

666
"SPORT TOPICS!"

A SPLENDID NEW SERIES OF SPORTING
ARTICLES JUST STARTING IN THIS NUMBER!



The Magnet Library

No. 666. Vol. XVIII.

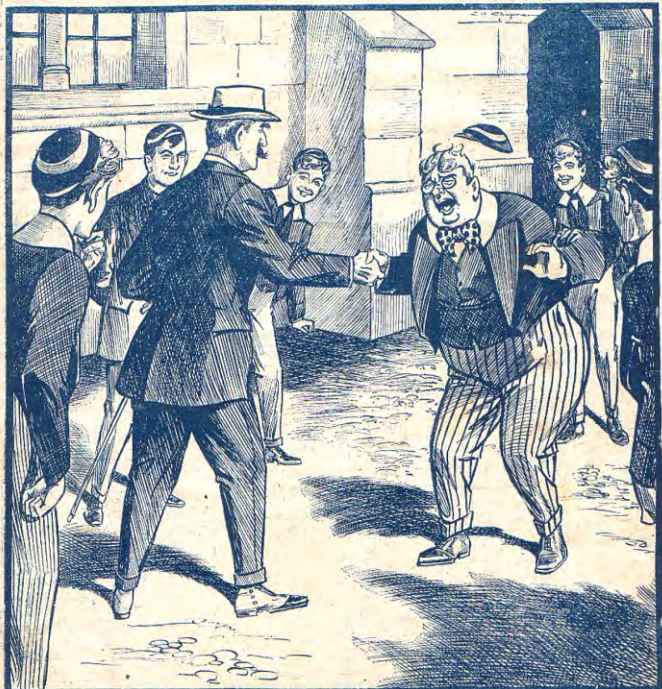
November 13th, 1923.

1¹⁰/₂



THE MAN FROM AMERICA!

SPLENDID COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY IN THIS ISSUE.



UNCLE BILL, OF NEW YORK, ARRIVES AT GREYFRIARS!

A SURPRISE FOR THE FALSTAFF OF THE REMOVE!



Next Monday's Programme.

"THE CATERPILLAR'S REST-CURE!"

Under this title Mr. Frank Richards gives us a really splendid Long Complete school story of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars.

Rupert de Courcy, of Highcliffe, and Archie Howell, of Greyfriars, are two very prominent figures in the tale. The latter having had a really strenuous time at Highcliffe of late, is keen on having a rest cure. Howell, his friend, keen to help him, makes a startling suggestion of a nature you will discover in due course.

There will be plenty of humorous and exciting incidents in the story, and I feel sure it will receive a cordial reception at the hands of my rhymers.

Another instalment of our grand serial of Ancient Rome, entitled

"MARCUS THE BRAVE!"

By Famaus Victor Nelsen,

will be next on the list of good things, and deals with further exciting escapes of the two young gladiators and Emma, the charming Christian slave girl, from the clutches of Nero, the cruel ruler of Rome, and his fearsome pretorians. You will enjoy this topping adventure yarn.

And a second interesting and chatty article dealing with

"SPORT TOPICS."

By "Spectator."

which is proving to be so popular with the readers of the MAGNET Library, Spectator invites letters from my friends, and any question which puzzles them he

will be glad to answer to the best of his ability.

Last, but not least, there will be some more comic pictures illustrating the screamingly funny antics of

"BILLY BUNTER—FORM-MASTER!"

By J. MacWilson.

THE GREAT RETURN.

There is a rumour that the laison form of Bunter was seen gliding through the empty, echoing corridors of old Greyfriars during the vacation. The idea is that the Owl could not keep away, but was studying and grub-hunting on the strict Q. T. while the school was given over to the charades and to silence. Frankly, I do not credit it. Peter Todd left nothing in the cupboard. The last pot of jam went into the hit-bag. Besides, Bunter was spending his well-earned hours of adipose—I mean repose—in the doting circles of his titled relative.

A MAGICIAN.

Perry A. Rositer, 25, White Road, Vicoage Lane, Stratford, E. 15, writes to me to say that he has read the Companion Papers since he was eleven. He is now a young man, and has taken up conjuring, and is making a success of it. He traces his advance to a letter he received from a professional conjurer which came through the MAGNET. "So," he says, "I think, Mr. Editor, you will agree with me that I have something for which to thank the old 'Mag.' Long may it reign!"

A "MAGNET" READER.

A request is to hand from Harold Doughty, Aberdeen Club, 1, Bain Avenue, Toronto, Canada. He says that while in Northern Canada recently he stopped overnight at a deserted cabin, and on the table lay an open book with a letter pinned to it, addressed to "Miss G. Anderson, 12, Hollywood Road, Stran—" There the address finished. As the MAGNET was mentioned in the letter, my correspondent hopes that the lady knew the paper, and will allow him to return her property.

SATISFIED WITH LITTLE.

A claim tells me he is laughed at because, as his friends say, he is easily satisfied. He has nothing to complain about. Fellows who are laughed at pretty regularly may take it as a compliment, since such reliability is an honest tribute to their worth. They are worth being ridiculed. Better to be noticed, any day of the week, than be coldly ignored. There lies the sting. My correspondent is an omnivorous reader, and he likes to think out things for himself. Personally, I do not think he is indolently content, as he fears. He seems to be getting a rare lot of good out of life—and who can do better?

Your Editor

THOUGHT HE WAS BOB CHERRY!

1. Jimmy Jiggs had been to the village and had secured his copy of the Magnet, and, desiring to have a quiet read, he sat down upon a seat some way out of town. But others became interested.



2. Jimmy was far too much engrossed in the story to take much notice of anything happening behind him, otherwise he might have wondered why so many people were taking interest in his story-book.



3. Then Jimmy Jiggs came to an exciting part, where Bob Cherry, the famous fighting man of the Remove, was "upsetting" Snop. "Left—the right!" he yelled, banging out with his fists. Biff! Bang! That upset the crowd!



The Man from America!

: A Magnificent :
Grand Long Story
of Billy Bunter and
Harry Wharton and
Co., the Chums of
Greyfriars School.
—By—
FRANK RICHARDS.

News for the Bunter family!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Great Expectations!

"MY only aunt!" Billy Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove, uttered that exclamation, in tones of mingled surprise and delight.

The fat junior was embedded in the armchair in No. 7 Study, glancing at the current issue of "The Chimes." How that celebrated newspaper had found its way into a junior study was a mystery. The Removables did not, as a rule, read the daily papers. The activities of Lenin and Trotsky, and the wave of unrest in Ireland, had less interest for them than for the adult public.

Anyway, the paper had got into No. 7 Study somehow, and Billy Bunter had been idly scanning its columns, when he suddenly shot bolt upright in the armchair, and called upon his only aunt.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton, two of Bunter's study-mates, were present. Peter was lacing his football boots, and Dutton was gazing meditatively out of the window.

"My only aunt!" repeated Billy Bunter, with emphasis.

Peter Todd looked up questioningly. Tom Dutton continued to gaze out of the window. Being deaf—or, as he himself would have expressed it, a trifle hard of hearing—he had failed to hear Bunter's ejaculation.

"I say, Toddy!" said the fat junior excitedly. "What do you think has happened? I've got on the track of one of my tilled relations!"

"Eh?"

"Mr. William K. Chumley, of New York, is advertising in the personal column of 'The Chimes.' He wants to get in touch with his relations living in England. And I'm his nephew!"

Peter Todd gave a grunt.

"In one breath you say he's a tilled relation, and in the next you refer to him as 'Mr.!' " he said.

"Ahem! He—he's not exactly tilled, you know, but he's got pots and pots of money. Before I came to Greyfriars he was living at Liverpool, and he was down on his uppers."

"So you had nothing to do with him, I s'pose?"

"Of course not!" said Bunter. "Blest if I was going to trouble my head over poor relations! But it's a different matter now—now that he's rolling in riches!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd had to laugh. It was typical of Billy Bunter to shun and despise a poor relation, and to change his tune directly the relation became wealthy.

"What on earth are you cackling for, Toddy?" demanded the fat junior, blinking at his study-mate through his big spectacles.

"Something tickled me, that's all," said Peter. "Carry on! Let's hear more about your Uncle Bill. I'm interested."

"He left Liverpool a few years ago," said Billy Bunter. "Worked his passage over to America, and said he wouldn't come back to England until he'd made his pile. He's evidently made it by now, or he wouldn't be so eager to get in touch with his relations."

"I don't know so much," said Peter. "Perhaps he's up to his eyebrows in debt, and he wants his relations in England to help him out."

"Not likely! This advert, suggests that he's made heaps of brass, and that he wants to find somebody who'll help him to spend it. I'm his favourite nephew, too—he used to fairly dote on

me—so you can bet I'm in for a good time!"

"Let's see the advert," said Peter Todd.

Billy Bunter had marked the paragraph with a blue-lead pencil. He spread the newspaper out on the study table, and indicated the advertisement with a grubby thumb.

"If any existing relative of Mr. William K. Chumley, late of Liverpool, and now of New York (at present staying at the Hotel Majestic, London), will communicate with Messrs. Grabbitt & Scoote, Solicitors, Lincoln's Inn, he (or she) will hear of something to his (or her) advantage."

"On the face of it, my Uncle Bill must be simply rolling in quids!" said Billy Bunter. "Only millionaires and multimillionaires stay at the Hotel Majestic. They charge about fifteen guineas for bed and breakfast."

"For a month?" queried Peter Todd.

"No—for a single night, fathead!"

"Oh!"

"Besides, the advert. says that any existing relative will hear of something to his advantage," continued Bunter. "I take that to mean that Uncle Bill's going to spit up his wealth between us—to dodge the excess profits tax, I suppose!"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"You're going to reply to that advert?" he inquired.

"Of course!"

"And what about your sister Bessie, and your minor Sammy? If you're an existing relative of Mr. Chumley, so are they!"

"I shall keep this dark," said Bunter, "and I shall expect you to do the same, Toddy. I don't want Bessie or Sammy to have a finger in the pie. If they did my own share of Uncle Bill's wealth wouldn't be nearly so big. I say, won't it be great when I have a ear of my own, and more cash than I know what to do with?"

"You're building castles in Spain, porpoise," said Peter Todd. "You're never likely to have a car of your own, and you're even less likely to come into a fortune."

