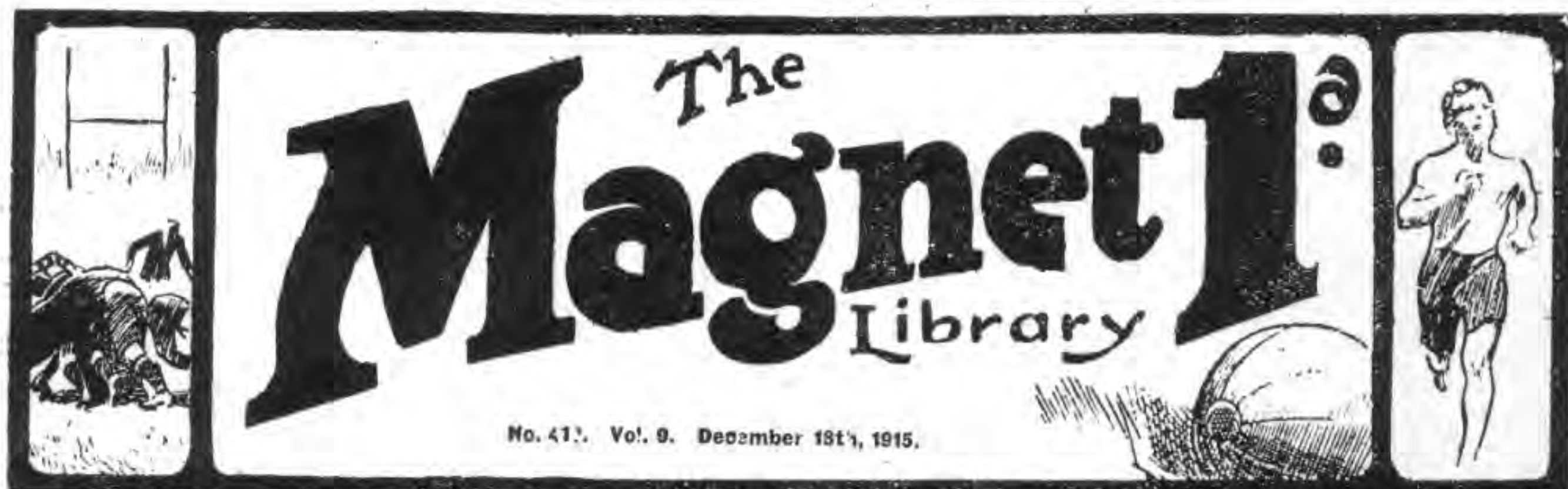


IT SELLS OUT
IN A FEW
HOURS!



No. 5 OUT
TO-DAY! BUY
IT AT ONCE!



SCREAMINGLY FUNNY SCENE IN "BUNTER THE MASHER!"

Published by Howard Baker Press Ltd, 27a Arterberry Road, Wimbledon, London, S. W. 20.



PAIN'S "BIG-VALUE" XMAS PARCEL.



25 XMAS CARDS
1/3 ALL 25 ARE BOOKLETS
AS USUALLY SOLD AT 1d., 2d., 3d. & 4d. EACH.

PAIN'S 1915 "BIG-VALUE" PARCEL of 25 Lovely Booklet Xmas Cards. A Most Wonderful Collection. Exceptionally Dainty and Pretty! Extraordinary Value!

25 ALL 25 ARE BOOKLETS
AS USUALLY SOLD AT 1d., 2d., 3d. & 4d. EACH.

Are finished with Silk Cord or Ribbon Bows, & have Seasonable Greetings (mostly in gold), and well-chosen Verses or Quotations, also space for writing names. We illustrate in miniature 3 of these Lovely Cards:—No. 1 being a Beautiful Gold-mounted Art Parchment Card; No. 2 is a Handsome Card with pretty view of Blacksmith & Horses in natural colours; No. 3 is a Very Dainty Card with Beautiful Spray of Roses in natural tints. The other 22 Booklet Xmas Cards are just as Lovely, and include Beautiful Jewelled, Choice Embossed, Hand-ome Floral, Pretty View, Dainty Art Parchment, &c., &c., Designs. **SEE THEM FOR YOURSELF, AND IF YOU ARE NOT DELIGHTED AND SATISFIED OVER & OVER AGAIN, WE WILL REFUND YOUR MONEY IN FULL.** Our Great Wholesale Value Price for these 25 Beautiful Xmas Cards is 1/3 only, post free (1/3 Postal Order, or 1/4 in Stamps).

FREE ENVELOPES—Envelopes are included free for all cards that will not go in envelopes of ordinary size.

OUR FREE INTERESTING ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE OF CARDS & PRESENTS

sent post free. Gent's Nickel Watches and Chains from 3/11; Lady's or Gent's Nickel Wrist Watches & Straps from 4/11; Silver 6/11; Watches that "Glow in the Dark" from 5/11; Rings 1/- to 70/-; Jewellery, Fancy Goods, Novelties, Electric Pocket Lamps, Toys, Xmas Cards, &c., &c. Presents for Everyone.

PAIN'S PRESENTS HOUSE, DEPT. 1, HASTINGS, ENG.

LEARN MAGIC—IT'S EASY.

The ALADDIN CABINET of 8 Tricks and Puzzles, post paid, 1/-



Our War Puzzle and Magical Catalogue 2d. to cover postage.
WILL GOLDSTON, Ltd., Aladdin House, Green St., Leicester Square, London, W.C.

Secret and apparatus for lifting a chair or table with bare hands, 1/- post paid.



BEFORE E.O.

DO YOU LACK SELF-CONFIDENCE?

Are you sensitive, irritable, or depressed? Do you suffer from involuntary blushing, nervous indigestion, constipation, lack of self-confidence, energy, will power, or mind concentration? Do you feel awkward in the presence of others? I can tell you how to acquire strong nerves and mind concentration which will give you absolute self-confidence. No drugs, appliances, or belts. Send at once 3 penny stamps for particulars of my guaranteed cure in 12 days.—**GODFREY ELLIOT-SMITH, 472, Imperial Bldg., Ludgate Circus, London.**



AFTER

3. 6 each



The "LORD ROBERTS" TARGET PISTOL.

Beautifully plated and finished. May be carried in the pocket. Trains the eye and cultivates the judgment. Range 100 yards. Targets 9d. per 100. No. 36 Ball Cartridges, 1/- per 100. Shot, 1/6 per 100. Send for list.
CROWN GUN WORKS, 6, Whittall Street, BIRMINGHAM.

VENTRILOQUISM. Learn this wonderful and laughable art. Failure impossible with our new book of easy instructions and amusing dialogues. Only 7d. (P.O.). Valuable Book on Conjuring (illus.) given free with all orders, for short time.—**Ideal Publishing Dept., Clevedon, Som.**

IF YOU WANT Good Cheap Photographic Material or Cameras, send postcard for Samples and Catalogue FREE.—Works: JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

BLUSHING.

FREE, to all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Enclose stamp to pay postage to Mr. D. TEMPLE (Specialist), 39, Maddox Street, Hanover Square, London, W.

100 CONJURING TRICKS. 57 Joke Tricks, 69 Puzzles, 69 Games, 12 Love-Letters, 12 Jokes, 10 Magic Tricks, 52 Money-making Secrets (worth 22s) and 1301 more stupendous Attractions, 8d. P.O. the lot.—**HUGHES & Co., Station Road, Harborne, BIRMINGHAM.** Sneezing Powder, 6d. Pkt.

SMOKING HABIT positively cured in 3 days. Famous specialist's prescription, 1/3.—**H. HUGHES (B.P.), Leaf Street, Hulme, Manchester.**

BLUSHING. Famous Doctor's Recipe for this most distressing complaint. 6d. (P.O.). Never fails. Hundreds of Testimonials. Mr. **GEORGE, 63, STRODE ROAD, CLEVEDON.**

A Real Lever Simulation

GOLD WATCH FREE

Guaranteed 5 years.

SEND 6d. ONLY.



A straightforward generous offer from an established firm. We are giving away Watches to thousands of people all over the world as a huge advertisement. Now is your chance to obtain one. Write now, enclosing P.O. 6d. for posting expenses, for one of our fashionable Ladies' Long Guards, or Gents' Alberts, sent carriage paid, to wear with the Watch, which will be given Free should you take advantage of our marvellous offer. We expect you to tell your friends about us and show them the beautiful Watch. Don't think this offer too good to be true, but send 6d. only, fulfil simple conditions, and gain a Free Watch. You will be amazed. Colonial Orders 1s.

WILLIAMS & LLOYD, Wholesale Jewellers, Dept. 16, 89, Cornwallis Road, London, N., England.



VENTRILOQUISTS Double Throat; fits roof of mouth; astonishes and mystifies; sing like a canary, whine like a puppy, and imitate birds and beasts. Ventriloquism Treatise free. Sixpence each, four for 1s.—**T. W. HARRISON (Dept. 6), 239, Pentonville Road, London, N.**

NEW STORY BOOK NOW ON SALE.

SCHOOL & SPORT!

Great 3d. Book Story of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Highcliffe, Rookwood, Courtfield and Rycombe Schools.
No. 319: "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3d. COMPLETE LIBRARY.

NOW ON SALE!



Highcliffe School Football XI.



Greyfriars School Football XI.

A Complete School-
Story Book, attrac-
tive to all readers.

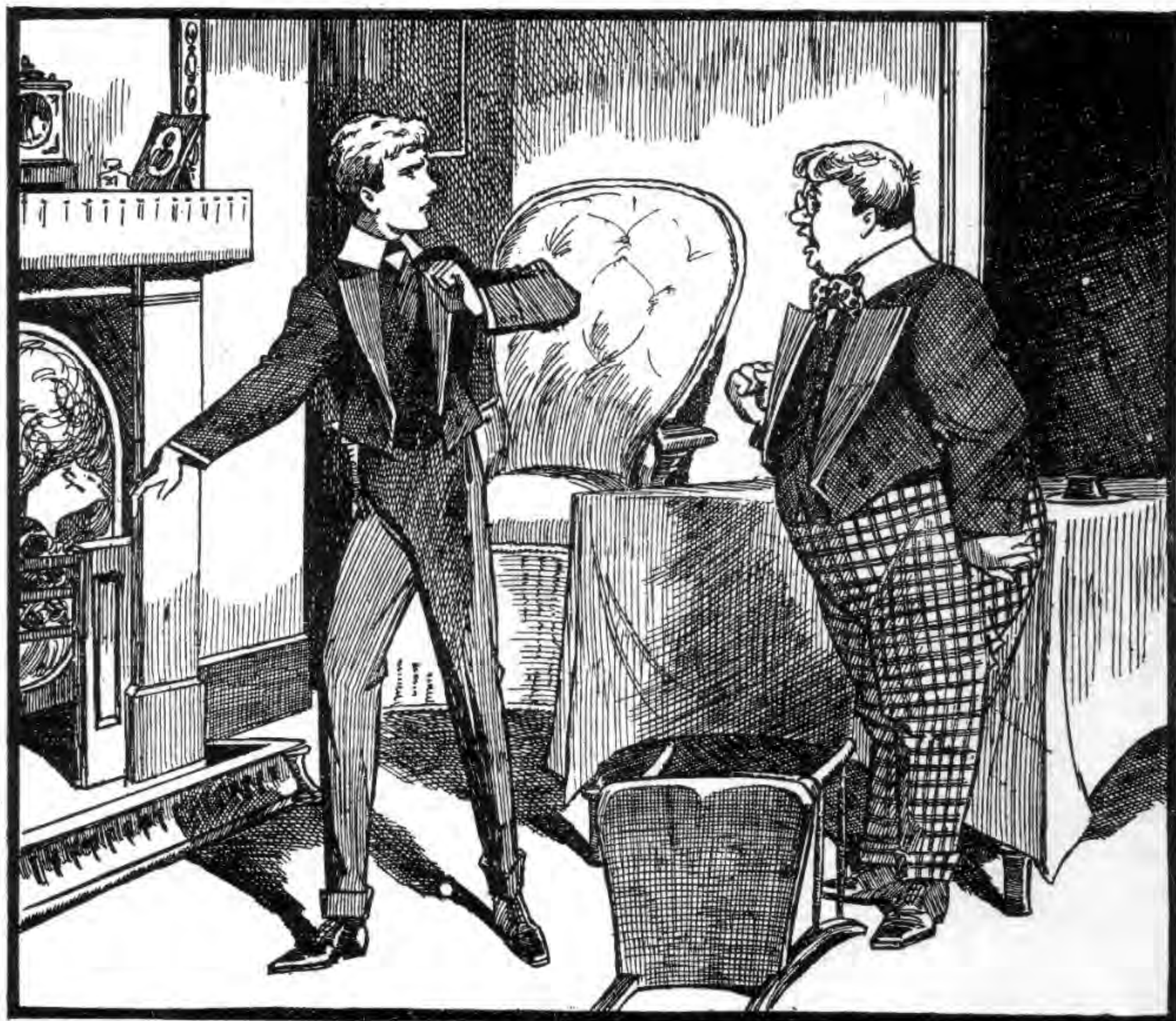


The Editor will be
obliged if you will
hand this book,
when finished with,
to a friend. . . .

BUNTER THE MASHER!

A New, Long, Complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.
at Greyfriars School.

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Billy Bunter jumped up, as Bob Cherry came towards him. Bob picked up the sheet of notepaper, upon which the words "Dear Marjorie" were written, and tossed it into the fire. (See Chapter I.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Loses His Temper!

"**D**EAR MARJORIE—"
Bob Cherry started as if he had been stung. Bob had looked into No. 7 Study in the Remove passage to speak to Peter Todd. Peter was not there, but Billy Bunter, his fat study-mate, was. Billy Bunter was seated at the study table, blinking through his big glasses at a sheet of notepaper. He had

a pen in his fat hand, and was evidently beginning to write a letter.

And the words he was mumbling to himself as Bob Cherry looked in at the open doorway were "Dear Marjorie."

Bob Cherry stood quite still for a moment.

Bunter did not observe him. His back was turned towards the door. His pen ceased to scratch, however, as he helped himself to a jam tart from a bag on the

table. There was jam on Bunter's fingers, jam on his face, and some jam on the letter he was writing. When Bunter was in funds he was generally jammy. He seemed to be in funds now, to judge by his liberal supply of tarts.

"These tarts are jolly good!" Bunter murmured aloud. "Ripping! Lemme see, what am I to say to Marjorie?"

Bob Cherry strode into the study.

"Bunter!" he rapped out.

Bob Cherry was the most good-natured fellow in the Remove at Greyfriars. His look and voice were always cordial. Bob's face was not exactly good-looking, but it was always so cheery and sunny that it was good to look upon. But at this moment it was neither cheery nor sunny. It was very grim. And his voice came at Bunter like a bullet from a gun.

Billy Bunter blinked round lazily. He waved a fat hand at Bob Cherry.

"Nothing doing!" he said promptly.

"What?"

"You're jolly well not going to have any of my tarts," said Bunter.

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! It's no good calling me names because I won't whack out my tarts with you. Only yesterday you refused to cash a postal-order for me. You can't expect——"

"Do you think I want your filthy tarts?" roared Bob.

"Well, what do you want, then?" asked Bunter. "I've got some dough-nuts, too, but you're jolly well not going to have any. After refusing to change my postal-order and hinting that you didn't believe it was coming at all——"

"I didn't hint," said Bob. "I said so plainly!"

"Well, then, you can sneak into some other study after dough-nuts," said Bunter; "I'm not handing out any of these."

"I looked in for Toddy——"

"Toddy's not here," said Bunter; "he's gone to Linley's study. You can go after him, if you like. You're not having any of my——"

"I heard what you were just mumbling."

"Did you? Well, the tarts are jolly good!" said Bunter.

"Not about the tarts; about Miss Hazeldene! You are writing to her?"

Bunter nodded.

"You're writing to Hazeldene's sister!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Yes."

"Well, what do you mean by it, you fat toad?"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

Billy Bunter jumped up as Bob Cherry came towards him. He did not like the look in Bob's eye.

Bob picked up the sheet of notepaper upon which the words "Dear Marjorie" were written, and tossed it into the fire.

"Why, you—you rotter!" gasped Bunter. "Wasting my notepaper—Toddy's notepaper, anyway! What the dickens——"

"You're not going to write to Miss Hazeldene," said Bob.

"Yes, I am—rather!"

Bob Cherry's brows had contracted, and his eyes were gleaming. Bob's regard for Miss Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House School, was well known. Bob was a downright straightforward fellow, with plenty of common-sense, and he could not be suspected of the folly of being "mashed" at the early age of fifteen. But certainly he had a very great regard for kind, sweet-faced Marjorie, and was devoted to her as a big Newfoundland dog might have been. Times out of number Bob had kicked Bunter for impertinent references to Marjorie, it being Bunter's fixed conviction that he was a fascinating fellow, whom girls found it hard to resist, and that Miss Hazeldene was one of his many victims. As Bunter explained, a fellow couldn't help being good-looking. Some fellows had a fascinating way with them and some hadn't. Bunter was one of those who had—according to Bunter.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

If any other fellow in the study had been writing to Marjorie, Bob would have supposed that the letter referred to some commonplace matter, and that it was no business of his, anyway.

With Bunter it was different. Bob had a strong objection to Bunter mentioning Miss Hazeldene's name at all, in fact. Probably Miss Hazeldene would have been surprised to know it. But there it was!

Hence the sudden destruction of Bunter's letter, although it had progressed no farther than "Dear Marjorie."

Bob Cherry raised his hand, and Bunter dodged behind the table. His little round eyes were gleaming with wrath behind his glasses.

"You fat rotter!" said Bob, with a deep breath. "I've heard Skinner and Snoop talking about this already. They've got some joke on about your corresponding with Miss Hazeldene."

"It's jolly well true!" said Bunter.

"Skinner said Miss Hazeldene had written to you—and, in fact, was in regular correspondence with you," said Bob. "They were chuckling over it. I banged their heads together. They won't chuckle any more for a bit."

"It's true!" yelled Bunter.

Bob clenched his hands.

"You say it's true that Miss Hazeldene corresponds with you?"

"Yes, it is."

"You fat liar!"

"Some fellows get liked by girls," said Bunter loftily. "Some fellows know how to talk to girls. I do. 'Tain't my fault, I suppose, if Marjorie likes me. Girls like a chap with a good figure." Bunter glanced down at his own ample proportions with just pride. "You can't expect a girl to take much notice of a long-legged boulder like you, Cherry. You're not good-looking."

"Why, you fat porpoise——"

"I don't throw it in your face," said Bunter considerably; "you can't help it. That's all there is about it. I don't brag of it."

"You slimy toad!" roared Bob.

"You shouldn't show your jealousy like that, Bob Cherry. It's better to take it quietly—more dignified, you know. Marjorie wouldn't be likely to write to you. Why should she?"

"You lying worm! I know jolly well Marjorie hasn't written to you."

"If my word isn't good enough for you——" said Bunter, with dignity.

"It jolly well isn't!" said Bob. "Now, look here, Bunter. You're a born idiot, and you can't help it!"

"Oh, really——"

"You're about as ugly as a rotten, fat, unfit slacker possibly could be!"

"Why, you cheeky beast——"

"And Marjorie can't stand you, any more than any other girl can. You ain't fit to speak to any girl!"

"Why, I—you—you—you——" spluttered Bunter.

"You're trying to make out that Marjorie takes notice of you, and writes to you, and so forth, and get your names talked about together," said Bob. "You're such a hopeless cad that you wouldn't understand how rotten it is to make a girl's name the talk of the Form. But you're not going to do it, see? I'm going to hammer you if you do. Understand that? Let me hear you mention Marjorie's name again, and I'm going to mop the school up with you."

"You cheeky beast!" howled Bunter. "What business is it of yours, anyway?"

"And you're not going to write that letter, either!" said Bob, unheeding.

"Bob!" came Harry Wharton's voice from the passage. "Where are you? We're waiting for you."

Bob Cherry did not heed. He had looked in for Peter Todd, to take him out to the footer practice. But he was not thinking of footer now.

"Look here, I'm jolly well going to write that letter, and as many as I like," exclaimed Bunter. "Do you think I can leave a girl's letter unanswered, you fat-



"Will you take this letter for me?" asked Marjorie, holding out the envelope to Bob. "The collection is gone in the village." "Certainly," said Bob. "Give it to Bunter." "Wha-a-at!" Bob Cherry almost staggered at the extraordinary request. (See Chapter 8.)

head? What do you think Marjorie would think if I didn't answer her letter. Yaroooh! Leggo, you beast! Yoooop! Help!"

Bob Cherry's patience was exhausted. His powerful grasp was laid on Bunter, and the Owl of the Remove came down on the hearthrug with a bump that made the study shake.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. In Black and White!

BUMP!

"Whoop! Yooop! Help!" "What the merry dickens!" Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, looked into the study in astonishment. "Bob, old man——"

"Yow-ow! Help!"

Bob Cherry, unheeding his chum, was bumping Bunter on the rug as if he wished to break through into the room beneath.

"Hold on, Bob!" gasped Wharton.

Bump!

"You'll damage the floor!" shouted Johnny Bull.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

"Not to mention Bunter!" grinned Nugent.

"The damagefulness will be terrific!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "My esteemed fatheaded Bob——"

Bump!

"Yaroooh! Help! Fire! Murder! Yooop!"

Harry Wharton & Co. rushed into the study, and grasped their excited chum, and dragged him away from Bunter by main force. Billy Bunter rolled on the floor and roared.

Bob struggled in the grasp of the Co.

"Let go!" he shouted. "I'm going to wallop him! Leggo, you fatheads!"

"Yaroooh! Keep him off! Whoop!"

"You've walloped him enough, you duffer!" said Wharton. "What the dickens is all the trouble about? Bunter been raiding your tarts?"

"No, ass!" gasped Bob Cherry. "The fat beast is playing his rotten tricks again! He's getting up a story that he's in correspondence with Marjorie, and some cads are making jokes about it already."

"So I am!" roared Bunter. "Yah!"

Bob made a rush towards him, but four pairs of hands dragged him back.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Will you let me go?" shouted Bob.
 "No fear! Bunter will burst if you bump him any more!" grinned Johnny Bull.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Yow-ow-ow! Help!"
 "Hallo! Who's that slaughtering my prize porker?" demanded Peter Todd, looking in at the doorway.
 "Toddy, old man!" Bunter scrambled up, and dodged behind the lanky form of Peter Todd. "You back me up, Toddy. Yow-ow-ow! That beast Cherry—yow-ow—is jealous because Marjorie writes to me! Yow! Why, you beast, now you're beginning, are you? Yaroooooh!"
 Peter Todd fastened a finger and thumb like a vice upon Bunter's fat ear.
 Bunter squirmed in his grip.
 "Hasn't Bob handed you enough?" asked Peter pleasantly. "You want some more from me? Anybody seen a cricket-stump?"
 "It's true!" shrieked Bunter. "I'll show you the letter if you like."
 "There isn't a letter!" shouted Bob furiously.
 "Yah, you beast! I've got it in my pocket!"
 "You lying toad——"
 "Hold on—hold on!" said Peter soothingly. "If Bunter says he's got the letter in his pocket, it's soon proved."
 "Let him show it, then!" growled Bob Cherry. "I know it isn't true, and if he can't prove his beastly lie I'll hammer him black and blue!"
 Peter released the Owl of the Remove. Bunter sidled towards the door, and Peter promptly closed it and put his back to it.
 "I'm going out!" howled Bunter.
 "Not just yet," said Harry Wharton. "You've been making out that you have letters from Marjorie. We know it's a lie, but we'll give you a chance of proving it. If you don't, we'll rag you till you won't want to tell any more lies this term!"
 "Show the letters!" said Peter Todd.
 Bunter snorted.
 "I'm jolly well not going to show my private letters to inquisitive bounders!" he said. "It's like your cheek to ask!"
 "Didn't I tell you he was lying!" exclaimed Bob angrily. "Collar the fat beast!"
 "Keep him off, Toddy! Look here, I'll show you the envelope, if you like! I suppose you know Marjorie's hand?"
 Bob Cherry paused.
 "That's all right," he said. "If Miss Hazeldene's written to you, it's her own business, and, of course, we shouldn't think of looking at the letter. But it's a lie! You can't show the envelope!"
 Bunter sniffed disdainfully.
 "Look at that, then!"
 He fumbled in his pocket, and held out an envelope in his fat hand. The Famous Five stared at it blankly.
 The envelope was considerably soiled from contact with Bunter's jammy hands, but they recognised it as the kind of stationery that was used at Cliff House School. And the address upon it was "Master W. G. Bunter, Greyfriars School," and the writing was undoubtedly that of Marjorie Hazeldene.
 "That—that's Marjorie's hand!" stammered Bob, taken quite aback.
 Peter Todd squinted at the envelope.
 "It's Miss Hazeldene's fist, right enough," he said. "Bunter couldn't copy a hand like that. And there's the postmark of Pegg, too. It's true enough."
 Billy Bunter grinned. He had been roughly handled, but he had his triumph now. The chums of the Remove were utterly taken aback. Not for a moment had they believed that Marjorie Hazeldene had written to Bunter, but the writing on the envelope was an indubitable proof.
 "Well," sneered Bunter, "are you satisfied now? Why, I have lots of letters from girls—jolly sweet letters, too!"
 "Shut up, you worm!" howled Bob.
 "Oh, really, Cherry! Of course Marjorie writes to me! Why shouldn't she, when she likes me so much? I answer her letters, like all the rest, when I have time."
 "You unspeakable toad!" said Wharton.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

"Oh, really Wharton, I hope you're not jealous, too, like Bob Cherry! I call it silly. I know you thought you'd cut me out with Marjorie, but you jolly well haven't——"

"Dry up, you vulgar little beast!"

