotter! Look here, if Wharton cares to bring you, you can come," said Hazeldene abruptly. "I don't care."

"Oh, all right! I'll settle it with Wharton."

Harry Wharton had consigned the baggage to the care of a porter, and he was coming to join the juniors at the buffet, when Billy Bunter intercepted him.

"Haven't you better look for your train, Bunt?" asked Wharton, glancing at him.

"Ahem! I'm coming in your train."

"What do you mean?"

"It seems that there has been a mistake," explained Bunter. "Hazeldene says that he didn't know you wanted me to come—"

"I don't want you to come."

"Oh, really, Wharton! What I mean is, Hazeldene has just been pressing me in the warmest way to come with him, if you fellows would like me to. He thinks you ought to be consulted about it, that's all."

"Bosh!"

"I suppose you're not going to be beastly about it," said Bunter indignantly. "I don't particularly want to come, but Marjorie and Clara will be there, and you know jolly well that they'd be glad to see me."

Wharton's eyes gleamed danger. He dropped his hand upon the fat junior's shoulder, with a grasp that made the Owl of the Remove wriggle.

"Now, look here, Bunter, enough of that!" said Wharton.

"Another word of that kind, and I'll ask Hazeldene as a special favour to kick you out of the party."

"I—I—I—"

"I suppose you can come if you like, if you've got round Hazeldene. But mind, you're to be on your good behaviour. If you play any of your dirty tricks, you'll get brought to order in jolly quick time. Do you understand?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Do you understand?" exclaimed Harry sharply.

"Ye-es."

"That's enough, then."

Wharton strode away to the buffet. Billy Bunter followed with an injured expression on his face. He joined the juniors there, and began to order refreshments. The juniors all had good appetites, but Billy Bunter, in spite of the sandwiches, exceeded any of them. The fat junior,



"You asses!" roared Horatio. "Shut up, and give a chap a chance!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the audience, delighted with that original line.

indeed, "wired into" the refreshments as if he had eaten nothing for a couple of days.

"Better get to the other platform now," said Harry presently, with a glance at the station clock. "You fellows finished?"

"All down," said Bob Cherry. "Bunter's not out, as usual."

"Oh, really, Cherry!" said Bunter, with his mouth full. "Wait a minute for me, you chaps. I only want to finish these sausages. I say, you fellows, you'd better order that lunch-basket while you're about it."

"Rats!" said Wharton. "We'll take a packet of sandwiches, and get a feed at Exeter."

"It would be wiser—"

"Shut up, old chap, do!"

"Oh, very well!" said Bunter sulkily. "If anything happens through my not having enough to eat, it will be your fault. I don't care."

"Then if you don't care, shut up. Come on, kids."

"You haven't settled with the waitress yet, Wharton."

"Yes, we've all settled."

"What about my lot?"

Wharton looked at him. Billy Bunter had eaten twice

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as much as anybody else, but he made no motion to pay anything. The waitress was looking at him expectantly.

"Aren't you going to pay, you fat fraud?" exclaimed Nugent.

"You see, I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"

Wharton coloured angrily.

"How much, miss?" he asked.

"Four shillings and sixpence, please."

Harry paid the money, and led Billy Bunter away from the buffet with a finger and thumb on his ear. The fat junior squeaked dismally.

"So you're beginning again, Bunter!"

"Well, I suppose I had to have something to eat, and it's not my fault if the post-office delays the delivery of letters. I hope you're not going to be waxy over a trifle like four shillings and sixpence. I shall pay it, of course."

"Oh, dry up!"

"Will you have it out of the postal-order when we get back to Greyfriars," said Billy Bunter, "or shall we put it down to the old account?"

Wharton made no reply. It was quite useless to argue with Billy Bunter. The juniors made their way to the other

A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

platform, where the Western express was already on the line, though it was not due to start for some time yet.

"We'll get a carriage to ourselves, if we can," said Wharton. "Here's a first-class, empty. Collar the seats."

The carriage was supposed to seat six, and there were seven of the juniors; but they preferred a little crowding to separating. Besides, Nugent suggested that Billy Bunter could sit on the floor—a suggestion that brought a most indignant blink from the Owl of the Remove.

The bags and cloaks were put into the carriage, and then the juniors strolled up and down the platform to wait for the train to start. A man who was smoking a big, black cigar on the platform watched them curiously, and he seemed so interested in at least one of the party, that the juniors observed him at last.

"Blessed if I know what that chap's watching us for," Bob Cherry remarked. "He doesn't look like a pick-pocket."

"What chap?"

"That dark fellow yonder. He hasn't taken his eyes off us for ten minutes."

Wharton glanced towards the man. He was a dark-skinned fellow with black eyes, and had a foreign look, increased by the curling black moustaches and the big cigar. Wharton would have taken him for a Spaniard. His bold, black eyes looked at the juniors, and did not fall before Wharton's questioning gaze.

"He seems to be staring at Hazeldene more than anybody else," said Mark Linley. "Do you know him, Hazel?"

Hazel shook his head.

"Never seen him before, that I know of."

"He's coming over here," said Bob Cherry. "He's going to speak to us."

The dark-skinned stranger crossed the platform towards the group of juniors. The chums of Greyfriars stopped dead, looking at him as he came. He was quite a stranger to them; yet curiously enough each of the lads felt a feeling of hostility, as if it were an enemy that approached. Perhaps there was a gleam in the deep black eyes, a curl of the tight lips, that hinted that the stranger did not come with friendly intent.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Man From South America.

THE swarthy stranger stopped close to the group of juniors, and slightly raised his broad-brimmed hat. His glinting black eyes rested upon Hazeldene. The look in his eyes was not pleasant, but there was no question that his manner was politeness itself—polite with a certain Spanish exaggeration.

"Pray excuse me, *senorito*," he exclaimed, addressing Hazeldene. "I think that I have seen you before. I think I know your name."

He spoke in perfect English, but with a slight lisping accent. If he were a Spaniard, he had certainly had ample acquaintance with English people.

Hazeldene stared at him.

"I have never seen you before," he said bluntly.

The foreigner smiled, showing a row of white teeth under his black moustache.

"Quite possible. I have never been in this country before, *nino*."

"Then how can you know me?"

"By your likeness to my old friend."

"Oh! You know my father, perhaps?"

"Perhaps? Your father has been in South America?"

"Oh, no! Never out of England, I believe—except to Boulogne," said Hazeldene. "He has certainly never been to America."

"Ah! Perhaps my friend is your uncle, then, or some other relation," said the stranger, with an agreeable smile.

"Perhaps," said Hazeldene, with a grin; "but—excuse me—you are a stranger to me, and one doesn't take strangers on trust in London. I am not exactly from the country, you know, I'm from a school where we have our eye-teeth out."

The stranger laughed, apparently not at all offended by Hazeldene's plain speaking. The juniors all grinned; they had already made up their minds that this was a new variety of the old, old confidence-trick frequently worked off on strangers in the metropolis.

"Ah! I am not a London swindler, as you imagine," said the man, with perfect coolness, "I will prove that by telling you your name."

"You might have seen it on my trunk," said Hazeldene. "But go ahead."

"Your name is Cunliffe."

Hazeldene started.

The juniors burst into a laugh. The stranger glanced round at them with a puzzled expression.

"What! Is that not correct?" he exclaimed.

"Hardly," said Bob Cherry.

"Then I am mistaken."

"Looks like it," grinned Nugent. "You'd better look a little further for your Cunliffe. Let's get into the train, you chaps."

"But—but—" The dark-skinned man seized Hazeldene by the shoulder. "Listen to me, *nino*. If your name is not Cunliffe, you have relations of that name."

"Mind your own business," said Hazeldene. "Let go my shoulder."

"I tell you—"

"Let go, confound you!"

The man's grip tightened, and an extremely ugly look came into his dusky face. The juniors did not need telling that his story of an "old friend" was not true. There were no friendly feelings in the man's breast, that was certain.

"Listen to me—"

Hazeldene jerked himself away. Wharton grasped the man's dusky wrist, and forced him to release his hold. The foreigner glared at him savagely.

"You young puppy—"

"Nuff said. You'd better clear off!" said Wharton crisply.

The man stood biting his lips, and evidently puzzled how to act, while the juniors crowded into the train. The doors were slamming now. The dark-skinned man looked after the boys, and then went slowly down the platform. Mark Linley glanced from the window, and saw him get into the train further along.

The train started.

"Blessed if I can quite make that chap out!" said Bob Cherry, with a perplexed look. "He didn't look like a common confidence-trick man. More like a giddy desperado masquerading in civilised clothes."

Hazeldene sat silent, a slightly worried look on his face. The other fellows glanced at him, wondering that the affair should trouble him at all.

"You're not letting it bother you, surely, Hazel!" exclaimed Wharton.

"I can't help wondering about it," said Hazeldene. "It was curious that that chap should know that name."

"But he didn't know your name."

"Cunliffe is my uncle's name."

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"I suppose I forgot to mention it to you," said Hazeldene. "I suppose I took it for granted you knew. The uncle of mine we're going to stay with is named Cunliffe."

"By George!"

"He's my mother's brother, you see. The curious thing is, that he's been a sea-captain, and spent years and years in South American waters. He's only lately returned to England—not more than six months ago."

"Then perhaps this chap really knew him in South America," exclaimed Nugent.

"That's what I was thinking."

"He may be an old friend, as he said—"

"He didn't look like a friend."

"You're right there," said Harry thoughtfully. "If he wants to see your uncle, he doesn't want to do so from friendly motives, I should say. He looked too savage for that. Anyway, you were quite right to tell him nothing, and you can mention the matter to your uncle."

"Yes. He must know my uncle well," said Hazeldene musingly. "You see, he knew me by the likeness between us. I am very like my uncle—that's why he's taken to me, I dare say. He's taken a lot of notice of me since he's been home, and I spent a vac. at his place in Devon. It's a curious place—as I told you when I asked you there. I don't know whether you'll like it."

"We'll manage to dig up some fun, anyway," said Bob Cherry.

"What I mean is, it's a lonely place," said Hazeldene.

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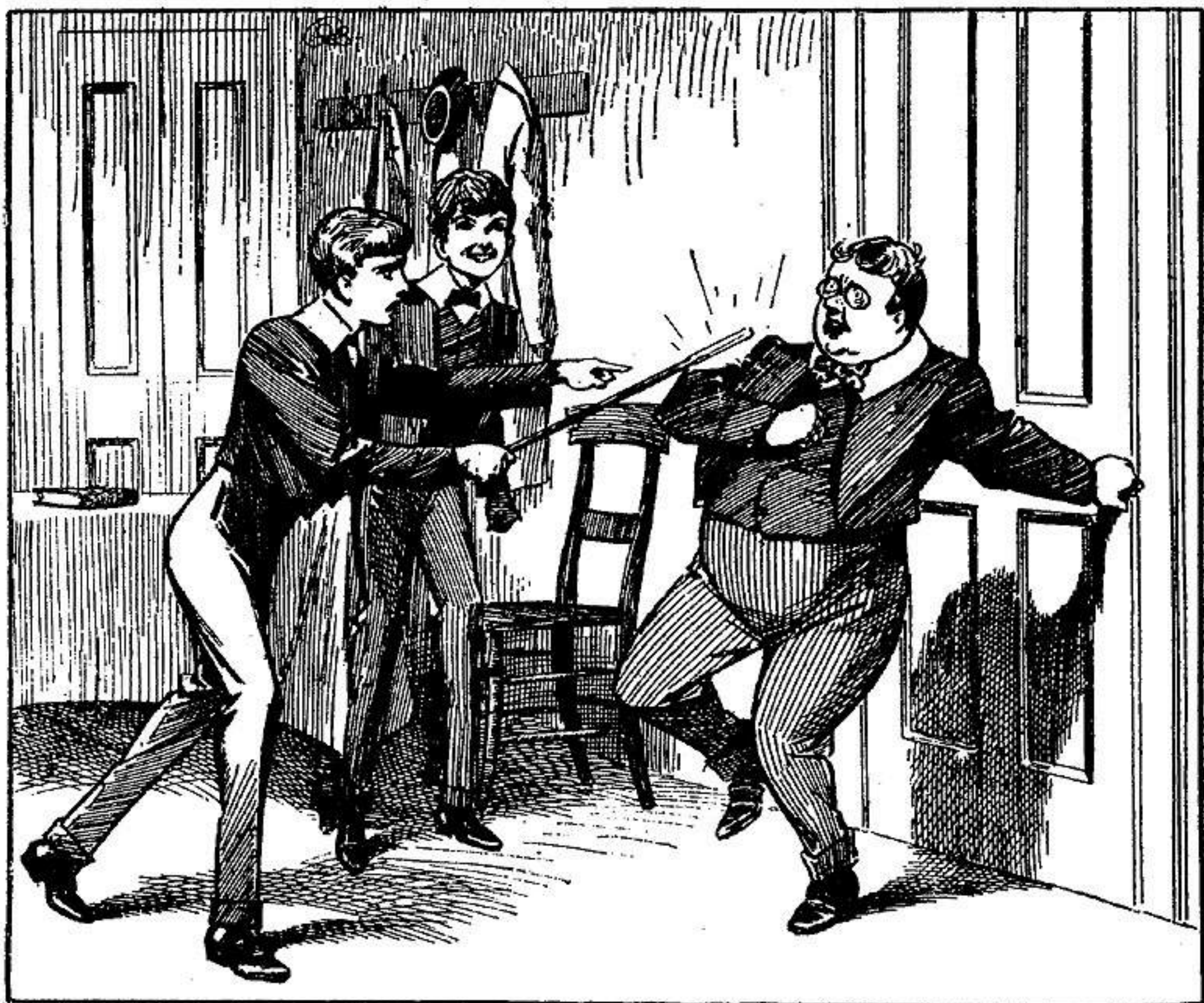
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"Are you going, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, politely, making a pretended lunge at the fat junior with the red-hot poker. "Ow! Keep off! Yah! Yaroo!" yelled Billy Bunter, backing away from the glowing tip in terror.

