

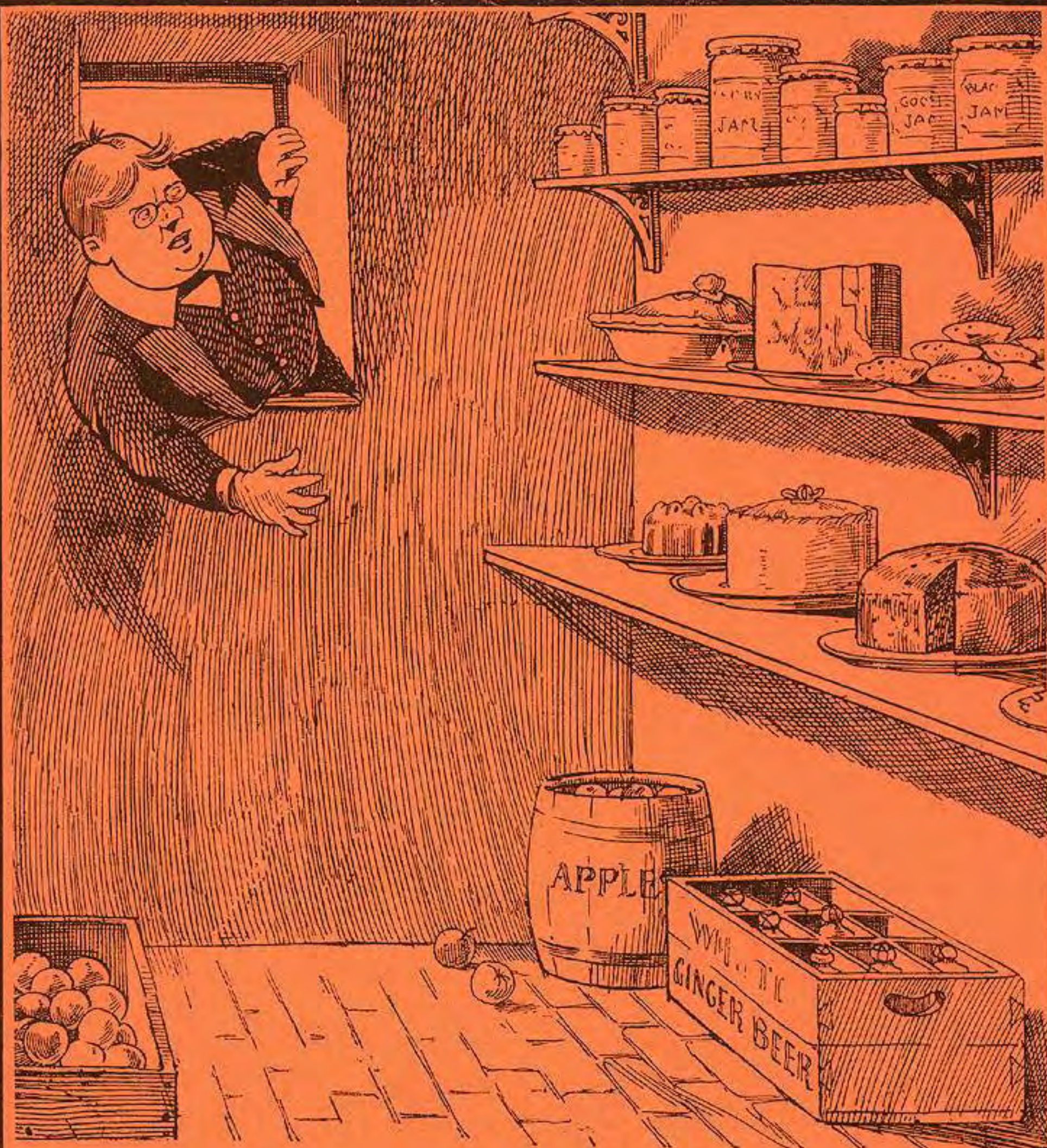
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“POOR OLD BUNTER.”



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[Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following Story are purely imaginary, and no reference or allusion is made to any living person. Actual names may be unintentionally mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reflection is intended.]



RIVAL WEEKLY.

A Splendid, Long, Complete
School Tale of
HARRY WHARTON & CO.,
at Greyfriars.

— BY —

FRANK RICHARDS

P.S.—Watch Billy Bunter and Alonzo.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Personal Jealousy.

“I’m going to give you fellows one last chance.”

Billy Bunter made that statement.

He stood in a dramatic attitude—or, at all events, what he considered a dramatic attitude—in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars.

It was bed-time, and the Remove the Lower Fourth of Greyfriars—had gone up to bed. Most of the juniors had turned in, and all were undressed, for the prefect was expected every moment to look in and put out the light.

As a rule, there was a great deal of chatter in the Remove dormitory when the juniors went up to bed, and this particular evening was no exception to the rule. The Removites were chatting away very busily, and there was but one topic—the school paper.

Certain fellows in the Remove had brought out a new paper. John Bull was the editor, and it was called “John

Bull Junior’s Weekly.” Harry Wharton & Co. were all sub-editors. If the paper was not a success, it certainly would not be from any lack of sub-editing.

Billy Bunter had offered his services pressingly as editor, as sub-editor, or as anything else, and his valuable services had been declined with singular unanimity by the whole staff.

The juniors were talking about a forthcoming second number of the paper, and had apparently forgotten that there was such a person as Bunter in existence.

Bunter had been glowering through his big spectacles for a long time, while he divested himself from his tight-fitting clothes. However large Bunter’s clothes might be, they were certain to be tight-fitting. He had transferred himself into his pyjamas, looking a great deal like a coloured balloon, as Frank Nugent had remarked.

No one even observed that he was glowering.

Bunter’s words burst out of him at last, in a stream of

indignation. Standing erect, or as erect as his tubby form would allow, with his arms folded, he hurled his ultimatum at the Greyfriars' Remove.

"A last chance!" he repeated dramatically.

The Remove seemed to awake then to a knowledge of the existence of the fat junior. Two or three fellows looked round lazily.

Frank Nugent, who was getting into bed, sat on the bed instead, and looked at Bunter.

"Did you speak, Bunter?" he asked.

"Yes, I jolly well did!" snorted the Owl of the Remove.

"What did you say?"

"I'm going to give you fellows a last chance."

"He's wandering," said Bob Cherry. "He can't help doing these things; it's simply an effect of too many jam tarts on the system. I should strongly advise you to give up jam tarts, Bunter. In the long run—"

"Look here—"

"I'm looking. It's painful to the eyesight, but I'm doing it. In the long run, I can foresee you tottering a prematurely aged wreck into an early grave. I was thinking of an epitaph for you, which would do temporarily for a contribution to the 'Weekly.'"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Here lies one whom jam tarts did kill,
Who always lied, and now lies still!"

The Remove roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think that's a jolly good epitaph," said Bob Cherry, with a great deal of satisfaction. "You see, there's a pun in the last line."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you fellows," roared Billy Bunter, "I've had enough of this rot! I've said that I'm going to give you a last chance."

"Oh, go to bed!" said Harry Wharton.

"You have excluded me from the staff of the school weekly—"

"Turn in!"

"And you mean to keep me out of the whole thing by combining against me? Your motive is sheer personal jealousy. You think that if my splendid work appears in the paper, it will throw all your stuff into the shade."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know how I can write poetry—"

"We know how you can crib it!" said Tom Brown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Brown! You've seen an instalment of my serial—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a splendid story of thrilling adventure—"

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I looked at the manuscript in the editorial offices, and I thought that it was a comic serial. I know I laughed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This personal jealousy blinds you to merit in my case. You see, some chaps are born to do brainy things, and— I'm one of them."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm quite willing to edit the 'Weekly'—"

"Go hon!" said John Bull.

"I'm quite willing to take the chief place as sub-editor—"

"Not really?"

"Or just to contribute," said Bunter. "There!"

"The trouble is, that we're not willing," said John Bull. "Even if you wrote anything good, I should think you'd cribbed it!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"You've tried to work off Tennyson's poetry as your own. You'll be bringing along a play next by Shakespeare, and trying to make us believe you wrote 'Hamlet.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, Bunter might make out a claim," said Nugent gravely. "Some people say that Shakespeare's plays were written by Bacon. Bacon is a kind of pork, and Bunter is a pig, so—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, you'd better listen to me. It's your last chance."

"Oh, go it!" said Ogilvy. "Pile in. Get it over. I want to get to bed."

"It's important—"

"Buck up!"

"I'm going to give you a last chance—"

"We've heard that one before," said Bulstrode. "Can't you change the record?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

PLEASE NOTE!

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"Get on with the washing!" roared Bob Cherry. "Do you think we're going to listen to you all night?"

"Well, as I was saying, I'm going to give you a last chance. You can make the 'Weekly' a success by putting my stuff in, or you can ruin it by personal jealousy. You are free to make your choice about it; but, mark—"

"Here, Linley, Bunter's talking to you!"

"Eh? What's that?" said Mark Linley, turning round. Bunter snorted.

"I wasn't talking to Linley. I said mark—"

"Well, Linley's Mark."

"What is it?" asked Mark Linley, who had been studying a list of Greek verbs written on the inside of his cap, and not paying any attention to the Owl of the Remove.

"Nothing; you ass!" snarled Bunter. "I said mark—"

"Well?"

"Mark!" roared Bunter. "Mark my words!"

"Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mark my words!" went on Bunter furiously. "Mark my words, I—"

"I'll mark your chivvy if you don't pretty soon come to the end!" said Hazeldene.

"Oh, really, you know, as I was saying, you can take your choice about excluding me from the staff of the 'Weekly'; but, mark my words, you'll be sorry for it. You know, I'm a dab at writing, and at managing things, too. I've got more knowledge of business than all you silly asses put together! Now, I'm going to give you a last chance—"

"My hat! He's at the beginning again now."

"Oh, Bunter has been reading Tennyson! He's learned a lesson from the little brook, and he's going on for ever," said John Bull.

"Ring off, Bunter!"

"Go to bed!"

"Cheese it!"

"Mark my words!" roared Bunter. "I say, mark me! I shall either take up a chief place on the staff of the school paper, or—"

"Or you won't!" suggested Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or," said Billy Bunter, after a dramatic pause—"or I shall start a rival weekly!"

"What?"

The juniors of the Remove stared at Bunter.

If Bunter had wished to astonish his Form-fellows, he had succeeded in doing so now. For Bunter, who had not an idea in his head, and not a shilling in his pocket, to think of starting a school paper on his own was surprising, to say the least.

The juniors stared at him blankly for a few moments, and then they roared. It was a roar that rang through the dormitory.

Bunter blinked at them indignantly.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you silly asses—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I want your answer!" yelled Bunter. "I want you to say what you're going to do. I want a plain answer—yee, or no."

Harry Wharton made a sign to his comrades.

Each of the juniors grasped a pillow or a bolster.

"You want an answer?" queried Wharton.

"Yes. I—"

"Here it is. Pile in!"

Whiz! Swish! Swoop! Boosh!

"Yow! Ow! Yaroo!"

Pillows and bolsters flew through the air like a cloud.

Biff! Bump! Whiz! Swoop!

They bumped on Bunter, they biffed on him, they caught him on the head, and the legs, and the back, and curled round his neck, and knocked him breathless.

"Yow!" roared the Owl of the Remove. "Stop it!"

Yoop! Yaroo! Yah! Oh! Help! Fire! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Biff! Biff! Biff!

The fat junior staggered and rolled over.

Still the hail of missiles continued, till the Owl of the Remove was almost buried beneath a mountain of pillows and bolsters.

The door opened.

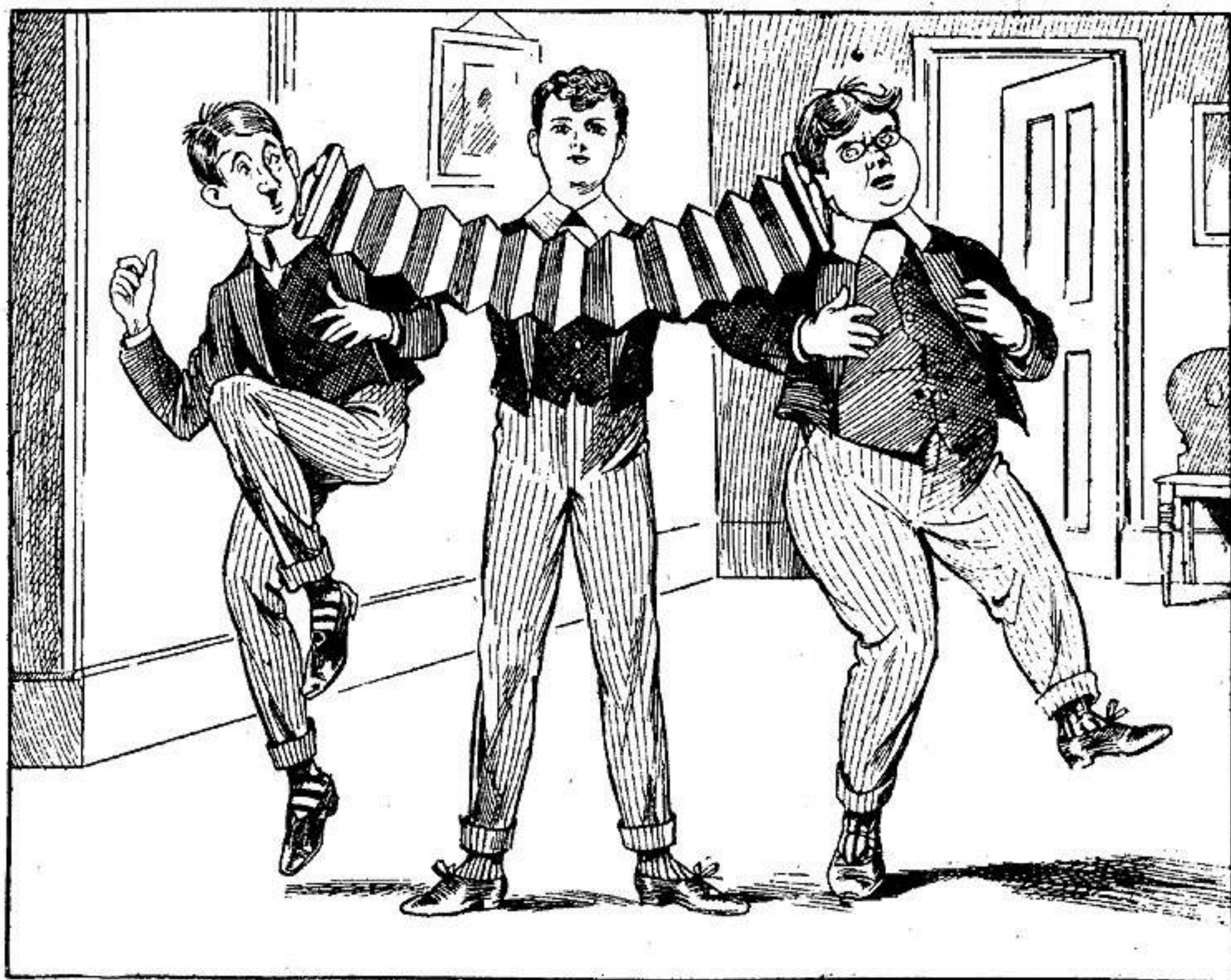
"Cave!" called out Harry Wharton.

The juniors rushed into bed.

Wingate, of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, looked in.

"Now, then, in bed. My hat!"

Wingate paused and stared at the scene on the floor of the



John Bull swept the concertina out to its full extent. One hand crashed upon Alonzo's chin and the other caught Bunter on the ear, and there were a couple of wild yells. (See page 4.)

dormitory. Billy Bunter's head and spectacles emerged from a sea of bolsters and pillows. From the beds, minus pillows and bolsters, came loud snores.

"Groo!" gasped Bunter. "Ow! Oh!"

"My hat! What the— Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate burst into a roar of laughter. He could not help it. Bunter sat up, and blinked at him and groaned.

"Ow! I'm hurt! I've been brutally assaulted! My backbone is sprained, and some of my legs have been broken—I mean, some of my ribs! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Wingate—"

"Get into bed, Bunter. Take these things back, you kids. Don't pretend to be asleep, you asses! Do you think I believe you're asleep without your pillows?" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain, with a laugh.

The juniors tumbled out, grinning. They had not really expected to take Wingate in with those loud snores, under the circumstances.

"I—I can't move!" groaned Bunter. "You see, I'm hurt! My backbone— Oh!"

Wingate drew back his boot. Bunter squirmed out of the way with really wonderful agility, considering that so many of his limbs were broken, and bolted into bed.

"Now, no more rows here," said Wingate, laughing. "Mind, I shall come up if you begin any more of this. Good-night!"

"Good night, Wingate!"

And the light was turned out, and the door closed behind the captain of Greyfriars. Then a squeaky voice was heard from Bunter's bed, addressing the Remove generally:

"Beasts!"

And the Remove chuckled.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT
TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Musical Editor.

"LEME see," Frank Nugent remarked the next day, as the chums of Study No. 1 in the Remove finished their tea. "I suppose we'd better take our copy in before we go out for a run?"

"Well, I've got mine done," said Harry Wharton. "How are you getting on, Inky?"

The dusky Nabob of Bhanipur grinned.

"The esteemed ludicrous editor prints so little of my honourable serial, that I am not overworkfully taxed to keep up the august instalments," he replied. "I have more than enough for the present honourable week."

"Then let's pile it in on him and get out."

"Good egg!"

The Greyfriars juniors were taking the new paper quite seriously. But they had to admit that the contributions took up a great deal of time they had been accustomed to devoting to the gym and the footer field.

However, Harry Wharton & Co. were prepared to set the example of sticking to it.

Wharton, and Nugent, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh, walked up the Remove passage with their manuscript under their arms.

Nugent gave a sudden shout:

"Listen! The villain!"

From the end study—No. 14—usually occupied by John Bull, Alonzo Todd, and Fisher T. Fish—now used as the editorial office of the "Weekly"—came the dismal strains of a concertina.

It was John Bull's one weakness. He fondly fancied that he could extract music from that terrible instrument.

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums
of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

But he couldn't.

The three Removites paused in the passage. They had no desire to get nearer to the concertina in No. 14.

"Oh, we'll bung in the copy and belt!" exclaimed Wharton. "What a fearful nerve, using the editorial office to play that rotten instrument of torture!"

"Buck up, then!"

The juniors ran along the passage.

John Bull was sitting on the edge of the study table, a rapt expression on his face, and the concertina going at full speed.

Bull probably imagined that he was playing a tune of some kind. But in that case it must have been an extremely classical one, for it was not recognisable as a tune at all.

"Hold on!" roared Wharton.

"Stop!"

"Chuck it!"

"Bull played on, unheeding. His head was a little on one side, his eyes dreamy. He was deep in his occupation, lost to the outside world.

"I have already requested Bull to cease that unpleasant, and, indeed, exasperating noise," said Alonzo Todd, who was seated at the window. "He persists, however, in spite of my earnest request. My Uncle Benjamin would speak to him very severely, I am sure, if he were here."

"Chuck it, Bull!" roared Wharton. "Here's the copy!"

"Put it on the table."

"Don't you want to discuss it?"

"No."

"Look here——"

"Don't interrupt!"

"You ass!"

"Get out!"

"Jolly glad to!" said Nugent.

And laying their copy on the study table, the three chums bolted. A few minutes later Bob Cherry looked in.

"Will you stop that row, Bull?" he bellowed. "This next room is mine, and I can hear every jerk and grind of that horrible thing!"

"It is, indeed, extremely painful to listen to, my dear Bull!" said Alonzo Todd.

"I'm going out!" bawled Bob Cherry. "When I come in, you'll stop—do you hear?—or there will be homicide!"

"Grind—crash—buzz—gr-r-r-r!"

Bob Cherry stamped out of the study.

Billy Bunter rolled up the Remove passage, and looked in at the door. He stopped his ears with his fingers.

"I say, Bull——"

"Gr-r-r-r-rind!"

"Bull, old man——"

"Shut up!"

"I want to speak to you——"

"Get out!"

"I'm going to give you one more chance——"

"Br-r-r-r!"

Bunter snorted. Alonzo Todd was looking deeply distressed. The grind and growl of that dreadful cheap concertina was enough to distress a marble statue.

The two juniors approached John Bull.

Bull slid off the table, and without ceasing to play, he landed out with his boot, and Alonzo gave a yell.

"Ow! My dear Bull, you have caused me considerable pain in my leg! Ow!"

"Gr-r-r-r-rind!—crash—rattle—gr-r-r-r!"

John Bull played on. He was evidently quite indifferent to the considerable pain in Alonzo's leg.

"My dear Bull——"

"I say, Bull——"

"Under the circumstances, my Uncle Benjamin would——"

"Look here, Bull——"

"He would be shocked, not to say——"

"I'm going to give you a last chance——"

"——Disgusted! You see——"

"Oh!"

"Yow!"

John Bull swept the concertina out to its full extent. One hand crashed upon the side of Alonzo's chin, the other caught Bunter on the ear.

"Yarrah! Oh!"

Alonzo staggered away, rubbing his chin. Bunter sat on the table, and rubbed his ear and roared. The concertina shrieked on.

"My dear Bull, I cannot—— Oh, dear, I feel that I must retire! Oh!"

And Alonzo fairly bolted from the study. Billy Bunter followed him. Even Bunter, who had no nerves to speak of, could not stand John Bull's music.

John Bull grinned. He was left in undisputed possession of the field, and the concertina brayed and shrieked on unchecked.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

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"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Caught Bending.

"PLUM jam!"

"Eh?"

"Raspberry jam!"

"What?"

"Black-currant jam!" said Billy Bunter dreamily.

The Famous Four stared at Billy Bunter. Bob Cherry tapped his forehead significantly.

"Has it come at last?" he murmured.

"The comefulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Bunter is off his august rocker at last!"

"Strawberry jam!"

"Bunter——"

"Plum jam!"

"There—he's got back to the first record again!" said Bob Cherry. "What's the matter with you, Bunter? Are you understudying a gramophone?"

"Raspberry jam!"

"Look here——"

"Red-currant jam!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry took the fat junior by the shoulders and shook him until his glasses rolled down his fat little nose.

Bunter made a wild clutch at his glasses, and blinked indignantly at the four Removites.

"Groo! What's up? Lemme alone!"

"What are you mumbling about?" demanded Wharton.

"Are you off you silly onion?"

"I—I was thinking of——"

"Jam!" grinned Frank Nugent.