"Look here——"

"He's dodged Marjorie into writing to him somehow," said Bob, with a deep breath—"perhaps written to her trying to borrow money——"

"Why, you silly fathead——"

"It was a trick of some sort," said Bob. "I don't want to see the letter, but if we saw it we should see that it was all about nothing."

"I'm jolly well not going to show you my private correspondence with ladies!" said Bunter, with a smug grin. "A chap shouldn't kiss and tell, of course."

Bob Cherry made a movement, and Bunter dodged round the table.

"Keep that beast off, you fellows! I tell you I've lots of letters from Marjorie!"

"It's a lie!"

"I'll show you some more, then!" sneered Bunter, diving into his pockets. "I don't usually keep envelopes, but I know I've got one more somewhere. Yes, here it is! Look at that!"

"My hat!"

The juniors stared at the second envelope.

There was no doubt about it. It was addressed to Bunter in Marjorie's hand, and bore the postmark of Pegg.

Bob Cherry set his lips hard.

"I can't let you see the letters!" said Bunter, smirking. "Of course, that wouldn't do under the circumstances. But I'll read you out some bits, if you like."

"You'd read out caddish lies, and make them up as you went along!" said Bob.

"Oh, really——"

"Let's get down to the footer," said Bob Cherry abruptly. "That fat beast makes me sick!"

"Makes you jolly well jealous, you mean!" said Bunter, with a sneer. "Marjorie's never written to you! You can't say she has!"

"I shouldn't be likely to say anything about it to you if she had!" said Bob contemptuously.

"He, he, he! I know she jolly well hasn't! You see, I'm first favourite——"

"Let's get out!" gasped Bob. "I shall throttle him if I stay here!"

Bob Cherry strode out of the study, his brow like thunder. Bunter had proved his assertion, and he could not deny it, but he felt more than ever inclined to take the Owl of the Remove by his fat neck and rub his fat nose on the floor.

The Co. followed Bob silently. They could not understand it. So far as they knew, Marjorie Hazeldene had always disliked Bunter, and kept him at a distance. Bunter's manner with girls was decidedly objectionable; he usually displayed either an utter indifference or else an odious familiarity. Neither line of conduct was likely to find favour in feminine eyes.

Yet here was indubitable proof that Marjorie was in correspondence with Billy Bunter; it was proved that at least two letters had passed. Evidently Bunter had been given the right to write to her if he liked.

Peter Todd lingered a few moments after the juniors were gone. His keen eyes scanned the fat, smirking face of the Owl of the Remove. Bunter restored the letters to his pocket and chortled:

"Rather knocked that cheeky rotter into a cocked hat—what?" he said. "Fancy his cheek, interfering between me and——"

"How did you work that, Bunter?" asked Peter quietly.

"Work what, you suspicious beast?"

"Getting Marjorie Hazeldene to write to you."

"I didn't work it!" howled Bunter.

Peter shook his head.

"There's some trick somewhere," he said.

"It's simple enough," said Bunter. "Marjorie likes me——"

"Rats!"

"In fact, she's rather spoons in my direction!"

"Don't tell silly lies, Bunter."

STUPENDOUS SUCCESS OF "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD," 1st. NO. 5 OUT TO-DAY!

"Well, if you saw us together, you'd think so!" smirked Bunter. "I'm going to meet her to-morrow afternoon, as a matter of fact."

Peter started.

"That's a whopper, and you know it, Bunter."

"You can come with me if you like!"

"What?"

"We're meeting on the cliffs," said Bunter, with another smirk. "If you like to come along, you can see us meet, if you can't take my word, Peter Todd."

Peter looked at him hard, and then quitted the study without a word. Bunter called after him from the door:

"I say, Peter!"

"Well?" said Todd, looking back.

"Don't jaw about it, you know. Of course, old Miss Primrose wouldn't approve of it. It's rather a secret meeting, you know."

"I won't jaw about it," said Peter quietly. "If Miss Hazeldene is really meeting you secretly, Bunter, she isn't the girl I've always believed. I'll give you a chance to prove it before I smash you!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

Peter Todd walked away. Bunter snorted, and returned to the study, and sat down at the table. With a jam-tart in one hand, and a pen in the other, he started again on a letter, beginning "Dear Marjorie."

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Very Queer!

"BUNGLER!"

"Duffer!"

"Muff!"

It was a regular chorus.

And it was directed towards Bob Cherry.

It was but seldom that opprobrious epithets were directed towards Bob Cherry on the football field. But on this occasion it could not be denied that they were fairly asked for.

It was a practice match of the Removites—not of any great importance in itself, but important as regarded showing the form of the players. A match with Highcliffe was coming along, and Harry Wharton was, as usual, keeping his men well up to the mark. Slacking was unknown in Wharton's eleven.

The Remove team were playing a scratch eleven, but two or three of the best players of the Form had been put into it, to give it, as Wharton said, a back-bone. The Remove team was playing three men short; so, upon the whole, they had plenty to do to hold their ground. As a rule, Bob Cherry was a tower of strength in the half-way line. He could play forward with distinction, but it was as half that he was at his best, and generally he could be quite relied upon.

On this especial occasion Bob Cherry was off his form.

The reason was difficult to seek, for that morning Bob had been in his usual uproarious spirits, and fit as a fiddle. Right up to the hour of the practice match, indeed, he had seemed his usual self.

But there had been a cloud upon his brow when he came down to the ground with his comrades, and, when the match began, it was soon seen that he was off his form. A good many fellows had gathered to see the play, some of them in the hope of seeing a player or two show poor form, which would offer a chance for their noble selves of getting into the Form eleven for the Highcliffe match.

Bolsover major, who considered that he played at half quite as well as Bob Cherry, if not a little better, was loud in his comments. Skinner and Snoop and Stott, who never had a chance of playing in the team, joined in heartily. And even Bob's own chums could not help remarking how very badly he was playing.

A rush seemed always to take him by surprise, he muffed nearly every pass, and when he passed the ball himself, he passed it clumsily. He muffed the easiest kicks, and seemed equally useless for attack and for defence—both of which were required of a good half.

"Bungler!" roared Bolsover major, as the ball passed Bob, who seemed to be quite unconscious that it was near him.

"Fathead!" chortled Skinner. "Call that playing! Ye gods! What will happen if he plays against Highcliffe like that?"

Bolsover major snorted.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"They'll crawl all over us, of course!" he sneered. "Not that Wharton will care, so long as he has his own pals in the team."

"Rotten, I call it!" said Snoop.

"I guess I don't call that football!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "I swow! I reckon I'll offer my services to Wharton again when this is over. He may have a bit more sense, now he's seen how Cherry's playing."

"You Yankee ass, you can't play footer," growled Bolsover major. "Wharton certainly ought to put a better man in for the Highcliffe match—me, f'rinstance!"

"Or me!" said Skinner.

"Oh, you're a duffer!" said Bolsover. "Not much to choose between you and Fishy. I'm jolly well going to see Wharton about this."

"Blessed if they haven't taken a goal!" howled Skinner.

"Goal!" snorted Bolsover. "Goal! My hat!"

The scratch team had scored. Such a development had not been expected, especially as Wharton's side had not broken their duck yet. Certainly it was largely due to the way Bob Cherry was playing.

Harry Wharton clapped his chum on the shoulder as they went back to the centre of the field.

"Anything wrong, Bob?" he asked anxiously.

"Eh! No."

"You're off your form."

"Sorry!" said Bob shortly. "Can't be helped."

"Don't you feel well?"

"Yes."

"Anything bothering you?"

"What should bother me?" said Bob.

It was an evasive reply, and it was so utterly unlike Bob Cherry to be evasive, or anything but utterly downright and direct, that Wharton stared at him. Bob reddened uncomfortably.

"I'm all right," he muttered. "Only—only, nothing! I—I'd rather not finish this out, if you don't mind, Harry!"

"Certainly! I'll call a chap to take your place," said Wharton at once. "If you're not feeling fit, it's no good going on."

"I'm fit enough, but—but I'd rather chuck it for this afternoon."

"Right-ho!" said Wharton, perplexed and a little anxious. "Tell Bolsover to get into his things and come on. We'll go on."

Bob Cherry left the field, and the play was resumed. Bolsover major stared at him as he came off.

"Call that playing footer?" he demanded.

Bob Cherry did not seem even to hear the taunt.

"Wharton wants you, Bolsover," he said. "Go on in my place."

Bolsover's expression relaxed considerably. It was the chance he wanted.

"Oh, all right," he said. "You have bungled it, and no mistake. What's the matter with you this afternoon?"

"Nothing."

Bob Cherry walked away quickly towards the school-house. Bolsover major changed hurriedly, and joined in the game. The practice match was on quite informal lines. As a rule, Bolsover's play compared with Bob Cherry's was as moonlight unto sunlight—as water unto wine, so to speak. But on the present occasion it could not be denied that the burly Removeite played up about ten times as creditably as Bob had done.

Wharton glanced round once or twice from the field. But Bob had not stopped to watch the play. He seemed to have lost all interest in Remove football, keen as Wharton knew him to be about the Highcliffe match, and the game generally.

The captain of the Remove was glad when the practice was over.

"Well, what do you think of my play?" Bolsover major demanded, when the footballers came off the field.

"Pretty good!" said Wharton absently.

He was thinking of Bob Cherry, and wondering what was the matter with him.

"Am I going to play in the Highcliffe match?" questioned Bolsover aggressively.

Wharton shook his head.

"The team's made up," he said. "You've seen the list."

"Then you're still playing Cherry, after the exhibition he's given to-day?"

"I expect he will be all right by Saturday."

"And you're going to put him in, whether he is or not!" sneered Bolsover. "I call it chucking the match away!"

"You can call it what you like!" said Wharton coolly. "I sha'n't play Bob if he isn't fit, and you ought to know it. But I expect he will be fit. I hope so, anyway. Excuse me, I've no time to jaw now!"

And Wharton followed his chums into the School House, and they changed in the dormitory. When they came down to the Remove passage they looked for Bob Cherry, but he was not to be seen. Wharton glanced into his own study—No. 1—but Bob was not there. He went along to No. 13, which Bob shared with Mark Linley and Hurree Singh and little Wun Lung, the Chinese junior. Wun Lung was curled up in the arm-chair before the fire, alone.

"Seen Bob?" asked Wharton.

"No see handsome Bob Chelly," said Wun Lung sleepily.

"Hasn't he been in?"

"No savvy."

"Where the dickens is Bob?" asked Harry Wharton, as he joined his chums in No. 1 Study again. "It's past time for tea, and he was coming to tea with us. I can't find him."

There was a cheery scent of frying-sausages in the study. That alone ought to have been enough to draw Bob Cherry there, after playing football on a keen winter afternoon. Nugent turned a ruddy face from the fire.

"Go and scout for him," he said. "The sosses will be done soon, and Johnny's getting on with the toast."

"Did you fellows notice that there was something up with him?" asked Harry.

"Did we?" grinned Johnny Bull. "He was playing footer like a dummy, or like Fishy. Must be ill!"

"He was all right this morning," said Mark Linley, who was a guest in the study, and was industriously ladling out jam into a soap-dish. "I thought he was rather queer in the game."

"Where the dickens has he mooched off to?" said Wharton. "You fellows get tea while I hunt him up."

"Right-ho!"

And considerably perplexed, and a little alarmed, in fact, Harry Wharton proceeded to hunt up the missing Removeite.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bob's Trouble!

"H E, he, he!"

Billy Bunter's fat chuckle smote upon Wharton's ears as he came out into the dusky Close. The Owl of the Remove was coming in, chuckling. Apparently something had happened to amuse William George Bunter.

"Seen Bob?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"He, he, he! Yes, I've seen him," chortled Bunter. "I've just been out to post my letter, you know. He, he, he! Bob saw it, and he went quite green! He, he, he!"

Wharton set his lips.

"What letter are you talking about, you oyster?"

"My letter to Marjorie, of course," chuckled Bunter. "You should have seen Cherry's face when he saw me posting it! He, he, he! Jealous, you know. He, he, he! As if Marjorie would take any notice of a long-legged duffer like that! He, he, he!"

Wharton controlled his inclination to mop up the quadrangle with the fat person of William George Bunter.

"Where is Bob now?" he asked.

"Under the elms," grinned Bunter. "Looking as if he'd like to hang himself. It's the green-eyed monster, you know—jealousy! Jealous of me! He, he, he!"

"Bob jealous of you, you fat idiot!" ejaculated Wharton. "Have you quite gone off your silly rocker?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

"Go and look at him!" chirruped Bunter. Like his cheek, I think, to suppose he had any chance against me! He, he, he! Girls take to a fellow like me naturally, and of course Marjorie—yow-ow-ow! You kick me again, you beast, and I'll—yaroop!"

Billy Bunter dodged into the House, yelling, and Harry Wharton hurried across to the elms. It was deeply dusky under the elms, and Wharton sighted a shadowy figure there, tramping to and fro. It was Bob Cherry. His hands were driven deep into his pockets, and his brow was wrinkled moodily.

"Bob, old chap——"

Bob halted. His face reddened a little under Harry Wharton's curious gaze.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he said. But it was not the usual hearty, ringing "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" that Wharton knew so well.

"Tea's ready, Bob."

"Tea?" repeated Bob.

"Yes, tea, old chap. Surely you're hungry?"

"Eh? No, I'm not hungry."

"Bob, old man!" Wharton's manner was quite serious now. "Bob, you're not ill, are you? Is anything the matter?"

"Ill?" grunted Bob. "You know I'm never ill."

"Well, what's the matter with you, then?"

"Nothing."

"Aren't you coming in to tea?"

"Well, no."

Wharton hesitated. That there was something very unusual the matter with Bob Cherry was easily to be seen.

"Look here, Bob!" said Wharton abruptly. "Surely you're not bothering about what that fat idiot Bunter has been saying?"

Bob Cherry flushed scarlet. The captain of the Remove smiled a little. He had hit the right nail on the head, evidently.

"There's nothing to worry you in that, Bob. It's no business of ours if Marjorie writes to Bunter. It's her own business."

"Of course, I know that!" faltered Bob. "That's all right. But Marjorie always seemed to dislike the fat beast, and when he said he was in correspondence with her I thought it was a lie, of course, and went for him. But—but he can't have faked those letters——"

"They're genuine enough," said Wharton. "Marjorie has written to him twice. It's jolly odd, as she doesn't like him. But I can't see anything to bother about."

Bob's flush deepened.

"Of course there isn't," he agreed. "I'm not exactly bothering about it, only——" He paused. "Marjorie is such a ripping girl, Harry, you know that——"

"Of course——"

"Bunter has tricked her into writing somehow. It wouldn't matter if it were any other chap. But you know Bunter. He's going to make a song about it in the Form, making out that Marjorie is what he calls spoons on him, the vulgar little beast! Some of the fellows have got hold of the story already. Bunter has shown those envelopes about. Marjorie will be the talk of the Remove soon. You know how that would hurt her, if she knew. She doesn't know what a cad Bunter is, or she wouldn't give him a chance of making free with her name."

"But—but she does know what a cad Bunter is, really," said Harry. "Dash it all, everybody who knows him ought to know that! Not that he's so much a cad as a silly idiot!"

"Girls do things without thinking," said Bob. "She wouldn't dream for a moment that Bunter would brag about her letters, and make up a yarn about them. Of course I can't chip in. Her brother could tell her, but I can't, and Hazel is away. But—but I'm not going to have Marjorie's name made the joke of the junior studies. Skinner was saying a while ago that there's a secret meeting on. Bunter's going to meet Marjorie on the cliffs to-morrow afternoon. I banged his head for him, the rotter! Of course that's a lie!"

Wharton laughed.

"Marjorie wouldn't be likely to have a secret meeting with anybody," he said. "Bunter least of all!"

STUPENDOUS SUCCESS OF "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD," 1^d. NO. 5 OUT TO-DAY!

"But Bunter's spreading the yarn," said Bob. "Skinner and his set are making a regular joke of it. It's sickening! What would Marjorie say if she knew?"

"Well, she wouldn't like it, I suppose," said Harry. "But it's no use kicking Bunter. Miss Hazeldene wrote to him of her own accord, I suppose, and she must have had her own reasons. Blessed if I can guess why; but it's her own business, and she took the risk of Bunter acting like a cad!"

"I know all that," said Bob impatiently. "You don't seem to see it as I do, and—and Marjorie has always liked you more than me, too!"

"What rot!"

"Well, she has," said Bob. "Not that she's ever said so, but she does. I suppose it does make a difference if a chap is good-looking, just as Bunter says."

"You awful ass!" exclaimed Wharton, half-laughing and half-vexed. "Are you going to begin to worry about your good looks now?"

"N-n-o. I'm not such an ass as that! But—but—" Bob paused awkwardly. "I suppose I'm an ass! Only—only—" He broke off again.

"Look here, Bob!" said Wharton quietly. "If you jaw like this to anybody else there'll be another joke in the Form. You'll get it said that you are spoony yourself."

Bob's face became scarlet again.

"Don't be an ass!" he exclaimed. "I'm not such an idiot as that! I suppose a fellow can think a lot of a really nice girl without being supposed to be a silly idiot! But—but what can Marjorie have written to the fat beast about, Harry? We know she doesn't like him."

"Goodness knows!" said Harry. "Bunter may have been trying to borrow money. He would borrow money of anybody. If he wrote, I suppose she might answer."

"But she wouldn't write twice for that."

"N-no, I suppose she wouldn't."

"It's jolly queer, isn't it?"

"I suppose it is," admitted Wharton. "All the same, it's no business of ours, Bob, and if you make a fuss about it there will be more jaw than ever!"

"I'm not going to make a fuss. I don't want to make a fuss, only to break that fat beast's neck!"

"Well, I think breaking Bunter's neck would amount to a fuss, and a jolly serious one!" said Harry, laughing. "Better let Bunter's neck alone. Chuck it out of your mind, and come in to tea."

"I can't chuck it out of my mind, and I don't want any tea!"

"You do!" said Harry, slipping his arm through Bob Cherry's. "Come on! You're going to have tea in the study. You don't want to set all the fellows wondering, I suppose? There's been talk enough already about the way you showed up at footer this afternoon. If the fellows got hold of a story that you were jealous of Bunter, there would be no end to it."

"Jealous of Bunter!" ejaculated Bob, starting as if he had been stung.

"Well, that's what will be said, if you're not jolly careful!"

"I'll come in to tea," said Bob.

"Right-ho! Come on!"

Bob went in to tea—with a grim expression on his face. Jealous of Bunter—jealous of the fat, unwieldy, conceited slacker of the Remove! Was it possible? The mere thought was humiliating.

"Hallo! Here you are!" said Nugent, as Wharton came in with Bob. "Tea's ready—more than ready! Ain't you hungry, Bob?"

"No—I mean famished," said Bob hastily.

Wharton smiled as they sat down to tea. Evidently Bob did not mean to afford any grounds for the suspicion that he was "jealous of Bunter."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter the Lady-Killer!

BILLY BUNTER was smiling and smirking at a great rate in the common-room that evening. The Famous Five made it a point to take not the slightest notice of his existence. But there were other fellows who took a delight in drawing Bunter out. Skinner and Snoop especially derived great pleasure from

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

EVERY
MONDAY

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

it. They were always "up against" the Famous Five, and they guessed quite correctly that the Co. were annoyed and exasperated by their proceedings. Which was quite sufficient to make the amiable Skinner very keen on the new tack.

"I think Bunter ought to be congratulated," remarked Skinner, having ascertained that Harry Wharton & Co. were within hearing. "Blessed if I should have thought that Bunter was a lady-killer! Who'd have thought it?"

"Nobody, I guess," said Fisher T. Fish. "And I jolly well don't believe it now!"

"It's rather thick!" said Bolsover major. "If Bunter ever makes a mash, I should say it would be in a Home for the Blind."

"That's all you know," sniffed Bunter.

"Yes, that's all you know!" said Skinner. "Bunter's got an appointment for to-morrow afternoon, haven't you, Bunter?"

"Yes, rather!" smirked Bunter.

"I'll believe that when I see it," said Bolsover major.

"You can jolly well see it if you like!" growled Bunter. "I'm meeting a certain party on the cliffs at three."

"How-wow!"

"Is that in the letter, Bunter?" chimed in Snoop.

"Yes, it's in the letter, Snoopey!"

"I guess I want to see that letter," said Fisher T. Fish, with a shake of the head.

"I don't show letters from ladies round the common-room," said Bunter, with a smirk. "'Tain't playing the game, you know!"

"Besides, it would show that you're lying, wouldn't it?" said Tom Brown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Brown! If you can't take my word——"

"Catch me taking your word!" said the New Zealand junior disdainfully. "What's your word worth, you toad?"

"I'll jolly well show you the passage in the letter, if you like!" roared Bunter indignantly.

"You won't show it to me," said Tom Brown; and he turned his back on Bunter.

"Show it to us, Bunt!" chirruped Skinner.

Billy Bunter drew a letter from his pocket. He blinked over it through his big glasses, and turned down the page carefully, so that only one line could be read.

"Now look at that!" he said.

Skinner read it aloud:

"——the cliffs to-morrow at three o'clock——"

Skinner stared a little. He had had his own doubts, but they had to be dispelled now. He knew Marjorie Hazeldene's handwriting.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

"Let's look!" shouted Snoop. "Well, my word, that does it! What the merry thunder can she see in Bunter?"

"A prize-pig!" snorted Bolsover major. "May be fond of bacon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry rose from his seat, his brow thunderous. Wharton quickly took his arm, and drew him out of the common-room.

"Let's get up to the study," he said.

Bob panted.

"Do you think I'm going to let that fat beast——" he began.

"You can't prevent the cad showing his own property," said Harry quietly.

"You ass! Do you think it's genuine?"

"Those fellows know Miss Hazeldene's handwriting well enough."

"But—but it's impossible! As if Marjorie would meet him on the cliffs!"

"Don't be an ass, Bob! It's not our business!"

"But—but——"

"Don't you see, you duffer? Miss Hazeldene is seeing the fat bounder for some reason or other, and Bunter is making out that it is a case of "mashing." That's a lie, of course! At least, I suppose it is—of course it is!" said Harry uneasily. "But the letter's genuine enough."

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

And you can't chip in, in Miss Hazeldene's business, without making an ass of yourself, Bob! Do be quiet!"

Bob Cherry nodded shortly, and walked away; but he did not go to the study; he went out into the dark quadrangle.

Bob was not seen again till the Remove went up to their dormitory. Billy Bunter blinked at him as he came in with a very quiet face, a little pale. Skinner & Co. were chuckling, and Bunter was smirking as usual.

"You might let a chap come along to-morrow, Bunter," said Skinner, as Bob Cherry came in.

"Yes, let's make a party!" grinned Snoop.

"What a pity Hazeldene isn't here!" said Skinner. "He would enjoy this. You're lucky he's away, Bunter." Bunter sniffed.