"It's all right for an adventurous sort of holiday—there's plenty of cliff-climbing, boating, swimming, and so on; but not much society—no parties or dances, or anything of that sort, like we had at your place, Wharton."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"My dear chap, you're describing just the holiday that will suit me," he said. "A week or two's boating and climbing and sailing on the Devon coast—I'd give all the parties and dances in the world for it."

"Then Black Rock will suit you," said Hazeldene, with a grin. "You can have all the rough-and-tumble amusements you like there; but it's a bit off the track of civilisation. My father thinks Uncle Hugh must be dotty to live in such a place—I suppose it's because he doesn't want to leave the sea, and he doesn't seem to mind solitude. He's fond of young people, though—and he jumped at the idea of my bringing some fellows down from Greyfriars for the vacation."

"Sounds like a jolly good sort," said Bob Cherry. "I like him in advance. But one thing's jolly certain, that Spanish-looking chap doesn't feel very friendly towards either you or your uncle, to judge by his looks, and I'm glad you've given him the slip."

"We haven't given him the slip, Bob," said Mark Linley quietly, "he's in this train."

"What!"

"I saw him get in."

"Great Scott!"

"He's following us," said Hazeldene.

"Oh, I don't know!" said Wharton thoughtfully. "He

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was waiting on the platform when we saw him. He was most likely waiting for this train."

"The likeness is terrific," remarked Hurree Singh; "but when we alightfully get out at Exeter, it would be a wheezy good idea to keep our honourable eyes open for the esteemed rotter."

"I say, you fellows, I've got a suggestion to make—"

"Go ahead—what is it?"

"Suppose we have the sandwiches now? I didn't really have enough to eat at the station; Wharton hurried me so, and—"

The juniors burst into a laugh. They had supposed for a moment that Bunter's suggestion was to have some bearing upon the matter they were discussing. But Bunter was thinking of a matter—to him—far more important.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at!" said the fat junior. "I'm feeling jolly peckish already, and I shall get into a low state if I don't have a snack. I—"

"You can have one sandwich—"

"Good!"

"In two hours time—"

"Oh!"

"And if you say the word 'sandwich' again, you sha'n't have any."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Dry up!"

Bunter snorted. As he could not eat, he decided to go to sleep as the best substitute for eating, and he was soon snoring in his corner, while the express rushed on westward, and the landscape flitted and fled by.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Plain English!

"EXETER!"

The Greyfriars juniors, somewhat stiff from sitting so long, alighted from the express. They did not forget to look out for the foreigner when they alighted. The express had made several stops en route, and at each of them they had looked from the window; but the dark-skinned man had not stepped out. He had evidently come as far as Exeter. There the juniors were to change trains, and if the foreigner were really following them, as Hazeldene half-suspected, he would have to do the same.

Hazeldene grasped Wharton's arm suddenly.

"Look! There he is!"

The swarthy man had stepped from the train. He had no luggage in his hand, and did not seek for any. Evidently he was travelling just as he was. Had he intended to leave London on that long journey without any personal belongings—or had he, indeed, followed the juniors on the spur of the moment.

He did not look at the juniors, however—or if so, it was imperceptibly. He strolled past, and entered into conversation with a porter near the exit from the platform. Harry Wharton & Co. had their luggage trolleyed away for the train they were to change into, and followed it. Wharton glanced back; the dark-complexioned man was coming in the same direction.

He was following them.

There could not be much doubt about it now.

Hazeldene looked very uneasy.

"I don't like this," he muttered. "What can he want? I suppose he can't mean to rob us?"

Wharton shook his head.

"Hardly."

"Then what's his little game?"

"I can't make it out, unless—" Wharton paused. "Unless he really wants to find Mr. Cunliffe, and is using us to guide him. You see, he may guess you're going to see your uncle, or he may think you are going home. In either case he could get in touch with your people by following you."

"But what could his object be?"

"He might be an old friend of Mr. Cunliffe's, as he said—"

"I don't believe it for a moment."

"Or," said Wharton gravely, "he might be an enemy."

Hazeldene looked deeply troubled.

"That's what I'm afraid of," he said, in a low voice. "I know Uncle Hugh has been through some rough times in South America. He might easily have made enemies there; it's a wild country. If this chap means business—and he doesn't look as if he ever meant any good to anybody—"

"He looks an ugly customer!"

"Well, if he means mischief to Captain Cunliffe, we shall be guiding him to the house," said Hazeldene, in dismay.

"Then we jolly well won't!" said Wharton decidedly.

"What can we do?"

"We'll find out first, for certain, whether he's following us. If it's proved beyond a doubt, then we'll dodge him. We can send a wire to Captain Cunliffe to say we're delayed, and will arrive later, and dodge this rotter, if it takes us hours!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"That will be a lark!" he exclaimed.

"We've got three-quarters of an hour to wait here for the train," said Harry. "We'll shove the luggage away, and then take a walk out in the town. If he follows us, that will make it quite clear."

"Good!"

Five minutes later the juniors were strolling down the streets of the ancient city of Exeter. Most of them were quite strangers to that city, one of the most interesting in the south of England, and they were glad of a chance to get a look at it, brief as it was.

As they quitted the station the foreigner in the broad-brimmed hat emerged, and walked in the same direction.

Up one street and down another the juniors went, purposely choosing a route that doubled on itself, and so could leave the foreigner no excuse for following it, unless he in effect admitted that he was shadowing them.

A grim smile appeared on the swarthy face of the South American. He soon realised the object of the juniors, and threw concealment to the winds. He kept upon the track of the juniors, never losing sight of them for a moment.

"It's pretty clear now," said Bob Cherry.

"Yes; let's speak to him!"

The juniors halted, and waited for the foreigner to come up. He came up, and stopped, and raised his hat mockingly. As he did so a ray of light from a street lamp fell upon his face, and Wharton saw a scar half-hidden by the thick

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black hair. He started as he saw it. Some time in the past a bullet had ploughed along the dark skin there, and the South American must have had a terribly narrow escape for his life.

The man smiled at them, showing his white teeth.

"Look here!" said Wharton abruptly. "What does this mean? What are you following us for?"

"Senorito!"

"You are shadowing us! What do you mean by it?"

The South American waved his dusky hand, upon which three or four rings were gleaming and sparkling.

"Are not the streets free to all?" he asked.

"You have followed us!"

"Possibly that is because we were all going in the same direction, senorito," said the South American politely.

Wharton gritted his teeth. There was something extremely irritating in the coolness of the swarthy stranger.

"Do you deny that you have shadowed us purposely?" he demanded.

The man shrugged his shoulders.

"Why should I, little senor?"

"What do you want with us?"

The South American hesitated a moment. Then he came closer to the juniors, his black eyes scintillating.

"I want nothing with you!" he said. "I want to find my—my old friend, Captain Cunliffe. This nino—this lad—is a relation of his, that I know—he resembles him so strongly. I very much wish to see Captain Cunliffe again!"

"Why?"

"Because he is my friend!"

"That is not true!" said Wharton bluntly. "You speak and look as if you were the enemy of the man you mention!"

The South American laughed.

"Friend or enemy, I want to find him!" he said.

"Do you think we will help you?" exclaimed Hazeldene fiercely.

The man laughed again.

"Not willingly, perhaps; but you will help me! And by that remark, you have admitted that you know the man!"

Hazeldene bit his lip.

"I desire to find him," said the South American. "Tell me where he is; or, rather, guide me, for I trust to no one's word—and all will be well! But I shall not lose sight of you till I have found him—or, at least, your home, whence I can find his traces. This lad is the only guide I have to my old friend—I, a stranger in Inghilterra. I must not let him pass from my sight. Is it not so?"

Wharton's brows contracted.

"I believe you mean harm to the man you are searching for," he said coldly. "And you are not the sort of looking chap a decent man would have for a friend, either! You will learn nothing from us!"

"We shall see!"

"Mind, if you follow us further, we shall find some means of getting rid of you!" said Wharton angrily. "And if the means are not pleasant, you will have only yourself to thank!"

"I shall risk it, senorito!"

"You had better take warning, and keep off the grass!"

"Bah!"

"Look here, you confounded blackguard!" burst out Wharton. "I believe you are up to some rascality, and we shall get rid of you any way we can! That's plain English, and you can understand it, I suppose?"

The South American grinned.

"I quite understand you, little senor, and I shall be on my guard!"

The juniors made a forward movement at once, but the South American backed away, still smiling. With wrathful faces Harry Wharton & Co. continued on their way.

They turned a corner, and ran hard, dodged round another corner, and ran again, as if on the cinder-path.

They found themselves in narrow streets now, and they alternately walked and ran in the half-light of dusk, and at last, looking back, they could see no trace of the South American.

"We've shaken the brute off!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, with a gasp of relief. "He was beginning to get on my nerves!"

"I say, you fellows—"

Wharton looked at his watch.

"Time to get back to the station!" he remarked. "None too much time, either!"

"I say, you fellows, I'm tired! I'm not accustomed to dodging about like that, and you know I've got a weak constitution! Hadn't we better take a cab?"

"Come on!" said Bob Cherry, seizing the fat junior by the ear. "This way!"

"Ow! Leggo!"

"But I'm helping you along!"

"Ow! I don't want to be helped along! Ow!"

"Think you can get to the station all right alone?" asked Bob Cherry, with an air of dubiety.

"Ow! Yes! Yes! Ow!"

"Good! If you lag behind, I'll help you again!" said Bob kindly.

Bunter did not lag behind. The juniors came up to the railway-station ruddy and breathless, and ran in, and almost ran into a swarthy man, in a broad hat and with a black cigar between his white teeth.

The man smiled.

It was the South American.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Feels Quite Well.

HARRY WHARTON & CO. went on to the platform with grim faces. They had succeeded in shaking off the shadower in the city of Exeter, but the man had guessed that that was not their final destination evidently. Perhaps he had observed that their luggage was left at the station. At all events, on losing them in the streets, he had returned to the station to watch for them, and there he was.

He followed them upon the platform. The train for Okehampton was already in, and the juniors crowded into a carriage in silence.

The South American hesitated a moment on the platform, but the doors were already closing, and he stepped into the carriage next to that occupied by the Greyfriars party.

Wharton had noticed his hesitation, and he had wondered for a moment what it meant. But the explanation flashed quickly into his mind.

The man had not known what train the juniors were taking, and he had no ticket. He had entered the carriage without one.

Wharton felt certain of it. And as he thought of it, a plan of getting rid of the obnoxious tracker came into his mind.

"Hold on a tick, kids!" he exclaimed, and he jumped out of the carriage.

He caught the guard by the sleeve as he came down the train.

"Chap in a first-class carriage here without a ticket!" he said.

"Where?" said the guard.

Wharton pointed to the South American, who was looking out of the window of the train.

The guard looked at the man. He was, from his appearance, so evidently a foreign adventurer, that the guard did not hesitate for a moment. He had the door of the carriage open in a twinkling.

"Ticket, sir!" he said.

The swarthy man started, and gave Wharton a venomous look.

"I am not bound to show my ticket here!" he exclaimed.

"Ticket, sir!"

"I tell you——"

"Ticket!" roared the guard, convinced now that the South American was trying to swindle the railway company.

"Show your ticket, or get out!"

"I cannot——"

"Will you show your ticket?" said the guard savagely.

"You're delaying the train! I tell you to show your ticket, or get out of the carriage!"

"I—I had no time to take a ticket! I will pay——"

"Get out!"