"Rats! There's a fortune waiting for me at this very moment. I've only got to write to Grabbitt & Scoote—"

"I hope they don't," said Peter. "Eh?"

"Grab it and scowl. If they do, you'll be left in the cart!"

"Don't be a funny ass! I say, Dutton, aren't you going to congratulate me? I shall soon be the richest fellow in the form!"

Tom Dutton turned from the window. "Warm?" he said. "Personally, I think it's perishing cold!"

"I said 'Form,' not 'warm'!" hooted Bunter. "I shall soon be the richest fellow in the Form—richer than Maudie!"

"No, there's no need to bawl," said Dutton. "I'm not deaf!"

"You—you—" spluttered Bunter, growing purple in the face with exasperation. "I shall soon be rich—richer than anybody in the Remove! You'll see me dishing about in a Ford—"

"A quite agree," said Dutton. "Eh?"

"I've always maintained that you ought to be in a casual ward!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd.

Before Billy Bunter could reply to Tom Dutton's outspoken comment there was a tramping of feet in the passage, and the Famous Five of the Remove crowded into the doorway of No. 7. They were in football garb, and Bob Cherry carried a brand-new ball under his arm.

"Buck up, Toddy!" said Harry Wharton. "We've been waiting for you."

"Sorry," said Peter. "I've been delayed through listening to Bunter's rosy dreams of wealth."

"Is the postal-order really coming at last?" asked Frank Nugent.

"No. Bunter's going to inherit a vast fortune from his Uncle Bill, who's just returned from the States."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the amused juniors.

"It's a fact, you fellows!" he declared. "My millionaire uncle from America has just come over, and he's advertising his relations."

And the speaker pointed to the advertisement in "The Chimes."

Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round the table and read the paragraph.

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "You say that Mr. William K. Chumley's your uncle?"

Bunter nodded.

"I'm his favourite nephew," he said. "And I'm his godson, into the bargain. Matter of fact," continued Bunter, drawing on his imagination, "I was named after him. My real name's William George Chumley-Bunter, with a hyphen."

But not being a mob, and not wishing to pose as an aristocrat, I dropped the 'Chumley' when I came to Greyfriars."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five roared with laughter. It was only too evident that they disbelieved their plump schoolfellow, and that they set no store by Billy Bunter's tale of forthcoming prosperity.

The fat junior had often had great expectations in the past, but these expectations never seemed to materialise. And it was extremely unlikely that they would materialise now.

THE MAXWELL LIBRARY.—No. 666.

"You fellows can laugh!" said Billy Bunter indignantly. "But you'll laugh on the other side of your chivvies when my Uncle Bill gives me a whack of his fortune!"

"He's more likely to give you a whack with a cricket-stump!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Bull! If you make rude remarks like that, I shall take you for a pyro in my Ford when it comes!"

"When!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

And he proceeded to parody an old refrain:

"When I get a motor,
I'll slaughter many a hoo!

When I get a motor,
When, when, when, when, when!"

"Come along, you fellows!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll leave Bunter alone with his dreams of wealth."

And the Famous Five quitted the study.

Peter Todd followed. And Tom Dutton, who had no desire to linger in Bunter's company, went, too.

Left to his own devices, the Owl of the Remove perused a sheet of Peter Todd's notepaper. Likewise Peter's fountain-pen, and seated himself at the table with a thoughtful and eager expression on his face.

"I'll answer that advert. right away!" he muttered.

And the next moment the pen, with much scratching and spluttering, travelled over the paper, to the detriment of Peter Todd's gold nib.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Unwelcome Visitors!

BILLY BUNTER was not an expert in the art of letter-writing. Both his composition and his spelling left much to be desired. But when the letter to the solicitors was finished, he appeared quite satisfied with it.

The document was worded as follows:

"Greyfriars School,
"Friarale, Kent.

"To Messrs. Grabbitt & Scoote,

"Dear Sirs,—With reverence to your advertisement in to-day's issue of 'The Chimes,' in which you ask relatives of Mr. William K. Chumley, Eskvire, to communicate with you, I beg to forward the following particulars.

"I am the favorite nephew of Mr. Chumley. He took a great interest in me when I was a small kid, and besides being present at my krisening, he used to visit me all over the place. I well remember his hansom face bending over me as I lay back in the male-cart.

"Will you please tell my Uncle Bill a-four-mensured that I'm simply dying to see him again, especially if he is a myllunaire, as your advertisement leads me to believe. I shall be glad to do so when he can visit me at Greyfriars, and I trust you will give me this information by return. I enclose an unstamped addressed envelope.

"Hopping you are kwite well, as it leaves me at present,

"I remain, yores trewly,
"WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER."

Billy Bunter surveyed his handiwork with considerable satisfaction.

No sooner had the letter been sealed and addressed than there was a roud of footsteps in the passage, accompanied by the rustle of a skirt.

The footsteps paused outside the door

of Study No. 7; and then, after an interval of a few seconds, two people stepped into the apartment. One was Billy Bunter's minor—the egregious Sammy; the other was Billy's plump sister, from Cliff House.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

And he promptly tucked the letter to Messrs. Grabbitt & Scoote into his pocket.

Bessie Bunter's keen eyes, however, had noticed the action.

"What have you got there, Billy?" she demanded.

"Oh, really, Bessie—"

"It's a letter of some sort," said the Cliff House girl. "Is it a Billy-do?"

"A—what?"

"A love-letter to some girl you're keen on?"

"Yes, rather!" said Billy, jumping at this opportunity of throwing his sister off the scent.

"Let me see it, then!" said Bessie.

"No jolly fear! I think I'm going to parade my private correspondence before the whole family!"

"You might have made some mistakes in the spelling," said Bessie, "in which case, I can correct them."

"Why, you can't spell for toffee!" said Billy Bunter. "I'm always having to apologise to people for your appalling lack of education, and Sammy's."

"Look here—" began Sammy wrathfully.

"It is very unbrotherly of you, Billy, not to show me that letter," said Bessie.

"I must insist on your handing it over!"

Billy Bunter promptly doled through the doorway, bowling over his minor on route. Then he sped away towards the Close, his fat little legs going like clockwork.

"What's the hurry?" asked Mark Linley, jumping to one side to avoid the wildly-careering Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove stopped short, pumping in breath.

"I say, Linley," he gasped, "lend me a tuppenny stamp!"

"Give you one, you mean," said Mark, with a smile. "If I lent you one, you'd never repay it. Here you are!"

And he handed over a stamp, which Billy Bunter promptly affixed to his letter.

A moment later the misative was dropped into the pillar-box in the Close, and the fat junior heaved a sigh of relief.

The letter to Messrs. Grabbitt & Scoote was now safe from prying eyes.

"Good!" muttered Bunter, putting from his exertions. "I was afraid Bessie and Sammy would get that letter away from me by force! And then the fat would have been in the fire. I don't want them to know that Uncle Bill's over here, with pots of money!"

The fat junior went back to Study No. 7. He found Bessie reclining in the armchair, while Sammy, like a dutiful fag, was preparing the tea.

It was a little habit of Bessie Bunter's to drop in on her brother when least expected. And Billy mournfully pointed out to her that there was nothing for tea.

"Nothing for tea!" echoed Bessie.

"Why, what do you mean? There are two cakes in the cupboard—one currant and one seed."

"They're Toddy's!"

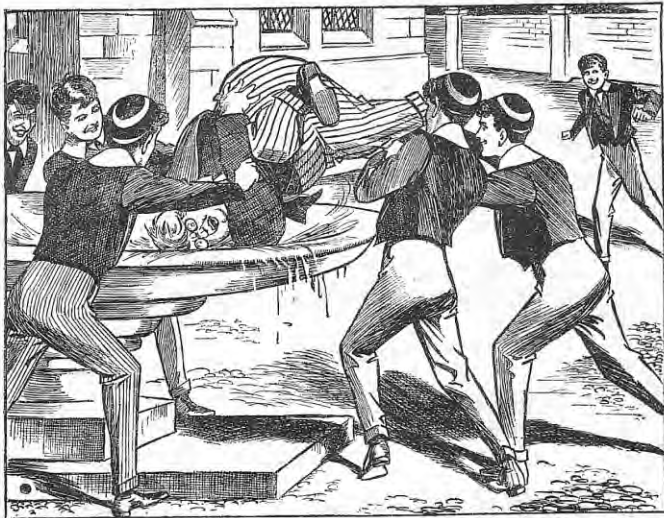
"And there's a bag of jam-tarts!"

"They belong to Dutton!"

"Well, you're a member of this study, aren't you?"

"Yes, but—"

"Then you're an equal share of everything. And if you care to invite your sister over to tea, Todd and Dutton oughtn't to raise any objection."



"Heave-ho, shipmates!" chuckled Bob Cherry. Billy Bunter, kicking and struggling in the grasp of his captors, was conveyed bodily to the fountain, and his head was ducked well in. There was a yell of alarm which echoed across the Close. (See page 7.)

"But—but I haven't invited you!" protested Billy.

"No; but I've invited myself, so it comes to the same thing," said Bessie, with a grin. "I say, Billy, why did you rush out in such a tearing hurry just now?"

"Ahem! I—I suddenly remembered that I had an important appointment."

"Who with?"

"Oh, really, Bessie. I wish you wouldn't keep asking silly questions! That's the worst of girls. They can never mind their own business."

Bessie frowned, and picked up the copy of "The Chimes," which had fallen from the table on to the floor. She was about to glance at it, when Billy intervened.

"Gimme that paper!" he exclaimed. "It's mine!"

"No harm in my reading it, surely?" said Bessie.

"Yes, there is—lots of harm! That paper's full of murders and things!"

"Oh, good!" murmured Bessie. "I'm very fond of thrilling stuff."

And she started to turn over the pages of the newspaper.

Billy Bunter groaned. He was on tenterhooks lest Bessie should discover the advertisement which had been marked with blue pencil. He made a sudden grab at the paper, but Bessie jerked it away.

"No, you don't!" she said. "If you try to do that again, Billy, I shall keep you off with the poker!"

"That's the style, Bessie!" piped Sammy. "Make him keep his distance!"

Bessie turned the paper over until she came to the advertisement page. Then she paused.

"Don't read that!" said Billy Bunter, in an agony of apprehension. "There's no sense in looking at a lot of mouldy adverts!"

