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BILLY BUNTER'S BANK HOLIDAY!



A NOVEL BANK HOLIDAY ATTRACTION!

(An Amusing Scene in the Magnificent Lon's, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.) 14-5-18



Billy Bunter's Bank-Holiday

A Magnificent Long, Complete School
Story of HARRY WHARTON & CO.
AT GREYFRIARS.

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

On the War-path!

"H AND me that bat, Lonny!" Billy Bunter blinked at Alonzo Todd across the table of Study No. 7.

The Duffer of Greyfriars stared. Such a request, coming from Billy Bunter of the Remove, was extraordinary.

What Billy Bunter wanted with a cricket-bat was a mystery. He seldom played cricket; and when he did, he resembled George Robey rather than Jack Hobbs.

"Getting deaf?" asked Bunter impatiently. "Gimme that bat!"

Alonzo reached for the bat, and handed it over.

"You are going out to hit goals on Little Side, my dear Bunter?" he asked.

"No, you ass! I'm going to practise in this study!"

"Pup-pup-practise in this study?" stammered Alonzo.

"Certainly! I'm going to practise a few strokes just to get my hand in, you know. The Remove are playing St. Jim's on Whit-Monday, and I want to be in form."

"But surely you are not participating in the event in question?" exclaimed Alonzo.

Billy Bunter gave a snort.

"I should like to see the Remove try to win the match without me," he said. "Why, they'd come a hopeless cropper. St. Jim's are a very hot crowd. I've been there, so I know what I'm talking about!"

"Has Wharton definitely selected you as a member of the team?"

"Well, not exactly," said Bunter. "But when I show him my form he'll simply jump at me!"

"I dare say he will!" murmured Alonzo.

Billy Bunter's plump fingers closed on the handle of the bat.

"I've been studying cricket a good deal lately," he said. "Of course, I know the game inside out. But even the best cricketer can pick up a few useful tips. Now, you watch me while I play back!"

"Play back?" echoed Alonzo. "Why,

I understood that football was the only game in which one could play back!"

"Ass!" said Bunter witheringly. "I mean playing back from the ball, instead of playing forward to it!"

"Forward?" said Alonzo, puzzled. "I thought that was a football expression, too."

Bunter regarded Alonzo with the superior contempt with which a general might regard a lance-corporal.

"I'll show you what I mean by playing back," he said. "Imagine that picture at the other end of the study is bowling to me—"

Alonzo Todd gazed at his fat study-mate in concern.

"Are you sure you feel quite all right, my dear Bunter?"

"Of course, my dear ass!"

"You are not suffering from a temporary lapse of sanity?"

"Shurrup! Now, supposing that picture is bowling to me. Instead of running out to hit the ball, I play back at it—so!"

Billy Bunter took one step to the rear, and the bat swung backwards.

Crash!

There was a shattering, splintering sound; and the glass panel of the book-case was smashed to smithereens.

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter surveyed the wreckage with a dazed expression on his face.

Alonzo looked horrified.

"My dear Bunter!" he said, in shocked tones. "You have, I fear, caused irreparable damage. Peter will be dreadfully angry when he beholds this devastation!"

"Bless Peter! Accidents will happen," said Bunter, pulling himself together. "Now, supposing I want to cut the ball to point—"

"Don't you think you had better put that bat down?" said Alonzo. "You will be doing yourself an injury."

"Rate! Just you watch me! With a quick jerk of the wrists, I cut the ball so—"

"But there is no ball!" protested Alonzo.

"Fathead! It's an imaginary one!"

"My poor Bunter! I am convinced that you have either been drinking—"

"Or that the heat of the sun has caused you to suffer from hallucinations."

"I don't know what you mean by Lucy

Nations!" said Bunter. "Who was she, anyway?"

"Your mind is disorganised, Bunter!"

"Oh, you're potty!" growled the fat junior.

"Dear me!" murmured Alonzo.

"How very distressing! When a person is mad he generally regards others as being in a similar condition. I feel convinced—"

"There's only one thing I want you to feel convinced about," said Bunter, "and that's my late cut. With a sharp turn of the wrists, I send the ball whizzing away at right angles—thus!"

Bunter fairly let himself go.

The only thing that whizzed away at right angles was the bat, which came into violent contact with the study window.

A shower of broken glass rained down into the Close.

Alonzo Todd jumped up from the table, and edged nervously to the door.

"Where are you going?" demanded Bunter.

"I was about to make arrangements for a doctor to be called in," said Alonzo. "These barbarous, Bolshevistic tendencies on your part must be checked—and the sooner the better!"

"What utter rot! I was just practising—"

"Your practising is very detrimental to the study furniture, my dear Bunter! I entreat you to desist. I have a terrible premonition that you will commit manslaughter!"

"A pane of glass here and there won't matter," said Bunter lightly. "I'll pay for them when my postal-order comes. Now, I'll just pull the ball round to leg—"

Alonzo beat a hurried retreat.

He was about to wrench the door open when Billy Bunter put his leg-pull into execution.

"Yaroooooop!"

The face of the bat smote Alonzo Todd with a sounding report on the rear of his person.

"Sorry, Lonny, old chap!" said Bunter. "But you shouldn't have got in the way, you know. Now I'll show you my forward stroke—"

But Alonzo did not wait to see more. He put himself on the other side of the door with astonishing agility.

"Ow! There can be no further doubt

about Bunter's condition. The poor fellow is mad—utterly and completely!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, coming along the passage with the other members of the Famous Five.

"Who's your companion in lunacy, Lonzy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo drew himself up and tenderly rubbed his back.

"Yow! I have been assaulted and half-killed by a raving, rampant maniac! I feel exceedingly sore and uncomfortable. My Uncle Benjamin—"

"Burst your Uncle Benjamin!" said Johnny Bull. "What's happened?"

Alonzo pointed dramatically at the door of Study No. 7.

"He's in there!" he exclaimed in awed tones. "Listen, my dear fellows!"

Even as Alonzo spoke there was a terrible crash inside the study.

The Famous Five threw open the door and rushed in.

They were just in time to see the clock turn a double-somersault into the fender. A couple of pictures had shared the same fate a second previously.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood spell-bound.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Bunter, you ass—"

"Bunter, you howling lunatic—"

Billy Bunter swung round, bat in hand.

His face was nearly purple with exertion, but he looked capable of doing still more damage.

"I say, you fellows, I'm getting in a bit of practice."

"Great pip!"

"I—I was trying a few strokes, you know, so that I should score a century against St. Jim's."

"You barbling idiot!" shouted Harry Wharton. "I think we'd better try a few strokes as well. Put him across that table! It's about the only piece of furniture left whole in the study!"

The others were about to comply when Peter Todd came in.

The leader of Study No. 7 uttered a howl of rage.

"What the merry dickens? Has an earthquake happened, or what?"

"It's only Bunter," explained Bob Cherry. "He's been trying a few strokes—and now we're going to try a few! Lend a hand, Toddy!"

Peter Todd, infuriated at the sight of the wreckage, needed no second bidding.

The bat was torn from Billy Bunter's grasp, and the fat junior was heaved on to the table and pinned down by willing hands.

"Give him beans!" said Peter Todd.

Harry Wharton nodded.

Whack, whack, whack!

The bat rose and fell, and a cloud of dust went up from Billy Bunter's tight-fitting trousers.

"Yaroooo! Help! Fire! Murder! Yab! Chuckit! Stoppit!"

"Whack, whack, whack!"

Harry Wharton did great execution.

By the time he had finished Billy Bunter felt as if he had been through a mangle. He slid down from the table on to the floor, and lay there making a noise like a punctured football.

"Ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Serves you jolly well right!" said Peter Todd. "I'll teach you to smash up the happy home like this, you mad idiot!"

"Beasts!" moaned Billy Bunter. "I've a jolly good mind not to offer you my services against St. Jim's! I hope you get the kicking of your lives—"

"Hand me that bat again, Toddy!" said Harry Wharton.

"Owl! I—I mean, I hope you win handsomely!" groaned Bunter.

"That's better!" said Wharton

"Come on, you fellows! Tea's ready in Study No. 1. We'll leave Toddy to settle the question of damages."

And the Famous Five retired, leaving Peter Todd to create order out of chaos, and to impress upon the mind of Billy Bunter that great batsmen are born and not made, and that they do not start their careers by smashing everything within range.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Many Called, But Few Chosen!

TEA in Study No. 1 was not a success.

There were plenty of good things, but there were plenty of interruptions as well.

Vernon-Smith was the first fellow to look in.

"Hallo, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry, jerking a chair back from the table.

"Come and share the festive kipper, old sport!"

"No, thanks!" grinned Vernon-Smith. "I looked in to see if I was down to play against St. Jim's, that's all!"



"You bain't goin' hout of these 'ere gates!" said Gosling firmly. "Horders is horders!" Billy Bunter grinned. (See Chapter 4.)

"Of course you are," said Wharton. "Why should I leave you out?"

"Well, every fellow in the Remove has told me that he's down to play, so I wondered whether you were going to include me as fortieth man!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So long as my name's down I'm happy," said Vernon-Smith. "I don't fancy cooling my heels at Greyfriars on a giddy Bank Holiday."

"No, rather not!"

Vernon-Smith nodded to the Famous Five, and departed.

Scarcely had his footsteps died away when Squiff appeared in the doorway.

"Yes!" said Wharton.

Squiff stared.

"W-w-what?" he exclaimed.

"I know exactly what you were going to ask me," said the captain of the Remove; "and the answer's 'Yes.' Now buzz off!"

"I'm down to play against St. Jim's!" said Squiff.

"Yes!" roared the Famous Five in unison.

"Oh, good!"

And Squiff walked off, humming a merry tune.

"Now, perhaps, we shall be left in peace!" growled Johnny Bull. "My kipper's stone-cold!"

"Same here!"

"The coldfulness of the esteemed and strong-smelling kipper is terrific!"

Bang, bang!

The study door quivered as a ponderous fist struck it from without.

"Come in, Fathead!" sang out Bob Cherry.

It was Bolsover major this time.

"Look here, Wharton," he said in his blunt way, "am I going to travel—"

"Yes," said Nugent. "As quick as you like! There's the door!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover glared.

"Am I going to travel to St. Jim's to play in the match?"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Sorry!" he said. "You're not a bad player, Bolsover, but there's such a lot of giddy talent knocking around that I've had to leave you out."

"You bain't goin' hout of these 'ere gates!" said Gosling firmly. "Horders is horders!" Billy Bunter grinned. (See Chapter 4.)

"My hat! Do you think I want to spend Bank Holiday in this beastly prison? I'm jolly well going to have a place in the team!"

"Door or window?" asked Bob Cherry politely. "Choose your own exit!"

Bolsover major saw that he would get no change out of the Famous Five.

He retired from the study, slamming the door behind him with terrific violence.

Harry Wharton & Co. got on with their tea.

"Peace at last!" said Nugent.

"Tap, tap!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Fisher T. Fish, the Yankee junior, was the next visitor.

"I guess I'm down to play against St. Jim's!" he asked.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I kinder sorter calculate you'll have to guess again, Fishy!"

"Look hyer—"

"Can't. It's a strain on the eyesight!"

"I guess—"

"Br-r-r!"

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Fisher T. Fish glared wrathfully at the Famous Five.

"Am I down to play, or am I not?" he exclaimed.

"Not!" said Wharton. "Now buzz off!"

The Yankee junior still lingered in the doorway; but he departed suddenly and swiftly as a cushion, deftly aimed by Johnny Bull, caught him under the chin.

"Yarooooop!"

Fisher T. Fish came to grief against the wall of the passage.

"I'm fed up with these blessed interruptions!" growled Wharton.

He took up a pen, and wrote out the following announcement, which was pinned up on the outside of the study door:

"NOTICE!

TO WOULD-BE CRICKETERS—

AND OTHERS!

The chap who comes in here to spout,

Or make the place a wreck;

Will enter on his feet, no doubt,

But go out on his neck!

The team to play against St. Jim's on Bank Holiday has been definitely chosen, and will consist of the following:

W. Wharton (captain), F. Nugent, R. Cherry, J. Bull, H. J. R. Singh, M. Linley, P. Todd, H. Vernon-Smith, S. Q. 1. Field, R. Penfold, and G. Bulstrode. Reserves: R. E. Russell and R. D. Ogilvy.

NO OTHERS NEED APPLY!

(Signed) H. WHARTON,
Captain of Cricket."

Many footsteps became audible in the passage after this notice had been displayed; but most of the fellows, after stopping to read it, went on their way.