"I will pay——"

"Hout you come!" said the guard. "None of your blessed third-class tricks 'ere, my son! You 'op it out of this train!"

And as the South American did not move, the guard unceremoniously seized him by the shoulders, and swung him out upon the platform.

The man staggered, and fell heavily against an automatic machine, and reeled there, gasping for breath.

Wharton grinned, and jumped into the carriage, where his grinning chums were waiting for him. They had seen and heard it all.

"Jolly good!" roared Bob Cherry, helping Harry in as the train began to move. "Ripping!"

"The rippingfulness is terrific!"

"What-ho!"

"We've done him!"

"He's arguing with the guard," said Mark Linley, with a smile. "Look!"

The train was gliding along now. The juniors looked over each other's shoulders out of the window. The South American was arguing furiously with the guard and a porter, and gesticulating fiercely.

The guard made a rush to get into his van, and the South American, eluding the porters, dashed for the train.

"Stand clear, there!"

"You mad idiot! Stand back!"

But the South American did not heed.

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He clung to the train, opened a door as he whirled along, and climbed in, and sent back a gasping yell of defiance as he closed the door. The porters stood petrified. The train dashed out of the station, and the South American was in it, two or three carriages away from the juniors he was tracking.

The boys looked at one another in astonishment.

"The madman!" said Nugent. "He might have been killed."

"What a nerve!"

"He's in the train after all," said Wharton ruefully. "Who would have expected a man to play such a foolhardy trick, though?"

"He must have a jolly strong motive in wanting to find Captain Cunliffe."

Hazeldene looked worried.

"We simply can't be his guides there," he exclaimed. "I know it's a rotten way to treat you fellows—my uncle's guests—but I don't want to get to Black Rock until we've shaken off that brute."

"Of course not! We'll send a wire from Okehampton, and then begin to dodge," said Harry Wharton, his eyes sparkling.

"After all, it will be fun. It's getting exciting."

"I wish I knew what his motive was."

"That's a mystery; but you can depend upon it that it's not a friendly one. Nothing could be clearer than that."

Hazeldene nodded. The juniors sat down, and discussed the matter as the train rushed on through the gathering gloom. One thing was fully decided upon—that through them the South American should never reach the home of Captain Cunliffe. Whatever happened, and however great a length of time was occupied in shaking him off, the juniors were determined to do it before arriving at their destination.

"I say, you fellows," exclaimed Billy Bunter, breaking suddenly into the discussion, "there's one thing you have forgotten."

"What's that, Billy?"

"About the sandwiches."

"The what?"

"The sandwiches. You were going to lay in a fresh stock of sandwiches at Exeter, and now you've forgotten all about them."

"Oh, shut up!" said Bob Cherry in disgust. "Is this a time to be thinking about sandwiches? I believe you'd only think about grub if an earthquake were going on."

"Well, you know, I've got a weak constitution, and I can only keep going by taking a sufficient quantity of really nourishing food——"

"Dry up!" roared Bob Cherry.

And Bunter blinked and glowered in silence. He began to moan a little presently, but no one took any notice. As his moans passed unheeded, they changed into groans, and the groans became so deep and awesome that the juniors could no longer pretend not to hear.

Bob Cherry turned a wrathful look upon the Owl of the Remove.

"What are you making that row about, Bunter?" he demanded.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"What's it all about?" roared Bob.

"I—I feel ill."

"Oh, you feel ill, do you? Then I'll jolly well cure you!"

Bob Cherry took a strap off his travelling-bag. Billy Bunter watched that proceeding in considerable alarm. He blinked nervously at Bob as the latter folded up the strap into a handy size.

"I—I say, Cherry, w-w-what are you going to do?" he stammered.

"I'm going to cure you," said Bob grimly. "I'm so tender-hearted that I can't bear to see anybody ill, especially when it's in my power to cure them. Where will you have it?"

"Oh, really——"

Swish! came the strap through the air, and it lashed upon the portly form of Billy Bunter. The fat junior gave a terrific yell.

"Oh! Help! Yow!"

Swish!

Billy Bunter jumped up, roaring. Bob seized him by the back of the collar and brought down the strap half a dozen times in quick succession. Bunter yelled at every swish. He was not really hurt much, but he might have been suffering the tortures of the Inquisition by the way he roared.

"There!" gasped Bob, at last. "Do you feel better?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Nugent. "Do you feel better, Bunter?"

"Ow! No! Oh!"

Swish—swish!

Bunter whooped.

"Do you feel better now?"

"Oh! No! Oh!"

A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

"All right! I'll keep on till you're quite well," said Bob cheerfully, and the strap swished again, and yet again.

"Now, Bunter, how do you feel?"

"Yow-ow!"

"Feel better?"

"Ow! No—yes! Yes!"

"Lot's better?"

"Yow—groo—yah! Yes! Lots!"

"Quite well, in fact?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes—yes—yes! Q-q-quite w-well!"

"Good!" said Bob Cherry, sitting down. "If you feel ill again just groan, you know, and I'll give you some more medicine."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beast!"

"Now don't be ungrateful, Bunter. You were seriously ill five minutes ago, and now you're quite well. You've got me to thank for that."

Bunter grunted. He subsided into his corner, still grunting. He rubbed his fat shoulders, and presently a groan escaped him. Bob Cherry looked up quickly, and grasped the strap.

"Ill again, Bunter?"

"No-o!" gasped Bunter hurriedly. "I—I'm all right!"

"Quite well?"

"Ye-es!"

"Good!"

And Bunter did not groan again.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Still on the Track.

THE South American had looked out of the window at every station the train stopped at. He had no more trouble with the guard, and Wharton guessed that he had settled the matter by means of a liberal tip. At Okehampton the juniors alighted, and the South American stepped out of the train, too. He lounged away up the platform, keeping a keen eye on the group of juniors.

"Better see the luggage out, Wharton," suggested Nugent.

"We change here, you know."

Wharton shook his head, but he hurried away towards the guard's van. There was a great deal of luggage being turned out on the platform. Harry Wharton was seen to talk to the guard for a couple of minutes, and hand him a couple of shillings, and then he came back and rejoined his chums.

"Luggage out?" asked Hazeldene.

"No. It's not coming out, either."

"I don't see—"

"It can go on," said Wharton. "I've told the guard I've changed my mind, and I want the luggage to go on in this one to the next station, and be put off there."

"But why?"

"It will be put out there," said Harry. "We sha'n't be there to claim it, but we can send for it afterwards. If we're to dodge the rascal yonder we can't carry it about with us. My idea is to come rushing out of the refreshment-room just in time to miss this train, and the rotter will think that it's the train we should have gone by—it will give him a wholly mistaken idea of the direction of the place we're going to. Then, when we've shaken him off the track, he'll take up the trail here again, and start off in a totally wrong direction."

"Jolly good idea!" exclaimed Bob Cherry admiringly. "What a head you've got! You ought to have been a detective or a giddy criminal."

Wharton laughed.

"Thanks! Let's get into the buffet."

"That's a jolly good idea!" said Billy Bunter. "I'm feeling quite ill—"

"What's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"I—I mean I'm quite well, Cherry!" said Bunter hurriedly.

"I—only I'm hungry, you know!"

"Come on!" said Harry.

They went into the refreshment-room, and the South American lounged in after them. He began to eat sandwiches and to drink rum-and-water. Billy Bunter was ordering right and left, and all the juniors were piling into scones and sandwiches and cake, when the bell rang.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, there's the train bell!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, loud enough for the South American to hear.

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Bunter. "I haven't really begun yet! I say, wait a minute! The train never starts till a long time after the bell goes, you know."

"Buck up, Bunter!"

"Besides, we could catch the next train," said Bunter, who had been too busy thinking about his feeding to bestow any attention upon Wharton's plans, and who was therefore unconsciously aiding in them. "There's no great hurry."

"Oh, buck up!"

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"I am bucking up, but I've hardly started." Bunter took a great gulp of coffee, and gasped.

"Ow! Oh! Yah! It's hot!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

The coffee was indeed hot, and Bunter had taken in a huge gulp in his hurry. He pranced up and down, clapping his fat hands to his chest, and the juniors roared.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"The train's going!"

"My hat!"

"Come on, you kids!"

The juniors rushed from the buffet.

The train was already in motion, and gliding fast out of the station. The juniors ran towards it. A porter dashed in the way.

"Stand back, you young donkeys!"

"But—"

"Stand back!"

The Grayfriars juniors halted. The train dashed away, and disappeared into the night.

"Gone!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh, dear!"

"Rotten!"

"Now we're stranded!"

"Well, let's go back and finish the feed," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, we shall have time for a really good feed now, and we can catch another train."

The juniors returned to the buffet. The South American had followed them out: he paused, with a mocking smile, in their path as they turned back.

"You have lost your train, senoritos," he remarked.

"That is our business!" said Harry curtly.

The man's eyes gleamed.

"True. But I also—I have lost mine. It seems that we are fated to keep one another company," said the South American, laughing. And he went back to his sandwiches and rum-and-water.

The juniors resumed the interrupted feed. Billy Bunter did not give the train a single thought: he did not even know that it was not really their train which had been lost. The train the juniors had really intended to proceed by did not start for a quarter of an hour yet. The question was, could they get rid of the South American in time to take it? It did not seem likely.

"I'll go and send the wire to Captain Cunliffe if you fellows can keep that brute off my track," said Hazeldene.

"There's a telegraph-office at this station, I believe. But if he managed to find the address of the telegram—"

"He sha'n't follow you."

"You will keep him back—"

"Yes. Or, on second thoughts, let him follow you," said Wharton, with a grin. "You're the chap he wants to keep in sight. If we separated, you're the chap he would follow. Look here! You and Bob take a stroll into the town, and while you're gone I'll send the wire."

Hazeldene chuckled.

"Good! He's bound to follow me, and that'll give you a free field."

"Exactly!"

"I'll write out the wire, then."

"Go ahead!"

Hazeldene scribbled the address and the message upon a sheet of paper from his pocket-book, and Wharton crumpled it in his hand. It was done without the South American observing it, Hazeldene carefully keeping his back to the man while he was writing. Then Hazeldene and Bob Cherry strolled towards the door.

The South American started and looked round. He was evidently perplexed for a moment.

So far, the juniors had not thought of separating, and the South American had observed that they were one party going to one destination. Now that Hazeldene left the others, the man was puzzled how to act.

He looked at Hazeldene and Cherry, and glanced back at the group of juniors still eating cake and drinking coffee at the counter. Then he knitted his brows, and followed the two juniors out of the buffet.

Wharton smiled.

"He's caught!"

Hazeldene and Bob Cherry left the station, and the South American followed them out. He was evidently determined not to lose sight of Hazeldene, at least.

Wharton watched them clear of the place, and then he despatched the telegram. It occupied but a few minutes, and then he rejoined his chums. Hazeldene had not yet returned.

"All right?" asked Mark Linley.

"Right as rain."

It was seven or eight minutes more before Hazeldene came back. He brought a bag of tarts in his hand, as a

reason for having left the station at all. Wharton gave him a quick nod.

"All serene!" he said.

The South American sat down at a little table near the juniors, and lighted a fresh cigar. He was evidently tireless.

"And now what's the next move?" said Bob Cherry.

Wharton was looking over a time-table. He did not reply for some moments.

"There's a local train leaves here in ten minutes for a place called Fernwood," he said. "I think we'll take that, and we'll stay the night in the place."

"Jolly good!"

"Captain Cunliffe will not be expecting us now, and we can take our time. We'll get to bed early at Fernwood, and start early in the morning again, and take the whole day, if necessary, to shake off that rotter."

"Good enough!"

And when the local train started the juniors were seated in it, and the South American was smoking a cigar in the next carriage.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Early Risers!

"**F**ERNWOOD!"

The train had been a slow country local, with many stops. It was late in the evening when the juniors alighted at a sleepy country village, in the midst of hills and deep woods.

"Here we are again!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

The South American stepped out of the next carriage. He showed no sign of fatigue; but the Greyfriars juniors were getting tired. They had had a long day.

Billy Bunter, as usual, was complaining. He was tired, and he was hungry again, and he did not fail to make his sufferings known.

"I suppose there's an inn here?" he grumbled. "Nice state of things if it turns out that there's no inn in the place."

"We could sleep under a haystack," said Linley.

Bunter grunted.

"I'm jolly well not going to sleep under a haystack, Mark Linley. I dare say it would be all right for you. Ow!"

Linley coloured, and turned away, and Bob Cherry compressed his finger and thumb upon Billy Bunter's ear. The fat junior squealed.

"Ow! Leggo!"

Bob compressed his grip till Bunter writhed, and then let go, without a word of explanation. But Bunter knew what it was for.