"I should hardly allow Hazeldene to interfere with me," he said. "Hazel went away owing me money, too!"

"Ha; ha! Did you lend him a postal-order?" chuckled Stott.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate of the Sixth looked into the dormitory, and the Removites turned in. Bob Cherry was the last to fall asleep.

Exactly why Bob should bother himself about the matter any more than the other fellows was a question Bob would have found it difficult to answer. But he certainly did. The idea even came into his head of writing to Hazeldene, and suggesting that he should return as soon as he could to Greyfriars. But he dismissed it.

Hazeldene of the Remove was away for a week or two. He had been laid up in the sanatorium with a bad cold, and the Head had given him leave to go home for a couple of weeks for a change. Bob Cherry had certainly not missed him—till now. Hazel was a good deal of a black sheep, and more than once the Co. had extricated him from difficulties his own foolish waywardness had landed him in—and they had exerted themselves more for his sister's sake than his own! Probably Hazel realised that, for he never troubled them with an undue amount of gratitude for their services.

But, so far as his friends knew, the weak and wayward junior was not in any fresh trouble at the present time, excepting his health.

If Hazel had been in his usual place in the Remove, certainly he would have put a "stopper" on Bunter in a very decided way. But nobody else had a right to act in his place.

Indeed, Bob divined that the Owl of the Remove had specially chosen the time of Hazel's absence for this new "wheeze."

It was Billy Bunter's great ambition to be considered a "lady-killer." On that subject he always had plenty of "yarns" for fellows who cared to listen to them. Bunter's yarns earned him more kicks than halfpence, so to speak. And he had always been exasperated that the Cliff House chums, while cordially friendly with the Famous Five, never showed any desire for his—Bunter's—excellent society. He regarded their attitude as indicating "coyness," and considered that they required encouragement. But the more encouragement he gave them, the more they seemed to avoid him—which was very annoying to a lady-killer.

But Bunter felt that he had the whip-hand at last, at least so far as Harry Wharton & Co. were concerned. The Co. met the Cliff House girls often enough, but there was nothing secret about their meetings. There was no occasion for secrecy. But Bunter, according to his own account, was to have a secret meeting with Marjorie Hazeldene, and he loudly announced that that young lady was a captive to his bow and spear.

What did it mean, Bob Cherry miserably wondered, at the same time angry and impatient with himself for being miserable about it.

Marjorie, of course, must have some other reason for meeting Bunter. The mere idea of being "mashed" on anybody was ridiculous, and in the case of the Owl of the Remove it was doubly so. That was the construction Bunter chose to put on it, but it was false. But why? Why was Marjorie seeing him at all?

Bob could not answer that "why." He told himself that

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

it was no business of his, and that he was a fool to bother about it—quite truly in each case. But somehow he could not help bothering about it.

He fell asleep at last.

When the rising-bell rang out in the morning Bob awakened with a sense of trouble on his mind. He was accustomed to awakening in cheerful spirits, of leaving his bed with a bound, and turning out Lord Mauleverer and Bunter uncereemoniously if they showed a disposition to slack.

But on this especial morning he rose very quietly, and did not even look at Bunter, and did not notice that Mauleverer was still dozing.

It fell to Peter Todd to yank his lordship out of bed, and Johnny Bull performed the same kind of service for Bunter. Johnny performed it very vigorously, landing Bunter on the floor with a terrific bump.

"Yow-ow!" roared Bunter, as he rolled over in the bedclothes. "Yow! You rotter! Yah! Oh!"

"Oh, you want waking up!" remarked Johnny Bull, and he squeezed a wet sponge over Bunter's fat face.

"Yow! You rotter! Yooop! Groooh!"

Bunter dodged wildly round a bed, and glared at Johnny Bull across it.

"Yow-ow! You beast! You're waxy because I'm going to meet Marjorie this afternoon! Yow-ow-ow! If you don't leave off kicking me, Squiff, I'll—oh, dear! Keep off!"

Billy Bunter dressed in silence after that, glowering angrily. Squiff had a heavy foot, and he was quite ready to use it again.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

In Borrowed Plumes!

AFTER morning lessons that day the Famous Five sauntered out into the quadrangle, chatting. It was a keen, clear, bright winter's day, ideal weather for football. The Co. were naturally thinking of the great winter game, but Bob Cherry's thoughts seemed to be wandering.

"We shall lick the Fourth this afternoon," said Wharton. "Feel fit, Bob?"

"Fit? Oh, yes."

"A bit fitter than you were at practice yesterday, I hope," said Johnny Bull. "We don't want Temple & Co. to break the record by beating us."

Bob coloured.

"Well, as a matter of fact, I'm not keen on footer this afternoon," he said. "You might give young Penfold a chance in my place, Wharton."

"I will, if you don't feel fit," said Harry. "Pen is all right; but don't you think you'd better stick to it?"

"I'm thinking of a run on my bike," said Bob uneasily. "You don't mind if I stand out?"

"No; we can beat the Fourth all right. But we want you on Saturday to play Highcliffe, you know. You've got to be fit then."

"Oh, that's all right!"

Billy Bunter came out of the School House, blinking round him. He was in search of somebody. He spotted the chums of the Remove, and rolled up to them. Evidently he was in search of them.

"I say, you fellows—"

The Co. turned their backs, and walked away.

"Look here! Don't you march off when I'm talking to you!" shouted Bunter angrily. "It's important!" He puffed and panted after the Co. "Hold on, Harry, old chap—"

Wharton paused for a moment.

"Do you want to have your fat neck wrung, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh, I say! Of—of course not, you know!"

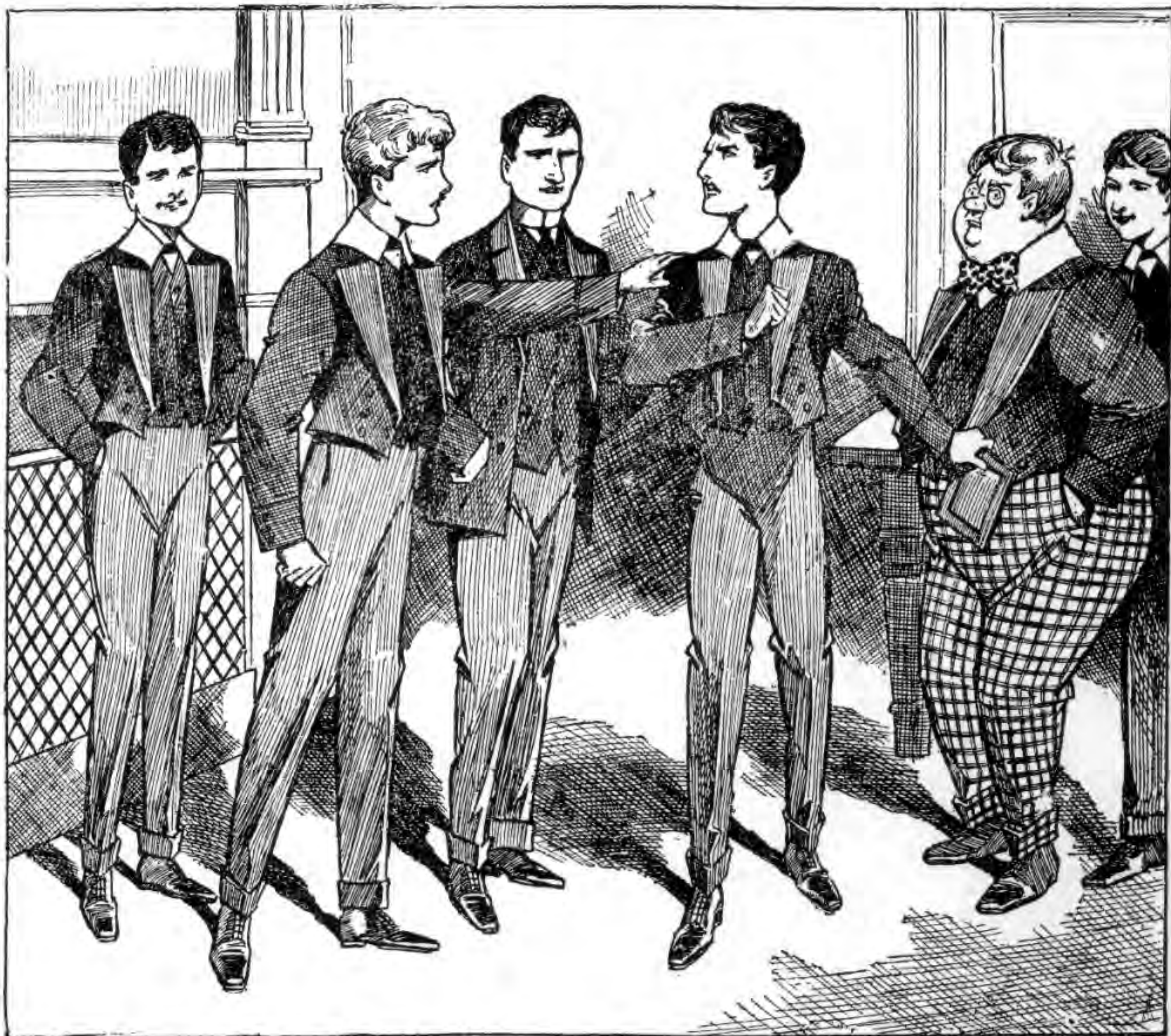
"Then don't call me 'Harry, old chap,' or you'll get it! Clear off!"

"But, I say, you fellows, it's important, you know. It's about Marjorie."

The juniors paused. Bob Cherry's eyes were beginning to glint.

"So you're beginning again?" he said.

"Nunno! Under the circumstances, Bob Cherry, I



"Look out!" murmured Snoop, as Bob Cherry rose from his chair, his brow as black as midnight. Bob strode up to the group, and held out his hand. "Give me that negative, Skinner!" he said quietly. (See Chapter 9.)

utterly refuse to discuss my love affairs with you! Here, keep him off!" roared Bunter, in alarm.

Wharton dragged at Bob Cherry's arm.

"Let's get away, then!" muttered Bob. "I shall squash the fat oyster soon!"

"I say, you fellows, this is really important, you know. I'm stony!" said Bunter.

Bunter made that statement in a serious and aggrieved manner, as if it were something quite new for him.

"Hasn't your postal-order come?" snorted Johnny Bull.

"The one you've been expecting for two or three terms."

"Oh, really, Johnny—"

"Don't call me 'Johnny,' you fat bounder!" roared Johnny Bull ferociously.

"Oh, really, you know! As a matter of fact, my postal-order hasn't arrived. I suppose it's through this blessed war. It causes a lot of delay, you know. I was expecting a remittance from a titled relation—don't walk away, you beasts! Look here! I've got rather an important appointment for this afternoon, and I'm stony!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"As you fellows are chummy with Marjorie, I should think you might do the decent thing!" said Bunter, in an injured tone. "I should like to take Marjorie a nice box of chocolates, you know, only I'm stony. I think

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

one of you might lend me a couple of bob. Of course I'll hand it back immediately my postal-order comes!"

Bob Cherry clenched his hand, and then, to the surprise of his chums, he extracted a two-shilling-piece from his pocket, and threw it to Bunter. He threw it at him, rather than to him, as a matter of fact, and it struck Bunter's fat little nose. There was a yelp from the Owl of the Remove, but he stooped down at once to field the two-shilling-piece, which had rolled on the ground.

Bob walked away hastily.

"What the dickens are you lending the fat beast money for?" exclaimed Frank Nugent, in astonishment.

Bob grunted.

"To stop his jaw!" he said savagely. "I don't want him to be going up and down the Remove trying to borrow money to take chocolates to Marjorie. I don't believe she would let that cad give her chocolates, either."

"He jolly well doesn't mean to, anyway!" said Nugent. "That two-bob-bit will go into the tuckshop!"

"Let it!" growled Bob.

Nugent was right, for a few minutes later Billy Bunter was in Mrs. Mumble's little shop, with exactly two shillings' worth of tuck spread out before him, and a grin of enjoyment upon his fat face. He looked very shiny and jammy when he came in to dinner.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

After dinner Harry Wharton & Co. were thinking about the Form match. Bob Cherry went down to the bike-shed for his machine.

Dick Penfold was taking Bob's place in the Remove team, much to the indignation of Bolsover major, who loudly proclaimed his grievance. Penfold was coming out with the team, when Skinner stopped him.

"Not using your camera this afternoon, Pen?" asked Skinner affably.

"No; I'm playing footer."

"Will you lend it to me?"

"Certainly; but there's no plates in it."

"I suppose you haven't a plate you can lend me, too?" said Skinner grudgingly. Skinner did not like spending money.

Pen laughed.

"Wouldn't be much good lending you a plate," he said. "You couldn't very well return it, after using it, could you?"

"Well, to give me, then?" said Skinner.

"I don't give plates away," said Pen cheerfully. "But you can get them at fourpence each in the village, to fit my little camera."

"Oh, all right!" said Skinner ungraciously.

A little later, when the Remove were on the football ground, Skinner and Snoop strolled out, and Penfold's camera was slung on Harold Skinner's shoulder. The two cads of the Remove were grinning gleefully, apparently having planned a very amusing excursion for that afternoon.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter was busy in his study. Bunter had donned his best suit of Etons, generally kept for Sundays, and his shiniest silk topper. He had taken the liberty of borrowing the best necktie he could find in Lord Mauleverer's study, Mauly being rather a dandy, and given to wearing expensive things. He had also borrowed a very expensive set of gold studs and sleeve-links from Lord Mauleverer, without mentioning the matter to his lordship. Under his arm he had a very handsome cane, the property of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. For once, too, he was wearing gloves—the gloves being the property of Vernon-Smith—borrowed in the Bounder's absence on the football ground.

Bunter surveyed himself in the glass, very satisfied with his appearance in his borrowed plumes. He was, as he would have described it, "dressed to kill!"

He smirked at his reflection in the glass, and fastened a flower in the lapel of his jacket. The flower, too, had been abstracted from the Head's garden, when the gardener was occupied elsewhere.

"I think that's all right," murmured Bunter. "Rotten that a chap should be stony at a time like this! Rotten!"

He grunted discontentedly, and left the study. Russell and Bolsover were talking in the passage, and they uttered a simultaneous exclamation at the sight of Bunter.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bolsover. "He's washed his neck."

"And his face!" said Russell, in wonder.

"Clean collar, too!" said Bolsover.

"And clean boots! What's the matter, Bunter?"

"I'm going to meet a lady," said Bunter loftily. "Must look a bit decent, you know. I say, Russell, Hazeldene rather chums with you."

"What about it?"

"Well, Hazel left owing me money," said Bunter. "I've lent him no end of tin, you know. I was thinking you might be willing to hand me a little of it, and Hazel will settle with you when he comes back."

Russell grinned.

"So I would if I believed a word of it," he said cheerfully.

"Oh, really, Russell!"

"But I don't," said Russell. "Not a giddy syllable!"

"Look here, you know jolly well that Hazel borrows of everybody."

"Everybody but you," agreed Russell. "You've never got anything to lend. Ask next door!"

"I think you might——"

"Bow-wow!"

"I say, Bolsover; you've got tons of oof,"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

"And I'm sticking to it," said Bolsover major, with a grin.

Bunter grunted, and rolled away down the passage. On the stairs he encountered Kipps of the Remove, and halted. Kipps put his hand dramatically over his eyes, as if dazzled by Bunter's unusual splendour.

"I say, Kippy, don't be an ass," said Bunter. "Can you lend me half-a-quid, Kipps? I'll settle when Hazel comes back. He owes me a lot of money."

"Where did you get a lot of money to lend him?" grinned Kipps.

"I—I had a remittance——"

"From a titled relation?" chuckled Kipps.

"Yes. Exactly."

"And you want a loan this afternoon?" asked Kipps considerably.

"Yes," said Bunter eagerly. "Five bob would do."

"That's not much when you're going out lady-killing," said Kipps, with a shake of the head. "I should say half-a-sovereign at least."

"Well, half-a-quid would be better," agreed Bunter.

"You're a good fellow, Kipps. Hand it over, old chap."

"My dear chap, I'm not giving away half-quids. I can tell you where to get it, if you like. That's the best I can do for you."

"Well, where?" asked Bunter suspiciously.

"Send a wire to your titled relation."

And having given Bunter that excellent advice, Kipps slid down the banisters, and departed, whistling. Billy Bunter sent an almost homicidal look after him. A wire to his titled relation was not likely to produce much in the way of cash, as Billy Bunter knew only too well. Indeed, Bunter might have found some difficulty in getting the address of a titled relation.

With a discontented grunt, the Owl of the Remove rolled out into the quadrangle. It was really too bad that a born "masher" should have to start on a lady-killing expedition without a coin in his pocket. A shout greeted Bunter as he appeared in the quad.

"Behold the masher!" sang out Ogilvy.

"Talk about Solomon in all his glory!" yelled Wibley.

"Where did you get that necktie, Bunter?"

"Whose studs are those?" demanded Micky Desmond.

"Where did you steal that cane, Bunter?"

"Don't let the gardener see that orchid."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter snorted, and rolled on to the gates. Loud laughter followed him. Billy Bunter often provoked a good deal of laughter, but as a lady-killer he seemed a little more entertaining than usual.

But Bunter did not mind the merriment of the merry Removites. He attributed it to personal jealousy, and, indeed, accepted it as a tribute to his striking appearance. He rolled away down the lane, quite contented with himself. A glum-faced junior was pedalling slowly down the lane, and he looked at Bunter as he came along. It was Bob Cherry.

The sight of Bunter in his finery seemed to have a disconcerting effect upon Bob. His brow grew very dark, and his hands clenched on the handle-bars. Bunter gave him a triumphant grin as he passed—a grin that very nearly cost him a ducking in the ditch. But Bob controlled his feelings, and watched him out of sight. Then he dug hard at his pedals, and rode away by a side lane, his brows knitted, and his eyes gleaming under them.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Takes Snapshots!

"HERE comes the oyster!"

The humorous Skinner was alluding to William George Bunter in that disrespectful way. Skinner and Snoop were skulking behind a hedge, watching for the lady-killer of the Remove. Skinner had Penfold's camera in his hand. It was provided with two plates, Skinner having made a great effort, and reconciled himself to the expenditure of eightpence of his own money for the sake of the great joke he had in perspective.

"Dressed to kill, by Jove!" grinned Snoop.

"Quite a dandy," chuckled Skinner. "He must be going to meet Miss Hazeldene, after all. He's got Inky's cane, and one of Mauly's ties, I'll swear, and he's pinched an orchid out of the Head's hothouse. Lucky for him old Mimbble didn't spot him. He's got up to mash all Cliff House, from Miss Penelope Primrose downwards."

"He, he, he!"

"Shush!"

The two juniors were very quiet as Billy Bunter passed them, rolling on towards the cliffs. When he was well past, Skinner and Snoop emerged from the hedge, and followed in his track.

They had no fear of being spotted. Even if Bunter looked back, he was too shortsighted to recognise them at a distance, or, indeed, to observe them at all.

Bunter kept on to the cliffs.

"It really looks genuine," said Snoop. "He's going to meet Marjorie right enough. What the dickens can it mean? Marjorie can't like that oyster."

"You never know," said Skinner. "Girls are queer animals. He's going to meet her right enough. And I'm jolly well going to snap them together, and put it on record. Rather amusing for Hazel when he comes back—what?"

"He'll punch your head," said Snoop.

"Well, if he does, I'll punch him, and I shall keep the photograph all the same," grinned Skinner. "Hazel don't count. It's those swanky rotters in No. 1 Study I'm going to chip with that photograph. They always monopolise the Cliff House girls; no chance for another chap to get in a word edgeways. They will enjoy seeing a picture of her trotting round with Bunter—what?"

"They'll be awfully waxy, I should say."

"Yes; I expect Bob Cherry will explode," chuckled Skinner gleefully. "But he can't say anything. A fellow can take photographs on the cliffs if he likes, I suppose."

"Of course he can! He, he, he!"

"Perhaps I might sell him the negative, if he's very keen about it," said Skinner, with another chuckle. "I might let him have it for ten bob, and he can keep it dark. It's no business of his, that I can see; but he seems to think that it is. Fancy that long-legged bouncer setting up as a squire of dames! Hallo, Bunter's stopping!"

Billy Bunter had been toiling up the cliff path, with many a grunt. He halted where the road was joined by another path which ran to the coast village of Pegg. Anyone coming from Cliff House would naturally come by that path. Bunter sat down on a jutting rock, and waited.

"That's the giddy rendezvous!" said Snoop.

"Lovely spot for a photograph," said Skinner. "Let's get a bit nearer, keeping behind the rocks. No chance of that blind owl spotting us."

Skinner and Snoop approached cautiously, till they were only a dozen yards or so from the unconscious Owl of the Remove. They carefully kept in cover among the rough rocks beside the path, and watched Bunter at the cross-roads. It was about five minutes later that a graceful figure came round the bend of the cliffs—the figure of Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House, in coat and scarf, her hair blown a little loose by the wind from the sea.

"She's coming along," murmured Snoop. "Miss Clara is always with her, you know. She's left her behind this time. It's jolly queer. Looks as if it's really a secret meeting, just as Bunter said."

Skinner was preparing the camera.

Billy Bunter did not observe Marjorie till she was quite near him. Then he rose to his feet, and raised his silk hat, with what was meant for a graceful bow. A fat smirk was on his fat face, that doubtless being intended for a pleasant smile.

"He's giving her killing looks!" gasped Snoop. "Oh, my hat! Ever seen an oyster look killing before? Marjorie don't seem to appreciate it; she looks as cold as ice. Blessed if I should like a girl to look at me like that! Bunter don't seem to mind, though."

"All ready," murmured Skinner. "I suppose I can't tell 'em to keep still and smile."

"He, he, he!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE I"

EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"Bunter's holding out his fat paw, and she don't seem to notice it," said Snoop. "Don't look much like mashing, so far as I can see. Can you hear what the fat bouncer's saying, Skinny?"

"Too far off."

"Now they're walking away together," said Snoop. "You'd better buck up with that snapshot, Skinny."

Snap!

Skinner had focussed the camera carefully, squinting into the view-finder. He snapped, just as Marjorie and Billy Bunter moved away side by side, evidently deep in conversation. Skinner grinned. He had made one successful shot, he knew that.

Snap!

Marjorie had, perhaps, heard the first snap, for she moved, and looked round, just as Skinner took the second. The two spies dodged behind the rocks at once.

Even Skinner and Snoop did not like the idea of being caught spying.

"Did she see us?" murmured Snoop, uneasily.

"I think not."

"What about the second snap?"

"N.G.!" growled Skinner. "Quite spoiled. But I'm sure the first one was all right. That'll be a beauty. I think they're gone now."

Skinner peered cautiously over the rocks.

Marjorie and Billy Bunter had gone on, and disappeared round the bend of the great cliff towards the sea. Skinner rose and yawned.

"Gone!" he said. "Let's hope they'll have a pleasant walky-talky. What Marjorie can have to say to that fat bouncer beats me. Come on! I've got to get this developed at the school, and there's plenty of light to get it printed to-day if I don't lose any time."

The precious pair started for Greyfriars, chuckling. As they came down the steep path into the lower road Skinner uttered an exclamation. A bicycle was leaning idly against a tree, and by the roadside a junior in Norfolks was seated, staring gloomily before him.

"Bob Cherry, by gum!" said Snoop, in surprise. "I thought he was playing footer this afternoon. Jolly lucky he didn't spot us, by gum!"

Skinner whistled.

"Jolly lucky! Not a word, mind—not till I get it developed and printed. He would be quite beast enough to want to smash the camera. What the dickens is he mooching about here for? Hallo, Cherry!"

Bob Cherry rose hastily as he saw Skinner and Snoop. The colour deepened in his rugged face.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he responded.

"Fancy meeting you here," said Skinner agreeably. "Chucked the footer for this afternoon—what?"

"Yes," said Bob. "What are you fellows doing here?"

"Oh, I've been taking snapshots on the cliffs!" said Skinner airily. "Pen's lent me his camera. He's playing footer, I believe."

"He's taken my place," said Bob.

"Don't feel fit?" asked Skinner sympathetically, closing one eye at Snoop—the eye which was furthest from Bob.

"Not very."