"Ye-es," said Billy Bunter. "You see, the housekeeper has been putting away a lot of jam that she made herself——"

"And you'd like to put some away——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! You see, I happened to see——"

"What a lot of things you happen to see!" Frank Nugent remarked sarcastically. "Were you looking in at a window or a keyhole?"

"Oh, really, you know——"

"Well, you don't mean to say that Mrs. Kebble has presented you with any jam, raspberry, or black-currant, or any other kind?" asked Bob.

"Oh, no! I was thinking—— Look here, if you fellows are game for a raid, I can show you where it is!" said Bunter, in an impressive whisper.

"What!"

"It's in the pantry. We should only have to get the key from Mrs. Kebble's room, you see, and——"

"You fat rascal!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I know the drawer in the table where Mrs. Kebble keeps the key, and it would be as easy as anything for one of you chaps to pop in and sneak it——"

"Why couldn't you pop in and sneak it?"

"Well, you see, I—I——"

"You might be caught!" sniffed Nugent.

"Well, I—I—you see, I'm not so light on my feet as you chaps," said Bunter, blinking at them. "I'm rather slow, owing to being run down for want of nourishment——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A few pots of jam would set me up splendidly. Look here, if you nip into Mrs. Kebble's room to get the key, I'll undertake to keep the old lady occupied somewhere else. You know what a splendid ventriloquist I am, for instance. Look here, it's worth working, and if it's a success you shall have half the jam, and I'll give you some columns in "Bunter's Weekly."

"Bunter's what?" roared the four sub-editors of "John Bull Junior's Weekly" together.

"Bunter's Weekly!" said the Owl of the Remove boldly. "I told you I was going to start a new school paper!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Look here," said Bob Cherry, clapping the Owl of the Remove on the shoulder, "we're not going to raid pantries and steal jam! That's in your line, but not in ours, and I warn you to let it alone! Don't be a pig! Rats!"

And the Chums of the Remove walked on and left Bunter blinking.

"Beasts!" said the fat junior savagely.

That was Bunter's favourite epithet when people did not do exactly as he wished.

According to Bunter, the world must have been chiefly populated by beasts.

Bunter thrust his hands deep into his pockets and thought it out. The idea of the jam, in rows of pots in the house-

keeper's pantry, haunted him, and filled his mind with visions of endless gorging.

He could not get that jam out of his mind.

How he was to get the key from Mrs. Kebble's room was a mystery. Two fellows in conspiracy might have done it, but for one alone it was very risky. And Bunter knew that nobody in the Remove, excepting himself, would be willing to run risks for the sake of ever so much jam, plum or strawberry or black-currant.

The fat junior rolled away in the direction of the housekeeper's room.

Mrs. Kebble was there.

Bunter could see her through the half-open door; and perhaps the fat junior made some sound, in spite of his caution, for the housekeeper looked up and saw him.

"What do you want, Master Bunter?" she exclaimed, with asperity in her voice.

Mrs. Kebble had never liked Bunter, especially since the time when he had fallen upon her favourite dog—with fatal results to the dog. Bunter was not a light weight.

"I—I say, Mrs. Kebble, I—I want to speak to you," stammered Bunter. He really did not know what to say, for he was caught unexpectedly, and he had no business in that passage at all—at all events, none that he could explain to Mrs. Kebble.

"Well, what is it?" asked Mrs. Kebble.

"I—I—you see—"

"Well?"

"I—I wasn't thinking of the jam," Bunter explained. "It's—it's a nice afternoon, isn't it, Mrs. Kebble?"

"I am not going to give you any of the jam, if that is what you mean," said the housekeeper crossly. "You have much—too much to eat already."

"Oh, really, Mrs. Kebble—"

"Please run away, and don't bother."

"B-b-b-but—"

"Oh, go away!"

Bunter grunted, and walked away. He turned into the lower passage and walked right into a junior, who was coming along reading a book. The junior who was reading did not see Bunter; and the short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not see him till they had collided.

Bunter staggered back, and the other fellow, who happened to be Alonzo Todd, uttered a startled exclamation, and let the book fall.

Bunter gave a fiendish yell.

The book was a heavy one—in two senses of the word, being a Dictionary of Dates and Events—and it had dropped on Bunter's toe.

"Ow! Ow!"

"My dear Bunter—"

"Oh!" roared Bunter, hopping on one foot in anguish.

"Yah! You chump!"

"I'm so sorry—"

"Yow! You ass!"

"I'm so sorry, Bunter. I did not see you. I was perusing that volume to find some interesting fact suitable for insertion in 'John Bull Junior's Weekly,'" said Alonzo Todd.

"I'm so sorry the book fell on your toe, Bunter."

"Ow! Fathead!"

"My dear Bunter—"

"Groo!"

"I'm sure my Uncle Benjamin would consider I had done sufficiently in expressing my contrition for this slight accident, Bunter. Knowing your insincere nature, I cannot help suspecting that you are feigning an injury you do not feel."

And Todd stooped to pick up his book.

As he bent down the temptation was too great: revenge, as they say in the six-shilling novels, was in Bunter's grasp.

The fat junior swept out his foot.

Biff!

"Oh!" roared Alonzo Todd.

He pitched forward over the book. Bunter grinned.

"There, you ass!" he gasped. "I caught you bending that time! Yah!"

And Bunter rolled away as fast as his fat little legs would move.

"Oh!" gasped Todd. "That was most brutal of Bunter! Yow! I am considerably hurt! Groo! My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked, not to say disgusted! Ow!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Bunk Up for Bunter.

"BULSTRODE, old chap!"

Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove, looked down at Billy Bunter, and sniffed.

When Bunter addressed anybody as old chap, it invariably meant that he wanted something—generally money. Bulstrode involuntarily slipped his hand into his trousers pocket as if to make sure that his cash was safe while he was talking to Billy Bunter.

"Oh, get out!" he said. "I've nothing to give away! I THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT
TUESDAY:

"POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

know you're getting a postal-order this evening, and only want me to cash it in advance, but I'm not taking any. See?"

"Oh, really, Bulstrode—"

"Buzz off!"

"As a matter of fact, I am expecting several postal-orders," said Bunter warmly. "I shall have one this evening from my Uncle Tabitha—I mean Uncle John—and another from a titled friend of mine. And—"

"I've heard that before. Get out!"

"I hope, Bulstrode, that you don't imagine I was going to ask you for money?" said Billy Bunter, with a great deal of dignity.

The Remove bully stared at him.

"I jolly well did imagine it," he said.

"As a matter of fact, I was going to ask you to give me—"

"Five bob?" sneered Bulstrode. "You might as well say five pounds. You would be just as likely to get it."

"Not at all. I was going to ask you to give me a bunk up."

"A what?"

"A bunk up."

"You fat duffer! What are you driving at?"

"You see," said Billy Bunter, lowering his voice mysteriously—"you see, Bulstrode, Mrs. Kebble got a fresh lot of jams and preserves out of the store-room to-day. They're in the pantry; but the old cat is so keen, a fellow can't get at the key, and the pantry's always kept locked. But there's a window in the pantry, and I happen to know that it doesn't fasten safely."

"Well?"

"Well, if somebody gave me a bunk up, I could get in," said Bunter eagerly. "Then I could hand the jam out, and—"

"Oh, good!"

Bulstrode's eyes glistened with a gleam of fun. He knew the small, square pantry window, and he did not believe for a moment that the ample figure of William George Bunter would pass through it.

"You'll give me a bunk up?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Certainly."

"I'll hand the jam and preserves out to you. Might as well get another fellow to help us carry them away," said Bunter.

"Good egg! Hallo, Hazel!"

Hazeldene of the Remove came up. Hazel was looking a little gloomy. He was still on bad terms with Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, who always lent him money when they were friendly. Hazeldene never could keep money in his pockets; he owed the Bounder a great deal, and he was stony now. He was sticking to the line he had marked out for himself—to please his sister Marjorie more than anything else. But it was not a pleasant line. The horn of plenty had ceased to flow, and Hazeldene was disconsolate.

"What is it?" he asked gruffly enough, looking at the two juniors.

"Bunter's got a great wheeze," said Bulstrode, with a grin.

"He's going to raid Mrs. Kebble's jam and preserves."

"Oh, blow the jam!"

"Oh, really, Hazel—"

"I'm off!"

"Look here!" said Bunter. "I think you ought to help me, Hazel. You ought to stand by a chap who's on such jolly good terms with your sister. You know how Marjorie likes me."

Hazeldene's eyes gleamed, and he clenched his hand.

"Chuck it, you ass!" said Bulstrode. "Don't get ratty, Hazel. You ought to lend a hand here and help Bunter. He's going to get in through the pantry window."

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Bulstrode winked as he spoke, a wink that was quite unseen by the short-sighted Owl of the Remove.

Hazeldene's face broke into a grin.

"Oh, I see!" he said.

"You'll help bunk him up?"

"Certainly."

"Good!" said Billy Bunter. "We shall want help to carry the things away. I'll stand in the larder and hand them out, and then you can help me down. I shan't be able to get down from the window without assistance, you know; it's too high up."

"Oh, come on!" said Bulstrode.

"Make sure we're not watched first," exclaimed Bunter. "We don't want a row over it, you know. It would mean caning, and Quelch lays it on so hard."

Mr. Quelch, the Form-master of the Remove, was walking in the Close, as it happened. But the Owl of the Remove did not even see him as he blinked round.

"This way!" said Bulstrode. "Come on, Hazel!"

"I'm coming."

The three juniors went round the house very mysteriously. They stopped under the blank wall in which the little square window of the pantry opened. The window was opened, and within the square orifice were untold treasures.

"Look here! I'll give one of you fellows a bunk up, if you like, instead!" said Bunter, looking up doubtfully at the wall.

"Stuff! Up you get—"

"You see, I'm rather heavy, and—"

"Rats! We'll manage you between us."

"Hazeldene is lighter than I am, and—"

"Up with you!" said Hazeldene.

"But I say—"

Bulstrode and Hazeldene cut short the argument by seizing the fat junior and "bunking" him up against the wall. Billy Bunter sprawled against the brickwork, clutching, and clawing wildly.

"Careful!" he gasped.

"That's all right."

"I—I—I'm—"

"Collar the window-sill, and you'll be all right."

Bunter grasped the sill, and hung on.

"Now pull yourself in," said Bulstrode.

"A-a-all right!"

Bunter clambered in at the window. He got his head and arms and shoulders in. But he did not get any further.

His fat legs lashed outside the window. His arms sprawled within. He gasped, and called out to the juniors outside.

"I—I—I can't get in, Bulstrode! Ow!"

There was no reply. The unnatural stillness around him struck Bunter. He called out again.

"Bulstrode! Hazeldene! Bulstrode! Beasts! I say, you fellows! Bulstrode!"

But no answer came. As soon as Billy Bunter was jammed in the narrow window, the two juniors had walked away and left him there.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not Quite!

"OW! Oh!"

Billy Bunter squirmed and wriggled in the narrow window.

Within, enticingly arrayed on the shelves, were the good things for which he longed—jams in jars, and preserves, and all kinds of eatables. The tortures of Tantalus were a joke to this.

So near and yet so far. Billy Bunter, squirm and wriggle as he might, could not get through the window.

And he began to have some doubts about whether he could get out again, either.

He had squeezed himself in so far, that he was stuck in the opening, and he could neither advance nor retreat.

"Bulstrode! Hazel! I say, you fellows!"

But Hazeldene and Bulstrode were far away.

The fat junior wriggled and rolled.

"Help! Bulstrode! I say—help!"

Billy Bunter's voice rang and boomed in the narrow limits of the pantry. It echoed out of the little window, but there was no one at hand to hear it.

"Help! Help!"

Bunter shouted louder and louder.

He did not care what happened now so long as he escaped from his terrible predicament. Even if he could have wriggled himself out of the window he could not have found the nerve to drop to the ground without assistance.

"Help! Help!"

"Dear me!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch, whose stroll had brought him within distance of Billy Bunter's roaring. "Whatever can that be?"

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PLEASE NOTE!

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"Help!"

"Dear me!"

Mr. Quelch hurried in the direction of the muffled shouting. His astonishment at seeing a pair of trousers and a pair of boots wildly waving from the pantry-window, may be, as a novelist would say, better imagined than described.

Mr. Quelch stood and gazed in blank amazement at the astounding apparition.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed.

"Help!"

"It is Bunter's voice!"

"Help me out!" roared Billy Bunter, who heard the voice, but in his cramped and excited state did not recognise it as the Form-master's. "Help me out of this, you beast!"

"What?"

"What are you wasting time for, you silly fathead?"

"Bunter!"

"Lay hold, and pull me out, you silly chump!"

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch stood dumbfounded for a moment. Then he raised his walking-cane. Billy Bunter was in a favourable situation to take a caning, and he took it.

Swish, swish, swish!

The fat little legs wagged and waved more wildly than ever, and Bunter's roaring sounded like that of an imprisoned bull.

"Oh, oh, oh! Yah! Ass! Beast! Warooh!"

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow! Help! Murder! Fire!"

Swish, swish!

"Yooop!"

Bunter, with a final terrific wriggle, squeezed himself back out of the window, and dropped to the earth with a bump.

The fall was not really far, and Billy Bunter was not hurt, only all the breath was bumped out of him, and he sat gasping like a landed fish.

He clutched at his glasses, and set them straight on his fat little nose, and spluttered and gasped, and gasped and spluttered.

"Bunter!" shouted Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, I—I didn't know it was you, sir!" stuttered Bunter.

"I—I thought it was Bulstrode, sir. I—I assure you, sir—"

"What were you doing at that window, Bunter?"

"That—that window, sir?"

"Yes. What were you doing there?"

"I—I was trying to get—to get out, sir."

"Then you had been trying to get in," said Mr. Quelch regarding the fat junior with a stern brow.

"Oh, no, sir."

"Then how did you come at the window at all?"

"Bulstrode bunked me up, sir."

"Why did he bunk you up, as you call it, if not to enable you to enter the pantry window?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"I—I really don't know, sir. Perhaps it would be better to ask Bulstrode, sir. He may have had almost any motive."

"What?"

"You can't expect me to explain Bulstrode's motives for doing things, sir. Bulstrode may have done it for—for any reason, you know, sir."

"Bunter!"

"Y-e-e-es, sir."

"Did you ask Bulstrode to assist you to enter that window?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Ah!" Mr. Quelch looked round quickly. Bulstrode had just come round the corner of the house. The Remove bully was curious to see how the fat junior was getting on. His jaw dropped at the sight of Mr. Quelch. He would have retreated hurriedly enough, but the Remove-master beckoned to him.

"Bulstrode!"

"Y-e-es, sir," said Bulstrode, advancing reluctantly.

"Did Bunter request you to assist him in at this window?"

"Yes, sir."

"You hear that, Bunter?"

"I—I didn't, sir?"

"You awful young liar!" ejaculated Bulstrode. "Why, you asked me to give you a bunk up. Hazeldene knows you did."

"That's a—a different matter," said Bunter. "You—you see, sir, I—"

"Did you ask Bulstrode to give you a bunk up?"

"Yes, sir."

"Just now you denied doing so."

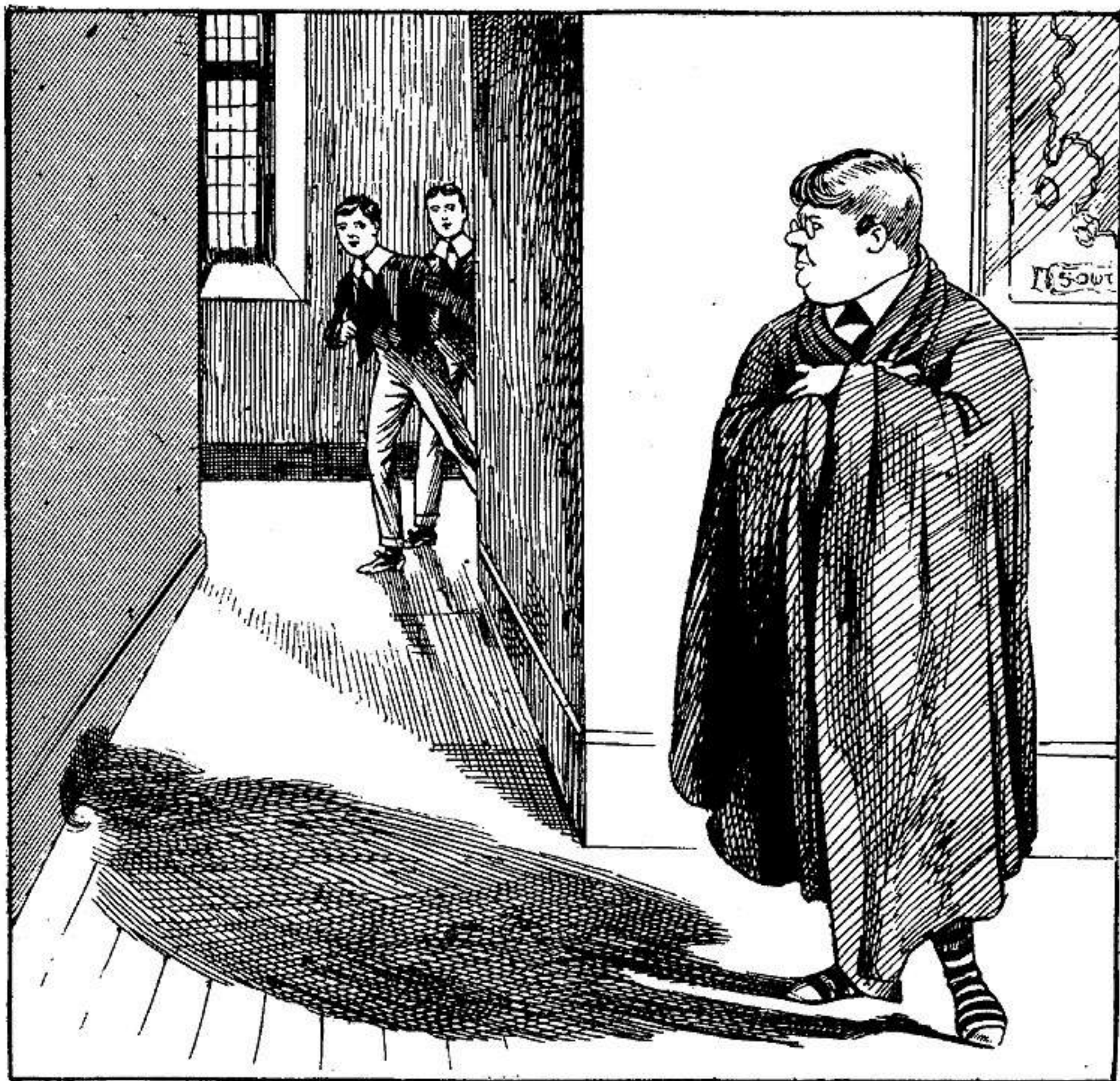
"Oh, no, sir."

"You denied that you asked Bulstrode for assistance."

"Yes, sir. You see, sir, I really asked him to give me a bunk up. That—that's a very different matter, sir."

Mr. Quelch stared fixedly at Bunter.

"I do not believe that you are so stupid as you pretend to be, Bunter."



"The juniors trod cautiously down the Remove passage, and as they entered, Harry Wharton uttered a suppressed exclamation. "Look!" he exclaimed, pointing to the bulky figure wrapped in a dark cloak like a brigand. (See p. 28)

"Oh, sir."

"Bulstrode, did you intend to help Bunter to rob the pantry?"

"Certainly not, sir. I knew he was too fat to get through the window, and I thought it would be a lesson to the greedy young bounder, sir."

Mr. Quelch smiled slightly.

"Very well, I excuse you, Bulstrode; but it was certainly your intention to rob the pantry, Bunter."

"I, sir? Oh, no, sir!"

"Then why did you wish to enter?"

"To enter what, sir?"

"The pantry."

"I—I didn't, sir. You—you see, sir, I—I was only doing that for a little exercise, sir. I've been told that exercises, such as climbing into—into pantry windows, sir, is very good for a chap run down for want of food. So—so I was trying it, sir. I—I think it's done me some good."

Mr. Quelch looked hard at Bunter. Bunter's system, when he found himself in trouble, was never to tell the truth while he had a lie left. But his untruthfulness was so steep, so out of all bounds, that he seldom succeeded in deceiving anybody. Bunter's opinion seemed to be that the bigger the lie, the more likely it was to be believed.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

"Bunter, you are speaking untruthfully."

"Oh, sir, I—I hope you haven't such an opinion of me, sir. Bulstrode is an awfully untruthful chap, but I've done my best not to follow his wicked example, sir. I've often got into trouble for being too truthful, sir."

"You were going to rob the pantry."

"Oh, sir, not at all, sir. You see, I wouldn't do a thing like that. Besides, home-made jam isn't so very ripping, after all. Then Bulstrode had gone off, so I couldn't have handed out the jars as I arranged, so I—I—"

"You intended to hand out the jars to Bulstrode?"

"Yes, sir—I mean no, sir."

"Bunter, I have already caned you, or I should take you to my study and cane you for your dreadful untruthfulness. As it is, you will take two hundred lines for being found in the pantry window, and if you are found there again you will be punished severely."

"Oh, sir!"

Mr. Quelch shook his head sternly, and strode away. Bulstrode chuckled.

"Well, you've got it in the neck this time and no mistake," said the Remove bully. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, Bulstrode, I suppose you're going to do those lines, as it was all your fault."

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Ha, ha! Catch me, that's all."

And Bulstrode grinned, and walked off. Billy Bunter cast a longing glance at the pantry window. But not even the thought of the jam inside could tempt him to make another essay in the direction. He rolled away disconsolately, and as he reached the School House, he was suddenly stopped by a grasp upon his shoulder. He blinked round, and recognised the frowning face of Alonzo Todd.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER,

Alonzo Does It!

"O H, really, Todd!"

"Bunter, I require some minutes of conversation with you, for the purpose of discussing a somewhat important matter," said Todd portentously.

Alonzo Todd was frowning. Todd was the best-tempered fellow at Greyfriars, and it was but seldom that he was seen to frown. It was clear that something had happened to disturb the serenity of the Duffer of the Remove.

"Oh, cheese it," said Bunter peevishly. "I'm busy. I've got an important matter to think out, and—"

"Bunter, I have reflected over your conduct—"

"Eh?"

"I have also reflected upon the maxims inculcated by my Uncle Benjamin. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to keep the peace, whenever peaceable methods were compatible with honour and self-respect."

