



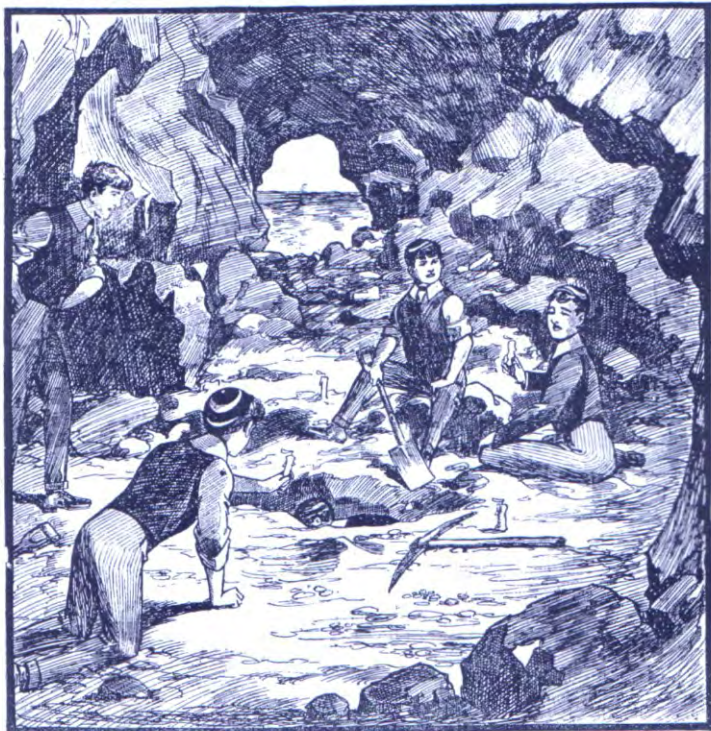
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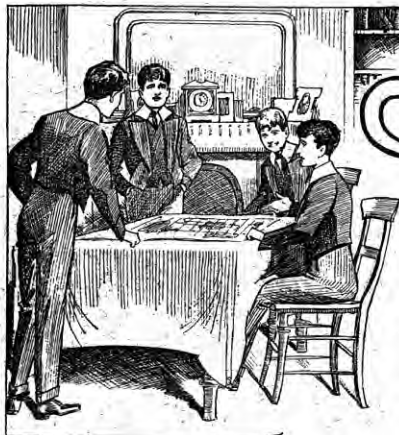
THE GOLDEN CLUE!



HARRY WHARTON & CO. DIG FOR TREASURE-TROVE!

(An exciting Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)

13-9-19



The Golden Clue!

by Frank Richards.

A Magnificent Long, Complete
School Story of HARRY
WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton & Co. in a Bad Mood.

HARRY WHARTON jumped up in alarm as Fisher Tarleton Fish came tearing into Study No. 1 in the Remove Form passage at Greyfriars.

Fisher T. Fish's face was flushed with excitement, and he dashed into the study at top speed, hardly seeing where he was going in his haste.

"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were playing chess, and the game had reached a most interesting point. But the warning came too late. Fisher Tarleton Fish, the American junior at Greyfriars, did not see the chess-table in time to stop himself, and he dashed right into it, and sent it flying. There was a scattering sound of chessmen on the floor, and Bob Cherry jumped up in wrath.

"You utter ass!" he roared. "See what you've done!"

"An idea!" shouted Fish. "A real live stunt! The best wheeze I've thought of for—"

"Confound your stunts! You've busted up our game of chess!"

"Yes, you utter duffer!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "I should have had Bob checkmate in three moves!"

"Rats!" exclaimed Bob Cherry warmly. "I should have had you checkmate in two—"

"Now, Bob, old man!"

"Now, Wharton!"

"My stunt!" shouted the American junior. "I tell you—"

"Bother—your stunt!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Go and tell it to Bunter, and if he won't listen to you, go and drown yourself in the quad! It's raining hard enough. What you mean by saying you'd have me mate in two moves, Cherry, I can't understand. Why, your queen was—"

"Now you know your king was—"

"And as for your rook—"

"With my bishop covering the king's—"

second, and the rook guarding the queen's square, you must see perfectly well—"

"I can see that I had you mated in three moves!"

"I tell you that in two—"

"Blow your old chess!" yelled Fisher Tarleton Fish. "We don't bother our heads about those old-fashioned games across the other side. I tell you this stunt of mine will make you lop-sided jays sit up! The idea—"

"Blow your blessed Yankee stunts! I wish you'd never left your blessed States, or you had gone to Jericho, before you had upset that table, you ass! Now Bob will always be maintaining that he would have had me mate in two moves, while I know perfectly well that I should have mated in three! You know—"

"Well, it's Fishy's fault that we can't settle the point!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"I vote that we teach him a lesson about upsetting people's chess-tables when they're in the middle of a game—or, rather, nearly at the end in this case, as I should have mated in two—"

"Oh, ring off, about your two moves! But your idea is a good one; this blessed Yank ought to be snatched bald-headed—"

"I tell you this stunt for a wet day is—"

But Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were too incensed, and they did not stay to listen. They grasped Fisher T. Fish, and rolled him over, in spite of his desperate struggles, and rubbed his features in the hearthrug, and mixed ashes in his hair. Fish yelled like a lunatic; but he could not escape, and he was pretty thoroughly ragged before Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton let him go. Then he staggered to his feet, with his face showing crimson where the dirt did not hide it, and his hair like a tumbled mop, and his collar hanging by one stud.

"Waal, you silly, lop-sided jays!" he roared. "Catch me coming to you in a hurry with my real live stunts again!"

"Yes, let's catch you, that's all!" said

Bob Cherry. "We'll give you worse next time! Here have I been trying for ages to beat Harry Wharton at chess, and, now, when I should have mated in two moves, you come rushing in and upsetting the blessed table!"

"Now, look here, Bob, I'm getting fed up with your two moves!"

"You'd have got beaten with 'em if Fishy hadn't—"

"That's all very well to say now, but if—"

"Oh, hang your 'ifs'! Anybody can say 'if'! I tell you—"

"And I tell you—"

"You lop-sided galoots!" roared Fish, with all the force of his lungs. "Will you listen to me? I tell you that this is a real gilt-edged, double-jewelled wheeze against those—"

Harry Wharton was picking up the chessmen.

"If you say another word about your blessed wheeze I'll throw you out of the room!" he growled.

"But it's the stunt of the century!" howled Fish. "It's just the very thing for a wet day. It's been raining cats and dogs for the last twelve hours, and you silly galoots can't play anything out of doors."

"And when we play a decent, exciting game of chess you come and play the silly goat in the middle of it!"

"Oh, my stars and stripes!" cried Fish.

"Can't you jays stop talking about that blessed game for a few minutes whilst you listen to what I've got to say! Now—"

Thump!

There was a violent bang on the study door, and the next moment Frank Nugent, Harry Wharton's study-mate, burst into the room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry. "Here's Franky now!"

"My hat!" replied the new-comer. "Fishy's in here now, is he?"

"Yep!" replied the American junior.

"I guess I've got—"

"I know what you've got, you dummy!"

"I guess—"
"Oh, for goodness' sake ring off!" interrupted Frank Nugent. "Wasn't I in Study No. 13 when you tried to work off your blessed wheezes on Inky and Marky? And now I've come along to my own study for a little peace and quiet!"

"I guess—"
"And didn't they chuck you out for bothering them on a wet afternoon? They're fed up with this weather, and they're fed up with you, so now they're coming along to this study for a bit."
"Those silly, lop-sided jays haven't the patience to listen to a real gilt-edged stunt, I tell you. Now, what—"
"Hallo, here's Mauly!" interrupted Frank Nugent, as the study door was flung open again, and Herbert Maulverer, the schoolboy earl, stroled in. "Anybody at home?" drawled Maulverer.

"Yes, come in, Mauly!" laughed Harry Wharton. "We shan't be at home for long if this long-winded Yank doesn't dry up!"

"Really, my dear fellow?"
"Yes, Fishy's got an idea. Hallo! Here's Inky and Linley and Johnny Bull now!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, otherwise known as Inky, stroled in and was followed by Mark Linley, the Lancashire scholarship boy, and general favourite with Harry Wharton & Co.

Hurree Singh and Mark Linley stopped, and glared across the study table at Fisher and Fish.
"I see my esteemed chums are being visited posthaste by the ludicrous Fish, said Inky, in his best English. "He's tried to work his ideas wheezefully in our esteemed study."

"And was jolly well bumped for it, too!" said Mark Linley. "We only chuckled him out a few minutes ago!"

"Yes, and then he came bouncing in here and spoilt a game of chess Harry and I were playing!" growled Bob. "I should have had Harry checkmate in two."

"Oh, ring off, Bob!"
"But I tell you your king was—"
"And I say your rook—"

"With my bishop covering the king's second, and the rook guarding the queen's square, don't you fellows agree that I had him checkmate perfectly well in—"

"Are you galoots going to listen to me?" roared Fish.

"No!"
"I tell you—"

"Oh, catch hold of him!" howled Bob. "A wet afternoon is trying enough without Fish. Let's throw him out into the passage!"

"Hands off!" cried the American junior as Frank Nugent and Mark Linley caught him by the arms.

"Bump the rotter!" said Bob. "Come on!"

"Rather!"

Harry Wharton & Co. required some sort of exercise. The rain had spoilt their afternoon's sport on the playing-fields, and the confinement on account of the rain had obviously tried their tempers. A little mild exercise with Fish as the victim would suit them down to the ground, and in a moment Fish was in the grasp of the chums of the Remove.

"Three of the best, you chaps!" cried Bob Cherry. "And then a final one for the passage floor!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my stars and stripes!" yelled Fish. "Will you galoots let go?"

"Yes, rather!" laughed Bob. "Up with him!"

Fish was raised high in the air, squirm-

ing frantically to release himself, but in vain.

"Now let him go!"

"Bump!"

"Twice more!" cried Bob Cherry. Bump! bump!

"Ow! You lop-sided jays!" howled Fish. "Will you listen—"

"Now one for the passage!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, flinging the study door open. "Come on, you dummies!"

Fisher Tarleton Fish was dragged squealing to the door, and he was raised in the air for the final effort.

"Out with him!"

Bump!

Fishy met the unsympathetic floor of the Remove passage with a crash, and he rolled over and over, squealing like a pig.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites. "Jever get left, Fishy!"

"Oh dear!" gasped the American junior, sitting up in the dust. "Will you galoots listen—"

Bump!

The door of Study No. 1 was slammed to with a crash, and Fish was left to himself to collect his wits. Nobody had the patience to listen to him, and he regarded the world a cruel and unsympathetic place, and Greyfriars the most cruel spot of all!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Golden Clue.

"NOW for a little peace!" said Harry Wharton. "Take a pew, you fellows!"

The chums of the Remove, feeling somewhat relieved in their feelings, complied with the invitation from the captain of the Form, and threw themselves into the wicker chairs. At least, some of them did; but there was no superfluity of armchairs in Study No. 1, and Frank Nugent was obliged to perch himself on the edge of the table, whilst Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry resented themselves in the chairs they had been using when Fish had bounced into the study.

"You see, Harry, old man," said Bob, "those two moves—"

"Oh, ring off!" growled Harry Wharton. "For goodness' sake try to forget all about that blessed game now! I'm going to read."

"There are some books," said Mark Linley, pointing to a little pile of volumes on the study table. "I've just been down to the library, and brought some up on the chance that some of you fellows would want to read."

"Good egg, Marky!"

"There's a curious old book there," said Mark Linley. "I found it jammed behind a lot of others, and it had about an inch of dust on it."

"Oh!"

"It doesn't look as though it had been touched for years and years," continued Mark Linley. "I don't know what it's about; but I thought it might be rather interesting to have a look through it."

Harry Wharton rose from his chair, and looked through the volumes on the table. A little puff of dust rose as he pulled out the old volume Mark Linley was referring to.

"My hat! This looks ancient, Marky."

"Yes; I can't make out who it's never been touched! It was wedged behind the old oak case rather, and I suppose it's been there for ages!"

"What's it called, Harry?"

Harry Wharton rubbed the corner of the tablecloth across the old leather binding, and tried to read the inscription stamped on the front.

"It's an jolly old I can hardly make it out. Oh, I see now! It's called 'A howke relating to olde treasure-trove, compiled from mane notes ande hear-saye legenders common in mane partes of our beloved countree.' Harry spelt the words out slowly, and the Removites listened in silence.

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob Cherry. "That sounds jolly interesting. I've often thought of taking up treasure hunting as a hobby."