"Having a walk all on your own, I suppose?" said Snoop, grinning. "You'll find company if you go round the cliffs, Cherry. Bunter, you know."

"Bunter?" repeated Bob.

"Yes—and somebody else. He, he, he!"

Bob Cherry's face became so dark that Snoop backed away. Skinner seized his chum by the arm, and hurried on. Bob looked after them with glinting eyes. Then he sat down again, leaning back against the big rock by the roadside. His brows were darkly knitted.

Bob had come out that afternoon for a spin, but his spin had been of brief duration. His machine leaned idly against the tree, and Bob sat leaning on the rock at the foot of the cliff-path, staring moodily over the wide fields before him, and feeling so utterly miserable that afternoon.

How long he sat there he was hardly aware; but he was disturbed at last by the sound of footsteps on the path above him. A voice he knew well came to his ears.

"Well, good-bye, Marjorie!"

Bob started as if stung.

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Good-bye!" came a low, clear, sweet voice that was very familiar to his ears. "You will not forget?"

"Oh, no! Rely on me."

"I shall write to you this evening, and then you will keep your promise."

"What-ho!"

Footsteps again.

Billy Bunter's heavy, grunting breath was audible as he came down the slope and round the big rock against which Bob Cherry was sitting. The fat junior came into view; he was grinning. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not observe the junior in the shadow of the big rock. He rolled away towards Greyfriars, still grinning.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Tea at Cliff House!

BOB CHERRY rose to his feet when Bunter was out of sight.

His rugged face was a little pale.

He had not had the slightest idea of seeing Bunter when he came there, nor of surprising the interview with Marjorie. Those few chance words had come to his ears entirely by accident. They had struck him with the force of a blow.

He mounted his machine and pedalled slowly away.

He hardly knew where he rode—up one lane and down another, unconscious of fatigue. He started a little when he found himself in the road that ran past the gates of Cliff House School.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

It was a laughing voice, imitating his own usual salutation. It came from a girl who was looking over the garden-gate.

Bob Cherry jumped off his machine, and raised his cap, with a flush. It was Clara Trevlyn, Marjorie's best chum, who was at the school-gate.

Miss Clara gave him a kind smile. She liked Bob Cherry, as most people did. Indeed, it would have been difficult not to like him. Bob liked Miss Clara, too, though she did not represent perfection in his eyes, as Marjorie did.

"How good of you to give us a look-in!" said Miss Clara cheerfully. "I've been bored to death this afternoon."

"Have you really?" stammered Bob.

"Yes, really! Marjorie has been out on her own." Miss Clara had adopted many boyish expressions from her chums at Greyfriars. "I've been playing chess with Paula. Paula would take my knight."

"Would she?" grinned Bob.

"Yes, she would. I told her it was bad chess to exchange pieces, and she said I had taken her bishop. Of course that was quite different." Miss Clara yawned. "Now Marjorie's come back she isn't very cheerful. That blessed brother of hers worrying her again, I suppose."

"Hazel?" said Bob. "Hazel's gone home, you know."

"Hazel's a worry wherever he is!" snapped Miss Clara. "He's always getting into scrapes, and coming to Marjorie to get him out of them. I've told him more than once that I will box his ears. When I call him names Marjorie gets cross, too. I called him a slacker once, and Marjorie wouldn't speak to me for two hours. I spoke to her, though—I kept on speaking all the time," chuckled Miss Clara. "So she came round. You were coming here, I suppose?"

"Nunno; I—"

"Going to Pegg?"

"Oh, no!"

"Well, that road doesn't lead anywhere but to Pegg or here," said Miss Clara.

"I—I was just taking a spin."

"You were simply crawling," said Miss Clara. "I think you're getting to be a slacker like Hazel. Do come in; I'll ask Miss Primrose if you may, and you can have tea with us. You haven't had tea?"

"Not yet."

"Then wait till I speak to Miss Primrose. She's in the garden, weeding. I've been weeding, too, but I got fed-up," said Miss Clara confidently. "I hate weeding. I wish Marjorie would be more cheery. Perhaps she will

THE MARGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

now she's got the letter she's been waiting for. Wait a minute!"

Miss Clara ran away, leaving Bob Cherry standing at the gate. He wanted very much to accept Miss Clara's kind invitation, and yet he shrank, somehow, from meeting Marjorie. But he remained.

Miss Clara reappeared through the rhododendrons with Miss Penelope Primrose, the Principal of Cliff House School. Miss Primrose was wearing heavy boots, huge gardening gloves, and had a hoe in her hand. She nodded kindly to Bob Cherry.

"Come in, by all means, my dear boy!" she said.

"Thank you, Miss Primrose!" faltered Bob.

He opened the gate, and wheeled his bicycle inside, and then walked up to the house with Miss Clara, who chatted away nineteen to the dozen—if not twenty. Bob hardly heard a word. His thoughts were elsewhere.

Marjorie was in the schoolroom, and greeted Bob kindly, as did Paula and Katie. Miss Clara triumphantly brought in a large cake. Bob Cherry offered to help his hostesses get tea—a proposal that was promptly sat upon by Miss Clara.

"No, thanks!" said the cheerful young lady. "You knocked the spout off the teapot the last time you helped, and broke a cup and saucer."

"I—I wouldn't this time," murmured Bob.

"You sit down," said Miss Clara decisively. "Perhaps crockery will be cheaper after the war, and then we'll let you help."

Bob grinned, and sat down. The little table was spread in the alcove in the school-room, and Marjorie and Clara did the honours.

"You are out on your own this afternoon," Miss Clara remarked. "What are the others doing?"

"Playing footer," said Bob.

"And you're not?"

"Nunno!"

"Slacking!" said Miss Clara severely.

"Oh, Clara!" murmured Marjorie.

But Bob only laughed good-humouredly.

"Not exactly slacking," he said. "I didn't feel quite like footer. They've got Pen in my place, too. Pen's a good half."

"You didn't feel like footer!" said Miss Clara, in astonishment. "It's the first time it's ever happened, I'm sure. Aren't you well?"

"First-rate."

"You're not eating much cake."

"I—I'm not very hungry."

"Nonsense! Boys are always hungry. Eat your cake!" said Miss Clara autocratically.

Bob Cherry meekly ate his cake.

He was a little surprised to find Marjorie's manner exactly the same as usual. Somehow, almost unconsciously, he had expected to see some difference. Yet little more than hour ago she had met Bunter on the cliffs, unknown to her schoolmistress, and she had said that she would write again that evening, and asked Bunter not to forget his promise. What promise? Was it possible that they were upon the very chummy terms which Bunter desired his Form-fellows to believe. It was impossible, and Marjorie must be totally unconscious of the way Bunter was representing the matter at Greyfriars. Bob was sure of that, and yet he was feeling gloomy and miserable. He was conscious more than anything else of a desire to punch Bunter's head.

"Well?" said Miss Clara suddenly.

"Eh!" said Bob, confused.

"What are you scowling at me for?"

Bob crimsoned.

"Wa-a-a-as I scowling?" he stammered.

"Yes, you were, and you haven't spoken for ten minutes," said Miss Clara. "I've been timing you by the clock."

"Oh, I—I'm sorry!" said Bob, utterly confused. "I—I—"

"Clara, don't be mischievous," said Marjorie. "Bob is thinking about the football match, and wondering how Pen is playing at half."

"N-no, I wasn't, honest Injun!" exclaimed Bob. "I haven't thought a word about footer this afternoon. I—I was thinking just then of a fellow who—whose head

I should like to punch, that's all. I—I say, this is ripping cake."

"Then why don't you eat it?" said Miss Clara primly.

"Oh! Yes, of course."

The four girls were all smiling; they could not help it. Bob's absent-mindedness was so pronounced. Bob generally enjoyed tea at Cliff House; it was a treat the chums of the Remove liked very much. But on this occasion he was glad when it was over and it was time to go.

The early winter dusk was falling as Bob came down the path to the gate. Marjorie and Clara came to the gate with him. Marjorie had a letter in her hand.

"Good-bye!" said Bob.

"Good-bye, and cheer up!" said Miss Clara encouragingly.

"I—I'm jolly cheery, really!" stammered Bob.

"Yes, you look it!" said the merciless Miss Clara.

"Doesn't he look cheery, Marjorie—as cheery as an interned Hun!"

"Will you take this letter for me?" asked Marjorie, holding out the envelope to Bob. "The collection is gone in the village."

"Certainly," said Bob.

"Give it to Bunter."

"Wha-a-a-at!" Bob almost staggered at the extraordinary request.

"It's for Bunter," explained Marjorie. "Will you give it to him as soon as you get back?"

"Oh, yes; c-c-c-certainly!" gasped Bob, wondering whether he was standing on his head or his heels.

He said good-bye hastily to the Cliff House chums, and mounted his machine, with the letter still in his hand. Miss Clara looked after him with a puzzled expression.

"Something's the matter with Bob this afternoon," she said.

Marjorie nodded.

"He seemed a little absent-minded," she agreed.

"A little?" Miss Clara made a grimace. "A lot, I think. I put some salt on his cake, and he never even noticed it."

"Oh, Clara!"

The two girls went laughing back to the house. Bob Cherry was pedalling away in the dusk, with the letter still grasped in his hand—the letter to Bunter!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Chuckles Too Soon!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were waiting at the school gates, looking for Bob Cherry. The football match was long finished; dusk was thickening on Greyfriars, and looking-up was almost due. As the chums of the Remove stood looking out into the winter dusk, Gosling came grunting out of his lodge, with his big bunch of keys in his hand.

"Where the deuce has Bob got to?" exclaimed Wharton uneasily.

"Must be jolly fond of his own society," said Johnny Bull. "He's been out all the afternoon on his own."

"Wait a minute, Gossy," said Wharton persuasively. "Bob isn't in yet."

Gosling grunted.

"Which he'll be reported," was his reply.

There was a whirr of a bicycle on the road, and a light gleamed through the dusk. Bob Cherry jumped off his machine at the gates.

"Jest in time, Master Cherry!" said Gosling grimly.

Bob did not reply. He wheeled in his machine, and his chums gathered round him as he wheeled it away to the bike-shed.

"Had a good spin?" asked Harry.

"No—yes. All right."

"Had your tea?"

"Eh! Yes. I—I had tea at Cliff House."

"Oh, you did, did you?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Ye-es."

"What's that in your fist?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Letter you've forgotten to post, you absent-minded beggar?"

Bob started.

"Nunno! Not a letter to post. Oh, no!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

EVERY
MONDAY,

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

He wheeled his machine into the shed, and put it on the stand. The confusion in his manner caused his chums to exchange curious glances. Bob Cherry was gripping the letter in his hand as he left the bike-shed, unconscious of the fact that he was crushing it.

"If that letter's for anybody special you'd better be careful with it," remarked Nugent. "It don't look much like a letter now."

Bob started again, and unclenched his hand. The envelope was terribly crumpled, and considerably soiled.

"It's for Bunter!" he gasped.

"Old Clegg got you to bring in his account?" grinned Johnny Bull.

"It's from Marjorie."

"Wha-a-t?"

Bob almost gasped for breath. He had to give the letter to Bunter; he had undertaken to do so. There was no keeping it dark.

"Marjorie gave me the letter to bring to Bunter," he said between his teeth. "I said I would."

"Well, my hat!"

The juniors were silent from sheer astonishment as they walked to the School House. Marjorie's correspondence with Bunter was a standing amazement to them. But that Miss Hazeldene should use Bob as a letter-carrier to the Owl of the Remove put the lid on, so to speak.

As soon as they reached the House the Famous Five had to go in to calling-over. They answered to their names, and after the roll had been called, Bob Cherry bore down on Bunter as the juniors were quitting the Hall.

The expression on his face made the Owl of the Remove back away in alarm. Bob had come to give him the letter, but what he was feeling inclined to give him was the thumping of his life. Which was really a little unjust, since, as Bob had to admit, it was no business of his if Miss Hazeldene chose to correspond with Bunter or with any other worm.

"Bunter!" rapped out Bob savagely.

"Here, you keep off!" exclaimed Bunter, dodging behind the burly form of Bolsover major. "I say, keep him off, Bolsover!"

"I've got something for you!" growled Bob.

"Keep him off, you beast! Why, what——"

Bob thrust the letter into Bunter's fat hand, and strode away. Billy Bunter blinked at it in astonishment.

Then he whistled. The envelope was addressed to him in Marjorie's hand. The fat junior burst into a chuckle.

"He, he, he!"

"What's the 'he, he, he' about?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, only another letter from a lady," said Bunter loftily. "She's made Bob Cherry bring it to me! He, he, he!"

"Gammon!" said Skinner.

"Look at it, then, fathead!"

Skinner and several other fellows glanced at the superscription on the letter, and stared.

"Hard cheese for Cherry!" chortled Snoop. "No wonder he is looking Hunnish."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's see the letter," said Skinner. "Come into the Rag, and read it out Bunter!"

"No jolly fear!" said Bunter. "This letter is private—very private!"

Billy Bunter scuttled off to his study with the letter. Skinner & Co. were chuckling in the passage, when Penfold came along, and tapped Skinner on the shoulder.

"Done with my camera?" he asked.

"Yes. It's in my study; you can take it," said Skinner cheerfully. "Much obliged!"

"Had any luck with it?"

"Yes. I took two—one a jolly good one, and the other a smudge," said Skinner, with a grin. "I've used your things for developing it. You don't mind?"

"Not at all," said Pen. "I didn't know you cared for photography, Skinner. What have you taken—views?"

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD, $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Edited by the Chums of the Remove Form.



FRANK NUGENT,
Art Editor.



H. VERNON SMITH,
Sports Editor.



HARRY WHARTON,
Editor.



BOB CHERRY,
Fighting Editor.



MARK LINLEY,
Sub-Editor.

Buy No. 5 Out To-day! You Will Like It!

"Well, in a way," said Skinner, while Snoop chuckled. "Still life, you know. An oyster and a young lady."

Pen looked puzzled.

"Oyster named Bunter!" explained Skinner. "Snapped them together, walking on the cliffs. It's come out a treat!"

Penfold's brow grew very dark.

"I didn't know you wanted the camera for a caddish trick like that, Skinner!" he said quietly. "Have you taken any prints yet?"

"Not yet. It was dark too early. But the negative's ripping!" said Skinner. "I shall have a good print in the morning. I'm thinking of having an enlarged copy made to hang up in the Rag."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Snoop.

"I should advise you not to!" said Pen. "I warn you that if I see it there I shall tear it up on the spot!"

"Mighty particular for a cobbler, ain't you?" sneered Skinner.

The scholarship junior clenched his hands for a moment. Skinner walked away rather hastily. Penfold went for his camera, his brow still dark. Skinner had been very careful not to explain what he wanted the camera for when he had borrowed it. Pen would certainly not have lent it if he had known. But it was done now, and the tell-tale negative was safe in Skinner's pocket-book.

Harry Wharton & Co. had gone to tea in No. 1 Study. Bob Cherry was silent and moody. He finished his tea quickly, and left the study. When he came into his own study, No. 13, he found Mark Linley at work there, and little Wan Lung curled

up in the armchair, blinking at the fire. Mark greeted him with a cherry smile.

"Time you got on with your prep," he remarked.

"Prep?" said Bob vaguely. "Hang the prep!"

He strolled out of the study again, leaving Mark considerably astonished.

Bob drifted aimlessly along the passage, his brow knitted, and moody. Two or three fellows spoke to him, and he answered at random. He went downstairs into the common-room, and threw himself into a chair, with a book. As he held the book unconsciously upside-down, however, he could not have been very interested in it. He wanted to be left alone—alone with his moody thoughts.

He hardly knew why he was so moody and miserable. He scouted the thought that he was jealous of the unspeakable Bunter. If Marjorie preferred Bunter as her special friend, above all the other fellows, it was no concern of his. Bob had always known, or felt at

least, that Marjorie liked Harry Wharton best, but he had taken that quite cheerfully. Wharton was a thoroughly decent fellow, whom any girl might like. But that she should throw over her old friends for a rank outsider like Bunter—a conceited, caddish fellow, whose vulgar boasting made her name the talk of the Lower School—that was the unkindest cut of all. Marjorie had always represented perfection in Bob's eyes. To change his ideas on that subject was a painful shock to him. To feel that, in spite of himself, she was lowered in his eyes, gave him an indescribable bitterness.

A group of fellows were gathered round Skinner in the common-room,

NEXT MONDAY.

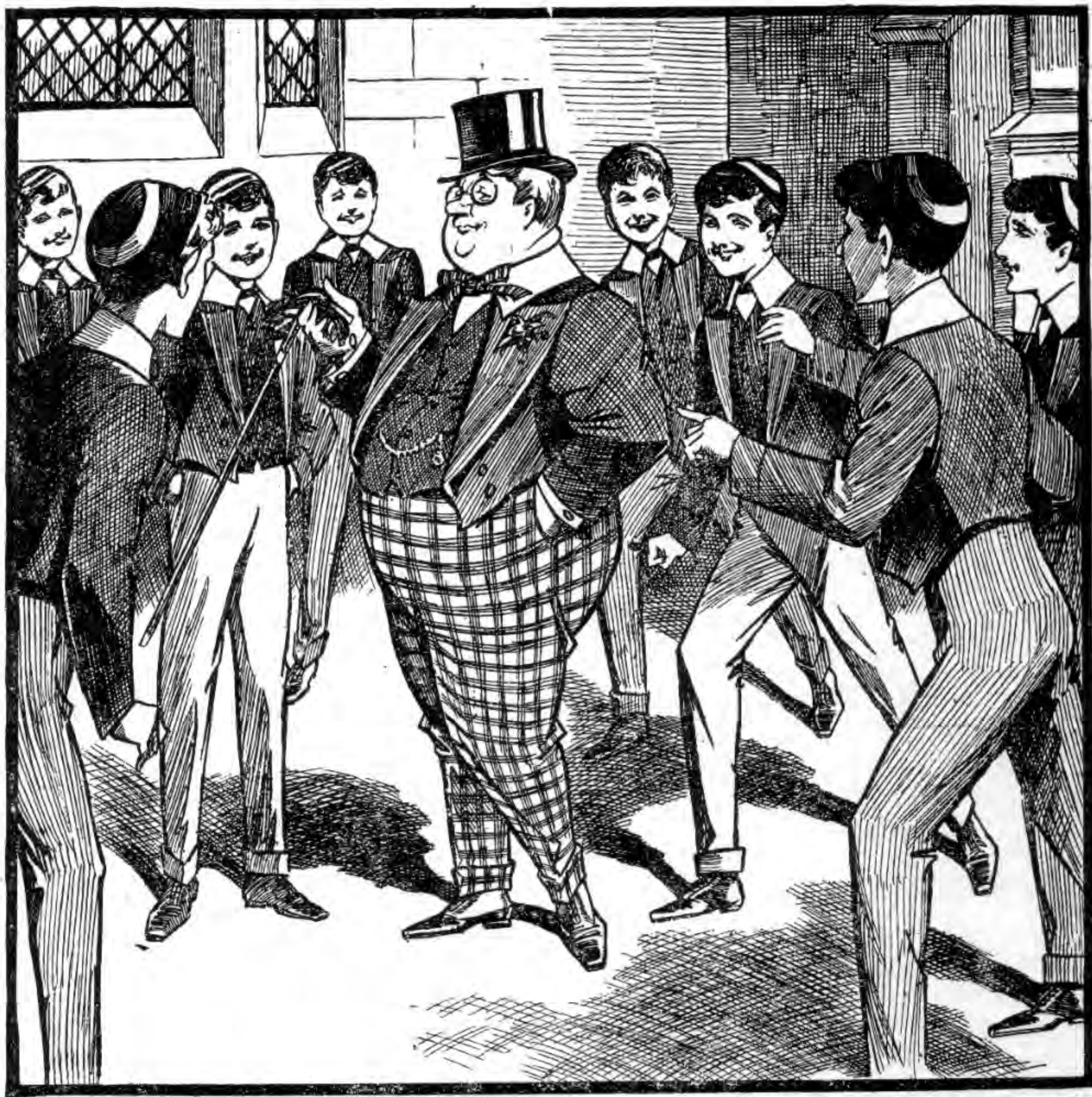
"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.



Order your copy of the "MAGNET" LIBRARY in advance. Price 1d.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.



"Behold the masher!" sang out Ogilvy. "Talk about Solomon in all his glory!" yelled Wibley. "Where did you get that necktie, Bunter?" Bunter snorted. (See Chapter 6.)

chuckling and talking, and it was some time before Bob, plunged deep in moody reflections, noticed them. But he looked round at last, as he caught Marjorie's name.

Skinner had a photographic plate in his hand, evidently a finished negative. He was holding it up to the light for the juniors to see what was represented on it. It was an excellent negative, with sharp, clear outlines, and though the lights were dark, and the darks light, in the negative, the two figures were easily recognised.

"Well, that's a clincher, I guess!" Fisher T. Fish was observing. "That's Bunter, right enough, and that's Marjorie!"

"Clear as daylight!" said Bolsover major. "Blessed if I can see what she sees in the fat toad!"

"Meeting him on the cliffs, by gad!" said Stott. "I couldn't help thinking the fat bounder was lying. But that clinches it!"

There was a fat chuckle from Billy Bunter. The negative came as a surprise to him, but it was a pleasant
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

surprise, a very agreeable surprise indeed. His claims to be a lady-killer had not been acknowledged—far from it, in spite of the proofs he had adduced. But the photograph was indeed a clincher! Bunter could almost have hugged Skinner for having had that ripping idea.

"I say, Skinner, I want one of the prints," he said. "You can have prints at a tanner each when I take them to-morrow," said Skinner. "That's my price. Cheap, I call it. You don't often get a photo of a porpoise giving killing looks."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, really, Skinner, you know——" "I'm expecting to do a good trade in No. 1 Study," pursued Skinner. "All the young lady's friends will be glad to have this photo, I should think."

"I call it rotten!" broke in Tom Brown. "And if Hazel were here he would bust that negative over your head, Skinner!"

"If Hazel doesn't like it he can have the negative for ten bob," said Skinner. "He can do as he likes with it"

then—after I've taken some prints, of course. I'm going to keep a record of the lady-killing oyster."

"Look out!" murmured Snoop, as Bob Cherry rose from his chair, his brow as black as midnight.

Bob strode up to the group, and held out his hand.

"Give me that negative, Skinner!" he said quietly.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry on the Warpath!

THE buzz of chuckling voices died away.

The look on Bob Cherry's face was quite enough to put an end to the merriment of Skinner & Co. Bob was very quiet, but his eyes were gleaming like cold steel under his bent brows.

"Do you hear me, Skinner?" he said.

Skinner backed away a little.

"That negative's mine!" he replied. "Give it to me!"

"What do you want it for?"

"I'm going to destroy it!"

"You're jolly well not going to do anything of the kind!" said Skinner warmly. "I don't take photographs for you to destroy! What business is it of yours, anyway?"

"Yes, mind your own business, Cherry!" said Bolsover major, in his most bullying tone.

Bob Cherry did not heed the bully of the Remove. He did not seem even to hear him. He held out his hand for the negative.

Skinner slipped it into his pocket.

"Will you give it to me?" asked Bob, his voice trembling a little now, with the anger he could hardly control.

"No, I won't!"

Bob said no more; he sprang upon Skinner. The cad of the Remove put up his hands promptly enough. He might as well have put them up against a charging motor-car. Crash! Crash! came Bob's heavy fists, full in his face, knocking aside the slacker's weak guard, and Skinner went down with a crash on the floor of the common-room.

"Yow-ow!" roared Skinner. "Oh, my eye! Oh!"

Bob knelt beside him, and dragged at his pocket for the negative.

"Keep off!" yelled Skinner. "Bolsover, lend me a hand!"

"Leave him alone, Cherry!" thundered Bolsover. "You touch that negative, and I'll give you a licking!"

The negative was in Bob's hand now, and he rose to his feet.

Crash!

The plate smashed into a hundred fragments as Bob hurled it on to the floor with all the strength of his arm. He set his foot on the larger fragments, and ground them almost to dust. It was an end of Skinner's precious negative with a vengeance!

"You rotten thief!" howled Skinner, sitting up. "That's my negative! You—you—oh! Leggo! Draggimoff!"