"But somebody might have something to give away," said Bessie, who never missed an opportunity of getting something for nothing.

"Read the football news!" urged Billy.

"I'm not interested in football."

"There's a special column for girls."

"I'm not a girl," said Bessie. "I'm a young lady."

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter saw that nothing would divert Bessie's attention from the advertisement page. But as a last desperate resource, he said:

"Put that paper away, Bessie. Tea's ready!"

"I can have my tea and read the advertisements at the same time," said Bessie cheerfully.

And then she gave a sudden start.

"Why, what's this?" Mr William K. Chumley, late of Liverpool, and now of New York. Great Scott! That's our Uncle Bill!"

"It isn't!" said Billy wildly. "It—it's just a coincidence that the name happens to be there!"

"It's our Uncle Bill, I tell you!" said Bessie excitedly. And Sammy came up to see what it was all about. "He wants

any existing relatives to communicate with his solicitors!"

"And they'll hear of something to their advantage!" said Sammy. "That means that Uncle Bill's made a fortune over in the States, and he wants his relatives to share it."

"Nothing of the sort!" said Billy Bunter. "You're both jumping at conclusions! That isn't our Uncle Bill at all!"

"It is—and what's more, I believe you've written in reply to this advertisement!" exclaimed Bessie. "That was why you dashed out in such a hurry just now. You wanted to post the letter!"

That Bessie's deductions were correct was proved by the guilty expression on Billy's face.

"I—I—," he stammered.

"Mean boast!" said Sammy. "You tried to keep this all to yourself, so that we shouldn't benefit in any way. Lucky think you spotted that advertisement, Bessie!"

"Yes, rather! I'm going to write to these solicitors directly I get back to Cliff House!"

"I shall write, too!" said Sammy.

"Look—here," protested Billy.

"where's the sense in you two writing, when I've already written myself—I mean, when that isn't our Uncle Bill at all?"

"You know very well that Mr William K. Chumley is our uncle," said Bessie. "It's not a bit of use your trying to pull the wool over our eyes, Billy!"

"Not a scrap!" said Sammy.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 666.

"I'll take this paper back to Cliff Hasso with me, and write the letter as soon as I get there," said Bessie.

"Half a jiffy!" interposed Sammy. "Let me jot down the address!"

And, by means of a grubby pencil and an equally grubby notebook, he did so.

As for Billy, he was furious to think that his brother and sister had both seen the advertisement, and that they would have shares in Uncle Bill's dollars, likewise seats in the Ford car which Uncle Bill was bound to present to his niece and nephews.

As the funder of the advertisement, Billy declared that he—and he alone—ought to reap all the benefits that were going. But Bessie and Sammy failed to see eye to eye with him on that point.

"When Uncle Bill comes down—as he's bound to do when he gets our letters—I mean to have my whack!" said Bessie.

"Same here!" said Sammy. "I say, there's some ripping things in store for us three! I dare say Uncle Bill will dish out enough dollars to keep us in pocket-money until we leave school!"

"If he gives us a car I'm going to drive it!" said Billy.

"He might give us a Ford," said Bessie, "but not a real car!"

"I don't care whether it's a sugar-box on wheels or a latest model Daimler," said Billy. "I'm going to drive it!"

In that case, we shall all finish up at the Cottage Hospital," remarked Sammy facetiously. "Now, who says tea?"

"Tea!" said Bessie promptly. "Back up and pour it out, Sammy, while I slice up the cake."

The meal was soon in progress, and it finished almost as soon as it began.

When three members of the Bunter family were gathered together at a feed, very few crumbs were left to tell the tale.

Peter Todd's two cakes, and Tom Dutton's jam-tarts, disappeared with lightning-like rapidity. And Bessie looked round for fresh worlds to conquer.

"There's nothing else," said Billy, interpreting his sister's desires. "Cupboards empty, except for a tin of sardines that's been here as long as I have!"

"Grog!"

The prehistoric sardines failed to tempt Bessie, who rose to her feet.

"I'll be going now," she said.

Billy hoped that she would forget to take the newspaper with her. But Bessie had evidently taken lessons in Spokenheim. Anyway, she didn't forget.

Bessie moved to the door, and Sammy followed her out into the passage.

The Owl of the Remove was left alone in the study—but not for long.

There was a tramping of feet without, and the next moment Peter Todd and Tom Dutton entered the study. They were followed by Mounty Newland and Dick Penfold, whom they had invited to tea.

Peter Todd paused on the threshold, and surveyed the plates and cups and the few toll-take crumbs. Then he emitted a sort of bellow:

"Bunter, you fat thief, you've scoffed our tuck!"

"Oh, really, Toddy, I—I—"

"What do you mean by it, you worm?" demanded the indignant Peter.

"It—it wasn't me!" exclaimed Bunter, in alarm. "It was Bessie and Sammy!"

"So you've had quite a little tea-party of your own—what! I'll teach you to scoff our cakes and things while we're at footer! Give me a hand, you fellows!"

The others readily responded, and Billy Bunter was heaved across the table, face downwards.

Peter Todd then picked up a cricket—**THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 666.**

stump, and proceeded to belabour his plump study-mate.

"Whack, whack, whack!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Pile in, Toddy!" said Dick Penfold. Peter needed no encouragement.

The stump rose and fell with deadly accuracy, and the yells of the victim echoed along the Remove passage.

By the time Peter Todd desisted, Billy Bunter resembled a deflated balloon. He rolled off the table on to the floor, where he lay squirming and groaning in anguish.

"Yow-ow-ow! Toddy, you bullying beast! I'll pay you out for this! I won't introduce you to my Uncle Bill when he comes!"

This terrible threat had no effect on Peter, who bade his guests remain in the study while he went to the school shop for fresh supplies of tuck.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Task for Wibley!

TWO days elapsed, and there had been no letter from Uncle Bill, or from Uncle Bill's solicitors.

The morning of the third day, however, brought developments.

Billy Bunter, usually the last fellow down, was now the first. He intercepted the postman, as that aged and gouty individual came shuffling across the Close.

"Any letters for me?" inquired the fat junior eagerly.

"One, Master Bunter."

"Good! Hand it over!"

The postman obeyed, and passed on. Billy Bunter glanced at the envelope, and saw it was written in the firm, resolute handwriting of a self-made man.

"It's from Uncle Bill, right enough!" he murmured.

He ripped open the envelope, and drew out the communication, which was headed:

"Hotel Majestic, London."

"Dear Nephew William,—I was delighted to hear of you from my solicitors after this long lapse of time, and I was equally delighted to receive, at the same time, information concerning Bessie and Samuel."

"You were a plump little fellow in knickerbockers at the time I left England. Much water has flowed under the bridges—and much wealth into my coffers—since then. You have doubtless heard of Chumley's Chewing-gum?"

I was the original manufacturer of that choice and delicious sweetmeat, which is guaranteed to clean the teeth, strengthen the gums, purify the breath, remove indigestion, and restore the most chronic invalid to perfect health. I have made a fortune in chewing-gum, and, though not exactly a millionaire, I am well on the road to becoming one.

"I am spending a long holiday in England, and I am anxious, whilst in the Old Country, to seek out my relatives. Hence, my advertisement in 'The Chimes.'"

"You may expect me at Greystones in a day or two. I am not in a position to state the exact time of my arrival."

"I am longing to see you again, dear William, after this protracted interval. I wonder if you have worked off your superfluous flesh yet, and your school-fellows call you 'Bony' Bunter? Or are you still as corpulent as Christopher Columbus when he swelled with pride on discovering America?"

"I guess I'll wind up now, in anticipation of seeing you soon."

"Your affectionate
"UNCLE WILLIAM."

Billy Bunter's eyes sparkled behind his spectacles as he read that effusion. He

frowned a little at the reference to the superfluous flesh; but on the whole he considered that it was a most affectionate letter.

"So Uncle Bill's going to seek out and entertain his relatives?" chuckled the fat junior. "That will be jolly nice for Uncle Bill—and nicer still for his relatives!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, coming on the scene with the other members of the Famous Five. "Wherefore that beaming smile, Billy?"

"It's come!" announced Bunter triumphantly.

"What—the postal-order?"

"No, no—the letter I was expecting from my Uncle Bill!"

"Good! Has he enclosed a draft for ten thousand dollars?"

"No; but he's coming down to Greystones in a day or two."

"Nice for Greystones!" murmured Nugent.

"Is your Uncle Bill a millionaire?" inquired Johnny Bull.

"Several times over!" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is he one of the get-rich-quick sort?" asked Wharton.

"Yes, rather! He made heaps and heaps of money out of chewing-gum. You fellows have heard of Chumley's chewing-gum, I take it?"

"Of course!" said Bob Cherry. "Everybody's chewing it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's wonderful stuff, according to the advertisements," said Nugent. "It cleans the teeth and sweetens the breath, cures whooping-cough, and removes corns and bunions."

And there was a fresh peal of laughter.

"It must be jolly good stuff, or Uncle Bill wouldn't have made a fortune out of it," said Billy Bunter.

"Fortunes are easily made in the States," said Johnny Bull. "Fishy will tell you that a man can make a million quids in a few minutes, and he stony broke five minutes afterwards."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I vote we all march down to the station to meet Bunter's uncle," said Bob Cherry. "We'll take mouth-organs and tin-whistles with us, and give him a royal reception."

"Hear, hear!"

"Fathheads!" snorted Bunter. "My Uncle Bill won't arrive by train. He'll turn up in style, in a car!"

"Then we'll go down to the village and tow his broken-down Ford up to the school!" said Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You won't be able to do that, because my uncle doesn't say what time he's coming," said Bunter. "And in any case I'm not going to let you fellows start toadying up to Uncle Bill for what you can get!"

"Why, you—you—" spluttered Bob Cherry, stultifiedly.

"I shall tell Uncle Bill not to have any tuck with cadgers!" Bunter went on, being too short-sighted to observe the danger-signals on the faces of the Famous Five. "It won't be a bit of use licking my uncle's boots. You'll get no change out of him."

That was the last straw.