"But they're nearly all yarns, I believe," said Johnny Bull. "I remember my dad used to tell us that there was supposed to be a lot of hidden gold a few miles away from our house at home."

"Did you ever look?"

"No; but the dad always said he'd like to try and work the thing out, and see whether there was anything in it."

"Work it out?"

"Yes; it was a complicated sort of legend. It had verses and all that sort of thing!"

"Oh!"

"These pages inside the book are very indistinct," said Harry Wharton, turning over the pages of the old volume one by one.

"Let me have a look when you've finished," said Bob. "Now, I think I'll just run down to the library and get a reference-book on chess. That game we were playing couldn't have ended in any other way, you know. You see, you fellows, Harry's king—"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Do for goodness' sake give that blessed game a rest! You know jolly well that your queen was—"

"But it was your king!" howled Bob.

"I know that—"

"Oh, dry up, you duffer," laughed Harry Wharton. "And listen to this! It looks like a bit of local interest."

"Yes, dry up, Bob!" said Mark Linley. "Read it out, Harry!"

Harry Wharton's face had become very serious, and he was looking intently at the old volume in his hands.

"My giddy aunt!" he said. "Blessed if there isn't an old print of the coast here, and there's a place marked that looks jolly well like the school."

"Really?"

"Half a second!" muttered Harry Wharton. "I'll try to work it out. Chuck over that magnifying-glass, Inky! It's on the shelf, if those fags didn't bust it when they ragged the study last week."

The glass was found, and Hurree Singh passed it across to Harry Wharton, and the captain of the Remove drew his chair up to the table, and leaned over the ancient volume.

"Read it out, old bean!" said Bob. "You never know, you know. There may be something in that treasure-trove idea."

"There—there is!" murmured Harry Wharton, staring through the magnifying glass. "I can see this thing quite plainly now. It shows Pegg and the cliff as far as the river."

"Does it show the Shoulder?"

"Yes; there's a big rock shown, and it looks rather like the Shoulder, but it looks ever so much bigger in proportion than the headland that we call the Shoulder."

"That's quite likely," said Mark Linley. "If it's an old print, the sea is sure to have worn away the rocks since that time."

"What's it say, my dear fellow?" drawled Maulverer. "Do read it out. It's such a fag if we've all got to look through it one by one!"

"Lazy rotter, Mauly!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Well, it doesn't say very much," said Harry Wharton, after a pause. "There are two pages, and I will read them out if you like."

"Yes, rather, my dear fellow!" drawled Mauleverer, settling himself back in the armchair and closing his eyes. "Do go ahead, there's a good chap!"

Harry Wharton cleared his throat, and placed the magnifying-glass over the volume, and then commenced to read aloud, spelling the words out slowly at times as the old print necessitated closer scrutiny.

"An olde legende maney goode folke in ye southe of oure cuntry hath passed downe from one generation to another relating to muche treasure reposed to have bene concealed in caves neare ye hamlet of Pegge.

"Ye legende, originates; so gossip hath it (and God protecte us from legende oure ears to muche gossip!); from ye monks ate ye monastierie known as Grey Friars, situated in Kent, neare ye hamlet of Pegge, ande not far distande from ye channelle dividinge oure cuntrye frome France.

"Ye storie hath it that a noble prince of France, fearinge for his heade, did flee from his cuntry into Spain, where his wealth, which was very abundant, was concealed by ye King ate that time reigninge.

"Ye prince, much embittered by sucho treatmente, ande in muche anger, robbed his Royale Majestie of two iron boxes or caskets, which contayned muche treasure.

"Conscience prickinge him sorely ate his ignoble action, drove this noble prince to flee from Spain, ande recorde hath it his goode shippe was sunke in a storme. (Folke did say openly that God punished ye prince for his wickednesse.)

"In these briefe notes ye authors craves pardon from his mane learned readers for not sayinge where ye Prince's shippe was engulged; but, accordinge to ye legende, historie hath it that ye shippe was loste with all soules neare ye hamlet of Pegge.

"Ye monks ate ye monastierie of Grey Friars are reputed to have recoverede muche wreckage from ye shippe, includinge ye boxes or caskets of riches stolene frome his Royale Majestie of Spain.

"Fearynge for their heades if such treasure shoulde be founde, ye boxes were duly concealed by burial in ye flosse of a cave neare by ye hamlet of Pegge.

"A legende saith that ye settinge sun muste shine its goldene rays on ye walle of ye cave ande forme ye crosse, avile but six paces downe, ande alonge ande downe againe, doth reveale ye treasure.

"Folke in ye southe hath searched in vain, ande in muche wraethe ate failure hath sprede mane false legendes over ye cuntrye-side; but ye one it hath been my honoure to inscribe here doth beare moste truthes."

"That's the lot," said Harry, leaning back in his chair.

"My hat!" cried Frank Nugent. "That's jolly interesting! That finishes it, does it?"

"Yes; that finishes that one, excepting for the picture of the coast-line."

"Any secrets in that, do you think?"

"I should say not. It's just given to show where Pegge is, I think, as it gives the geographical markings. I see they shove a map similar to that at the end of all these legends."

"I wonder if it's true?"

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"Might be. You never know with these things. People go and dig for years and years, and don't get any luck, and then suddenly a Johnny goes along one day and accidentally picks up the whole lot."

"Worth a little investigating, if that's the case."

"I wonder which cave they mean?" said Johnny Bull. "We've all explored the cliffs pretty thoroughly, haven't we?"

"Yes; we've probably been in the one where those old monks buried the treasure."

"Of course, we haven't been in all of them," said Bob Cherry. "There's that one with the warning notice stuck up outside, for instance. That cave has been going to fall in ever since I've been at this school, and it hasn't busted up yet."

"I know the one you mean."

"Well, that blessed notice-board frightens me out of that," said Bob Cherry. "I take it's thing up. I shall jolly well go and see if the setting sun does anything in the shadow-line in that one, for one."

"You want to be careful."

"Yes, I know that," replied Bob Cherry. "Now, let's go into that game of chess we were just finishing."

"El?"

"Now, your king—"

"Blow my king!"

"And my bishop was covering the king's second, and the rook guarding the queen's square. Now, you must see perfectly well that—"

"Oh, help!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Have you chaps ever heard of such a howling duffer in all the world? Why, his blessed queen was—"

"I say your king—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites, as Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton started off once more.

"Shut up that cackling!" cried Bob. "Harry knows perfectly well that—"

"Your blessed queen was—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry sat and glared across at one another, whilst the chums of the Removs roared with laughter, thoroughly enjoying the argument.

"I say, my dear fellows," drawled Mauleverer, "it's no good quarrelling over that blessed game of chess after all this time! Either give it up or play the game all over again, and let us get on with the business in hand!"

"Yes; I vote we go in for this treasure-trove wheeze!" said Johnny Bull.

"Seconded!" said Frank Nugent.

"Voted for and passed by the chairman!" said Mark Linley. "Now Bob and Harry can both dry up!"

"Yes; let's forget that rotten game!" laughed Harry Wharton. "I thought it was dead and buried after we'd settled with Fishy by chucking him out into the passage!"

Bob Cherry grunted.

"All right!" he said. "I know it was only a question of two moves before you were checkmate. And we'll play the blessed game over again, and that will prove I'm right!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter overhears.

"BETTER take some grub!"

Billy Bunter gave a start. William George Bunter, otherwise known as the Porcise, or the Owl of the Removs, was at a loose end. It was raining cats and dogs outside, and the downpour had upset Billy Bunter's arrangements in the same way

as it had upset the plans of Harry Wharton & Co. and the rest of the boys at Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter had been downstairs, and had peered out of the passage door and watched the rain pelting down in the Close and the playing-fields for more than ten minutes. And then he had thought it would be a good idea to go and honour Harry Wharton & Co. with his presence. On a half-holiday they were generally to be found on the playing-fields; but Billy Bunter had gazed at the playing-fields, and they were utterly and completely deserted.

He went to the gym, and had drawn blank there; the Removites were not to be discovered in the Common-room, or in any of the old stone passages. As a final chance Billy Bunter went up to the study—No. 1 in the Removs passage—in the hope of catching the chums of the Lower Fourth there. It had suddenly struck Bunter that the chums of the Removs were far more likely to be indoors on such a wet afternoon.

And it is the expected that sometimes happens.

As Bunter neared the door of Study No. 1 he heard Frank Nugent's voice, which showed that the juniors were in their quarters; and the mention of the word "grub" gave Bunter the clue.

The fat junior sniffed.

"Better take some grub—eh?" he muttered. "Yes, rather. They've kept indoors to plan a study picnic, and they think they're going to leave me out! I'll watch 'em!"

And Bunter peeped through the key-hole, blinking into the study through his big spectacles.

Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Hurrell Jamset Ram Singh were seated close to one another at the little table. Bob Cherry was standing up and looking through a little volume. Mauleverer and Mark Linley were leaning across the table at the other end. And they all seemed to be discussing some matter quite earnestly.

"We may need some grub," said Nugent. "You don't know how long we may be gone."

"We might be away for hours if we get on to the treasure right away."

"Better take some grub, in case of accidents."

"Now, we shall have to leave the spot where the treasure is for the moment. That old book out of the library doesn't say too much about it; but there's a clue there, at any rate, and we must hang on to the book like grim death."

"Rather! We don't want any idiots after it. That ass Temple, for instance, would be all over a wheeze like this!" "Yes; and Colker will tear his hair out if we find the giddy gold!"

"Ha, ha! Rather!"

"Anyway, we know the blessed treasure is hidden somewhere near Pegge, and that's enough to go on. What sport it'll be if we get it!"

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob Cherry. "This book makes you feel funny all over! Jolly smart of Marky to get it out of the library!"

"Yes; that was a real bit of smart work on your part, Marky!"

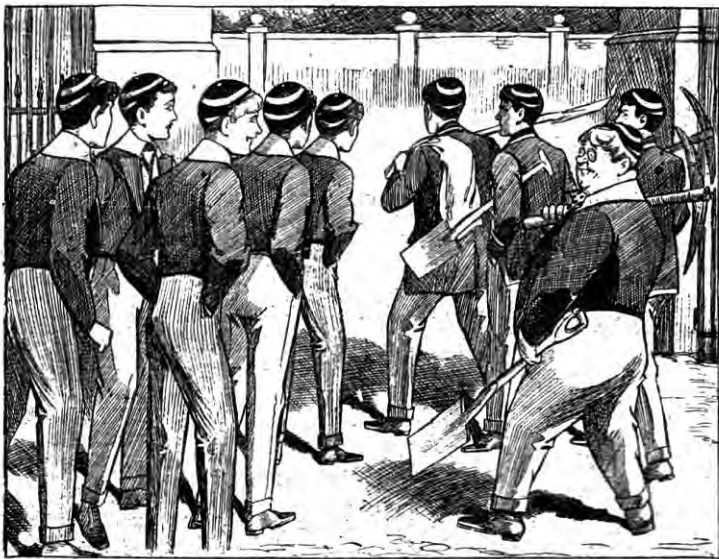
"Well, then, you chaps," said Wharton, "it's agreed we all go down to Pegge next half and dig up the giddy gold. We'll take spades and picks, and all that sort of thing, and wait at likely spots to see how the clue works out."

"That's the notion!"

"Mum's the word, now!"

"Rather!"

"Well, Franky had better cut down to the tackshop and order the grub from Mrs. Nimble," said Wharton. "She likes to have plenty of time over these



"So long, you chaps!" said Bunter. "I've done with you fellows in the Remove at last. I don't want to be bothered with you any more. When we've found the treasure I dare say you'll be running after me from dawn till night; but it won't wash. I'm done with you from to-day. Yah!" (See Chapter 7.)

things. And Franky can tell her to pack the grub up so that it's ready for us next half. Don't make a show of it, Franky, or the other fellows might catch on."

"Are we going to take anybody else to help dig?" asked Nugent.

"This little lot ought to be enough, and we all know the place."

"I was thinking of Tom Brown and Bulstrode; and there's Redwing, too."

"I think the party as it stands will be large enough."

"All right. What about Bunter?"

"He'd only be in the way. He's such an ass, you know."

"The assfulness of the esteemed Bunter is great!" remarked Hures Singh, the esteemed Nabob of Bhanipur, as Bob Cherry called him.

The unseen listener at the keyhole snapped his teeth. It is said that listeners never hear any good of themselves, and Bunter was finding it out.

"Yes; better leave him behind," agreed Nugent. "I can't stand Bunter, either. We've agreed to overlook his mean tricks he's played in the past; but I must say he gets on my nerves."