But still the Famous Five were not intended to be left alone.

Long before the odour of the fried lippers had died away, Coker of the Fifth burst into the study without knocking.

"Look here, you fags—"

Five warlike glances were directed at Horace Coker.

"I've decided to sacrifice the pleasures of Bank Holiday in order to come over to St. Jim's and umpire," said Coker loftily.

"Very noble of you," said Harry Wharton, "but we don't want an umpire! Tom Merry's seeing to that."

"Rats! You don't want a common or garden umpire—"

"Then why volunteer?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker frowned.

"I don't want any of your cheek," he said. "I've gone out of my way to offer you my services, and—"

"Declined—without thanks!" said Harry Wharton. "Now, hop! It we want to finish our tea."

Coker clenched his big fists.

"You—you—" he stuttered. "I decide to do you a good turn and instead of bubbling over with gratitude, and all the rest of it, you chuck cold water on my intentions!"

"We'll chuck something else if you don't vamoose!" said Nugent dully. "Take your face away and pawn it! Isn't it time you started wearing a mask?"

That was too much for Coker.

With a roar like an angry bull he advanced towards the Famous Five.

But Harry Wharton & Co., experts in the art of war, acted swiftly and decisively.

Before Coker could reach his objective, a swarm of missiles sailed through the THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 592.

air, and smote him in various parts of his person.

"Yaroooooh!"

A kipper landed fairly and squarely on Coker's cheek, and a couple of cushions caught him in the chest, bowling him over.

The Fifth-Former sat down heavily and hurriedly on the floor of the study. The expression on his face rendered a mask more desirable than ever.

"You—you cheeky young sweep!"

"Out with him!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, springing to his feet.

The next moment five boots clumped upon the lanky form of Horace Coker, and propelled him through the doorway and into the passage.

Bulstrode, Russell, and Ogilvy were standing outside, reading Harry Wharton's notice, and they completed the good work.

Coker was shunted along for a few more yards; then he scrambled to his feet, and beat an undignified retreat to his own quarters.

Horace Coker's unselfish intentions had somehow missed fire!

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THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Left Behind!

BANK HOLIDAY dawned at length—a clear and cloudless day.

Harry Wharton & Co. were up with the lark.

Billy Bunter, who was up with that somewhat lazier bird, the sparrow, rolled out into the Close just as the Remove Eleven, with Russell and Ogilvy as reserves, were about to start off for St. Jim's.

The Owl of the Remove could sometimes be very determined. The other fellows called it obstinate. Anyway, Bunter had made up his mind to get to St. Jim's, and get there he would, though the skies fell.

"I—I say, Wharton, old chap—"

Harry Wharton, who was wrestling with a huge cricket-bag, grunted.

"Not so much of your 'old chap'!" he said.

"Oh, really, you know! I was going to suggest that I gave you a hand with that bag."

"All serene," said Wharton. "You can yank it to the station, if you like. But you're not coming any farther."

"Look here," said Bunter desperately.

"You'll want me badly when you get to St. Jim's. When the game is going dead against you you'll be pining for me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll ring you up on the 'phone, Bunt," said Bob Cherry. "Then you can borrow Prout's motor-bike, and rush over to the rescue."

"I believe you're trying to pull my leg, Bob Cherry—"

"Go on!"

"You couldn't come over to St. Jim's, even as a spectator," said Nugent. "You've got some lines to do for Quetchy. He gave you two hundred for going to sleep in class, I remember."

"Blow Quetchy! Does he think I'm going to grind out mouldy lines on a Bank Holiday?"

A sudden hush fell upon the cricketers. Unseen by the shortsighted Owl, Mr. Quetchy himself, attired in a golfing suit, had appeared on the scene.

"Quetchy's always barging in at a time like this!" went on Billy Bunter. "If he had his own way he'd abolish Bank Holidays. Fancy expecting a fellow to swot indoors on a day like this! Quetchy's a beastly kiljoy!"

"Oh," gasped the juniors.

Bunter heard the rasp, and he concluded that he had made an impression. So seldom did Bunter succeed in im-

pressing anybody by what he said that he determined to go the whole hog, so to speak.

"I suppose Quetchy will spend his Bank Holiday at the typewriter, hammering out his silly old 'History of Greyfriars'."

Bunter went on. "It's about time that blessed history was finished. But Quetchy will never find a publisher for it—not in a thousand years!"

Mr. Quetchy stood as if turned to stone. His lips were moving; but articulate speech refused to come.

Peter Todd shot out his foot, hoping to check Billy Bunter's ready flow of oratory.

"Ow! What beast kicked my shin?" gasped Bunter. "It hurt! As a matter of fact, that's just what I should like to do to old Quetchy!"

"Bunter!"

The Remove-master had at last recovered the power of speech. His voice was like the detonation of a bomb.

Billy Bunter blinked.

"Who's that trying to give a cheap imitation of Quetchy's voice?" he exclaimed. "I never heard such a silly dog's yap! Oh crumbs! M-m-my hat!"

Bunter's face turned almost green as he caught sight of the Form-master. "I—I didn't know you were there, sir!"

"That is perfectly obvious, Bunter!" rumbled Mr. Quetchy. "Had you been aware of my presence, it of kicking my shin. How dare you refer to me in such a disrespectful manner, Bunter?"

"Ow! I—I wasn't—I didn't—I never!" stammered the fat junior helplessly.

"You appear to have resented the fact that I gave you an imposition," said Mr. Quetchy. "That imposition is now doubled. You will at once proceed to the Form-room, and commence writing it."

"Oh crumbs!"

"But for the fact that I have to keep a golfing appointment with Mr. Front I should chastise you severely," said Mr. Quetchy.

"Oh, really, sir, I—"

"Go and do your imposition, Bunter!"

"But—but I've got an important appointment as well, sir."

"Nonsense!"

"I'm going over to St. Jim's, sir, to lead these fellows on to victory in a cricket-match."

Mr. Quetchy compressed his lips.

"I forbid you, here and now, to do anything of the sort!" he snapped. "Do not dare to disobey me! Unless you proceed at once to the Form-room, Bunter, I shall thrash you!"

"Oh dear! It won't be my fault if the Remove lose the match, sir."

Mr. Quetchy made a stride towards Bunter, and the Owl of the Remove, who could not fail to observe the storm-signals on the Form-master's brow, promptly turned and fled.

The prospect of spending the morning—perhaps the day—in an empty Form-room, filling up sheet after sheet of impetuous paper, didn't appeal to Bunter in the least.

But it was impossible to argue with Mr. Quetchy.

When Bunter had gone, the Remove-master turned to the cricketers.

"I trust you will have a good game, my boys," he said.

"Thank you, sir!"

"I feel sure you will benefit by your day's outing. You will come back to your Form-work with renewed vigour."

"Y-e-s, sir!"

The juniors were rather doubtful on this score. But they appreciated Mr. Quetchy's good wishes, all the same.

The Remove-master nodded to Harry Wharton & Co., and went off to keep his appointment with Mr. Prout on the golf-links.

The cricketers, in high spirits, started off for the station.

"No luck for Bunter!" grinned Squiff. "He thought he was going to be our strength and stay at St. Jim's; but he hasn't even got a walking-out part."

"No jolly fair!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Peter Todd, with a sigh. "I've tried to bring him up in the way he should go, but it's N.G. And now he's got to spend his Bank Holiday gridding out lines."

The juniors had precious little sympathy to waste on Billy Bunter as a rule, but they could not help feeling a trifle sorry for him now.

It was no joke to be kept indoors on a day like this, when all the other fellows were basking in the sunshine.

The Form-room would be a very bleak and barren place on a Bank Holiday—little better than a prison, in fact.

In the excitement of the forthcoming match, however, Billy Bunter and his burdens were soon forgotten.

The Greyfriars cricketers boarded their train, and were soon speeding through the fair countryside of Kent, past green meadow and shady lane, looking forward with great eagerness and excitement to the tussle with their old and tried rivals of St. Jim's.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

In Durandé Vile!

BILLY BUNTER groaned.

It could hardly be said that his cup of happiness was filled to overflowing.

Through the windows of the Form-room came the festive shouts of the holiday-makers.

The fat junior rose to his feet and looked out into the Close.

Temple & Co. of the Fourth were in their boating bannels, evidently bent upon a day on the river.

In another corner of the Close Bolsover major and Skinner and Stott were holding a deep discussion. They were probably planning to spend the day in a less profitable manner than the Fourth-Formers.

Other fellows were thronging out of gates, too.

Some were going to explore the old caves on the seashore. Others were bound for Courtfield, where the usual Bank Holiday attractions, in the form of fairs and merry-go-rounds, were due to take place.

The call of the open air seemed irresistible.

Bunter realised, at length, that he was practically alone in the great building.

"It's a shame!" muttered the fat junior. "A downright, rotten shame!"

He had not started his lines. What was more, he didn't intend to start them.

For a long time Billy Bunter sat writhing in his place of captivity.

Then he rose to his feet, his little round eyes fairly gleaming behind his spectacles.

"I'll do it!" he said aloud. "I'm fed up with sticking here. Quelch's gone off to play golf, and he won't know anything about it if I bunk."

Billy Bunter rolled to the door.

His determination to go to St. Jim's was as strong as ever.

He meant to defy Mr. Qualch, and to make a bid for freedom.

"I'm not going to stay here and starve!" he muttered, as he emerged into the bright sunshine of the Close.

"There's no grub to be had anywhere, and Mrs. Mimbble's closed her shop. I might not get a game if I go to St. Jim's, but I'm bound to get a feed!"

Bunter moistened his lips as he thought of the fine repast he would have at St. Jim's. Tom Merry & Co. knew how to entertain a visiting team, and they always provided the finest fare for their guests.

The fact that he would be an unbidden guest didn't worry Bunter in the least. He was a past master in the art of thrusting himself in where he was not wanted.

And then an awful fact dawned upon the fat junior.

He was stony!

How could he possibly get to St. Jim's without paying his way?

It would be comparatively easy to dodge the railway officials at Friardale. But Bunter was not so sure about the people at the other end. And there would be a scrutiny of tickets at Wayland; that was certain.

It was useless to think of travelling without paying his fare.

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Bunter, in dismay. "This fairly puts the kybosh on it! And there's no one I can squeeze a loan out of. All the fellows have gone out—even that slacker Mauls."

Billy Bunter opened the door of the bicycle-shed and blinked in.

The shed was empty. All the fellows who owned bikes were either using them or had lent them to someone else.

A wild thought flashed into Bunter's mind of borrowing Mr. Prout's motorcycle. But his knowledge of motor-cycles, unlike Sam Weller's knowledge of London, was neither extensive nor peculiar. He would be certain to come a cropper.

What was he to do?

With all his determination he could not walk to St. Jim's. Physical exertion was distasteful to the fatty Owl.

Even if he felt in the mood for tramping from one county to another, he could not reach St. Jim's till nightfall.

"It's a no go!" muttered Bunter. "Bank Holiday's going to be a wash-out, after all!"

He turned back with a grunt.

There was nothing to do—nowhere to go. He was a prisoner at Greyfriars!

As he was about to re-enter the building, however, Billy Bunter stopped short.

He was not very observant, as a rule, but his eye had alighted upon a pocket-book which lay on the ground directly beneath the window of Gerald Loder's study.

Bunter stooped and picked it up.

"My hat! What a lucky find!"

The fat junior blinked cautiously around. The coast was clear.

He turned the pocket-book over in his fat hand.

The initials, "G. L.," were plainly embossed on the front.

"It's Loder's!" murmured Bunter.

He would have been more correct to say that it had been Loder's. The black sheep of the Sixth was not likely to see that pocket-book again—especially if it contained anything of value. Billy Bunter had never yet been able to discriminate between "maum" and "tuum."

With feverish fingers Bunter opened the book.

Two pieces of paper fluttered on to the ground. Bunter was upon them with the swoop of a hawk.

The next moment his eyes fairly glittered.

"What luck!" he exclaimed. "This is corn in Egypt, and no mistake!"

One of the documents was a letter—a note to Loder from one of his shady com-

panions outside the school; and the other was a five-pound note!

Billy Bunter's problem was solved at last.

He had money in his possession—money enough to make this particular Bank Holiday a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

Slipping the notebook into his pocket, the Owl of the Remove scuttled down to the gates.

He met an unexpected barrier here, in the person of Gosling, the porter.

Gosling shuffled out of his lodge, and eyed the fat junior with extreme disfavour.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," he began. "I've 'ad borders from Mr. Quelch that you're not to be hallowed hout of gates. Master Bunter!"