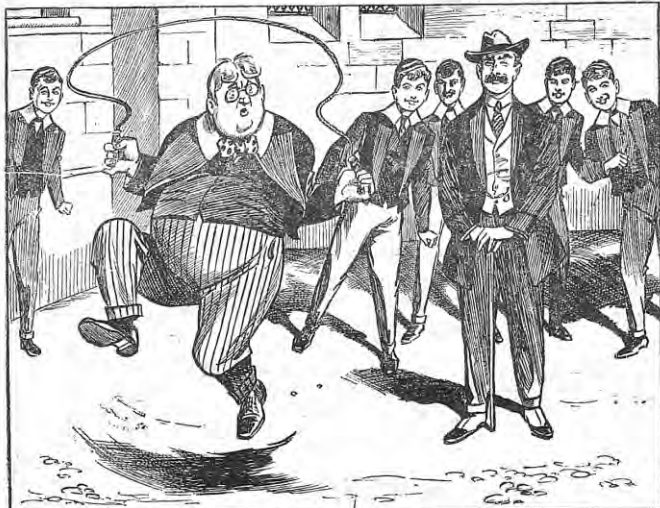
Moved by a simultaneous impulse, Harry Wharton & Co. advanced towards the Owl of the Remove and swung him off his feet.

"Here, wharrier you up to?" screamed Bunter in alarm.

"Bring him along to the fountain!" said Wharton tolerably. "We'll give him a jolly good ducking!"

"The duckfulness will be terrific!" murmured Nurce Singh.

"Likewise the splashfulness and the



"Skip six times round this yard, or quadrangle, or whatever you call it," said Uncle Bill. "Pile in William or I shall lose patience with you!" Billy Bunter started to skip—or, to be more correct, he started to try to skip—and he only managed to clear the rope successfully three times. (See page 10.)

yellfulness!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Heave-ho, shipmates!"

Billy Bunter, kicking and struggling in the grasp of his captors, was conveyed bodily to the fountain, and his head ducked well in. There was a yell of alarm which echoed across the Close.

"Yooocoooo!" Help! You heasts! Gug-gug-gug!"

Billy Bunter's outburst ended in a wild gurgle as his head was immersed in the water again.

The Famous Five released him at last and strolled away.

When Billy Bunter went into breakfast his hair had a matted appearance, and his face looked unusually clean and shiny. Mr. Quetch glanced at him curiously from the head of the table, but he asked no questions.

The fat junior soon recovered from the effects of his ducking. His appetite was as healthy—or, rather, as unhealthy—as ever, and after disposing of his own rasher of bacon he consumed that of Lord Mauleverer, who was heard to remark that it was too much fat to eat.

During the interval between breakfast and morning school Billy Bunter could talk of nothing but the impending visit of his Uncle Bill. His avank was colossal. He prated of the vast fortunes which would shortly be his, and of the luxurious car which he would soon own.

It was Bunter's object to turn his schoolfellows green with envy. He didn't succeed, but his bombastic talk annoyed and exasperated Harry Wharton & Co. They couldn't stand a side, least of all when it was displayed by Bunter.

"Something will have to be done!" said Bob Cherry with conviction, as the juniors streamed out of the Form-room after morning lessons.

"About Bunter, do you mean?" said Johnny Bull.

"Yes. It's simply awful the way he keeps babbling about Uncle Bill, the Chewing-gum Chief! Just hark at him now!"

A short distance away Billy Bunter was holding forth to Skinner and Snoop and Stott on his pet topic.

"I shall have a special car of my own, you fellows," he was saying, "and I expect uncle will let me engage a chauffeur. I'm not particularly keen on having one, as I'm such a ripping driver myself, but I dare say Uncle Bill will insist."

"Oh, quite!" said Skinner gravely. "Will you take your old pals out for a run occasionally, Bunt?" asked Stott.

"All depends how you behave yourselves. If you treat me with the respect due to a person of wealth and position, I'll see that you get plenty of joy-rides."

"Thanks, awfully!" said Snoop.

"And I expect my Uncle Bill will settle on me—"

"You speak as if he was a humble-bee!" said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Aa! I expect he'll settle on me a regular yearly allowance—five thousand a year, or thereabouts."

"Oh, make it billions!" said Stott.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And he'll send me enough chewing-

gum to last me a lifetime!" said Bunter. "I'm in for a top-hole time, and I'll see that Wharton and the others don't get a look-in. They've always sneered at me about my postal-order not turning up, and it will be my turn to sneer soon. Why, they'll be a set of poverty-stricken paupers compared with me!"

The Famous Five exchanged grim glances.

"Just listen to the fat worm!" exclaimed Nugent. "Fairly makes your blood boil, doesn't it?"

Harry Wharton nodded.

"I agree with Bob that something must be done," he said. "We must take a rise out of Bunter soon, or the school won't be big enough to hold him! He's already talking as if he was a Rothschild and an Astor rolled into one!"

"The question is, how can we take the wind out of his sails?" said Johnny Bull.

The juniors racked their brains for a "wheeze." But they seemed to be barren just then of brilliant brain-waves.

It would be no use bumping Billy Bunter, or ducking him again in the fountain. Neither of these two expedients would succeed in silencing the fat junior's tongue.

What was to be done?

"Here's the Wib!" said Bob Cherry suddenly, as Wibbly of the Remore approached the group of juniors. "Wib's always bristling with brainy ideas. Let's ask him if he can help us out."

"At your service, gentlemen!" said

THE MARKET LIBRARY.—No. 666.

Wibley, who had overheard Bob's remark.

"We want to know how we can take Bunter down a peg or two," said Harry Wharton.

"Quite simple!" said Wibley, in whose active brain a scheme had already taken shape.

The Famous Five regarded the speaker hopefully—eagerly.

"You've got a wheeze, Wib?" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes, O king!" Wibley threw a glance over his shoulder to make certain that Billy Bunter was not within ear-shot. "What do you say to my disguising myself as Uncle Bill, and turning up at Greyfriars this afternoon? I shall be able to lead Bunter the very débâche of a dance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ripping!"

"I can get a jolly decent make-up from old Lazarus at Courtfield," Wibley went on, "and I can cultivate a Yankee drawl. I don't suppose I shall look anything like Uncle Bill, but then Bunter hasn't seen him for ages, so he's not likely to smell a rat."

"Do you happen to know whether the genuine Uncle Bill is a hefty merchant, or an underized one?" asked Wharton.

"He's on the short side. I remember Bunter saying that he was a dapper little fellow."

"Clean-shaven?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Can't say. Anyway, I shall have to sport a false moustache, and if Bunter asks any questions I shall say that I've just sprouted it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How will you arrive, Wib?" asked Frank Nugent. "Will you hire a Ford?"

"No, I'll roll up in the station hack."

"Splendid!"

"And what will you do when you get here?" asked Bob Cherry. "I mean, in what way will you make things warm for Bunter?"

Wibley grinned. And he contented himself with the historic and evasive reply:

"Wait and see!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Arrival of "Uncle Bill"!

AFTER dinner Wibley of the Remova slipped quietly away and walked over to Courtfield. He called upon Mr. Lazarus, the dealer in second-hand clothes and in actors' perquisites, and he spent half an hour in the stuffy little room at the back of Mr. Lazarus' premises.

When he emerged he was no longer recognisable as a Greyfriars junior. He wore a brown suit, of American style and cut, and he had a dark moustache and dark, bushy eyebrows—false, of course. A Homburg hat was pulled well down over his forehead.

Wibley had examined himself closely in the mirror, and he was satisfied that he would pass muster as Mr. William K. Chumley, the original manufacturer of Chumley's chewing-gum.

A silver-mounted walking-stick, a pair of white gloves, and a pair of silk spats added lustre to Wibley's appearance.

The impersonator knew little or nothing of the American manner of speaking. But then Billy Bunter was equally ignorant in that respect, so that if Wibley made any slips they were not likely to be noticed.

Having donned his disguise, Wibley went into the nearest confectioner's, and purchased a dozen packets of Chumley's chewing-gum. He crammed these into

his pocket, and then proceeded to the station, where he boarded the local train to Friarale.

When he stepped out on to the platform at his destination, he was respectfully saluted by one of the porters.

"Got any luggage, sir?"

Wibley replied in the negative. He handed in his ticket, and passed out of the little station, leaving the porter vaguely wondering why such a lavishly-dressed individual should travel third-class.

The prehistoric station-hack was standing outside, with an equally prehistoric horse in the foreground.

The driver, a man who had seen about eighty summers and an equivalent number of winters, was perched in his seat. He was on the verge of nodding off to sleep when Wibley hailed him.

"Say! I want you to take me to Greyfriars!"

"Certainly, sir!" said the driver, touching his weather-beaten hat. "Any luggage, sir?"

"No."

Wibley stepped into the vehicle, and the driver whipped up his stolid-looking horse.

As the hack jolted along the village street, Wibley took a final survey of himself in a hand-mirror.

"Think I'll do!" he muttered.

The distance to Greyfriars was a quarter of a mile, as the crowd flies. But the ancient horse lacked the speed of a crow, and half an hour had elapsed before Wibley arrived at his destination.

The school gates were open, and the Cloak was thronged with fellows. It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and everybody was out of doors.

Harry Wharton & Co. were there, and they pretended to be as surprised as everybody else as the hack rolled up.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"A new kid, by Jove!"

"Rat!" growled Bolsover major.

"Now kids don't wear Homburg hats, and have fangs on their upper lips!"

"It's somebody come to see somebody," said Skinner rather vaguely.

Wibley was the cynosure of all eyes as he stepped down from the hack.

"My hat! Just look at the cut of his togs!" said Stott. "No need to ask what his nationality is."

"I guess he's from the other side of the pond," said Fisher T. Fish, gazing at the newcomer with interest.

"In that case," said Snoot excitedly, "he's Billy Bunter's uncle!"

"What?"

"Great pip!"

No sooner had Wibley paid off the driver of the hack, than he was surrounded by a curious throng.

The newcomer produced a stick of chewing-gum, bent it double, and thrust it into his mouth.

"Say, is nephew William anywhere about?" he inquired.

"Who—who are you?" gasped Bolsover major.

"Guess I'm William K. Chumley, of New York."

"Billy Bunter's uncle?" exclaimed Skinner.

"Yep."

At that moment Billy Bunter came rolling on the scene. His face was glowing with excitement. He had not expected his uncle to arrive so soon. But his appearance was none the less welcome.

The bogus Mr. Chumley emitted a whoop of delight as the fat junior approached him.

"Gee, Billy! Guess it's a treat to see you after all this time! How you've shot up, to be sure!"