Wharton was inquiring of the porter who collected the tickets for an inn. He was told that the Fernwood Arms was just outside the station, and the juniors repaired there at once.

The South American followed them, but he was looking very puzzled now.

Perhaps it was dawning upon his mind that the juniors had relinquished their real journey, and were deliberately leading him upon a wild-goose chase.

The landlord of the Fernwood Arms, a jolly-looking, ruddy-faced man, with a broad Devon accent, greeted the juniors hospitably. Custom was not overwhelming in a quiet little place like Fernwood, and the landlord was glad enough to see seven fellows asking for accommodation, especially as they looked as if they could pay well for it.

"Four beds will do," said Wharton; "and if you can shove them all in one room, so much the better. Supper first, anyway."

And the juniors sat down to a substantial supper, for which Billy Bunter was quite prepared, in spite of the supplies he had lately laid in.

"I say, you fellows, I've heard that Devonshire cream is awfully good," he remarked. "You may as well order some. Better order a lot while you're about it."

And Bunter made an inroad upon the cream which made even those who knew him well open their eyes. The cream was certainly excellent; but Bunter consumed so much that he was in danger of a bilious attack, and he was looking a little green when he rose from the table.

The juniors went to bed. They saw the South American having his supper in the inn before they went up. He had put up at the same place.

Wharton closed the door when they were in their room. The landlord had had the beds put in one room, as Wharton wished. With the South American so near, the lads naturally did not wish to separate.

"That chap is staying here," he remarked. "I've got an idea. Suppose we don't sleep to-night, but get out of the window and buzz off, and leave that rotter still sleeping. We could leave money for the landlord here."

"Good idea!" said Bob Cherry, but not very heartily.

As a matter of fact, the juniors were fagged out, and there was no way of leaving the village but by walking.

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WEEK:

"THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

Wharton's idea was a good one, but his comrades were not in a state to carry it out.

Billy Bunter blinked at Harry in silence for some moments, as if he could scarcely believe his ears. Then he burst out:

"You—you utter ass! I'm jolly well going to bed."

"Look here, Bunter—"

"I'm going to bed; and I'm not going to get up early, either. I'm going to have a good night's rest. I never came across such a selfish boulder in all my life. You seem to have no consideration whatever for a chap with a delicate constitution."

"Oh, shut up!" said Wharton roughly. "Get into bed. I suppose it would be a little too thick, you chaps, under the circumstances. We're tired."

"Well, as a matter of fact, I'm fagged out," said Hazeldene. "I'm not so hard as you are, you know."

"And I must admit that I could do with a snooze," said Nugent.

"All right, we'll turn in, but we shall be up at day-break."

"Look here, Wharton—" began Bunter.

"Bunter can stay in bed if he likes, but if he does he'll be left behind," said Harry, kicking his boots off.

"I'm jolly well not going to be left behind. Owing to that disappointment about my postal-order, I haven't any money. I owe you for my ticket from London, and I shall have to pay that out of my postal-order next term. I've no ready cash to pay my way if you leave me behind in this place."

"Then you'd better be up at daybreak, that's all."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Go to sleep!"

Bunter grunted and turned in. The prospect of having to be up at daybreak was almost enough to keep him awake. But he dropped into slumber soon, and snored loudly. Bob Cherry yelled at him from his bed to keep quiet, but Bunter did not hear. He only turned over and grunted when a pillow was hurled at him, and then Bob gave it up, stuffing the sheets round his ears to keep out the steady reverberation.

Wharton had not asked to be called in the morning, in case the South American should learn at what hour he intended to rise. Harry could generally depend upon himself to awaken.

He slept soundly, but his eyes opened when the first gleam of dawn was stealing in at the little diamond-paned window.

Wharton sat up in bed.

He was still sleepy, but he never yielded to any feeling of that sort when it was necessary to get up. There was nothing soft about him. He pushed the bedclothes back and stepped out quietly.

Then he shook his comrades one after another, awakening them. They all rose quietly, with hardly a word, with the exception of Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Greyfriars Remove was fast asleep, and did not seem inclined to awaken, though Wharton shook him vigorously.

He grunted at last, but did not open his eyes. Wharton compressed his lips; he felt certain that the fat junior was shamming.

"Hand me that water-jug, Bob," he said at last.

Billy Bunter sat bolt upright with surprising suddenness.

"Oh, I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, you're awake, are you, you worm?"

"I—I've just woke up. What are you fellows getting up for? It's not light yet."

"It's dawn."

"I can't see any light."

"Put your barnacles on, then," said Hazeldene, "and shut up. I believe that Spanish chap is in the next room."

"But I say—"

"Hold your tongue, and get up!" said Harry, in a tone that Bunter knew it was useless to argue with; and the fat junior turned discontentedly out of bed.

"Blessed if I like this idea of a holiday!" he grumbled. "I shall be jolly sorry soon that I accepted your invitation, Hazeldene."

"Rats!" said Hazeldene.

"I suppose you think that's a polite way to treat a guest," said Bunter.

"Yes, a guest of your sort."

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Don't talk, Billy," said Harry, "and don't make a row."

"My boots haven't been cleaned."

"I didn't put them out last night, any of them. We wanted them this morning before we could have had them, you see."

"You may have wanted them," grunted Bunter, "I didn't. I don't see how I can travel to-day with dirty boots."

A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS

"You've travelled often enough with a dirty face," said Bob Cherry. "Don't talk rot. Get your boots on, and shut up."

Wharton was the first ready. He stepped out into the passage. A large pair of tan leather boots stood outside the door of the next room, and Harry Wharton recognised them as belonging to the South American. He smiled quietly; it was evident that the man was not yet up. He had not calculated upon the move the juniors were making, and in that he made the mistake of under-rating his opponents because they were mere lads. Wharton quietly picked up the boots and carried them into his room.

"What on earth have you got there?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Boots."

"My hat! That chap's boots?"

"Exactly! A capture from the enemy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, I say, Wharton," said Bunter, looking round with a dab of soap on his nose, that dab constituting his morning's wash—"I say, you know, I don't approve of stealing a chap's boots, even if he's no good. I—"

"Hold your tongue!" said Harry sharply.

"That's all very well, but I don't think you ought to be dishonest while you're with me," said Bunter, who had a way of pretending to misunderstand people, and then posing as a rigid moralist on the strength of the misunderstanding. "I've got to consider my good name. Stealing a chap's boots—"

Wharton's fist closed for a moment, and Bunter backed away in alarm.

"Here, hold on!" he said shrilly. "I suppose you don't want me to wake the chap in the next room. I—"

Wharton unclenched his fist. After all, Bunter was not worth licking. He quietly opened the window. He had noticed a water-butt outside the previous night. The juniors chuckled softly as Wharton dropped the boots into the butt.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Ripping!"

"If he comes after us, he'll have to come in his socks," grinned Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry closed the window. The slight splash in the water-butt had been unnoticeable. The juniors finished dressing, and quitted the room, taking their bags with them. The house was very silent, and the landing creaked as they came out of the bed-room.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Early Start.

MARK LINLEY paused, and signed to Wharton to stop. The others were stealing quietly down the stairs.

"What is it?" whispered Wharton. He knew that the Lancashire lad would not waste time, and he had stopped at once.

Mark pointed to the South American's door.

"That's his room, isn't it?"

"That's it."

"There may be some noise before we get out," whispered Mark. "What price fastening his door on the outside? I've some cord, and a piece tied across from his door handle to the banisters would make him a prisoner."

Wharton suppressed a chuckle.

"Good egg! You're a giddy genius."

Linley whipped a length of cord from his pocket, and silently knotted the end round the handle of the South American's door. He stretched it taut across the landing, and knotted the other end to the thick oaken banisters.

There was no likelihood of anyone stirring for at least an hour, upstairs. And if the shadower tried to leave his room, it would certainly take him some time to attract attention to his predicament. From inside he could not possibly open the door. It opened inwards, and the taut cord would not give an inch.

The juniors grinned as they hurried downstairs. They would have time to get clear now, even if the South American woke.

Wharton unbarred the door, and opened it. The sun was glimmering on the woods now, in a greyish light, and a fresh breath of morning came to the juniors as they looked out into the shadows. An early ostler was stirring, and he looked curiously at the juniors.

He walked across their path as they left the house. The thought had evidently come into his mind that they were leaving thus early to avoid paying their bill. Strong suspicion was written upon his face.

"We are going away early," said Wharton quickly. "I suppose you know what the charge will be for our accommodation. I don't want to waken the landlord."

The ostler looked at him still suspiciously.

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"Don't you want any breakfast?" he asked.

"Yes," said Bunter; "I'm hungry. I—"

"Shut up, Bunter! No, we don't want any breakfast, we're in a hurry to get off."

"Oh, really, Wharton— Oh!"

Billy Bunter subsided as Bob Cherry pinched his arm. The ostler looked at Harry in an extremely doubtful way.

"I'd better call the landlord," he said.

"We are going now," said Wharton. "We haven't a second to spare."

"You be in a great hurry, young master."

"That's our business," said Harry crisply. "Here's the money; you can take it or not. You can take it straight to your master if you like, but we're not going to wait. I asked the charge last night; it is one pound. Here's a shilling for yourself."

The ostler took the money, his doubts appearing to vanish at the sight of gold and silver. He bit the coins to ascertain that they were good.

"That be all right," he said. "I—"

"Good-morning!"

The juniors strode on. The ostler stared after them for a minute or two, and then went into the house. He had gone to acquaint the landlord with the sudden departure of his guests. Harry knew that, and he quickened his pace.

"The South American may be awakened," he remarked. "We'd better buzz off just as quickly as we can."

"The buzzfulness is terrific, my worthy chum," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "I will prick the ostler Bunter pinfally to accelerate his honourable steps."

"You—you black beast—"

"Buck up, Bunter!"

"I can't buck up, Bob Cherry! I'm hungry—sinking with hunger. I can hardly drag one leg after another," said Bunter pathetically. "You're a set of heartless beasts. I wish now I hadn't come with you on this rotten vacation. My titled friend would never have treated me like this."

"Can't you really walk any faster than that, Bunter?" asked Bob.

"No, I can't; it's quite impossible."

"Then we shall have to help you!" exclaimed Bob, seizing the fat junior by one arm. "Take his other arm, Linley."

"Right you are!"

"Oh—oh! Beasts! Oh!"

But Bunter could not resist. He was rushed along at a run between the two sturdy juniors, and the others followed fast. They went down a lane that led directly away from the railway-station. An early labourer stopped to stare at them. The sun was rising higher now, and dawn was stealing over the fields.

"Oh, stop!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'm sinking, you know! I—I feel very bad!"

"Come on!"

"Ow! I'm ill!"

"Where's my strap?"

"Oh! I—I mean I'm all right, only—only— Ow!"

"You'd better not get ill again," said Bob Cherry warningly. "I've got plenty of the same medicine left, you know; and you're going to have some whenever you get ill!"

"Oh—oh! Really—"

"We can slacken a bit now," said Harry. "We must be half a mile from Fernwood. We can get some breakfast at a farmhouse, I think."

"Good! We shall have an appetite for it."

"I know I shall!" groaned Bunter.

The chums slackened into a walk, and framped on. There was no sign of pursuit so far. They were feeling exhilarated. There is something very exhilarating and refreshing in the keen air of early morning; but, besides that, the juniors had the exultant sense of having "done" the enemy; of having thrown their obstinate shadower off the track.

"We've done him brown," Bob Cherry remarked, with great satisfaction. "When he gets out, he won't know in what direction to look for us. We've only to get a lift in some farmer's cart to a town, and take the railway again, and then we're all right."

"The allrightfulness will be terrific."

"I—I say, you fellows, there's a farmhouse!"

It was high morning now. A bright sun peeped over the woods, and lighted the wide, green fields and the deep lanes and the verdant slopes of the hills. A farmhouse, standing in the midst of great green trees, burst upon the view of the juniors as they came round a bend in the lane they were following. A gate gave admittance to a rough cart-track leading up to the house.

All the juniors were hungry enough, and all were as ready for breakfast as Billy Bunter was. Wharton stopped at the gate.

"We'll try and get some grub here," he remarked.
"Good enough!"

A buxom dame came to the farmhouse door as the juniors presented themselves in the porch. She smilingly agreed to provide them with a substantial breakfast at sixpence a head; and when the juniors saw the breakfast, even Bunter had to acknowledge that they were receiving their money's worth.

The fare was plain, but plentiful—bread-and-butter and cheese in any quantity—and such bread, such butter, and such cheese! They had milk to drink, and only Bunter was disposed to grumble at not having the usual tea.

The juniors sat at their breakfast in the porch, and rose from it a quarter of an hour later feeling much refreshed. Bunter was inclined to go to sleep on his seat, but Bob Cherry kindly shook him into broad wakefulness.