"Oh, come off, Gossey! I'm not going far. I—I'm just going out to—pick a few flowers, you know!"

But Gosling's suspicions were fairly roused.

"You hain't goin' hout of these 'ere gates!" he said firmly. "Horders is borders!"

Billy Bunter grinned.

For a moment he was taken aback, but only for a moment.

The gates were open, but Bunter knew that if he tried to push his way past Gosling he would be repulsed with heavy losses, so to speak.

There was another way out, however. Bunter had not studied the art of ventriloquism for nothing.

"Gosling, what is this bottle of gin doing in your lodge?"

"It was the Head's voice—at least, it was a perfect imitation of it."

"Oh, my hey!"

Gosling turned back towards his lodge to meet—as he expected—the vials of Dr. Locke's wrath.

No sooner was the porter's back turned than Billy Bunter fairly shot through the open gateway.

He was free—free as the air he breathed!

An angry shout behind him told him that Gosling had tumbled to the deception.

Bunter grinned, and quickened his pace. "Gossey can shout till he's jolly well husky!" he chuckled. "My hat! It was jolly thoughtful of old Loder to drop his notebook like that! Lucky thing for Loder that I found it, too. If anyone else saw the letter from the landlord of the Green Keys Loder would be slung out of Greyfriars on his neck!"

In appropriating the notebook and its contents Bunter was guilty of theft. But he was far too stupid to realise the seriousness of his action.

Had he stopped to think, it might have occurred to him that he himself was going the right way to be kicked out of Greyfriars.

But it was not Bunter's way to stop and think. He had no thinking apparatus, to begin with.

And so, feeling that life was still worth living, the Owl of the Remove continued his headlong flight to St. Jim's!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not Nice for Loder!

DASH it all!

Loder of the Sixth was looking—and feeling—very much annoyed. He paced up and down his study on the morning of Bank Holiday with a frowning brow.

He had missed his notebook—a fact which made the rascally prefect both upset and uneasy.

There were good grounds for Gerald Loder's uneasiness.

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That notebook contained a letter which, if it came before the eyes of the authorities, would bring about his instant expulsion.

Jerry Hawke had written the letter. It was an invitation to Loder to spend the afternoon and evening of Bank Holiday at the Cross Keys, where—in the words of Mr. Hawke—several sporting gents would be present.

The rascal added his congratulations—they were not sincere, of course—to Loder for having won five pounds at cards a few evenings before.

Loder shuddered as he pictured the effect that letter would have upon Dr. Locke.

To have lost the letter was bad enough; to have lost the five-pound note as well was maddening.

The prefect continued to pace up and down, trying to account for the mysterious loss of his notebook.

There was a tap on the door of the study, and Carne entered.

"Hallo!" he said. "You look pretty down in the mouth, old man. What's up?"

"I've lost my notebook!" growled Loder.

"Careless as!"

Loder scowled.

"It isn't funny," he said. "There was a five inside, and a note from Jerry Hawke."

"Pshaw!"

Carne looked serious at once.

"How on earth did you lose the blessed thing?" he asked.

"That's what I've been trying to puzzle out. I know I had it as recently as yesterday afternoon. I must have dropped it somewhere."

"Or mislaid it," suggested Carne.

"Perhaps you shed it in your desk, or in your Sunday boots, or something. Let's have a hunt for it."

And the two Sixth-Formers proceeded to ransack Loder's study.

They turned out the contents of the desk; they explored the bookcase, the mantelpiece—everything. But there was no sign of a pocket-book.

"No go!" said Carne. "When did you first make this painful discovery?"

"This morning!" growled Loder. "I felt in all my pockets, and drew blank."

"Did you go to the Cross Keys last night?"

"Then you probably dropped it on the way back. Can't you remember hearing a thud, or something, as you walked along?"

Loder shook his head.

He could remember very little of what had happened the previous evening. He had been on one of his nocturnal expeditions to the Cross Keys; and, although he had touched nothing stronger than weak cider, the stuffy atmosphere of the billiard-room had dazed him to such an extent that he could not clearly recollect his return journey to Greyfriars.

"Have you looked underneath your study window?" asked Carne.

"My hat! I hadn't thought of that. Let's come and look now."

And the seniors went downstairs.

But the pocket-book was nowhere to be seen. It had passed into Billy Bunter's hands half an hour previously.

Carne reflected for a moment.

"Look here," he said, at length. "I wouldn't mind betting you didn't drop the thing at all!"

"What!" roared Loder. "You think I'm hunting high and low just for a joke?"

"No; it's my opinion that you've been robbed."

"Eh?"

"While you were at the Cross Keys last night, somebody picked your pocket," said Carne, with conviction. "It sounds a bit steep, I know, but that boulder Hawke isn't to be trusted."

Loder jumped.

"You think Hawke pinched my pocket-book?" he exclaimed.

"I'm practically sure of it."

Loder turned abruptly into the building.

"What's the next move?" asked Carne.

"I'm going down to the Cross Keys at once, to ask Hawke what he knows about this bizny."

"Good! I'll come along."

The seniors got their caps, and set out for the village together.

Loder strode, along swiftly, and said nothing; but his suspicions against Jerry Hawke, slight at first, grew more and more powerful.

This was just the sort of shady trick to be expected of the rascally landlord.

By the time the Cross Keys was reached suspicion had ripened into certainty.

Loder was looking very grim as he led the way into the billiard-room.

Jerry Hawke was there, greasy and affable as usual. He was acting as marker for a couple of gentlemen in loud check suits who were playing a hundred up.

"Afternoon, sir!" said Jerry Hawke, as Loder came in.

The prefect glared.

"I haven't come here for formalities," he said. "I've got a straight question for you, Mr. Hawke, and I want a straight answer!"

"That's the stuff!" said Carne approvingly.

Mr. Hawke didn't turn a hair. He seemed perfectly cool and self-possessed.

"Fire away, sir," he said.

Loder advanced towards the landlord.

"I have reason to believe," he said, "that I was robbed in this place last night."

"My eye!"

The coolness of Mr. Hawke vanished in an instant. He became considerably excited.

As for the two billiard-players, they laid down their cues and looked daggers at the Greyfriars prefect.

"Ho!" said Jerry Hawke, at length.

"So you think my establishment is a den of thieves—what?"

"I think," said Loder deliberately, "that you took advantage of me last night and stole my pocket-book!"

"Great pip!" ejaculated one of the men. "That's strong language to use to an honest man. Put it across him, Jerry!"

Mr. Hawke promptly stepped up to Loder. For once in a way, he was really innocent; and the fact that he had been wrongfully accused made him savage.

"Get out!" he said thickly. "I've a good mind to 'ave the lor on yer for sayin' sich things! Get off my premises, or—"

Snack!

Loder's open palm came with a report like a pistol-shot across the face of the rascally landlord.

Jerry Hawke reeled.

But before Loder could continue his furious onslaught the other two men clipped in.

They were powerfully-built fellows, and Loder and Carne went down before their fierce onrush like chaff before the reaper.

Desperately the Sixth-Formers strove to regain their feet; but Jerry Hawke joined his companions, and Loder and Carne, struggling furiously, were bundled out into the street.

"Now cut off," said Jerry Hawke,

breathing hard, " afore I fatches the perlice!"

"Ow!"

"Yow!"

"Oh, my nose!"

"The beastly ruffians—"

Loder and Carne sorted themselves out with some difficulty, and limped away.

The struggle had been of brief duration; but considerable damage had been done to the personal appearance of the victims.

Loder's nose was already beginning to swell; and Carne looked as if he had become entangled with a lawn-mower.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Loder. "It was you who dragged me into this!"

"Why, you— you— you— spluttered Carne. "I was doing you a good turn—"

"Oh, dry up! Precious fine Bank Holiday this is! I'm enjoying myself up to the hilt—I don't think! Why did you want to interfere in the first place?"

Carne clenched his fists, and it looked for a moment as if there would be still further casualties.

But the Sixth-Former controlled himself with an effort, and accompanied Gerald Loder in sullen silence to Greyfriars.

For two fellows, at any rate, Bank Holiday was anything but blissful!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Match with St. Jim's!

"WELCOME, little strangers!"

Monty Lowther, of St. Jim's, uttered that cheery greeting to the Greyfriars juniors as they tumbled out of the train at Rycomb Station.

Quite a crowd of St. Jim's fellows had turned out to meet the visitors.

The Terrible Three of the Shell were there; and so were Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, the celebrated New House trio.

Jack Blake, Herries, and Digby, of the Fourth, were acting as a sort of body-guard to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who, as Monty Lowther pointed out, had to be kept under restraint.

The swell of St. Jim's jammed his monocle into his eye, and beamed upon Harry Wharton & Co.

"Awfully glad to see you again, dear boys!" he said, cordially. "Of course, you're goin' to get a fearful thrashing, you—"

"Perhaps!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"But I trust that will make no difference to the spirit of brotherly affection which exists between us."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Digby. "Good old gas-bag!"

"Weally, Dig, I verry much wescnt that wemak—"

"Oh, cut the cackle, Gussy!" said Tom Merry. "Once you get fairly wound up, it will be time to draw stumps before we start!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A brake was waiting outside the station, and the rival teams rattled merrily away to St. Jim's.

Launch was served on the cricket-ground—a mere snack, as Fatty Wynn mournfully expressed it—and then the real business of the day began.

Tom Merry spun the coin, and Harry Wharton guessed wrongly. The St. Jim's skipper decided to bat first.

Matches between Priars and Saints—whether the senior or the lower sections were involved—were always productive of keen tussles.

A dense crowd—mainly composed of juniors—had assembled on seats in front of the pavilion.

A cheer went up as Tom Merry and

Talbot, looking very fit and confident, stepped out to open the innings for the home side.

The bowling was shared by Hurree Singh and Vernon-Smith. Both were dead on the mark.

Runs came slowly. Tom Merry and his partner wished to lay a solid foundation; and they took no risks.

Nearly half an hour had elapsed when 10 went up on the telegraph-board.

The crowd began to yawn.

"One of these days," murmured

Monty Louthery, "I shall write a book on the tameness of modern cricket. Why doesn't our Tommy hit out?"

"Because he's wise in his old age," said Jack Blake. "If you try to hit out at that dusky fellow's bowling you generally find yourself trotting back to the pavilion."

Hurree Singh was certainly bowling at the top of his form. And he was well backed up in the field.

Hungry for catches, the men in the slips crouched low; and in the long-field

Mark Linley was active and alert. If a ball were smitten high in that direction, there would be no mercy for the smiter.

It looked, for a time, as if the Saints would monopolise the batting all day; but presently Talbot was run out. Squiff had gathered up the leather and hurled it in with unerring aim while the St. Jim's fellow was barely half-way down the pitch.

After Talbot's departure the game took a brighter turn.

Redfern of the new House came in to bat; and on his day Reddy was one of the finest junior bats at St. Jim's.

On this occasion he surpassed himself. He was careful to take no liberties with Hurree Singh; but Vernon-Smith occasionally sent down a loose ball, and when that happened a 4 or a 6 was recorded in the score-book.

The score had put on flesh considerably when Tom Merry left, clean bowled by Hurree Singh.

And no collapse followed, either.

The rest of the batsmen acquitted themselves well, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy contributed a brilliant 24 to the St. Jim's total of 130.

"Not so bad," said Figgins, as he uncorked a bottle of ginger-pop. "If you put your beef into it, Fatty, we shall get the beggars out for under a hundred."

Fatty Wynn grunted.

"You can't expect me to do miracles on an empty stomach," he said. "My lunch wouldn't have satisfied an infant sparrow!"

"Never mind, old top!" said Kerr. "There's going to be a tea interval as soon as Greyfriars are all out. And it's a bumper spread, too. Look!"

With glistering eyes, Fatty Wynn watched a number of large carrying cakes and pastries to a far corner of the field, where tables had been set out in readiness.

"That's the style!" said the plump junior. "I only hope those kids don't start gorging on the sly. Those tables are too far away for a fellow to see what's going on."

"Look here!" said Figgins. "If you do the hat-trick, and take three wickets with three balls, we'll let you wolf as much grub as you like!"

Fatty Wynn beamed.

"Is that a go?" he exclaimed.

"Yes—honest Injun!"

The dazzling prospect of unlimited tuck acted as a spur to the Falstaff of St. Jim's.

He meant to win that wager; and he won it—much earlier than anyone expected.

Harry Wharton was the first victim.