"Oh, does he?" murmured Bunter.

"Well, he can't help it," said Wharton, with a laugh. "He's more fool thanascal, and I really believe he's too stupid to know right from wrong."

"Oh, is he?" murmured Bunter, sotto voce.

"The stupidfulness of the honourable Bunter is terrific!" remarked the dusky

Nabob of Bhanipur. "I do not wish to say anything against an esteemed rotter behind his honourable back; but I must remarkably observe that, for sheer fat-headedness, the worthy Bunter takes the august bun!"

"Well, I'll cut down to Mrs. Mimble," said Nugent, taking up his cap. And he left the study so suddenly that he ran right into Billy Bunter, who was not expecting so sudden an exit, and wasn't prepared for it.

"Oh!" exclaimed Nugent, in surprise.

"Ow!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"Bunter!"

Bunter sat down. He did not mean to sit down, but the shock of the collision settled the matter for him. He sat on the linoleum, and blinked at the wrathful Nugent.

"Ow! I——"

"You worm!" said Nugent. "You were listening!"

"I—I wasn't! I—I——"

"You utter worm!"

"I—I didn't! I wasn't! I wouldn't! You fellows were talking about a fellow behind his back, and——"

"How do you know we were talking about you, if you weren't listening?" demanded Nugent.

"I—I——"

"Oh, shut up! I've a good mind to tread on you!"

Bunter squirmed out of the way with wonderful swiftness. He was slow, as a rule; but on that occasion he was positively eel-like.

"Ow! Don't! Yow! Wow! Help! Ow!"

"You ass! Shot up! I'm not even touching you!"

Bunter scrambled to his feet. He adjusted his big spectacles, and blinked at the chums of the Remove, who were glaring at him through the open door.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Nugent.

And he passed down the passage, hurrying off to Mrs. Mimble's, who kept the school shop at Greyfriars.

"I say, Wharton!"

"Well, what do you want?" asked Harry, not at all cordially.

Bunter had been very trying of late, and it seemed to the chums of the Remove that they wouldn't be able to stand him much longer. And now that they had to contend with a rainy half-holiday Bunter was too much to expect on the top of it.

"You're going on a feed——"

"We're not!"

"I—I heard Nugent say——"

"The esteemed Bunter cannot have heard Nugent say anything, as he was not listening carelessly," murmured Harree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Inky, I-I happened to hear——"

"We're not going on a feed," said Wharton. "We're only going to take some grub in case we should be delayed. We're going on—an expedition."

"I'll come and dig for you."

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"You—you rotter!" roared Harry Wharton. "You've listened to every blessed word we've said!"

"Oh, really, I—"

"You heastly eavesdropper, so you've caught on to the wheeze, have you?"

"Really, Wharton, when a chap offers to come and dig for you, that's—that's not a very grateful sort of thing to say!"

"You fat rotter!"

"Besides that, Linley found the book in the school library, and the books in the library belong to me just as much as they belong to you. You're not the only chap in the school who pays his blessed fees, you know!"

"Slint up!"

"I'm just as much entitled to a portion of the hidden gold," continued Bunter, blinking at the Removites through his big spectacles. "All I shall want is a proper division, and I am offering my services as a digger. I'm a jolly strong chap, I am, and just the sort of fellow you want to do a lot of digging!"

"Well—well, scrag you!"

"Really, Wharton, I think you might give me an idea how much gold there is in this place near Pegs. Just pass that book over, Bull, old man, and let me have a look at the clues."

"Clear off, Bunter!" snapped Johnny Bull. "If you don't you'll be scragged!"

"Very well," said Bunter. "If you can't pass the book, Inky, will. Just hand it over, Inky, there's a good chap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter's perseverance was too much for the Removites, and they burst into a peal of laughter at the audacity of the fat junior.

"Really, you fellows!" said Bunter. "Come on, Inky! Perhaps you'll pass the book over now you've had your little joke!"

"The perkfulness is terrific!" chortled the dusky Nabob of Bhamipur. "The delectfulness is also great!"

"I might have known that you would be a selfish rotter, Inky!"

"Can you lend me a cricket-stump for five minutes, Wharton?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Certainly! Here you are!"

"I—I say, Cherry, what's that are you going to do with that stump?"

"I am going to lay it round a fat, cheeky owl," answered Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—Oh, my hat! Gerroff, you beast! Oh crickey!"

Billy Bunter dodged out of Study No. 1 and flew down the passage, with Bob Cherry in hot pursuit. But it wasn't necessary for Bob to go the whole length of the Remove passage. Billy Bunter was not going to risk an argument with Cherry when the latter had a cricket-stump handy.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Temple, Dabney, and Co. are Envious.

"O H, really, Mrs. Mimble—"

"Nothing for you, Master Bunter."

"But just a few tarts!"

"Certainly not!"

"I say, I'm awfully hungry, you know," said Billy Bunter persuasively, leaning his elbows on the little counter of the school shop, and blinking at Mrs. Mimble through his big spectacles. "I never really get enough to eat, you know, Mrs. Mimble. My constitution is rather delicate, and I need keeping up with plenty of good, nourishing food. And your meaty is so good, you know!"

"If it's good it's worth paying for!" said Mrs. Mimble, with a sniff, which showed she was not to be taken in by Bunter's blandishments.

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"I hope you don't think I'm likely to act dishonestly, Mrs. Mimble? I expected to find my chum Nugent down here."

"Master Nugent has just left," said Mrs. Mimble. "He came down to order something for Saturday."

"Yes, I know that; and I came down to have a snack with him. We were to sample the things for Saturday, you know. But it doesn't really matter if Nugent isn't here. I'm expecting a postal-order this evening—"

"Nonsense, Master Bunter!"

"Oh, really—"

"I won't trust you with any more until you've paid my account!" said Mrs. Mimble, with emphasis. "You've owed me six shillings for over a month now, and when you paid me up before you only did it by using another boy's postal-order—"

"That—that was a mistake!"

"And I should never have been paid otherwise. Now you owe me six shillings!"

"I'm expecting a postal-order for ten to-night. Let me have four bob's worth now, and you can take the whole postal-order when it comes!"

"I don't believe you are expecting a postal-order," said Mrs. Mimble.

"Oh, really—"

"Hallo, Bunter!" said Temple of the Upper Fourth, coming into the tuckshop. Temple was followed by Dabney and Fry, his study-mates, and deadly rivals of Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove, or Lower Fourth.

Temple greeted Bunter quite affably, and the Owl of the Remove suddenly sat bolt upright as an idea flashed into his brain.

"Hallo!" said Temple again. "I say, what ripping tarts!"

"Jolly good, aren't they?" agreed Billy Bunter. "I've—I've been looking for you, Temple—looking all over the blessed place! Don't know where you chaps in the Upper Fourth get to!"

"Why, what do you mean?" said Temple. "What do you want me for?"

"About Wharton's latest wheeze."

"They're on a good thing this time," continued Bunter. "It seems funny that those rotters are always the ones to get the best things in this school!"

"The—the best things?"

"Yes; if they find it all right, it'll be one of the best things ever done in this blessed school!"

"Find it?"

"Yes, find it," said Bunter, blinking at Temple, Dabney, and Fry. "It's a jolly shame, too, as they've only got the clue out of a book in the library."

"The clue?" murmured Temple, Dabney, and Fry in one breath.

"Yes, your don't you chaps insist upon your rights?" said Bunter.

"Blessed if I would be sat upon by these bounders if I was in a higher Form! Why, this latest stunt of theirs will probably make them rich men for life!"

Temple, Dabney, and Fry exchanged glances.

"Here, I say," said Temple affably, "here are those ripping tarts waiting to be eaten! Isn't nobody going to have any?"

"Certainly, Temple! This is very decent of you! I'll do as much for you fellows when my postal-order comes! Did you say I was to have a dozen?"

"No, I didn't! You can have two," said Temple, throwing a shilling on the counter. "I've got a mouth, too, you know. Besides, you mustn't overeat yourself, or you won't be fit to help us to tackle Harry Wharton & Co.—this little game of theirs, getting all this money, you know."

Billy Bunter blinked at him in surprise.

"I didn't know that you knew they were going to get the money," he said. "Has Wharton told you? When I was there they were jolly anxious that the story about the treasure shouldn't get round to any of the other chaps."

Temple jumped.

"The treasure?"

"What! Didn't you know, after all?" exclaimed Bunter.

"Ha, ha! No, no! But we do now!" grinned Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

"You may as well tell us the lot now!" chuckled Fry. "Have some more tarts? We won't give you away to the others, you know. What's this rot about the treasure?"

"It isn't rot," said Billy Bunter, with his mouth full. "I'll have another, please! I say, these tarts are ripping! You see, these chaps didn't want me to know anything about the blessed treasure. Ho, he, he!"

"Of course they wouldn't," said Temple sympathetically. "You know I've always said you ought to be captain of the Remove—really, that's about your mark—and all Wharton does now is to try to keep you down. It's a rank injustice!"

"Well, I'm glad to see there are fellows who can appreciate my qualities," said Bunter, taking another tart. Temple winked at his chum.

"Of course! But what about the treasure?"

"They've got it all out of that blessed book! It's got the clues and everything in there."

"Oh, I see! Have another tart, old man?"

"Thanks!" said Bunter. "I must say these blessed tarts are first-class! Have you got any meat-pies, Mrs. Mimble?"

"Not for you, Master Bunter!"

Bunter blinked through his big spectacles.

"Didn't you know that I was the guest of these fellows, Mrs. Mimble? I'll just try a sample of your meat-pies. I always think they're jolly good here, don't you, Temple, old man?"

"Eh?"

"Jolly good meat-pies, you know," said Bunter, reaching across the little counter for another plate of tarts. "I've always said that much for the old school. Whenever anybody tries to run down Greyfriars when I'm on my holidays I always tell them about the stunning quality of Mrs. Mimble's meat-pies!"

"Do you really?" said Temple.

"Now, old man, these meat-pies and jam-tarts cost a lot of money in these times, you know. You can't expect me to buy up the whole blessed lot! Now, what about this wheeze of Wharton's? Let me see it! We had got as far as the book out of the library."

"That's right! It's a book Mark Linley, that scholarship cad, found in the school library."

"What's it called?"

"Let's talk over the business afterwards," said Bunter, as Mrs. Mimble placed a large dish of beautiful new meat-pies on the counter.

"Here you are, Master Temple! They were only cooked this afternoon, and you'll find them lovely and fresh."

"Good!" said Bunter, picking up one from the dish. "By Jove, Mrs. Mimble, I must offer you my congratulations over your cooking!"

"I don't think I want any of your Battery, Master Bunter!"

"No, don't! I've got so much, old man!" said Temple, rather coarsely.

He was beginning to wonder where Bunter's appetite would take him to. His

purpose wasn't so long that he could afford to feed the fat Removite indefinitely. Temple had thought that a little flattery and a few jam-tarts would be sufficient to wheedle the secret out of him. That is where Temple, Dabney, and Fry had miscalculated. Bunter was a great nuisance, and often utterly foolish and stupid, but there was another Bunter to reckon with: sometimes.

When Billy knew that he was on a good thing he could be very astute and very obstinate. Unfortunately for the nuts of the Upper Fourth, this was the Bunter they had found seated at Mrs. Mimble's little counter.

Billy Bunter sat and munched away, and Temple and Dabney and Fry stood and watched him with what patience they could muster.

"Feeling in good form, old man?" inquired Dabney, after Bunter had accounted for three of the pies. "I think you ought to stop gorging for a bit so that we can discuss this wheeze of Wharton's. You see, if we're to get on to the treasure we mustn't waste any time."

"What we want, Bunter, old man," said Fry, "is to get this treasure they're talking about before they get on to it. Be jolly ripping if we can come down here every day of our lives and have plate-lard after plate-lard of jam-tarts and mince-pies!"

"Oh," grunted Bunter, "that's the right sort of life to live! My word, that would suit me down to the ground!"

"But it wouldn't be very healthy for you, Master Bunter," suggested Mrs. Mimble. "You ought not to eat so much pastry with all that fat on you! It ain't right for a boy of your age!"

"It isn't fat!" growled Bunter, taking up another meat-pie. "It's all muscle on me. I can tell you I'm a jolly good specimen—aren't I, Temple, old man?"

"Yes, rather," replied Temple. "Now, what about getting on with the bizney in hand? We want to know something about this blessed book!"

"All right!" said Bunter. "I don't mind discussing business over a meal when once I've got started. You fellows can talk away!"