"Oh, really—"

"But under the circumstances that have transpired, Bunter," went on the long-winded sub-editor of "John Bull Junior's Weekly"—"under those peculiar circumstances, Bunter, I feel that I have no resource but to administer personal chastisement."

"Eh?"

"Will you kindly accompany me to the gymnasium, where we can don the boxing-gloves, and settle this unhappy matter without interruption?"

"Look here, Todd, what are you driving at?"

"You cannot have forgotten, Bunter, the brutal assault of which you were guilty, in effecting a concussion between your boot and my person," said Todd sternly.

Bunter grinned. As a matter of fact, in his subsequent anxiety on the subject of the jam, he had forgotten all about catching Alonzo bending.

"I—I say, Todd, that was a joke, you know," he said.

"What—what I meant to convey by that was that—you were the kind of fellow I like, and that I admire you more than any other chap in the Remove."

Alonzo blinked at him doubtfully.

"You are so very untruthful, Bunter!"

"Well, you see," said Bunter, who could drop all his fat swank, and be as meek as a pet lamb when occasion demanded. "You see, Todd, old man, I never had the advantage you have had, of an Uncle Joseph to look after me—"

"You mean Uncle Benjamin, Bunter."

"Yes, that's it; Uncle Benjamin. You see, Todd, I'm trying to follow your example, and to become like you, you know. I always tell all the fellows that there never was a chap like you in the Greyfriars Remove before, and never will be again."

Alonzo smiled with gratification. He did not see any double meaning in Bunter's remark, and a testimony to his high moral influence always pleased Alonzo. It made him feel that all his Uncle Benjamin's efforts had not been wasted.

"I am truly glad to hear you speak in this manner, Bunter," he said. "But surely kicking me in a very tender place is a very singular method of showing personal regard?"

Bunter grinned. Alonzo was in the painful position of the gentleman who so pathetically complained to the object of his affection—"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me downstairs?"

"You see," said Bunter, "I—I meant you to—to understand that—that I knew you were the sort of chap who could take a little joke. As a matter of fact, I was just looking for you at this moment. I wanted to find a chap who'd do an obliging thing for me, and—"

"Say no more, my dear Bunter! I am wholly at your service."

"If you wouldn't mind doing me a little favour, Todd!"

"Anything, Bunter—that is to say, anything compatible with the instructions of my Uncle Benjamin, and my duty and respect to the masters here."

"Ahem! Look here, old Kebble—"

"I trust you are not alluding to the respectable Mrs. Kebble, the housekeeper, in that disrespectful way, Bunter?"

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"Ahem! I mean Mrs. Kebble. Look here, you've been in the housekeeper's room, haven't you, Todd?"

"Yes. On several occasions I—"

"You know the writing-table with a draw in it?"

"Yes, I have observed that article of furniture. I—"

"The key's in that draw. Now—"

"What key, Bunter?"

"Ahem! My study key. I—I'm having a new lock put on my study door," Bunter explained. "A—a Yale lock. Now, there's a Yale lock in the pantry, and as I happened to drop my Yale key, Mrs. Kebble picked it up, and—somehow, thinks it's her pantry key, just because it's a Yale key. I—I can't get into my study till I get that key—"

"My dear Bunter, you are quite mistaken. I passed your study door five minutes ago, and it was open."

"I—I mean that I can't lock my study door till I get that key. Only Mrs. Kebble is firmly convinced that it is her key, as—as I suppose she's lost hers, and I was thinking that you—"

"I know, Bunter. You wish me to see Mrs. Kebble, and explain the matter to her, do you not? I shall be very pleased to do so."

"Not exactly that!" stammered Bunter. "She is jolly obstinate, you know, and—won't listen to reason. I—I was thinking of taking the key, you see, and then explaining. It's easier that way, because she's got a prejudice against me, somehow, and I know she won't give up the key if she can help it."

"I hardly like the idea, Bunter. Yet if you are convinced that it is your key that is in the table drawer—"

"Not the slightest doubt about that, Todd. I'll show you my initials scratched on it when you bring it to me."

"That will be quite satisfactory, of course. But—"

"My idea is that I should get Mrs. Kebble out of the room somehow, and you should nip in and get the key," said Bunter. "I thought of you because you're such a brainy chap, and so awfully keen and—deep."

"Thank you very much, Bunter. But—"

"Of course, if you don't want to oblige me—"

"I shall be very pleased to oblige you, Bunter."

"Then come on!"

"My dear Bunter—"

"This way, Todd. You wait at the corner of the passage here, and when old Kebble's gone—"

"Yes, but—"

"You nip in and get the key. Mind, you've promised!"

"I do not remember promising. I—"

"If you're going back on your word—"

"My dear Bunter—"

"Come on, then!"

Alonzo, in a rather confused state of mind, allowed himself to be dragged away by Billy Bunter. He was posted at the corner of the passage.

Bunter rolled on to the housekeeper's room. A tap at the door assured him that Mrs. Kebble was there, as her voice bade him come in.

Bunter partly opened the door, taking care that he could not be seen from within. Bunter, who was a great ventriloquist, had a great gift for imitating voices. It was the voice of Trotter, the House page, that he chose to imitate on this occasion.

"Mrs. Kebble, mum, cook says will you step down to the kitchen, mum, 'cause she's 'ad a haccident with the 'Ead's dinner, mum."

There was an annoyed exclamation within.

"Oh, very well!"

Bunter swiftly retreated.

By the time Mrs. Kebble was at the door Bunter was in another room, with the door ajar, to watch if she went downstairs.

Mrs. Kebble descended to the lower regions, and Bunter followed her as far as the hall floor, where he took up a position at the notice-board. There were several juniors standing there reading the footer announcements. Billy Bunter wanted to make himself as prominent as possible just now—it might be necessary to prove an alibi if there was a question raised as to what had become of the key.

"Can you tell me the time, Fish?" he asked the American junior.

"I guess so, Bunter," said Fisher T. Fish.

He took out his watch and looked at it.

"Six o'clock," he said.

"Thanks, Fish! I say, I'm expecting a postal-order this evening. I wonder if you would mind lending me a few bob till it comes?"

The American youth closed one eye.

"I guess not," he said.

"Oh, really, Fish—"

"Nope, my son! You will have to get up very early in the morning to get a few bob out of me," said Fisher T. Fish emphatically.

"I say, Wharton, would you mind——"
 "Yes!" said Wharton abruptly, walking away.
 Alonzo Todd appeared in the passage, looking rather flustered and excited. Billy Bunter ran towards him.
 "Todd! Got it?"
 Alonzo Todd held out a Yale key.
 "Yes, my dear Bunter. Here is the key. It was just where you said."
 "Good enough!"
 Billy Bunter slipped the key into his pocket with a grin of satisfaction. Whole rows of jam-jars seemed to be dancing before his eyes.
 "You didn't let anybody see you, Todd?" he asked.
 "Unfortunately, Mrs. Kebble came in as I was leaving her apartment. She seemed to be annoyed about something."
 "You ass!"
 "My dear Bunter!"
 "What did you let her see you for? Well, I suppose it can't be helped," growled Bunter. "I might have known you'd muck up the thing."
 "My dear Bunter, that seems to be somewhat ungrateful, nor do I attach any importance to this chance meeting with Mrs. Kebble. You were going to show me your initials cut on that key, my dear Bunter."
 "Eh?" said Bunter, suddenly becoming deaf.
 "Your initials——"
 "I'll see you again presently, Todd," said Bunter, turning away.
 "But you were going to show me——"
 "Did you know Wharton's looking for you, Todd?" asked Bunter.
 "Dear me! No!"
 "He wants you—something very important, I think," said Bunter. "He's—he's in the Cloisters. I'll see you later."
 Alonzo Todd ran out of the house, and hurried off in the direction of the Cloisters. Bunter chuckled, and rolled away with the key in his pocket.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Cheap Jam.

"**B** READ," said Nugent, "and butter."
 "And what else?"
 "Nothing."
 "Oh!"
 The Chums of the Remove looked rather blank. They had come in from football practice, and they had come in very hungry.
 Funds were low in Study No. 1, and provisions were low in the cupboard. It was not a pleasant discovery to find nothing there but bread—and not too much of it—and a little butter—very little.
 "My hat!" said Wharton. "That means tea in hall, then!"
 Nugent shook his head.
 "Too late for that, old son."
 "My hat! I'm hungry!"
 "The hungryfulness is terrific!"
 "I say, you fellows——"
 Billy Bunter put in his head at the door. The three Removites turned round and glared at him. They were in no humour to stand Billy Bunter.
 "Oh, buzz off!" said Wharton. "There's nothing for you. We've only got bread-and-butter for tea, and not much of that."
 "Oh, really, Wharton, I haven't come to tea, you know," said Billy Bunter, in an injured tone. "I want to do you fellows a favour."
 "Rats!"
 "Look here, if you haven't any grub for tea, I dare say you'd like a pot of jam," the fat junior suggested.
 "Are you giving pots of jam away?" Nugent asked sarcastically.
 "Yes, I am, Nugent—practically giving them away," said Bunter. "You see, my Aunt Tabitha—I mean Georgina—makes home-made jam, and she has sent me a lot——"
 "You young bounder!" roared Wharton. "You mean you've been robbing the pantry, after all! You've got Mrs. Kebble's key somehow."
 "I—I've got several pots of jam to dispose of cheap," said Billy Bunter. "Look here!" He drew a jam-jar from under his jacket. "That's what would cost a bob in the village or at Mrs. Mumble's," he said. "I can let you fellows have it for fourpence."
 "Rats!"
 "Well, say threepence, then."
 "Bosh!"
 "I say, you fellows, you don't want a jar of jam like that for twopence, I suppose?" demanded Billy Bunter wrathfully.
 "We don't want it at all," said Wharton. "It's not yours to sell. Take it away."
 "Well, then, I'll tell you what I'll do," said Bunter. "If you chaps like to do me some really good contributions for 'Bunter's Weekly'——"
 THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT
 TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
 TUESDAY, The "Magnet"
 LIBRARY. ONE
 PENNY.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at," said Bunter peevishly. "If you care to do me something really decent for my new paper you shall have the jam."
 "Oh, go and eat coke!"
 "What do you say?"
 "Rats!"
 "Look here, if you think you're going to have that jam for nothing——"
 Nugent picked up a ruler, and came towards Bunter. The fat junior eyed him warily till he was quite close, and then dodged into the passage. The ruler looked too dangerous at close quarters.
 "I say, you fellows——" Bunter called in from the passage. Nugent slammed the door.
 "Beasts!"
 The Chums of the Remove settled down to their tea of bread-and-butter. Billy Bunter rolled along the passage with his jar of jam under his jacket. He blinked in at John Bull's study.
 The sturdy junior was writing at his table. As editor of the new weekly he had plenty of work to do.
 Bunter rolled in, and Bull gave him one look.
 "Get out!" he said briefly.
 "Oh, really, Bull——"
 John Bull junior picked up the inkpot. Billy Bunter was outside the study in the twinkling of an eye.
 He grunted, and looked in at the next door. Bob Cherry and Mark Linley and little Wun Lung, the Chinese, were having tea there. Bunter nodded to them, but he received only frigid stares in return. The chums of Study No. 13 did not want the company of William George Bunter at their festive board.
 "I say, you fellows, I notice you haven't any jam for tea," said Bunter. "Look here! A relation of mine in the jam business has sent me a lot of jam, and I'm disposing of it cheap. Look at that!"
 He planted the jam-jar on the table.
 "Velly good," said Wun Lung.
 "How much would that cost you at the tuckshop?" demanded Bunter.
 "About a bob, I suppose," said Bob Cherry.
 "You can have it for ninepence."
 "I don't want it."
 "You can have it for a tanner, Linley," said Bunter, turning to Mark. "I'm willing to let you have it very cheap because I know you're horribly poor, and, besides, I like doing little kindnesses to the lower classes. Say sixpence."
 The Lancashire lad turned pink.
 "Will you get out of this study, or shall I throw you out?" he asked quietly.
 Billy Bunter jumped.
 "I—I say, Linley, you know, I haven't finished yet. Blessed if I see what you want to get your rag out in this way for when I'm trying to be kind to you! Look here, Wun Lung! Would you like that pot of jam for a tanner?"
 "No savvy!" said the little Celestial softly.
 "You can have it as it stands, jar and all, for sixpence."
 "No savvy!"
 "I've got a relation in the business who sends me these things, and I can let you have lots of jam at the same price," said Bunter. "My intention is to treat the Remove well if they treat me well."
 "No savvy!"
 "Look here! Do you want that jam?"
 "No wantee."
 "Say fourpence, then, you mean heathen beast!"
 "No savvy!"
 "I don't want the trouble of carrying that jar away," said Bunter. "I'm willing to take threepence."
 "Oh, clear out!" said Bob Cherry. "I don't suppose it belongs to you at all. If it does, we don't want it."
 "I'll make you a present of it, on certain conditions," said Bunter, blinking at him. "You must undertake to write only for 'Bunter's Weekly,' and not send any contributions to the rival paper."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Mark Linley picked up the jam jar, carried it out of the study, and put it on the floor of the passage. Then he came back towards Billy Bunter. Bunter retreated towards the door as the Lancashire lad came towards him, and backed out into the passage. He did not exactly like the look in Mark Linley's eye.
 "I—I say," he said. "You know—ahem!—oh, really! I say—you see—oh!"
 Slam!
 The closing of the door cut short Bunter's feeble remarks. He scowled over his spectacles, and picked up the jar of jam.

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums
 of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

He stood blinking for a few moments in the passage, considering where he should take his wares next. There did not seem to be a ready sale for jam, however cheap, in the Remove passage. As he stood considering, Bulstrode clapped him on the shoulder, and calmly jerked the jam-jar out of his hand.

"This for me?" asked Bulstrode.

"Oh, really—"

"Thanks very much! Come on, Skinner; there's jam for tea!"

"What-ho!" said Skinner, chuckling.

"I—I say, you fellows! That's—that's my jam! You can have the jar for ninepence."

"We don't want the jar; we want the jam," said Bulstrode. "You can have the jar back—for nothing—when we've finished."

"Oh, really—" Bunter rolled down the passage after the two juniors. "You can have it for sixpence, Bulstrode."

"Rats!"

"As—as you're a special friend of mine, I'll let you have it for fourpence-halfpenny," said Bunter. "I couldn't part with it for less, or I should actually lose money over it, considering the cost of carriage from my relation's factory to Greyfriars."

"Why, your young fibber, you've boned this from the pantry, you know you have!"

"I—I—"

"Look here, will you take a pound for it?" demanded Bulstrode.

"Oh, yes! Certainly! Rather!"

"Well, you owe me about a pound," said Bulstrode. "You can keep it for this jam. Ta ta!"

And Bulstrode and Skinner went into the former's study, leaving Billy Bunter, spluttering with indignation. Bunter always insisted upon putting little loans down to an account, and in maintaining that he would settle them shortly from an abundant supply of postal-orders that he was expecting. If that were true, he should have been very pleased to have the whole of his indebtedness to Bulstrode wiped out at the cost of a jar of jam. Yet he did not seem pleased.

"Beasts!" he snorted. "Cads!"

And he rolled away disconsolate.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Best Customer.

"BUNTER! My dear Bunter!"

"Would you like some jam, Todd?" asked the fat junior, stopping.

"Jam?"

"Yes. You see—"

"You were going to show me your initials cut on that key, Bunter. I am very anxious to see them, because I have heard that Mrs. Kebble is complaining that someone has taken her key away. I trust there has been no unfortunate mistake."

"I'm sincerely sorry, Todd. I've lost that key," said Bunter. "Better say nothing about it."

"But you are sure that it was your key?"

"Oh, quite sure!"

"It is very odd," said Alonzo, "because I have looked at your study door, and you have not a Yale lock upon it."

"I—I meant I was going to have," stammered Billy Bunter. "Never mind that. Say nothing about the key, and it will be all right."

"But, under the circumstances—"

"Do let the matter drop, Todd. You're such a long-winded chap. Look here, would you like some jam?"

"Oh, certainly, my dear Bunter! My Uncle Benjamin considers jam a very harmless and even nutritious article of diet, provided, of course, that it is manufactured of sound fruit and—"

"I've got lots," said Bunter. "A—a relation of mine in the business has sent me dozens of jars of jam. It occurred to me, you know, that we might let fellows in the Remove have them cheap, and save them some money."

"That is a very good idea, Bunter, and quite philanthropic. I am sure my Uncle Benjamin would approve of it," said Todd warmly.

"That's really what I was thinking of all the time—what your Uncle Benjamin would think of it," said Bunter blandly.

"It seems to me to be a good idea, and I want to sell off all the jars before Mrs. Kebble—ahem! I meant before—in fact, as soon as possible. My object is to be philanthropic. If you would like to buy some jam, Todd, at a greatly reduced price—say, three pounds of first-class home-made jam for ninepence—"

"My dear Bunter, you are too good! I shall certainly purchase some of the jam at that price, if you are quite certain that it will not be inflicting a loss upon yourself."

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"This way then, Todd."

And Billy Bunter, glad to get a customer at last, marched Alonzo Todd off to his study.

Bunter had a study to himself in the Remove passage. Fellows were often crowded in the other studies. But no one showed any desire to share that study with Bunter. He was not popular as a study-mate.

The study was untidy. There were the ashes of a dead fire in the grate, and dirty crockery on the table and the mantelpiece. Bunter had been tidy when he was an occupant of Harry Wharton's study, to some extent, because he was in danger of being hammered when he was untidy. But in the solitary independence of his own quarters, he was as slovenly as he chose—and there seemed no limit to it.

On the table, amid soiled crockery and huddled books and papers, appeared a large sheet of foolscap. Scrawled across it was the title—"Bunter's Weekly."

That was as far as the Owl of the Remove had advanced with his rival paper. Alonzo Todd blinked at it curiously.

"My dear Bunter," he exclaimed, "it is surely out of the question for you to start a paper! When you are not clever enough to be even a contributor, how can you expect to edit a paper? I assure you—"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Bunter. "I warned the fellows how it would be. If I'm not given a prominent place on the staff of the 'Weekly,' I start another on my own. It's beneath my dignity to submit to exclusion solely from personal jealousy."

"My dear person—"

"Look here, here's the jam," said Bunter, changing the subject.

Alonzo Todd looked at the piles of jars containing jams and preserves, revealed to sight as Billy Bunter raised the edge of the table-cover.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Alonzo, in astonishment. "Your relation must be a very generous man, Bunter, to send you such a quantity of jam for nothing."

"Oh, he's—he's awfully decent!" said Bunter. "Look here, how many jars will you have? I'll make it cheaper by the dozen—say, seven and six the dozen."

"You are sure you will not lose by the transaction, Bunter?"

"Oh, that's all right!"

"Then I accept the offer. You are very kind."

"Good! I mean to be kind. Seven-and-sixpence, please!"

"The unfortunate part of the matter is, that I have no ready money," said Alonzo. "I suppose that does not matter, between friends."

Bunter glared at him.

"You frabjous ass!"

"My dear Bunter—"

"You—you unspeakable chump! Get out!"

"But, my dear—"

Bunter grasped one of the jars, with deadly intent. Alonzo Todd hopped out of the study in alarm. Bunter snorted with indignation and wrath.

The jar seemed to be a drag in the market, after all. Bunter set the jar down on the table, and growled. He had already disposed, internally, of a considerable quantity of the stolen property. Under the circumstances, he did not see that he could do better than continue that process. He jerked the paper covering from the top of the jar, found a big spoon, and started. And for some minutes, at least, Billy Bunter was happy.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

"Bunter's Weekly."

THE next morning, in class, John Bull, chief editor of "John Bull Junior's Weekly," wore a very thoughtful expression. He was not thinking of his lessons, however, as his absent-minded answers to Mr. Quelch showed.

When he replied to a question of the Form-master, and informed that gentleman that the most prominent character in the Elizabethan era was John Bull, and that the most noted event of the reign of Queen Bess was the production of the first number of a "weekly," Mr. Quelch was astonished, and he certainly had reason to be.

"Bull!" he rapped out, lending additional emphasis to his words by rapping his cane on a desk with a report like a pistol-shot. "Bull, you are paying no attention to the lesson!"

"Oh, sir!" said John Bull, coming out of a brown study.

"You have been talking nonsense, Bull!"

"H-h-h-have I, sir?"

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"You have! You will take fifty lines, and pay more attention!"

"Ye-es, sir."

John Bull paid more attention. He was very glad when the class was dismissed. He hurried off at once to the stairs, to go up to his study.

"Not coming out to footer practice, Bull?" Harry Wharton called after him.

"No, not now."

"Lovely weather for footer; you'd better."

"Oh, rats!"

"I say, Bull, old man——" called out Billy Bunter.

But John Bull junior did not even stop to reply to Billy Bunter. He went upstairs, and into his study.

The fat junior followed him. Bull was settling down at the editorial desk—formerly the study table—when Bunter looked in.

"I say, Bull——"

"Oh, get out!" said Bull. "I'm busy! I've got to get the copy ready for press, and if I don't buck up, the second number of the 'Weekly' will be late this week. Buzz off! I haven't time even for a tune on the concertina."

"Jolly good thing, too!"

"What!"

"I—I mean I've got a jolly good thing to show you," said Billy Bunter. "Look here!"

He unrolled a sheet of foolscap, and spread it out on the table before the surprised eyes of the editor of "John Bull Junior's Weekly."

"My word!" said Bull.

"There! What do you think of that—eh?" said Bunter triumphantly.

It was the paper Alonzo had seen on Bunter's table, but amplified. It read:

"BUNTER'S WEEKLY."

"A Journal to Amuse, Instruct, and Entertain."

"Edited by W. G. Bunter, Esq."

"Contributions to the columns of the 'Weekly' are carefully considered, and three penny stamps should be enclosed for return of rejected manuscripts. In case of manuscripts being returned by hand, the stamps will be used for editorial purposes. No manuscripts considered unless accompanied by three penny stamps. Authors and artists are invited to send in their work."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared John Bull. "I should say so if you made threepence a time out of them!"

"You see, there are a lot of stamps used in editorial offices," said Bunter. "I could not be expected to provide them out of my own pocket. If I sometimes changed the stamps at Mrs. Mumble's, I should keep a careful account of them, of course, and enter the sum to the credit of the paper."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter snorted. Bull read on down the page:

"Contents of the first number: Articles by William George Bunter. A short story by W. G. Bunter. Leading article by William G. Bunter. Poem—'Spring'—by W. George Bunter. Chatty pars., by W. G. B." "

"Well, there will be plenty of Bunter, at all events," John Bull remarked.