The captain of the Remove had expected Fatty Wynn's first ball to be a

medium-paced one, for Fatty took a very short run.

But when the ball did come it seemed to be possessed of demons.

Wharton checked it with his bat, but only slightly; and the next instant his off-stump was performing revolutions.

"Hurrah!"

"Well bowled, Fatty!"

Fatty Wynn grinned, and braced himself up to deliver the next ball.

Nugent was the next batsman; and he expected a ball similar to the one which had compassed Wharton's downfall.

Instead of which he received a slow leg-break, which took him so completely by surprise that he mistimed it; and once again the umpire had to replace the balls.

And then—to the blank consternation of Greyfriars, and the delight of St. Jim's—Peter Todd walked in, and walked out again in one movement, as it were.

Fatty Wynn's third ball had made a terrible mess of Peter's wicket.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus

"Trust old Bob to avoid that!" said Wharton, laughing.

Greyfriars bucked up.

Fatty Wynn was always dangerous, but he did not have matters all his own way.

Bob Cherry, Vernon-Smith, and Mark Linley all got into double figures; and Bulstrode batted in a manner which suggested that it was a mistake to put him in last.

The Remove were finally dismissed for 80, which gave St. Jim's a clear lead of 50 runs on the first innings.

"Now for tea!" said Fatty Wynn.

"My hat! I'm simply famished!"

"Never mind, old scout!" said Kerr.

"It's your innings now!"

And Kerr and Figgins each took their chum affectionately by the arm and propelled him towards the tea-tables.

The rest of the cricketers, with appetites sharpened by their strenuous efforts on the field of play, stood on.

But a surprise was in store for the players.

When they reached the tables they



Stretched upon the couch, snoring with a trumpet-like refrain, and with his hands clasped in the region of his waistcoat, was Billy Bunter of Greyfriars:—
"My hat!" gasped Manners. (See Chapter 7.)

tus D'Arcy, in ecstasy. "That's simply stunnin', Wynn, deah boy!"

"It's wen me a jolly good feed, anyway!" said Fatty Wynn, with a triumphant grin at Figgins.

"There's no objection to your taking a wicket with every ball you bowl," said Tom Merry. "If you can settle Vernon-Smith's hash with your fourth ball, we'll fall down and worship you!"

But Vernon-Smith put a straight bat in front of the three remaining balls of the over.

At the other end Bob Cherry was batting.

Bob had been compelled to stand idly by while three of the Remove's best batsmen had been disposed of; and he was itching to have a go at the bowling himself.

Talbot was the bowler this time, and he was less deadly than Fatty Wynn.

Bob Cherry smote the first ball hard and true to the boundary.

"Oh, good!" murmured Peter Todd, as he unstrapped his pads. "I was thinking we were going to be all out for nix!"

found nothing but empty dishes and a collection of crumbs.

The food had disappeared!

Cakes, pastries, stewed fruits, and other comestibles had vanished as mysteriously as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up.

Fatty Wynn's jaw dropped.

"Gone!" he muttered. "My only hat!"

And the cricketers stared at each other blankly.

The same question was on the lips of each.

What hidden hand had been at work to remove the feed?

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Lively Afternoon!

"THIS beats the band!" said Tom Merry.

"Takes the cake" would be more correct," grunted Monty Louthery. "Those fags must have been helping themselves."

"Wot!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "My young brotherh helped to bring the grub along, and I'm hush be wouldn't lay a finger on it."

Wally D'Arcy and Joe Frayne of the Third came sprinting up as Gussy spoke. "What's happened?" asked Wally breathlessly.

Tom Merry indicated the barren dishes.

"We've got to entertain the Greyfriars fellows with crumbs!" he said. "Somebody's wolfed the grub."

"Do you kids know anything about it?" asked Manners sternly.

The two fags shook their heads.

"The grub was all serene when we left it," said Wally. "It was all laid out ready—mountains of it! It's been speered away, or something."

"Why couldn't you silly young asses have kept guard over it?" demanded Figgins.

"Rats!" said Wally D'Arcy. "We did our bit by bringing the stuff along. If somebody chooses to come and pinch it, that's their look-out."

Tom Merry turned rather a flushed face to the Greyfriars juniors.

"I'm awfully sorry this has happened, you fellows," he said.

"Don't munch!" said Bob Cherry. "Accidents will happen, even in the best-regulated cricket teams."

"We've got plenty of grub in the study," said Manners hopefully. "Let's go along and get it, Tommy."

Tom Merry's face brightened.

"I'd forgotten all about our own supplies," he said. "Shan't be long, you fellows."

And he accompanied Manners into the School House.

"It won't be such a fine spread as it was in the first place," said the captain of the Shell. "But there's a cake, and rolls, and strawberry-jam, and that's something."

But it was destined to be an afternoon of surprises.

When the two Shell fellows threw open the cupboard in Study No. 10, they found themselves in a similar plight to the celebrated Mother Hubbard.

The shelves, once stacked with good things, were now bare.

"My hat!" said Manners. "We've been ridged!"

"It almost makes you think that Billy Bunter was at St. Jim's again!" said Tom Merry. "You remember Bunter's little ways? He always used to pinch anything he could lay his hands on."

"What's to be done now?" asked Manners helplessly.

"We must go along and see if Grundy can help us out. He had a fat remittance from his Uncle Grundy this morning."

Grundy of the Shell, however, did not prove to be a horn of plenty.

He was discovered in his study, with Wilkins and Gunn. The trio looked decidedly wrathful.

"You fellows seen anything of my pie?" said Grundy. "It was a rabbit-pie—fresh from the tuckshop—and it's disappeared!"

"Oh!"

"We were going to have a high tea," growled Wilkins. "And now it looks as if we shall have a jolly low one—in Hall! Dame Taggles has closed the tuckshop, and we can't get another pie."

"This study-raiding's getting a bit too thick," said Grundy. "If I find the fellow who scoffed my pie I—I'll burst him!"

Tom Merry nodded. He could sympathise with George Alfred Grundy in the present crisis.

"We're in the same boat," he said. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 592.

"We got in a topping spread for the Greyfriars fellows, and now there's hardly a crumb left to tell the tale."

"My hat!"

"The question is," said Manners, "how are we going to raise a feed? We can't carry on with the match without a tea interval. It's unthinkable!"

"There may be something doing in Cardew's study," suggested Gunn. "I believe they laid in plenty of provisions for a feed this evening."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "Come on, Manners. Cardew's certain to turn up trumps."

The food-hunters went along to Cardew's study on the Fourth Form passage.

Levison, Cardaw, and Clive, the three occupants, could be counted upon to rally round at the critical moment, and to help the St. Jim's cricketers out of their awkward predicament.

Tom Merry threw open the door of the study.

The next moment the two Shell fellows nearly fell down.

The rightful occupants of the study were not present. But, stretched upon the couch, snoring with a trumpet-like refrain, and with his hands clasped in the region of his waistcoat, was Billy Bunter of Greyfriars!

"Mum—mum—my hat!" gasped Manners.

"Bunter!"

Tom Merry was too paralysed to act at once. He could only stare at the fat

figure of the Owl of the Remove in mute wonder.

Smears of jam were upon Billy Bunter's face, and he gave the impression of having stuffed himself until he was obliged to sink down, overcome.

Manners advanced into the study and opened the cupboard.

Fortunately, Billy Bunter had hardly touched Cardew's supplies.

His orgy in the corner of the cricket-ground, followed by his raids on the Shell studies, had proved too much for him. Even Bunter, mighty feeder though he was, had his limits.

At that moment footsteps were audible in the passage, and Levison major, Cardaw, and Clive appeared.

They stopped short on the threshold of the study in astonishment.

Cardaw was the first to find his voice. "Behold the Sleepin' Beauty!" he said. "I thought we'd seen the last of our barrel-kick friend months ago. What's he doin' at St. Jim's?"

"Give it up!" said Tom Merry. "It looks as if he's come over here without permission. Anyway, in the last hour or so he's had three feeds, and you were going to be the fourth victim. Look here, Cardaw. Can you put off your feed till another time, and let us have your supplies for the Greyfriars fellows?"

"With pleasure!" said Cardaw. "I'm sure 'em're willin'." Sidney?

"Yes, rather!" said Clive.

"Same here!" said Levison. "Can't let the strangers within the gates go empty away."

"What shall we do with this fat worm?" asked Manners, indicating Bunter whose trumpeting snore fairly shook the study.

Cardaw chuckled.

"I think this is a golden opportunity to provide a little Bank Holiday amusement," he said genially. "We'll put our fat friend on a wheelbarrow, an' exhibit him to the crowd. Three shies a penny!"

"Ee, ha, ha!"

"Bring him down to the quad," said Cardaw. "while I commandeer the barrow."

Willing hands laid hold of Billy Bunter, and lifted him off the couch.

But it was as much as the four sturdy juniors could do to carry the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove into the quad. They groaned and grunted beneath their burden.

Bunter, although none too gently handled, still slept soundly.

Even when he was bumped into the wheelbarrow, and made secure with a length of rope, he failed to wake.

"Don't start the merry procession for a minute," said Cardaw.

He went back to his study, and carefully inscribed a placard, which was duly affixed to Billy Bunter's broad back. It ran as follows:

"GREAT BANK HOLIDAY
ATTRACTION!

BUNTER, THE TAME BOA-
CONSTRUCTOR!

THREE SHIES A PENNY!
HIT HIM ON THE DIAL AND GET
YOUR MONEY BACK!

TOPPING PASTIME FOR YOUNG
AND OLD!

Bricks are taboo, but rotten eggs and ancient kippers are warmly welcomed!
PLEASE THROW SOMETHING!"

"That ought to do the trick!" grinned Cardaw. "Full steam ahead!"

The wheelbarrow was pushed round to the cricket-ground. It lurched unsteadily from side to side, and the jolting movements caused the sleeper to stir uneasily. But he still slept.

Read "THE HEART OF A HERO!"

A Wonderful Complete
Story of TOM MERRY
& CO. at St. Jim's,

By MARTIN CLIFFORD,

in

"THE GEM."

Out This Wednesday.





"Woman!" came in a snarling tone, apparently from Mr. Quelch. "Viper! Vixen!" The sour-looking lady shot bolt upright. "Eh? Wot was that?" she exclaimed. (See Chapter 9.)

There was a yell from St. Jim's and Greyfriars juniors alike when the barrow came to a halt in front of the pavilion.

"What the merry dickens—" gasped Monty Lowther.

"Bunter!" yelled the Greyfriars fellows as one man.

"My only aunt!"

"He's defied Quelch!"

"And he's scoffed our tea, too!" said Tom Merry. "There can't be any doubt about it. We ran him to earth in Cardew's study!"

"The fat thief!"

"Beat him!"

The crowd began to look round for suitable missiles. The invitation on the placard was too good to be ignored.

The next moment Billy Bunter wondered dazedly if Bedlam had broken loose.

He awoke to find himself cramped in a wheelbarrow, surrounded by a hostile crowd.

Before he could fully account for his present plight a shower of eggs burst and splattered all over him.

"Yoochoop!"

Those eggs were not by any manner of means new-laid. They resembled, in fact, Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome." The fags of the Third had been keeping them in reserve for an occasion such as this; and they entered into the spirit of the thing with great zest.

"Go it!"

"Give him beans!"

"Bust his window-panes for him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The air was thick with flying missiles.

From far and near fellows trooped up to join in the fun.

Had Billy Bunter been an effigy of the ex-Kaiser he could not have met with such a warm reception.

"Yow! Chuck it! Stop it! I'm hurt!" spluttered Bunter. "Give over, you beasts!"

But the pelters did not desist until lack of ammunition compelled them to do so. They continued to rain in shots upon the unhappy Bunter; and when at last Harry Wharton stepped forward to untie the victim's bonds, the Owl of the Remove was in a terrible state. He could not have been worse if he had just emerged from a very slimy and unsavoury duckpond.

"Ow! Traitors!" groaned Bunter, blinking at the grinning faces of the Greyfriars juniors. "Why didn't you back me up against those rotters?"

"You deserved every bit of what you got," said Peter Todd. "Now, hustle back to Greyfriars, unless you want to be fired out of the school in disgrace! You heard what Quelch said this morning. You were flatly forbidden to come over here. If Quelch finds out where you've been you'll be sent packing!"

"Oh, really, Todd—"

"You fat young toad!" said Wharton. "You're a disgrace to the Remove! Fancy coming to a rival school to steal!"

"I—I say, that's an ugly word, Wharton—"

"He's true!" snapped Harry.