"Upwards and outwards!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've expanded no end since I last saw you, Billy!" said Mr. Chumley.

"Wonder if you'd go off pop if I were to stick a pin in you?"

Billy Bunter chuckled feebly.

"You will have your little joke, uncle!" he said.

"No offence meant, of course!" said Mr. Chumley.

"Put it there, William!"

Billy Bunter held out his hand, and it was taken in such a crushing grip that the fat junior roared with anguish.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing like a hearty handshake for putting people at their ease," said Uncle Bill.

Billy Bunter didn't look at all at ease. He clasped his damaged hand tenderly with the other.

"Wish you wouldn't be so beastly diffusive, uncle!" he groaned. "By the way, how did you come—in a Ford?"

"I guess not. —I'm rather particular how I travel. I came up on the station hack—a rum-looking contraption. We've got nothing like it on the other side of the pond."

"Did the driver get pulled up for exceeding the speed limit, sir?" inquired Frank Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I kinder calculate that both the driver and the horse had been tortoise, way back in some other incarnation!" said Mr. Chumley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you haven't brought a car at all, uncle?" asked Billy Bunter, in disappointed tones.

"None. Of course, I've got heaps of cars on the other side of the Atlantic—more'n I know what to do with."

Billy Bunter was regarding the speaker curiously.

"You know, you don't look a scrap like my Uncle Bill," he said.

"Eh?" gazed Wibley, with a quaver of alarm.

"When I last saw you, years ago, you were clean-shaven."

"I've cultivated a moustache since then, William."

"And your eyebrows weren't nearly so thick and bushy—"

"Guess I've watered 'em every night before going to bed to make 'em grow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And your hair used to be quite fair," continued Bunter.

"I've dyed it," said Wibley—quite truthfully, as it happened.

"What's more, you used to be a jolly sight better looking than you are now, uncle," said Bunter.

"The passage of time doesn't improve a galoot's appearance," was the reply.

"Take yourself frinstance. You were quite a handsome little chap, William, before you came to this hyer seat of learning."

And now, if you were to ransack the States from New York to Onchoreville, you'd never find an uglier-looking freak!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A roar of laughter went up at Billy Bunter's expense.

The fat junior frowned. He was wishing that his Uncle Bill would not be so painfully candid.

"By the way, where's the infant Samuel?" inquired Wibley.

"Oh, never mind him!" said Billy hastily.

"Ho's stewing in the fags' Common-room, I suppose. If you're thinking of giving your relatives a royal time, uncle, you can cut Sammy out. Ho's a awfully little beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's the bud of blushing beauty known as Bessie?"

"Over at Cliff House. But you needn't

worry about her. She's cast in the same mould as Sammy.

"Am I to understand," asked Wibley, "that you're the best boy of the family?" "That's right," said Bunter. "I'm quite a good chap—awfully modest, you know, and ever so popular. I could have been captain of the Remove if I'd wanted to, but I stood aside and let Wharton take on the job."

"Why, you — you —" spluttered Harry wrathfully.

"And, apart from being a fellow who never blows his own trumpet," Bunter went on, "I've a very temperate sort of character. I never over-eat, for instance."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"And I should never dream of cadging round a rich relative," said Bunter, linking his arm affectionately in one of Wibley's. "Shall we come and have a tuck-in, uncle? I'm awfully peckish! I — I mean, you must be fearfully hungry!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Whereabouts do you feed in this one-eyed show?" inquired Wibley.

"The tuckshop's over yonder," said Bunter, "and Mrs. Mimble's got a lot of my stuff in."

"Good! Lead the way, William the Corpulent!"

Billy Bunter promptly rolled away in the direction of the tuckshop.

Wibley hesitated a moment. Winking at the Famous Five, he said:

"Would you kids care to come and have a snack?"

"Delighted!" said Harry Wharton.

And as they crossed the Close with the bogus Mr. Chumley, Bob Cherry whispered:

"It's working like a charm, Wilf! Keep it up!"

"You're not going to starve Bunter a feed, surely?" muttered Johnny Bull.

"No jolly fear! I shall treat everybody but him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

When the party entered Mrs. Mimble's establishment they found Billy Bunter giving orders on a lavish scale.

"Come away from those pastries, William!" said Mr. Wibley.

"Eh?"

"They're not good for you. Instead of reducing your fat, they have just the opposite effect."

"But—but surely you don't begrudge me a little snack?" said Bunter.

"Not at all. But I guess you'd better

eat something that's good for you—not a lot of heavy pastry. Try this!"

So saying, Wibley produced a stick of chewing-gum from his pocket, and handed it to Bunter. The fat junior fingered it gingerly.

"What's this muck?" he asked.

"Muck?" echoed Wibley reproachfully. "Why, that's a stick of my own chewing-gum! It's nourishing, sustaining, invigorating, and refreshing!"

"Grog!"

"That one stick of chewing-gum," said Wibley, "will do you more good than a whole steak-and-kidney pudding!"

"But it isn't satisfying!" protested Bunter.

"Shucks! It'll last for hours, if you chew it carefully."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co.

Billy Bunter placed the stick of chewing-gum in his mouth, and his jaws were soon busy.

"Stick it, William!" said Wibley encouragingly. "Now, what are you kids going to have?"

"The muck would shift a dish of joints," said Bob Cherry.

"With a few doughnuts and cream-buns thrown in," added Nugent.

"Right you are," said Wibley. "You can help yourselves to the things that William ordered in a moment of weakness. You're fine healthy youngsters, and pastry will do you no harm. But in William's case it would be fatal. Pile in!"

The Famous Five "piled in" with avidity. And Wibley followed suit.

"I think we had heard that most wealthy Americans were chronic dyspeptics. But his Uncle Bill appeared to be an exception to the rule, for he ate as heartily as any of the juniors."

The Owl of the Remove was obliged to content himself with the stick of chewing-gum, which had tasted pleasant at first, but now had a soapy flavour.

Billy Bunter leaned against the counter and surveyed the feasters with hungry and envious eyes.

"Would you let me have just one doughnut, uncle?" he pleaded.

"None!"

"Just one jam-tart?"

"None!"

"But I'm jolly ravenous, you know! I was refused a fifth helping of pudding at dinner-time."

"That chewing-gum will more than satisfy you, I guess. In fact, by the time you've got through it you won't want another stick."

"I certainly sha'n't!" growled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What you want," said Wibley, "is plenty of strenuous exercise."

"Ow!"

"Baseball's a fine thing, but it's not played to any extent in this sleepy old island. However, there's football. Are you a footballer, William?"

"Every inch of me!" said Bunter, who could not resist the opportunity of parading his abilities—his imaginary abilities, of course—before his uncle.

"In what position do you play?"

"I'm a full-back."

"A very full back. I should think, if you're in the habit of cramming pastries before every match!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So soon as this little snack's finished," said Wibley, "I'll put you through your paces. I came over to England with the intention of doing my duty by my relatives; and if only I can work off some of that superfluous fat of yours, I shall feel that I've scored a great achievement. Anybody got a skipping-ropes?"

"I have!" said Bob Cherry promptly.

"Then you might run and fetch it as soon as you've finished those jam-tarts."

"With pleasure!" chuckled Bob.

"Here, I say, uncle," said Billy Bunter, in alarm, "what's the little game?"

"I'm going to put you through your paces," repeated Wibley. "I regard it as a solemn duty, William."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"I sha'n't be here long enough to make an athlete of you," said Wibley, "but I'll do my best in the limited time at my disposal."

"But I—I don't want to skip—"

"What you want, or don't want, doesn't count. You've got to obey your uncle. And if you don't, I shall alter my mind about giving you a Ford car, and a share in my apoplexies."

"Oh!"

Much as Billy Bunter hated physical exertion of any kind, he realised that he would have to go through with it, or Uncle Bill would cut him off without a penny. And after all, he reflected, a few turns with a skipping-ropes would be well worth while, if his labours were going to be crowned with the gift of a Ford car and unlimited dollars.

So Billy Bunter decided to humour his uncle, and to do everything that was required of him. And when Bob Cherry went off in quest of the skipping-ropes, the fat junior did not call him back. He was prepared to skip until further orders, if it meant that he would afterwards receive a share of the wealth which had been accumulated by Mr. William K. Chumley, the Chewing-gum Chief!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Earning a Fortune!

"I GUESS we'll start right now!"

It was Uncle Bill, alias Wibley of the Remove, who spoke. And with the words, he handed Billy Bunter the skipping-ropes which Bob Cherry had brought.

The fat junior took the ropes gingerly, and turned to Wibley, who was in the act of adjusting his false moustache, which had begun to droop at one end.

"What do you want me to do, uncle?"

"Skip six times round this yard, or quadrangle, or whatever you call it."

"Six times round the Close?" ejaculated Bunter, in dismay.

"Yep!"

"But—but it'll kill me!"

"Kill or cure," said Uncle Bill calmly. "That's been my principle all through life. I put it into practice when I invented my chewing-gum. Afraid it's killed more people than it's cured, but that's beside the point."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five were enjoying the situation immensely. The same could not be said of Billy Bunter.

The fat junior would have regarded it as a stiff order to have to run six times round the Close. And when it came to skipping—

"Go ahead!" said Uncle Bill.

"I—I say, uncle," said Billy Bunter, hesitating at the doorway of the tuckshop. "There's a whole crowd of fellows in the Close, and they're all cackling! Think what a fool I shall look!"

"No bigger a guy than usual, I guess."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pile in, William, or I shall lose patience with you!"

"It's only six times round, Bunt."

said Bob Cherry consolingly. "And we'll get an ambulance ready to take you away at the finish."

The MARKET LIBRARY.—No. 666.

EASY PAINTING COMPETITION.



£150
in Cash
PRIZES

For Boys and Girls

Every boy and girl should enter for this new WONDERLAND WEEKLY Painting Competition. All competitors have to do is to paint two simple pictures of the adventures of Mr. Toad, who is the jolly little cat you see here. All details appear in Friday's issue of

WONDERLAND WEEKLY

The Jolly COLOURED Picture Paper

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter started to skip—or, to be more correct, he started to try to skip.

To most of the athletic fellows in the Remove it would have been mere child's play to go round the Close half a dozen times with a skipping-rope. But to Billy Bunter it was an appalling task. He managed to clear the rope successfully three times, and then his foot became entangled in it, and he pitched forward in a sprawling heap.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Up, William, up!" counselled Uncle Bill.

"Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!" murmured Frank Nugent.

Billy Bunter scrambled to his feet and made a fresh start.

The Close was crowded with fellows; the majority of whom were holding their sides with laughter as they witnessed the fat junior's antics.

With the exception of the Famous Five, nobody knew that the dapper little man who was putting Bunter through his paces was not Uncle Bill at all. Had the crowd known it was Wibsey of the Remove, they would have laughed even more loudly.

Billy Bunter stumbled on for a few more yards, and then he again enudated Humpy-Dumpty. He fell heavily on to the flagstones, and complained of a fractured spine and several minor injuries. He pleaded that he was physically unable to carry on.

Uncle Bill, however, was a hard task-master.

"I guess you'd better put a jerk in it, William," he said, "or the Ford car and the dollars will go to somebody else!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Skipping is the finest flesh-reducing exercise ever invented," continued Uncle Bill. "If you did this every day, you'd be as slim as my walking-stick by the end of the term."

"Groo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter had no alternative but to get up and carry on. With the perspiration streaming down his cheeks, he resumed his task, and by great good fortune he managed to get round the Close without another mishap.

"Bravo!" said Uncle Bill approvingly. "Only five more laps to go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The only laps which Billy Bunter felt capable of undertaking at that moment, were laps at a bottle of ginger-beer. But there was no rest or refreshment for him yet. He went on skipping, and the crowd went on laughing. And every time Bunter came a cropper, a perfect yell went up.

Fired with visions of possessing a car of his own, and enough cash to last him till the end of his school career, Billy Bunter kept on keeping on. Under no other circumstances had he have been able to go six times round the Close with a skipping-rope. But with the prospects of wealth looming before him, the Owl of the Remove stuck to his task, and, what was more, he completed it.

Bunter was in a state of collapse by the time it was all over. He threw the skipping-rope down, and sank down beside it, gasping and panting.

"Guess you can have a breather now, William," said Uncle Bill generously. "I'll give you five minutes to get your breath back. Then we'll carry on with the good work."

"What!" gasped Bunter. "You—you're going to make me do some more skipping!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 666.

"None. I'm going to watch you play football."

"But I—I haven't got a kick in me!" panted Bunter. "I'm fagged right out!"

"I guess you'll be as fresh as a daisy in a brace of shakes."

Billy Bunter groaned dismally. He had imagined that with the finish of the skipping exercises all his troubles would be over. Instead of which, it seemed as if they were only just beginning!

Uncle Bill waited until the allotted five minutes were up; then he asked Harry Wharton & Co. to lead the way to the football ground.

Billy Bunter accompanied the party. He had no choice in the matter, for Uncle Bill had taken a friendly grip of his arm and was marching him along.

A large crowd followed to see the fun. It would certainly be funny from their standpoint, but not from Billy Bunter's!

"Guess you'd better plant yourself in that goal, William," said Uncle Bill, when they reached the ground.

"I'm not a goalkeeper, uncle," protested Bunter. "I'm a full-back."

"Don't argue!" rapped out Uncle Bill sternly. "I guess I'll make a first-class custodian of you. Where's the ball?"

Bob Cherry lobbed the sphere across to Uncle Bill; and Billy Bunter, with great trepidation, took up his position in the goalmouth.

"Ready, William!" came the query.

"Y-e-s," faltered Bunter.

Mr. Chumley was evidently as great an expert in the football as in the chewing-gum line. He sent in a scorching shot, and the ball caught Billy Bunter under the chin and hauled him into the net.

"Goal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was hopelessly entangled in the net, and the crowd shook with laughter.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I'm sure I shall bust a boiler in a minute!"

"It's too fanny for words!" said Harry Wharton. "But don't you think

Wib's gone far enough, you fellows? If he goes on at this rate Bunter will have to be sent away from Greyfriars for a rest-cure!"

"Trust Wib to know when to stop," said Johnny Bull. "I expect he'll chuck it in a few minutes."

Johnny was right. But in those few minutes Billy Bunter had a nightmare experience. Uncle Bill kept up an incessant bombardment of shots, and on several occasions the short-nosed goalie was bowled over in the mud.

When at length Uncle Bill ceased fire, Billy Bunter was in a deplorable state. He was smothered from head to foot with mud; he had lost his spectacles; and he was obliged to cling to one of the posts for support. Never in all his life had the fat junior had such a strenuous time.

"Well played, William!" said Uncle Bill, giving his pupil a slap on the back which made him howl. "You'll turn out for England yet! Care to go on playing?"

"Ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"I guess that's meant to be a negative reply," said Uncle Bill, "so we'll pack up."

Billy Bunter threw an appealing glance at the speaker.

"I—I say, uncle," he quavered. "Now that you've put me through my paces will you stand me a feed?"

"Certainly, William!"

And Uncle Bill fished in his pocket and produced a stick of chewing-gum. "Here you are," he said. "As I remarked before, there's more nutriment in this little bar of chewing-gum than there is in a whole steak-and-kidney pudding."

"You may be right, uncle," said Billy Bunter. "But, all the same, I think I'd prefer a steak-and-kidney pudding."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Uncle Bill made a gesture of impatience.

"Take this stick of chewing-gum and be satisfied!" he said.

Bunter took the chewing-gum, but he was far from satisfied. After his strenuous exertions, he longed for a really substantial repast. But it looked as if he would have to go on longing.

After he had recovered his spectacles, which had been lying embedded in the mud, Billy Bunter retired from the football ground with his uncle, the rest of the fellows following behind.

"Guess I'll have to quit now," remarked Uncle Bill, when they reached the Close.

Bunter's heart began to beat faster than usual.

Would his uncle, on parting, hand him a wad of banknotes? The fat junior felt certain he would. Yes! Uncle Bill was already groping in his breast pocket, evidently for his wallet.

Billy Bunter was quivering like a table-jelly in his excitement.

How much was he going to receive! Several thousand pounds, perhaps. Several hundreds, at least.—Uncle Bill was practically a millionaire; therefore, he could afford to be generous.

"Now, with regard to that Ford car I mentioned, William—"

"Yes, uncle!"

"I guess there will be a delay—a considerable delay—before it reaches you."

"Oh, that's all right," said Bunter. "I quite understand that. Delay is unavoidable sometimes. My postal-orders, frinstance, are always getting held up. I'm thinking of writing to the Postmaster-General about it."

Uncle Bill nodded, and held out his hand.

LIGHTING-UP TIME FOR THIS WEEK.



NOVEMBER.

8th Monday	- - -	4.50 p.m.
9th Tuesday	- - -	4.48 "
10th Wednesday	- - -	4.47 "
11th Thursday	- - -	4.45 "
12th Friday	- - -	4.44 "
13th Saturday	- - -	4.42 "
14th Sunday	- - -	4.41 "



"Uncle be blowed!" growled Bunter. "There's no sense in keeping this up, you impostor. Get out!" Then at a signal from Bessie, Billy and Sammy made a sudden rush at the individual in the motoring coat. Uncle Bill was swept clean off his feet and he landed in a heap in the school gate-way. (See page 13.)

"Good-bye, William!" he said. "Sorry I've not been able to stay longer. By the way, you're expecting a share of my fortune, I believe?"

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter eagerly.

"Then you shan't be disappointed my boy. I have great pleasure in handing you a portion of my life's savings!"

There was a rustle of paper, and something was slipped into Billy Bunter's greedy palm. The fat junior supposed that it was a draft for an enormous sum of money, and it was not until Uncle Bill had vanished from view that he glanced at it.

A chorus of inquiry ensued.

"How much, Bunter?"

"Is it five hundred?"

"Or five thousand?"

Billy Bunter's complexion had turned a sickly colour. The paper fluttered from his fingers, and Bolsover major promptly stooped and picked it up. Then he broke into such a violent guffaw that it could have been heard all over Greyfriars.

"How much, Bolsover?" inquired a score of voices.

The bully of the Remove held up the paper for inspection. And a yell of laughter rang through the Close.

It was a postal-order for sixpence!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Completely Spoofed!

BILLY BUNTER'S face was a study. The fat junior was utterly dumbfounded.

Uncle Bill had come and gone, leaving his plump nephew a postal-order to the value of sixpence!

It was amazing—almost incredible!

After all his strenuous exertions in the Close and on the football ground, Billy Bunter had expected an adequate reward. But his great expectations had fallen far short of realisation.

Harry Wharton & Co. were doubled up with helpless laughter. The others were laughing, too. Everybody, in fact, was laughing—barring Bunter. The Owl of the Remove felt more like weeping.

"Sixpence!" roared Bolsover major. "Bunter's share of the fortune!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ford car to follow in due course!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Bunter needn't wait for the car to arrive," said Nugent. "He can buy himself a Ford out of that postal-order!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows," said Billy Bunter. "My Uncle Bill's the meanest, stingiest beggar I've ever struck! After all his big talk about what he was going to do for his relatives, he stands his favourite nephew a tanner postal-order!"

"I'll never speak to Uncle Bill again—never!"

"Here you are, old chap," said Bolsover major, handing the postal-order back to Bunter. "Don't go making a beast of yourself!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

At that moment two plump individuals arrived on the scene. They were Bessie and Sammy Bunter. The latter had been over to Cliff House, by arrangement, to fetch his sister, in case Uncle Bill should arrive at Greyfriars that afternoon.

"Why, here's Billy, with a big crowd round him!" exclaimed Bessie. "What's going on I wonder?"

"Let's come and see," said Sammy.

The Famous Five lifted their caps at Bessie's approach.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "You're just too late to see Uncle Bill!"

Bessie stopped short.

"Uncle Bill has been here!" she exclaimed breathlessly.

"Yes. He went about five minutes ago."

Bessie Bunter uttered an exclamation of mingled wrath and dismay.

"Then I suppose that greedy bounder Billy has done us out of our share of the fortune?" she said.

Bob Cherry nodded gravely, and Bessie stepped up to Billy.

"Halves!" she said grimly.

"Thirds, you mean?" chimed in Sammy. "I'm not going to be left out in the cold."

Billy Bunter grinned ruefully.

"If we're all to have a share," he said, "it'll work out at tuppence a piece!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why—what—" began Bessie in astonishment.