"Of course, I'm putting in plenty of my own work," explained Bunter. "What I really want is to make the thing popular—to make it go with a swing, you know."

"Hallo! What's this?"

"Oh, that's the serial beginning in the first number. I'm pretty certain that it will make a sensation in the school."

"My hat!"

The announcement that caused John Bull's exclamation ran as follows:

"A splendid serial story, an entirely original work by W. G. Bunter, will commence in this number. It is entitled 'Jack, Sam, and Pete.'"

"I've heard of that story before," roared John Bull.

"You ass! You're at it again—plagiarising."

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"This is on a par with trying to palm off 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' on us as an original poem," grinned John Bull. "Why, you ass, Jack, Sam, and Pete are known wherever the English language is spoken. Why don't you shove in 'Hamlet' or 'Coriolanus,' and say you wrote it."

"Look here, Bull——"

"It will jolly well cause a sensation if you print that story, but not the kind of sensation you'll like," grinned Bull. "It's bound to be copyright."

"I wrote it——"

"Out—from a copy of the paper."

"Oh, really——"

"You awful fibber! Why don't you tell easier ones?"

"I haven't come here to argue with you, Bull, about the originality or otherwise of my literary work," said Bunter loftily. "I've come here to make you a last offer. You see the splendid number I am producing—each number complete in itself, and every story a gem. Well, what show will your rotten paper have when this comes out?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You won't have an earthly. Now, look here, I'm not

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NEXT

TUESDAY:

"POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY.

The "Magnet"
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ONE
PENNY.

bent on this; I don't want the fag of bringing out a paper. I'd rather make yours a success by writing for it."

"How good!"

"I'll take the post of chief sub-editor, and contribute my splendid serial, 'Jack, Sam, and Pete,' to your columns, and drop my own paper," said Bunter. "I'm willing to do that on certain conditions."

"Ass!"

"The conditions are, that I'm treated with proper respect in this editorial office, and that there are refreshments—decent refreshments—when I'm here doing the copy," said Bunter.

"That's not much to ask."

"Anything else?" asked John Bull blandly.

"Well, yes; I think I ought to have the armchair."

"And what more?"

"And a cushion; and you other fellows ought to stand about to help me, if I need it," said Bunter. "After all, you don't often get a chap like me on the staff of a school paper."

"Quite true."

"Well, if you like to agree to those conditions, I'll join your staff," said Bunter.

"And if not?"

"Then, not!"

John Bull pointed to the door. Billy Bunter followed his gaze, and then blinked back at John Bull through his big spectacles with a puzzled expression.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"There's the door."

"Well, I——"

"Get on the other side of it."

"Oh, really——"

"And close the door."

"Look here, Bull," roared Billy Bunter, "I'm giving you a last chance. Am I going to join your staff, or am I to set up a rival weekly?"

"I'm giving you a last chance, too," said John Bull.

"Get out of this study."

"You silly ass——"

John Bull jumped up.

Billy Bunter made a rush for the door then. But he had left it too late. In a twinkling the grasp of the sturdy junior was on his collar. He was whirled through the doorway with a whirl that took his breath away.

Bump!

Bunter sat down violently on the linoleum in the passage, and gasped. John Bull crammed his manuscript down the back of his neck, rolled him over, and left him. The door of the editorial office of "John Bull's Weekly" slammed.

Bunter sat up.

"Ow! Groo! Beast! W-w-w-what's the matter with my neck? Ow! The rotten beast! Yow! Yaroo!"

Bunter dragged the crumpled page of "Bunter's Weekly" from the back of his neck, and rolled away, vowing vengeance.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

In Borrowed Plumes.

"WHARTON——"

"Don't bother!"

"Will you lend me——"

"No."

"Will you lend——"

"No!"

"Will you——"

"Ass! I'm stony!" shouted Harry Wharton, looking up in exasperation from his work. "Do clear out! I'm stony to-day."

"Will you lend——"

"You hear what I say? Get out!"

"Will you lend me——"

"My hat! I——"

"Your overcoat."

"Oh!"

"Will you lend me your overcoat?" Billy Bunter asked calmly, still blinking cheerfully in at the door of No. 1 Study, where the Chums of the Remove were doing an imposition in three parts. They had a model of handwriting set up before them, and were all keeping as close to it as possible.

Wharton stared at the fat junior. He had naturally imagined that Billy Bunter was after money, as usual, from the way he opened the conversation.

"Overcoat!" he repeated.

"Yes. I'm going down to Friardale. Any little commission I can see to for you?" asked Bunter obligingly. "I should be very pleased to call in at Uncle Clogg's, if you wanted any pork-pies or——"

"Rats! What do you want my overcoat for? You've got one of your own."

"Yes, but mine's rather shabby," said Bunter. "You see,

"I'm going on a most important mission, and I want to look rather smart."

"Well, of all the cheek——"

"I suppose it's not asking much, to ask a chap to lend me an overcoat," said Bunter, in an aggrieved tone. "Besides, you've got two. I only want the Sunday one."

"The best one, of course," said Nugent sarcastically. "And you'll burst all the buttons off it if you try to button it."

"I'll wear it open, to oblige Wharton. I shall be warm enough if you lend me your silk muffler, Nugent."

"My hat!"

"No, your silk muffler."

"You can have the second-best coat to go out in this once," said Harry. "But what are you after? What's the little game?"

"I'm going to undertake some personal interviews on account of the new school paper," said Bunter, with considerable dignity.

"What! Has John Bull——"

"John Bull has nothing to do with it."

"But the new school paper——"

"I'm speaking of 'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"Oh! Ha, ha, ha!"

"The ha-ha-ha-fulness is terrific."

Bunter blinked at them angrily. He did not see why the mere mention of "Bunter's Weekly" should make fellows roar with laughter. But it always did.

"I say, you fellows, I'm blessed if I see anything to cackle at," he exclaimed. "I'm going round now canvassing for advertisements for 'Bunter's Weekly,' and I want to look as decent as possible. That's why I'm going to have Wharton's best coat."

"The second-best," Harry reminded him.

"If you're going to be mean about it, Wharton——"

"Well, I am, if it's mean to prevent you bursting the buttons off my best coat," said Harry. "Besides, you never care for anything you borrow. You're a more careless beast with other fellows' things than with your own."

"You needn't say any more, Wharton," said Bunter loftily. "I decline to borrow a coat of you at all. That's the only dignified course I can take, under the circumstances."

"Very well," said Harry, sitting down to his work again. Bunter blinked at him.

"I—I mean that, under the circumstances, I will borrow the second-best coat," he said. "Where is it, Wharton?"

"Here it is."

Wharton took a coat down from behind the door. He held it while Billy Bunter inserted his fat, unwieldy figure into it. Certainly Bunter could not have buttoned that coat without great physical exertion, and certainly the buttons would have flown off in a moment if he had. It was somewhat of a strain on the fat junior to wear it open.

"Where is that muffler, Nugent?" Bunter asked.

"What muffler?"

"That silk one."

"What silk one?" asked Frank, deliberately misunderstanding.

"The silk muffler you were going to lend me."

"I wasn't going to lend you one that I know of."

"Oh, really, Nugent! If you'd rather I risked spoiling Wharton's coat by buttoning it——"

"There's a woollen scarf you can have," said Nugent. "You won't have my silk muffler. Go and eat coke."

"Look here——"

"Oh, buzz off! I'm tired of you."

"I'll have the scarf, of course, if you are going to be disgustingly mean about the muffler. Now, if Inky will lend me his diamond pin, and——"

"Inky's a silly ass if he does."

"The silly-assfulness of my esteemed self is not terrific. The lendfulness will never be the accomplished fact."

"Look here, Inky, I want to look decent——"

"Impossible!"

"You—you ass, Nugent! Inky's diamond pin will look rich, and give an impression——"

"Bosh! Nothing will make you look decent, Bunter, excepting becoming decent, and that's wildly unlikely."

"Can I have the pin, Inky? Of course, I shall take great care of it, and return it to you immediately I come back from Friardale."

The nabob hesitated. He was the best-natured of fellows, and he disliked saying no to anybody. But Bunter, besides being a most unscrupulous borrower, was the most careless also. It was quite probable that he would wear the pin and lose it, and mention the latter fact quite off-handedly when he was called to account for it. Inky was a youth with somewhat gorgeous-Oriental tastes, and his diamond pin was worth fifty pounds, being, in fact, a jewel belonging to him as prince of Bhanipur.

"Come on, hand it over!" said Bunter. "If anything should happen to it, I will buy you a new one."

"You ass!" said Harry Wharton. "You couldn't raise enough money in fifty years."

"I would ask my father for a cheque," said Bunter loftily.

"Oh, cheese it!"

"If I lend the esteemed Bunter the pin——"

"You're not going to," said Harry. "Get out, Bunter, or I'll help you with my boot. You've borrowed enough in this study."

"I'm talking to Inky."

"And I'm talking to you," said Wharton, getting up.

"Clear off!"

Bunter backed into the passage.

"Look here, Wharton——"

Wharton advanced towards him. Bunter dodged down the passage, and Harry closed the door of the study.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter breathlessly, as he stopped outside Bob Cherry's study.

He blinked into the study. Bob Cherry, and Linley, and Wun Lung were all absent. Billy Bunter stepped into the room. He calmly appropriated Bob Cherry's best pair of gloves, which he used for church parade. Bunter knew where Bob kept them. Bunter always seemed to know where fellows kept their things.

He left Bob Cherry's study, and looked into Bulstrode's room. Bulstrode and Tom Brown and Hazeldene were all out in the Close.

"Good!" murmured Bunter.

He extracted Bulstrode's Sunday topper from a leather hat-box, and tried it on before the glass. It certainly looked very nice.

"Good!" murmured Bunter again. "I suppose I may as well take Brown's umbrella in case it should rain. It's not a first-class one—blessed if I know what these chaps come to Greyfriars for, if they can't afford a decent umbrella. I suppose I shall have to make it do."

And the fat junior, looking unusually gorgeous in his borrowed plumes, stepped out into the passage and went downstairs. At the door of the School House he met Bulstrode and Skinner.

Bunter felt an inward tremor, in case Bulstrode should recognise the silk hat. He gasped as the burly Removite clapped him on the shoulder. Bunter would very gladly have hurried past, but Bulstrode stopped him.

"Hallo! What's on?" demanded Bulstrode.

"I—I—— You see——"

"Been getting a postal-order?" grinned Skinner. "Or has your uncle in the old-clothes bizney sent you some of his shop-soiled stock?"

"Oh, really, Skinner——"

"Never seen the fat boulder so gorgeous before?" said Bulstrode. "Are you going over to Cliff House, to give the girls something to cackle over?"

"Oh, really——"

"Whose silk topper is that?" asked Bulstrode, little dreaming that it was his own. "I'll bet you've borrowed or stolen it. You never had so decent a one yourself."

"I'm in rather a hurry," said Bunter, with dignity. "I'm going to interview some tradespeople about putting advertisements in 'Bunter's Weekly'——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bulstrode and Skinner. The mention of "Bunter's Weekly" had had its usual effect.

Billy Bunter blinked at them indignantly, and rolled away. He left them roaring. But Bulstrode ceased to laugh when he went up to his study, and found his hat-box open and empty. Then he understood only too well how it came to pass that Billy Bunter was arrayed in such unusually expensive headgear. And Bulstrode breathed vows of vengeance, and waited for Billy Bunter to return to Greyfriars.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

One Way of Getting an Order.

"IF you please——"

"Money down!" said Uncle Clegg.

Uncle Clegg did not speak politely. Uncle Clegg was not a polite man by nature. Uncle Clegg kept the tuckshop in Friardale, and perhaps the trials of the position had soured his temper. Certainly a customer like Bunter was sufficient to sour anybody's temper. Uncle Clegg, like most of the tradespeople who were honoured with Bunter's custom, never allowed the fat junior to take anything he could not pay for at once. They knew their Bunter!

So when Bunter entered his shop with a particularly agreeable smile on his fat face, and a particularly insinuating wriggle of his plump person, Uncle Clegg came to the conclusion that he wanted credit; and Uncle Clegg turned

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on the special manner he kept for creditors. It was not a pleasant manner!

"Money down, please!"

"If you please—"

"I don't give credit in this shop."

"Oh, really, Uncle Clegg—"

"You're wasting my time," said Mr. Clegg.

"Look here," said Billy Bunter indignantly, "I don't want any tick here. I don't want any of your pork-pies. They're jolly wangan, anyway."

"Oh, har they?" said Uncle Clegg.

"Yes, they are! Look here, I don't want any of your stuff! I haven't come here to buy anything at all."

"Then you're wasting my time," said Mr. Clegg.

"The fact of the matter is—"

Uncle Clegg took up his newspaper and his pipe, and deliberately began to read. If Bunter hadn't come as a customer, Uncle Clegg wasn't disposed to listen to his conversation. Uncle Clegg was a business man.

"Look here," said Bunter, blinking at him over the little counter, with its little pyramids of stale tarts and cake. "Look here, I've got a business proposition to make. We're bringing out a school paper at Greyfriars, and we're open to take advertisements at a reduced rate. We give you a whole column at the rate of a shilling, and in your case, we should be willing to take it out in tarts."

"Stuff!" said Uncle Clegg.

"Now, as a business man, you can't object to a shilling for—for two columns," said Bunter. "Say three columns for a shilling! Be reasonable."

"Rubbish!"

"Of course, considering that I'm a regular customer here, I might be able to do four columns for a shilling."

"Good-mornin'!"

"Now, look here, Mr. Clegg, don't be an ass!"

Uncle Clegg snorted, and went on with his paper. He whisked the paper round to drive away a belated fly, which persisted in settling on the bald spot on his head.

"Drat it!" he grunted. "Look 'ere, Master Bunter, I ain't giving you anything. Good-day to yer. That's all. Good-day!"

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

It was pretty clear that he would not get an advertisement for "Bunter's Weekly" out of Uncle Clegg, and the sight of the buzzing fly had put an idea into the head of the fat ventriloquist of Greyfriars, for getting his own back on the surly-keeper of the village shop.

B-z-z-z-z!

Uncle Clegg started up.

"Drat it! That's a wops!" he muttered. "I didn't think there was any wopses about at this time of the year."

B-z-z-z-z!

"Where is it?"

"Buz-z-z-z!"

The buzzing came from behind Uncle Clegg's head all the time. But as fast as he spun round the wasp seemed to spin round, too, for the troublesome insect was never in sight.

"B-z-z-z-z-z!"

"Master Bunter! Can you see it?"

"There it is!" shouted Bunter.

"Oh, dear! Where?"

"There—just settling on your head," said Bunter, who had no regard for the truth to interfere with his sense of humour.

Uncle Clegg made a smack at the top of his head, and grunted with the pain; but the smack apparently did not touch the "wops," for the buzzing continued round his ears.

Mr. Clegg's eyes began to grow wild.

He grasped his folded newspaper, and swept it blindly to and fro in the air in the hope of smashing the buzzing insect.

He succeeded in smashing a jar of sweets and a bottle of bulleeyes, but the buzzing of the wasp continued unabated.

Uncle Clegg was quite unacquainted with Bunter's ventriloquial powers, and the fat junior did not allow his lips to move.

He grinned at the excited shopkeeper.

"Would you like me to drive it out, Uncle Clegg?" he demanded.

"Yes," gasped Mr. Clegg. "Drive the 'orrid thing out, Master Bunter, and I'll give you a—a tart!"

It cost Uncle Clegg an effort to say that. But he remembered that he had, behind the counter, an exceedingly ancient and fragrant tart, that had seen better days; and he could really afford to give that away.

"I'm on!" said Bunter, at once.

He had intended to make Uncle Clegg "sit up," but the offer of a tart was too tempting. He took off his silk hat and waved it in the air, moving towards the door. As he was the author of the buzzing, it was easy for him to make that move towards the door also.

It ceased in the doorway, and Bunter returned to the counter, somewhat flushed with his efforts.

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NEXT
TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"It's gone, Uncle Clegg," he said.

"Thank you, Master Bunter!" said Mr. Clegg, much relieved. "I never could abide wopses—nasty things!"

"What about the tart?" asked Bunter.

"'Ere you are, sir."

Uncle Clegg fished behind the counter, and produced the tart. Billy Bunter gazed at the mouldering crust of it, and the sticky, dusty, tainted jam of it, and then fixed his gaze upon Uncle Clegg.

"Do you call that a tart?" he demanded indignantly.

"It's a good tart," said Mr. Clegg stoutly.

"Rotten! I'm not having that."

"It's all you'll get from me," said Uncle Clegg, settling down with his paper again. He thought he could afford to be ungrateful, as the troublesome wasp was gone.

But he was mistaken. He did not know the nature of that wasp.

B-z-z-z-z!

Uncle Clegg started up angrily.

The buzz came sailing in, as it were, at the doorway, increasing in loudness every moment as it came nearer, and Uncle Clegg had no doubt that the wasp had returned. Perhaps the odour of that ancient tart had attracted it. Uncle Clegg glared angrily at Bunter, as if he thought the fat junior might have had some magnetic influence on the wasp, and drawn it back to the scene of its former labours.

"Oh, drat it!" growled Uncle Clegg.

B-z-z-z-z!

The old gentleman jumped as the buzz came round his ears, and swept his newspaper wildly through the air.

Crash!

A jar of sweets came crashing down, breaking into a score of pieces, and Best Mixed were scattered to right and left.

"Oh!" gurgled Uncle Clegg. "Oh, dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bunter. "Serve you jolly well right, you mean old boulder! I jolly well hope he'll sting you! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh! Ah! Drive him away, Master Bunter!"

"No fear!"

B-z-z-z-z!

"I—I—I'll give you a fresh twopenny tart!"

"Rats!"

B-z-z-z-z!

Uncle Clegg started and jumped, and jumped, and pranced, driven almost into hysterics by the incessant buzzing round his ears and the back of his head, and the momentary fear of being stung upon his bald spot.

Bunter grinned at him in great enjoyment. It was a field-day for the Greyfriars ventriloquist. He was quite enjoying it.

B-z-z-z-z!

"Oh, dear! Drive him away, Master Bunter! I—I can't get at 'im!" gasped Uncle Clegg. "I know he'll sting me in a minute! It might cause blood-poisoning! Ow! Look 'ere, Master Bunter, drive him away, and I'll give you an advertisement for your paper."

Bunter's fat face brightened up.

"Two columns?" he asked.

"Yes! Yow! Drive him away!"

B-z-z-z-z!

"At two shillings a column?"

"No—a shilling—that's what you said."

"B-z-z-z-z-z-z!"

"Yes, two shillings if you like—two shillings a column—drive it out!"

"Money down!" said Bunter.

"I—I—I'll pay when the advertisement appears—"

"Rats!"

"B-z-z-z-z-z-z!"

"Oh! Ah! Groo!"

The almost hysterical old gentleman flung four shillings out of his till.

"There you har!" he gasped. "Now drive it hout!"

Bunter slipped the shillings into his pocket.

"Your advertisement will appear in the next number," he said. He swished his hat in the air, and it apparently had full effect upon the wasp, for the buzzing ceased. "How would you like it worded?"

Uncle Clegg mopped his perspiring brow with a red handkerchief. Now that the wasp had gone he regretted his four shillings.

"Look 'ere, Master Bunter, I'll give you two tarts instead, and you 'and me back the four bob!" he said.

Bunter elevated his fat little nose in the air with all the dignity of an editor who is appraised for the first time that common persons attach any importance to mere money.

"Impossible, my dear sir!" he said. "All money that passes into the editor's hands must be—er—retained for editorial purposes. It is possible to pay in more money, but

not to retract any payment made. It would be against all the traditions of the editorial profession."

"Look 'ere—"

"I could make some modification in the arrangement if you like, if it does not involve the return of cash. For instance, I would give you a whole page displayed advertisement for seven shillings and sixpence, and would take what has been already paid as part payment of the same."

"You young idiot!"

"Ahem! Or I could introduce your business into 'Topical Pars by W. G. B.' in a neat and effective manner. Such as something like this: 'We are pleased to be able to say that our old friend Uncle Clegg now supplies fresh and wholesome pastry, and his customers may rally round the old shop without fear of indigestion.' That would cost you two shillings."

"Get hout of my shop!"

"Or I could give you a column in the form of an interview—"

Uncle Clegg made a clutch at a barrel stave, and the editor of 'Bunter's Weekly' dodged out of the shop with a promptness that was not at all editorial.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER. Another Advertiser.

"**B**EAST!"

That was Billy Bunter's expressed opinion as he travelled on from the village tuckshop. But he jingled Uncle Clegg's four shillings in his trousers pocket with considerable satisfaction.

He knew that John Bull and Harry Wharton had failed to get any orders for advertisements from the Friardale tradesfolk, and Billy Bunter plumed himself considerably on his success.

True, his success was due to his abilities—not as an editor, but as a ventriloquist. But Bunter's motto was: "Nothing succeeds like success."

And with Billy Bunter cash counted first, last, and all the time. So he jingled Uncle Clegg's four shillings quite joyfully as he ambled on his way.

His next visit was to Walker's, the draper's.

The editorial staff of "John Bull's Weekly" had interviewed Mr. Corney—Walker's famous shopwalker—but had failed to draw an advertisement from the firm. Billy Bunter walked into the shop determined to see the proprietor. Mr. Corney swam up to him with his grandest manner.

"I want to see the proprietor, please," said Bunter boldly.

The shopwalker coughed.

"Impossible!"

"It's important—most important!"

"Impossible!"

"Take my name into him, please!"

The shopwalker gasped.

"My dear boy," he explained, "it is impossible to disturb Mr. Walker. He is planning a new department. We are opening a new department for youths' underwear next week. It is impossible to disturb him."

"I want to see him."

"Yes, ma'am? This way, ma'am! Will you please walk this way, ma'am?" said Mr. Corney, turning away to attend upon a customer who had no existence excepting in his imagination.

Billy Bunter grunted. But the fat ventriloquist of Greyfriars was not to be put off so easily as that.

"Gr-r-r-r-r! Yap, yap!"

Mr. Corney jumped as the snarling and yapping of a savage dog came round his feet.

"What!" he exclaimed.

"What! A dog here! Dogs are not admitted to this establishment! Master Bunter, is that dog yours? You must take him away! Absolutely!"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

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"Is that dog yours—"

"Bow-wow! Yap!"

The sound came from behind the counter, now. It was followed by a sound exactly resembling that of tearing cloth.