"Rats! You ought to know me better than that! I've had a few snacks, I admit, and I'm quite prepared to pay for them!"

"W-w-what?" gasped Wharton.

Billy Bunter, still seated in the wheelbarrow, plunged a fat and sticky hand into his pocket, and produced four currency notes and some small change.

"Great jumping cracker!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Have you been rifling the Head's safe, you young ass?"

"Of course not! This money is part of a fiver which I received this morning from one of my titled relations! I'm willing to make good any financial losses I've caused to my old pals at St. Jim's!"

"Well, I'm jiggered!" murmured Frank Nugent.

"I've had about a quid's worth of grub altogether," Bunter went on. "Here you are, Tom Merry!"

And the fat junior extended a pound note to the astonished captain of the Shell.

"I'll take it," said Tom Merry, "and keep it by me. It's bound to be claimed sooner or later by the person whose desk you've burgled!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Now, look here, Bunter," said Wharton sternly, "you'd better cut back to Greyfriars at once, or there'll be ructions! If you go back now there's just a chance that you may get in before Quelch spots your absence."

"I'm staying, leave!" said Bunter obstinately. "I'm not going to have my Bank Holiday nipped in the bud for anybody! Who cares a rap for an old woman like Quelch, anyway?"

Scarcely were the words out of Bunter's mouth, when the crowd of cricketers

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suddenly parted, leaving a pathway down the centre.

"And through this pathway, stern of eye and taut of lip, strode a familiar figure.

Bunter's eyes nearly bulged out of their sockets.

For the intruder was Mr. Quelch!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Homeward Bound!

"BUNTER!"

The Remove master's voice fell upon Bunter's ear like a clap of thunder.

"Ow!"

"What are you doing here? And how dare you place yourself in such a preposterous position! Remove yourself from that—that objectionable vehicle at once!"

Billy Bunter got down from the wheelbarrow. It turned turtle as he did so, and Bunter landed at Mr. Quelch's feet like a bounding fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"This is no laughing matter, my boys! Get to your feet, Bunter!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Billy Bunter struggled to his feet, and stood blinking at Mr. Quelch.

His knees were fairly knocking together. He was in a tight corner; and it was difficult to see a way out.

"This morning, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, in measured tones, "I expressly forbade you to leave the precincts of Greyfriars! I gave you an imposition to write, and directed you to remain in the Form-room. You have wantonly and brazenly defied me!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"I understand from Gosling that you escaped by means of a trick," continued Mr. Quelch. "You have been guilty of the most outrageous conduct, Bunter! What have you to say for yourself?"

Billy Bunter moistened his dry lips.

"I was in the Form-room, sir, writing my lines like a dutiful pupil, when I got an urgent telegram from Wharton—"

"What?"

"A fearfully urgent telegram, sir! It said, 'Come at once. We are getting badly licked by St. Jim's.'"

"Bless my soul!"

"You fat young fraud—" exclaimed Harry Wharton angrily.

Billy Bunter clutched at his excuse like a drowning man at a straw.

"That's how it was, sir," he said. "Of course, I couldn't leave the Remove in the lurch, so I hurried over to St. Jim's without a moment's delay. Under those circumstances, sir, I hope you won't punish me."

Bunter's hope was ill-founded.

"You are a most deceitful and untruthful boy, Bunter! You say that Wharton sent you a telegram!"

"Yes, sir."

"It is impossible to send telegrams on a Bank Holiday!" said Mr. Quelch dryly.

"M-m-my hat!"

"You will return to Greyfriars at once, in my custody," rumbled the Form-master. "I will consider how best to deal with you."

"Ow! Kik-kik—can't you wait till the match is over, sir?" stammered Bunter.

"The Remove are relying on me to pull the game out of the fire, sir!"

"You will come with me!" rasped Mr. Quelch.

His hand descended upon Billy Bunter's shoulder, and the Owl of the Remove, after a wild glance round, was marched off the cricket-ground.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

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hus D'Arcy. "I consider that Bunter is booked for a very warm time, dear boys!"

"There's not much doubt about that," said Harry Wharton. "I wouldn't be in Bunter's shoes for a whole term's pocket-money!"

The rest of the juniors shared Wharton's view.

Mr. Quelch was extremely angry. His Bank Holiday had been entirely spoiled. In the middle of his game of golf with Mr. Prout he had been informed by Gosling that Bunter had broken bounds.

Another master might have carried on with his golf, and postponed Billy Bunter's hour of reckoning.

Not so Mr. Quelch. Always a keen disciplinarian, he meant to bring Bunter back into the strait and narrow path with all speed.

After apologising briefly to Mr. Prout, he had taken the train to Friarale, and had hurried to St. Jim's to expedite the return of the wanderer.

It was a very breathless Bunter that arrived at Rylcombe Station with Mr. Quelch.

"What time is the next train to Court-field Junction?" inquired the Remove-master of the sleepy-looking porter.

"Not till 5.30, sir. You've got an hour and a half."

Billy Bunter blinked at Mr. Quelch.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea, sir," he said, "to fill in the time at the bun-shop. I—I've had no tea, sir!" added Bunter, hastily, as Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes were turned upon him.

The Remove-master frowned.

"It would be a much better idea, Bunter," he said, "if you spent the next half-hour in a bath. Come with me!"

A taxi was crawling along the village street. Mr. Quelch hailed it.

"Are there any public baths hereabouts?" he inquired of the driver.

"Yesir! Over at Wayland, sir. Thinking of taking your usual Bank Holiday splash, sir?"

The taximan was trying to be genial, but the humour of the situation was quite lost upon Mr. Quelch.

"Do not be impertinent, my man!" he said. "Take us to Wayland at once!"

A refusal hovered on the man's lips. But the next moment a curious grin spread over his features. He meant to give Mr. Quelch a good run for his money.

"Jump in, sir!" he said.

Mr. Quelch stepped into the taxi, and Bunter followed.

The roads were not rough; but, judging by the antics of that taxi, Mr. Quelch imagined he was taking a trip over the Rocky Mountains.

The vehicle jolted and bumped terribly.

On rounding a corner Billy Bunter was hurled bodily into the unwilling arms of the Form-master.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch, as the fat junior cannoned into him.

"Yarooop!" roared Bunter. "The—the man's drunk, sir! May I get out and walk?"

"You will do nothing of the kind, Bunter! Resume your seat at once!"

Billy Bunter did so, only to be shot forward again the next instant.

He pitched across the taxi, and clasped Mr. Quelch lovingly round the neck.

"Ow! Help! Save me, sir! That fellow's potty!"

With great difficulty Mr. Quelch divested himself of Bunter's weighty form.

Then he thrust his head out of the window.

"Pray drive more carefully!" he shouted. "You are causing me acute discomfort!"

The driver grinned, and forged

merrily ahead. He meant to get his own back—and he succeeded!

Bump, bump!

The taxi jolted and swayed in a most alarming manner. It was a nightmare journey to the unhappy couple inside.

When the vehicle at last slowed up outside the public baths, Mr. Quelch drew a deep, deep breath of relief. He was thankful to think there were no bones broken.

"You are a very reckless and unprincipled man!" he said to the taxi-driver.

"Yesir! Certingly, sir! Seven-and-six, please!"

Mr. Quelch handed over the fare, and the taxi rolled away.

Billy Bunter turned to the Form-master with a look of appeal.

"Mum-mum-may I postpone my bath until we get back to Greyfriars, sir?"

For answer, Mr. Quelch grasped the fat junior by the arm and led him into the baths.

He gave the attendant instructions—likewise a tip—and Billy Bunter was taken, willy-nilly, to his doom. There were few things Bunter dreaded so much as a bath.

The attendant did his work thoroughly. He paved the way with a hard scrubbing-brush, and the odour of bad eggs and savoury kippers was gradually dispersed.

Then Bunter was plunged into an icy-cold bath, and he gurgled and spluttered as the water closed over his head.

But there was no help for it.

That attendant was a conscientious man. He didn't like working on Bank Holidays; but Mr. Quelch's tip had been a lavish one, and he meant to make himself worthy of it.

That half-hour was one of the most painful in the varied and extensive experience of Billy Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove pleaded, threatened, exhorted, and cajoled, but all to no purpose. He was soaped and scrubbed so thoroughly that, for once in his life, he looked perfectly clean.

When he rolled out of the baths, smarting all over, he found Mr. Quelch waiting for him.

"I am pleased to note an improvement in your appearance, Bunter," said the Remove-master, with grim satisfaction. "There is a train leaving Wayland in an hour. Meanwhile, we will have tea."

Billy Bunter brightened up.

Was it possible that he had misjudged Mr. Quelch?

It certainly looked like it.

The fat junior pictured himself sitting down to a table laden with good things. Some little time had elapsed since his orgy at St. Jim's, and he felt quite equal to another feed of large dimensions.

Mr. Quelch led the way into a small tea-shop—one of the few establishments of its kind which was open on Bank Holiday.

The proprietor of the shop came forward.

"Good-afternoon, sir! What can I get for you and your son?"

"Mum-mum-my son!" stammered Mr. Quelch.

The proprietor nodded.

"Is he not your bonnie, bouncing boy?" he asked, indicating Billy Bunter. Mr. Quelch shuddered.

"He is not—thank goodness!" he muttered.

"Your nephew, perhaps?" ventured the chatty proprietor.

"We are master and pupil," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "Pray bring two small cups of tea and half a buttered scone."

"Very good, sir."

The proprietor brought the tea, likewise the half scone, complete with margarine.

Mr. Quelch started operations on the scene.
"May I order my whack, sir?" asked Bunter.

"Be silent, Bunter! Drink your tea!" Billy Bunter slowly sipped his tea, and cast longing eyes at the dishes of pastry on the counter.

Mr. Quelch picked up a newspaper, and started to read.

Bunter saw that the Remove-master was not prepared to treat him to anything more substantial than a cup of weak tea.

But the fat junior remembered that he had money in his pocket.

Whilst Mr. Quelch was engrossed in the paper, Bunter caught the eye of the proprietor.

"Bring me a dish of those fancy pastries!" he whispered, almost inaudibly.

The proprietor obeyed.

Billy Bunter was just about to start on a large chocolate macaroon when Mr. Quelch looked up sharply from his paper.

"Bunter!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Remove that dish of indigestible compounds at once!"

"Yes, sir! Certainly, sir!"

And Billy Bunter took a huge bite out of the chocolate macaroon.

Mr. Quelch started up in anger.

"Boy! Bunter! How dare you disobey me!"

Billy Bunter blinked reproachfully across the table.

"You—you told me to remove those things, sir!" he said. "I was just making a start."

"You will replace that dish on the counter at once!"

"Ye-es, sir!"

Billy Bunter placed the tempting dish out of range.

He began to realise that he would have had a much happier Bank Holiday writing lines in the Form-room at Greyfriars. To be tantalised in this way was maddening.

Mr. Quelch finished his newspaper at leisure, while Billy Bunter sat, and withered.

Then, glancing at his watch, the Remove-master roge.

"Come, Bunter!" he said.

For an instant Bunter entertained a fleeting thought of making good his escape.

He was wondering whether to make a sudden bolt for freedom when Mr. Quelch, interpreting his thoughts, placed an iron grip on his shoulder.

"Do not dare to elude me, Bunter!" he said sternly.

And the Remove-master stalked out of the tea-shop.

Billy Bunter—owing to circumstances over which he had no control—accompanied him.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Revenge!

"HURRY UP, there!"

"Take your seats, please!"

The train was in at Wayland Station.

Mr. Quelch, with a tenacious grip on Billy Bunter's arm, looked out for an empty carriage.

He was unlucky. Bank Holiday crowds reduce empty carriages to a minimum.

There was, in fact, very little standing room.

Just as the train was starting Mr. Quelch threw open the door of a third-class smoking compartment and entered, dragging Billy Bunter in after him.

There were a dozen young fellows in the carriage—most of them in a state of hilarity. Some were singing. Mr. Quelch was amazed to learn from the lips

of one of them that the bells were ringing for him and his girl. Another young man, musically inclined, was proclaiming to the world at large that his wife had gone to the country. Yet another youth requested Mr. Quelch to give him his smile, the lovelight in his eyes.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

The carriage was hazy with the fumes of tobacco-smoke.

In one corner sat a very sour-looking lady of uncertain years. She frowned as her glance alighted on Mr. Quelch.

"Let that kid alone, can't yer? He ain't done you no 'arm!"

Mr. Quelch started.

"Are you addressing me, madam?"