Having finished with the negative, Bob Cherry started on Skinner. He grasped him by the back of the neck, and proceeded to rub his prominent nose in the hearth-rug. Harold Skinner yelled with anguish. His struggles were of no avail in the powerful grasp of the sturdy Remove.

"There, you cad!" panted Bob. "You've wanted a lesson for a long time!"

"He's getting it!" chuckled Tom Brown. "No mistake about that!"

"Rescue!" shrieked Skinner.

Bolsover major's grasp was laid on Bob's shoulder, and he was dragged away from Skinner. The latter rolled over on the floor, rumpled and roaring. Bob Cherry turned on the bully of the Remove in a flash.

"Do you want some, too?" he said, between his teeth.

"Come on, then!"

In a second they were fighting hammer and tongs.

"Go it, Bolsover!" chirruped Snoop.

"Pile in, Bob!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

"Shut the door!" shouted Temple of the Fourth. "We don't want the prefects here."

Slam!

Crash! Thump! Trample! Trample! Tramp! There were no rounds in that fight. It was a furious combat, such as the Remove had seldom seen before.

Bolsover major was a powerful fellow, and it had been considered a doubtful point whether any fellow in the Remove could stand up against him in a hard fight without the gloves. That doubtful point was settled now. Bob Cherry seemed to have the strength of three or four. All the bitterness that had been cankering in his breast found expression now—the long-controlled wrath was wreaked upon the head of Bolsover major.

Bolsover, powerful as he was, was fairly knocked right and left.

Bob had been down once, but he was up again like a cat, springing at his enemy. Then Bolsover went down—and he went down again. He came on again like a bull, till a right-hander struck him like a battering-ram between the eyes, and he fell like a log.

"Go for him, Bolsover!" sang out Snoop.

Bolsover lay on the floor, and groaned. One of his eyes was closed, the other was blinking painfully, and his nose was streaming red. He was utterly done.

"Licked, by gum!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"Look here, Bob Cherry—" began Bunter.

Bunter got no further.

Bob's grasp closed like a vice on his collar. He came down with a bump on the floor that almost shook the room.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "Oh, my hat!"

Bob's flashing glance swept round him.

"Anybody else got anything to say?" he panted.

Tom Brown burst into a chuckle.

"Yes, I have," he said.

"Well, what?"

"It's a fine evening."

Bob glared for a moment, and then he grinned.

"Don't go for your old pals, Bobby," said Squiff chidingly. "If you want somebody else to lick, there's Snoop—he's simply spoiling for a fight."

There was a burst of laughter. Sidney James Snoop was making for the door. He disappeared promptly into the passage.

"Are you done, Bolsover?" asked Bob, looking down at the bully of the Remove, who was sitting on the floor and gasping spasmodically.

"Wo-wow! Yes," panted Bolsover. "I'll lick you another time, you cheeky cad. Wooooop!"

"Do you want any more, Skinner?"

"Keep off!" yelled Skinner.

Bob Cherry strode out of the common-room. He left the juniors in a buzz.

"Good old Bob!" said Tom Brown. "Never mind, Skinner. I was thinking of thumping you myself, so you were bound to have it, you know."

"Ow! Ow! Ow!" groaned Skinner.

"I say, you fellows, has that beast gone?" mumbled Bunter.

"Ha, ha! Yes, he's gone. Now you can tell us what you were just going to do to him!" chuckled Russell.

Bunter staggered to his feet, gasping.

"He's taken jolly good care to clear off!" he snorted.

"I'd have wiped up the floor with him, the cheeky beast. I'd have mopped up the room with his cheeky carcase, if he hadn't cleared off like a funk—"

"Here he comes!" sang out Kipps.

Bunter gave a gasp of alarm, and dodged round the table.

"Keep him off!" he yelled. "I'll tell Wingate! I—I'll go to Quelch! Keep him off! Help, help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help!" yelled Bunter.

"You silly ass!" roared Kipps. "He isn't here—only a false alarm."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

ANSWERS

STUPENDOUS SUCCESS OF "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD," 1st. NO. 5 OUT TO-DAY!

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.
 "Now tell us the rest of the things you were going to do to him, Bunter," chortled Rake.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry had gone to the dormitory to bathe a nose and an eye—both needed it badly. When he came into his study, Mark Linley looked at him in surprise and concern.

"Been fighting?" he said.

"Yes," growled Bob.

Mark coloured a little. Bob's tone was decidedly surly.

"The esteemed Bob is not eminently politeful," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who was doing his preparation at the study table.

Bob Cherry flushed.

"Sorry, Marky, old man!" he stammered. "Don't mind me. I'm out of sorts to-day."

"All serene, old man! Let me give you a hand with your prep," said the Lancashire junior good-naturedly.

Bob nodded; he was a good deal in need of a helping hand. That evening was not a happy one for Bob Cherry.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Postal-Order!

"YOW-OW-OW!"

That remark heralded the arrival of William George Bunter in his study, No. 7 in the Remove. His three study-mates—Peter and Alonzo Todd and Tom Dutton—were at work at the table, and they all looked at him.

"My dear Bunter, what is the matter?" asked Alonzo, with gentle concern. "You look somewhat dusty."

"Yow-ow-ow!" groaned Bunter, sinking into the arm-chair. "Wow-wow-yoop!"

"Is that German or Esperanto?" asked Peter Todd, with an air of interest.

"Don't be a beast, Toddy! If you were a decent chap, you'd stand up for your own study. I believe you could lick Bob Cherry."

"Possibly," said Peter cheerfully. "I dare say I could, but I know for certain that I'm not going to!"

"Some fellows are backed up in their own study," said Bunter bitterly. "I've been bumped and rolled over. I put up a tremendous fight. I've given Bob Cherry a black eye and a swollen nose—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.

"What are you cackling at, you ass?"

"The casualty list," chuckled Peter. "What else did you do to him, Bunter? I like hearing these thrilling stories of battle."

"If you don't believe me, you can look at him," sniffed Bunter.

"I have looked at him," said Peter. "I saw him going to bathe his eye, and I know he got it from Bolsover. If you've finished telling whoppers, I'll get on with my prep."

"The beast!" groaned Bunter. "He went for me like a Hun, because he's jealous about Marjorie—"

"Do you want me to go for you like a Hun, too?" asked Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"If you don't, you'd better shut up."

"My dear Bunter," murmured Alonzo, "I must observe that your remarks on the subject of that young lady are in very bad taste. If Miss Hazeldene had shown any preference for you, it is not a matter for boasting in the common-room. Such a course of action is liable to wound the susceptibilities of the young lady in question, if it should, by chance, be brought to her knowledge. I am sure that my Uncle Benjamin would take this view."

"For goodness' sake, don't spring your Uncle Benjamin on me!" growled Bunter irritably. "I call this disgraceful. You ought to lick Bob Cherry, Peter. Blessed if I don't believe you're a funk!"

"Hear, hear!" said Peter, unmoved.

"I say, Dutton!" shouted Bunter, turning to the deaf junior. "Dutton, old man!"

Tom Dutton looked up.

"Eh!"

"Bob Cherry's been acting like a beast. I want you to lick him. I know you could lick him."

"Kick whom?" asked Dutton, in surprise. "I'm not going to kick anybody."

"Not kick—lick!" shouted Bunter. "I want you to mop up the ground with Bob Cherry."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

EVERY
MONDAY

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"I don't understand you, Bunter. I'm not going to kick anybody, and if I did, it wouldn't make him merry, so far as I can see."

"Oh, my hat! I want you to tackle Bob Cherry!" shrieked Bunter. "Toddy won't—Toddy's a funk!"

"Oh, I'm a skunk, am I?" said Tom. "I don't know what you're calling me names for, Bunter, as I haven't said anything to you; but I know I'm jolly well going to stop you, and sharp!"

"Here, keep him off, Toddy!" yelled Bunter, in alarm, as Tom Dutton rose wrathfully from his chair.

"Can't," said Peter. "I'm a funk, you know."

"Oh, really, Toddy—I say, you know— Help! Yurrrrrrggggggggh!" Bunter's voice became indistinguishable as Tom Dutton whirled him across the arm-chair, and attacked him in the rear with a ruler. "Gurrggg! Yooop! Groooooh!"

"Now, don't you call a fellow names again!" said Dutton.

"Oh, dear! Yow-ow-ow! Grooooooh!"

Tom Dutton sat down again to work. Bunter sat in the arm-chair and blinked furiously. Peter Todd was yelling with laughter, and even the mild Alonzo could not help smiling.

"I don't believe that beast is as deaf as he makes out!" gasped Bunter. "I believe he misunderstands on purpose, sometimes."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, do stop cackling!"

It was some time before Peter ceased to cackle. Bunter sat down discontentedly to his preparation. He felt very bitterly that he lacked proper support in his own study. Bunter's idea was that No. 7 Study ought to be inordinately proud of having so distinguished a lady-killer in its honourable company. Somehow, No. 7 Study seemed the reverse of proud of Bunter. Alonzo was shocked at him, Tom Dutton couldn't stand him at any price, and Peter dealt with him with an iron hand. To such lengths, as Bunter bitterly reflected, could fellows be carried by jealousy of a chap's good looks.

When prep was finished in No. 7 Study Peter Todd produced chestnuts from the study, and proceeded to roast them on the bars of the grate.

"Is that all you've got for supper?" grunted Bunter. "Look here! I'm jolly hungry; I hardly had any tea!"

"You had most of it—as usual," remarked Peter. "Better scout along the passage; you're so popular, anybody would be glad of your company at supper. Try Bob Cherry's study!"

Bunter grunted. The "spread" of the term would not have tempted him into Bob Cherry's study that evening.

"The tuck-shop ought to keep open later!" he growled.

"Not much good the tuck-shop being open when we're all stony," said Peter.

"You may be stony. I'm not."

"You were at tea-time," said Peter. "You wouldn't have been satisfied with only enough for two if you'd had any tin."

"I've had a postal-order," said Bunter loftily.

Peter jumped.

"A postal-order?" he said faintly.

"Yes, you fathead!" howled Bunter. "What is there surprising in that?"

"Surprising ain't the word for it!" gasped Peter. "Do you really and seriously mean to say that your postal-order has come at last? The postal-order you've been expecting ever since you were a fag in the Second Form?"

"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "Is it from one of your titled relations, Bunter?"

"Certainly!" said Bunter.

"Then you really have titled relations?" asked Alonzo, in mild surprise.

"Haven't I told you a dozen times, you ass?"

"Yes; but you are really so untruthful, Bunter! And I remember when your cousin Wally was here he

said he hadn't any titled relations. How can you have titled relations if your cousin hasn't, Bunter?"

"Oh, don't jaw!" said Bunter.

Alonzo's innocent question was rather a poser, and Bunter did not feel equal to answering it.

"Is it from your uncle, the marquis?" asked Peter, "or from your aunt, the duke?"

"Oh, don't be a funny idiot, Toddy! I've got the postal-order. Suppose you go and knock up the tuck-shop. I've tried, and Mrs. Mimbble called out to me to go away. I told her I had a postal-order, and she only slammed the window," said Bunter, in an aggrieved tone.

"She's heard of that postal-order before," chuckled Peter. "Seeing is believing, Bunter. If you've got a postal-order I'll try my luck with Mrs. Mimbble."

"Look here, you suspicious beast!"

Billy Bunter flourished a postal-order under Peter's astonished nose. It was a real, genuine postal-order, and it was for a pound.

"A pound!" shrieked Peter. "A real quidlet! Let me look at it—let me feast my aged eyes on it! Dash it all! We must let the fellows see this; all the Remove ought to know that your postal-order's come!"

"Gimme my postal-order, Toddy!" roared Bunter, as Peter jerked it away.

"Don't you want me to try Mrs. Mimbble with it?"

"Ye-es; but don't show it about."

"Why not?" demanded Peter.

"It—it would look like showing off, you know."

"Well, isn't that what you live for?" asked Peter. "Do you mean to say that you're going to drop showing off in your old age?"

"Look here! I don't want that postal-order shown about—"

"Rats!" said Peter decidedly. "Your postal-order has been a standing joke up against this study for

whole terms. I'm jolly well going to let the Remove know that it's come."

"I tell you——" shouted Bunter, in alarm.

"More rats!"

Peter Todd, with a chuckle, threw open the door. With all the force of his lungs he shouted along the passage:

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!"

"Shut up, you fathead!" yelled Bunter.

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!" shouted Peter, in the manner of the town-crier. "Oyez! Roll up, ye cripples! Bunter's postal-order's come! Oyez, oyez, oyez!"

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER. A Startling Discovery!

OYEZ, oyez, oyez!" Peter Todd's stentorian voice rang along the Remove passage.

Most of the Remove were in their studies, at their preparation, or at supper. That loud shout in the passage drew them forth in a crowd. Bolsover major came out nursing his nose; Bob Cherry appeared rubbing his eye. Vernon-Smith and Skinner came out of their study, the latter with a nose of fiery hue, the result of the terrific rubbing it had received in the common-room. Wibley and Rake and Micky Desmond and Morgan came out together. Squiff and Johnny Bull and Fisher T. Fish appeared from the end of the passage, and Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent from the other end.

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!" roared Peter.

Door after door was thrown open, and astonished juniors came pouring out. There was a buzz of voices.

"What's the row?"

"What's the matter with that duffer Todd?"

"Shut up!"

"Ring off, for goodness' sake!"

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!" roared Peter Todd. "Gather round, ye cripples! Roll up in your myriads, gentlemen of the Remove! Oyez, oyez, oyez! The latest news—news that would waken the Seven Sleepers. Oyez, oyez, oyez!"

"You thumping ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What the merry dickens——"

"Oyez, oyez, oyez!"

All the Remove were out now, gathering round an astonished crowd. The general surmise was that Peter Todd had gone off his "rocker." Billy Bunter was grabbing furiously at the postal-order, but the lanky Peter easily held it high out of his reach. For some reason, best known to himself, Bunter wanted to keep that postal-order unknown outside the study. His reason was difficult to guess. It might naturally have been supposed that, his postal-order having materialised at last, he would be anxious to convince the doubting Thomases that it had a real existence.

But Bunter's wishes, whatever his reasons were, did not count. It was Peter's wish that counted. And Peter meant to let all the Remove know that the celebrated postal-order had come at last.

He waved it in the air before the eyes of the surprised crowd.

"Look at it!" sang out Peter. "Feast your eyes on it! Look! Regardez! Observe! Feast your eyes, my infants!"

"You blessed ass!" said Bob Cherry. "It's a postal-order! Haven't you ever seen a postal-order before?"

"But this isn't a common-or-garden postal-order! This isn't an ordinary postal-order, with a tail like a banana! This is an extra special postal-order. This is the postal-order famed in song and story in the 'Greyfriars Herald.' This is the celebrated postal-order known and celebrated almost since the foundation of Greyfriars! This is, in short, Bunter's postal-order!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter's postal-order!" ejaculated Squiff. "The one he was expecting when I came to Greyfriars!"



An Apology

from Harry Wharton, the Editor of the

Great New Boys' Paper

The Greyfriars Herald

EVERY MONDAY—ONE HALFPENNY!

"Greyfriars School, December 11th, 1915.

"Dear Boys and Girls,—

"I feel I must make an apology to all who have been unable to get the first number of the GREYFRIARS HERALD. As it is the first paper I have ever published, I ordered only a quarter of a million copies of Number One. These were sold right out in three days. Now I know that it is so popular, I have ordered more for each of the next numbers. Take my advice, and always get your copy first thing every Monday morning. That's the way to prevent disappointment.

"Your Friend and Editor,

Harry Wharton."

"The one he told me he was expecting when we were both in the Second Form!" exclaimed Ogilvy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The one from his cousin, the marquis?" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Or the one from his uncle, the earl?" yelled Wibley.

"Or the one from Lord Bunter de Bunter, of Castle Bunter?" shrieked Micky Desmond.

"Or the one from his grandfather, the Duke of Bunter?" ejaculated Skinner.

Billy Bunter blinked furiously through his big glasses at the hilarious Removites. The arrival of that celebrated postal-order had caused a sensation, as Peter Todd expected.

"Bunter mustn't spend that postal-order!" exclaimed Squiff. "It ought to be framed, and hung up in the common-room."

"Or put under a glass case!" suggested Vernon-Smith.

"Or placed in the school museum!" said Wharton.

"Or put it up to auction," said Bulstrode; "a pound isn't enough for that postal-order. That's only the face value. A postal-order with a reputation like that ought to fetch something really handsome."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What will you take for it, Bunter?"

"You silly asses!" roared Bunter. "You—you blithering idiots! You—you cuckoos! You jabberwocks! Gimme my postal-order, Toddy, you beast!"

"Hold on!" said the Bounder. "Let's make sure it is Bunter's postal-order. We can't swallow it all at once, you know."

"It can't be the one Bunter has been expecting," said Wibley, with a shake of the head. "There's no signs of age about it."

"It's mine, you fatheads!" roared Bunter. "Give it to me, Toddy!"

"Yes, it's Bunter's," said Peter Todd—"Bunter's, right enough—his name is filled in on it, in black and white, you know. My only hat!" ejaculated Peter Todd suddenly, and he stood staring at the postal-order blankly. The expression on his face was so extraordinary that the juniors all stared at him in surprise, and the laughter died away.

"What is it?" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Spoof?"

"Made it himself, by gad!" said Skinner.

"Is it spoof, Toddy?"

"Nunno; it isn't spoof!" said Peter Todd. "It's a genuine postal-order, right enough. It isn't spoof. It's a swindle, I think."

"Gimme my postal-order, Toddy, you beast!" shrieked Bunter, in alarm. "It's mine!"

Peter held the postal-order out of reach of the Owl of the Remove. His expression was growing very grim.

"It must be his, if his name's on it, Peter," said Wharton, puzzled.

"That's as may be," said Peter Todd. "Bunter, I think you said this postal-order was sent to you by one of your titled relations?"

"Yes; so it was."

"You have a titled relation living at Pegg, then?"

"Pegg! Nunno."

"Visiting there, perhaps?" asked Peter blandly.

"No. Of course not, you ass! What are you talking about?"

"Then, how did your titled relation come to buy his postal-order at Pegg Post Office?" asked Peter.

"He didn't—I—I mean—"

"This postal-order was bought at Pegg Post Office," said Peter coolly. "There's the office stamp on it, and the date is to-day."

"My hat!"

"It—it was from somebody else," stammered Bunter. "Give it to me! It's mine!"

"I'll give it to you, if it's yours," assented Peter. "So it wasn't a giddy titled relation after all, Bunter?"

"Never mind who it was. It's mine!"

"And how," went on Peter calmly, still holding the postal-order out of reach of Bunter's frantic clutches—"how did you get it, Bunter? You were stony when you had tea, and there's been no post since."

"Mind your own business!"

"You've had one letter since then, and that was the letter Bob Cherry brought you by hand from Cliff House," said Peter.

"What!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

EVERY
MONDAY

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

"Was this postal-order in that letter, Bunter?"

"No, it wasn't!" shrieked Bunter.

"What the deuce are you driving at, Peter Todd?" exclaimed Wharton. "How could there be any postal-order in that letter? Are you dotty?"

"Not at all, my infant. I scent a swindle," said Peter Todd coolly. "A pretty big swindle, too. Bunter isn't the lady-killer he's been making out—he's a spoofing swindler, I fancy. So this postal-order wasn't in the letter Bob Cherry brought you from Miss Hazeldene, Bunter?"

"Of course it wasn't!" yelled Bunter.

"Then how does it come to be filled in, to your name, in Marjorie Hazeldene's handwriting?"

There was a general exclamation of astonishment in the crowded passage. Bob Cherry flushed crimson.

"It's impossible!" he exclaimed. "Are you mad, Todd? Miss Hazeldene sending that fat beast money! You're potty!"

"You can look at the postal-order," said Todd calmly. "There's the name it's payable to—W. G. Bunter—and it's written in Miss Hazeldene's handwriting."

"Great Scott!" said Wharton.

One glance at the postal-order was enough. There was no mistaking the clear, delicate handwriting of Marjorie Hazeldene. The postal-order had come from Cliff House, and evidently it had come in the letter Bob Cherry had brought for Bunter. Bob's jaw dropped.

"I—I say, Toddy," muttered Wharton, "it seems clear enough, but you needn't have yelled it out before all the Form. Dash it all, it's not a thing to be made the talk of the school."

"That's all you know!" retorted Peter. "There's been a lot of talk about Bunter and Miss Hazeldene, and a little more won't do any harm. My idea is that it will do good."

"I don't see—"

"Of course you don't, till I explain things to you," said Peter calmly. "That's why No. 7 is top study in the Remove."

"Oh, don't be an ass! What—"

"Let Bunter speak. Miss Hazeldene has sent you a postal-order for a pound, Bunter. What did she send it for?"

"No business of yours!" said Bunter angrily. "Suppose she has? I suppose a girl can make a fellow a loan if she likes—a fellow she's mashed on, too?"

"Keep that ass Cherry back!" said Peter. "It's not time to thump Bunter—yet. We're going into this. I think I've mentioned that it's a swindle. Miss Hazeldene hasn't made Bunter a loan, and she hasn't written to him in the way he has been making out. Bunter has been spoofing her—swindling her, in fact. That's why he's sprung his lady-killing bizney on us while Hazel is away. I've been jolly suspicious all along, and that, my esteemed Wharton, is why I've yelled it out before all the Form. All the Remove is going to know that Bunter has been telling lies about Miss Hazeldene."

Bob Cherry drew a deep, deep breath.

"But—but how—" he stammered.

"Since Hazel's been gone," said Peter quietly, "Bunter's been saying that Hazel went away owing him money. He's told the same yarn about every fellow that's been away. When Johnny Bull went away with his uncle, Bunter made out that Johnny owed him money, and asked No. 1 Study to square up for him—"

"So he did," said Wharton, with a nod.

"He spun me the same yarn when Alonzo was away and asked me to settle the quid Alonzo owed him—"

"My dear Bunter!" murmured Alonzo, in shocked tones. "What a very unscrupulous fabrication!"

"And he's spun the usual yarn about Hazel," said Peter. "He's been saying that Hazel owed him money, and trying to screw it out of Hazel's chums—"

"Yes, rather!" exclaimed Russell. "He tried it on me, I know that!"

"And me!" said Bulstrode.

"And me!" chimed in Tom Brown.

"And me!" said Kipps.

"We all know him too jolly well to be taken in," said Peter. "But Miss Hazeldene don't. As soon as I saw her writing on the postal-order I jumped on to the little

game at once. Bunter, you fat scoundrel, you've been telling Marjorie Hazeldene that her brother owes you money, and getting a pound from her!"

There was a gasp from the Removites. Bob Cherry's face lighted up, like the sun coming through dark clouds. It was light at last.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER. Not a "Masher"!

BILLY BUNTER'S fat face was a study.

Accusing looks were cast at him on all sides. Not a fellow there had the slightest doubt that Peter Todd, with his usual astuteness, had jumped to the correct conclusion. In spite of the evidence of their own eyes, they had found it difficult to believe that Marjorie Hazeldene could really be in regular correspondence with the fat "bounder," and that she really met him for secret walks, as Bunter averred. The envelope Bunter had shown in her handwriting, the photograph taken by Skinner on the cliffs, had seemed to clinch the matter. But Peter Todd had let in a sudden new flood of light.

"We're going to have this out before all the Form," said Bob Cherry. "Bunter has lied about Miss Hazeldene—I knew it was lies all the time. His lies can be shown up before everybody now, and perhaps some fellows here may be decent enough to be ashamed of themselves."

"I—I say, you fellows, it's all rot, you know," said Bunter feebly. "Marjorie lent me that quid because—because we're so awfully chummy, you know."

"We'll see about that," said Peter. "Come into the study, you fellows—as many as can get in. We're going right into this. Bunter, you've had some letters from Hazel's sister?"

"You know I have," growled Bunter.

"You've been making out to all the fellows that they were spoony letters."

"So they were—awfully sweet!" said Bunter, with a smirk.

"Don't interrupt the judicial proceedings, Bob Cherry, please—"

"I shall throttle him soon, I know that!" gasped Bob Cherry.

The Co. pushed Bob Cherry back. There was a crowd of juniors in the study now. Billy Bunter cast a longing glance towards the door. But the doorway and the passage outside were crammed with Removites. All the fellows were keen to see and hear the "showing-up" of William George Bunter, the self-styled lady-killer.