"Time to get on!" he remarked.

"Ow!" grunted Bunter. "Don't s-s-shake me, you ass. If you make my glasses fall off—"

"Get a move on!"

"They'll very likely get broken, and then you'll have to p-p-pay for them, so I tell you."

"This way," said Bob, jerking the fat junior out.

Wharton settled with the good dame, and the juniors raised their caps, and set off towards the lane they had left. They entered it, and Harry climbed a high tree near the gate, to look back the way they had come from Fernwood, to ascertain whether, by any chance, the South American was in pursuit.

His chums watched him from below. They saw him reach a high branch, and shade his eyes with his hand and stare back, and then he came shooting down the tree so abruptly that for a moment they thought he would fall. He jumped to the ground, panting.

"Quick!" he exclaimed.

"What is it?"

"Quick!"

There was no time for words. Wharton dashed away up the lane, and the others followed at top speed. Harry sprang through a gap in a hedge, and headed for a large hayrick a little way back from the lane, ran round it, and threw himself into the grass and loose hay on the other side.

"Just in time!" he gasped.

"Was it—he?"

"Yes."

"The South American?"

"Yes; coming up the lane! He's followed us, after all!"

"My hat!"

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tracked Down!

THE Greyfriars chums crouched in the grass and the loose hay behind the stack. They did not venture to look out upon the field or the lane, in case the South American should catch a glimpse of them; they had observed already that he was as keen as a hawk.

Billy Bunter grumbled a little as he lay.

"I say, you fellows—"

Bob Cherry pressed a heavy hand over his mouth, and the fat junior sputtered into silence.

"Quiet, you ass!" whispered Wharton.

"I—groo!—I'm not making a row. Look here, I'm not afraid of that blessed foreigner!" said Bunter. "I don't want to hide away like a rotten coward!"

"Hold your tongue!"

Bunter grunted, and rolled over in the hay. He closed his eyes to sleep; after all, the hay was soft, and the sun was warm.

The juniors listened intently.

"Where did you see him?" Nugent whispered, at last.

"Down the lane."

"You are sure it was he?"

"Quite sure."

"How on earth could he have got on the track?"

"He is cunning enough for anything, I think. But—"

"But he hasn't seen us in the lane?"

"I am sure not."

Hazeldene set his lips. He was looking very worried. The pursuit was beginning to tell on the nerves of the junior.

"He may inquire for us at the farmhouse," he remarked.

"Very likely."

"And then, if he can't catch sight of us in the lane, it's more than likely that he'll look round the stack."

Wharton nodded in silence. It was quite possible. Yet—

Snore!

It was a deep, reverberating, unmusical snore from Billy Bunter. It was loud as well as deep, and it came at a most awkward moment.

In the deep silence of the morning air it sounded very clearly.

Bob Cherry clasped his hand over the fat junior's mouth the next moment, and Mark Linley shook him fiercely.

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Bunter started into wakefulness.

"Oh—ow—groo—gerrooh!"

"Quiet!"

He spluttered and choked under Bob's hand, but no more sounds came forth. He was reduced to silence and fury.

But had the harm already been done? The juniors listened with straining ears. There was a sound of feet in the grass of the field.

Footsteps!

The juniors waited with bated breath. Was it the South American? It might be only a field labourer going to his work.

The footsteps came nearer!

A lithe form swung into view round the corner of the hayrick. Harry Wharton sprang to his feet. It was the South American.

He smiled as he saw the boys. It was a mocking, irritating smile. The man was smoking a black cigar, early as the hour was, and he had the broad-brimmed hat on, and a pair of rough, heavy boots, evidently borrowed at the inn.

"So we meet again, senoritos."

"Hang you!" said Harry, between his teeth.

The South American laughed.

"You do not find it so easy to elude me, you see," he remarked. "Had you not better give up the attempt?"

The juniors stood with downcast and savage faces.

"It was a clever trick to fasten my door. And then the boots—I could not find them," said the South American.

"Carambo! I swore! But it was not so easy to throw an old tracker of the pampas off the scent. Yet I might have passed the hayrick if one of you had not obligingly given me the hint."

The juniors looked daggers at Bunter. It was that unfortunate snore which had given them away to the shadower.

"Well, and now you have found us," said Harry, gritting his teeth. "I warn you to be careful! It is not safe to track anyone down like this in England, whatever you may have done safely in South America. If you trouble us any more, we shall hit back!"

The South American showed his teeth.

"Good! A little spitfire, carambo! But what will you do, senores? There are seven of you; but you are only boys. Do you think to scare me?"

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"Don't follow us any further, that's all," he said.

"Bah! I shall follow you to the end!"

"Till when?"

"Till I have found El Capitan—Captain Cunliffe," said the South American coolly. "You shall be my guides."

"You hound!" said Hazeldene.

"Hard words do not hurt, little senor. And I am in no hurry." The South American blew out a thick cloud of smoke. "I will wait."

"I warn you not to follow us!" said Wharton, breathing hard.

"And I laugh at your warning."

"You will be sorry for it."

"Bah!"

"Come on, you chaps!" said Harry abruptly. "If this scoundrel follows us as far as the lane, we're going to tackle him!"

"Right-ho!" said Bob Cherry heartily.

They started across the field. The South American strolled easily after them. They went up the lane, the shadower still in the track.

In the lane Wharton exchanged a glance with the others, and they halted.

"Now, then!" said Harry, raising his hand and pointing.

"Choose your road, you foreign rotter! And start first!"

"I shall not do so!"

"Then take the consequences!" exclaimed Harry. "Collar him, kids!"

"Hurray!"

The Greyfriars juniors rushed at the South American. In a moment they were round him, and grasping him. In another moment he would have been rolling in the dust, but his hand had disappeared under his coat, and it came out again with something in it, that flashed and glittered, and the juniors started back from the clear steel.

It was a knife that the South American had in his hand—the natural weapon of the bravado and desperado. He grinned mockingly over his cigar.

"Come on, then!" he said.

But the juniors paused.

To attack a desperate scoundrel with a deadly weapon in his hand was no light task. They were not afraid. But, as Bob Cherry would have said, it was "not good enough."

Billy Bunter was already scuttling up the road. The sight of the clear steel had almost frightened the fat junior out of his wits.

"Well?" said the South American, with a sneer.

Wharton bit his lip. That sneer was hard to bear; but the knife was a weapon the Greyfriars chums could not contend with. They were unarmed; and, in any case, a struggle, with danger to life involved, was quite outside their plans. The idea was not to be entertained.

The South American, for the moment, was the master of the situation. The sneer was still on his lips.

The juniors were furious—but defeated. Without a word they turned and tramped up the lane. The South American returned the knife to its hiding-place under his coat, and strolled in the same direction. Bob Cherry overtook Bunter, and clapped him on the shoulder. The fat junior gave a wild howl of terror.

"Ow! Oh! Help! Murder!"

"You young fool—"

"Oh, really, is it you, Cherry?" gasped Bunter, in great relief. "I—I thought it was that—that—I mean—"

"You cowardly porpoise!" snorted Bob Cherry. "What did you run off for?"

"Oh, really, Cherry, you know I didn't run off—it was merely my—my presence of mind. I was going to—to call a policeman!"

"Oh, ring off!"

The juniors tramped on. Wharton's eyes were gleaming under his contracted brows. He did not mean to leave matters where they were for long.

Bob Cherry glanced at his hard, angry face.

"You intend to tackle him again, Harry?"

"Yes," said Harry, between his teeth. "I did not know he was armed. We can't fight with a ruffian who uses a knife. If he would leave that out, I'd tackle him with my fists soon enough, man as he is!"

"I shouldn't wonder if you could knock him out, too. But he won't leave the knife out of it, kid. He looks like a chap who's more used to a knife than to fists in a scrap," said Nugent.

"Yes; but we may be able to take him by surprise, so that he can't use his knife," said Harry, frowning. "We shall get a chance to lay a trap for him, in the lanes here somewhere. There's plenty of cover, and we haven't practised as Boy Scouts for nothing."

"Good egg!"

"And then I think we'll make him feel sorry that he's followed us so far."

And the juniors brightened up as they tramped on discussing the scheme.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Turning the Tables.

"STOP here!"

The juniors had turned into a deep lane. An hour had elapsed since the encounter at the hayrick, and they had covered some miles, always with the lithe figure of the South American in view at a short distance behind. They turned abruptly into the lane, and a great shoulder of red earth shut them off from the view of the shadow.

It was one of those deep lanes commonly met with in parts of Devonshire—deeply sunken below the level of the woods on either side. On each side of the narrow road rose a wall of earth, a score of feet high, and on the summit could be seen the thick trees of a wood, with straggling fences along the edge.

Wharton pointed to the earthen wall on the right.

"This way—quick!"

Half a dozen feet above the ground a great mass of bushes grew on the earthen wall, and they gave hold to the juniors. They scrambled up the almost perpendicular wall, plunging into the bushes, and getting a hold among the roots. Bunter was just beginning to say that he couldn't possibly climb, as he was too exhausted, when Wharton and Bob Cherry grasped him, and dragged him up. He was dumped into the bushes, and there he clung desperately to the stump of a tree, in momentary fear of rolling down bodily into the lane again.

"Oh, really—" he gasped.

"Silence!"

"But—"

Wharton clapped a hand on his mouth. He knew that the South American would quicken his pace, so as not to allow them to remain out of sight many minutes.

Harry's plans needed no explaining to his comrades. The South American, turning the corner to follow the lane, would pass almost directly underneath them. At a given signal they would fall on him from above, and he could hardly be prepared for such an attack.

There was a patter of light footsteps on the muddy road. The South American was running. The lithe figure came rapidly round the corner.

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For a moment the juniors held their breath.

The man stopped directly under the sagging and swaying bushes, twigs from which brushed on the broad brim of his hat.

He stared up the lane, apparently astonished at not finding the juniors in sight—for the lane ran straight on without a bend for a quarter of a mile or more.

The rascal's glance was turning upwards towards the red earthen walls, when Wharton gave the signal to his comrades.

"Go for him!"

And he threw himself upon the South American.

"Carambo!"

Wharton fell sprawling on the man's shoulders, and grasped him tenaciously, and they rolled to the earth together.

In a second the other juniors were piling on them, with the exception of Billy Bunter, who clung to the tree-stump in the bushes. He had apparently made up his mind that discretion was the better part of valour.

The South American was taken utterly by surprise.

As he crashed upon the earth, he made a desperate attempt to get at his knife, but Wharton's weight fell on his arm, pinning it to his chest.

Then the other juniors were upon him.

He yelled with pain as Bob Cherry landed on his legs. Bob Cherry's boots were hard and heavy, and there could be no doubt that the man was hurt. That was nothing to the juniors, however. They had warned him that he would be hurt, and he had not cared to profit by the warning.

"Hold his hands!" gasped Harry.

Nugent grasped one dusky wrist, and Mark Linley the other. Wharton groped in the man's breast, and found the knife.

He grasped it, and drew it quickly away.

The South American was struggling like a wild cat, gnashing his teeth, his black eyes flaming with rage.

But his weapon was gone now, and he was powerless in the hands of the Greyfriars juniors. The odds were too great for him.

Wharton dropped the knife into his pocket, intending to dispose of it in the first pond he came to.

"That's all right," he remarked. "His fangs are drawn now."

"Good! Ha, ha!"

"Carambo!" shrieked the South American. "Carambo! Let me go!"

"Not just yet," said Bob Cherry. "Keep still."

"I will not! I will not! Carambo!"

"My hat, what a wild cat! Better give him a jolly good bumping while we're about it, and teach him not to follow innocent youths and make them miss their trains," suggested Frank Nugent.

There was a chorus of approval.

"Yes, rather."

"Bump him!"

"The bumpfulness is terrific."

"Let me go—let me go! I—I—"

"Bump him!"

And the South American was promptly bumped. The juniors had been exasperated by his insolence and his persistent pursuit. They were determined that he should be sorry for having followed them so far.

And there was no doubt that he was sorry—for a time, at least.

They bumped him on the ground in spite of his struggles, and he gave a fearful yell. It was a kind of punishment well-known in the Close and the passages of Greyfriars, but quite new to the South American adventurer, and he was as surprised as hurt. He struggled furiously in the grasp of the Greyfriars Removites.

"Carambo! Release me!"

"Yes, when you've had your lesson," said Bob Cherry.

"Bump him!"

Bump! bump!

"Go it!"

"Hurrah!"

Bump! bump! bump!

"Have you had enough?" asked Harry, looking at the gesticulating, struggling, shrieking Southerner, who seemed to be almost in a frenzy by this time.

"Oh! I—I will revenge this!" gasped the South American.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Have you had enough?" he repeated.