Mr. Corney almost raved. A dog in his establishment, tearing the stock behind the counter! Why, it was unheard of—incredible! Colonel Pride's soldiers entering a House of Commons' rising like a flock of frightened geese round them—that was the only scene in English history at all comparable to the sensation that was now caused in the drapery establishment of Walker's.

Mr. Corney raved, and the young ladies shrieked, and the young gentlemen looked helpless. Mr. Corney brandished a pair of thin arms.

"There is a dog here! Drive it out! Mr. Twist—Mr. Bowback, I insist upon your driving that dog out immediately! He is destroying the stock!"

Mr. Twist and Mr. Bowback rushed to drive the offender out.

The yapping seemed to dodge round the counter, and then proceeded from a different spot. Two young ladies shrieked and fled.

"Miss Chubb—Miss Skinner, drive that dog out!"

"Oh!"

"It is unheard of—absolutely! Drive—"

"Bow-wow! F-z-z-z! Gr-r-r!"

"Oh, dear!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"Absolutely—"

A fat gentleman came running out of the inner regions—the sanctum sanctorum of Walker's. It was the great Walker himself—the Whiteley of Friardale.

"What is the matter? What is the matter? What is the matter? What—"

"A dog, sir! A dog in the shop—a dog behind the counter!"

"A dog, sir! Then why do you not drive him out, sir? I employ you, Mr. Corney, to keep order in this establishment, sir!"

"I have directed Mr. Twist and Mr. Bowback—"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Bow-wow!"

"My word! Oh!"

"If you please, sir, may I have a word with you?" said Billy Bunter, approaching the proprietor. "I'll drive the dog out, sir."

"What, boy? What—"

"Shush!" exclaimed Bunter. "Quiet! Go out!"

The growling and yapping ceased immediately. The curious thing—which did not strike Mr. Corney at the time—was that the dog had not been seen in sight at all.

"He is not gone!" said Mr. Corney.

"He must be!" said Bunter. "I can't hear him!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Walker. "He must have dodged into another department! What do you want, my boy?"

"I want to speak to you, sir, on most important business—concerning a rush of customers from Greyfriars, sir."

Mr. Walker stared at Bunter in surprise, and then beckoned him into his inner office. He sat down at his desk, still looking very flustered.

"Now, what is it?" he said.

"We're starting a school paper at Greyfriars," said Bunter, plunging in medias res at once, so to speak. "We want some advertisements from you, sir."

Mr. Walker shook his head.

"Impossible!" he said.

"Absolutely!"

"But, sir—"

"Absolutely!"

"We can give you two columns for five shillings—"

"I think not!"

"Or, as a special arrangement, we could let you have four columns for half-a-crown."

Mr. Walker smiled.

"Thank you, no!"

"It would bring a rush of customers from Greyfriars,

Read the Splendid Tale of

"Tom Merry

VERSUS

Jack Blake,"

In this week's

"GEM" LIBRARY.

Price One Penny.



Pillows bumped on Bunter, they bluffed him, they caught him on the head and legs and knocked him breathless. "Owl!" he roared. Stop it! Chuck it! Owl!" (See page 2.)

sir. I know a lot of chaps who are in want of—of new shirts, sir, and they don't know exactly where to go."

"Ahem!"

"Just a column advertisement at two shillings, to give us a start."

Mr. Walker hesitated. He was a good-natured man, and it occurred to him that an advertisement in a school paper for two shillings might be worth while. He had heard of John Bull's editorial venture from Mr. Corney, and he naturally supposed that Bunter represented the same paper. And the fat junior was very careful not to enlighten him upon this point.

"Well, then, we will have a column," said Mr. Walker.

"Thank you, sir. If you will give me the wording now it will save time," and Bunter opened a pocket-book and licked a stump of a pencil. "I may mention that Mr. Clegg is advertising in the 'Weekly,' sir, and expects to do a great deal of business through it."

Mr. Walker gave the wording for the advertisement, and Bunter took his leave, the richer by two shillings.

The Owl of the Remove was in a very triumphant mood as he left Walker's, and proceeded in search of another victim. He felt that he was scoring over Harry Wharton & Co. all along the line.

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THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Jump.

BULSTRODE looked round the Close, and looked into the common-room.

"Anyone seen Bunter?" he asked.

Alonzo Todd looked up from a volume of "Dictionary Dates and Events," a present from his Uncle Benjamin.

"Yes, indeed, Bulstrode!" he said.

"Where?"

"In class, to-day. He was on the same form."

Bulstrode snorted.

"You ass! I mean since he went out!"

"Ah! No! Probably he has not returned!"

"Ass! Skinner saw him come in! He's hiding somewhere!"

Todd looked perplexed.

"That is very singular, Bulstrode. Are you playing a game of hide-and-seek with him, Bulstrode? Is that what you mean?"

"Well, yes, that's it in a way," he said grimly.

"Bunter's hiding, and I'm seeking. And when I find him I'm going to give him a hiding! See?"

Todd pondered.

"No, I do not quite see," he replied. "Is your latter statement that kind of a play upon words which is generally alluded to as a pun? My Uncle Benjamin says that puns are a positive proof of feebleness of intellect. You see—"

"Oh, dry up, Todd! Anybody here know where Bunter is?"

"Might be in Wharton's study," said Snoop. "Wharton had a postal-order this afternoon, and they'll be having something decent for tea."

"Good!" said Bulstrode.

He went up to the Remove passage. He knew that Bunter had returned, because Skinner had seen the fat junior come in, and Bulstrode had found his silk hat, considerably the worse for wear, in his study. Bunter had deposited it there, without taking the trouble to brush it, or even to put it back in the hat-box. That was very like Bunter.

Bulstrode looked into Study No. 1. Here were preparations for tea on the table, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was there. The Nabob of Bhanipur was just leaving the study as Bulstrode looked in.

"Seen Bunter?" asked the burly Removeite.

The nabob shook his head.

"No, I have not seen the esteemed fat Bunter," he replied. "I understandfully opine that he is gone out."

"Oh, he's come back. Going to have tea?"

"The honourable Wharton and the esteemed Nugent are going to have tea, and I thinkfully believe that they are bringing the esteemed Cherry," said Hurree Singh. "For my own honourable part, I have been askfully invited to tea with our revered Head-master, sahib, and I am going now, if the august Bulstrode will excuse me."

"Oh, buzz off as soon as you like!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh walked down the passage, and Bulstrode watched him go downstairs. Then he stepped quickly into the study.

He guessed that Wharton and Nugent were gone to Mrs. Minble to expend some of Harry's postal-order for tea, and if that was the case, and they were bringing Bob Cherry to tea with them, there was little doubt that Billy Bunter would go on the scent of the feed, and arrive sooner or later at Study No. 1.

Bulstrode determined to wait for him there. As the Chums of the Remove were not likely to lend him any assistance in the matter, he did not intend to apprise them of his intention.

He slipped underneath the table, of which the covers extended near enough to the floor to conceal him from sight, unless a close examination should be made.

It was a somewhat cramped position for the burly bully of the Remove; but Bulstrode could muster up plenty of patience, especially when he was feeling spiteful.

In a few minutes there was a sound of footsteps in the passage, and the door of the study opened again, and Bulstrode saw three pairs of feet enter the study. Then he heard a bump above as a parcel was set down upon the table.

"There's the tommy!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "You're staying to tea, Bob?"

Bob Cherry grinned cheerfully.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "Marky's gone to tea with the Head, with Inky, and Wun Lung's off with his minor. I should have had tea in Hall—not much fun feeding alone. I'll grub with you with pleasure."

"Good!" said Wharton heartily.

Bob Cherry helped to unpack the parcel. Wharton had had a substantial remittance from his uncle, and he had expended most of it right royally. There was a really first-class feed for Study No. 1, and there was not the slightest doubt that if Billy Bunter got on the scent of it he would not be long in arriving. Bulstrode chuckled silently under the table.

Nugent made the tea, and the juniors settled down to their meal. Not the least suspicion had any of the three of the presence of the Remove bully in the study. They never thought, of course, of looking under the table.

Once Frank Nugent knocked his foot against Bulstrode's boot, but he imagined it to be Wharton's, and thought nothing of it.

Bulstrode's heart jumped for a moment. But no remark was made by Nugent. The Remove bully was growing very cramped and uncomfortable in his confined quarters, and he sincerely hoped that Bunter's coming would not be long delayed. But there was as yet no sign of the fat junior.

Bulstrode's detention was not to last, however, until Billy Bunter arrived. An incident occurred upon which he had not counted.

Bob Cherry had lifted the teapot down to the grate to refill it from the kettle. As he brought it back to the table, he set it on the tray, and in sitting down, swept it over with his elbow. It was Bob Cherry's little way, as a matter of fact. But Bulstrode was not prepared for it.

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PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylecombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

Crash!

The teapot fell upon the floor and smashed, and the hot tea splashed over Bulstrode's face and head under the table-cover.

"My hat!" ejaculated Wharton. "I— Oh!"

The crash of the breaking teapot had startled the juniors, but not nearly so much as what followed.

The tea-table suddenly uprose.

As they could not see Bulstrode beneath it, it seemed to the juniors as if the table had suddenly risen in the air of its own accord.

"What—"

"How—"

"Look out—"

Bulstrode, scalded by the tea, had leaped up, blindly, hurling the table into the air.

The juniors sprawled back over their chairs, and Nugent went to the floor, accompanied by a shower of cutlery, and crockery, and cakes, and jam.

"What is it?"

"Oh! Look out—"

"My hat—"

"There's somebody under the table!" roared Wharton.

Crash!

The table rolled over on its side, and Bulstrode stood up. His face was crimson with scalding and fury.

"Bulstrode!"

"You—you ass!"

"You clumsy chump!" roared Bulstrode, glaring at Bob Cherry. "What did you scald me for, you frabjous ass! Fathead!"

"M-m-my hat!"

"What were you hiding under the table for?" demanded Harry Wharton sternly.

Bulstrode mopped his dripping face with a handkerchief.

"I was waiting for Bunter," he said sullenly. "I wanted to catch him. How was I to know that fool would drop a teapot?"

"How was I to know a mean cad was squirming under the table?" said Bob Cherry. "Get out of the study!"

"I'll go when I please!"

"You'll go when we please!" said Harry Wharton angrily, throwing open the door. "There's your way!"

Bulstrode glared at him. But the three juniors, exasperated by the destruction of the feed, were advancing upon him.

Discretion was evidently the better part of valour. Bulstrode stepped out into the corridor, and Nugent closed the door after him.

The three juniors surveyed the scene of devastation in dismay.

"Bang goes the feed!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, we've plenty more grub," said Wharton, as cheerfully as he could, "and we can borrow some more crockery."

And after some delay the juniors went on with their tea. They had just settled down when the door opened, and Bunter blinked into the study.

"I say, you fellows, I hear you've got a feed going— Yow!"

A pat of butter, hurled by Nugent, caught the fat junior fairly on his fat little nose.

Bunter staggered out into the corridor, gasping, and spluttering, and snorting. A roar of laughter followed him. Nugent closed the door. Tea in Study No. 1 was not interrupted again.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Called Over the Coals.

"TODD!"

"Where's Todd?"

"Where's the Duffer?"

"My dear fellows—"

"Oh, here you are! You're wanted!"

Half a dozen juniors were in search of Alonzo Todd. They found him in the junior common-room, busily occupied with a pencil and paper, copying out some really valuable facts from the "Dictionary of Dates and Events" to adorn the "Scientific and Useful" column of "John Bull's Weekly."

"You're wanted!" said Ogilvy.

"I am very glad to hear that a value is placed upon my presence, my dear fellows," said Todd.

"You won't be so glad soon!" grinned Ogilvy.

"Faith, and it's the Head that wants you!" said Micky Diamond.

"Dear me!"

"You're wanted in the Head's study, Todd."

"Buck up!"

"There's a row! Mrs. Kebble is there, and she looked waxy when I saw her go in!" Skinner remarked.

"Faith, and ye're right!"

Alonzo Todd rose with a sigh. He found a fascinating interest in the "Dictionary of Dates and Events," and he was loath to leave it.

But he had to go. Even the Duffer of Greyfriars was not duffer enough to keep the Head waiting.

"I suppose I had better go," he remarked. "It is very annoying, because I was noting down some very interesting particulars of the discoveries at Nineveh, which I am sure would have interested the fellows very much in the 'Weekly.' However, I will go at once."

"You'd better, ass!"

"My dear Morgan—"

"Hurry up!"

Alonzo Todd hurried up.

He sped off to the Head's study, and arrived there in a breathless state, and knocked at the door with unintentional violence. His knock sounded like a crash. A sharp voice within bade him enter.

"Ah, it is you, Todd!"

Dr. Locke looked at Alonzo over his glasses severely.

"Yes, sir," gasped Alonzo.

"What do you mean by knocking at the door so loudly?"

"I—I—if you please, sir, I was in a hurry, and—"

"Mrs. Kebble has a complaint to make against you."

Todd turned to the housekeeper. That dame was looking very red and very wrathful. She fixed her eye like a basilisk's on Todd.

"My dear madam," said Todd, "I trust I have not been so unfortunate as to displease you in any way. My Uncle Benjamin always impressed upon me to be very kind and polite to ladies, even to those who are old and plain, and—"

Mrs. Kebble became crimson.

"Silence, Todd!" said the Head, covering his mouth with his hand for a moment. "Mrs. Kebble accuses you of robbing her pantry."

Alonzo jumped.

"I, sir?"

"Yes, you, Todd!"

"It is a great mistake, sir. I should certainly not rob a pantry. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at such a proceeding on my part."

"Mrs. Kebble states that she found you leaving her room yesterday, and that afterwards she missed the key of her pantry."

"Yes, sir, but—"

"One moment! Mrs. Kebble thought she must have lost the key, and had a new one made, and has only just obtained the new one. On opening the pantry, she finds that it has been almost cleared out of jams, preserves, and other things."

"I'm so sorry—"

"Mrs. Kebble therefore thinks that she did not lose the key, but that it was taken from the drawer in her room by someone who robbed the pantry. Certainly, the pantry could not have been opened without that special key, as it has a Yale lock."

"My dear sir—"

"Did you take the key from Mrs. Kebble's room, Todd?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"You know nothing about it?"

"Nothing at all, sir!"

"Then what were you doing in my room that time, Master Todd?" asked Mrs. Kebble, with great asperity.

Alonzo Todd hesitated.

"You must answer, Todd," said the Head, who was regarding the Duffer of Greyfriars with a very keen and curious glance.

"If you please, sir, it is not wholly my secret."

"What do you mean?"

"I was asked to visit Mrs. Kebble's room to perform a service for somebody else, sir."

"Who else?"

"Am I bound to give the name, sir? Although there was no actual arrangement as to preserving secrecy, yet I consider that it is my duty to keep the matter dark until I have at least consulted Bunter—I—I mean the person I allude to."

The Head smiled, and touched the bell. Trotter appeared at the door.

"Find Master Bunter, and bring him here, Trotter," said the Head.

The page vanished.

"Now, Todd, what service did you wish to perform for this other person, by paying a visit to the housekeeper's room?" asked the Head.

"It was to obtain a key, sir."

"A key?"

"Yes, sir."

"What kind of a key?"

"A Yale key."

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NEXT TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"The key of the pantry?"

"Oh, sir, No! Not at all!"

"Then what key was it?"

"The key of a study, sir."

"None of the studies at Greyfriars has a Yale lock, to my knowledge, Todd," said the Head sternly.

"No, sir. But Bunter intends having a lock put on his study door, you see, sir, and he apparently had the key first. He lost the key, and Mrs. Kebble found it and put it in the drawer, thinking it was the pantry key."

"How do you know that, Todd?"

"Bunter told me, sir."

"And that was the key you took for Bunter?"

"Yes, sir," said the Duffer of Greyfriars cheerfully.

The Head could not help smiling. The simplicity of the great Alonzo was comic. No one at Greyfriars, excepting Alonzo Todd, would have dreamed of swallowing Bunter's preposterous yarn for a moment. But it had gone down quite easily with Alonzo.

"Did it not occur to you, Todd, that Bunter might be speaking untruly, and that the key in the drawer was really the key of the pantry?"

"Oh, sir; no, sir!"

"You gave the key to Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he do with it?"

"He has since lost it."

"Did he open the pantry with it?"

"Not that I know of, sir," said Todd, looking very much distressed. "I really and sincerely hope, sir, that Bunter would not do anything of the sort. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Your Uncle Benjamin is not at present under discussion, Todd. Pray leave out any further reference to him. You do not know whether Bunter opened the pantry with the key you handed to him after abstracting it from Mrs. Kebble's room?"

"N-n-n-no, sir."

"Do you know whether Bunter has lately been in possession of any quantity of jams and preserves, such as might have been abstracted from the pantry by whoever opened it?"

"Bunter certainly has been well supplied with pots of jam, sir, but he obtained them cheap from a relation of his in the business."

"How do you know that?"

"He told me so, sir."

The Head smiled.

"Ah, here is Bunter!"

The door opened, and the Owl of the Remove came in with Trotter. He was looking very red and uncomfortable. Bunter knew instinctively that he was to be hauled over the coals for something; but his sins were so numerous that he had no idea which of them it was that he was to be called to account for now.

Trotter retired and closed the door, and Billy Bunter blinked at the head-master uneasily through his big spectacles.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Fall in Jam.

DR. LOCKE looked sternly at Bunter. The fat junior blinked at him, and then blinked at Todd, and then at Mrs. Kebble. The sight of the housekeeper in the Head's study gave Bunter an inkling of what was toward. He remembered the jars of jam and preserves piled up under the table in his study, and inwardly quaked.

"Y-y-y-you sent for me, sir?" he stuttered.

"Yes, Bunter. You induced Todd to take a key from the housekeeper's room for you?" said the Head sternly.

"Oh, no, sir."

"You deny it?"

"Certainly, sir."

"My dear Bunter!" exclaimed Todd in amazement. "Surely your memory is very defective? You surely recall asking me to obtain the key, which you said was your own, and which Mrs. Kebble refused to give up because she fancied it was hers?"

"Look here, Todd—"

"Is that correct, Bunter?"

"Not at all, sir. Todd has been dreaming, sir. I believe

ANSWERS

he is subject to these fancies, sir—a kind of hallucination," said Bunter.

The Head's brow grew very stern.

"Are you speaking the truth, Bunter?"

"I hope you don't doubt my word, sir. The Bunters are a very truthful family, excepting my minor, Sammy. We have always been famous for telling the truth, sir, ever since my ancestor, Sir Bunt de Bunter, came over with the Conqueror—"

"You did not open the pantry, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Then where did you obtain a quantity of jams and preserves from?"

"I—I haven't any, sir."

"Your mind must be wandering, Bunter," said Todd in astonishment. "You have them stacked under the table in your study—you remember, the consignment of jams and things your relation in the business sent you!"

Bunter looked daggers at the too loquacious Todd.

"You ass, Todd—"

"Bunter!" thundered the Head.

"I—I meant to say, just so, Todd," stammered Bunter.

"That—that was what I really meant to say, sir."

"You have jams and preserves under the table in your study?"

"No, sir."

"Trotter!"

Trotter must have been very near the door, for he heard, and entered at once.

"Go to Master Bunter's study, Trotter, and bring here any jams, preserves, or things of the sort you may find there."

"Yes, sir."

Bunter gasped.

He was wonderful when he started lying; but he never took the slightest precautions against being found out. His mental powers did not extend so far as that. As soon as Trotter had departed, however, Bunter began to hedge.

"It's—it's possible some jars and things may be found in my study, sir," he said cautiously. "I don't say it's likely, but it's possible."

"Then where did they come from, Bunter?"

"A relation in the business, sir, sent me—"

"His name?"

"His n-n-name, sir?" stammered Bunter, taken aback.

"Yes, what is his name?"

"B-b-bunter, sir."

"His address?"

"A-a-a-address, sir?"

"Yes; I shall write to him and make an inquiry."

Bunter almost staggered.

"I—I—I forgot his address, sir," he said. "And now I come to think of it, I ate all he sent me, and if any things are found in my study, sir, they won't be what he sent me. You must put that idea right out of your head, sir."

"Then where did you obtain them, Bunter?"

"I—I didn't obtain them, sir."

"But if they are in your study—"

"It's a plot, sir."

"What?"

"A pi-pip-pip-plot!" stammered Bunter, somewhat disconcerted by the direct gaze and knitted brows of the Head of Greyfriars.

"I don't understand, you, Bunter."

"It's a plot to ruin me, sir," said Bunter. "I read a thing of the same kind in a story in a newspaper the other day—a newspaper serial story—"

"I do not approve of my boys reading the serial stories in newspapers," said the Head, frowning. "The less you see of modern newspapers the better, with very few exceptions. But that has nothing, in any case, to do with the present matter."

"Yes, sir; it's the wheeze, sir. In that story, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"In that story, the villain, a chap named Clarence Fitz-Herbert, sir, planted a dead body in the rooms belonging to Cecil De Vere, sir, so as to get him convicted of murder, sir, so as to have him hung, sir, so that he could marry the girl, the Lady Gloxiana, sir, and so that—"

"What nonsense are you talking, Bunter?"

"This isn't nonsense, sir, it's a newspaper serial. Well, sir, this is a similar case—some awful villain has planted those jam pots on me, sir, so as to ruin me."

"You utterly stupid boy!"

"Eh?"

"Ah! Ha! My goodness!"

The door opened, and Trotter came in.

His arms were full of jam jars, and he was heavily laden. He staggered gasping into the study.

His foot caught in the rug, and he took a step too many forward, and lurched.

Crash!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

A jam jar smashed on the floor.

It was like the first drop of a thunder shower.

Crash! Crash! Crash!

CRASH!

Down in a terrific shower went the jam pots and preserve jars, mixing in wreck on the Head's carpet, while Trotter stared at them in dismay.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Catches It.

TROTTER gasped, and gasped again.

"Ho, I'm sorry, sir! They was 'eavy, sir! Ho, dear!"

"You stupid boy!" exclaimed the Head.

"Ho!"

"My jams!" ejaculated Mrs. Kebble. "My preserves! Oh, dear!"

"I'm so sorry," said Alonzo Todd, "but perhaps I can scrape up some of the spilt jams, and it can be restored to the jars. It may be possible to wash it!"

"Ho, dear!"

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!"

"That amount of jam has been found in your study! It was in Bunter's study, Trotter?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Trotter. "Hunder the table, sir. You told me to bring it hall, sir, but it was 'orrid 'eavy, sir."

"How did those jars get into your room, Bunter?"

"Must have been taken there, sir."

"By you?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"Then by whom?"