Temple, Dabney, & Co. glared in suppressed wrath at the Owl of the Remove. They felt that they could have slaughtered him as he sat there munching away expensive meat-pies one after another without a murmur. It was almost more than flesh and blood could stand. But Temple winked at his cronies, and they endured the torture in silence.

"Well," said Temple, "I feel we haven't got quite enough data to work upon, Bunter, old man. I think it is necessary for us to know more about this wheeze of Wharton's. You—you see, we ought to know where this treasure is, so that we can get on to it at once."

"Eh?"

"I say we ought to know where the blessed treasure is, so that we can get on to it at once."

"You needn't think you rotters are going to leave me out of it!" said Bunter. "I've got on to the secret! I shall want my full share out of it when the gold is dug up!"

"Of course, old man!"

"There's millions of pounds concerned," continued Bunter. "It seemed that the meat-pies were fertilising his imagination now, besides almost ruining Temple. I shouldn't like to say how much gold there is, and it's—it's all in the secret place, just for the finding."

"My hat!"

"Now, just a nice currant-cake to finish off with!" said Bunter, blinking across the counter. "Come along, Mrs. Mimble, please! One of your own

special ones, please, with plenty of ice on top!"

"Nothing more, Master Bunter!" said Mrs. Mimble decisively. "You've had enough! It will be eight shillings and ninepence altogether, Master Temple."

"Eight bob!" gasped Temple. "Do you mean to say that that fat rotter has eaten eight bobs' worth of tummy in these few minutes?"

"Oh, really, Temple, old man!"

"You—you—"

"All I want is a nice currant-cake to finish off with."

Temple glared in great wrath.

"I'm not jolly well going to watch you gorge at my expense unless you make it worth our while!" he snapped. "We want to score against those rotters in the Remove; and if you can help us, I don't mind spending a bit of money on your tummy."

"All right, Temple, old man!" grunted Bunter. "I know all about this treasure wheeze of Wharton's, and it will pay you to listen to me. Just get Mrs. Mimble to fork out that blessed cake, and then we can go right ahead. These wheezes always give me a jolly good appetite."

"You—you—"

"Eight-and-ninepence, Master Temple, if you please."

"All right, here you are, Mrs. Mimble. There's a ten-bob Bradbury. Let Bunter have that cake, and—and I hope it jolly well chokes him!"

"Really, Temple!"

"Here you are, Master Bunter. Here's half the cake. They're half-a-crown each, and I think you're a very greedy body. And if I don't get that six shillings you owe me very soon I shall have to report you to Mr. Quelch, your Form-master."

"Oh, I forgot the six bob!" said Billy Bunter, cutting the cake into slices.

"It's jolly easy to forget these small amounts, you know!"

"Well, if it's such a small amount, pay me the six shillings, Master Bunter."

Billy Bunter blinked.

"Just lend me six bob, one of your fellows. I'm expecting a postal-order to-night, and, anyway, we shall have so much ready gold shortly we sha'n't look at six bob!"

"I'm not going to lend you six bob!" snapped Fry.

"Nor I," said Dabney.

"All right, you chaps, old Temple will oblige. That's what I like about Temple, there's nothing stingy about him."

Cecil Temple glared angrily. He had spent ten shillings on the fat junior up to now, and he could see that Bunter was out to bleed him for as much as he possibly could. Temple worked the matter out in his mind rapidly. He had spent ten shillings, another six would probably be sufficient to drag the secret out of Bunter, and it would pay him to lay out the extra money and win success than to quarrel at this stage and lose the ten shillings already expended without gaining any result.

"Will you tell us all you know if I brass up, you fat rotter!"

"Yes, rather, old man! And I'll pay you back as soon as my blessed postal-order turns up."

"Well, here you are, Mrs. Mimble," said Temple, throwing down the money on to the counter. "That squares the matter up."

"Thank you, Master Temple! You are a very lucky boy, Master Bunter, to have such kind friends."

Bunter crammed the last slice of cake into his capacious mouth, and staggered off the stool.

"Now, then," said Temple, "let's have the story, Bunter."

"All right, old man. There's nothing much more to tell you. Those rotters in

Study No. 1 have found an old book in the library. Mark Linley found it, and when Wharton looked through it he found particulars about a lot of hidden treasure buried near Peggs."

"My hat!"

"I overheard it all quite by accident, and—"

"Of course, old fellow."

"And—and I remonstrated with those cads at once. We belong to the school library just as much as they do, and we are just as much entitled to see the blessed book as those cads are!"

"Rather!"

"But would those rotters give it up to me? Not much! So what we've got to do is to insist on our rights, and make them hand it over."

"Rather!" said Temple, Dabney & Co.

"And we'll waste no more time either," said Temple, leading the way out of the little shop. "Come on, you fellows! I'll jolly well make them hand it over!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing.

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry. "What do you bounders want?"

"It's Temple!"

"And Dabney?"

"And Fry!"

"And Bunter!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were seated round the study table in Study No. 1, when Temple, Dabney, Fry, and Bunter walked into the room without even giving the customary knock on the door.

But then, the fellows in the Upper Fourth were never blessed with good manners.

At least, this was the opinion frequently expressed in the studies of the Lower Fourth. It may have been quite wrong to make such a sweeping assertion as that, but nevertheless, the nuts of the Upper Fourth certainly did not trouble to knock on the door on this occasion, and they burst in upon a merry little party at the tea-table, the members of which appeared to be not a little astonished at the appearance of the visitors.

"What do you bounders want!" said Bob Cherry, when the new-comers had squeezed themselves in, and allowed Billy Bunter to close the door behind them.

"Sorry to intrude in the middle of your tea, you kids," said Temple very condescendingly. "But the matter's urgent, and can't wait."

"Oh!"

"I understand you kids in the Lower Fourth have been borrowing books out of the school library?"

"Too true, O king!" said Bob Cherry solemnly.

"Well, you happen to have a book that I want to borrow, and as you're having tea, and are not reading it, you can jolly well hand it over at once!"

"What?"

"I want that old book Linley brought up out of the library. Just hand it over now, at once!"

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob Cherry. "Temple gets funnier and funnier every day of the year! Did you hear what he said, Johnny?"

"Yes, he said he must have the book at once. Did you hear him say all that, Maulvercrer?"

"Yes, rather, my dear fellow," drawled Mauly. "It seemed an extraordinary request, I must say, and I should say he's looking for trouble, as well as for the book!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, you young bounders!" snapped Temple. "We don't want to

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muck up your blessed tea-party for you, but that is exactly what will happen if you don't hand that book over at once."

"Oh, ring off, Temple!" said Harry Wharton, with a grin. "You must admit that you kids in the Upper Fourth don't stand an earthly when you're up against the Remove. Why, we could mop up the study with your little lot."

"And we jolly well will, too!" said Bob Cherry. "What do you want, Bunter, you fat rotter!"

"Oh really, Cherry!"

"Why have you come along with these bounders? Have you been telling tales, you fat toad?"

"You leave Bunter alone, Cherry!" said Temple.

"I'll—I'll put this cricket-stump across him in half a tick," said Bob Cherry. "He's had one taste of it this afternoon already, and I'm not so sure that it isn't time for him to take his next dose."

Bob Cherry rose from his chair, and grasped a cricket-stump firmly in his right hand.

"Oh!" gasped Billy Bunter, shaking all over. "You—you leave me alone, Cherry, you cad! You nearly broke one of my ribs this afternoon!"

Bob Cherry flared.

"You—you got fat toad!" he cried. "If you don't clear out of this in half a minute, I'll stir you up with this stump!"

"You wouldn't dare to touch me whilst my pal Temple's here."

"What?"

"You just leave Bunter alone!" said Temple. "If you touch him with that stump you'll jolly well have to answer for it to me!"

"That's right, Temple, old man!" said Bunter. "You let him understand that we can't bully chaps in the Upper Fourth. There's too much bullying in the Remove, and it's quite time it was put down!"

"My hat!" gasped Bob. "Just talk at the fat rotter!"

"Well, Wharton, what have you got to say?"

"Eh?"

"Let's deal with them one at a time," said Bob. "Temple can dry up whilst I settle with Bunter. Now then, Bunter, get out!"

"I say—"

"Will you go?" roared Bob Cherry, picking up a book, and laying the cricket-stump aside for the moment. On second thoughts Bob had decided that the study was too full to allow him sufficient elbow-room to wield the stump in a satisfactory manner.

Billy Bunter dodged towards the door, and stood ready to dodge behind it if the book should be hurled. Bob Cherry looked very grim and determined. Even the short-sighted Owl of the Remove could see that.

"I'll go when we've fixed things up, Cherry. We've come for the book!"

"Blow the book!"

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"What's the book got to do with you, your fat image?" demanded Bob Cherry. "Buzz off, or you'll jolly well get this book!"

"I don't mean that book, I—"

"You ass! I don't believe you know what you do mean!"

"I mean, I don't mean the book you're got there."

"Eh? Then what do you mean, dummy?"

"The book with the clues."

"Oh, then you can buzz off!"

"If you advanced me a small sum on account of the treasure I might—"

"Get out!"

"And Wharton and Nugent and Bull and Inky do the same—"

"Bunk!"

"And then—"

"Travel!"

"And then I don't mind standing down for the present. Of course, in the event of you chaps being successful in yours—"

"Scat!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Biff!"

The volume flew through the air, and it caught Billy Bunter before he had time to dodge. It crashed upon his chest, and he sat down in the doorway with a gasp like escaping steam.

"Gw! Wow!"

"Get out!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ow!"

Another book came hurtling through the air, and Billy Bunter rolled out into the passage just in time. The book crashed on the floor.

Bob Cherry breathed hard through his nose, and the remainder of the party, with the exception of Temple & Co., gave a shriek of laughter.

"The fat worm!" said Bob wrathfully.

"The fat bounder's been listening to our wheeze, and he's brought these rotters along to try to get the secret. If that isn't a traitor's trick I don't know what it is! Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Billy Bunter was looking in at the door again.

"I say, Temple, old chap, are you going to allow me to be treated like this?"

Read

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"Be off!" roared Bob Cherry, before Temple had time to reply.

Bunter eyed him warily.

"Yes, but—"

Bob made a rush at him.

Billy Bunter dodged into the passage, and caught his foot in the mat in his hurry, and went over with a bump. Bob Cherry's grasp was upon him the next moment.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "Oh! Help!"

Smack, smack, smack!

The portion of Bunter that was uppermost came in for three mighty smacks from Bob Cherry's open palm, which rang along the passage like pistol-shots.

Bunter roared in earnest then.

"Now is that enough?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Yow!"

"Are you going?"

"Yes! Ow! Yes!"

"Then buzz off!"

Bunter squirmed away along the passage. Bob Cherry, very red and ruffled, returned to the study, and found that Temple, Dabney, and Fry had grouped themselves together as if anticipating an attack, and they had some reason to anticipate it. The Removites were beginning to look very annoyed as they looked at their captain for a lead.

"Come on!" shouted Bob Cherry, directly he arrived. "Let's wipe up the study with these rotters!"

"Hurrah!" shouted the Removites.

"Down with the Upper Fourth!"

"Stand back, you kids!" said Temple hoarsely. "Don't you lay hands on us!"

"Rats! Give 'em socks!"

Harry Wharton's eyes were blazing.

"Close the door, Bob!" he said.

"Quick! Don't let these bounders get out!"

Temple made a dash for the door, and flung himself upon Bob Cherry.

"Got him!" shouted Bob, throwing his arms round Temple's neck in a most affectionate manner. "Collar the others!"

Temple writhed himself away, and went with a bump against the wall of the study. The next moment Removites and Upper Fourth rushed in to the attack, and in a second the study was crammed with fighting, struggling forms.

The room was a good size for a junior study; but just now there was no space to spare for the excited combatants.

They bumped against the table and sent it flying, and then bumped on the bookcase, and brought it ever with a crash.

In the midst of upset furniture, scattered books and papers, and flying ink-pots, the struggle went on with undiminished vigour.

"Buck up, Remove!"

"Sock it to 'em!"

"On the hall!"

"Hurrah!"