"Let me go!—let me go!"

"Listen to me! You have followed us a long way, and put us to a lot of trouble," said Harry quietly. "I warned you that we'd had enough of it, and I warned you to look out for squalls if you followed us further. If you like to take yourself off, we've done with you. But we won't have you hanging on our track like a shadow."

"That's it," said Bob Cherry. "Are you going to leave us alone?"



"If you would remain like that for half-an-hour or so, Gay, I could make a really excellent sketch," remarked Tadpole, opening his huge sketch book. (An amusing incident in the splendid, long complete tale of Gordon Gay & Co., in this week's issue of The "Empire" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Halfpenny.)

"No—never. I—"

"Bump him, then."

Bump! bump!

The bumping was heavy, and growing heavier. The juniors were losing patience. The South American was gasping for breath, gasping and panting.

"Now will you go back?"

"No! No! No!" yelled the South American.

"Bump him!"

Another heavy bump, and another.

"Hold! I will go!" gasped the man, at last, his obstinacy overcome. He was aching in every limb, and his breath came in thick short gasps. "Hold!"

"Let him get up."

The juniors released the South American, but it was a minute or two before he could rise, so exhausted and breathless was he. When he staggered to his feet at last, his dark face was convulsed with passion.

"Oh, I will revenge this!" he muttered, clenching his hands.

"Are you going?" demanded Harry, making a step towards him.

The South American stepped back.

"Yes—si, senorito, I am going. Give me my knife."

Harry laughed.

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NEXT
WEEK.

"THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

"That is not likely. Go!"

"You will see me again."

The man staggered away and disappeared. Bob Cherry grinned.

"I fancy we've seen the last of him," he remarked. "He won't want another experience like that."

"I hope so," said Harry. "We've turned the tables on him, anyway; and he's got no more than he deserves. And he is unarmed now: we need not fear him."

"Let's get on."

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I can't get down——"

"Roll down," said Bob Cherry curtly. And as the juniors walked on, Bunter found that he could get down, and he did so, and joined them sulkily.

Wharton took the knife out of his pocket as the juniors strode on up the deep lane. It was a handsome weapon, and on the handle was scratched a name—Pedro Ijurra. It was undoubtedly the name of the South American.

A quarter of an hour later the juniors emerged from the lane into a country road, and at the corner was a wide pond where ducks were swimming. Wharton sent the knife through the air with a toss of his arm, and it sank into the middle of the pond.

"We've seen the last of that," he remarked. "I hope we've seen the last of Pedro Ijurra, too!"

A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Left Behind.

THE juniors stopped at noon at a farmhouse, where they obtained dinner. During the rest of the morning they had seen nothing of the South American. It really seemed that he had taken warning by the lesson they had given him, and abandoned the pursuit. Their spirits rose at the thought. They ate a good dinner and over it discussed the situation.

Nothing having been seen of the South American, there was no reason why they should not head for Black Rock, the house of Captain Cunliffe, on the western coast. They had wandered a great deal out of their way, but Wharton had a time-table in his pocket, and inquiry of the farmer at the house elicited information as to where they were now. After a talk with the farmer, Harry rejoined his chums, who were finishing a plentiful repast. Bunter, indeed, showed no signs of finishing. It was pretty certain that the fat junior would not leave the table till he was removed by force.

"We can get a lift in the farmer's cart as far as a town called Moorback," said Harry. "There we can get a train for the nearest railway point to Black Rock. We shall arrive some time this afternoon, I expect."

"Good enough," said Hazeldene.

And the meal being over, and Bunter being persuaded to leave the table—by the gentle persuasion of a tight finger and thumb on his ear—the juniors clambered into the farmer's waggon, and were driven off to the westward.

They kept a keen look-out for any sign of the South American, but he was not to be seen. The town was reached, and the juniors found they had a quarter of an hour to wait at the station.

"Shall we have a stroll round the town?" asked Hazeldene.

Wharton shook his head.

"Better keep in here. Ijurra may be on the prowl."

"I think we've quite dropped him."

"Yes, but one can't be too careful. He's a dangerous villain, and we don't know what harm he may intend to your uncle."

"Well, you're right. We'll lie low."

"There's no need to go out," said Billy Bunter. "There's a buffet here, you know."

"Oh, go to the buffet, and be quiet!" said Nugent.

"Will you lend me a bob? I've left all my ready cash at Greyfriars by an oversight—"

"Cheese it."

Nugent handed over the shilling, and the fat junior walked away to the buffet. He stood there negotiating buns and ginger-beer with a reckless disregard for his digestion. The juniors, having taken their tickets, walked up and down the platform.

The train came down the line.

Wharton breathed a deep breath of relief. Though he thought, like the others, that the shadower was shaken off, he had a lingering doubt, and he would feel much easier in his mind when he was speeding away behind a locomotive.

The train stopped, and the juniors were about to start towards it, when Mark Linley uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Stop! Cover, quick!"

"What the—"

"Cover!"

Mark pushed his companions back into the waiting-room. They obeyed him unquestioningly. The Lancashire lad's face was greatly excited.

"What on earth is it?" muttered Hazeldene.

"The South American."

"Where?"

"In the train."

"My only hat!"

The juniors peered out of the doorway. It was true—the Lancashire lad's keen eyes had not deceived him.

The South American was in the act of stepping from the train almost opposite the door of the little waiting-room.

The man glanced carelessly up and down the platform, but evidently with no expectation of seeing the juniors there.

It was an unexpected thing; but Wharton easily understood it. Ijurra had lost their track, and sought for it in vain, and he had taken the train in the direction he knew the juniors were travelling in in the hope of picking up the trail again. Fortune had led him to alight at the very station where they were waiting for the train—the train he had come in by.

"Keep in cover," whispered Harry. "He hasn't seen us—he doesn't suspect we're here. He'll go out of the station in a minute."

"We shall lose this train."

"We can wait for the next. If he misses us now, all's serene."

"Good."

"That shows that he's still sticking to the trail, though," said Hazeldene, with a troubled look. "He must have some

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fearful grudge against my uncle to be so keen to get on his track."

"All the more reason why we should baffle the rotter."

"My hat!" muttered Bob Cherry, in dismay. "Bunter!"

"What?"

"Look!"

Billy Bunter was coming along the platform, blinking round in search of his companions. He had not left the buffet because the train was in, but because he had come to the end of the shilling.

"I say, you fellows," he called out, "where are you? Where—"

Wharton suppressed an exclamation. Bunter had betrayed them. The keen, black eyes of the South American were on the fat junior at once. Ijurra stopped on his way to the station exit, and turned towards Bunter. His eyes were scintillating.

"Ah, that is one of them!"

The juniors heard him mutter the words. Ijurra strode towards the Owl of the Remove, and grasped him by the shoulder.

Bunter started and blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Nino!"

"Ow! Ow! It's—it's that murderous beast!" stuttered Billy Bunter. "Ow! Help! Murder!"

"Boy—"

"Murder!" yelled Bunter. "Help! Fire!"

"Fool! Be quiet! I shall not hurt you—"

"Leggo! Help! Murder!"

"Where are the others?" said the South American, releasing the fat junior, for Bunter's outcries were attracting attention.

"Lemme alone! Get away! Help!"

"You fat fool—"

"I—I say, you fellows, where are you? I say!"

"I know they are here," said the South American, shrugging his shoulders, and taking out a fresh cigar from his case. "That is enough."

Concealment, of course, was useless now. The Greyfriars juniors came out of the waiting-room. The South American looked at them with gleaming eyes.

"I have found you."

"Yes, you cur!" said Wharton angrily. "And I warned you what would happen if you followed us again. Collar him!"

"Stand back! I—"

"Collar the cad!"

The juniors rushed at him. The South American, as if by force of habit, thrust his hand into his coat for his knife, but no knife was there. He sprang back, dodging the rush of the juniors, and backed away.

The train was starting.

"Get in," muttered Harry. "Get in quick!"

"But—"

"Quick—do as I tell you!"

"Oh, all right!"

Bob Cherry dragged Bunter into the train, which was already beginning to move. The others scrambled in pell-mell. A porter shouted and rushed up. Harry dashed after his comrades, and just entered the train. The South American rushed at the traitor, too, though it was now gathering speed, but he was too late.

The porter grasped him and pulled him back, and they fell to the platform together. The train whirled out of the station, the shadower was left behind.

Wharton had fallen in the bottom of the carriage amongst the legs of his comrades. He gathered himself up, gasping for breath.

"Did he get in?"

"No," grinned Bob Cherry, who was looking from the window. "He's left."

"Jolly good!"

"Hurray!"

The station disappeared behind. Bunter grunted and sorted himself out from among the boots of the Greyfriars juniors. He was breathless and indignant, but no one minded him. They had beaten their shadower again, but for how long? A feeling was growing in their hearts that the man from South America was not to be shaken off.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Passed on the Road.

HARRY WHARTON sat with a wrinkled brow as the train rolled on. It was not a fast train. It stopped at every station, and the waits were long. But Wharton knew that there was no other train on the line for half an hour, so pursuit that way, at least, was impossible. Yet the juniors would hardly have been surprised to see the dusky face of the South American on the platform in any

station they stopped at. The determination of the shadower was, as Bob Cherry expressed it, getting on their nerves.

"We've done him, for a bit, anyway," Nugent remarked.

"But it won't do to go on to the end of this line," said Mark Linley. "He will be able to find out by inquiry which station we alighted at."

"That's just what I was thinking," Wharton remarked. "And if we get out at the station we intended, it will take him too near to Captain Cunliffe's house."

"Exactly."

"We'd better get out about half-way," said Hazeldene. "Then we can cut across country, and get to Black Rock by road."

"That's the idea."

There was a grumble from a corner of the carriage. Billy Bunter blinked at the chums with rising indignation.

"I don't know how you fellows feel," he said, "but I'm jolly tired. This hurrying and scurrying about may agree with you, but it doesn't agree with me. I've got a delicate constitution, and I have to look after that. I've jolly well had enough of this dodging about."

"Shut up, Bunter."

"I'm not going to shut up. I've had enough of it. I feel convinced that it will make me ill. Besides, I dare say you fellows are frightened about nothing," went on Bunter, in a patronising tone. "Why don't you do as I do, and take things with quiet courage?"

"Eh?"

"You seem to be as nervous as a lot of old hens," said Bunter. "Besides, if the South American has a grudge against Captain Cunliffe, I don't see that it's any of our business. We ought to get on, I think."

"Will you ring off?"

"No, I won't. I—"

"Are you ill, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry significantly.

"No," gasped Bunter, in a great hurry—"no, you beast!"

"Too much jabbering is a sign of illness," said Bob, with a shake of the head. "I shall take any more jabber as a proof that you are ill, and that you want some more medicine."

"Look here, Cherry—"

"Then you will have it?"

Bob Cherry rose to his feet.

"Hold on! Keep off, you beast! I—I'm all right, and—and I won't talk any more!" gasped the fat junior.

Bob Cherry sat down again. Billy Bunter glowered in silence. The afternoon was bright and sunny, and the weather was very cheering; but the juniors could not help thinking of the shadower on their trail, and of his unknown intentions towards the man who was to be their host at Black Rock.

At the same time, there was a sense of excitement and adventure in the whole affair, which was not at all displeasing to the juniors. There was certainly more variety in their journey to the west than they had anticipated when they left Greyfriars for their Easter vacation.

"We get out here," said Harry, at last.

The juniors alighted at a little country station. Wharton's intention was to proceed for the remainder of the journey on the road, either by walking, or obtaining lifts in carts. It was twenty miles yet to the fishing village of Penwyn, the nearest hamlet to the lonely house of Captain Cunliffe.

The juniors took the road. They had had a long rest in the train, and they were fresh enough for a walk. Bunter groaned as he started.

"Where are we going to, Wharton?" he asked.

"A place called Penwyn, on the coast."

"How far is it from here?"

"Just under twenty miles."

"Twenty miles!" shrieked Bunter. "Twenty miles! You utter ass! Do you think I can possibly walk twenty miles?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I hope we shall get a lift on the way, Billy."

"Look here, I'm jolly well going back to Greyfriars," said Billy Bunter peevishly. "I don't call this having a holiday."

"Go back, then," said Hazeldene.

"Oh, really, Hazel—"

"Hold your tongue, then, hang you!"

Bunter grunted, and subsided into silence. He was Hazeldene's guest, in a way, but he was not the kind of guest to get much courtesy. He tramped on sulkily. The sun was setting over the western hills, towards the wide Atlantic Ocean, which the Greyfriars juniors were soon to see.

A market-cart came lumbering along, and Wharton hailed the driver. The man, who had a ruddy, good-natured face, stopped his horse.