"'Course I am! I'm surprised at yer, bully!" a small child like that! You'll make 'is glasses fall off in a minute. You orter be ashamed of yerself!"

Mr. Quelch bit his lip with annoyance.

He did not wish to enter upon a long explanation of Bunter's misconduct. This woman would not understand.

It was at this moment that Billy Bunter hit upon a sudden idea.

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He was furious with Mr. Quelch—not only because he had been dragged away from St. Jim's, but because the tea in Wayland had turned out to be a farce.

Bunter saw an opportunity of getting his own back by means of ventriloquism.

He knew that he would have to be very careful; for there would be short shrift for him if Mr. Quelch tumbled to the little game.

"Woman!" came in a snarling tone—apparently from Mr. Quelch. "Viper! Vixen!"

The sour-looking lady shot bolt upright.

"Eh? What was that?" she exclaimed.

"Insolent hussy! Mind your own business!"

"My eye!"

The incensed old lady flourished a bony fist under Mr. Quelch's nose.

"'Ow dare yer!" she shouted. "'Ow dare yer say sich things to a lady!"

Mr. Quelch staggered.

"My good woman, I—I can assure you—I wasn't—I didn't—I—he stammered.

"If my 'usbung was 'ere, he'd bash yer ury face in!"

There was a roar of laughter from the other occupants of the carriage.

Mr. Quelch nearly collapsed.

"Oh dear! I—I—"

"You're a 'Bawlshevrist, that's wot you are!" said the lady in the corner.

"A-bully!" of that young kid, as ever was! Nice young kid he is, too! He ain't a boot-fisted clown, like you!"

"Madam! I—"

"Yah! Go an' boil yer 'ead!"

Mr. Quelch did not go and boil his head. Instead, he leaned heavily on the strap, gasping.

"Come 'ere, my little man!" said the woman, addressing Billy Bunter.

"There's room on my lap, if yer like."

"—I'd rather stand, thanks!" said Bunter hastily.

"Oh, orright! Wot's the trouble? 'As he bin ill-treatin' of yer?"

"N-n-not exactly," stammered Bunter, with a dubious glance at Mr. Quelch.

"I—I'm peckish, ma'am, that's all. I only had a light snack for lunch; and I've had no tea."

"Bless 'is 'eart! 'Ere, pitch into these buns!"

So saying, Billy Bunter's Good Samaritan produced a large paper bag, from which the fat junior helped himself liberally.

Mr. Quelch was too much overcome to interfere.

Billy Bunter disposed of the buns with lightning speed.

"Bless yer!" said the kind-hearted lady. "I ain't 'ad sich a treat since I fed the seagulls at the Zoo!"

"Thank you, ma'am!" mumbled Bunter. "I feel better already."

"That's the style! If that old geyser —the woman pointed a very faded parasol at Mr. Quelch—"if he tries any of 'is tricks on yer, let me know. You'll find me in the pawshop queue at Court-field any Monday mornin'!"

"Right you are, ma'am!"

Bunter felt that he was not having such a bad time, after all.

The chopper would come down when he got to Greyfriars, he knew. Meanwhile, he meant to enjoy himself.

The train rushed on through the pleasant countryside; and the voices of the holiday-makers broke out afresh.

"There's a tramp, tramp, tramp along the 'ighway!"

There's a sound of music drawin' near!"

Mr. Quelch devoutly wished that the music, instead of drawing near, would fade away. His ear-drums seemed in imminent danger of bursting.

"Why don't yer take that sour look off yer mug?" demanded the woman in the corner, at length. "It's 'oliday time, and everybody's 'appy! Give us a song, old 'stetich-fice!"

"Yus, give us a song!" chorused the hilarious occupants of the carriage.

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I regard you as an unrefined and disorderly rabble!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, do yer!" growled one of the youths. "Then take that!"

Mr. Quelch took it. It was a playful thump on the head which smashed his golfing-cap down over his eyes.

"You—you disgraceful ruffian! I have a good mind to pull the communication cord!"

"If you do," said the festive youth, "there won't be much of yer left by the time the guard gets 'ere!"

The Remove-master quailed before the ominous tones of the speaker.

"Oh dear!" he murmured. "This—is intolerable!"

That journey was like a bad dream to Mr. Quelch.

The din which went on around him was deafening.

Chorus after chorus burst from the lips of the irrepressible holiday-makers.

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Over in the corner Billy Bunter was engaged in telling his lady benefactor all about his titled relations. Mr. Quelch caught the word "postal-order" from time to time.

Ah! Courtfield at last!

With a jarring of the brakes, the train rumbled to a standstill.

Mr. Quelch was quite limp as he staggered on to the platform.

"Bless my soul!" he gasped. "I shall never travel by train on a Bank Holiday again—no!"

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" sang out the lady in the corner. "An' don't let me catch yer up to none of yer bullfinch tricks agen!"

"Ho, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter.

Mr. Quelch spun round upon the fat junior.

"How dare you snigger at the epithets of that—that offensive female!" he exclaimed. "Come away at once, Bunter!"

And Mr. Quelch enforced his words by fairly dragging the Owl of the Remove on to the other platform, where the Friar-dale train was waiting.

The grin faded from Billy Bunter's face.

He realised that the end of the adventure loomed very near.

Mr. Quelch was in a towering rage, and he would not be likely to spare the rod.

The train rumbled on its way, and a hoarse refrain from one of its crowded carriages followed Mr. Quelch and Billy Bunter as they went.

"There's a tramp, tramp, tramp along the highway!
There's a sound of music drawin' near!"

With something like a shiver Billy Bunter reflected that the "music" was drawing near much too quickly for his personal comfort!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Fellows Who Won!

WHILST Billy Bunter was being led to the slaughter, as it were, the Greyfriars Eleven were having a similar experience at St. Jim's.

The game had gone against them.

After the tea interval, at which Cardew's supplies were duly requisitioned, St. Jim's had started upon their second innings. And it had seemed to the Greyfriars juniors that they would never finish.

Tom Merry and Talbot had stayed in for an hour, and had given an exhibition of fireworks.

Then George Figgins, determined to show that the cricketing talent of St. Jim's was not confined to the School House, had gone in and made merry, rattling up 35 before a fast ball from Hurree Singh uprooted his off-stump.

As if this were not enough, Redfern proceeded to pile Pelion on Ossa by scoring four boundaries in one over.

The Saints were irresistible. They piled up runs at an amazing rate, and the second innings closed—the day was far spent by this time—for the magnificent total of 199.

Harry Wharton & Co. wanted 250 to win.

It was a tremendous task. It was next-door to impossible.

Even if the Remove made hay of Fatty Wynn's bowling—and very few batmen ever succeeded in doing that—it was doubtful whether the light would hold out.

Although the match had started early, there had been many delays, for which Billy Bunter had been chiefly responsible.

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"Two hundred and fifty!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Shades of Jack Hobbs! Where are we going to get that little lot from?"

"Of course, we haven't an earthly!" said Bulstrode. "Let's make the second innings a sort of pantomime."

Wharton turned almost fiercely upon the speaker.

"We're not going to play the giddy goat, if that's what you mean," he said. "We're almost certain to lose; but we're going to make the margin as narrow as possible! Every fellow's got to put his best into it!"

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull. "We shall go under, but we'll show 'em that we've still got a kick left in us!"

It was in this spirit that Greyfriars started on their second innings.

They were tired and leg-weary. They had fielded for three hours beneath a blazing sun. They had brought all their energies to bear on dismissing the St. Jim's batsmen. And now that their own turn to bat had come they were ill-equipped for the struggle.

When Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent walked out to the wickets there was a strange lack of enthusiasm on the part of the spectators.

Many of the fellows had already left the ground, deeming the match as good as won for St. Jim's. Only a few remained, curious to see how Greyfriars would shape in their uphill task.

Wharton opened strongly.

There were no fancy strokes, no beautiful leg-drives or stylish cuts.

Wharton's batting was of the rustic order. He hit hard and clean. When allowed to do so he hit often.

"Harry's got his back to the wall!" murmured Bob Cherry, from the pavilion seats. "He's a fixture this time. Fatty Wynn's tearing his hair already."

"Nugent can't settle down," said Peter Todd. "Look at that! Thought his number was up that time!"

Frank Nugent had just scraped feebly at a slow ball from Fatty Wynn, and mid-wicket had just failed to get to the ball in time.

It was not until the fifty had been hoisted that the St. Jim's fellows began to tell each other that this sort of thing wouldn't do.

But although they were rather perturbed by Wharton's hurricane batting, they were by no means anxious. There could only be one result, they reflected—a St. Jim's victory.

The score had leapt up to 85 when Frank Nugent was caught at the wicket, and Harry Wharton had made 60 of them.

Frank Nugent grumbled rather breathlessly as he passed Bob Cherry, who was going in to take his place.

"They're not getting so much ginger into their bowling as they were before," he said. "Go for the stuff baldheaded, Bob!"

"Trust your uncle!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

But for quite a long time he had nothing to do.

Harry Wharton was still going strong. He had a happy knack of scoring singles off the last ball of each over, thereby retaining the bowling.

Bob Cherry watched his chum in silent admiration.

Wharton was always at his best when playing an uphill game.

If the Remove had wanted a thousand to win he would never have given up.

The hundred runs went up on the telegraph board, and although the sun was beginning to sink in the west, Harry Wharton saw that Greyfriars still had a faint chance of saving the match.

That faint chance grew into something more tangible as the game advanced.

The hundred and fifty was reached with only one wicket down.

And presently a tremendous burst of cheering swept up from the pavilion.

Harry Wharton looked round dazedly. He could not understand it at first; and then it dawned on him that he had reached his century.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, panting with his exertions in the field. "These beggars are goin' to take some shiffin', a'fah all!"

"Oh dear! I—I'm done!" gasped Fatty Wynn.

His bowling had lost its sting. After a rest he would probably come back like a giant refreshed. In the meantime, a change-bowler was necessary.

Tom Merry himself took the ball, and he tried all he knew to break through Harry Wharton's defence.

But this was Wharton's day. He was touching the top of his form, and nothing could move him.

Bob Cherry backed his leader up loyally. Bob was a lusty hitter, and although Wharton did the lion's share of the batting, quite a respectable score stood to Bob Cherry's credit when he was at length disposed of by a fast ball from the captain of the Shell.

"A hundred and eighty for two!" said Bulstrode. "My hat! I wonder if we can possibly pull it off!"

A good many other fellows were wondering, too. But their wonderment turned to dismay when they realised that there was only another hour to go.

"This is where the G. L. Jessop touch will come in useful!" observed Skiff. "Play up, Toddy!"

Peter Todd ran out to the wickets. He ran, because every moment was precious now.

The crowd, which had dwindled away, returned in full force when they heard of the Remove's obstinate refusal to accept defeat.

Some lively batting followed.

Peter Todd did most of it, for Wharton was far spent now.

The captain of the Remove had played a great game with commendable fortitude. But there was a limit to all things, and Wharton was all but "whacked."

The perspiration was streaming down his face, and he was almost sobbing for breath.

Peter Todd, by far the fresher of the two, bit off at anything and everything. He knew that, if his wicket fell, there were others to take up the running.

The second hundred was hoisted amid loud applause.

"This is really a most remarkable display!" said Arthur Augustus. "I thought we'd won the match, dear boys!"

"Hark at him!" said Monty Lowther. "He thought! When people like Gussy start thinking tragedies always follow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowther—"

"Shurrup! Let's shift these beggars!"

But the beggars refused to be shifted. Wharton did little scoring now; but Peter Todd drove delightfully.

It was not until the score stood at two hundred and thirty that Peter was caught in the long-field.

Mark Lanley came in next. The Lancashire lad hit three boundaries in succession, and then got out.

But he had played his part in the lightning performance; and when Vernon-Smith followed on, Greyfriars were confident of victory.

It took Vernon-Smith but a few minutes to knock off the remaining runs. The winning hit was a beauty. The

ball landed with a bump and a clatter on the pavilion steps.

"Amazin'!" murmured Arthur Augustus, almost staggering from the field. "I wedged it as utterly improbable that Greyfriars could win!"

But it was so!
The Friars, with six wickets in hand, had not only won, but won handsomely. Harry Wharton's score was a hundred and forty—not out.

Small wonder that the St. Jim's fellows twisted the Friars to carry the captain of the Remove back to the pavilion.

Seldom had Harry Wharton & Co. succeeded in routing their opponents by such a big margin. It was not easy for any visiting side to win against St. Jim's.

But the Friars had overcome all obstacles, and won; and Harry Wharton's great score was likely to stand as a record for the season.