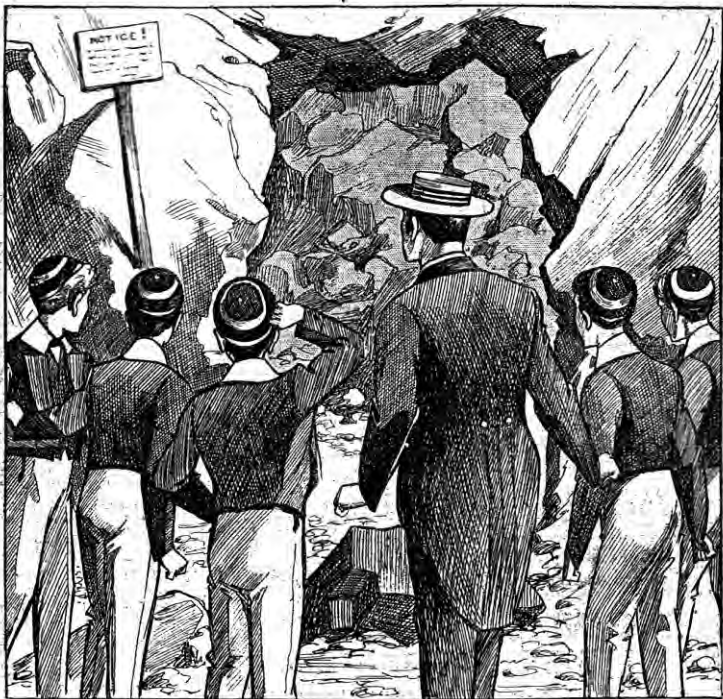
The din in the crammed study was terrific, and the scene was one of indescribable confusion.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton & Co. Oblige.

TEMPLE and Bob Cherry staggered into the window, and an elbow crashed into the panes. Fry broke away from Inky and Johnny Bull for a moment, and dragged the ashpun from under the grate, and scattered the contents over the Removites, his own friends getting as much of the ashes.

However, the result of the combat was never in doubt, and, in spite of the staunch fight the Upper Fourth put up, the Removites were too numerous and too weighty for them, and at last Temple and Dabney and Fry were penned up



The little party stood and gazed at the great cave in silence. The aperture was completely choked up with great masses of rocks, and behind those tons and tons of boulders lay buried the ancient treasure! (See Chapter 9.)

against the wall, gasping and panting for breath.

"You bounders!" muttered Temple. "Will you hand over that book?"

"Not much!"

"Tell us where the treasure is hidden, then?"

"Perhaps."

"Have you got a plan of the spot, you rotters?" gasped Temple.

Harry Wharton grinned.

"Not half, old bean!" he replied.

"We've got something top-hole in plans."

"Then show it to us!"

"Not to-day, thank you!"

"You—you—"

"Oh, ring off!" cried Bob Cherry. "Come on, you chaps, we've had enough of these bounders! Let's put them outside."

"Rather!"

The Removites leapt to the attack again, and after a very brief struggle Temple, Dabney, and Fry were rushed, panting, to the door.

"Out with 'em!" roared the Removites. "All together now!"

Temple, Dabney, and Fry went whirling through the doorway in a mass, and they landed on the floor of this passage with a loud crash.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you young rotters!" roared Temple. "You'll be sorry for this before long!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The nuts of the Upper Fourth scrambled up from the dusty floor, looking very much the worse for wear. Ties were hanging out and collars were torn, and their clothes were dusty and rumpled. They looked very disreputable members of the very select Upper Fourth, and they looked bitter hatred at the laughing Removites as they walked off with as much dignity as they could muster under the circumstances.

Harry Wharton & Co. closed the door of the study, and resorted things out somewhat. The bookcase was pushed up

into its proper place, and the books were put on to its shelves again. Scattered papers and pens and inkpots were recovered. The mess from the ashpan was swept up into a corner, and in a few minutes Study No. 1 looked more or less respectable.

"It's a beastly nuisance that that fat bounder Bunter ever heard our plans," said Wharton at last. "We shall be pestered to death by Temple and his crowd unless we can think of some scheme to diddle them!"

"Yes; they've only got to keep a close eye on us, and follow us whenever we go," said Mark Linsley. "It's really very awkward."

"An idea occurred to me when Temple asked whether we had a plan of where the treasure was," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh!"

"Don't you think we ought to let those rotters have a plan?"

"What?" roared the Removites.

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"Phew!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I think it's time we went down now. Those rotters in the Upper Fourth are sure to be ready to leave by this time, and it's too jolly fine to hang about in here!"

"Yes, I think it's safe to go," said Harry Wharton. "We know they rose to the bait all right, and it's pretty certain that what as Temple has got a copy of the plan in his pocket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All we can hope for now is that they find the treasure," said Frank Nugent. "I vote we go down and give them a send-off!"

"Right-ho!" laughed Harry Wharton. "I heard Dabney telling Bunter to meet at the gardener's shed at two-thirty. They're going to collect the shovels and picks there."

"Oh crumbs!"

"It will be great fun watching the bouncers off if they're loaded up with tools."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Fancy Bunter walking five miles to dig a blessed hole in the ground!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And fancy seeing him walk another five miles home after he's dug the hole!"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Well, come along, you fellows," said Harry Wharton. "It's just gone two-thirty, and we'll get down to the gates and say good-bye. Go carefully, you know. We don't want the rotters to catch on to the idea that we're bamboozled them!"

The Removites streamed out of the study at last, and went downstairs, and strolled leisurely out of the front door of the old school building. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry walked arm-in-arm down the gates, and the rest of the chums followed in pairs behind them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry. "We're just in time to see the procession. Here they come!"

Temple, Dabney, Fry, and Billy Bunter came striding round the corner of the school building, and Harry Wharton & Co. gave a pretended start of surprise as the two factions caught sight of one another. Cecil Temple was leading the way. He had a large spade over his right shoulder, and a big miller's sack was slung over his left shoulder. Dabney and Fry and Bunter followed close on his heels, and they were all carrying spades and picks, and they looked quite happy in spite of these encumbrances.

"Hallo, you bouncers!" cried Harry Wharton, as the little party approached them. "Where the dickens are you off to with that little lot?"

"That's our bizny!" replied Temple in a lofty tone of voice. "Now then, get out of the way, you kids!"

"Going to bury Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry genially.

"Really, Cherry," grinned the fat junior. "That's a rotten sort of remark to make!"

"Well, you're a rotten sort of worm for a fellow to make a rotten sort of remark about, Bunter!"

"Don't take any notice of these kids," said Temple. "When we come back perhaps they'll sing smaller!"

"Why, what do you mean?" said Wharton.

"Wait and see!"

"Wait, and see four silly asses!" growled Bob Cherry. "I suppose you think you're going to find the treasure with those spades and pickaxes. Would you like us to lend you the book of the plan now?"

"No; we can do without that, thank you!" replied Temple.

"Rather!" chorused his benchmen. "This is where you get left, Wharton," said Temple, very loftily. "This is where you bouncers in the Remove sing very small, you know!"

"Oh!"

"Come on, you fellows!" said Temple.

"Quick march!"

The little party shouldered their implements again, and fell in behind their leader, and marched through the big iron gateway of Greyfriars.

"So-long, you chaps!" said Bunter, with a grin all over his fat face. "I've done with you fellows in the Remove at last. I don't want to be bothered with you any more. When we've found the treasure I dare say you'll be running after me from dawn till night. But it won't wash! I'm done with you from to-day! Yah!"

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

"Come along, Bunter, old man!" cried Temple. "Let these kids alone now, and don't let us so much! You'll be giving the show away if you aren't careful!"

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" cried Bob Cherry. "Hope you enjoy the digging. Good-bye-ee!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple, Dabney, & Co. strode on with angry faces. They had hoped to avoid the Removites, and they did not appreciate the banter that was hurled at them as they marched down the dusty lane in the direction of the little fishing village of Pegg.

"Well, they're out of the way!" laughed Harry Wharton, as the Upper Fourth juniors disappeared round the bend in the lane. "Now we can push off on our little excursion. It won't take us long to ride down on our bikes, and things can easily go a few spades and things on to the jiggers. We've got plenty of time, as we don't want to get there until the sun gets down a bit."

The Removites strolled across to the bicycle-shed and got their machines out, and Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull volunteered to go across to the gardener's shed and get hold of any shovels and picks Temple's party may have left there.

They found what they wanted without much difficulty, and the tools were strapped on to the cross-bars of the bikes, whilst Hurree Singh ran across to Mrs. Mimble's shop to get the provisions that Frank Nugent had ordered on the Wednesday. The dusky Nabob of Bhanipur soon returned with the parcel, and Harry Wharton & Co. mounted, and pedalled out of the gates in grand style.

They took the same route as Temple, Dabney, & Co had taken, but turned to the left at the cross-roads, on the edge of Friarale Wood, and then they bowled along the pleasant country road which brought them to the top of the cliffs at the seashore. By taking this road they were not likely to run into the victims of their hoax.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry, as the party dismounted. "The tide's out all right. That means we can get down to the caves at the Shoulder."

"Yes, rather!" said Harry Wharton. "I'd clean forgotten all about the tide. Jolly lucky it's out!"

"We should have been dished, dished, and done, otherwise!"

"Well, our jiggers will be quite safe up here!" said Wharton. "We'll put them all together, and get down to the beach by the old smugglers' steps."

The bicycles were propped up against one another, and the tools taken off, and in a few minutes the juniors were striding along the stony path that led down the steep front of the cliff.

It was a gorgeous afternoon, and the juniors were looking forward to the exploration of the caves, and they all felt very happy and contented as they gazed across the wide-sweeping bay beneath them.

At one end of the bay clustered the hamlet of Pegg; at the other end the great Shoulder rose grey and grim, weather-beaten with the storms of a thousand years, with the sea-gulls flying round its summit, as they had flown when the Roman tiremes came creeping along the coast, as they had flown when Danish rovers had landed in Pegg Bay, and fought with the Saxon fishermen there in the olden times. And under the huge rocks of the Shoulder, so the fisher-folk said, were deep, dark caves that had been used by the smugglers in more modern times, till the freedom of trade had made smuggling no longer a paying game. The caves, undoubtedly, were there, and the Removites had explored some of them; but whether the stories of the smugglers were exactly veracious was another matter.

Harry Wharton & Co. clambered down the pathway, and reached, at last, the sandy beach at the base of the great cliffs.

"My hat!" said Frank Nugent. "This is topping down here! I really think that path down the cliff gets worse and worse. I suppose it will be quite unsafe to come down it one day!"

"The rain and the waves wash it away," replied Wharton. "But come along. I've got an idea fixed in my head that the cave we want is the one with the warning notice stuck up outside it."

"The one I suggested on Wednesday?" said Bob.

"Yes; I've been thinking it over, and now I come to think it's the very likely place. I've never been inside, because it's supposed to be dangerous; but I've looked into it, and it's certainly an enormous cave. They say it might fall in any day because it's become so undermined."

"Let's try that one, anyway!"

Harry Wharton & Co. strolled towards the Shoulder along the sandy beach, and peered into several caves running far back into the great cliffs. A few hundred yards from them now the water foamed and swirled among the big rocks sticking up out of the water, and at high tide the water would be where the boys were now standing, and the caves in the cliffs would be filled with the swirling waves.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Golden Clue.

"THE sun's beginning to go down," said Harry Wharton.

"Another hour and it'll be setting!"

"Yes; I should think that's about the time."

Harry Wharton & Co. were standing on the sandy beach at the base of the great Shoulder. They had enjoyed a good rest on the seashore, and the parcel of tuck which Mrs. Mimble had made up for them had been consumed with much relish, and the juniors had sunned themselves, and felt thoroughly happy. But the time had passed quickly, and now the tide was on the turn, and the boys realised that they must waste no more time, or the swirling waters would rise and frustrate their plans.

The base of the shoulder was honey-combed with caves. Most of them, however, were mere hollows extending a

short distance, and narrowing as they extended.

Harry Wharton looked out keenly for the opening of the deep cave which they had discussed in Study No. 1, as the Removites now strolled round the great Shoulder.

"There it is!" cried Bob Cherry suddenly. "The old board is still up!"

"I should have thought the waves would have smashed it by now, because at high tide the water must go clean over it," said Wharton.

The boys paused, and looked. Deep in the grey cliff appeared a black gap. It was a huge, deep cave, and at high tide the water flowed into it, and certainly submerged the old warning notice-board placed at the entrance.

"We'll go in and explore," said Harry Wharton. "I've brought some candles."

The Removites advanced, and peered into the gloomy depths of the cavern. They heard a large piece of rock fall away inside, and the noise echoed eerily, and Mauleverer gave a shiver. But the juniors were keen to explore this unknown place, and, if anything, the element of danger made them even keener.

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll get inside, and light the candles here. There's too much draught out here."

The Removites clambered over the great chunks of rock scattered at the entrance of the cave, and Harry Wharton handed round the supply of candles, and matches were lit and applied to the wicks.