"Uncle Bill had me the dickens of a dance!" said Billy. "He made me skip six times round the Close, and play football until I dropped. And he wound up by giving me a promise of a Ford car and a postal-order for sixpence!"

"Great Scott!"

"He's as mean as they make 'em!" Billy went on. "He admits that he's made a fortune out of chewing-gum, yet he goes and gives his favourite nephew a mouldy tanner!"

"Perhaps he made a blunder," suggested Sammy. "He may have handed over the postal-order in mistake for a banknote."

"Not likely!" said Billy. "He's a mean, tight-fisted rotter, and if I meet him again I shall forget that he's my uncle, and dot him one on the boko!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, a postal-order for sixpence is better than nothing at all," said Bessie philosophically. "Let's come and get Mrs. Mimble to cash it."

"Look here," protested Billy. "It's my postal-order—"

"Halves!" said Bessie.

"Thirds!" amended Sammy.

"What do you think you're going to get for tuppence?" asked Billy sarcastically. "Duck and green peas?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll get a jam-tart, anyway!" said Sammy. "Come on!"

And the Bunter trio proceeded to the tuckshop, with a grinning crowd at their heels.

Billy Bunter presented the postal-order to Mrs. Mimble.

"Cash, please, ma'am!" he said.

Mrs. Mimble frowned.

"In the first place, Master Bunter, this isn't a post-office," she said. "And secondly, it's impossible for me to cash this order."

"Why?"

"If you'll look at it you'll see that it's made payable to you at Wick Post-office."

"Wick! Where's that?"

"It's a little village about five miles beyond Courtfield," explained Bob Cherry from the doorway.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter nearly collapsed.

This was the last straw! Even the sixpenny postal-order was useless to him, unless he cared to tramp many weary miles in order to cash it. He had no bicycle, and if he went by train the fare would exceed the value of the postal-order.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped the fat junior. And the expression of dismay on the faces of the three Bunters were worth a guinea a box, as Johnny Bull expressed it.

"No go!" said Sammy dolourously. "My hat for it! I'll write and tick Uncle Bill off for this!"

"You can tick him off now, if you like," said Harry Wharton. "Here he comes!"

"Eh? Where?"

"He's just coming in at the gates!"

"But—but that's Wibley, of the Remove—"

"Alias Uncle Bill!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"What!"

The three Bunters uttered a combined howl.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 555.

Wibley had slipped round to the back of Gosling's lodge in order to remove his disguise, and he was now his normal self. He was grinning cheerfully as he approached the tuckshop.

"Say, Bunter," he said, "I kinder sorter guess and calculate that you've been spoofed, diddled, dished, and done!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter's face worked convulsively. He realised, at last, that he had been completely taken in. His Uncle Bill had not come to Greyfriars at all! And the fat junior's strenuous physical exercise had been carried out, not at Uncle Bill's bidding, but at Wibley's!

"You—you—" spluttered Billy Bunter, clenching his plump fists, and glaring at the impersonator. "I've a jolly good mind to wipe up the ground with you!"

"Go ahead!" said Wibley cheerfully.

But the Owl of the Remove hesitated. After his terrible exertions he was in no condition for fighting, and in any case Wibley could have put him on the floor inside a couple of seconds.

So Billy Bunter contented himself with making a verbal attack upon the practical joker. And then, with Bessie and Sammy, he walked leisurely away from the scene of his discomfiture.

And as the Bunter trio, humbled and crestfallen, proceeded across the Close, peal upon peal of laughter followed them.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Costly Blunder!

WIBLEY'S joke, which had been carried out so successfully, had the desired effect. It silenced and subdued Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove no longer swanked to his schoolfellows about the vast fortune he was expecting. He was compelled to hide his diminished head.

At the conclusion of afternoon lessons next day Billy Bunter glanced from the window of his study, and saw Wibley of the Remove in the act of wheeling his bicycle down to the school gates.

On the carrier at the back of the machine was a mysterious-looking bundle, which immediately aroused suspicions.

"My hat!" muttered the fat junior.

"That fat blunderer isn't satisfied with playing one jape on me. He's going to try to work the same stunt again! I know what he's got in that bundle. It's a disguise!"

The latter surmise was perfectly correct.

As a matter of fact, Wibley was returning his make-up to Mr. Larzou at Courtfield. But this obvious explanation of Wibley's movements didn't occur to the obese Bunter. He concluded that Wibley was setting forth to some quiet moult, in order to disguise, for the second time, as Uncle Bill.

Billy Bunter gave a chuckle.

"Ho, he, he! I'm afraid Wibley's going to be unlucky this time. Jolly good thing I spotted him going out of the gates with that bundle, or he might have spoofed me again!"

Shortly afterwards Bessie and Sammy came into the study.

"What do you want?" demanded Billy in unbrotherly tones.

"Uncle Bill will be coming this afternoon—the genuine Uncle Bill," said Bessie, "and we're going to wait for him."

"Yes, rather," said Sammy. "I don't see why we shouldn't be first in the field, Billy. We'll all meet uncle Bill together."

"He won't be coming," said Billy. "If he intended turning up at Greyfriars to-day he'd have got here before now. It isn't a very long run by car from London."

"We'll wait here for an hour or so, anyway," said Bessie, plumping herself into the armchair.

"Good!" said Billy. "I'm glad you're going to stay. You'll be able to help me kick the impostor out!"

"Eh? What impostor?"

"You know that fellow Wibley, who spoofed us yesterday? Well, he's going to work the same stunt this afternoon. I saw him go out of the gates just now with a bundle tied to the carrier of his bike. It doesn't need a Sherlock Holmes to deduce what's in that bundle. It's a disguise. I expect it's a different sort of get-up from the one he had yesterday."

"Do you really think he's going to try to take us in again?" asked Bessie.

"I'm sure of it! He'll go and tag up in this disguise, and then he'll probably hire a car from Courtfield, and drive here in state, posing as Uncle Bill."

Bessie looked grim.

"He'll have to be bundled out neck and crop!" she said.

"Hear, hear!" chimed in Sammy.

"I shouldn't care to tackle Wibley on my own," said Billy. "The best is as strong as a horse. But if the three of us go for him, and Bessie uses her laptop—the Suffragettes used to do, we'll jolly soon get the better of him!"

"That's the idea!" said Bessie. "We'll show him that he can't work the same dodge twice running."

The three Bunters continued to discuss their plans for ejecting the practical joker as soon as he arrived.

When half an hour had elapsed there was a snorting sound in the Close.

Billy Bunter rushed to the window.

"Here he is!" he exclaimed. "It's Wibley, right enough. In a Ford car! I seem to recognise that Ford. It belongs to one of the garages in Courtfield."

Bessie and Sammy joined their brother at the window.

The Ford car had come to a standstill just inside the school gates, and the driver was in conversation with Gosling, the porter.

The three Bunters gazed intently at the driver. He was a dapper little man, of the same stature as Wibley, but his attire differed from that which the usual personator had worn on the previous day. It consisted mainly of a heavy, motor-proof coat and a thick muffler. The driver also had a pair of goggles, and a cap, which was well pulled down over his forehead. He was clean-shaven, and his features did not resemble Wibley's. But, as Billy Bunter suggested, he was probably wearing a skillfully-made mask.

The Close was thronged with fellows, the majority of whom made their way towards the car.

The Famous Five were there, and they were laughing.

"They're in the know, you see," explained Billy Bunter. "In fact, I dare say they put Wibley up to this."

"You bet!" said Sammy.

At that moment voices were heard calling.

"Bunter! Where's Bunter?"

"What's wanted?" shouted Billy Bunter, from the study window.

"You are!" responded Bob Cherry, in his booming voice. "Your Uncle Bill's arrived!"

Billy Bunter chuckled softly to himself.

"Just coming!" he exclaimed. And he went down into the Close with Bessie and Sammy.

The driver of the car had alighted,

and he was now in conversation with a group of juniors. Somebody informed him that his nephews and his niece were approaching, and he promptly turned to greet the advancing trio.

"Gee! I guess they're Bonnie kids!" he exclaimed. "They'd make fine advertisements for these fattening foods!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Which is my nephew William?" "The one in front, sir," said Frank Nugent.

"And the other two are Bessie and Sammy, I take it?" "That's so, Mr. Chumley," said Harry Wharton.

Uncle Bill extended his hand to Billy Bunter, who was the first to arrive.

"Pleased to meet you, William!" he said cordially.

The Owl of the Remove ignored the proffered hand.

"Say, what's biting you?" asked Uncle Bill, with a frown. "Why won't you give me your paw? You needn't be afraid that I shall make rude remarks about its grubby condition!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Billy Bunter glared at the newcomer through his big spectacles, Bessie and Sammy glared, too.

"Get out!" growled Billy savagely. Uncle Bill nearly fell down. He was obliged to clutch at the side of his car for support.

"Eh? W-w-what did you say?" he stammered.

"Get out!" repeated Billy Bunter. "The game's up, you rotter! You snuffed us yesterday, but you can't pull the wool over our eyes a second time!" "I-I don't quite get you!" stammered Uncle Bill. "What are you babbling about? Have you got bats in your belfry, or what?"

Bessie Bunter pushed Billy aside, and confronted the speaker with gleaming eyes.

"Impostor!" she exclaimed shrilly.

"What?"

"If you're not off these premises inside two minutes, we'll put you out by force!"

"On your neck!" chimed in Sammy.

"Great jumping cackets!" gasped Uncle Bill, after a dramatic pause. "So this is the sort of welcome you give your uncle!"

"Uncle be blowed!" growled Billy Bunter. "There's no sense in keeping

this up, Wibley, you rotter! Get out!"

Uncle Bill stood petrified, unable to move or speak. The Bunter trio were still glaring at him, and the crowd looked on breathlessly.

Then, at a signal from Bessie, Billy and Sammy made a sudden rush at the individual in the motoring-coat.

Billy and Sammy launched such a violent charge that Uncle Bill was swept clean off his feet. He landed in a sprawling heap in the school gateway.

"Rout him out!" shrieked Sammy, flushed with the joy of battle.

Uncle Bill didn't wait to be booed out. He picked himself up, with a grim expression on his face, and resumed his seat in the Ford car, the engine of which was still going.

"Times up, quit!" he said, glaring at the Bunter trio. "I came to this hyper show with the intention of giving you a real good slap-up time. But after this outrage you needn't look to me for a single cent, any of you!"