"How many letters have you had from Hazel's sister, Bunter?"

"Lots!" said Bunter defiantly.

"You've shown us the envelopes of two, when you were bragging. I think it's pretty safe to put the number down at two," said Peter. "Then there's the one Bob brought you to-day—that's three. You've got three letters from Miss Hazeldene."

"Yes, I have."

"According to your own account they are spoony letters. According to my belief, they're letters about a claim you've made for money you pretend her brother owes you. You never lent Hazel any money; you never have any to lend, and you're too mean to lend it, anyway. Have you made a claim on Marjorie on account of her brother?"

"Of—of course I haven't."

"Very well. Where are those letters?"

"Look here, Toddy, you're not going to see my private correspondence with a lady!" hooted Bunter.

"Those letters are going to be shown up to the whole Form," said Peter calmly. "You've said they're love-letters. If they are, you're all right; I'll beg your pardon. I believe they're not. If they were, you're cad enough to show them round the school. You'd certainly have done so, to prove your lying statements about Miss Hazeldene. Hand them out!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"If they're the kind of letters you pretend, the first line or two in one of them will prove it; I'll hand them back unread," said Peter Todd. "If that's the kind of letters they are, I don't want to see them, and nobody

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

here wants to see them. What we want to do is to prove that they're nothing of the kind. Give me the letters. I'll glance at one. If it's a love-letter, I won't read more than enough to prove it, and won't look at the rest. Isn't that fair, you fellows?"

"Quite fair."

"The fairfulness is terrific!"

"You're not going to see my letters!" howled Bunter.

"I won't force you, Bunter," said Todd, with ominous quietness. "But if you refuse, I shall know for certain that you've been swindling Miss Hazeldene, and I shall take you to Mr. Quelch."

Bunter's jaw dropped.

"Wha-a-at!"

"I shall tell our Form-master that you've swindled Miss Hazeldene out of a pound," said Peter calmly. "He will telephone at once to Cliff House, and get particulars from Marjorie. Take your choice—Quelch or me."

"I—I say, Toddy—"

"Take your choice—and sharp!"

"Buck up, you fat cad!" growled Bob Cherry. "I know it's a swindle now. The beast ought to be sacked from the school! Look here, I'm going to take him to Quelch, anyway."

"Keep off!" yelled Bunter. "I—I say, Toddy, I—I don't mind letting you see the letters, you know. I—I'd like you to, in fact."

"Hand them over, then!"

"You—you fellows promise not to mention it to Quelch, of course," stammered Bunter. "He—he wouldn't understand, you know."

"You mean that he would understand," said Wharton, with a curl of the lip. "Show up the letters, and we'll keep Quelch out of it, anyway."

Bunter fumbled in his pockets, and produced three letters. Peter Todd took them and opened them. He read them through one after another, with a grim brow. The fact that he read them through was plain enough proof that they were not the "sweet" letters Bunter had averred.

"Just as I thought," said Peter. "Listen, you fellows. One of these is dated last week, the day after Hazel left. Bunter must have written to Miss Marjorie at once. The second is yesterday's date. Listen!"

There was silence as Peter Todd read out the first letter. It ran:

"To W. G. Bunter."

"Not Dear Billy!" chuckled Skinner.

"Nothing of the sort," said Peter. "Not even Dear Bunter. The way it's worded shows that Marjorie wouldn't have touched the fat bounder with a barge-pole. It goes:

"To W. G. Bunter."

"I have received your letter, and am very much surprised to hear that my brother owed you money when he left the school. If you will send me the I O U you mention, I will certainly forward you the sovereign, as you wish. Please do not think of sending it to my father."

M. HAZELDENE."

There was a buzz of wrath and scorn as Peter finished the first letter. Peter waved his hand for silence, and started on the second. Evidently it had been written in reply to another letter from Bunter. It ran:

"To W. G. Bunter."

"I cannot see in the least why you cannot trust the I O U to the post. If, however, you insist upon handing it to me personally, I have no alternative but to see you, though, as you are very well aware, I have no wish to do so. I will be at the cross-roads on the cliffs at three on Wednesday, and shall expect you to bring my brother's I O U with you."

M. HAZELDENE."

Billy Bunter was generally credited with possessing a hide as thick as that of a rhinoceros, but even Bunter shrank a little from the contempt in every glance that was turned upon him. These were the letters he had passed off as "sweet" letters; letters breathing dislike and disgust, which would have made any fellow but Bunter writhe with humiliation.

"Now for the third letter," said Peter Todd grimly;

"the letter you brought from Cliff House this afternoon, Bob."

"Go it!" said Bob, setting his teeth.

"To W. G. Banter.

"As you refuse to part with my brother's I O U until I have paid the debt he owes you, I enclose a postal-order for one pound. As I told you, I was expecting to receive it to-day, having written to my aunt to ask for it. Now that you have the money, please send me my brother's I O U by return post. You have promised to do this, and I expect you to keep your promise.

"M. HAZELDENE."

Bob Cherry gritted his teeth. This was the "promise" Marjorie had mentioned when parting with Bunter that afternoon, unconsciously in his hearing.

"Now," said Peter Todd, "I think it's pretty clear. Bunter sprung that yarn about Hazel leaving in his debt on some of us, who didn't believe a word of it, and on Hazel's sister, who did believe it—not knowing Bunter as we do. He's told her that he's got an I O U from Hazel for a pound. Where's the I O U, Bunter?"

"I—I—" stuttered Bunter.

"We could ask Hazel when he comes back on Saturday," said Peter. "But we're not going to wait till Saturday. We're going to have it out now. Show up that I O U, Bunter!"

"You—you see, I—I—in fact, there was a slight mistake," stammered Bunter. "I—I haven't exactly got an I O U from Hazel, you know—"

"I know you haven't," assented Peter. "Everybody knows you haven't. But you told Miss Hazeldene you had, to screw money out of her."

"I—I may have said something of the kind, in a—a—a joking way," mumbled the wretched Bunter. "N-not seriously, you know."

"You haven't an I O U from Hazel?" exclaimed Wharton.

"N-nunno!"

"You admit that you've swindled Miss Hazeldene?"

"I—I haven't, you know. I—I regarded this pound really as a loan, and—and I was going to pay it back—"

"When?" sniffed Peter.

"When my postal-order comes."

"What?"

"I—I'm expecting a postal-order, you know, from—from a titled relation—"

"Cheese it!" roared Peter Todd, almost ferociously. "Don't start that on us now. You see how it is, you fellows. Bunter pretended he had an I O U from Hazel, and dunned his sister for the money. He forced Marjorie to meet him by saying he would insist on handing her the paper personally. Here are her letters—which prove that Miss Hazeldene despises the fat beast as thoroughly as anybody could—and he's passed them off as love-letters. Any other fellow written to like that would have died of shame, I should think. But not Bunter. All Bunter thought of was making capital out of the fact that he'd had letters from Marjorie. He slandered a nice girl. It's slandering any girl to say she could stand Bunter—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's a liar, a slanderer, a libeller, and a thief," said Peter Todd. "I think Miss Hazeldene is cleared of any suspicion of being able to endure Bunter. Of course, if she'd known what a rascal he was, she wouldn't have risked a letter to him at all. But she simply had to write, as the beast was hinting or threatening that he would send that I O U to Hazel's father—an I O U that doesn't exist. Take that postal-order, Bob."

"I—what for?"

"To take it back to Cliff House to-morrow, and explain to Marjorie that Bunter was trying to swindle her, and that her brother doesn't owe him any money at all."

Bob slipped the postal-order into his pocket.

Billy Bunter's eyes watched it mournfully as it disappeared.

"I—I say, you know," he murmured feebly. "I—I want that, you know. I can settle with Marjorie when my postal-order comes."

"You've got to settle with us now," said Peter Todd. "If you were anything but a fat slacker, and could put up a fight, I'd make you fight Bob Cherry. You can't do

EVERY
MONDAY

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

that, but you've got to have a lesson. You're going to be birched."

"Birched!" yelled Bunter.

"Yes. I know where the Head keeps his birch. Keep the beast here while I fetch it, you fellows!"

Peter Todd left the study. Billy Bunter made a move to follow, and Bob Cherry pitched him into a corner without ceremony. He was still gasping there when Peter came back with the Head's birch.

Bunter bounded to his feet in alarm.

"Look here, I won't have it!" he roared. "I'll yell for help! I'll tell Quelchy! I'll go to the Head!"

"You can yell for help, or tell Quelchy, or go to the Head, just as you like," agreed Peter. "If you do, you'll get a flogging from the Head instead of from me, and most likely the sack into the bargain. You know that. Put him on the table!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Bunter, in anticipation, as a dozen hands seized him, and he was swung on the table, face downwards.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

"Yaroooh! Ow, ow, ow, ow! Yoooop!"

"Go it, Peter!"

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

Peter Todd was laying it on with extraordinary vim. The fat junior wriggled and howled under the castigation. The flogging could not have been much severer if he had received it from the Head himself. Bunter's howls rang loudly down the Remove passage. Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

Fifteen telling strokes were delivered, with all the force of Peter's powerful arm. Billy Bunter was wriggling and writhing when he had finished.

"So much for Bunter the masher!" said Peter Todd. "That's enough; I'm tired."

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Billy Bunter bolted wildly from the study. When the Remove came up to the dormitory that night they found the fat junior on his bed, groaning. He groaned after lights out, till a boot hurled by Bolsover major gave him a hint that he had groaned enough.

Bob Cherry looked as if he were walking on air when he came down the following morning.

The clouds had rolled away.

Bob was himself again.

Now it was over he wondered that he had allowed the wretched artifice of the cunning Owl of the Remove to trouble him so deeply. He felt that he ought to have guessed somehow that it was all "spoof." After morning lessons he biked merrily over to Cliff House, and the astonished Marjorie received the postal-order again, with an explanation. But, needless to say, Bob did not mention the part of the affair which had worried him so deeply; and Marjorie remained in ignorance of the fact that the conceited Owl had claimed her as a "mash." Nobody was likely to tell her that, least of all Bob Cherry.

Bob was quite in his old form on Saturday for the Highcliffe match, and even Bolsover major had to admit that he played up wonderfully for his side. On that day Bunter was not happy, for Hazeldene returned to Greyfriars that day. Hazel heard the whole story from Skinner and Snoop at once, and he went to look for Bunter. Peter Todd had said that Bunter had had enough; but Hazel did not seem to think so, judging by his next proceedings. Billy Bunter did not see the Highcliffe match. He spent the afternoon groaning in his study.

While merry shouts rang on the football-field, Billy Bunter groaned and suffered for his sins—a just reward for Bunter the Masher.

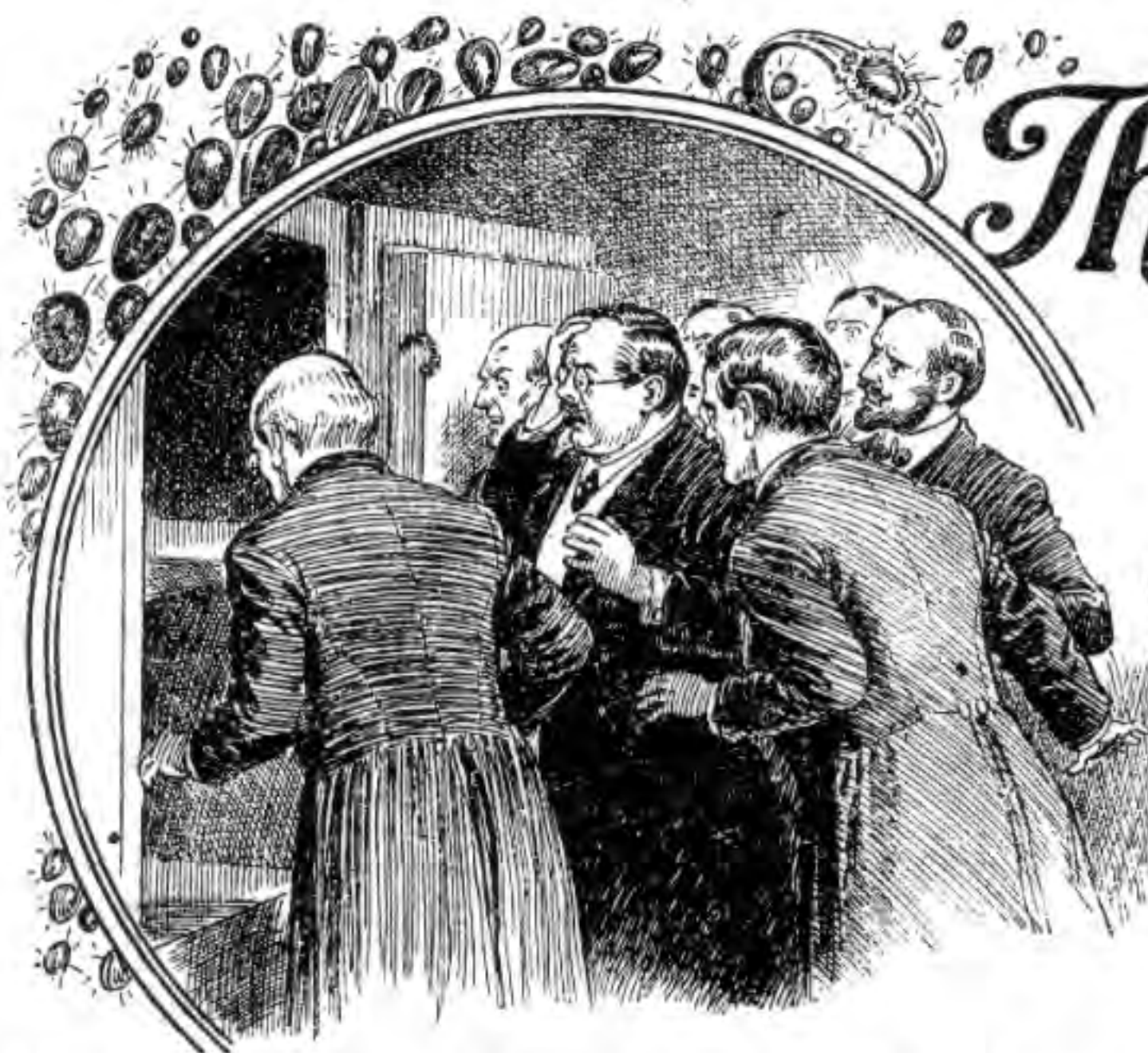
THE END.

(Do not miss "The Bunder's Relapse!" next week's grand story of the chums of Greyfriars, by Frank Richards.)

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.



The Rubies of Sheba.

- - By - -
EDWIN WOOTON.

**THE FIRST CHAPTERS OF A GREAT NEW SERIAL STORY
OF MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE.**

The managers of the BYZANTINE GEM SYNDICATE call upon SIR WILLIAM CRANSTON, manager of the GREAT SOUTHERN BANK, to demand the return of the SHEBA RUBIES, which they have previously placed in the bank's keeping.

The interview is interrupted by a detective and another person, who request Sir William to hand the rubies over to them, as they hold a royal warrant to take possession of the gems to prevent them being conveyed to Germany.

MR. DELAVILLE, the chief cashier at the bank, is sent for the gems, and on returning surprises the manager by informing him that the safe is empty.

This brings him under suspicion, and TOM HEReward, a junior clerk at the bank—to whom, with his sister, Dora, Delaville is acting as guardian—determines to sift the matter out to save his guardian from disgrace.

MARSELLA, a detective, discovers that Tom's sister, Dora, is wearing a ring containing one of the missing rubies, which Mr. Delaville has given her.

Tom discovers that his guardian bought this ring from a MR. BROCKLEY; but Brockley declares that he bought the stones from a person named JOHN GREY.

In order to track down Grey, Tom disguises himself, and makes some inquiries of a Mrs. Scudamore, the landlady of an East End boarding-house.

(Now go on with the story.)

Marsella Arrives on the Scene.

"What! Old Porson as kep' the paper an' tobacco business?" asked Mrs. Scudamore.

Tom nodded.

"Rather! An' fancy that landlord sellin' the goodwill for a 'undred an' twenty. Why, if you'll believe me, the takin's in that place didn't come to more'n a couple o' pounds a week! Tch, tch!"

"Did you often go there?" asked Tom.

"Well, considerin' that my own niece rented the upper part of the 'ouse for dressmakin'. I did often go there."

"Porson used to receive letters for people?"

"Penny each, or seven for sixpence, like buns. It don't pay, 'cos there's too many advertisin' swindlers as uses that sort of place for addresses, an' the police is always interferin'."

"Is that so? Did you ever hear the name John Grey when you were there?"

"What! Along o' my niece, d'ye mean?"

"No; when you were in the shop."

"Yes, I did. No, I didn't. I see it on a letter that was give to a chap one evenin'. The letter was registered. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

Likely it was that what made me notice it. 'It's been 'ere for two days an' over,' says old Porson. Then when the chap as took it got outside he ran up against a swell. My word, 'e 'ad got 'em on—silk 'at, white spats, an' kid gloves! I mind, too, that 'e 'ad on a light overcoat. A 'andsome man, 'e was, with black 'air, streaked with grey."

When was this?" asked Tom.

"The day afore our kitching chimbley caught fire, an' a week or two afore old Porson died. Lemme see, that'd make it the tenth of August. Yes; that was the date, for sure."

"Did you observe anything else?"

"Yes; the swell chap 'ad a limp. I 'eard 'im say to Mr. Grey—if that was the other's real name—I called at your place, but you was out. Did you get my letter?" and Grey answers, 'Just got it.'"

"How did the swell speak?"

"A lot of 'Aw, 'aw!' about 'im."

"Did you ever see the swell again?"

"No. 'E shook 'ands with t'other chap, an' I see 'im wave 'is 'and to a taxi, an' jump in."

Tom drew half a dozen photos from his pocket, and placed them side by side on the table.

"Any one of these like the lame gentleman?" he asked.

Mrs. Scudamore's eyes glanced quickly from one to another. Then she thrust her right forefinger down on the fifth, as if to prevent its escape, and said decisively:

"That's as like 'im as one pea's like another. If it ain't 'imself, it's 'is brother!"

"You are sure as to the date?" questioned Tom.

The lady nodded.

"Well, that is all, I think?" said Tom.

With that he placed two half-crowns on the table, and moved to the door.

Mrs. Scudamore placed the coins in her pocket.

"What's 'e been doin' of—anythink wrong?" she inquired.

"Come into a fortune, and we're trying to trace him."

"Well, now! Just to think!" And Mrs. Scudamore, turning over the coins in her pocket, nodded her head. "Fancy," she went on, "if I 'adn't been a-standin' there 'e mightn't 'ave come into it!"

As Tom arrived on the pavement, a backward glance showed him Mrs. Scudamore extending her broom-handle to the panel of the adjoining house door, and his ears received the words, presumably addressed to a lady in that house's area:

"What ever do you think?"

"I know what I think," said Tom to himself. "Hallo! Why, here's Marsella!"

The detective passed him without recognition.

STUPENDOUS SUCCESS OF "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD," ½D. NO. 5 OUT TO-DAY!

The debts and possessions of the Great Southern Corporation had passed into the care of the Court of Bankruptcy. The failure of a business house is always a bad introduction for its servants to other employers. In this case the failure had been due to a robbery, which threw a mist of suspicion over all connected with the company, and had Tom been trying for a new post he would have found it difficult to obtain.

It is reported that one man did remark in a contemplative manner as an applicant for a junior clerkship was turned away:

It seems rather unlikely that anyone who has stolen five millions should try for twenty-five bob a week."

But he must have been a man with wrong views.

Mr. Delaville had made no attempt to retain the wealth that had heretofore been his of right. The civil law had seized his possessions, save a trifling annuity and some few articles of furniture. He could have haggled with the law, and driven it to a compromise, but that was not Delaville's way. He simply walked out of it.

At the inmoving to his little house there was one man who worked as if paid by the job. He had neither collar nor coat. His hands were red and dirty. He shifted heavy furniture, and filled the coal-scuttle. He was a man of sweat and grime and disordered hair, and his name was Charles Delaville.

To see him using a carpet-stretcher, while Sarah and Dolly drove in the tacks—to see him as an amateur "strong man" carrying a heavy chair upstairs, only to find it had to be brought down again; to see him sitting on a packing-case, eating bread-and-cheese and drinking tea out of a jug, was to see a man poor in purse, but richer in many things than in the days of his prosperity.

He had flung away care defiantly. In the end the truth would prevail. Yet every now and then, as some chance need took him to the street, his face would harden, for from one or another passer-by there would be shot at him looks of hatred, or of contempt, or proud pity, and there would come whisperingly or mutteringly the words:

"Vahr! That's the chap!"

It was upon the scene of these domestic labours that Mr. Marsella intruded on the day after Tom's interview with Mrs. Scudamore. It may have been a surprise to Mr. Marsella to find a wealthy criminal living so humbly. Indeed, he commented on the smallness of the house as he put down his hat.

Mr. Delaville nodded solemnly.

"Yes," he said; "I've no doubt that a public explanation should be made. I thought of doing it in advertisement form. This might answer: 'To all the people who have dropped us from their call-list,—We shall be taking a bigger house so soon as we've sold the swag, in a street where real carriage folk live.'"

Marsella nodded and grinned. He had come to crush this man, and dictate terms, so he could appreciate a little preliminary pleasantry.

"Now, Mr. Delaville," he said, "let us get to business. Not to beat about the bush, I have proof that you disposed of some of the gems in August last. Of course, with this fact to go on, I could arrest you anywhere. But what would be the use of a conviction? Hang a conviction! We want the stones."

At this moment Tom came in.

"Mr. Marsella has been good enough to suggest compounding a felony," said the late cashier drily.

"Oh, dear, no! I don't run my business in that style. Arrested now, and the stones not forthcoming, you will get fourteen years. If the stones are recovered by your aid, you will get off with a trifle."

Charles Delaville filled and lighted a briar pipe.

"It seems to me," he said quietly, "that the authorities ought to make up their minds as to what I have done. It is obvious that if I was engaged in trying to help the German get the gems out of the country, I didn't steal the stones for myself, and the likelihood is that I didn't steal them at all, but that the German had them; and if he had them—why, in the name of goodness, did he make all that bother at the bank?"

"Don't you know what is said?" questioned Marsella gravely.

Delaville shrugged his shoulders.

"It is said, sir, that after taking the gems you found them difficult to sell, and so tried to make a deal with the German."

Delaville broke into a contemptuous laugh.

"The question that occurs to me," said Tom, "is how a gentleman of such brilliant intellect should waste his time in looking for mares'-nests."

Marsella gave the lad a supercilious glance.

"I think," he remarked, "that you are the small boy who played at being a detective some weeks ago. Take my advice, and play marbles."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

"I shall win all yours if you play against me," retorted Tom, with a smile Marsella did not like. "But look here, there's no need for us to say nasty things. It is only fair that you should state what proof you have that my guardian ever attempted to sell the stones."

"Proof? I have proof that he wrote to John Grey, and sent him a registered letter, and met him."

"When?" asked Tom quietly.

"Oh, back in the summer!" He referred to some notes. "It was on the tenth of August that Mr. Delaville last met Grey."

"You are sure as to your date?"

"Quite."

"Then, Mr. Marsella, I have won your marbles. You are not clever enough to play. Buy a baby's rattle."

Marsella deliberately turned his back on Tom.

Addressing Delaville, he said harshly:

"For the last time, I ask you—Where are the stones? For the last time, mind!"

"Thank goodness!" ejaculated Mr. Delaville solemnly.

"Are you familiar with the name Holward, Mr. Marsella?" asked Tom, very quietly.

"If you mean Major Holward, the police commissioner, I certainly am."

"I am glad you know Major Holward by repute," went on Tom. "I recommend you to call on the major, and repeat the subject of our conversation, not forgetting the date you mentioned."

"My good friend," said Marsella, "I am not to be frightened by any man's name. If Major Holward is your guardian's chum, he will be showing his clumsiness by sticking up for him; but I'll chance that."

"My dear Mr. Marsella, what are you saying?" came from Tom, in a tone he had somehow caught from his guardian. "For aught I know to the contrary, Major Holward is a model of integrity. Between our two selves, I do not like the major. He makes the very worst football referee this wicked world has produced. Apparently he doesn't know the difference between a half-back and a goal-keeper. Keep him off football, and he is quite decent. There is, however, one point on which he might render you some help."