"Can you give us a lift towards the coast?" asked Wharton. "We can pay."

The man grinned good-naturedly.

"I'm going four mile," he said. "Jump in, young gentlemen, if you will, and say nought about paying."

"Thanks, very much," said Wharton gratefully.

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NEXT WEEK: "THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

There was straw in the bottom of the cart, and plenty of room for the seven juniors. They gladly clambered in, and the cart lumbered on with them. The driver looked at them curiously, but asked no questions.

"Well, this is a godsend," said Bob Cherry. "We haven't walked more than three miles, but I'm beginning to feel done. We've had a rather exciting time since we left Greyfriars."

"Yes, rather."

Snore! came from Bunter, as his contribution to the discussion. The fat junior was already fast asleep in the straw.

Several of the others followed his example as the cart lumbered on through the shady lanes. Harry Wharton sat upright and watched the road.

Toot, toot!

It was the hoot of a motor horn.

Wharton looked back along the road as the driver drew quickly to the left to allow the car space to pass in the lane. A car, driven by one man, with another sitting wrapped in a coat, was approaching rapidly.

Wharton started as he glanced at the man in the coat. He was too far off to be recognised, but Wharton knew the broad-brimmed hat again.

"My word!" murmured the Greyfriars junior.

Bob Cherry started out of a doze, and sat up. Harry Wharton was crouching down in the cart at the same moment, and his head came in contact with Bob's, with a loud crack.

"Ow!" roared Bob.

Wharton rubbed his head ruefully.

"Quiet, Bob."

"Ow! I'm hurt!"

"Quiet—quiet, you chaps! That villain is behind us again!"

"My hat!"

Hoot-toot! Zip!

"You—you don't mean to say that he's in a car!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in a suppressed voice.

"Yes, he is."

"My only hat!"

"Where on earth could he get a car from here?" exclaimed Nugent, in amazement. "He must have plenty of money, at all events."

"It is a tradesman's car, I think, from the look of it," said Wharton, peering over the tailboard of the cart. "He has hired it with its driver to follow us, as there was no train. He could manage that for a few pounds, but it shows how determined the rotter is. Keep quiet—mind Bunter doesn't snore. They'll be passing us in a minute."

Bob Cherry chuckled softly.

"He won't see us, and he'll get ahead. That will be worse for him than falling behind. He will be done brown this time."

"Yes. Quiet now."

The cart lumbered on slowly, shaking and rattling on the ruts of the country road. The juniors, half buried in the straw in the bottom of the cart, were quite hidden by the high wooden sides. Unless the South American looked into the cart, he would never dream of their presence there—and why should he? He certainly could not look into every cart he passed—the car was going too quickly.

Zip—zip!

The motor-car was drawing level now. The cart plodded on; the juniors scarcely breathed.

Zip—zip!

It was passing them.

With a snort and a whir, the motor rushed past, and shot ahead, and the dust and noise of it died down on the road.

Harry Wharton raised his head cautiously and looked after the car. It was disappearing in a cloud of dust ahead.

The South American had passed within six paces of them—passed unsuspectingly—and was gone. The last whir of the car faded into silence ahead. The enemy was out of sight.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Shaken Off at Last.

"H A, ha, ha!" The Greyfriars juniors laughed loud and long. It seemed comical enough to them that the South American had passed so close without suspecting that they were near. Billy Bunter started out of slumber, and rubbed his eyes, and adjusted his spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, what's the row?"

"Nothing; but we get down here," said Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton, I'm tired, and—"

"We get down, I tell you."

"I can't! I won't! I'm tired, and I—"

"Well, stay where you are, then," said Harry.

He jumped out of the cart. The driver stopped.

"I go on for a mile yet," he remarked.

"Thank you very much," said Wharton. "This will do for us. We're much obliged."

Bob Cherry rolled Bunter out of the cart, and the driver nodded cheerily to them and drove on. The juniors were left standing in the road. Billy Bunter was grunting and scowling discontentedly.

"We can't go on any further," said Harry. "We want to strike out in a different direction. We'll get to Penwyn by making a wide round."

"Good egg!"

"We'll take the first turning, then."

"I say, you fellows—"

But no one answered Bunter. The fat junior trotted sulkily after them as they strode up the lane. They swung round the first turning, and kept on at a good speed. If the South American should suspect that he had overshot the mark, and turn back for them, they were safe from him now: at least, they hoped so.

"But that rotter has a sort of uncanny gift of getting on the track," Hazeldene remarked. "I shall be surprised if we've seen the last of him."

Harry Wharton nodded. He was thinking the matter out, and he walked on for some time in silence.

"I've got an idea," he said. "You know what the slaves used to do when they were being tracked down—they took to the water, so as to leave no trail. You read about it in the history of the West Indies. I've got a wheeze. Suppose we take to the water, and throw the cad off the track that way."

"But there's no stream here—"

"I was thinking of the sea."

"The sea!"

"Certainly! If we made directly for the sea, I think it is not more than two miles away. Penwyn is some miles down the coast. Now, if we got to the shore, we might get hold of a boat, and get to Black Rock by water."

"By Jove!"

"What a jolly ripping idea!" exclaimed Mark Linley. "Once we got on the water, the rascal couldn't spot us again."

"And we should get to Captain Cunliffe's house without leaving a trail of any sort behind," said Harry, with satisfaction.

"What about the boat?" asked Bob. "It would have to be returned to the owner, you know, and Ijurra might get in touch with him."

"I have thought of that. We could buy a boat at a fishing village. Any old thing would do for a few miles' row down the coast in calm weather. It could be sold again for two-thirds as much as we gave, too, so the loss wouldn't be so very great. I've no doubt we could pick up an old boat for a few pounds."

"Well, you are a giddy genius!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in admiration. "I should never have thought of a dodge like that."

"My uncle would stand the money, when he knows why we did it!" exclaimed Hazeldene eagerly. "He has lots of tin. He is a rich member of our family, you know."

"Well, if he made good the loss, we wouldn't object, of course," said Harry. "But it doesn't matter about that now. Shall we try it? We've plenty of money among us to make the purchase, if that is all."

"We'll do it."

"Jolly good idea!"

"Then it's settled!"

The juniors tramped on, chuckling aloud every now and then at the idea of "doing" the South American so completely. A finger-post at a corner of the lane told them that it was a mile and a half to Combe Bay. They had never heard of the place before, but the name was a sufficient indication that it was on the coast. They took the new turning, and tramped on cheerily.

The lane gave place to a rough footpath over wild heath. The juniors tramped on between green hillocks, and suddenly, between two high points of land, the wide sea and the red sun in the west burst upon their view.

They paused for some moments in sheer admiration at the beauty of the scenery; that glorious scenery of the West of England which one who knows it well will never admit to be inferior to the finest on the Riviera. Between two rugged cliffs, wooded to their very tops, a deep combe sloped, and on the further side gleamed a beach of shelving sand and the deep blue of the Atlantic. The sun was sinking into the gleaming bosom of the ocean, and the water was lit up with red and purple and gold.

"Well, this is jolly," said Nugent, with a deep breath.

"Glorious!"

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NOW
ON SALE.

THE EMPIRE LIBRARY.

ONE
HALFPENNY.

"We shall have a ripping time here," said Mark Linley, as they picked their way down the rugged path to the fishing village under the cliffs.

"I say, you fellows, I'm hungry!"

"I can see some boats from here," said Wharton, as they went down the rough path. "Some of them look pretty rocky, too. We ought to get one at a reasonable figure."

Half an hour later the juniors stood in the little village. The sunset was deepening into night.

A group of fishermen, in jerseys and huge boots, stood smoking outside a little inn, within a stone's throw of the boats turned up on the beach. The juniors entered the inn, and were soon eating a hearty meal; and for the time Billy Bunter's grumbling was silenced.

Leaving his comrades still at their meal, Harry Wharton sought out the jolly-looking landlord—a little fat man with a red face and a strong smell of fish—and tackled him on the question of the boat.

The innkeeper was astounded at first, and for a long time persisted in believing that the juniors simply wanted to hire a boat; but finally he was made to understand that they really and truly wanted to purchase one. Then he scratched his bald head in a thoughtful way.

"I've got just the craft you want," he remarked. "It was Peter Heard's boat, but 'un never came back from the fishing."

"It's seaworthy, I suppose?" said Harry.

"Seaworthy enough, or I'd never sell 'un to you," said the landlord. "I'm selling it for his widder. And the price is three pound."

Wharton could not help smiling. The simple fellow, living in that quiet nook of the Devon coast, was a stranger to the ways of cities, and he had never learned to "take the stranger in," evidently. He might as easily have asked six pounds for the old boat, but it never occurred to his slow and honest mind to double his price because he was dealing with an inexperienced lad.

"Done!" said Harry at once.

"I'll show you the boat," said the landlord. "When do you want it?"

"At once."

"You're not going on the water now, young master?"

"Yes, I am. It's fine weather, and a run on the sea will be safe enough," said Harry.

"Safe enough, I make no doubt, but—" The landlord scratched his head again. He was evidently greatly puzzled to know what to make of Wharton and his comrades; but apparently he came to the conclusion that it was no business of his, for he asked no questions.

Wharton was taken to see the boat, which was drawn up on the beach. It was a large and heavy craft, with the mast lying in it. The landlord promised that the sail should be put in with a couple of oars that belonged to the boat. Wharton returned to his comrades in cheerful spirits.

"It's all right," he announced, sitting down to the bread and cheese again. "I've got a boat, and we can start as soon as we've finished eating."

"Jolly good!"

"Oh, really, Wharton, I think we ought to have a rest," said Bunter. "I'm getting absolutely worn out, you know. Besides, it isn't safe to go to sea at night."

Wharton laughed. The little run he proposed to make was safe enough for the Greyfriars juniors, who spent many a happy hour on Pegg Bay during the term, who could swim like fishes, and handle almost any kind of craft afloat. Harry Wharton had not formed the Greyfriars Naval Cadet Corps for nothing.

"It will be jolly!" said Bob Cherry. "The moon's coming up, and we shall have lots of light. I suppose you'll know where to land, Hazel?"

"Oh, yes; Black Rock's not to be mistaken!" said Hazeldene. "I should know it in the dark; but if it's moonlight it will be all serene."

The juniors left the inn. Some of the fishermen willingly helped them to get the boat down to the water, while Wharton was settling with the landlord.

The sun had disappeared now, though there was still a red glow on the bosom of the western sea. The moon had climbed the east, and a silver light fell upon the wooded cliffs and the deep, echoing combe.

The sea was rolling softly, calm and fair.

The boat grated over the pebbles into the water, and floated, and the juniors stepped the mast. Wharton pushed off and shipped the rudder. The boat glided into deep water, and the sail was shaken out.

There was a sudden yell from the shadows of the shore.

"Stop—stop them!"

The juniors started.

"My hat! I know that voice!" cried Bob Cherry.

"The South American!"

"Great Scott! He's found us again!"

"But he's found us too late," said Harry Wharton grimly.

There was a pounding of feet, and a dim form came tearing down the path to the beach. The fishermen stared at it in blank amazement.

The South American came panting down over the pebbles. "Stop them!" he shouted hoarsely. "Carambo! Stop them!"

The boat was gliding out; already a dozen feet separated it from the shore, and as soon as the sail caught the wind it would speed along fast enough.

The pursuer was too late.

He halted, panting, on the water's edge, and waved his hand wildly after the boat. His voice rose to a furious shriek.

"Come back—come back!"

Harry Wharton laughed. He was not likely to turn back at the bidding of the South American. He took the rudder, while the others handled the sheets.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" sang out Bob Cherry, kissing his hand to the furious figure on the beach.

The South American raved.

"Come back! I—I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Too late, sonny!" called out Nugent. "You're done—unless you want a swim! It's a nice night for a swim, if you feel up to it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

As if taking the junior at his word, the South American plunged into the water. He swam strongly after the boat. The sail did not fill for the moment, and the strong swimmer came swiftly up.

"My hat! Look at that!" ejaculated Nugent.

Wharton's face set grimly.

"Take the rudder, will you, Linley?"

"Right-ho!" said Mark.

Wharton relinquished the lines to the Lancashire lad, and picked up a boathook. Holding it firmly, he stood ready for the South American to come up.

Ijorra's eyes met his in a blaze of fury.

"Go back!" said Wharton.

"Carambo!"

"If you lay a hand on this boat, you will suffer for it."

The South American, with gritting teeth, made a tremendous effort, and came level, and his dusky fingers flashed up from the water and grasped the gunwale. Without a moment's hesitation Harry brought the boathook down. It rang on the gunwale with a loud crack, but the South American had withdrawn his fingers just in time. He slid back into the sea.

The wind filled the sail, and the boat seemed to take a

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sudden leap, and in a flash the swimmer was left a dozen yards behind.