"By some deeply-dyed villain, sir, like—like Clarence Fitz-herbert in the story in the 'Chronicle Weekly,' sir," said Bunter.

"Bunter! How dare you talk such nonsense to me?"

"It's a plot, sir."

"A—a plot!"

"Yes, sir, a plot to fix the jam on me—I mean the theft of the jam on me. That's what it was, sir, depend upon it—a plot, sir."

"My dear Bunter—"

"Oh, shut up, Todd!"

"But you assured me that all the jam had been sent to you by a relation in the business, Bunter!"

"That wasn't this jam, fathead!"

"But I recognise the jars, Bunter."

"Rot! Jam-jars are very much alike."

"Yes; but it is rare for jam-jars to have the names written upon them on labels by hand," said Todd. "I remember they were like that."

"It is quite clear," said the Head, "you induced Todd, by a falsehood that would not have imposed upon a less simple boy, to obtain the key of the pantry for you, Bunter."

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Then you robbed the pantry, and deliberately throw the key away, so as to put off the hour of discovery as long as possible."

"I—I didn't, sir! I—I dropped it down the drain quite by accident, sir."

"What! Then you admit having had the key of the pantry?"

"Oh, sir! No, sir!"

"But you have just admitted it."

"I—I didn't mean to, sir. It's a mistake, sir—a slight mistake on your part. What I really meant to say was, that I never saw the key at all—in fact, I don't know what a Yale lock is like, and I never saw a Yale key."

"My dear Bunter, you told me—"

"Oh, shut up, Todd!"

"You will do yourself no good by this lying, Bunter," said the Head sternly. "It is amazing that you should expect anybody to believe such falsehoods."

"You—you see, sir," said Bunter, changing his ground a little, "I—I might have taken the jam, sir, thinking that you'd like us to have plenty to eat. People do these things and forget all about them, sir."

"You did take the jam?"

"I—I might have—"

"Did you, or did you not?"

"Ye-e-es, sir! When I think over it carefully I think I must have, sir. I did it to stand the fellows a feed. They are always twitting me with feeding at their expense, sir, and never standing them anything," said Bunter pathetically. "so I thought I would really give them a good blow-out, sir, for once."

"You do not appear to have given the jam away, as it was found in your study," said the Head sharply.

"I—I was going to, sir."



It seemed to the startled juniors as if the table had risen in the air of its own accord. They scrambled over the backs of their chairs, and Nugent went to the floor. "There's somebody under the table!" roared Wharton. (See Page 16.)

"I fear you are lying again, Bunter."

"I—I—I've already disposed of about a dozen jars, sir."

"There was about a dozen empty jars in the bottom of the cupboard in Master Bunter's study, sir," said Trotter.

"Beast!" murmured Billy Bunter.

"You have eaten yourself all that you have disposed of, I have no doubt, Bunter," said the Head. "For stealing the jam and for lying about it with such extraordinary effrontery I shall administer a severe punishment."

"Oh, sir! I—I think, sir, you might go lightly through my courage and manliness in owning up to it," said Bunter dismally. "When a chap owns up to anything in 'Sherrick; or, Bit by Bit,' his kind teacher takes him by the hand, sir, and cries over him."

The Head smiled grimly.

"I think you will do the crying in this case, Bunter. I am afraid that you are a very unscrupulous boy."

"Oh, sir! I—"

"You may go, Todd!"

"Thank you so much, sir! I am afraid that I have been deceived by Bunter, sir."

"You have, undoubtedly."

"Oh, really, sir—"

"And that has led me to become instrumental in causing loss and inconvenience to this good lady, whom I admire and respect very much," said Todd. "I trust Mrs. Kebble will accept my profound apologies. I feel that I cannot do less than offer them under the unfortunate and distressing circumstances."

Mrs. Kebble sniffed.

Perhaps she did not feel that the apologies of Alonzo Todd were a sufficient indemnification for the loss of her jams and preserves.

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NEXT
TUESDAY:

"POOR OLD BUNTER."

"I will now retire, sir—"

"Please do so at once."

"Oh, sir, certainly!"

And Alonzo Todd retired.

"Mrs. Kebble, the delinquent is discovered, and will be duly punished," said the Head.

Mrs. Kebble left the study.

Then the Head devoted his attention to Bunter.

The fat junior eyed him nervously as he selected a cane. Billy Bunter knew from of old how the Head could lay on the cane, and he did not like it. He racked his brains for an avenue of escape.

"I—I say, sir, if you please, sir, would you mind letting me off this time, sir? You see, I'm very delicate, sir—"

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

"I—I—I've got a weak head, sir—I—I mean a weak heart, and—"

"Your hand, Bunter—"

"And I may be ill, sir— Yow!"

Bunter yelled as the cane sang across his fat shoulders.

"Now hold out your hand, Bunter, or I shall flog you instead of caning you," said the Head sternly.

"Oh, sir! I—"

Swish!

"Yarrah!"

"Your hand, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter held out his hand at last.

The Head gave him four cuts on either hand, and he laid them on with the scientific skill for which he was celebrated in Greyfriars. Sometimes the Head's canings were little more than a matter of form, but when he was in earnest he made the cane ring again on the palms of the unfortunate victims. He was in earnest this time. The Head abominated a liar.

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of the Chums
of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

above all things, and Billy Bunter received more for his falsehoods than for his robbery of the pantry.

The fat junior was wriggling and squirming like a wounded snake when the Head had finished with him. Dr. Locke laid down the cane.

"You may go now, Bunter," he said. "I trust that this will be a lesson to you."

And Bunter groaned and departed.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo Implores.

"H E'S been through it, poor beast!"

Bob Cherry made the remark as Billy Bunter came into the junior common-room.

Bunter was wriggling as he walked, with his fat hands tucked away under his armpits, and his fat face less ruddy than usual.

There were sympathetic inquiries from all quarters. Even Bunter was entitled to a little sympathy when he had been "through it."

"Poor beast!" said Bob Cherry. "Did it hurt?"

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. "Yow! Did it hurt! Do you think I'm doing this for fun, you ass?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The hurtfulness of the honourable Bunter must have been terrific, as he is so fat and out of his esteemed condition," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Yow!"

"Hallo, Bunter there!" exclaimed Bulstrode, coming into the common-room. "I've got a bone to pick with you, my fat beauty!"

"Ow!"

"You've been borrowing my silk hat——"

"Groo!"

"And I'm going to give you the licking of your life! Now——"

"Hold on, Bulstrode!" said Wharton quietly.

The bully of the Remove gave him a fierce look.

"What on earth's it got to do with you?" he exclaimed angrily.

"Bunter's had enough."

"Look here——"

"I dare say he deserves a licking, but the Head has been going for him, and you can leave him alone."

"I'll do as I like! I——"

"No, you won't!" said John Bull. "You'll do as the decent chaps in the Form like. Let Bunter alone."

"Chuck it, Bulstrode!"

"Ring off, old man!"

"Don't be a cad!"

Bulstrode hesitated. But he saw that opinion was against him, and he gave in.

"Well, I daresay the fat beast has had enough," he said; "but if you touch my topper again, Bunter, I'll make you wriggle!"

"Ow!"

"Oh, stop that row!"

Billy Bunter dropped into a chair and groaned. Alonzo Todd came up to him with a very sympathetic expression upon his face.

"I'm so sorry, Bunter, that you are in pain," he said; "but perhaps you can find some comfort, even in this unpleasant affliction, by reflecting that it is for your good."

"Yow!"

"You have been guilty of the most inexcusable untruthfulness, and have, indeed, shown a character warped very far from the path of rectitude," said Alonzo, in the best manner of his revered Uncle Benjamin. "I beg and implore you, Bunter, to let this be a lesson to you."

"You fathead!"

"My dear Bunter——"

"You silly chump——"

"My dear——"

"Buzz off, you burbling jabberwock!"

"I really cannot approve of these expressions, my dear Bunter, and I am sure that my Uncle Benjamin would be equally shocked—nay, disgusted," said Todd seriously. "Your untruthfulness, Bunter, is your besetting sin. If you gave it up you would find a very great comfort in the solace of an untainted conscience. From my high moral standpoint—which I owe wholly to the lessons inculcated by my Uncle Benjamin—I strive to reason with you, Bunter, and again I beg and implore you to give it up."

"Ass!"

"I beg and implore——"

"Take this dummy away!" shrieked Bunter. "It's too bad—won't somebody cart him off to a lunatic asylum? Ow!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

"Shut up, Todd!"

"Leave him alone!"

"Ring off, old man!"

Alonzo Todd looked round at the remonstrating juniors. Alonzo Todd was on the high horse now—fairly mounted upon the high moral standpoint which he owed wholly to the valuable instructions of his Uncle Benjamin.

"My dear fellows, I cannot conscientiously shut up. I feel it to be my bounden duty to beg and implore Bunter——"

"Cheese it!"

"Ass!" said Wharton. "If you want to talk like a silly chump can't you do it at some time when your victim isn't bothered about anything else?"

"My dear Wharton——"

"When you start boring anybody, you should first ascertain that they are physically fit and free from worry," said Nugent. "Any idiot might be expected to ascertain that before beginning to bore."

"My dear Nugent——"

"Ring off!"

"As a friend to Bunter, seeing him in this state of moral inexactitude, I am bound to beg and implore of him——"

"Shut up!" roared a score of voices.

"My dear fellows——"

"Oh, kick him out!"

"Jump on him!"

"But I am only begging and imploring Bunter——"

"Fathead!"

"Shut up!"

"Under the circumstances, I do not believe that my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my shutting up, as you so coarsely put it. I am bound to go on, and to beg and implore Bunter—before it is too late, to——"

But the Remove had had enough of Alonzo's conscience. They made a rush at him. He was whisked off the floor in a moment.

He struggled frantically in the grasp of a dozen fellows.

"Now, are you going to shut up?" roared Tom Brown.

"Certainly not. It is my duty to beg and implore Bunter——"

"Fathead!"

"My dear fellows——"

"Bump him!" shouted Hazeldene.

"But I beg and implore——"

"Chump!"

"Bump him!"

Alonzo Todd smote the carpet in a sitting position, and with a concussion that was painful. He roared!

"Oh! Ow! Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I beg and implore——"

Bump!

Once more Todd smote the carpet with himself.

"Now, are you going to shut up?" demanded Tom Brown.

"Certainly not. I beg and——"

Bump!

"Yaroo!"

"Finished now?"

"No! I——"

"Oh, chuck him out!"

Alonzo was rushed to the door.

He was whirled through the doorway, and then half a dozen boots were planted behind him, and he went spinning along the passage. A roar of laughter followed him.

"I guess he's done now," remarked Fisher T. Fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A dusty face, with a torn collar straggling under it, looked in at the door. Alonzo Todd blinked round in search of Bunter.

"My dear Bunter! I beg and implore——"

"My hat! He's at it again!"

"Collar him!"

The juniors made a rush for the door. But even the Duffer of Greyfriars thought that it was time to go then. He dodged along the passage, and fled for his life, with excited juniors whooping on his track. And he did not even stop to breathe. He had locked himself up in a deserted class-room, and was safe.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Splendid Serial.

JOHN BULL sat at the editorial table in Study No. 14 in the Remove passage. He was not editing now. Editing was over for a time. Copy had been sent off to the printers in Courtfield, and the printed copies were shortly due at Greyfriars. John Bull had conceived the idea of imitating the famous "Punch" round table, and he was standing a feed to his staff to celebrate the despatching of the last of the copy.

John Bull was still rolling in money; for though he had grown more careful than he had been at first of the munificent present from his Aunt Tabitha, he still spent it right royally when occasion demanded, and he had a great deal left.

The table groaned, as a novelist would say, under the weight of the goodly viands. John Bull, and Harry Wharton, and Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sat round the table. Mark Linley and Tom Brown were on a stool, and Fisher T. Fish, and Alonzo Todd on boxes. The study was crowded, certainly, but everything was very cosy and cheerful, and the party were very merry.

"Here's to the school paper!" said John Bull, lifting a glass of ginger-beer.

"Hear, hear!"

"That ought to be drunk with musical honours," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, that's easy enough!" exclaimed John Bull. "My concertina's in a locker there, and—"

"Oh!"

"Ah!"

"I should be very pleased to—"

The juniors looked at one another with sickly expressions. John Bull was their host, and they were bound not to express their opinions with the freedom they were accustomed to on the subject of the concertina.

But even a guest was not bound to stand a concertina. The laws of etiquette could not be so stringent as that.

"I—I think we'll leave the musical honours out," said Harry Wharton. "You see—"

"Exactly!" said Nugent. "You see—"

"The seefuiness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

John Bull laughed.

"Oh, rats! You fellows have no ear for music."

"That's it—anything you like," agreed Tom Brown.

"Only—only don't give us any! You see, old man—"

The door opened.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What do you want, Bunter?"

"Not much need to ask that, when there's a feed going," grinned John Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, you can come in!" said John Bull unceremoniously. "Find a place to sit down if you can, and tuck in. You're welcome."

"Thank you, very much, Bull!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "You see, I—I didn't come here for a feed, but as you're so pressing, I'll have some."

"My dear Bunter—"

"Oh, shut up, Todd!" said Bunter peevishly. "I'll begin with ham, please, and I think I may as well have a porkie with it."

"My dear Bunter, you are dropping into your old habit of untruthfulness, and I beg and implore you—"

"Shut up, Todd!" roared the whole study.

"My dear fellows—"

"Ring off!"

"Under the circumstances—"

"Exactly. Under the circumstances, cheese it," said Wharton.

"I say, you fellows, I'm rather chilly—I'd like a seat by the fire, if one of you chaps wouldn't mind moving. I'm accustomed to sitting in an armchair, you know."

Wharton laughed, and rose, and Bunter took his place.

"You might hand me some grub, Wharton, as you're on your feet," said Bunter.

"Good old Bunter!" murmured Bob Cherry. "No change! Same old Bunter—same beast all the time!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Wharton handed Bunter supplies of food. He had plenty of handing to do. Long after the rest of the juniors had finished, Bunter was still going strong.

"You fellows want the table?" he asked. "Don't wait for me."

"Are you finished?"

"Well, not exactly finished: but I'll take some of the dishes here," said Bunter. "Then I can help myself. Don't mind me."

"My hat!"

"Well, my only desire is to avoid giving trouble. After I've finished, I've got a splendid offer to make to you fellows."

"Rats!"

Bunter did not reply. He was too busy eating. The other fellows cleared the table, and some of them went down, while some gathered round the table to discuss the policy of the third number of "John Bull Junior's Weekly."

Billy Bunter was finished at last. He ceased eating with a great gasp of breathless enjoyment.

"That was something like!" he remarked.

"Eh? What was?" asked John Bull, looking round.

"That feed! I'm finished, thanks! I'll put some of the

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TUESDAY,

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LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

cake in my pocket, if you don't mind in case I get peckish," said Bunter. "It's important for me to have plenty of nourishment, you know, as I've got a very delicate constitution."

And Billy Bunter proceeded to fill every available pocket. John Bull did not make any remark.

"Now, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, "to business!"

"Eh? What?"

"I told you chaps I was going to make you a splendid offer. For the last time," said Billy Bunter impressively. "I'm going to make you the offer of my splendid serial for the columns of the 'Weekly.'"

"Oh, rats!"

"If you don't want my splendid work, you can say so, and—"

"We don't!"

"No fear!"

"Rats!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the staff of "John Bull's Weekly." Their opinion had been expressed unequivocally enough for most contributors. But it did not seem to have any effect upon Billy Bunter.

He simply extracted a manuscript from his pocket and unfolded it.

"Here's the first chapter of my serial—"

"Take it away!"

"Bury it!"

"I say, you fellows, you might give a chap a chance! I'll bet you anything that this is better than any stuff you've got in the rotten paper now."

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Well, read out the first paragraph," said John Bull resignedly. "I suppose an editor is bound to go through these things. Get on!"

Bunter opened his manuscript, and coughed, and wheezed, and began, in an extremely important manner:

"Jack, Sam, and Pete!"

There was a roar.

"What's that?"

"That's the title!" said Bunter, blinking round.

"My hat!"

"You giddy plagiarist!"

"You blessed burglar!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Of all the duffers—"

"Look here, let me go on with my splendid story. You agreed to listen to it. Chapter I—'Pete and the Camel.'"

"My hat!"

"Great Scott!"

"The esteemed great Scottfulness is terrific."

Bunter read on.

"Zeila is a small town in British Somaliland, and it is on the Eastern coast. Here, Jack Sam, and Pete had wandered

Billy Bunter could get no further. A yell of indignation interrupted him.

"Stop it!"

"Cheese it!"

"You burglar!"

"My hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "I believe that chap would rob a church. You fat, silly duffer, I've read that story!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"It was in the 'Marvel' a few weeks ago!" Harry Wharton shouted excitedly. "It was called 'Pete's Bad Bargain.' I lost my copy of the paper. I suppose that fat duffer found it, and he's copied the story out."

"Oh, really—" said Billy Bunter feebly.

"You plagiarising rascal!"

"You awful fibber!"

"You chump!"

"I say, you fellows, of course, Wharton's statement is dictated wholly by personal jealousy," said Bunter. "That's understood. I—"

"Fibber!"

"Liar!"

"I—I never found his copy of the 'Marvel.' I bought it myself in Friardale—I—I mean, I never saw a paper of that name at all. I never knew there was such a paper, and I have not taken it in myself at all."

"You haven't taken us in, anyway, you fat fraud!" said Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really—"

"Get out!"

"Clear out, you fraud!"

"I say—"

"My dear Bunter, I am shocked at you," said Alonzo Todd solemnly. "And if my Uncle Benjamin were here I

am convinced that he would be equally shocked—nay, disgusted. Bunter, I beg and implore of you——"

"Outside!" roared John Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

John Bull lifted his boot. Bunter was out of the study in a twinkling. He had felt the weight of John Bull's boot before.

Alonzo Todd ran to the door after him.

"Bunter—my dear Bunter, I beg and implore you——"

But Billy Bunter was gone.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

A Dissatisfied Advertiser.

"HERE'S the second number!"

John Bull looked very satisfied as he made the announcement.

It was very gratifying to the youthful editor of "John Bull's Weekly" to have the second number of his paper delivered safe and sound in the editorial offices.

The juniors received their copies eagerly.

There had been trouble over the first number, owing to the action of Billy Bunter in getting some copy of his own inserted without the knowledge of the editor. But the second copy was all right.

"It looks ripping!" said Bob Cherry.

"First-class!"

"The first-classfulness is terrific!"

"What we want," said John Bull thoughtfully, "is advertisements from local tradesmen to fill the covers, so as to save some of the expense of printing. Of course, I don't mind footing the bill; but it's better business to get advertisers to do it."

"Yes, rather!"

"The Friardale people don't seem very keen on advertising in the paper——"

"That's because you don't know how to canvas for advertisements," said Billy Bunter. "Now, if I were on the staff——"

"Oh, cheese it, Bunter!"

"If I were on the staff I could manage it for you. Not that I would accept a position on the staff now. I am getting in advertisements hand over fist for my paper."

"Your what?"

"My paper—'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows——"

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

"You can cackle as much as you like," said Billy Bunter. "That's how the matter stands. I've got advertisements from Uncle Clegg, and Walkers, and Sands, the grocer."

"Rats!"

"If you choose to doubt my statement——"

"We do—rather!"

"You cannot be surprised at that, Bunter," said Alonzo Todd. "You are a most untruthful boy, and you have persisted in bad courses, although I have begged and implored you——"

"Oh, rats!" snorted Bunter, and he rolled away.

When Bunter did tell the truth no one believed him. But it was on such rare occasions that that really made very little difference.

"We'll rope in some advertisements somehow," said John Bull. "Perhaps the people were rather shy of advertising in the paper while it was still in the air, you know. Now that it's a concrete fact they may nibble."

"Very likely."

"We'll send free copies of the paper to every tradesman in Friardale," said John Bull firmly. "That's the business way. We'll send a little circular, too, calling their attention to the splendid advertising medium they are missing."

"Cost something in stamps."

"Good business always costs money. We shall get it back in advertisement fees."

"Good!"

And the editorial staff of "John Bull's Weekly" busied themselves for some time in despatching free copies of the paper to the Friardale tradesfolk.

Humorous inquiries were made of Bunter as to when the first number of the weekly of which he was editor was to appear.

On that point the fat junior maintained a discreet reserve. Some of the fellows thought that he must really have captured some advertisement fees in Friardale, because on his return from the village he had been seen in the tuckshop, expending money freely.

But, whether he had captured advertisements or not, Billy Bunter certainly had no capital to pay for the production of the promised weekly paper.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

"Bunter's Weekly" remained, for the present at least, a thing of the imagination.

As a matter of fact, Billy Bunter was turning the matter over in his mind, and the question of raising the wind—otherwise, the capital—for his new venture was a burning one with him.

The more the fellows joked about 'Bunter's Weekly,' the more the fat junior was determined to bring the paper out; but the more he reflected upon the matter the more impossible it seemed to raise the money.

He even descended to the desperate resource of visiting Mr. Casey, the printer, and requesting him to publish the first number on credit, payment to be made out of the advertisement fees that were to accrue later.

Mr. Casey looked at him over his glasses speechlessly for a minute.

Bunter's request seemed to have taken his breath away.

Then he called to Solly Lazarus:

"Lazarus, show this young gentleman out."

Solly grinned, and opened the door.

"Thith way, if you pleathe," he said.

Billy Bunter blinked at the printer.

"But, I say, you know, I'm making you a jolly good offer!" he exclaimed. "I'm willing to add five per cent. interest to the capital amount if you let the thing stand over for payment for, say, a month."

"Good-afternoon!"

"Well, say ten per cent. interest!"

"I am very busy now——"

"Look here, fifteen per cent——"

"Show Master Bunter out, Lazarus."

"Yeth, thir!"

"But look here——" roared Bunter.

Solly laid an insinuating hand upon his fat shoulder and steered him to the door.

Bunter turned round in the doorway and blinked at the printer.

"Look here, Mr. Casey, we'll say twenty per cent. That's splendid for letting a small debt stand over for a month. Twenty-five per cent——"

The door closed behind Bunter, and he was left talking to the desert air. The fat junior snorted.

"Beasts!"

And he walked back to Greyfriars disconsolately.

He found an excited group of juniors in the Close when he entered. There was a shout at once as Bunter appeared.

"Here he is!"

"Here's Bunter!"

The juniors crowded round the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter began to swell visibly. He had never deemed himself of such importance in the Form before.

"Hallo, you fellows! What is it?" he asked loftily.