The Saints took their defeat like true sportsmen, and a very merry crowd assembled in the quadrangle to bid the Greyfriars juniors farewell.

"We'll see if we can't lower your giddy colours when we come over to Greyfriars," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah!"
"You'll have all your work out cut," said Harry Wharton, with a smile. "So long, you fellows! It's been a ripping day!"

And as the Remove Eleven were whirled back to Greyfriars in the thick

of a Bank Holiday crush, they felt that they had deserved well of their country.

Billy Bunter rolled up to the cricketers as they came into the Close.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" he mumbled.
"Is that a conundrum?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Wow! I've been licked!" yelled Bunter. "Quickly busted a couple of canes on me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" said the Owl of the Remove, blinking round at the grinning Removees. "I've had it hot, I can tell you! And I'm jolly hungry!"

"Rats!"
"You fellows would make me the guest of honour in Study No. 1 if you had a shred of sympathy for me!" said Bunter.

"Yes; but we haven't, you see!" said Wharton. "You're a stupid young ass, and you're jolly lucky not to be sacked from the school!"

"Oh, really, you know! I—I say—" But the cricketers were gone.

Billy Bunter rolled away disconsolately, but he cheered himself with the reflection that there was a goodly portion of Loder's fiver still unexpended.

On groping in his pocket, however, Bunter made the alarming discovery that the pocket-book was missing.

He groaned aloud.
Either the sour-faced lady in the railway-carriage, or one of the merry-making

roughs, had practised a little sleight-of-hand trick, and Bunter's ill-gotten gains had been transferred to somebody else's pocket.

Loder of the Sixth showed considerable traces of anxiety during the next few days.

He was concerned for the fate of his pocket-book.

Not that Loder minded losing the money a great deal, though that was bad enough; but he dreaded that the pocket-book might have found its way into the hands of the Head, or one of the masters.

That note from Jerry Hawke, if it came to light, would undoubtedly result in Loder's expulsion from the school. With all his cunning, he would find it difficult to explain away.

For a time the rascally prefect suffered intolerable suspense. But he was never called to judgment, and his anxiety ceased at length.

But Loder failed to unravel the mystery of the missing pocket-book.

Certainly his suspicions never rested upon William George Bunter. Had they done so, there would have been a yet more terrible climax to Billy Bunter's Half-Holiday!

(DON'T MISS "BUNTER THE BOLSHEVIK!" — next Monday's grand complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., by Frank Richards.)



SYNOPSIS.

Johnny Goggs comes to Rylcombe Grammar School from Frankingham with his chums Tricketts, Blount, and Waters.

Goggs is a jiu-jitsu expert, a clever impersonator, and the organiser of many brilliant fapes. He leads an expedition of grammarians to St. Jim's, and accomplishes one of the most daring night raids ever perpetrated.

(Now read on.)

On the Roof!

As there seemed no possibility of getting into the school by the usual way, all were ready to try this plan. They were fairly tired out by this time, and to most of them the roof adventure made no great appeal as an adventure. But it had its points as a likely way to bed.

An inspection of the tree did not make their prospects look more hopeful. The roof at the back was lower than in front, and the higher branches of the tree rose well above it. But the distance between those branches and the roof was too great to allow of stepping from them to it, and to jump was out of the question. Anxious as they were to get in, they had no desire to attain that end by making a hole in the roof and crashing through it.

"No go!" said Gordon Gay.

"Looks pretty hopeless," agreed Frank Monk.

"A giddy frost. And, my word, I am sleepy," growled Harry Wootton.

"Wait a moment, duffers! Goggles is thinking," said Bags. Bags was as tired as anyone else, but he was not too tired to retain his faith in Goggs.

"Have I not seen a short ladder somewhere about?" asked Goggs.

"Yes; I dare say you have," replied Jack Wootton. "You seem to see everything. There is one, anyway, and I fancy we can get at it, for the foot-board isn't often locked, and it's supposed to be kept there. Run and fetch it, Harry."

"Run and fetch it yourself, swanker!" said Goggs.

Lane and Mont Blanc fetched the ladder.

"Yes, I think it is long enough," said Goggs.

"Rats! It doesn't reach half-way," Morgan said.

"Half-way from where to where?" Goggs inquired blandly.

"From the ground to the roof, of course, fathead!"

"But it is not necessary that it should. My notion is that it will reach from the upper branches to the roof—see?"

It was a very simple solution of the problem, but it had not occurred to anyone but Goggs.

Now they all saw, and in a moment three or four were swarming up the tree.

"Don't all come right up to the top, you idiots!" rapped out Gay. "The ladder will have to be passed up."

The ladder was passed up, and it was found easy to make with it a kind of bridge from the upper branches to the roof.

Gordon Gay crossed it on hands and knees, and Goggs, Monk, Bags, and the rest followed.

The ladder will look above a bit suspicious in the morning, you know," said Carboy.

"It can be removed before anyone is down," replied Goggs.

They crept along the lower part of the roof. The main building was a storey higher than

the annex, which contained the kitchen and domestic offices, above which they now were. At first the getting from the lower roof to the higher one looked like another problem, but Goggs again found an easy solution to it.

A rain-pipe, running down from the upper roof, passed the edge of one side of the lower one, and it seemed quite firm.

Again Gordon Gay went first, and reached the upper part of the roof without difficulty. One by one Carboy, Mont Blanc, Nicky O'Donnell, Harry Wootton, Tricketts, Wagtail, Morgan, Donaldson, Lane, and Jack Wootton all followed him.

There remained on the lower roof only Frank Monk, Bags, and Goggs.

Wootton major's weight made the pipe sag out a bit. It was not that that he was heavier than two or three of the others; but the additional strain, that each made greater, was telling.

"Is it going to bear us?" asked Bags.

Gordon Gay looked over the edge of the upper roof, lying along the slates to do so.

"Dogs' try it if there's any doubt about that," he said warningly. "If we can get in, one of us can come down and open the window for you fellows."

"Oh, I'm going up," replied Monk. "The thing will hold all right. It's only one stanchion that's loose."

"If it will bear Monk it will bear us, Goggles," said Bags. "He's the heaviest of the three."

"You can both go before me if you like," Frank Monk said. "I'm quite content to be last."

"Go on, Bags!" said Goggs.

Bags went up nimbly. The pipe sagged just a little more.

"Here goes!" said Monk, and he began the climb up.

"Oh, look out!" cried Wootton minor. "It was too late. Monk was two yards above the lower roof when the pipe gave. He dropped, sprawling backwards. Goggs snatched at him as he fell, and broke the force of his fall by falling under him.

Those peering from above saw in the moonlight the two roll down the roof a yard or two. One of them clutched at the edge of it, and arrested their progress for a moment. But they were too badly mixed up together to see just what they were doing, and next moment they disappeared over the edge, still clinging to one another.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Wootton minor.

"They'll be smashed!"

"Splash!"

"Yooop!"

"Yow!"

"They've fallen into the water-butt!"

It was even so. And it was well for Goggs and Monk that so it should be.

One of the big buttows below happened to be of which was fortunate. And the two came down in such a manner that they fell right inside it, which was also fortunate. For if either had struck the edge of the butt the break might have been broken.

What was not so fortunate was the condition of the water inside the butt.

Rain-water long stored is apt to grow very smelly indeed. This had been long in the butt, and was to have been run off the next day. In order that the vessel might be cleaned out.

"Gurrigeeg!" gasped Goggs and Monk in unison, as they came up out of the vile liquid—or, rather, as their heads appeared above it.

"Are you all right?" sounded a somewhat treble voice from above.

"All right, be hanged!" We've been jolly well drowned, and now we're being jolly well poisoned!" replied Frank Monk hotly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you silly asses think it's funny—"

"Are you hurt?" demanded Gay from the roof.

"Not exactly hurt, but—"

"Then it's funny—blessed funny!"

"I quite agree with you, Joyful," said Goggs.

"But I am not greedy. I should like a footstool, but I don't want to get a share of the fun. I wish—I do really wish—that two or three of you were down here instead of me!"

"I wish the whole glady crew of them were," snapped Monk.

"That is truly kind of you, Monkey!" said Goggs.

"Kind? What do you mean, chump? It's not you I'm thinking about."

"But it was I we were talking about, was it?"

"No, Monkey, my dear fellow, have you happened to notice that this water does not—"

"—that this water—er—in short, that there is quite a nasty smell in this butt?"

"Have I happened to notice it? Why, you silly idiot, I've been laid out ten gallons of the beastly stuff!"

"Then you are doomed! Nothing on earth can save you. May I suggest that if you will only die quickly I can get out of this butt before I expire by using your corpse as a footstool?"

"I should not like to ask you to go right under here, you are actually deceased, but after that—"

"Ugh! Gurrigeeg! Ow!"

"Why, what is the matter, my dear Monkey?"

"Gurrigeeg! Ow! Yow!"

"Frank Monk had tried to climb out of the butt, but had slipped back, and had soused fairly under again.

"In the words of the Bard of Avon—or was it Wilkie Bard?—that does it!" said Goggs.

"After that I have no expectation of your recovery, and I am so impatient to get painful to you to put your head under water and be done with the job at once."

"You silly fathead! How are we going to get out of this?"

"Ask me another," replied Goggs mildly.

"Are you fellows coming out and up?" demanded Wootton minor impatiently.

"I fear that the answer is in the negative," said Goggs.

"See here, we've got to get out of this, Goggles!" said Frank Monk.

"Ugh! The stuff smells horribly. We shall be poisoned if we stay here much longer."

"As you refuse to decess—"

"You had better climb up on my shoulders and get out so."

"What?"

"You dear Monkey, I trust that I make myself intelligible."

"Yes; but—"

"Are you idiotic ever coming out of that?" called down Gordon Gay.

"You had just better do as I suggest, Monkey," said Goggs.

"But—"

"That is exactly the case. It is 'but' indeed, and I really think it is time we got out of it."

"If I climb on your shoulders, how are you?"

"Leave that to me, I beg."

"Oh, all serene! There's one good thing—I can't make you in a worse state than you are."

And with that Monk, using Goggs' back as an aid, scrambled up, and fairly flopped over the edge of the butt to the ground beneath.

"Are you out?" asked Goggs gently.

"Are you fellows coming up?" called down Lane.

"It looks like it. Ugh!" granted Monk.

"Yes, it looks like it. Coming in a minute, my dear old friend!"

And he levered himself up and out, dropping lightly on his feet by the side of his helper in misfortune.

"How on earth did you do it without help?" asked Monk.

"I was just going to get up to help you out."

"If you insist upon it, my dear Gorilla," replied Goggs solemnly, "I will get back into the butt. I must confess, however, that the prospect has no real charm for me."

"Ugh!" Frank Monk got to his feet.

"If you aren't the coolest boulder I ever met!"

"I'm rather more than cool," answered Goggs.

"You're a cliff!"

"Oh, come along!"

They moved round to the tree.

"My dear Chimpanzee, you do—er—niff somewhat!" remarked Goggs, sniffing.

"You don't!" retorted Monk.

"I am afraid to do, I quite hate myself," Goggs said sadly. But he brightened up as added: "But perhaps the other fellows will like us better than we like ourselves."

"The others shall have a glady chance of seeing whether they do, anyway," replied Monk grimly. "Hark at the chumps chortling!"

"Are you idiots ever coming up?"

"That was Bags. We had really better go."

"When Bags grows impatient it is time," Goggs said.

They climbed the tree, leaving a slimy trail behind them. They crossed by the ladder to the lower roof. But they had still to get to the higher one, and the rain-pipe had—

"—that is, the flag below."

"How are you going to get up?" asked Gay, looking down at them.

"Strange," said Goggs musingly, "that with so many acute intelligences assembled together here it should not have occurred to any one of them that it would be quite a useful notion to go down and open the window for us!"

"Perhaps it was strange, especially as that was the case, but before the rain-pipe had given way. But no one had thought of it since that."

"If you get on my shoulders again, my dear Orang-Outang," said Goggs, "and Gay and I will reach the chump's fingers as they stretch up, we will be able to raise the strain, and you may be hauled up."

"And what about you?" asked Monk.

"There is a way for me, if you have no objection. If these above can shift their weight on your armful, to ease the strain, I can climb up by your back."

"You mean it?"

"Do I not always mean what I say, my dear fellow?"

Goggs then planted himself as securely as possible on the roof as he spoke, his face to the wall.

Frank Monk climbed to his shoulders, not without difficulty. Gay and Wootton minor could not reach their chump's fingers as they stretched up, and gave a slight leap, and they gripped him by the wrists.