"Don't walk too close to the sides, in case the rocks fall in," said Harry Wharton. And his voice seemed to boom below the dark cavern, and set up echo after echo.

"My hat!" muttered Johnny Bull. "It looks a dangerous sort of place, doesn't it? Makes you feel that it might fall in any moment. I don't know what it is!"

"It does make you feel like that a bit," agreed Bob Cherry. "But then, that old board has been outside for donkey's years, and the jolly old cave still seems to live, excepting for those great chunks that seem—"

Crash!

Somewhere ahead in the darkness there was a report that sounded like thunder, and the boys stopped dead.

"That's a healthy lump of rock broken loose somewhere!" muttered Harry Wharton. "But I think we're safe enough so long as we stick to the centre."

"Lead on, Harry!"

Harry Wharton held his candle up in the air and walked on, and the chums of the Remove followed him cautiously.

"Hallo!" said Bob Cherry suddenly. "What the dickens is that light there?"

"A light!"

"Yes, that blessed light on the right. Looks something like a church-window."

"Oh, I see it!" said Harry Wharton. "That's a jolly funny thing. It seems a sort of reflection from the sun."

"Very curious, my dear fellow," drawled Mauleverer. "It must be some sort of shaft from above. I should think."

"Yes; that's what it is, I suppose; and the sun shines down the shaft, and gets reflected like that."

"Lead on, my dear fellow!"

"Stop!" cried Bob Cherry suddenly. "My giddy aunt! I believe I catch on. I wonder?"

"What?"

"I wonder!" exclaimed Bob excitedly.

"It's jolly strange!"

"What's up, Bob?"

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Bob Cherry was gazing at the walled reflection of the sun's rays on the dark walls of the dank cave, and he gave a whistle of surprise.

"It's something like a cross!" he gasped. "Blessed if it isn't! What do you think, Harry! Don't you think it might be the clue?—I'm hanged if I don't think we've stumbled on to it right away!"

"My hat!"

The walled reflection on the black, shiny wall of the cave was gradually growing dimmer and dimmer, and the boys watched it in astonishment.

"Quick!" shouted Bob. "Don't stand there like a pack of gaping idiots! Quick, Harry! Who's got the blessed tape-measure? It's going away! It's the clue, you duffers! Mark the spot, for goodness' sake, and get the measure—quick!"

"Right, old man!"

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Harry Wharton leapt forward to the wall of the cave, and placed his finger on the centre of the strange reflection just as the last faint signs of it remained.

"Got it!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Hang on, for goodness' sake! Who brought the measure?"

"Here you are, old chap," said Johnny Bull. "I've got it. Here it is."

"Thanks, Johnny!"

Bob Cherry grasped the tape-measure, and hurried to Harry Wharton's side, and the remainder of the Removites threw down their shovels and picks on to the sandy floor of the cave, and waited in breathless excitement.

"Let me see," said Bob. "How did it go in that blessed legend?"

"Six paces down, and six along, and again six paces down," replied Harry Wharton. "Hold a light up here, you fellows!"

"I suppose a pace means a foot, doesn't it?" said Bob.

"Yes."

Bob Cherry placed the tape-measure on the spot where Harry Wharton's finger-tip rested, and counted out the measurements with suppressed excitement.

"Hallo!" he muttered. "It's only five feet down to the floor!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"That's all right," said Frank Nugent. "The book was written years and years ago, and the floor of the cave is sure to have got silted up since then."

"That's it!" cried Bob Cherry.

"Good for you, Frank! Now, it's all along, and then it will be seven down, I suppose, allowing for the silting of the floor of the cave."

Bob Cherry marked the measurements out, and the excited Removites crowded round the spot.

"Come on, you fellows!" cried Harry Wharton. "Coats off to it, and we'll take the digging by turns. I think we're on the right spot, and it's absolutely marvellous that we should have arrived in the nick of time. That legend says it should be sunset, and I suppose that's why everybody has failed in the past. My hat! This'll be one up for the Remove!"

Crash!

Another enormous piece of rock crashed down from the roof of the cave on to the floor, and the chums looked towards the opening behind them, and they could only see a glimmering patch, and they realised that the fall had occurred between them and their only exit.

"Goodness!" said Harry Wharton. "I only hope that doesn't go on too much. That's the place where it seems to be caving in. Hallo! Look at that!"

Another great piece of rock dropped away from the roof of the arched opening, and the chums looked at one another askance.

"Come on!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"We must dig like mad!"

"Is—is it safe, old man?"

"Why, Harry, you're—you're not—"

"No, I'm not afraid, Bob," said Harry Wharton grimly. "But—but I don't want you fellows to stay if it's too risky. A death like that—why, it's not worth it!"

"Come on!" cried Bob. "We'll chance it. Come on, you others! Lend me a hand!"

Bob Cherry raised the pick over his head, and brought it down on the shaly floor of the cave; and his action fanned the rest of the Removites, and they set to with a will.

In five minutes they had a large, gaping hole in the floor of the cave, and in ten minutes Johnny Bull and Harree Singh were digging away like mad, and they could only be seen down to their hips.

Two more loud crashes from the opening of the cave had reminded the Removites of their danger. But they heeded not, and toiled away until the perspiration rolled off them like water.

"Go on, lads!" cried Bob encouragingly. "Chuck it up!"

"All right, my esteemed chum!" gasped the dusky nabob. "I—I'm putting the earth out chockfully!"

"Stick it, Johnny, old man!"

In twenty minutes the depth of the hole had increased until it was nearly four foot deep; and now Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry jumped into it, and Harree Singh and Johnny Bull clambered out, and sat at the side and gasped for breath.

Harry and Bob worked like niggers, and shaly rock and great stones were hurled out in a constant stream.

Crash!

The floor of the cave literally shook as an enormous fall of rock crashed from the roof and wall of the cave in the old spot, and the chums of Greyfriars gave a cry of alarm.

"Could they risk it any longer?"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry ignored the danger, and worked away at their digging feverishly.

"Let us give you a rest, Bob, old man," said Mark Linley.

"No; it's all right, Marky!" gasped Bob. "We're nearly down the fall depth now."

The two chums could not be seen on a level with the floor of the cave now, and still they dug, and shovel-load after shovel-load was tipped out in a perpetual stream.

"Stick it, Harry!" gasped Bob, as another crash in the direction of the entrance proclaimed another fall of rock.

"All right, old man."

"We're more than six foot down now."

"Yes."

"Stick it!"

The earth out of the hole was now piled up in a great heap all around the gaping aperture, and Johnny Bull watched it as it was flung out.

"By Jove!"

Johnny Bull gave a sudden cry of astonishment, and held out his guttering candle at arm's length.

"What's up?"

"A coin!" shouted Bull, going down on his hands and knees, and picking up a dull, round object lying in the pile of sand and rock and earth in front of him.

"My hat!" cried Harry Wharton. "We're on to the treasure! The boxes must have smashed!"

"Hurrah!"

Crash!

A roar like thunder rolled along the cavern, and the chums went white. Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton groped wildly about in the bottom of the hole, and grabbed up a handful of coins mixed with dirt, and thrust the whole lot wildly into their trousers-pockets. They did the same again and again.

Crash!

"Good heavens!" gasped Frank Nugent. "Harry—Bob! Quick!"

"Give me a hand!" roared Bob.

"And me!"

The boys on the edge of the hole dragged their chums out at lightning speed, whilst Mark Linley gathered up the pile of Eton jackets and thrust them under his arm.

Crash, crash!

"Oh!"

The chums of Greyfriars gasped. Had they left it too late? Had the narrow exit of the cavern become blocked by the tons of rock crashing down? A tiny pin-prick of light could be seen in the darkness, and the Removites staggered towards it.

"Come on!" roared Mauleverer. "Stick together!"

Crash!

A huge boulder broke away from the roof of the cave and crashed not a foot away from the schoolboy earl as he led the way, and the floor of the cave shook and trembled from end to end.

"Good heavens!" gasped Mauleverer, his face blanched with fear. "If that had even touched me!"

The Removites scrambled wildly over the huge masses of rocks now piled up on the floor of the cave, and the aperture at the arched entrance could now be seen plainly. When the boys had entered it, it must have been quite ten feet high. Now there was barely two feet of daylight to be seen, and Lord Mauleverer, who was leading, wondered whether he could scramble through.

He scrambled wildly on, and fairly threw himself on his hands and knees, and wriggled through the gap like a worm. The moment he was through, he stood up, and held out his hand to Hurree Singh, and pulled the dusky nabob through just as a thunderous

roar rumbled through the vast cave, and proclaimed another fearful fall of rock.

One after another, the Greyfriars boys were jerked through the narrow gap, and at last the whole of the party were safe and sound, and lying on their backs on the sandy shore, panting and gasping for breath.

For five minutes the juniors remained like this, and in that time as many fearful crashes were heard from the cavern from which they had so miraculously escaped. It seemed that it had only required the vibration from the boys' efforts whilst digging to bring about the collapse of the cave, which for so many years had been marked a danger-spot to the local inhabitants.

Harry Wharton sat up, at last.

"Well, you fellows!" he cried. "We've escaped death inside that horrible place; but we don't want to get drowned now."

Mark Linley sat up, and the rest of the juniors followed his example, and they looked about them and blinked.

"My hat! The tide's nearly up to the cliffs!"

"That's what I mean!"

"We shall have to make a run for it," said Bob Cherry.

The Removites scrambled up, and dragged on their jackets, and in a few seconds they were going along the sand at a comfortable trot. In five minutes they had gained the old smugglers' steps at the foot of the cliffs, and they took their time in clambering the winding pathway, and even then arrived at the top fairly panting for breath.

"Thank goodness that's done!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Here are the jiggers. I wonder how long it would have been before anybody had found them if—we'd been caught in that cave!"

"Oh, hush! Don't talk about it!" laughed Harry Wharton. "Let's have a look at these blessed coins we've found!"

"I got a few handfuls of stuff," said Bob, thrusting his hand into his trousers-pocket and drawing out a handful of dirt. "Hallo, here's something!"

"I've got some!" cried Harry Wharton. "My hat! Look at these!"

He held out a handful of coins, stained dark through age and rust, but shining golden through the dirt and grime.

"Goodness! How tipping!"

"And look at these!" cried Bob, holding out a fistful of coins similar in appearance to Harry Wharton's. "They're old Spanish doubloons, I should think, and they'll be worth a 'whole heap'!"

"By jove!"

"I've got twelve here," said Bob.

"How many have you got, Harry?"

"The captain of the Removites counted the coins in his open palm, whilst the excited juniors stood round him.

"I've got sixteen," he said at last.

"What rotten luck that that cave should have busted up to-day of all days! There might be thousands of those things hidden there. Perhaps we shall be able to go back one day."

"Never mind!" laughed Bob. "We've got something, and we must all be satisfied with four each."

"And thankful that our lives have been spared us," said Mark Linley, the Lancashire junior.

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, come along now," said Harry Wharton. "Let's get back to Greyfriars. I'll be dark on about another two hours."

"I could do with a jolly good tea!" laughed Johnny Bull. "Excellent! like that is enough to give anybody a regular Bunter appetite!"

The bicycles were sorted out, and Harry Wharton & Co. mounted them, and peddled away down the dusty road in the direction of Greyfriars.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

See the Conquering Heroes Come!

"THERE'LL be a few things to settle when we get back," said Harry Wharton, as the cyclists turned to the right as they reached Friarale Wood.

"What's that?" ejaculated Frank Nugent.

"We shall have to brass up for the 'spades'!"

"Oh crumbs, yes!"

"And the picks!"

"My hat!"

"And then there'll be our dear friend Temple."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And Bunter!" added Bob Cherry.

"I had forgotten all about those rotters, I wonder how they've been getting on."

"They've been digging nice little holes, I suppose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And looking out to sea, to see where the old ship was sunk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Harry Wharton.

"Won't those asses in the Upper Fourth be wild about this? Poor old Temple & Co. off on a wild-goose chase whilst we're left in peace to dig up hidden gold by the fistful! They'll never forgive us!"

"And fancy those Upper Fourth bouncers having to put up with Bunter all the afternoon!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

Chatting merrily, the Removites peddled gaily along, and at last the old grey towers of Greyfriars School loomed up ahead of them, and they sailed through the gates and across the quad and made for the bicycle-shed.

"Those rotters won't be back yet," said Harry Wharton, when the bicycles had been stored. "I suggest we go up to Study No. 1 now and have some tea, and then get a few of the fellows together and wait for Temple and his lunatics to arrive at the gates."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They're sure to be feeling a bit tired and languid, and a few encouraging words to them ought to freshen them up a bit."