"Want my advice about something? Suppose we go and talk the matter over in the tuckshop?"

"You fat fraud!"

"You bounder——"

"You burglar!"

"You rotter——"

"Oh, I say, you fellows, what's the row?" demanded Bunter, realising that it was not an ovation, and blinking round in some alarm.

Alonzo Todd wagged a bony forefinger at him.

"Bunter, I'm so sorry to see you persist in your evil courses, although I have begged and implored of you——"

"Look here, Bunter!" shouted John Bull.

He held out a letter to Bunter. The letter was written, in a scrawling hand, upon sugar-bag paper, and the address on it was that of Uncle Clegg, the keeper of the tuckshop in Friardale.

"Dear Sir," ran the letter—"I ave seen the koppy of the paper you ave sent me, but I doant see my vertizment, which I ave paid 4 shillings for. I rekwire the return of the munny!—Yorts trooly,
J. Clegg."

The staff of "John Bull's Weekly" glared at Bunter.

"Well, you fraud?"

"What do you say to that?"

"You've been swindling again!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—look here, that letter must have been for me, and you've opened it. It's not what I call honourable," said Bunter.

John Bull glared.

"It was addressed to me!" he exclaimed. "Look here!"

He held up a cheap envelope.

Upon it, in a scrawling hand, was the superscription:

"The Eddytor of the Skool Paper at Greyfriars."

"That was for me!" said Bunter loftily. "I'm the editor of the school paper at Greyfriars—'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"You—you—you——"

"It's no good calling me names, Bull, because I'm bring-

ing out a better paper than you are, and getting advertisements for it," said Bunter.

"You fraud! You must have made Clegg believe that our weekly was the one you were talking to him about. He wouldn't have believed for a moment that you had money or sense enough for the job."

"Clegg may have made such a mistake; but I suppose I'm not responsible for his being a stupid ass. I certainly didn't tell him so."

"You've spoofed him—"

"I decline to discuss the matter further," said Bunter. "All this is the outcome of personal jealousy on the staff, and—"

"Oh, bump him!"

"I—I say, you fellows, hold on—"

"We're going to pay Uncle Clegg back his four shillings, and explain to him that you were spoofing him," said John Bull. "But you're not going to do this sort of thing again."

"Bump the cad!"

"Ow—yow—yaroo!"

But in spite of Bunter's wild yells, he was bumped, and he was left sitting in the Close looking very dusty and bewildered. There was a spiteful gleam in his little, round eyes as he rose to his feet, gasping.

"Beast! I'll make them sit up for that!"

And Bunter rolled away, still snorting.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Caught.

"GREAT Scott! What was that?"

"What was what?"

"That!"

"Ass! What are you jabbering about?" said Bob Cherry peevishly.

"There was somebody opening the dorm. door," said Frank Nugent, sitting up in bed. "Somebody has either come in or gone out."

"The burglar again, perhaps," sniffed Bob Cherry. "He never was captured, and he may come back again, you know."

"More likely Bunter gone rummaging for a feed," said a sleepy voice from Harry Wharton's bed. "It's all right."

"My hat! He may be after the cold chicken in our study!"

"The cupboard's locked."

"Bunter would bust the lock. You know what he is when he's hungry. I'm going to see. Bunter!" called out Nugent.

There was no reply.

"Bunter! Bunter!"

Several of the fellows woke up, and sleepily demanded what the matter was. But there was no reply in the voice of William George Bunter.

"He's gone!" said Bob Cherry.

"Might be asleep."

"I'll soon see!"

Frank Nugent leaped out of bed and struck a match. The light glimmered upon Billy Bunter's bed, and showed it to be untenanted. The fat junior was gone.

"Shouldn't wonder if the fat duffer's walking in his sleep again," said Harry Wharton. "He did once before, you know."

"Let's go and look for him."

"Oh, all right."

The three juniors drew on their clothes, and quitted the dormitory. They descended quietly to the Remove passage. It was not yet late, and the lights were still on in Greyfriars. Masters and prefects were awake, and it was necessary for the juniors to be careful.

Harry Wharton uttered a suppressed exclamation as they entered the Remove passage:

"Look!"

"What is it?"

"There—it's gone!"

Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent halted.

"What was it, Harry?"

"Blessed if I could see! It looked like somebody in a dark cloak," said Wharton, with a perplexed look. "I wonder—"

"A dark cloak?"

"Yes. It might be—"

"The burglar!"

"Possibly."

"Come on—only be careful!"

The juniors trod cautiously down the passage. They did not feel, somehow, that it was a burglar. But recently a determined ruffian had made several attempts to enter the school, and he had not yet been captured, so it was quite possible.

If it were Bunter, what was he doing wrapped in a dark cloak?

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT TUESDAY:

"POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
TUESDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

cloak like a brigand? The juniors breathed softly as they stealthily made their way down the passage.

"Look!" muttered Harry. "There's a light in No. 14!"

"John Bull's study!"

"Yes. Where he keeps his tin—and he's got plenty of it!"

"Then it's a burglar!"

"Yes—or—"

Wharton paused. In spite of his unscrupulousness in money matters, surely it was not possible that Bunter meant to help himself to John Bull's money in this way? But Harry felt almost certain that the figure in the dark cloak was Bunter's.

"Come on!" he muttered.

Nugent stumbled on a form in the passage and uttered an exclamation. There was a sound in Study No. 14, and the light was instantly extinguished.

There followed the sound of a door shutting softly.

"He's out in the passage!"

"Stand where you are!"

In the darkness the juniors could see nothing.

There was no sound.

"Stay here, Frank," Harry muttered, after a few moments. "I'll look in the study and see what he's been up to. He can't get back to the dorm. while you stay here."

"Right—ho!"

Wharton and Bob Cherry ran up to the study.

They entered it, and Harry lighted the gas, and the two juniors looked keenly and eagerly round the room.

Nothing had been disturbed, so far as the locker where John Bull kept his money was concerned.

John Bull's money was not the object of the late visitor to the study. Wharton uttered a sharp exclamation as he looked at Bull's desk.

A large drawer, where the copy for the "Weekly" was kept, was open, and a great heap of manuscript had been taken out.

Several sheets were torn across.

Wharton's eyes blazed with anger as he saw it. There was no longer any doubt as to the identity of the rascal, or the object of his visit to the study.

It was Bunter, and he had come there to destroy the manuscript of the "Weekly"—to throw the next number hopelessly behind, and, at the same time, to involve the staff in a great amount of unnecessary labour.

"The cad!" muttered Bob Cherry, to whom the same thought occurred at the same time.

"The worm!" said Harry.

He pushed the papers back into the drawer and closed it. The fat junior had been interrupted before he had time to destroy more than a few sheets. Little harm had been done. But the sub-editors of the "Weekly" were feeling very vengeful. They felt that it was a time when drastic measures were required.

The two chums left the study and rejoined Nugent.

"What is it?" whispered Frank.

"He's been tearing up the 'Weekly!'"

"The cad! Then it's Bunter!"

"Of course!"

"He hasn't come back this way?" asked Bob Cherry.

"No; he couldn't have passed me."

"Then he's taken the side passage," said Wharton. "Come on!"

The juniors turned into the passage, and hurried on. This part of Greyfriars was still lighted.

There was a swishing sound from the distance.

"That's Bunter!"

Wharton held up his hand as the sound ceased.

"Quiet!" he said.

"But—"

"He's stopped," whispered Harry. "He's hiding behind the corner at the end of the passage. He can't go any further without going down the prefect's passage, and he would most likely be spotted by Loder or somebody."

The juniors grinned softly. They had Bunter now.

"The chump has put on that cloak to pass as a burglar if anybody sees him, because that burglar chap, Frayne, was here some time back," muttered Harry. "He thinks he'll frighten anybody who sees him, and bolt without being discovered. If he's passing off as a burglar, we'll treat him as one."

"Good egg!" grinned Frank.

Bob Cherry very nearly burst into a chuckle, but he restrained himself in time.

The juniors crept on cautiously.

Harry Wharton was the first to reach the corner, and he peered round it. A fat figure, draped in a dark cloak, stood there.

Billy Bunter blinked at Wharton. He was standing, draped

in the cloak, a great deal like a brigand on the operative stage. But as soon as he saw Wharton, he drew the cloak over his face, to prevent recognition.

"Back!" he hissed, in a melodramatic voice. "Away!"

"Burglars!" exclaimed Wharton, in affected alarm.

"Back!" said Bunter, from behind the cloak. "I've got a revolver—I mean a Mauser pistol—fires twenty automatic shots a second! I—"

"Collar him!"

The three juniors rushed upon the cloaked figure.

"Ow!" roared Bunter, dropping the cloak, and attempting to bolt.

But their grasp was already upon him.

He was whirled round, and jammed against the wall with a concussion that knocked every ounce of breath out of his fat body.

"Groo!" he gasped.

"Bump him!"

"Biff him!"

"Groo! Ow! Oh, really, you fellows, I—I—I'm not a burglar, you know; I—I'm Bunter, you know. It's only a—ow—lark! Groo!"

Bump—bump! went the fat junior against the wall.

"Yaroo! Grooh! Yow! Oh!"

Bump—bump!

"Yoop! Leggo! I'm Bunter! Ow!"

There was a loud voice from the distance—the voice of Loder, the prefect.

"What's that row?"

Then there was a sound of approaching footsteps.

"Cave!" gasped Nugent.

"Bolt—quick! Buck up, Bunter!"

"I—I can't move; I—I'm injured!"

"Take his other ear, Bob!"

"Ha, ha! All right!"

"Groo! Ow! Yow! I—I—I'm c-c-coming."

"You are!"

The juniors rushed off. With a hard grip on either ear, Bunter had to go, or else part company with his auricular appendages. He went.

The juniors rushed at top speed back to the Remove dormitory, and hurled him into bed.

"Oh!" roared Bunter. "Yah! Oh!"

"Get to sleep," said Wharton, with a chuckle. "Loder is certain to look in here."

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Rough on Loder.

TWO minutes later the door of the dormitory opened. When there was any disturbance, the prefects generally looked to the Remove for the cause of it. They knew the little ways of the Lower Fourth.

But there was silence and slumber in the Remove dormitory. Even Billy Bunter had sufficient sense to snore, instead of groaning over his supposed injuries. If Loder had had any proof that he had been out of the dormitory, he would have had some real injuries to groan over, as he knew very well.

"You rats asleep?"

That was Loder's nice polite way of putting it.

Snore!

There was a suspicious unanimity in that chorus of snoring from the Removes.

Loud and resonant above all others, sounded the formidable snore of William George Bunter. Bunter was primus inter pares, in that respect at least.

"I know you're shamming," growled Loder. "Some of you were out of the dormitory just now."

Snore!

"Look here, you rats——"

Snore!

A still, small voice was heard amid the snoring. It was the voice of Alonzo Todd.

"My dear Loder——"

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

"Yes, I am awake, Loder. It is not possible to sleep while you are speaking in tones that can only be justly described as stentorian. You have awakened me——"

"You young liar! You were awake all the time!"

"Indeed, Loder, I was not awake all the time, and I regard it as decidedly rude of you to impute untruthfulness to me. Bunter is untruthful, although I have begged and implored him to follow the path of rectitude. But I have been far too carefully instructed by my Uncle Benjamin to ever deviate in the slightest degree from the actual facts, and under those circumstances, after I have made this brief explanation, I think you should withdraw the expression you have just used, Loder."

The juniors left off snoring to chuckle.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

They wondered how it was that Todd had been allowed to get so far without interruption from the prefect. But the explanation was simple. Loder was picking his way towards Alonzo's bed in the dark, and he did not want to betray his approach by speaking.

He reached Todd's bedside, and grasped the Duffer of Greyfriars, and yanked the clothes off him.

"Now then, you cheeky young scoundrel——"

"Oh, my dear Loder, I did not intend to be cheeky. I assure you! My Uncle Benjamin impressed upon me——"

Oh!"

Spank!

"Yaroo! Help!"

Harry Wharton sprang out of bed.

"Rescue!" he shouted.

"Hurrah!"

The Remove poured out of bed on all sides. The bully of the Sixth was quite outside his rights in attacking Alonzo without cause.

And in the dark, Loder would not be able to see who his assailants were, and so there was less danger of being called to account for assailing a prefect.

The juniors closed round Loder in the gloom.

Wharton and John Bull grasped him, and pulled him off Alonzo, and he was sent spinning to the floor.

Crash!

"Yow!"

"Roll him out!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump him over!"

"You young hounds!" roared the prefect, struggling to his feet. "I'll—I'll——"

"Kick him out!"

"Outside, you bounder!"

"Go for him!"

A score of hands reached at Loder.

He hit out frantically on all sides, and several of the juniors rolled on the floor of the dormitory, yelling.

But they were too many for him. The prefect was overwhelmed with numbers, and he was rolled and hustled to the door.

"You young cads! Stop—I—I—Oh!"

"Roll him out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump!"

"My dear Loder, you cannot expect anything else after your exceedingly reprehensible conduct!" called out Todd from his bed. "You have acted in a way that betrays a shocking state of moral turpitude. My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked at you—nay, disgusted!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Loder, why do you not change your bad ways? Why do you not seek the path of rectitude, and follow it unswervingly? Loder, I beg and implore you——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump!

Loder was deposited in a heap in the passage.

There was a footstep down the passage as Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, came hurrying to the scene. The noise upstairs had called the attention of the Remove-master. But in the excitement of the moment, neither the prefect nor the juniors heard or saw the master of the Remove.

Loder struggled to his feet in the passage.

He was torn and dusty and breathless, and shaking with rage. He gathered breath for a rush at his tormentors.

In the momentary pause, Bob Cherry caught sight of the form-master advancing along the passage in the gloom.

"Cave!" he muttered hurriedly.

The juniors crowded back into the dormitory.

Loder ran right into him, hitting out furiously.

"Take that!" he snarled. "And that! And that!"

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

He staggered back against the door, almost felled by a terrific right-hander on the chest, and a left on the chin.

"Bless my soul! What——"

Loder was hitting out again, but at the sound of the Form-master's voice, his hands dropped to his sides as if paralysed.

The dreadful consciousness that he had been hitting a Form-master rushed upon him, and he simply staggered.

"Oh, sir!" he gasped.

"Loder!"

"Oh, sir!"

"How dare you?" spluttered Mr. Quelch. "Are you mad, Loder?"

"I—I was going for those young cads, sir," stammered the prefect. "I—I didn't see you, sir. They—they have chucked me out of the dorm., sir, and—and——"

"No wonder, Loder, if you were treating them in that manner," said Mr. Quelch. "Do you mean to say that you would deal such blows at mere lads—that you would hit

these juniors as if you were a prize-fighter hammering an opponent in the ring?"

"My word!" murmured Nugent in the dormitory.

"Loder's getting it in the neck!"

"Serve him right!"

"The rightfulness is terrific, my worthy chums. The noble Quelch seems to have got his esteemed rag out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I—" stammered the prefect.

As a matter of fact, Loder did not know what to say. He had been caught in the act, and there was really no defence he could make.

"I shall not punish you for striking me in the dark, Loder. I am willing to believe that that was a mistake on your part—"

"Indeed it was, sir."

"But for intending to strike juniors in such a manner, I shall have to report you to the Head. Such brutal methods are not suitable for a prefect, Loder. Go to your room at once, sir!"

"But—but—b-h—"

"Not a word more! Go!"

And Loder went.

Mr. Quelch looked into the Remove dormitory. No sound but incessant snoring was to be heard. The form-master smiled slightly, closed the door, and departed.

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER.

Gentlemen to see Bunter!

"GENTLEMAN to see Master Bunter!"

Trotter made the announcement with a grin on his face. Billy Bunter was in the common-room, talking to some of the fellows, after morning school. The fat junior was trying to make the fellows understand that if they subscribed twenty pounds to produce the first number of "Bunter's Weekly," they would soon have the money back with interest in the form of fees for advertisements.

Whereat the juniors laughed.

"You fellows haven't the slightest knowledge of business," said Bunter with a contemptuous snort. "You make me tired. Look here! Suppose you hand me twenty pounds—"

"Gentleman to see—"

"Oh, shut up, Trotter! Look here, you hand me twenty quid—"

"Gentleman to—"

"Show him in here," said Bunter. "I suppose it's a new advertiser anxious to see the editor of 'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"I don't think!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! Look here, I have a splendid scheme on—"

"Why not work it the other way round?" suggested Ogilvy.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh; what do you mean?"

"You always start your little schemes by suggesting that somebody should hand you some money. Suppose you start one by handing somebody else some money?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Ogilvy—"

"Good!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You see, you hand us twenty pounds—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It would really come cheaper in the long run, even for you," said Bunter, with a snort. "Some of you lend me small sums at times, and owing to the delay in some of my postal-orders coming in, I haven't always been able to settle. Well, with twenty pounds capital to start this new scheme I could draw in a steady income. I should never have to ask a penny of you again—in fact, I should refuse to do so. A fellow must consider his independence and his personal dignity."

"Ha, ha, ha! Rather late in the day for you to begin, Bunter."

"Oh, really—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's your giddy visitor!"

It was Mr. Sands, the grocer. He came into the room with a very red face. His expression was not cordial, but Bunter was too short-sighted to notice that. He rolled towards his visitor in his graceful way.

"Ah! Mr. Sands! So glad to see you! I suppose you have decided to have the two columns instead of one in my paper?"

"I was parsing," said Mr. Sands—Mr. Sands did not mean that he had been doing a grammatical exercise; he meant that he had been passing—"I was parsing, and I called in to see about it. Here's a copy of the paper which I've received."

He held out a copy of "John Bull's Weekly," second number, which he produced from his coat-pocket.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

The juniors grinned. They guessed what was coming now. It was the case of Uncle Clegg over again.

Bunter blinked at the paper, and then at Mr. Sands.

"Which I paid three-and-six for the ad. in the school paper," said Mr. Sands; "but I've searched up and down, from head to head of the paper, and my ad. ain't there, so as I was parsing I thought I'd call in about it."

"You—you see, that's not the paper," said Bunter, reddening. "That's a rival rag—of no account whatever. My paper is called 'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"I've heard of this paper," said Mr. Sands, "but I've not heard of the other. Have you a copy of the other, Master Bunter?"

"It—it is not printed yet."

The grocer's face assumed an unpleasant expression.

"P'r'aps it never will be printed," he suggested.

"Oh, my dear sir—"

"Which, then, I'll have my money back, and pay again when I see the advertisement," said Mr. Sands.

Bunter shook his head.

"Impossible, sir! Money once forwarded to the editor cannot be returned. Editors never part with money. It would be against all the traditions of the profession."

"It looks to me," said Mr. Sands unpleasantly, "as if I was being swindled."

"My dear sir—"

"My dear Bunter!" broke in Alonzo Todd. "How many times I have begged and implored you—"

"Oh, shut up, Todd!"

"You'd better take your money back, sir," said Harry Wharton, taking three shillings and sixpence from his pocket. "Bunter's paper is only a scheme, sir, and it will never come to pass."

"Thank you, Master Wharton! You're a gentleman, sir—"

And Mr. Sands walked away satisfied. He looked back at the door of the room.

"I parsed Mr. Walker at the gate," he remarked. "I believe he has some business with Master Bunter."

"Oh!"

Mr. Sands departed. Bunter made a roll towards the door, but the hand of Harry Wharton descended upon his collar, and he was held fast, wriggling.

"No, you don't!" said Wharton grimly.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"If Mr. Walker's coming you can see him—"

"Look here, I—I left some negatives exposed in my room—"

"Rats!"

"I—I mean I left the bath-tap running—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I'm going! I don't see why I should stay and see Walker if I don't want to! You fellows can—"

"This way, sir!" said Trotter's voice.

"Here he is!"

Mr. Walker, the great chief of Walker's Drapery Emporium, walked majestically into the room. He held a copy of "John Bull's Weekly" in his hand—the copy that had been sent to him free by post.

"Good-afternoon, young gentlemen," said Mr. Walker. "I have received this copy of the paper, but I don't see my advertisement in it. You have missed it out, Master Bull."

"You didn't give me the advertisement, sir," said Bull, colouring.

"Oh, no! It was Mr. Bunter I gave it to," said Mr. Walker, with a curious glance at Billy Bunter, who was still wriggling in Wharton's grasp. "I paid him for it."

"Bunter again! Spoofer!"

"My dear Bunter, I have begged and implored—"

"I—I—I— You see, the paper's not out yet!" stammered Bunter. "I'm sincerely sorry, Mr. Walker, if you made a mistake, and—supposed that I was representing that disreputable rag—Ow! Leggo!—that paper you hold in your hand. I came to you to canvass for advertisements for 'Bunter's Weekly.'"

"Oh! You never said so!" said Mr. Walker suspiciously.

"I—I may have omitted to mention it. However, it does not matter. Your advertisement will appear in 'Bunter's Weekly' in—in due course."

"Shut up, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton, shaking the fat junior. "The fact is, sir, that Bunter's paper is only gas. There is only one school paper at Greyfriars, and that's it—'John Bull's Weekly.' Bunter has spoofed you, sir; but we don't want anybody to be done by a Greyfriars fellow. You can have your money back if you like, sir, or we'll put your advertisement free of charge into 'John Bull's Weekly.'"

"Good!" said John Bull.

Mr. Walker smiled.

"Very good!" he said. "That's all right! I'll tell Mr. Corney to send it in to you. Good-day, young gents!"

"Good-day, sir!"

Mr. Walker quitted the room. Billy Bunter made an effort to follow. There was a snap as the stud at the back of his collar parted, but Harry Wharton's grip did not part. The Owl of the Remove was a prisoner.

"I—I say, you fellows!" he exclaimed, blinking round in alarm. "It—it was all a mistake, you know! As for the money Wharton paid to old Sands, I shall refund it, of course."

"Hand it over, then!"

"When—when my postal-order comes I will hand it over with pleasure. I—I am somewhat short of cash at the present moment, otherwise I would settle up without a second's delay. I—Ow!"

"Frog's march the bounder!"

"Oh! Ow! Help!"

"Collar him!"

"The collarfulness is terrific!"

"Twice round the room, and then bump him!" said Harry Wharton. "Go it!"

"Oh! Ow! Yaroooh! Yah!"

Billy Bunter's voice died away in inarticulate gasps as he was borne round the room in the delights of the frog's march. He was bumped down at last, perspiring and gasping and snorting.

Then the juniors streamed out, laughing, and left him. The editor of "Bunter's Weekly" sat on the floor for some minutes before he had breath enough to rise.