"What?"

"By enabling you to make inquiries where you could prove or disprove the truth of this assertion: On August the first, at about eleven in the forenoon, Mr. Delaville and I were being driven in a motor-car through Piccadilly. At about fifteen minutes past eleven my guardian signalled the chauffeur to stop, beckoned to the major, and asked him to step in."

"Major Holward did so, and sat by my side. When we were nearing Charing Cross the horse of a goods van bolted, and one wheel of the van smashed the motor into chips. Mr. Delaville's right leg got in the way, and, as we were very near the bank, the major very kindly helped to get Mr. Delaville inside. There he was put to bed in the house-keeper's quarters."

"Possibly you have heard of Sir Henry Holward, the major's brother? He is rather famous as a surgeon. The major telephoned for him. He came, told Mr. Delaville he had a dislocated ankle, and ordered him to be kept a prisoner, and Mr. Delaville remained in bed until the pressure of duties became compelling—that is, until August the fourteenth, on which date he bought the ruby as a birthday present for my sister."

Marsella had lost his smile and his suavity.

"You can prove this?" he demanded.

"Of course I cannot. I can only give my evidence—the evidence of a small boy, as you have done me the honour to style me. But if you want proof, you can have the evidence of the major, Sir Henry, the bank housekeeper, the chauffeur, four of the directors, two clergymen, Mr. Delaville's solicitor, the bank solicitor, one inspector of police, two trained nurses, and about half a dozen Members of Parliament, for dear old guardie was bored by the lot of 'em from time to time."

Marsella sat looking speechlessly at the boy.

"I am not crowing, sir," continued Tom; "and I realise you are only trying to do your honest duty. It is quite true that one at least of the Byzantine gems was sold to Grey. It is equally true that the vendor resembled my guardian so closely as to be easily mistaken for him; but he was not my guardian."

"Then who, in the name of thunder, was he?" demanded Marsella.

"Ah! That, sir, is another question. We will leave it open."

"I think," said Delaville solemnly, "it must have been

Jones, one of the bank clerks. I'm nearly sure it was Jones, or he wouldn't be so recklessly extravagant. Yesterday I saw him carrying home half a loaf of bread and at least two-penn'orth of cheese. Why not arrest him?"

"Oh, good-day!" said Marsella, and stamped out. He had lost all his marbles!

"Tom," said Mr. Delaville, after an impressive silence, "how came you to think of it all? How came you to do it all?"

Tom tapped his breast pocket.

"Ask my diary, sir," he returned.

The Secret of Peter's House.

Peter Sallowby's house, where Tom had taken up his abode, had two garret rooms. They lay side by side, with a continuous frontage. It is very necessary to keep this in mind. This storey had no back rooms.

The garret windows faced one another. Each window was in the side of a small rectangular extension from the sloping roof. The distance from window to window measured about six feet. The house roof formed an angle with equal sides, and the garret doors stood beneath the apex of this angle. One of the garret rooms had Tom for an occupant. The other was used as a lumber closet.

Tom, in his idle moments, had speculated on the reason for the seeming waste of space at the house-back, for here just as many cubic feet as the garrets contained had been walled up. Once he ventured a comment to Peter, who, by way of answer, snapped out:

"I suppose that the man who built the house knew his own business!"

On the day following his interview with Marsella, and the signal discomfiture of the detective, and at about the hour of eight in the evening, Tom was attending to some details of his toilet opposite the rather unflattering mirror that hung by the window side.

As the lad struggled with difficulties presented by an erratic tie, a light flickered across his eyes. He looked up quickly, and saw for a moment a tiny ray playing from the opposite window. At first he thought that Peter or Will had entered the room to take some article from it. Tom gave the tie its finishing pull, and, on the chance of the explorer being his chum, and that of being able to assist him, he opened the door of his room. That of the other chamber was shut. Then came the thought—"thieves!"

If he knocked at the door, that would give them a chance of escaping. If he opened the door without knocking, and it proved to be Peter who was within, he would offend the old man. Tom stepped back gently, blew out his light, and, having mounted a chair, peered through the window. The light in the other room probably issued from a lantern, for its rays were limited to one small space scarce a yard in diameter upon one wall.

A man, mounted on a box, was taking down a picture. Now, the picture having been removed, he ran a knife-point under the wallpaper, and detached a portion that had been fastened by its edges only. Next, he pulled from the place, one by one, several bricks, fully forty in number.

They came away as if placed loosely on one another. Tom now saw the light directed through the gap so made. The lantern was passed within, and the man followed. For a second or two what lay beyond the gap was in obscurity. Then the light played ruddily on the man's face, and Tom started, for the man was Peter.

He knelt by a box, its shape uncertain. The next moment the boy caught sight of a succession of flashes, and then saw that they issued from something that lay in Peter's palm. Tom, acting almost automatically, stepped down and seated himself, his lips parted, his eyes dilated.

Suddenly upon the darkness of the past few weeks a light had flashed, but the revealed fact was astounding, almost incredible. Should he act on his own initiative, or consult others? That was his first mental question.

The second was—whether he ought to act at all? At the faint imagining of the rush and uproar and scandal that would follow the least publicity he shivered. He would be sending the father of his chum into penal servitude. It wasn't even necessary now to clear his guardian, for that had already been done. Yet he must do something. To live within six feet or so of that would be worse than sleeping in a powder-magazine.

"Great Heaven!"

The words came from mental fever, not from irreverence. His mind had become a hunting-ground for phantoms. No human being can endure for long the unvaried contemplation of the wonderful. It exhausts, and makes one think of trifles.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

Tom sighed, and found himself questioning whether he had any cigarettes. One idea now rose above all others in Tom's mind—it would be essential to keep Peter from knowing that he had been watched, and to effect this there must be continuity of manner. Possibly, Tom did not put his thoughts quite in this way, but this is what he meant. To preserve an unchanged manner when a revolution has taken place in the mind is very difficult.

Tom at once began to prove his utter lack of skill as an actor by singing and whistling, for he very seldom did either. Next, he quitted his room, closing the door noisily, went downstairs, and began chaffing Will. When Peter came down Tom opened his eyes.

"Why, I thought you were out!" he said.

"So I am—out of work!" growled the other. And with this Peter donned his hat and quitted the house.

Tom sighed with relief. Will regarded him curiously.

"Look here, old chap. What's up with you?" he asked.

Then a sudden impulse broke down all Tom's intended diplomacy.

"Will," he said brokenly—"oh, Will, it's that box of rubies! I have seen it to-night! It's in this house!"

"Where?"

Tom, with struggling voice, told all.

"What shall we do?" he finished by asking.

"Wait until the morning. Dad will be out. I shall stay at home. Then we shall see for ourselves. Good-night, now! I'm going to camp down."

On the morrow Peter quitted the house as usual, after an early meal. Will, having made sure that his father had gone, locked the house door. Then he hurried to the top floor. The lumber-room door was locked, and the key absent. Tom was asleep. Will noiselessly took the key of his chum's room. It fitted the other lock, and the door opened.

Will went in, his heart thumping. The picture was in position. He removed it. The square of paper beneath was loose; in places it had been gummed to the wall. Will raised the paper. There stood the bricks, as described by Tom. Their displacement occupied the lad scarce a minute. The gap showed a large cavelike space beneath the roof. Before him lay a box of wood, clamped with iron, and having on its upper surface an inlet brass plate bearing the words:

"BYZANTINE GEM SYNDICATE."

Will did not touch the box. As if it were unfastened, and contained a deadly reptile, he retreated, blocked the opening, and restored paper and picture. Then, having locked the room door, and replaced the key, he went downstairs. His mind was made up. Justice should be done.

"I have seen the box," he said abruptly to Tom when the latter came down.

"What is to be done?"

"The thing that is right, if possible—the thing that is merciful. That is my father! Stay here!"

Peter came in rubbing his hands, for the morning was chilly.

"Hallo!" he said. "Not out yet? What have you been doing all this time?"

"Finding the proof of your crime, father. Was it nothing to you that some hundreds of men stood in danger of poverty, and some of prison?"

"Oh, you spy!"

"Spy or not, I know the truth, and Tom knows it. We won't argue. I'm not going to tell the police. But those stones go back. The robbery has already caused more misery than can be set right. Back they go, and at once."

"And what becomes of me?" asked Peter, with lowered face.

"That we must plan. There is one man to be told—Charles Delaville."

"Hang him!" came from Peter passionately.

"What harm has he ever done you?" questioned Tom.

"Fetch him here, and I will say. Then perhaps you will understand why the gems were stolen."

"Tom," said Will, "take a taxi, and bring Mr. Delaville round as quickly as you can. Say little—merely that the box has been found. You and I, dad, will stay here."

The minutes crawled with horrible slowness. At length, when the waiting had become almost unbearable, there came the noise of a taxi, followed by the opening of the street door and the coming in of Mr. Delaville and Tom.

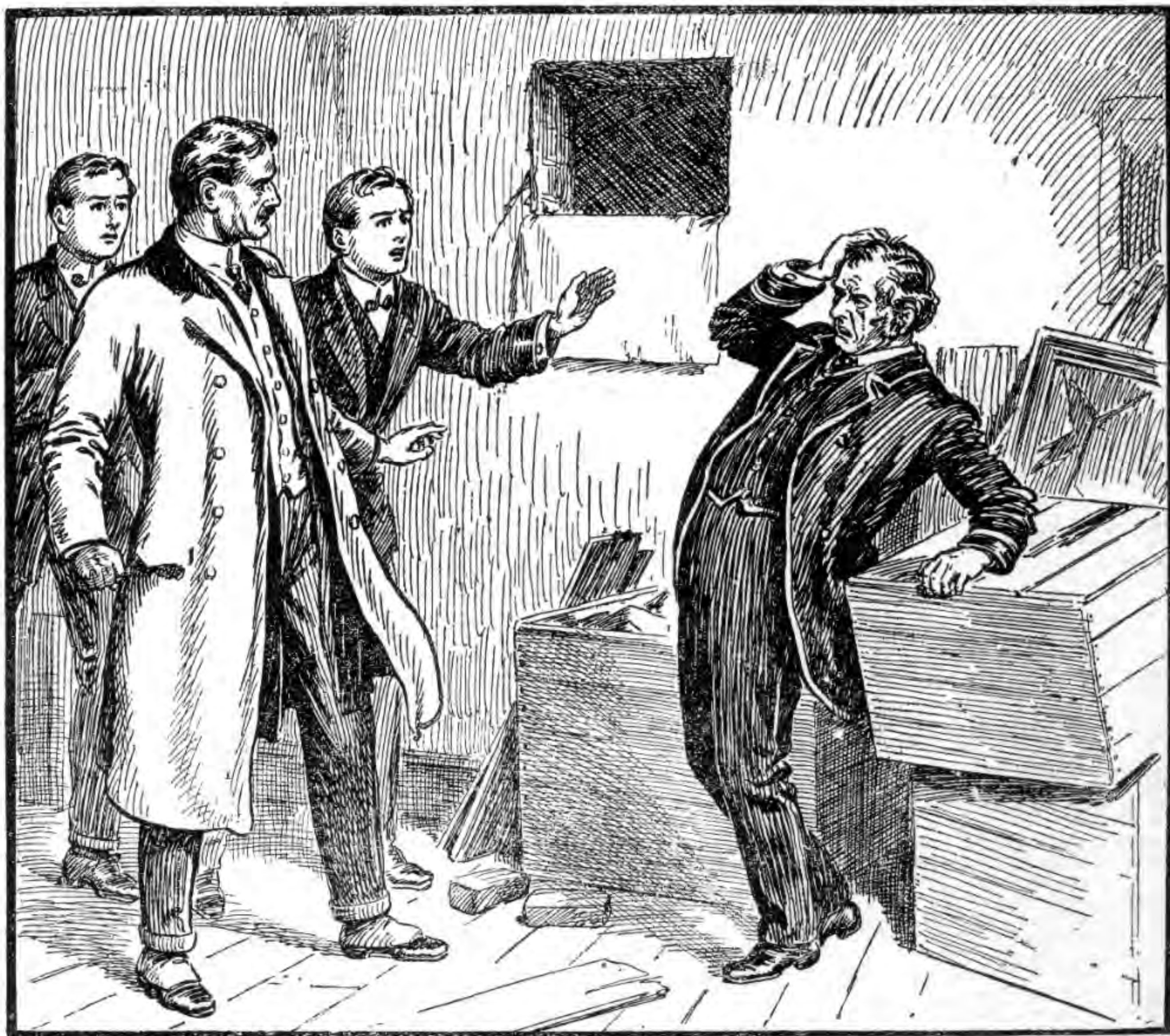
"What is this I hear?" asked the late cashier of Peter.

Folding his arms and standing erect, Peter returned defiantly:

"What has to be told shall be told by me. I took the missing box."

Charles Delaville, cold and haughty in his bearing, looked the speaker over.

"First as to the how," went on Peter. "Twelve months ago the locks on the safes were changed. You set me and two policemen to guard the room while the work was being



There came from Peter Sallowby's throat a gurgling, inarticulate noise. Then by a supreme effort he forced the words: "I will clear you!" And in the next instant collapsed, his face twisted grotesquely. (See page 26.)

done. We did guard it. Not a thing was stolen, nor was any attempt made at stealing. But something else was done. Do you recollect anything occurring about midday?"

"There was a quarrel of some sort," returned Delaville.

"Just so. A man sent in a message that he had come from Baron Huren, the financier. You received him in your room. There he began to bluster about some asserted wrong, and threatened you with violence. You and your shorthand clerk, Mr. Hereward, sounded the bell for the constables. The two in the strong-room and one of the workmen rushed outside. Now was my chance. While the remaining man was craning his neck to listen I got hold of the keys of the safes, and took their impression on a tablet of prepared wax, also the impressions of the other keys. These keys I had duplicated at leisure. Now things were easy, and I had only to bide my time."

"But the safe locks could be opened only by those knowing the letter combinations," objected Delaville. He was judging Sallowby to be out of his mind.

"Quite so. You changed those combinations pretty often, and I didn't trouble until the Byzantine gems had been deposited. Then I made it my business to learn what you thought no one could find out. There were more chances than I can count. You kept the record in a little notebook and this was always in the inner breast pocket of your coat. I made observations, and found that when you removed your coat in the afternoon before washing your hands you placed

it on a certain peg near the door. Do you recollect my brushing that coat?"

"Dimly."

"One afternoon, when you were in the lavatory, I came in and rubbed some powdered chalk on a sleeve, in passing. Then I said: 'There's some white on your sleeve, sir.' I took up a brush, and began to use it. The business was risky, but you were chatting to Mr. Tom, and I slipped the book out of your pocket, and opened it where the rubber band fastened down some leaves. Then I saw the entry: 'Safe—K.' followed by a column of letter groups, the last of which was 'FRML.' You thought a robbery quite impossible. Pooh! I had got chummy with the housekeeper, and stayed to tea one evening. When the time came to go I offered to let myself out, and banged the door. But I was in the bank. The rest was a trifle. As I had guessed, your precious clerk, and police played nap, and didn't go near the strong room."

"Thanks for that item of information," said Delaville drily.

"Well, I got the box, and put it in my room, wrapped in some brown paper, and wrote an address on it as if it was a parcel delivered at the bank. That's all about what you may call the robbery. But now, Mr. Delaville"—and Peter's eyes gleamed—"can you guess why I did this?"

"Because of your criminal instincts, presumably," said the other coldly.

"Because I wanted to pay you out," said Peter. "Yes—you, Charles Delaville, hypocrite! Villain! Heartbreaker! That's why!"

NEXT
MONDAY—

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

A Grand, Long, Complete Story of Harry
Wharton & Co. By FRANK RICHARDS.

"He is mad!" said the late cashier softly, regarding Sallowby with pity.

"I am not mad. Nine and twenty years ago you were the bosom friend of a boy named Hubert Stanley."

Delaville started.

"Twenty years ago you went to Cape Town as the general manager of the South African branches of the Great Southern, and there, again, you met Stanley. You had prospered, he had not. He was the support of his parents, and was at his wit's end how to get money to send to them. Chance allowed him to buy some diamonds that had been stolen. He fell before the temptation. Then he offered the diamonds in sale to your bank, and you promptly handed him over to the police. He was sent to penal servitude, and died a convict, and it broke his mother's heart!"

Sallowby paused. Then he added hoarsely:

"Hubert Stanley was my half-brother—my mother's son!"

Charles Delaville began to trim the nail of a little finger.

"What an erratic imagination you have, Peter," he commented.

"You cold-blooded, sneering ruffian!" broke out the other.

"Please do not be too extravagant with my patience," said Delaville. He turned to Tom—"Where is the box?"

"You shall listen!" raved Peter. "I have avenged Hubert Stanley."

Delaville turned upon him.

"Better had you said that you have been doing your utmost to foul his memory," he retorted. "Listen, you bubble-headed fool. I did not manage the Great Southern in South Africa. That was done by my cousin, Morrison Charles Delaville, who is now dead. I did not buy diamonds of Hubert Stanley. I had nothing to do with sending him to prison, but I had a lot to do with keeping him out of it. I thought his sentence most unjust, and ultimately I succeeded in getting him a pardon, so he did not die in prison. He died later under another name, leading an honest life. He left children. Do you insist on knowing more?"

Peter was trembling.

"You mean—" he asked.

"This is your brother's son. He bears his mother's surname by his father's dying wish," and Charles Delaville placed a hand on Tom's shoulder.

"Tom! Miss Dora! My brother's children! And you have nourished them as your own?"

"Well, let us say I have done my best. My dear Peter, the silliest thing on the broad earth is revenge. It always does more harm to the attacker than the one attacked. Now, if your leisure permits, I should like to see the gems."

"Come this way," said Will. His face was white with emotion. He threw open the door, and passed up the stairs. Tom stayed behind, under a determination to be sympathetic with Peter. He was beginning some commonplace remark when he heard Will shouting his name.

"Yes?" called Tom.

"Come here, and bring dad!"

The two went up stairs. Will met them on the garret landing.

"The box is not here!" he said.

In the garret Mr. Delaville was standing on a chair, his head and shoulders through the wall opening.

"Come down!" said Peter hoarsely. Delaville complied. Peter sprang to the vacated place, and looked about the cavity for ten seconds. Then he turned on his son with the words:

"You must have taken it!"

"Be careful, dad! I won't stand much of that!"

"When did you see it here?"

"This morning, at about half-past eight!"

"And you haven't quitted the house?"

"I have not!"

The boy's simple, undramatic, and earnest words silenced Peter. His face was beginning to work strangely, it seemed drawn, and the features were ill controlled.

"And you?" he questioned, turning to Tom.

"I saw the box last evening," said Tom. "I watched you remove the picture, the paper, and the bricks. I told Will. We decided to wait until this morning. After you had quitted the house, Will informed me he had been into the room and seen the box. He insisted on justice being done. When Peter returned, Will told him what he had found out. Then I fetched Mr. Delaville. That is all I have to say."

Delaville went to the window. A dwarf muslin blind was over its lower part. Immediately opposite was the window of Tom's room. Only by looking askant could one see what lay beyond the house, and even this view was blocked by a huge poplar.

"No one could have come from the outside," he said.

"What about the old lady—Mrs. Jenkins?" asked Will.

"She left the house two minutes after I did," returned

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

Peter. "I saw her hobbling along some distance behind me."

"Never mind the box," said Delaville. "That, I have no doubt, we shall be able to recover." Then fiercely: "Man, what, of the other thing—that which has wrecked my life; the trap laid for me, and into which I was lured—what of Vahr?"

Peter's face had been working yet more strangely. He was supporting himself by clutching a piece of lumber, his head shaking as if with palsy. Now there came from his throat a gurgling, inarticulate noise. As if by a supreme effort he forced the words: "I will clear you!" And in the next instant collapsed, his face twisted grotesquely.

"The proof, man—the proof of my innocence!" broke from Delaville.

But the words were addressed to a man who could neither hear, nor see, nor speak. Peter Sallowby had been stricken with paralysis in its worst form. He had become a living log. His secret was locked where none could find it.

Tom opened the window to let in fresh air. He leaned out for a second. When he withdrew his head, his eyes had a new light.

"You had better fetch the doctor, Will," he said quietly. "Dad and I will stay here."

And presently Tom found himself alone with his guardian, for Peter did not count.

Tom's Discovery.

Anyone looking from the window of either garret, and directing his gaze downward, would have seen a part of the house roof; this was a mere strip some six feet in width. It ended in a piece of ornamental coping.

No sooner had Tom and his guardian been left to themselves than Tom threw the window open more widely, and stepped out upon the slates.

At any other time Mr. Delaville would have uttered a word of warning, for the slope of the roof was dangerous. The man's thoughts were too engrossed with recent events to permit him giving attention to Tom's procedure. In the very moment when Providence seemed to have placed in his hands the means of clearing his character from every stain it had been snatched from him.

The loss of his wealth he could support. The charge of complicity in the robbery itself had already been disproved; but that awful shadow of Vahr still hung over him. He eyed the huddled figure of Peter Sallowby with disgust and disdain. The foul fiend himself must have tempted the man to this double piece of evil. So lost was he in his thoughts that he did not hear Tom when the latter scrambled back through the window, and our young hero had to speak twice before his guardian turned to him with a somewhat peevish look.

"I didn't hear you," he said.

"I have found one clue," repeated Tom.

"What?" demanded Mr. Delaville.

"This." And Tom extended his hand. In the palm was a small silver coin.

Mr. Delaville took it from him. The coin was about as large as a sixpence, and had been bored. Attached to the hole was a small silver ring.

"It is a half franc," said the man.

"Where did you find it?"

"Outside, on the slope of the roof."

Delaville rose, and moved to the window. A moment later he said excitedly:

"Hi!"

"What is it?" asked Tom.

"A man's head was thrust over that corner piece a moment ago."

Tom made as if to scramble out, but his guardian seized him.

"Are you mad?" he demanded. "That roof is no place for a struggle."

"I saw the fellow's face, and should recognise it," said Delaville. Then he added sharply: "Hush, I hear the doctor."

The medical man made a few simple inquiries, and ordered the patient to be put to bed, and kept quiet.

"He will either become rapidly worse, or recover slowly," was his verdict. "Much depends upon his mind being free from worry."

Obviously it would have been a very easy matter to have called in the police, laid the entire case before them, and so have cleared poor Charles Delaville from every tinge of suspicion; that course would also have strengthened the assertion of the victim of Vahr that Peter alone had been responsible for his going to the club. But Delaville would not listen to such a suggestion. He meant to spare Peter.

"Have you ever seen this, Will?" Tom asked his chum,

when they were alone together, producing the half-franc piece as he spoke.

Will shook his head.

"And I don't seem to have missed much," he returned, in his old tone. "A bit chipped out of its edge, too! Where did you annex it?"

"Found it on the roof outside the garret window," Tom answered.

Tom had a purpose in his mind quite unconnected with personal adornment, when, on the afternoon of that day, he visited a jeweller's shop, and had the coin mounted as a scarf-pin. He had the coin so affixed that it was suspended from the pin by the ring.

On the following morning he spent fully half an hour on the roof, now lying down, and now moving on hands and knees. Before the visit he had known that all the houses in this block was tenanted. He had known that no work had of late been carried out on the roof. He did not come across a germ that could be developed into a false clue.

Rather sick of it all, he sat down. From here he could see some distance down the street, past four blocks; and he allowed himself to watch the passing traffic with some slight interest.

Now, had the robbery taken place in that third block, on the other side of the way, the case would have had a better clue than that coin long before this. They were vamping an old house into a "new" one by scraping and painting. Against the house-front was scaffolding, and the men were passing up and down ladders.

Tom shrugged his young shoulders cynically. The vamping process was so typical of the age. Then, without giving the matter a thought, he saw a sturdy labourer coming by that house. He was in holiday garb. Now he stopped, and spoke to one of the workmen. The holiday-maker passed on, nearing Tom every second. Tom's eyes rested on him carelessly. "A bricklayer!" he hazarded.

The man crossed the street diagonally. Tom, without thinking of him, went to the coping to give a final half-interested look up and down the street. Then his eyes took in the figure of the man moving up the steps of the third house from Peter's, and the front door of this house the man seemed to open with a latchkey.