"Rather!"

"And then there's Bunter," continued Harry Wharton. "It'll be so nice to see his fat face when we let him know how careless we were with that plan. Fancy little us leaving it lying about on the table, and the door wide open, too!"

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

"When we've had our tea we'll clean up those coins, as I think we ought to show them to old Quichey to-night. You know how jolly keen he is on anything ancient. He'll be awfully bucked about these blessed things we've found, and perhaps he'll be able to tell us something about them."

"Hanged if I know anything about antiques!" said Bob. "Do you, Marky?"

Mark Linley shook his head and laughed.

"I don't know a thing about these," he replied. "But if that book we got the dust out of is so jolly old—and as it refers to the treasure as an old legend—it certainly makes our find pretty ancient, doesn't it?"

"Rather!"

Harry Wharton & Co. tramped up to Study No. 1, and set to with a will. The little table was soon prepared for tea, and in less than half an hour the big black kettle on the fire was puffing a cloud of steam into the room, and Frank Nugent brewed the tea, and the chums sat down and made an attack upon the good things placed before them. The afternoon excursion had been a great

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success, and the excitement entailed had given them one and all a ravaging appetite, and they munched away, and spent very little time in talking.

The cakes and buns disappeared like magic, and the massive trestles were refilled so often that at last Bob Cherry had to remind Johnny Bull, who was officiating, that the last tea-cake had expired through drowning.

Tea finished, Hurrey Singh and Lord Maulveverer were detailed to go and collect a few of the Removites, and to tell them the details of the rag, instructing them to rally at the school gates for a little quiet fun with the Upper Fourth.

Whilst the two juniors were away on their errand, Harry and Bob placed their coins in a basin of warm water, and endeavoured to remove the dirt and stains from the gold coins. Gradually the grime of ages soaked off, and at last twenty-eight large Spanish doubloons lay upon the study table, glittering in the gaslight.

"My hat!" gasped the Removites, in the same breath.

"Don't they look ripping?"

"By Jove! I should think they do. Show them away, Harry! We'd better get down."

"Right-ho! Here comes Maulveverer."

Lord Maulveverer and Hurrey Singh entered the study, and announced that a large party were on the way down to the gates.

"Good!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, picking up his cap, and secreting the treasure in a place of safety. "Come on, you fellows!"

The chums of the Remove trooped out, and strolled down to the entrance just as a loud cheer rolled out from the crowd of juniors clustered round the school gates.

"It's Temple!"

"Come on, you fellows!"

"Hurrah!" roared the juniors at the gates. "Here they come!"

Harry Wharton & Co. rushed up, and looked down the dusty road. It was just light enough to see, and the captain of the Remove gave a whoop of joy as he distinguished the forms of Temple, Dabney, & Co. crawling along.

"Give 'em a cheer, you fellows!" cried Harry Wharton. "Come out! Hip, hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!" roared the crowd.

Temple & Co. looked up with a start. They had been ambling along in the twilight, hungry and thirsty, and bad-tempered and dusty, and the sudden cheer from the gateway seemed to astonish them somewhat.

Billy Bunter had long ago enticed Temple to carry a double load of picks and shovels, and now the leader of the Upper Fourth shifted the implements from one shoulder to another as the cheer went up from the Removites.

"What's that silly row for?" gasped Dabney.

"Hanged if I know, you idiot!" snapped Temple.

"Well, you jolly well ought to know, then," said Fry. "You call yourself a blessed captain!"

"Precious fine captain!" grunted Bunter, pushing his handkerchief across his steaming forehead. "Walk ten miles just to dig a blessed hole! Blessed rot I call it!"

"Come on, you bounders!" cried Harry

Wharton's voice through the gloom. "Step it out! Last lap, Temple!"

"Hurrah!"

Temple, Dabney, Fry, and Bunter staggered up to the gates. Their faces were scarlet with exertion, and beads of perspiration were rolling down their necks, and they looked thoroughly fed up and bad-tempered, and the banter of the Removites made matters no better for them.

"What do you young fatheads in the Remove want?" howled Temple. "What are you making that row for?"

"Cheering you home, Temple dear!" laughed Harry Wharton. "We want to see the giddy treasure!"

Temple glared.

"Where's the gold, Bunter?" said Bob Cherry. "Are you going to give me a share?"

"We—we haven't found it yet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can't make out what you idiots are cackling at," snapped Bunter. "What's the beastly joke?"

"You, Bunter!"

"Eh? What do you mean?"

"You're the beastly joke, Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silly fatheads!" snapped Bunter.

"Ever been had, Temple?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple, Dabney, & Co. threw down their spades and picks, and tried to push their way through the mass of laughing juniors blocking the entrance.

"Let me get by, you young cads!" howled Temple. "Anybody would think you'd gone mad, making all this blessed row!"

"How did you enjoy the digging, Temple, old man?"

"Cheeky young rotters!"

"Did you find it easy to read the plan, Temple dear?"

The leader of the Upper Fourth frowned wrathfully.

"Did you like the nice little cross with 'G.O.L.D.' under it?"

"And the 'Ship Sunk Here'?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you kids getting at?" shouted Temple, an inkling of the truth suddenly dawning upon him.

"We're getting at you, Temple dear," replied Harry Wharton. "We drew you out such a pretty little plan of the hidden treasure. We naturally want to know now whether you found it useful."

"Especially as you went to the trouble of making such a nice copy of it," added Bob Cherry.

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

Temple put his hand up to his forehead, and groaned with anguish.

"You—you rotters!" he roared. "D-d-do you mean to say—to—to—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You young scoundrels!" shrieked Temple. "Did you give Bunter a dud plan?"

"Oh no, Temple dear!" replied Harry Wharton. "It wasn't at all dud. It took me nearly five minutes to think it out, and then I had to draw it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A fake, was it?" howled the exasperated member of the Upper Fourth. "A blessed fake!"

"You silly ass!" roared Dabney.

"You fatheaded dummy!" cried Fry.

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

"Where—where's that fat scoundrel!"

raved Temple. "Bunter—Bunter! Where is he? I'll bump the life out of him! He put me up to it! He sold me! He took me in to copy the blessed plan!"

"Here he is!" cried Dabney, grasping the shivering Bunter by the collar, and singing the fat Removite into the arms of the raving leader of the Upper Fourth.

"Ow!" shrieked Bunter. "Ow! Help! Oh dear! Leggo, you rotter, Temple! Rescue, Remove!"

Shake, shake, shake!

Billy Bunter's teeth fairly rattled as Temple shook him wildly to and fro. And the crowd looked on, shrieking with laughter.

"Ow! Help!" roared Billy Bunter. "Leggo! It wasn't me! It was that ass Wharton! Help! Rescue, Wharton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was shaken by the enraged Temple until the fat junior had not enough breath left to squeal for help, and then, when Temple had finished, Dabney and Fry grabbed the P.O. from their leader's grasp, and bumped him soundly on the stony ground, until Bunter did not know whether he was standing on his head or his heels.

But at last Bunter was finished with, and the enraged and dusty members of the Upper Fourth were allowed to pass through the cheering Removites, and make their way in as dignified manner as possible.

Temple, Dabney, & Co. decided there and then that they had been very properly dished by their rivals in the Remove Form, and they realised it would be a precious long time before they would be allowed to forget it. As for Bunter, it wasn't wise to even mention his name to Temple or Dabney or Fry for several days.

That night Harry Wharton went down to his Form-master's study and knocked on the door.

Mr. Quelch was there, and he gave the captain of the Remove a friendly greeting when he entered the room, and he listened with deep interest to the story Harry had to relate to him.

Mr. Quelch inspected the coins with vast interest, and gave his young pupil every information about them, and even suggested to Harry that he should rise early the following morning, and, with his chums, take Mr. Quelch down to the Shoulder, and see whether it was still possible to enter the cave.

Needless to say, Harry Wharton readily obliged his Form-master, and the following morning the little party journeyed down to the seashore once more, and made their way along the sands as far as the Shoulder.

They stood and gazed at the great cave in silence. The falls had evidently continued during the night, for the aperture was now completely choked up with great masses of rocks, and behind these tons and tons of boulders lay buried the ancient treasure, a portion of which Harry Wharton & Co. had luckily secured by means of the Golden Clue!

THE END.

(Don't miss "SPORTS DAY AT GREYFRIARS!"—next Monday's Grand Long Complete Story of Greyfriars School—by FRANK RICHARDS.)



Goggs, the Grammarian

By Richard Randolph

SYNOPSIS.

Johnny Goggs comes to Lycombe Grammar School from Frankingham with his chums Trickett, Bloom, and Waters.

Goggs is a jiu-jitsu expert, a clever impersonator, and the organizer of many brilliant japes. He leads an expedition of Grammarians to St. Jim's, and accomplishes one of the most daring night raids ever perpetrated. Gerald Cutts of St. Jim's falls foul of Goggs, the butcher, and after a scrap, in which Cutts is worsted, Goggs picks a quarrel with Goggs.

Bingo is completely defeated, and Cutts loses a big bet. Goggs accepts Bingo's challenge to a return fight. Snipe and Larking plot to kidnap Goggs before the fight. Cutts is brought into the scheme, which is duly carried out. On the morning of the day of the fight Goggs is missing from the dormitory. His chums, in surprise, go off to bathe, hoping to find him already in the water.

(Now read on.)

A Surprise for Everybody.

As soon as they had gone, Snipe and Larking awoke.

"Hallo! Time to be stirring," said Larking. "Game for a bathe, Carp?" He did not speak to Snipe, and Snipe did not even look at him.

To Carpenter they were still to appear at odds.

"I'm not keen," answered Carpenter. "Gay came in just now, and fetched out Bloom and Trickett and Waters. Goggs wasn't here."

"Oh, wasn't he?" returned Larking. "The lecherous dog got up early sometimes."

"Do you know, it seems rather strange to me, piped out Tadpole," but I woke when it was hardly light, and Goggs' bed was empty then."

"You dreamed it, you fatheaded ass!" growled Larking.

"Look here, were you chaps up to anything with Goggs last night?" whispered Carpenter in Larking's ear.

"Who?" asked Larking.

"You and Snipe, of course!"

"I and Snipe? My dear chap, we're hardly on speaking terms just now!"

"But you went out together!"

"Your mistake—we didn't!"

"You were both out, anyway!"

"I was out, all right, but I'd have asked you to come along, only it was the sort of thing you've been off lately."

"But Snipe—"

"I don't say Snipe didn't go out. I know nothing about that. But we didn't go out together."

"On your honour, Lark?"

"On your honour, old top!"

Larking's honour really was not worth much, in any case. But he told himself that it was not damaged by that assurance. He and Snipe had not actually gone out together, for he had followed Snipe.

Still Carpenter did not even appear satisfied.

"He stood and fidgeted while Larking went on dressing. Snipe did not even look their way. But Snipe was feeling very uneasy."

"You didn't—oh, look here, Lark, you haven't been playing any low trick on that fellow Goggs?"

"I certainly have not!"

"On your honour?"

Larking's honour, such as it was, had to be strained that time. But it was not really he who had played the trick on Goggs. Cutts and Snipe had done that.

we've had about enough of this sort of thing!" he snapped.

"I'm sorry if I've hurt your feelings at all," said Carpenter. "But I couldn't help wondering. Even now it seems jolly queer."

"You don't think Goggs can possibly have funked facing the butcher boy again, do you?" said Larking aloud.

"I am quite sure that Goggs has done nothing of the sort, and I am extremely surprised that you should suggest such a thing, Larking!" said Tadpole, before Carpenter had time to answer.

"If Goggs has done a stealthy bunk, it's not because he is a funk."

said Jasper Weird solemnly.

"I'm with you chaps there, though you are both asses," Carpenter said. "I don't believe Goggs ever funks anything." "He tried to persuade himself that he had no choice but to credit Larking's denial."

The crowd came back from bathing, and there was a babel of voices in the quad.

Everyone seemed to be anxious about Goggs. Gay and Monk and the Woodton brothers, Carboy and Lane and Mont Blanc, O'Donnell and Morgan and Donaldson, they were all making inquiries. Even Aigeron Lacy seemed interested. Probably the sports Algy had bets on the result of the fight. Carker crept up to Snipe.

"Know anything about the mysterious disappearance, Snipe?" he asked, with a leer.

"How should I?" returned Snipe, surging his shoulders.

"Oh, I only thought you might, that's all!"

Carker had been in one or two former plots against Goggs. Snipe was half inclined to wish now that he had brought him into this one. Carker was a cunning rascal, and Snipe had just begun to doubt whether the plot was quite as absolutely water-tight as he had thought it.