He ground his teeth and swam furiously after the boat, but it was drawing away now three feet to his one.

It was useless, and he realised it. Panting, exhausted, he relaxed his efforts. He remained treading water while the boat glided out into the moonlit sea.

Wharton looked steadily back. The South American was swimming back to the shore now. He was dragged exhausted from the water by the helping hands of the fishermen. As the boat ran seaward, the juniors caught a last glimpse of the dripping figure, standing there in the moonlight, with a threatening fist shaken after them.

Then the shore and the figure disappeared, as the boat ran seaward. Hazeldene gave a great gasp of relief.

"We want to get southward," he remarked, as the boat steadily sped on into the wide sea.

"Not till we're quite out of sight of land," said Wharton.

"We don't want to leave him the shadow of a clue."

"Right!"

And the boat sped on. Not till the shore and the cliffs and the deep woods beyond were a black mass on the edge of the sea, did the Greyfriars chums change the course of the boat to the southward.

"Baffled—as they say in the six-shilling novels," grinned Bob Cherry. "Dished—as we say at Greyfriars!"

The boat drew towards the shore again. The juniors handled it easily, and it sailed well. A great cliff loomed up from the moonlight. Hazeldene pointed to it.

"That's the Black Rock!"

"And your uncle's house?"

"At the foot of the cliff. There's a cove, and a landing-place there—it's all serene, now."

And the juniors steered for the Black Rock; and five minutes later they had made the boat fast in the little cove, and jumped ashore. A light twinkled through dim trees in the distance.

"Home!" said Hazeldene.

The long journey was over. The juniors followed Hazeldene up the rocky path, and for once they all agreed cordially with Billy Bunter, that supper and bed, and a jolly long sleep would be exactly the proper "caper."

THE END.

(Another splendid tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled "The Junior's Enemy," by Frank Richards. Order your "Magnet" Library in advance. Price One Penny.)

The First Chapters of a New Serial.



STANLEY DARE

The Boy Detective

INTRODUCTION.

Stanley Dare, the Boy Detective, having rescued a lad named Tom Winfield from the Thames, into which he had been flung by would-be assassins, becomes interested in the case. He journeys from London to Launceston, Tasmania, where Tom Winfield lives, and there meets his old friend, Professor MacAndrew, who offers to assist him to trace young Winfield's unknown assailants. The three are travelling in the bush together when Tom Winfield is kidnapped. Stanley Dare traces the hand of a rascally lawyer named Silas Warner in the business, and leaving their black tracker, Watoonga, to follow the trail of the kidnappers, the young detective and his friend, the professor, return to Launceston to search out Warner. Stanley Dare confronts the scoundrel in his den, but the lawyer overpowers him, and locks him in a huge oak wardrobe, and leaves him there to suffocate. Immediately on gaining the street, however, Warner runs right into Professor MacAndrew.

Silas Warner Disappears.

"Muster Silas Warner, I believe," observed the professor, as he laid a detaining hand on the lawyer's arm. "I'm sorry to put you to any inconvenience, but I'll hae tae trouble ye to remain here till my friend Stanley Dare joins us, or sends word tae me that I may let ye go!"

For the space of several seconds the wily lawyer was so taken aback as to be incapable of uttering a word. The situation was a desperate one for him, and for the moment he saw no way out of it. This Scottish professor, with the

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NEXT
WEEK:

"THE JUNIOR'S ENEMY."

muscular arms—the grip of his fingers was like a vice—had declared, in no uncertain tones, that his captive must remain with him until Stanley Dare joined them.

And the bitter irony of the matter lay in the fact that, by his own dastardly act, the young detective could not by any means join them. His non-appearance would excite suspicion, and the crime would be discovered. For even if his victim was still alive, the villainous outrage would be punished by many years imprisonment. He cursed his folly for not having quitted the building by the back way.

A Double-Length Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

But all at once he brightened up, for he remembered that unless he gave away the secret no one would be likely to find the body of Stanley Dare, alive or dead, in the place it was hidden. He resolved to put a bold face on the matter, and if the professor was obstinate, to get out of his difficulty by a daring stratagem.

"I don't know what you mean by venturing to detain me in this manner," he exclaimed, with well-assumed indignation; "but if you don't instantly release me, you will get yourself into trouble. I know nothing of Mr. Stanley Dare, and his whereabouts is a matter of no concern to me whatever!"

"Verra guid," observed MacAndrew coolly. "Ye dae it verra weel; but as I happen to know that Stanley Dare was in your room less than a quarter of an hour syne, and with you, for we watched ye intae the hoose, ye'll see that all your blither aboot knowing naething of him won't gae doon with me."

"You're mad—quite mad!" said the lawyer.

"I'm nae mad enow tae let ye go until I find out what has become o' Stanley Dare."

Warner knew now that his only hope was a resort to stratagem. He, therefore, commenced to struggle with MacAndrew, although he was well aware that under ordinary circumstances to attempt to break away from that iron grip would be futile.

But now he not only struggled, but he struck savagely at the Scotsman with his fist. The result was what he anticipated. MacAndrew shook him as a terrier shakes a rat, and then Silas Warner began to shout out for assistance at the top of his voice.

"Help! Help!" he yelled. "Police! Murder-r!" Then he flung himself down on to the pavement, but MacAndrew did not let go his grip.

"Squeak away, ye loon!" said the professor. "When the police come ye'll mebbe sing tae a different tune."

But MacAndrew was forgetting that he was practically a stranger in Launceston, whereas Silas Warner was not. He was certainly known as a lawyer with a name for undertaking shady business, but he had been artful enough never to have given the police reason to suspect him of anything worse.

In a few seconds a policeman and two civilians came running along the street, the lawyer renewing his shouts for help.

"Take this man away!" he cried. "He will murder me! Constable, I give him in charge for assault!"

The constable and one of the civilians gripped hold of the professor, who realised now the artful game which Silas Warner was playing, while the other civilian helped the lawyer to his feet.

"You saw him?" panted Warner. "I believe the fellow is mad! I have never seen him before to my knowledge! I don't know who he is!"

"You liar!" exclaimed the indignant Scotsman. "Ye ken well who I am!"

"He suddenly made an attack upon me," pursued the lawyer, without heeding the interruption, "without the slightest provocation or reason."

"You charge him with assault?" said the constable, pulling out his notebook.

"Most certainly I do!"

"Then you will have to come to the police-station," said the constable to MacAndrew. "You see, we witnessed the assault, for you had Mr. Warner on the ground when we came up. As to whether there was provocation, I know nothing. The magistrate will decide that to-morrow."

Professor MacAndrew was on the horns of a dilemma. He feared that Stanley Dare had fallen into a trap and might be in desperate need of help. At the same time he did not wish to lose sight of Silas Warner. Then, again, as the rascally lawyer had charged him with assault, he would certainly have to go to the police-station, and if he could not find bail would be locked up for the night. He did not for an instant suppose that Warner would appear again the next day. He would have

too much regard for his own safety for that. In desperation the professor appealed to the constable.

"Look here, officer!" he cried. "I was holding that mon, Silas Warner, because I believe that he has committed murder, or attempted to commit murder!"

"What?" screamed the lawyer, although he went pale as death at the words. "Do you dare to make such an accusation against me? I told you, constable, that he was mad!"

"I demand that Warner's rooms be searched!" pursued MacAndrew. "A freend of mine entered them nearly an hour ago to see this mon—"

"Here, this won't do, you know!" expostulated the officer. "You won't mend your own case by bringing such a ridiculous charge as that against Mr. Warner. The best thing you can do is to hold your tongue and come along quietly."

There was no help for it. Professor MacAndrew was ignominiously marched off between the constable and one of the civilians. The other civilian, having given his name and address to the constable, went on his way. Silas Warner walked behind.

But when the constable and his prisoner entered the police-station, nobody appeared to prefer a charge against the professor.

Silas Warner had disappeared!

Professor MacAndrew's News—To the Rescue!

Of course, as there was nobody to prefer a charge against Professor MacAndrew now, he was, after a short interval of waiting, released.

"I can't understand it!" muttered the constable. "I saw the struggle taking place right enough; but I don't understand Mr. Warner's game in first of all giving this gentleman into custody for assault, and then giving us the slip, instead of coming here to prefer the charge against him."

The inspector, to whom these remarks were addressed, was quite as puzzled as the constable.

"I shall have to see Mr. Warner over this matter to-morrow," he said. "In the meantime, sir"—he turned to the professor—"if you will leave your name and address I will not detain you."

"It's a peety the constable didna' dae as I asked him," exclaimed MacAndrew, "and mak' a search in Silas Warner's rooms. Ye'll no be finding him there, or anywhere else in this toon, the morn's morn, I'm thinkin'."

"What reason have you for making such a statement, Mr. MacAndrew?" demanded the inspector.

Professor MacAndrew gave an account of all that had transpired that evening—all, that is, of which he had a personal knowledge—and a brief statement of the case which had brought Stanley Dare out to Tasmania.

The inspector opened his eyes wide at the recital, and, realising that the Scotsman's words bore the stamp of truth, he apologised for any inconvenience which might have been caused him by his arrest.

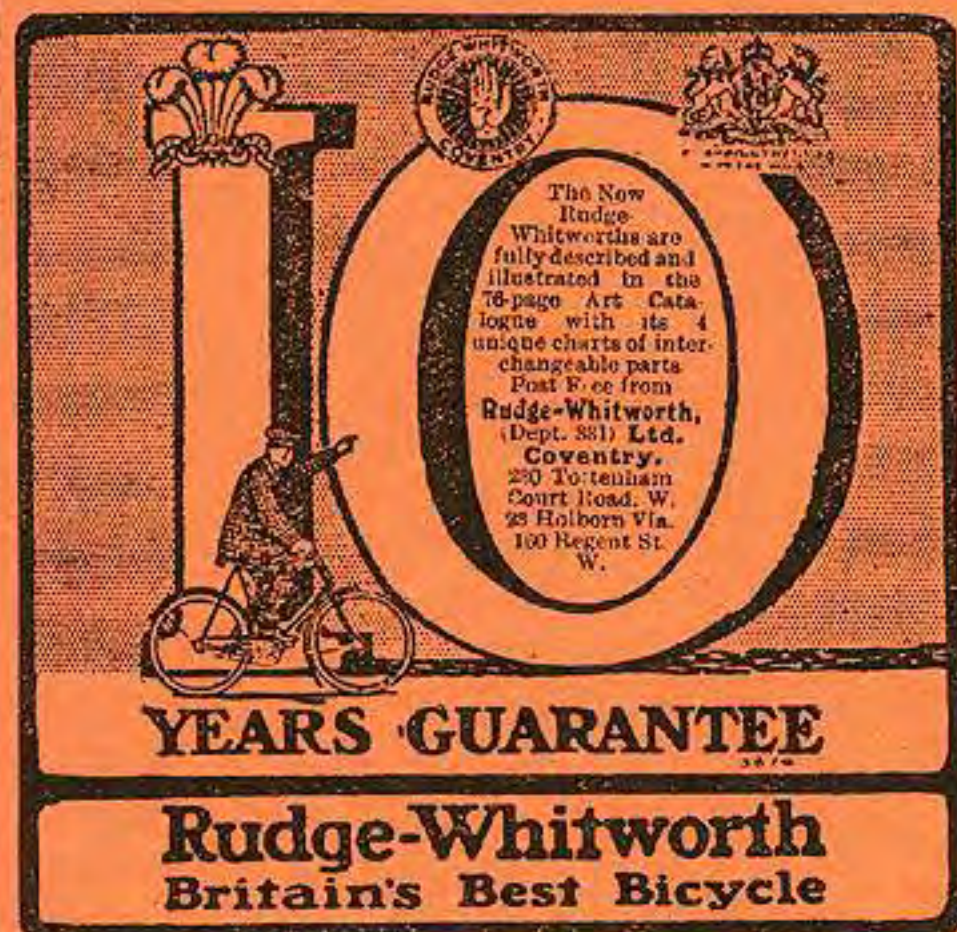
"The inconvenience tae myself is naething tae the time which has been wasted," replied MacAndrew. "I fear that young Dare is in peril, and in need of help. It may even be a question of minutes between his life and his death—that is, if he is still alive. Warner may have murdered him outright, if he had the chance of dacing so. I'd like weel if ye'd lend me one of your men, inspector, tae come back wi' me and search Warner's rooms."

"I'll come with you myself," said the inspector. "If Mr. Silas Warner is really in league with Luke Bastable, I can quite believe that he is capable of any crime. It was by a mere shave that Bastable escaped hanging about a year ago; and, under the circumstances, we shall be quite justified in making an examination of our legal friend's rooms."

(Another instalment of this splendid serial next week.)



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