"Beasts!" he snorted.

Then he rolled away. But the lesson was not lost on Bunter. John Bull's paper flourished, but in the Remove quarters at Greyfriars nothing more was heard of "Bunter's Weekly."

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next Tuesday, entitled: "POOR OLD BUNTER," by Frank Richards. Order in advance. Price One Penny.)

[Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following Serial Story are purely imaginative, and contain no reference or allusion to any living person. Actual names may be unintentionally mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reflection is intended.]

GRAND NEW ADVENTURE SERIAL JUST STARTED.

Wolves of the Deep.

The Story of a Great Conspiracy, introducing Ferrers Lord and Ching-Lung.

By **SIDNEY DREW**

READ THIS FIRST.

Ferrers Lord is the possessor of a powerful submarine, called "The Lord of the Deep." One night the model is stolen from him by Michael Scaroff, a Russian. Lord declares that he will catch Scaroff, even if the pursuit takes him twenty years, and, accompanied by Rupert Thurston, leaves London by train for Dover. On the way, a bullet comes whizzing through the carriage window, just missing Ferrers Lord's head. "Some poaching fellow, I suppose," remarks Thurston.

(Now go on with the story.)

The Smash!

"A poacher in May," exclaimed Ferrers Lord, "when birds are nesting and game is at a discount? Oh, Thurston, I fear you are no sportsman! Look at the hole it has made in the table. For the sake of argument, let us presume that the gentleman who presented us with that little token of esteem was a poacher. All the poachers I have known—and I preserve some thirty thousand acres—have carried a shotgun. Look at the hole again. Any modern rifle—Lee-Enfield, Mauser, Quackenbush, or Lee-Enfield—would have passed clean through without making a splinter. That bullet was fired from some old-fashioned weapon, probably a Brown Bess. In fact, here is the bullet itself."

He picked it up—a shapeless piece of lead—and tossed it over to Thurston. The millionaire's careless calmness had had its due effect. Thurston was calm now.

"I am sure you are right," he said, glancing admiringly at Ferrers Lord. "Why, the bullet is nearly as large as a pigeon's egg! But why did the fellow fire on us?"

"You have a short memory, my friend. I fancy I remarked that Michael Scaroff would take good care to cover his retreat. He knows me, and I know him. No doubt before he managed to kill my poor servant there was a struggle, and he lost his false arm then. Even without that I would have guessed who the thief was. Perhaps you wonder why I take things so calmly. It is because an adventure like this is my very life. I have already fought as an adventurer in a dozen different armies. I have been in ten insurrections in South America; I fought for Greece against Turkey, and for the Yankees against Spain; and I was with Kitchener at the Khalifa's last battle that was worth calling a battle. My friend, if you love excitement as I love it, do not despair, for I will give you plenty. Will you try a smoke now?"

"With pleasure!" said the young man. "Your cigars are really marvellous!"

"Well, they cost a couple of guineas each, and the world

can show no better. By the way, as we have at least half an hour, I will show you something that will amuse you. Reach over my bag, please."

Thurston lifted the leather gladstone-bag from the seat and placed it upon the table. Once more the engine uttered its warning hoot as it thundered into a tunnel. Ferrers Lord pulled out his gold key-chain and selected a key from the bunch.

"This is an amazing invention," he went on, as he unlocked the bag; "but up to the present the motive power has absolutely defied me. I can make it fly for ten or twelve hours, and travel against a strong breeze; but the weight of the fuel is too great. Here it is."

He thrust his hand into the bag, and Rupert Thurston bent forward eagerly. There was a fierce crash, a grinding roar, and the whole train seemed to splinter into fragments. Thurston was pitched forward like a stone from a catapult. A cry broke from his lips, and all was silent.

Ferrers Lord struggled from the mass of wreckage, his face crimsoned with blood. All was dark and silent; but even in the pitchy gloom his eyes shone like the eyes of a cat. The smashed carriage lay upon its side, but the windows were shattered to atoms.

He dragged himself through the opening half way, and then dropped back as he scented the noisome stench of the tunnel. The saloon, curiously enough, had only been lighted with gas, for the train had been ordered at a moment's notice. The gas had gone out; but as he struck a match he saw that the globe was unbroken. He picked up one of the legs of the splintered table, and with one blow dashed the globe to atoms. The reservoir was intact, for the gas caught alight at once in a spluttering jet.

Ferrers Lord looked round him. The front of the saloon had been practically telescoped. The buffers of the overturned engine protruded through the wrecked panels, and scalding steam filled the ruined carriage. Thurston was lying under a mass of wreckage, and the cigar he had been smoking was smouldering under Lord's feet.

The millionaire was still as calm as ever. He stretched out his arms, and finding he was unhurt, except for a few bruises, took out his cigar-case and struck a second match. Then, with a cigar between his teeth, he set to work to free Thurston.

His muscles seemed like iron, and no weight seemed too much for his sinewy arms. In five minutes he had dragged the wreckage aside, and Thurston was released.

"Not so bad," he said, running his long fingers over the

PLEASE NOTE!

"The Rivals of St. Wode's," and the Chums of Rylcombe Grammar School are in THE "EMPIRE" LIBRARY. One Halfpenny. Every Wednesday.

young man's limbs. "A broken arm, and nothing more. Now to explore. I expect it's about time to get out of this."

He took out his flask, and, prising open the young man's clenched teeth, forced a quantity of brandy down his throat. Then he pulled himself through the window and stepped out upon the line, snatching up the papers.

He heard a deep groan from behind, but took no notice. In a moment he had collected a pile of broken wood and laid a fire. He poured half the contents of the flask upon it, and a bright flame shot up. Then Ferrers Lord turned back.

The guard's van had suffered least of all, though it was standing up on end. He thrust his head through the broken window and called:

"Are you badly hurt?"

A second groan answered his question, and then a husky voice said:

"I'm a good bit shaken, sir, and pinned down; but I don't think there's any bones broken. Can you give me a hand? Be quick, sir, for Heaven's sake, for the express is about due!"

The van was in darkness, and even Ferrers Lord's eyes could not pierce the gloom.

"Wait for me a moment," he said, "and I will get a light."

"But the express!" cried the guard. In spite of the pain he was suffering, he remembered his duty. "It's right behind us, sir!"

"I have built a fire here," said the millionaire.

"That's no good, sir. There is a big bend in the tunnel, and they won't see it until it is too late. It's the boat-train, and it's sure to be crowded!"

"You're a brave fellow," said Ferrers Lord, "and I will talk to you presently. Meanwhile, I will see what I can do."

He ran back to the saloon, and sprang through the window. Madly he gathered more fragments of wood, and snatched up the magazine Thurston had been reading. Then he ran wildly up the dark tunnel at a pace that few athletes could have equalled.

He laid the fire, emptied the flask upon it, and as the flames licked round the wood he listened intently. Somewhere in the distance a goods' train was snorting and puffing, and a dozen bats were squeaking round him.

A straight line of rails lay before, and the wood was crackling merrily. Any engine-driver who could have missed his danger signal must be blind at least. He strained his ears, and caught the distant roar of wheels. Then, with a laugh, he hurried back, and scrambled into the guard's van.

"How are you now?" he asked.

"Pretty bad, sir. Have you built another fire?"

"Yes; you may make your mind easy on that point. Where's your lamp?"

"I don't know, sir."

Ferrers Lord found it quickly by the light of a match. The can was still half-full of oil, and the lamp threw out a brilliant light. The guard lay in the left-hand corner, pinned down by a heavy trunk and some lighter wreckage. Ferrers Lord's tireless arms set to work again, and he was quickly free.

He stood up with a grunt.

"Thank you, sir," he said. "If I hadn't been in the corner, I guess I should have been as dead as a kipper. What's the time?"

He pulled out a watch, but it was broken to atoms.

"What is the time, sir?" he asked. "I'm afraid my old turnip has ticked its last tick."

"It is just 11.40," said Ferrers Lord.

"Then the express is overdue."

"There is no danger. The fire will burn for an hour."

"I'd better go, sir, for all that," said the guard. He followed Ferrers Lord painfully through the window, and then stopped. "What about the driver and stoker?"

Ferrers Lord shook his head.

"I have not had time to look," he answered. "You go up to the mouth of the tunnel and show your red light while I go back. Our special is sure to delay the train for a short time. I will go back."

They separated. The guard hurried towards the mouth of the tunnel. The fire was throwing a fierce red glare upon the damp, oozy roof of the tunnel. He looked up the line, and saw the flashing lights of the approaching train, and heard the rush of its wheels.

He waved his red light frantically up and down. The lights grew brighter, the roar more distinct. Then the frightened driver forced down the brakes, and the train came to a standstill.

"What's the matter?"

"Line blocked," said the guard laconically.

A man staggered past him into the glare of the furnace. He was carrying a body in his arms.

"Line blocked, you say. I should just fancy it is! There's a boulder almost as big as Gibraltar across it, and both driver, and fireman are as dead as doornails. Is there a doctor here?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 159.

NEXT
TUESDAY: "POOR OLD BUNTER."

EVERY
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ONE
PENNY.

The permanent-way was crowded with frightened passengers. Someone heard the question, and a young man stepped forward.

"I am a doctor, sir."

"Then just take charge of this patient, please, and do your best for him. He has his left arm broken," said Ferrers Lord. "You will be well paid. Here, driver, steam back at once, and telegraph for a gang to clear the line. I am in a hurry."

The train steamed back, but Ferrers Lord was gnashing his teeth.

"Thank you, Scaroff!" he muttered. "It is your turn now, but I can wait!"

After the Disaster—On Board the Violet—Off to Calais on Track of Scaroff.

Ferrers Lord was bruised and shaken in the accident; but, in his rage against Scaroff, he felt no pain. He was confident that the Russian was not only responsible for the bullet that had grazed his head, but also for the disaster that had wrecked the special train and cost two lives.

By what he had seen in the tunnel by the light of the guard's lantern, he felt certain that Scaroff's hirelings had been disturbed only just in time. Possibly the train had made better speed than they expected, for they had failed to get the mass of granite into position between the rails. The left buffer had struck its protruding side, flinging the engine over, and killing both driver and brakesman.

His own escape had been wonderful. The force of the shock had dashed both engine and boulder clear of the rails, and the shattered saloon and guard's van had slid forward a good twenty yards before they had come to a halt. Had the train been five minutes later, giving time for the proper placing of the obstacle, it would have meant death for all.

Frightened people crowded round him, asking a hundred questions; but he waved them aside.

"I want a doctor," he said coldly, "and I think someone said he was a medical man just now. Ah, you are there, sir! Will you just see how much my friend is damaged?"

The doctor was a little stout man, with fat, freckled hands. He ran his hands swiftly over Rupert Thurston's limbs.

"Broken arm," he said jerkily, "and a nasty rap on the head. Nothing very bad for a young fellow in good form. I'll fix him up as well as I can, and— Why, here's a station! Take his heels, sir, and we'll put him in the waiting-room. I've got all I want in my bag."

The train drew up as the brakes were applied, and for a moment all was confusion. Ferrers Lord left the guard to explain, and aided the stout doctor to set Thurston's broken arm. A spoonful of strong brandy made the young man open his eyes.

"There, what did I tell you?" chirped the doctor gleefully. "He's just as hard as nails—all muscle and no fat. Just give me the sponge again. How do you feel now, my fellow?"

His clever fingers deftly plastered up the cut on Thurston's head. For a moment the young man was dazed and bewildered, but he quickly remembered. He saw Ferrers Lord, and uttered a cry of pleasure.

"I'm glad you didn't get knocked over," he said weakly. "How do I feel? Well, I feel as if someone wearing hob-nailed boots had been dancing a jig on my head. You've not sawn off an arm, have you? I've only got one as far as I can tell."

The doctor laughed.

"No, no, my dear sir; we've only patched you up. Have a drink of brandy-and-water. You'll take him back to town, I suppose?" he added, turning to Ferrers Lord.

Thurston heard the words, and, to the doctor's amazement, rose to his feet, though rather shakily.

"I am not going back to London," he said.

"You know your own business best, sir. I simply said London, because I saw your train out. You need a few days' quiet, that is all, and one place is as good as another. I am glad to have been of service to you. Here is my card."

Ferrers Lord had turned away to slip a hundred-pound banknote into an envelope. He handed the envelope to the doctor.

"You will find my card in this," he said, smiling. "I am deeply obliged for your kindness. I fancy the guard of our unlucky train got rather mauled. Would you add to the debt by looking after him. Please do not open the envelope until you have done that."

"Certainly, sir!" said the doctor briskly.

He hurried away, and Thurston sat down.

"Well?" he asked meaningly.

Ferrers Lord was still smoking his cigar. He flicked the ashes into the grate of the dingy waiting-room.

"You have guessed, I suppose?" said Ferrers Lord.

"Of course I have guessed. First we have a bullet, and then a railway accident. I can put two and two together. If I had no quarrel with this precious Russian of yours before, I have one now. I mean to go on to the bitter end, Lord. Scaroff has tried to kill me, and I mean to return the compliment."

Thurston was pale, and he spoke quietly; but there was a look on his boyish face that the millionaire had never seen there before.

"Then you intend to go on?" said Ferrers Lord.

"The very moment the line is cleared."

"I don't think we shall have to wait for that. They will run us round on the up-line, I expect, for mails can't be delayed. Sit down and rest, my friend, while I explore."

Already the marvellously rapid machinery of the great railway was at work. A train packed with brawny navvies puffed in, coming apparently from nowhere. All along the line the news had been flashed: The train discharged its human freight, great lights flared in the tunnel, and skilled hands hurried to clear away the wreckage.

Ferrers Lord found the station-master.

"How long do you intend to keep us here?" he asked.

"Not five minutes, sir. We'll put you on the emergency line at once. The boat will wait for you. This is a grave business, sir, and I can't account for it except in one way. We've got police and detectives all over the place already. You'll make your report at Dover, sir."

"If I have time," said Ferrers Lord. "Please put me on a private first-class carriage."

He went back to Rupert. Thurston was holding a cigarette in the flame of the gas. His arm hurt him terribly, but he smiled as the millionaire appeared.

"Look here, Lord," he said. "do you think we've come to the end of this chapter of accidents?"

"I expect so, until we get to France, at least. He has got a long start now, and I don't see what else the fiend can do. Don't breathe a whisper of what we know. Let them imagine that it is the work of some madman with a mania for train wrecking. We must get on, and a hint would mean a grave delay. Hang it, more trouble!"

He had turned to face a young man in knickerbockers, who had come hastily into the room. The man raised his cap and bowed.

"Mr. Ferrers Lord, I presume?" he said.

"I am Mr. Ferrers Lord."

"Pleased to meet you, sir; I am a detective—Ralph Grey—employed by the company. I want you to tell me all you can, sir. It's a black business."

A look of displeasure crossed the millionaire's face. He glanced at his watch.

"You had better travel down with us, then," he said coldly, "for we are pressed for time. There goes the bell. Come, Thurston, give me your sound wing!"

They entered the reserved carriage, followed by the detective, who had produced a bulky notebook. The whistle sounded, and the train moved back to the junction. In ten minutes they were again racing through the tunnel where, in the bright glare of the lamps, the toiling men looked more like imps than human beings.

Ferrers Lord told his story lazily, and it was a brief story.

He had been smoking and chatting with his friend just before the accident. He had freed himself, released the guard, and warned the approaching train. Afterwards he had found the bodies of the engine-driver and his comrade, and discovered the obstacle that had wrecked the train.

The young detective wrote it all down.

"It is certain," he said, biting his pencil, "that the train was maliciously wrecked. I suppose you have a theory, or, perhaps, a suspicion concerning the author—"

"I have neither," said the millionaire coldly. "That is your business, not mine. Let us change the topic, if

you please. A man wants time to recover his nerve before talking about a thing like this. Hallo! What are we stopping for?"

"Merely to set me down. Good-night, sir, and thanks! Good-night, Mr. Thurston!"

The detective slipped out, again raising his cap, and shut the door behind him. A crowd was waiting anxiously at Dover, for the news had leaked out. The two men hurried out of the station, and Ferrers Lord looked keenly round him.

Two figures stepped from the gloom, and the millionaire waved his hand. Thurston glanced behind him once or twice. The adventures of the day had quickened his wits.

"We are being followed," he said, in a hoarse whisper.

"Don't worry about that," answered the millionaire, "for they are a couple of my own men. Dover is a nice, quiet little town; but Michael Scaroff is no respecter of places. I took the precaution of ordering a bodyguard. There are two more in front."

They reached the quay, and entered a boat that was waiting. It was long past midnight, and the sea was smooth as glass, and silvered by the moonlight.

"Pull!" said Ferrers Lord.

The oars fell, and the boat leapt out. A trim yacht, with smoke rising from her funnels, was rocking lazily on the slight swell. The boat grazed her side, and Ferrers Lord scrambled on board. Strong arms helped Thurston up, and almost before his feet touched the deck the little screw was lashing the water into foam.

"You had better turn in, Rupert," said Ferrers Lord kindly. "That splintered bone will want careful nursing. Does it hurt much?"

Thurston was wincing with pain, but he tried not to show it.

"It twinges a bit," he said lightly, "I must admit. I'd prefer an hour on deck, for all that. This is a nice little boat of yours, and she knows how to move. What a perfect night!"

"Not for long, I fear. That looks ugly."

Ferrers Lord lay back in his cushioned deck-chair, and pointed in the direction of the French coast. A line of jagged cloud was rising rapidly in the Eastern sky, and a cool breeze came rippling over the water. A flash of lightning flickered across the horizon, and the breeze grew stronger.

"We are going to have a gale," said the young man. "Luckily, I am a good sailor. Those boats don't seem to like the look of things. They're tacking round for shore. How large is your crew?"

"Seventeen men. I call this yacht the Violet, after my niece. As I belong to the Royal Yacht Club and fly the pennant, I have no difficulty about harbour dues in most parts of the world. By Jove, my friend, I think we are in for it! Luck is against us to-day."

"Drink this, Rupert," said Ferrers Lord, handing him a glass containing a sleeping-draught.

Thurston took the glass unquestioningly, and drained off its contents. In an instant the cabin was whirling round him, his head swam, his eyelids felt like lead. He fell back asleep.

Ferrers Lord looked down at him smiling.

"I fancy I have made a good bargain," he murmured;

"plenty of nerve and plenty of muscle. He will need both, poor fellow! It seems almost a pity to sacrifice him."

He sighed, and, turning upon his heel, hurried upon deck.

Ferrers Lord mounted the little bridge, and, leaning over the rail, peered into the darkness. In a second the blinding rain had drenched him to the skin. The officer in command passed and re-passed him, staggering under the force of the wind.

(Another splendid instalment of this thrilling serial story next week. Order your copy of THE MAGNET LIBRARY in advance. Price One Penny.)



For Next Week

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The Editor



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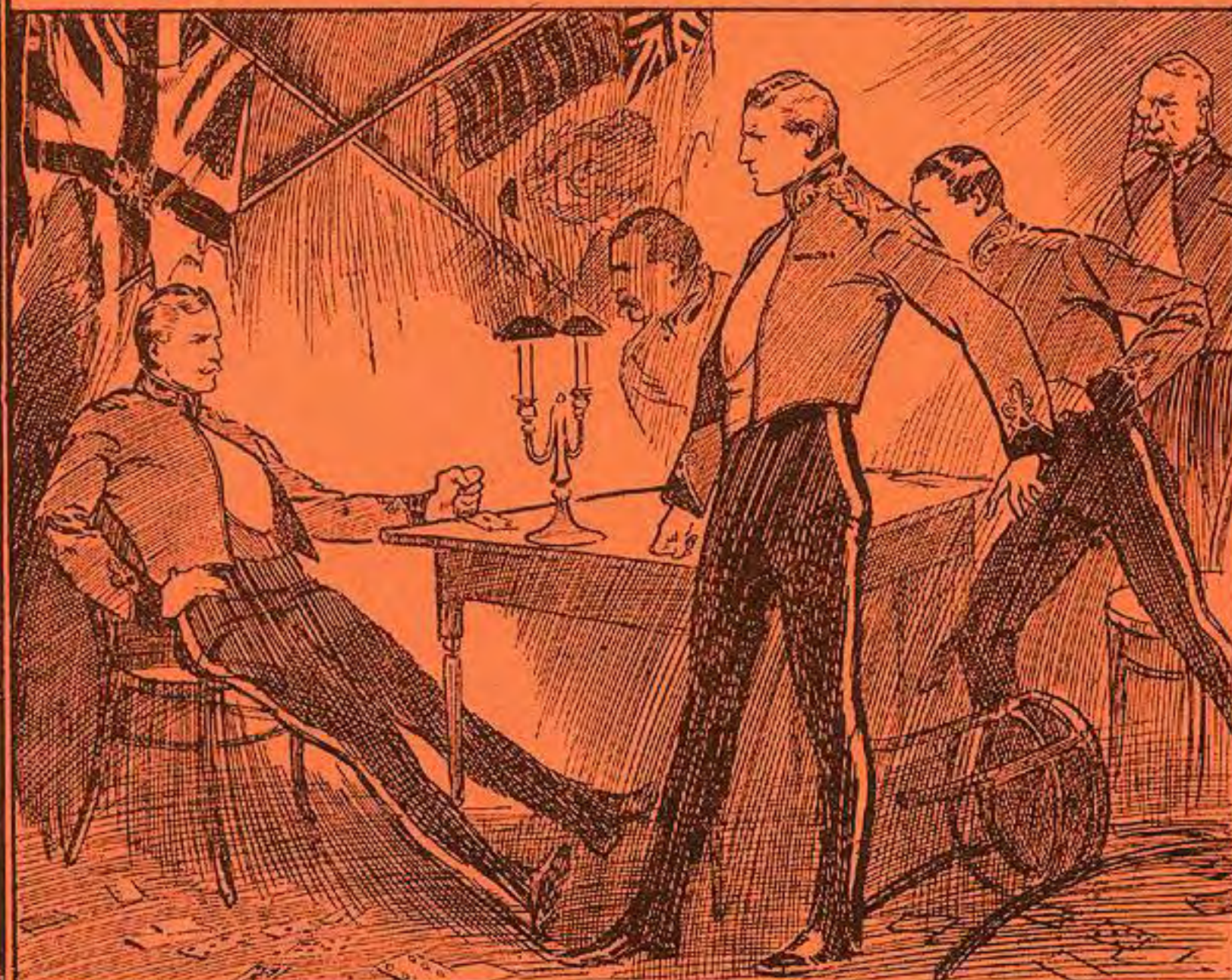
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