He sought out Larking.

"Look here, Lark," he said. "Let's take the first train after brekker. No need to go any farther than Wayland. But we're bust out of the way just now."

"Yes, I should think we might be," Larking agreed. "But what about that letter? Hew's Bloom going to get it?"

"I've fixed all that up," Snipe answered.

"Willis of the Third is to deliver it. He's an awful young liar—likes telling 'em—and I know a thing or two about him. Got my thumb on him, Lark!"

"You're sure it will be all right?"

"As safe as houses, old top!"

But Larking did not feel too comfortable during breakfast, and his appetite was not as good as usual.

The appetites of others were somewhat off, too.

Bags and Tricks and Wagtail tried their best to believe that everything was as it should be, and that the unexplained absence of their chum only meant that he had gone off somewhere in his own queer way, and would put in an appearance when the time for action came.

But their best did not carry them far. Goggs was queer in some ways, but hardly in this way. He often kept his chums in the dark but he never left them in the lurch, worrying about him.

And the questions of the other fellows added to their anxiety. Everyone naturally expected them to know something, and a good many were inclined to suspect them of knowing darker what they knew, which was distinctly annoying.

They felt glad when the time came for a move to the scene of the combat.

It was not to be on the Rylcombe cricket-ground this time. News had been received that P.-C. Cramp was likely to intervene if any attempt was made to bring off the fight there. He had heard of the earlier combat, was sure that it was against the law, and would keep his eagle eye open for anything else in the same line.

So a place in the woods had been selected by Bingo's friends, and Bags & Co. on behalf of Goggs; and thither, in threes and fours, the Grammarians who meant to be present now made their way.

The St. Jim's fellows would also be there in considerable force, naturally. But the crowd would hardly be as big as on the former occasion, for there were fellows from both schools who would not put off their start for home and holidays for even a fight—especially a fight which most of them reckoned a sure thing for one combatant.

The time fixed was half-past ten. Nearly half an hour before that most of the spectators had gathered. But Bags and Tricks and Wagtail waited in the lane. They did not care to appear without Goggs.

Ten minutes before time Bingo appeared upon the scene. He passed the three waiting juniors, with Heavens and Wagtail at his heels, and gave them a half-sour, half-friendly nod.

When they had gone a few yards the trio of villagers turned their heads and spoke together. Then they called.

"Ain't he comin'?" called Bingo.

"Oh, he's coming all serene!" replied Bags. And at that moment, with those words, he realized that he was not sure of Goggs' coming.

But it was not his chum he doubted—it was circumstance, possible trickery, anything but Goggs! No one with keen Johnny Goggs as these three did could suspect him of funk.

"Right-ho!" shouted Bingo; and he and his seconds passed on.

"I wish I was sure he was coming!" said Wagtail, blinking at the other two.

"Oh, rat," replied Tricks uneasily.

"He may be there already," Bags said.

"No telling but he might come across the fields."

"Where from?" asked Wagtail.

"Why from wherever he's gone, fathead!" Bags looked at him severely.

"See here, young fellow-me-had, if you're going to begin doubting our Johnny at this time of the day—"

"I'm not doubting! It's not Gogges I doubt. If he doesn't come?"

"Well, if he doesn't come?" said Tricks, as Wagtail panted.

"It will be because there's—oh, I don't know—some heavily dodge of somebody's to keep him out!"

"But who—"

"How should I know, Bags? But you chaps think I'm an ass. I know: all the same—"

"Oh, get it out!"

"Oh, rats!" said Bags. "What could Snipe do with our Johnny? The Snipe-bird may be awful, but Gogges can give him a start and a boking there."

"Let's get along, then," Tricks said. Just at that moment a Third-Former—as

he was called—came, and he said, and thrust an unstamped envelope into the hand of Bags.

"Hallo, it's young Willis!" said Tricks.

"Where did you get that letter, kid?"

Willis, shifty of eye, and with a mouth like a rat's, seemed to shirk explanation.

"It was when I was in the Broom," he said. "None of my friends—A. D. Trickett!—Tah! for you, my dear!"

"And he would have killed! But Wagtail shared him."

"None of your tricks, my son!" he said. "What is it, Bags? Anything—"

"Hold the young shyster a minute!" Bags broke in. "I believe there's something fishy about this. And yet I don't see how there very well can be. It's Johnnie's bet, sure enough."

"If there is anything fishy about it that ain't my fault," whined the dog. "Just you let me go, Waters! I've got a train to catch! I'm not staying for any rotten old fight, if you chaps are!"

"Sorry, my pigeon—can't be did!" replied Bags, while Wagtail hung on. "We've got to know all about this before you demob yourself in order to gladden the eyes of your fond master. I say, she must have been fond of kids, not to drown you!"

Young Willis did not look quite the sort of youngster whom a judicious mother could have regarded with pride at that moment. "Liar" was written all over his unwelcome young countenance. But it is a fair question whether, as regards matters of this sort, there are any judicious mothers; and probably Master Edwin Willis' maternal relative considered him a belted among boys.

"What's in it?" asked Tricks. "Tell you in a moment. Here, look for yourself, matter of that. Now, young Willis, where did you get that letter?"

"Waters gave it to me. Who else should?" snarled the dog.

"Snipe didn't, I suppose?" snapped Wagtail, whose mind was running very much upon Snipe.

"Snipe! What on earth could he have to do with it?" demanded Willis, as if completely taken by surprise. Yet it was the very question which, put in some form or another, he had been dreading.

"When did Goggs give it to you?" asked Bags.

"Early this morning, before most of the chaps were up. I couldn't make it out, because he was going to the station, and I thought he was booked to fight the butcher chap on to-day."

"Had he his luggage?" Tricks inquired.

"No! I don't know. I didn't see it."

"Let it go," said Bags. "If there's anything wrong he is only a fool in the hands of other chaps, and it's up to us to beat them out. But—Well, I can't make this anything but Johnnie's fast, and yet I can't understand his doing this without letting us know about it earlier."

"And I don't doubt he has done it!" said Wagtail, stubbornly.

"It's his bet!" snarled Bags.

"What are we to do about it?" Tricks asked.

"We shall have to read Goggs' letter to the whole crowd. Don't know what they'll say. We don't like it, and you can't expect them to," Bags answered.

"Another couple of minutes found them in the middle of the crowd."

"And the crowd was excited—there was 'no probable, possible shadow of doubt' about that. Indeed, the crowd was very nearly riotous."

"What's Goggs'?"

"Isn't the boulder ever coming?"

"Has he faked it?"

"That last query came from Racker."

Gordon Grog promptly stuck an elbow hard into Racker's chest.

"If you can't talk civilly, clear!" he snorted. "We don't allow anybody to say things like that about our man Goggs!"

Bags looked round, smiling rather wanly. Tricks was doing his best to look cheerful, but the attempt was not conspicuously successful. Wagtail, gnawing at his white lip, did not even try to appear cheerful.

"He's not coming," said Bags.

"Oh, no!"

"You can't mean R. Mount!"

The intense surprise of the whole crowd was a genuine compliment to Goggs. But Gordon Grog was not thinking about that sort of thing. If they had been told that the fellow of whom they thought so much was to take the hiding of his life at the hands of Bingo, they would yet rather have seen him there.

(There will be another splendid long instalment of this grand school story in next Wednesday's issue of the MAGNET. Order your copy in advance.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:

THE MAGNET, THE GEM, THE BOYS' FRIENDS, CHUCKLES, THE PENNY POPULAR.
Every Monday. Every Wed. Every Monday. Every Friday. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

FIVE WEEKS!

Five weeks soon go, don't they! Think of your summer holidays! How quickly the time flies along!

"What about it?" say you; and you don't like to be reminded of the fact, perhaps. But the point is that in five weeks from now

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD"

will make its reappearance. On October 20th, to be precise, No. 1 of the new edition of the great school journal will be on sale.

Now, that is something really good to look forward to after the summer holidays are over, isn't it? No. 1 is practically finished now, and it contains the most splendid and original features that have ever appeared in any school paper.

TUCK HAMPER

are going to be restarted, for one thing. I have no doubt whatsoever of what the unanimous verdict of my readers will be on this magnificent feature. Can almost hear you shouting "Hurrah!" And that's just what all your fellow-readers of the Companion Papers will be exclaiming as they read the great news.

A splendid competition has been arranged in connection with the Tuck Hamper scheme, and every reader will have an equal opportunity of winning one of these coveted prizes.

ANOTHER GREAT IDEA

will be something quite original in the way of a school paper photo gallery. Space will not permit me to say very much about it, except that I am certain this is going to be a feature which will make a great appeal to every reader of the new "Greyfriars Herald."

MAKE A NOTE OF THE DATE,

if you have not already done so—October 20th!

Two—and this is very important—tell all your chums the date. Point out to them that October 20th is going to be a red-letter day for all lovers of a really magnificent school paper.

When you write to your cousins or friends, add, you have signed your name, just publish it: "Greyfriars Herald"—October 20th.

By this means you will be giving them all an opportunity to share your delight on the great day.

GOOD NEWS FROM IRELAND.

A girl chum—Miss Muriel White—sends me a most interesting letter from Galway. I have not the space to quote it, but among other interesting news she tells me that she has been a reader of the MAGNET and "Gem" for many years.

That is a splendid testimony to the quality and excellence of the two great school papers.

My correspondent thinks that a short time back the "Gem" struck rather a "bad patch."

Well, of course, Miss Muriel, there are bound to be stories which you may not care as much for as some that have appeared. Still, I know that you will realise that a story which you may not be particularly keen on will probably be considered by many the best they have ever read.

There is always certain to be differences

of opinion about stories. We can't all be alike in our views, can we?

However, I know your appreciation of the papers is great and sincere, and you have never yet read a story in them which you disliked sufficiently to make you cease to be a reader, have you?

No, of course not. And you never will, I am sure!

By the by, do you read the "Penny Popular"? That contains just the sort of stories you will like. There are new yarns of Harry Wharton & Co., Tom Merry & Co., and Jimmy Silver & Co. every week.

A SUGGESTION FROM LEEDS.

Three loyal Yorkshire readers of the Companion Papers—the "Penny Pop"—are specially—wish to know if either of the Greyfriars teams are going as far as Yorkshire.

They have all enjoyed the stories of the recent tours, but, quite naturally, I suppose, they want to hear of a Greyfriars trip to their own county.

The suggestion has been forwarded on to Mr. Frank Richards, and he will give it full consideration.

More than that I cannot promise for the moment.

Many thanks, I. T. T., for your letter.

NOTICES.

Football.

Football club, entering League coming season, wants good, enthusiastic players, 16 to 18.—A. E. Fisher, 17, Grange Road, Walkhampton, E. 17.

Wanted, football club to join League 1919-20: 14-15; a miles Widnes.—Secretary, Haile Bank Juniors, 66, Church Street, Widnes, Lancs.

H. G. Potter—16-19, Derswater Road, Broadbury Road, N.W. 6, wants to join football, cricket, or tennis, in the North West district; age 15.

St. Helen's 1st and 2nd: 5 miles; matches wanted; also members.—E. Cox & Sons, 8, Quinlan's Park, North Kensington, W. 10.

Wapping Athletic—15-17—matches coming season: 10 miles.—E. Akins, Woodside Mansions, St. George's, E. 1.

Regent United Football Club—16-17—home and away.—A. E. Hopkins, 20, Elthorington Buildings, Archer Street, W. 1.

Wanted, members for football team—16-18—small entrance fee—5 miles.—Apply personally to R. Aspin, 60, Broadbury Road, Kilburn, N.W. 6, after 6.30 any evening.

Back Numbers Wanted.

S. Storey, Witham Villa, Tattonhall Road, Boston, Lincs.—red-covered "Magnets," 2d. each; "Christmas Numbers before 1916," 3d. each. Write first.

J. Vaindell, 55, Upper North Street, Poplar, E. 14—"Magnets" and "Gems," 300-400, 2d. each; also "Penny Populars." Write first.

L. A. Freeman, Waterworks, Brede, Sussex—wants red-covered "Magnets" and blue-covered "Gems," 3d. each offered. Write first.

Correspondence.

Mux Barker, 22, De Villier Street, Cape Town, South Africa—with readers overseas, 14-16.

David H. Withey, 14a, Victory Square, Camberwell, S.E. 5—with readers anywhere.

H. C. Potter, 22, Bath Street, Birmingham—with readers anywhere. J. C. Potter, same address—with readers age 16.

Tom MacLellan, 19, Kingsmill Road, Inverness, Scotland—with readers overseas.