"Yow! That hurts!" gasped Monk.

But in another moment they had hauled him farther up, and had got their hands under his arms.

"Now, Johnny!" called Bags.

Goggs gave a little jump, and seized Monk round the legs.

In another second or two he had pulled himself up, slapping his back to his shoulder.

Then he reached up and reached the outstretched hands of Bags and Tricks, and was pulled on to the roof.

"Let me embrace you, my dear Blount!" he said effusively.

"Remember! Preserver! Heroic boy! Come to my arms!"

"Here, get away! Gerraway! I tell you!" howled Bags. "You—Oh, my hat!"

And Bags dodged out of the embrace that was so liberally offered him.

"You—my dear—"

"None for me, thank you! Ow! Stop it, Goggles, you fatheaded idiot! Stop it, I say! You smell like a blessed glue factory!"

Monk had by now been hauled up, fairly gasping. But in spite of his gasping he tried to fold Gay in loving arms. The attempt was not a success, for the Grammarian leader had been warned by the exclamation of Bags and Tricks.

"If you silly asses haven't had enough rotting for one night I have!" said Lane, rather crossly.

"Let is vat you call chiefly oop here," remarked Mont Blanc, shivering.

"Oh, chuck it, you two! You'll be having something to say about Gay."

There was really danger of that. The roof, though its pitch was not steep, was not exactly the safest place for such games.

And at that moment there came proof of that.

"My word, you do niff, Monkey!" jeered Wootton minor.

Frank Monk grabbed at him.

"Taroook!" howled Wootton minor, as he slid gutter the roof to get out of the way.

"Yoop! I shall be over! I'm—going!"

He matched at Monk's legs, forgetting in his panic that they were not precisely in a pleasant condition; and Monk began to shiver.

"Yoooop! Help!" gasped Monk.

Goggs threw himself flat, and caught Monk by the collar.

"Hang on to me, some of you!" he cried.

And though he also was success in a state that made hanging on to him as absolute luxury, Gay and Wootton minor on the roof were pulled up within an inch of going over. His feet had touched the ground, but he was pulled up, and that was all that mattered.

"That's enough of this fooling!" said Gay sharply.

"We're all in pretty much the same condition now, so you fellows may as well chuck trying to scent us with exclaims of bludge-water. Come along, and let's see whether there's any chance of getting in by the skylight."

They crawled along the roof after him.

The skylight had some distance from the place which they had got to, and some of them did not quite enjoy that slow and difficult progress. The raid on St. Jim's had been a huge success, but they would have been satisfied with a little less excitement to follow.

"Closed and fastened!" said Gay lugubriously.

"And after all this!" growled Wootton major.

"We've have some more of your blessed cleverness, Goggles!" said Carboy sarcastically.

"If you will be so very kind as to let me come near the skylight, it is just possible that I may be able to do something."

Returned Goggs. "But I certainly cannot do anything if you keep me from it."

"Let the image come!" snapped Frank Monk. "He has some know-how that's all the rest of us put together, and if he can't find a way none of us can, that's a dead cert."

"Hear, hear!" murmured Bags and Tricks and Waters in chorus.

"Gentlemen, I thank you for this unolicited testimony. I would bow if my position allowed of it. Please consider that I have done so."

He wriggled his way to the skylight, sniffing as he went.

"I can't have too much scent," he said.

"I shall not patent Essence de Bludge-water as a suitable toilet adjunct. I am not sure that everyone would like it."

"Head, does he never run down at all, at all?" asked Nicky O'Donnell.

"He's a blessed gramophone, whatever,"

said Morgan. "If the boulder doesn't look sharp, I shall be falling to sleep and tumbling off the giddy roof."

"Do not go hunting for big-water, my dear fellow," said Goggs mildly. "Apply to the old firm of Goggs, Gorilla, & Co., quite Unlimited—as to nil, if in no other respect."

But Goggs was at work as he talked. He tried the blade of a knife, but found that useless. Carboy, something of a dandy, once used a pair of nail-scissors, but they failed to do the trick.

"There is nothing else for it, I fear," said Goggs, with a sigh.

And he threw up a leg and brought his foot down smartly on the ground-glass of the skylight.

Fragmenta tinkled to the floor below. Goggs thrust in his hand and unfetters the catch.

"Now you've done it!" gasped Lane. "I intended to do it," replied Goggs coolly. "Shall I go first?"

"There will be no end of a row about that skylight in the morning," grumbled Woolton minor.

"I shall be less if we were convicted of a night out!" inquired Goggs.

And almost as he spoke he slipped through the opening, and dropped lightly on the floor ten feet below.

An Alarm of the Night.

GORDON GAY followed, and landed on his feet, as Goggs had done. But he did not land as lightly; he came down with a thump.

"A repetition of that noise for about the twentieth time might quite possibly wake someone," said Goggs blandly. "I had never suspected you before of being so heavy-footed, Goggs."

"Oh, cheese that!" said Gay. "I can't make out what you're built of, Goggs. After all this you seem as fresh as a daisy, and I don't mind owning that it's as much as I can do to keep on my pins. Hold on, you fellow! You mustn't all drop like I did. I'll stand underneath, and you can step on to my shoulders and slide down."

"If you will allow me, joyful—"

"Blast! you're not going to be allowed to do anything!" said Monk.

"Shall I hold your nose for you, joyful?" inquired Goggs.

"Yes, rather! No, you silly ass! You're as silly as he is!"

Monk's legs appeared through the opening. His feet fumbled for Gay's shoulders, and found them. He slid down his chum's back easily.

"How!" said Gay. "I'm glad that's over, anyway."

"If you think you smell like attar of roses yourself you're above a bit off it," answered Monk crossly.

The tempers of all except Goggs, and possibly Bags and Tricks, were badly frayed by this time. Wagtail, who came next, was certainly not an exception. He missed his footing, and would have come down sprawling had not Goggs and Monk caught him and held him up.

"You silly ass, Gay!" he snorted. "You moved. Just leave go of me, you two idiots! I don't want to smell like you do."

"I had better retire at once to the seclusion of No. 29, Waters," said Goggs. "You are really not as amiable as you might be."

"Think I'm going till everyone else is down! Rathed!" snapped Wagtail.

O'Donnell was next, and he managed the descent in good style. But Morgan was less lucky or more clumsy.

He got his feet on Gay's shoulders, but he did not push with enough vigour that Gay was sent reeling forward, to strike the wall with his head, and Morgan, letting go of the edge of the skylight too soon, landed on the floor in a heap.

"My napper!" mumbled Gay.

"You-s-w! I've busted something!" wailed Morgan.

"Somebody's coming!" hissed Monk.

"Keep back, above there!" whispered Goggs. The whisper came clearly to the ears of Woolton minor, who was just about to descend. He drew back, with a word of warning to the rest.

Through the skylight the moon shone in brightness. But the passage a few yards beyond it was in darkness, and next moment Gay, Monk, Morgan, O'Donnell, and Wagtail found themselves huddled together there.

(Continued on page 16.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:

THE MAGNET. THE GEM. THE BOYS' FRIEND. CHUCKLES. THE PENNY POPULAR.
Every Monday. Every Wed. Every Monday. Every Friday. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

For Next Monday:

"BUNTER THE BOLSHIEV!"

By Frank Richards.

Billy Bunter has played a good many parts in his time, but when he develops Bolshevistic tendencies he fairly "beats the band, takes the hum, and prances off with the whole giddy biscuit factory," to use an expression of Bob Cherry. Billy Bunter ante scratches himself that Bolshevism is "the thing"; and this merry antics in the Remove, his defiance of Mr. Queech, and the methods he adopts to advance the cause of Bolshevism, are narrated with that ready wit and sparkling humour for which Frank Richards is justly famous. Billy Bunter's dangerous mania does not bat, of course; but I will leave my readers to discover how it was effectively checked, and how the career of

"BUNTER THE BOLSHIEV!"

came to a sudden full-stop.

I can give an even stronger recommendation than usual to next Monday's grand long complete story of Greyfriars. It is, my sub-editor intimated to me, so I tremble to think of the effect it may have on some of my chums who are easily provoked to mirth!

NOW, BOYS AND GIRLS!

WHAT ABOUT THIS ANNUAL?

As I announced on this page last week, it has been proposed that a "Companion Papers Annual" should be published this year, if possible—containing the best work of Frank Richards, Martin Clifford, Owen Conquest, and other premier authors.

It rests with my readers whether this stupendous proposal is squashed or carried unanimously.

Be it understood that when I speak of a "Companion Papers Annual" I do not mean a book about the same size as the "Boys' Friend" Library. Oh dear no! I mean a real, fat volume, containing hundreds of pages, and the contents bill of which would be something like this:

A Long Complete Story of Greyfriars School, by Frank Richards.

A Long Complete Story of St. Jim's, by Martin Clifford.

A Long Complete Story of Rookwood, by Owen Conquest.

Magnificent Long Complete Redskin Story.

A Hoarding Historical Tale of the Days of Monmouth.

Plenty of Bright, Humorous Verse.

And on the pictorial side:

A Wonderful Coloured Cover.

Profuse Illustrations by Warwick Reynolds, C. H. Chapman, and others.

Several Fine Art Plates in Photogravure.

Portrait Galleries of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, and Rookwood Characters.

Roughly speaking, the "Annual" would consist of the foregoing features. It would be the biggest and boldest venture in boys' literature. It would be something which lovers of the Companion Papers could cherish throughout their lives, and they could bequeath it as a rich legacy to succeeding generations.

Now, boys and girls! Write and give your Editor and friend your views on this all-important subject!

A SERIAL BY YOUR EDITOR!

Last any of you missed last Wednesday's issue of the "Gem" Library, I will reproduce a suggestion contained therein—my suggestion that your Editor—apart his blarney—should contribute a serial to one of the Companion Papers:

Dear Editor,—Could you not write a serial describing how the Companion Papers First

started, how you met Frank Richards and Martin Clifford and Owen Conquest, and giving your readers a glimpse of the personalities of these fine writers?

Such a serial would be a new and altogether unique departure, I know; but thousands of your chums would be delighted if you would lift the veil and show us how the work of the Companion Papers has been carried on since their inception.

Many of us are simply dying to know what sort of men our favourite authors are—whether they are tall or short, young or old, athletic or deformed, and all that sort of thing.

Do be a sport, and give us a serial on these lines!

If you entertain any doubt as to the reception such a serial would receive, put a notice in your Chat, and I guarantee your serial will be flooded out with letters of approval and delight.

Don't hesitate, dear Editor. Think of the masses who are yearning and clamouring for such a serial!

Believe me,

Your sincere friend,

"SCNNY JIM."

Now, I do not claim to be a Frank Richards or a Martin Clifford; and if I undertake the writing of such a serial my chums must not expect a perfect masterpiece. Blessed are they who expect just a natural, straightforward record of my experiences, for they shall not be disappointed. At least, they won't be if they write at once and give us their unanimous sanction to go ahead!

THE MEN OF MIDDLESEX!

"Middlesex" to wit, published at one shilling by Messrs. W. H. Smith, is a very little book concerning the part played by Middlesex in the Great War. It is compiled by Clive Fenn, whose name is not known to readers of the Companion Papers, and contains contributions by Sir Owen Seaman, the Duchess of Northumberland, Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild, and others.

This little book will make a direct appeal to the patriotism of all my readers resident in Middlesex.

The Middlesex Regiment—or the "Die-Hards," as they are familiarly called—has traditions which are bound up with all the martial history of the British Empire; and an attempt has been made in this book, to justify to these fine, fearless fighting men.

Lovers of Middlesex should make a special point of securing a copy of this book, which is one of the best of its kind that I have seen.

A SPLENDID TREAT THAT'S HARD TO BEAT!

Last there be any of my readers who are groping in darkness with regard to the latest developments in the "Penny Popular," I should like to draw their attention to the splendid new story of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, and Rookwood, which are now appearing in our famous Friday companion paper.

I have received a good many letters from disappointed—and in some cases indignant—readers, to the effect that they have missed these fine new stories.

I have no sympathy to waste on these readers. If they have missed this feast of fiction, it's their funeral. I warned them quite plainly that

THE ONLY WAY

to ensure getting a copy of the "Penny Popular" was to order in advance. It is a very simple precaution; and it makes all the difference between a happy and an unhappy Friday evening.

"The 'Penny Pop' is still on top."

Order to-day,

S.V.P."

H. A. H. (YOUR EDITOR).