Tom donned his facial disguise, quitted the house, and sauntered in the direction of the scaffolding. A readjustment of his hat, a grave fixing of his features, and the display of a notebook in one hand made him a respectable rent-collector, or house-agent.

He walked without any appearance of hurry, until he had come to the building under repair. Then he stopped short, gave a critical look over the house-front, and, addressing a man who seemed to be in charge of the work, remarked:

"You're making a good job of that!"

The other looked askance at the speaker, possibly from being suspicious of "chaff."

"There ain't no fault as I can see," he replied.

"Nor I. Did you think I was trying to pull your leg?" came from Tom bluffly. He knew the tone likely to tell with the man he was addressing.

"All right. There ain't no 'arm done," said the foreman.

"It may be a little better yet," said Tom, nodding as one who conveys a secret, and screwing up one eye. "Now," he went on, "I just want to put a case to you. Supposing anyone had bought a house, a little smaller than this, nine rooms in all, and it wanted dressing up to last six months spick and span, what would the cost be?"

"It all depends. New sashes an' glass, an' ceilings, an' so on, means money!"

Tom came closer to the other.

"What I want is paper, and whitewash, paint, and scraping," he said. "You twig?"

"It might run to forty pound."

Tom seemingly debated.

"Humph!" he returned. "I thought it would be five pounds less than that. I shall want the work done as quickly as possible. I suppose that all your men are willing to work overtime?"

"Dunno as to that. When they don't want to work there's no gettin' 'em to. One of 'em 'as just come into a legacy, an' goes about drinking an' standin' treat. Come up the ladder, an' 'ave a look at my work."

Tom nodded, and went up to the first line of planks. Here were two workmen. Tom gave them a civil greeting, and they returned one; but not even a glance did they bestow on the scarf-pin.

This was wasting time. Tom pleaded that he was in a hurry, and, after saying that he would make an appointment with the foreman, went down the ladder, followed by the foreman. The latter, looking along the street carelessly during the descent, called out:

"Bill!"

"Ay!" came the reply.

"'Ere's the swell comin'!"—he turned to Tom. "It's the cove what come in for a legacy. Ain't 'e got 'em on!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 410.

EVERY
MONDAY

The "Magnet"
LIBRARY.

ONE
PENNY.

Tom turned his gaze to where the builder nodded, and saw approaching, with an easy swagger, possibly the unconscious result of conscious importance, the man he had seen go up the steps of the house near that of Peter.

He came up with an unlighted cigar in his mouth, a cigar that Tom set down as a "twopenny smoke." He drew from one pocket a wooden box of matches, and, having closed one eye, struck a match, and applied it to the end of his cigar.

"Well," he said, "how's trade?"

He looked at the foreman, stuck his hands in his trousers pockets, and, gazing up and down the building, stated that all this plodding for shillings was infinitely beneath him. Then he nodded to Tom.

Immediately his eyes rested on the pin in Tom's scarf. Real interest and doubt were expressed silently in the man's face. Then came an uncertain emotion, or combination of emotions. The gentleman of fortune looked away, but in a second or two brought his eyes again to bear on the pin.

"Jim!" called a voice from the scaffolding.

No answer was vouchsafed.

"Jim Bare!" roared the voice.

"Hallo?"

"Got such a thing as a ten-pun note ter give away?"

"Got one or two for meself!" retorted Jim, grinning in scornful triumph, as he pulled from an inner pocket a roll of paper.

There was a laugh, and a man came down the ladder, with a paint-pot in one hand.

"My word!" he said, as he touched the pavement.

"Who but you? Gold chain, an' all! Where's yer silver one?"

"Give it away."

"Why don't yer take a 'ouse instead o' piggin' it in one room?" asked the foreman.

"Where's yer silver coin?" asked a workman at the same moment.

"Lorst it," returned Jim Bare.

He was confused, for one of the men above had begun to chaff him.

"It's curious what a lot we think of things like that," said Tom. "Now, this coin in my scarf isn't worth more than sixpence for its silver, but I wouldn't take a fiver for it."

All three men were now looking at the object mentioned.

"Why, that chap," said the foreman, indicating Bare, "had one exactly like it! Only his was on a chain."

"Oh, mine was only worth a trifle!" said Bare carelessly.

"It's at 'ome, I egspect, on the floor somewheres. Got knocked orf one night."

"Oh, well, I'm losing my time!" said Tom bluffly.

"Good-day, all!"

Tom Hereward walked away briskly until he had turned a near corner. His brain was being racked with silent debate. Should he ask his guardian, or consult with Will, or seek Marsella's advice. Then a wave of resolution swept over him. He would act "on his own"—he would bluff his way to success!

As the clock struck five on the afternoon of that day Tom called at the house where his suspect lived. In one window a bill announced "Room to Let—Unfurnished!" The door was half-opened by a grimy, hard-faced woman. She looked with widened eyes at the visitor, and waited.

"Mr. Bare at home?" asked Tom.

"No, sir. 'E ain't been in since dinner."

"Mrs. Bare at home?"

"I ain't sure, but I'll see."

The woman went upstairs. Within a minute she was down again, and tendered the information:

"Mrs. Bare says 'er 'usband does all the business."

"Very likely," said Tom. "But in this case there can be no waiting. I am here on a legal matter. Show me upstairs, please!"

"I sha'n't do nothink o' the kind!"

"Then I shall have to call the police."

It was pure bluff, and dangerous bluff at that. Tom, however, deemed that the end he had in view justified it, and it succeeded.

The woman drew back. She had a dread of police interference. She closed the door gently behind Tom, and went before him up the stairs, and on the second floor pointed to a room in the front of the house.

Tom nodded, and turned the door-handle. As he entered he took in the details of a decently-furnished bed-sitting-room. A woman, young and good-looking, clad in gaudy mauve, was washing a child's face. She glared at Tom.

(Another long instalment of this grand serial next Monday. Order your copy early.)

MY READERS' PAGE

OUR COMPANION PAPERS: "THE BOYS' FRIEND," 1d., Every Monday. "THE GEM" LIBRARY, 1d., Every Wednesday. "THE BOYS' FRIEND" 3d. COMPLETE LIBRARY. "THE PENNY POPULAR," 1d., Every Friday. "CHUCKLES," Price 1d., Every Saturday.

The Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums, at home or abroad, and is only too willing to give his best advice to them if they are in difficulty or in trouble. . . . Whom to write to: Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

For Next Monday:

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!"

By Frank Richards.



gallantry at Loos, when he charged the German first-line trenches, bayoneting and shooting nine of the enemy, and giving a very fine example to all who were with him.

For this wonderful deed of daring Private Challoner has been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal by his Majesty the King, and every Magnetite should be proud to learn of such a glorious achievement on the part of one who is so closely attached to their favourite paper.

For many months now my chums have been longing for a MAGNET story with the ever-popular Vernon-Smith in the limelight, and next Monday they will not be disappointed. The Bounder, who has been straight as a die for a considerable time, suddenly revives his intimacy with Ponsonby & Co., and, by constantly breaking out at night, leads Harry Wharton & Co. to suppose that he has returned to his bold, bad ways. The Famous Five put in some clever detective work, and Herbert Vernon-Smith wins a still higher place in their esteem when the true explanation of

"THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE"

comes to light.

SLANDER AND SPITE!

Falsehoods From a Contemptible Section of the Daily Press.

I suppose that few—if any—of my chums ever read a certain daily paper which, having been hopelessly "left" by other and sounder periodicals such as the "Times," occasionally barks out its venom and makes a violent tirade upon a great public man and all his works, besides abusing popular boys' papers, which, so thinks that precious periodical, will be unable to hit back.

Hitherto we have treated these libellous articles with the scorn and contempt which they deserve, but when the paper in question describes the companion papers as the "Boys' Guide to Gore," it is time to retaliate, lest such a callous lie should be given credence.

The MAGNET Library has now been in existence some seven or eight years, yet in all that time I cannot remember Frank Richards having introduced a solitary murder into his stories, neither have there been any allusions to "gore." The libellous newspaper is completely off the map. It has come out with its mechanical need of abuse without taking the trouble to verify its puerile statements.

As a matter of fact, no boys' paper could afford nowadays to publish tales of the "Jack the Ripper" variety. It would lose its circulation instantaneously were it to do so, for the boy of to-day differs from the boy of twenty years ago in that he is shrewd and discriminating, and buys only those books calculated to have a wholesome effect on his life and character. When the editor of the paper I speak of was a boy—if one can ever suppose him to have been young—blood-and-thunder tales were probably at their height, and the precious slanderer, who has not taken the trouble to move with the times, is doubtless in ignorance of the sweeping changes which have taken place since the late-Victorian era. Criminality and gore are now almost at a discount so far as boys' papers are concerned, and certainly the companion papers would not contaminate themselves by trafficking in such lurid subjects. Even were they to do so, however—even if the MAGNET Library positively reeked with revolting horrors—the stories could not be worse than some of the serials I have seen in the slanderer's own production, which, although they may have fought shy of murder, have dealt with subjects even more disgusting, and quite unsuited to the moral well-being of any Britisher.

PRIVATE CHALLONER'S PLUCK!

Private F. G. Challoner, of the 6th (City of London) Battalion, London Regiment (T.F.), who was attached to our staff prior to the outbreak of war, has recently covered himself with glory in Flanders. He showed conspicuous

"SCHOOL AND SPORT" STILL ON SALE!

Tremendous Reprint Order Executed!

So colossal was the success of the latest threepenny book-story, "School and Sport," by Frank Richards, that it sold out in next to no time. It was feared that no further copies could be printed, but so great, so insistent, was the demand all over the world that I was compelled to instruct our printer's foreman to issue another quarter of a million copies. These are now on sale, and every Magnetite who has not had the pleasure of reading what is the finest story of Harry Wharton & Co. ever written should ask his newsagent at once for

THE "BOYS' FRIEND" 3d. COMPLETE LIBRARY, No. 319.

SEND ME YOUR PHOTOGRAPH.

It is my intention to launch out shortly with a decidedly novel feature in the MAGNET Library, in the form of a page of readers' photographs. Already I have a very large number waiting to pass through our process department, but in order to keep up the feature regularly week by week it will be necessary for me to receive hundreds of photographs. The latter can in no circumstances be returned, owing to the treatment which they have to undergo before being published, but, of course, readers will be able to buy several copies of their portraits in the MAGNET, and much more cheaply, too, than would be the case at a photographer's.

Buck up, readers all, of both sexes, and send in your photographs right away!

THE BIGGEST RALLY OF MODERN TIMES!

The first few issues of our marvellous little companion paper, the "Greyfriars Herald," have sold, as I anticipated they would, like "hot cakes." Moreover, my chums were vastly entertained with the many fine features, and the splendid way in which they are supporting their Editor's new venture leaves nothing to be desired.

CONCERNING THE COMPETITION.

With regard to the wonderfully popular Tuck-hamper Competition, some of my chums do not seem to have paid due attention to the rules governing the contest. In all cases the coupon must be cut out from the "Greyfriars Herald," and the solutions should be sent, not to the Fleetway House, but to the Editor, the "Greyfriars Herald," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. The result of the first contest will be announced very shortly in Harry Wharton's popular paper.

MY VERY BEST THANKS!

And now I should like to extend my warmest thanks to the many thousands of friends who have put themselves out to

(Continued on page iv of Cover.)

ONE MILLION GREY HAIR TREATMENTS FREE!

London Hair Specialist's Wonderful Discovery Promises the Gift of Youth to all who are Grey-Haired.

NEW SCIENTIFIC FORMULA WHICH OVERCOMES THE NEED FOR DYES & STAINS.

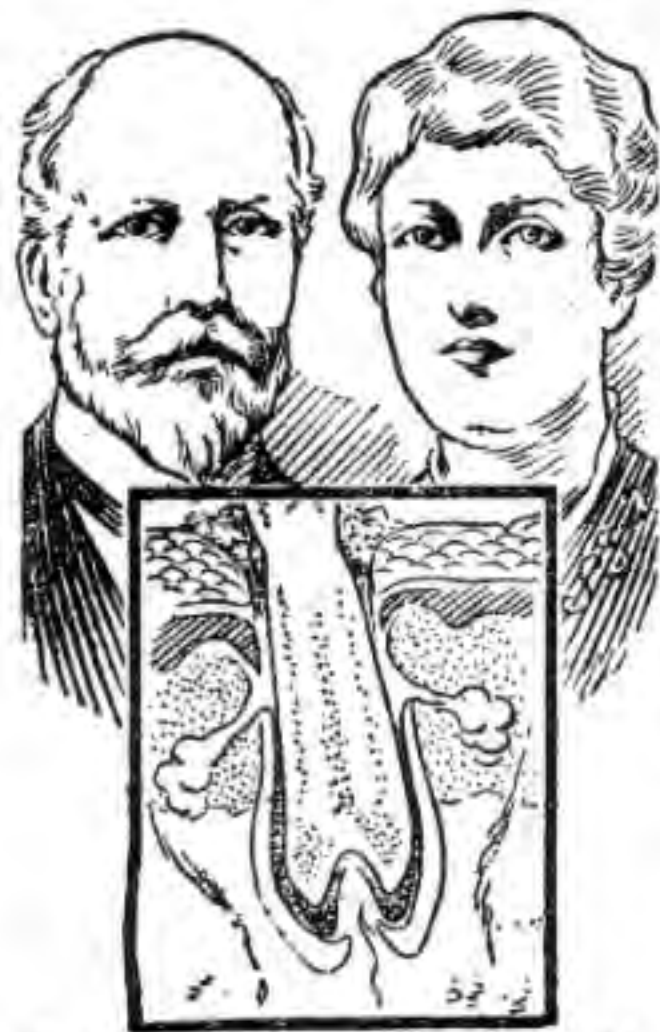
A startling announcement is made to-day, which concerns every reader whose hair is Grey, White, or beginning to lose its natural colour.

It is nothing less than a personal invitation to try a most successful *natural* remedy, absolutely free of cost or obligation.

At no cost to yourself you can immediately commence to banish that appearance of premature age which you must so often have felt to be almost a stigma upon your good looks and upon your capabilities.

WONDERFUL POWERS OF THE NEW DISCOVERY.

The remarkable discovery—"Astol," as it is called—which you are now invited to test in the privacy and convenience of your own home is the achievement of a well-known London Hair Specialist—none other than Mr. Edwards, whose "Harlene Hair Drill" has already achieved a world-wide popularity.



Grey hair undoubtedly adds from ten to twenty years to the appearance, and in social and business life this is indeed a handicap. The discovery of "Astol," a natural scientific remedy, will enable you to regain those too advanced years. To prove this you are invited to test "Astol" free of cost.

Mr. Edwards is determined that no Grey or White-haired man or woman shall be debarred the wonderful benefit of his new scientific preparation, and your free test supply is only one of a million that this Hair Specialist has decided to send out to the public entirely at his own expense.

In addition you will receive a supply of the splendid tonic hair and scalp cleanser "Cremex" Shampoo Powder.

"Astol" is practically colourless. It does not stain the scalp or discolour the fingers. It does not dye or stain the hair in the smallest degree.

A TWO-FOLD GIFT.

First using "Cremex" as directed, you then simply apply "Astol" to your hair. In a few days it will have penetrated right to the roots of each separate hair *below the surface of the scalp*. At the same time you will begin to notice the natural shade that once made your hair so attractive creeping back to the actual hair shaft, like the faint blush of the years that are gone.

Simply post the coupon given here, when by return you will receive:—

1. A free bottle of "Astol"—the wonderful scientific discovery that literally forces the natural colouring cells of the hair to new, healthy activity, and at the same time greatly benefits the growth and lustre of your hair.

2. A supply of the delightful "Cremex" Shampoo Powder.

3. A copy of the famous book, "Good News for the Grey-Haired," in the pages of which the use of "Astol" is clearly explained.

Send for this gift now. You will always look back upon the day you do so with pleasure and delight. Of course, after you have once seen for yourself the wonderful effect of "Astol" you can always obtain further supplies from any chemist at 2s. 9d. and 4s. 6d. a bottle; "Cremex" Shampoo Powders, seven for 1s. (single 2d. each), or direct, post free, on remittance, from the Edwards' "Harlene" Co., 20-26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C. Carriage extra on foreign orders. Cheques and P.O.'s should be crossed.



Note the wonderful change that even a short course of "Astol" makes in the appearance. Why be worried longer with grey hair trouble? Send to-day for your free supply of "Astol" and commence to regain the natural rich colour of your hair.



POST THIS "GIFT OF YOUTH" COUPON

TO THE EDWARDS' HARLENE CO.,
20-26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.

Dear Sir,—Please send me a free trial supply of "Astol" and "Cremex" with full particulars how I may restore my grey hair to its former colour. I enclose 4d. stamps for postage to any part of the world. (Foreign stamps accepted.)

Name

Address

MAGNET, December 18th, 1913.

MY VERY BEST THANKS!

(Continued from page 28.)

see that the "Herald" is the success it undoubtedly deserves to be. It would take more than mere words to convey my heartfelt gratitude in the matter. Suffice it to say that my reader-chums have endeared themselves to me for all time by their splendid loyalty, and I wish them, with all the fervour and sincerity in the world, a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year!

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

The following British Tommies now fighting with the Colours would highly appreciate a few back numbers of the companion papers: 1032 Gunner G. Smith, 7th Battalion, A Sub-Section, 3rd West Riding R.F.A., British Expeditionary Force, France; and 10607 Private H. H. Evans, D Company, 7th Battalion South Staffs Regt., 33rd Infantry Brigade, 11th Division, British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

3215 Private A. Rowe, Attached Convalescent Company, 51st (Highland) Division, British Expeditionary Force, France, would be very grateful if any kindly-disposed reader would send out a gramophone, which would make things merry for himself and comrades.

J. H. Greenhalgh, 39, Cornwall Street, West Hartlepool, wishes to form a club for MAGNET readers in his district.

The Cormant Athletic require football matches at home and away during the current season. Average age, 15. Medium strength. Apply J. White, 26, Burgoyne Road, Stockwell, London, S.W.

"Gronders, Ltd." (Cricklewood).—Your abusive letter is a pretty piece of work. You ought to be on the staff of the "Daily Chronicle."

"A Magnet-Gemite" (Chester).—Many thanks for the books you so kindly sent! They have been despatched to the trenches.

T. Lewis (Aldgate).—A drawing—from a photograph—of the Remove football team appeared in Frank Richards' latest threepenny book, "School and Sport," copies of which are still obtainable from most newsagents.

Winifred W. (Watford).—Sorry your letter has lain neglected all this time. With the advent of the "Greyfriars Herald," however, I have been fairly inundated with communications, and it has been impossible to cope with them all, especially as my staff is scattered about in the various theatres of war. Thank you very much for your splendid enthusiasm. There is no lack of that valuable commodity in Watford. I feel sure. Best wishes for a Merry Christmas!

Edward Moller (Cape Province).—I have done as you suggest, and sincerely hope your brother is still fit and strong. Yes, we are decidedly proud of the South Africans.

Jimmy R. (Repton).—The Editor of the paper you mention is Mr. Horatio Bottomley—and a jolly good Editor, too!

S. Horne (Wimbledon).—If you will send me your full address, I shall have pleasure in forwarding you, free of charge, a copy of "The Sunday Crusaders."

N. T. L. (Lowestoft).—Of course, Magnetites may contribute to the "Greyfriars Herald." I am at all times pleased to consider short stories, humorous articles, and verse, provided the latter is of the "bright and breezy" order. Several of my chums have sent me miserable odes on the war. This sort of thing doesn't suit the "Herald," which strives after jollity and fun. The rest of the information you require has been sent to you through the post.

Hudson Rewcroft (Scarborough).—Very many thanks for your letter and good wishes.

P. A. (Upper Norwood).—Would you mind repeating your queries? Your letter has apparently been mislaid.

"A Very Old Reader" (Aldeburgh).—Dick Penfold often comes into prominence in the "Greyfriars Herald," of which I presume you are a reader.

A. L. (Bacup).—I am not yet in a position to make a definite promise concerning "Tom Merry's Weekly."

"Two Loyal Readers" (Leeds).—Your suggestion came too late. I will bear it in mind when compiling our next Double Number.

Reggie M. (St. Helens).—Your sketch of Billy Bunter wasn't at all bad, but it falls just a little short of publication standard. You will notice that a cartoon of celebrated Greyfriars characters appears every week in the "Greyfriars Herald."

A. E. G. (Manchester).—There are not many boys of the Bolsover major type about, thank goodness! Best wishes to you and your soldier brother.

"Scottie" (Greenock).—Thank you for your letter. It is a precarious business to run an amateur magazine with a view to making a profit. If you have it printed, you are almost sure to be out of pocket. The best plan is to go about it in a modest way. The copygraph is tedious, but inexpensive.

J. E. (Stockport).—Yours is one of the most loyal letters I have read for many a long day, and my only regret is that I have not space to publish it.

"A Loyal and True Reader" (Swansea).—By all means send along your photograph, together with those of your chums. I intend to devote a full page of the MAGNET each week to portraits of my reader-chums. Thanks very much for obtaining new readers for the "Greyfriars Herald," which gets better and better with each issue.

Doris W. (Hull).—Many thanks for your cheery message of congratulation. Are you trying for the tuck hamper? Girls aren't barred, you know.

Reginald M. (Monmouthshire).—I am deeply indebted to you and your chums for such unwavering loyalty to the companion papers.

F. Field (Luton).—You are a worthy disciple of the immortal Squiff.

D. T. (Stoke Newington).—Monty Newland is, I believe, the only Jewish junior at Greyfriars.

Pat McDermott (Plymouth).—Glad to hear you are waking things up in your delightful Devon town.

W. R. (Barrowford).—The best junior athlete at Greyfriars is Harry Wharton, with Bob Cherry and Vernon-Smith in close attendance. Bunter is the finest ventriloquist in the school. This is not surprising, since ventriloquism is an art acquired only by the few. The rest of the information you ask for will be found in the special four-page supplement which appeared in our Christmas Double Number.

David K. and William B. (London, E.).—Yes, I quite agree with your suggestion that the slanderers in question should be exported to Germany. The Kaiser would give them a right royal reception. Many thanks for your continued loyalty to the old paper!

A. L. C. (Leeds).—You have my warmest thanks for recruiting so many new readers, and for recommending the "Greyfriars Herald" throughout Leeds.

F. W. A. (Manchester).—Thank you for all the good work you are doing to promote the interests of my papers.

E. W. B. (New Zealand).—Sorry, but there is no Correspondence Exchange in connection with the MAGNET Library.

E. C. Foote, junr. (Swanley).—Many thanks for your kind letter. Storyettes should always be sent to the Editor, the "Gem" Library, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.

William B. (Liverpool).—See reply to E. W. B., printed above.

A. S. (Stepney).—I adopted your suggestion some time ago, but it met with no success. The introduction of Harry Wharton & Co.'s early schooldays in the "Dreadnought" was not supported so well as it should have been.

George K. (Barnsley).—I sympathise with your position, but it is quite impossible for me to do as you suggest.

W. Cater (Ilford).—"School and Sport," by Frank Richards, is still obtainable at all newsagents'. It is one of the finest threepennyworths of fiction ever offered to British boys.

Gertie M. (Woodstock).—A very creditable poem, echoing fine sentiments, but I fear I have not the space for its reproduction.

"Manchester Lad."—It is a good idea to occasionally introduce a more sober type of story than the usual run. That was why I induced Mr. Richards to write "The Sunday Crusaders." A good story should always contain a sound moral.

"Philip" (Catford).—Your suggestion is a splendid one, but is impracticable in war-time.

H. B. Haynes (Birmingham).—Many thanks for your most sound and sensible letter. So long as the MAGNET Library retains readers of your stamp it will flourish apace.

"Muriel and Maud."—Wingate was once infatuated with a pantomime girl named Paula. Since then he has defied Cupid's chains.

Dick Smith (Dundee).—A story on similar lines to "Sportsmen All!" has already appeared in the "Gem" Library. It was entitled "The Great Sports Tournament." Many thanks for your loyal comments.

J. Patrick (Montrose).—Quite right, my dear fellow. Shake!

G. H. P. (Cardiff).—There is no recognised Rugger eleven at Greyfriars.

W. L. (Tooting).—I do not think a club on the lines you suggest would be viewed favourably by the majority of my readers.

Your Editor