So saying, Uncle Bill set his car in motion. As he turned it round, the crowd scattered like chaff before the reaper. And then the Ford throbbed and snorted out of the school gateway, and disappeared down the dusty road.

"Good-bye, Bluebell!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Serve him jolly well right!" said Billy Bunter, with a grin. "I'll admit that Wibley's a brainy sort of chap, but we've outwitted him this time! He won't impersonate my Uncle Bill again, in a hurry!"

"Why, you fatheaded chump," ejaculated Harry Wharton, "that wasn't Wibley!"

"Eh? Of course it was—"

"Wibley's here!" said a voice in the background.

Turning sharply, Billy Bunter encountered a cheerful-looking junior, attired in the customary Elton garb.

It was Wibley of the Remove!

The three Bunters were fairly staggered.

"I—I say, Billy, we've done it now!" gasped Sammy.

"You have!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

"Y-y-y've given your Uncle Bill marching orders!"

"Just as he was going to whack out his fortune between you, too!" said Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do—do you fellows really think that chap was our uncle?" exclaimed Billy Bunter.

"Sure of it!" said Bob Cherry. "He told us he came down from London by train, and hired that Ford car at Court-field."

"Oh!"

"Let's go after him and apologies, and fetch him back!" said Bessie.

But that was easier said than done. A car could not easily be overtaken on foot.

"Your Uncle Bill's well on the way back by now," said Harry Wharton. "You've seen the last of him."

"But I don't suppose they've heard the last of him?" said Nugent.

And they hadn't. For the following morning's post brought a letter for Billy Bunter. The fat junior recognised the handwriting on the envelope as his uncle's.

The letter bore the crest of the Hotel Majestic, London, and it ran as follows:

"Dear William,—Since you have seen fit to treat me with such discourtesy and violence, I am determined to have nothing more to do with you. This applies also to your sister Bessie and your brother Samuel.

"I came down to Greyfriars specially to see you, with the express intention of entertaining you, and of giving you a liberal tip. But after the savage and unprovoked assault you made upon me, it will be some time before I attempt to pay you a visit again.

"I am now going to seek out other relatives, if possible, in the hope that they will welcome me with the courtesy and civility due to the prominent American citizen who ascribes himself

"Your uncle,
"WILLIAM K. CHUMLEY."

Billy Bunter's feelings, on reading that communication, were too deep for words. He could have kicked himself for having jumped to such hasty conclusions the day before. If he had only exercised what little common-sense he had, he would have realised that Wibley of the Remove would not have played the same sort of joke two days in succession.

Uncle Bill had been treated in a barbarous manner. And it was only natural that he should be very angry.

Billy Bunter made frantic efforts to obtain his uncle's pardon. But the ill-spelt letters which he addressed to Mr. William K. Chumley, at the Hotel Majestic, were returned to the sender; and the envelopes bore the terse announcement: "Gone away."

Mr. Chumley had evidently left London in search of other relatives, who would give him a better reception than he had obtained at Greyfriars.

Bessie and Sammy were furious with Billy for having made that fatal blunder. And Billy was furious with himself. No doubt, in the course of time, his uncle's anger would abate. But for the present the fat junior was left to mourn the loss of the "liberal tip" which he had failed to extract from the Man from America.

THE END.

Another Grand Long Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars School, next week, entitled:

"THE CATERPILLAR'S REST-CURE!"

By FRANK RICHARDS.

ORDER YOUR COPY EARLY!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY, (No. 666.)

LATEST POPULAR BOOKS

EACH A 65,000-WORD NOVEL COMPLETE IN ITSELF.

NOW ON SALE.

DETECTIVE TALES.

SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY.

Sexton Blake figures prominently in all the following stories.

No. 148.—THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS. A Story of the Highlands, featuring the Hon. John Lawless and Professor Kew.

No. 149.—THE HOME OF HIS CHILDHOOD. In which Sexton Blake elucidates a baffling Murder Mystery.

No. 150.—HIS SON'S HONOUR: Or, Shadowed by Sexton Blake. Relating another Episode of the Famous Detective's Fight with Aubrey Dexter.

No. 151.—THE MYSTERY BOX. A Thrilling Tale of the Secret Service, featuring Granite Grant.

SCHOOL, SPORT, & ADVENTURE TALES.

BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY.

No. 530.—DETECTIVE-WARDEN NELSON LEE. Powerful Drama of Prison Life.

By MAXWELL SCOTT.

No. 531.—THE SEA WAIF. Thrilling Tale of the Sea.

By DAVID GOODWIN.

No. 532.—JACK JACKSON'S ENEMY. Spectacular Story of Schoolboy Fun and Adventure.

By JACK NORTON.

No. 533.—THE DOUBLE HORSESHOE RANCH. Magnificent Tale of the Wild West.

By GORDON WALLACE.

PRICE 4d. EACH.

DON'T HESITATE GET YOUR COPY NOW EVERY NEWSAGENT SELLS THEM.

PRICE 4d. EACH.

SPORT TOPICS.

No. 1 of a Splendid Series of Interesting and Chatty Articles, dealing with every kind of Sport. By SPECTATOR.

FOOTBALL.

It is pleasing to see such enthusiasm being taken throughout the country over the great winter game. This is proved by the record gates at many of the big grounds during the past few weeks.

No doubt most of my readers have their favourites amongst the clubs in the three divisions of the League; and follow up week by week the doings of their champions.

Sportsmanship comes first in the game, and although a certain amount of foul play still exists, this is very much on the decline, I am glad to say.

Never waver if the club you are attached to strikes a bad patch. Stick to them, for there is always a silver lining, you know.

This season, with three divisions running, promotion and relegation each concerning the sixty-six clubs, and also the possibility of winning the Association Cup, the competition is indeed very keen. No individual can surmise the outcome of it all at the end of 1920-21 League football. The mighty can fall, the weak rise—keenness goes a long way.

Up to the time of going to press with this number, Everton are at the top of Division I. This position they hold by a slight advantage in goal average over Aston Villa, last season's Cup winners.

About this time last season Aston Villa were struggling at the bottom of the League, but by hard work managed to finish ninth in the table.

There is no doubt that the Villa are a team of stalwarts, everyone. Look at Sam Hardy—an absolute giant—the best man between the sticks to-day. The backs are good. Then the middle line; that trio are as safe as a bank. Andrew Ducant not only ranks as a first-class half-back, but is one of Surrey's giants as a cricketer. The Villa's forward line is also all that is wanted, with Clem Stephenson as the actual star.

Huddersfield and Tottenham Hotspur, fresh from Division II, are doing remarkably well. These are teams that should go far, with such consistency as they show. At home on October 2nd, the Spurs defeated Manchester United to the tune of 4-1, after being a goal down at half-time. The football witnessed was extremely delightful, and the forty odd thousand spectators who watched the game went away amply satisfied.

In Division II, South Shields, before meeting Rotherham County away from home, had not been beaten this season, and I am sure that this defeat came as a great surprise to many of us. Clapton Orient are leading, with others close on their heels.

There seems to be a rosy season in front of the Orient, and, barring accidents, they should finish well up.

Crystal Palace and Southampton are bracketed together at the head of Division III, having points and goal average identical.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 665.

The Palace are a team of funny moods; they can be very brilliant, and, on the other hand, can be very much lacking. Nevertheless, they should again finish the season in the first three, if not at the actual place where they now stand. Another London Club to gain promotion would be a great achievement to Southern football.

Southampton are, of course, Southerners also, and are going great guns. This club did very well indeed to lower the colours of last season's champions at home and away.

It is surprising to find Chelsea occupying such a lowly place in Division I. This club, I imagine, has struck their bad patch very early in the season, but, I think I can safely say they will soon work themselves out of the rut. Have they not talent? The answer must emphatically be in the affirmative. Injuries have also played their part against the luck of this side, but there, such things will happen with all.

Derby County are actually at the bottom of this Division, and Coventry City and Norwich City respectively at the bottom of Divisions II. and III.

A word about the Scottish clubs may not be out of place. Glasgow Rangers lead the competition as usual. What a fine team they are, and so consistent! Celtic, the winners of the Glasgow Cup only a few weeks back, are another set of sturdy lads who do extremely well and uphold the glorious traditions of Scottish football.

"Amateur football is better to watch than professional." So say a great number of our leading critics on the game to-day.

I am afraid I cannot give a casting vote, but I am aware of its excellence. In my own opinion, Dulwich Hamlet are the premier club among the amateurs this season—and were last.

Any readers living within easy access of Champion Hill, and who are lovers of the winter game, should repair to this ground, and see the Hamlet at work. It would be quite worth their while, and a pleasant afternoon spent. Many a big club—and I believe I am right—have had their eyes on Kall, but this idol of the Hamlet seems to be quite content to remain an amateur, and with his present club.

CRICKET.

It is rather a little late in the year to write under the above heading, but, forgive me, I really must.

In a few weeks hence every lover of King Cricket will be anxiously waiting to hear news of the doings of the M.C.C. team in Australia. Will the Ashes be retained? That is a very important question, and I see no reason why they shouldn't. We have sent out the very best men available—men who will do all in their power to uphold England's cricket.

J. W. H. T. Douglas (Essex) should make an admirable captain. He is a good batsman and also a bowler, and in spite

of the fact that he scores slowly at times—hence his nickname, "Johnny'Wool"—Hit-to-day"—it pays when a side collapses, and very often is the means of stopping the rot.

J. B. Hobbs should do well as usual, and will probably add one or two more centuries to his ever-increasing total. By the way, in case readers would like to know his number of centuries to date for future reference, here it is: 24.

I need not mention a word about the remainder of the team; they will all do their best, and that is everything.

Yes, I will mention one other, the last member to join the team—William Hitch, the Surrey fast bowler. I myself was very pleased to see that he was elected to fill the breach, and I am sure I am not alone in this. Hitch is a great worker in every capacity of cricket, as a bowler, batsman, and fieldman. His energy is wonderful, and I cannot imagine how he keeps going at the pace he does throughout a long day's cricket.

"Aussie," beware of William Hitch when he is holding at short leg—very short leg. He is apt to be your undoing if you play a stroke in his direction.

Good luck to you, "Bill," and may you justify the selection!

BOXING.

The National Sporting Club will have opened its Boxing Season by the time this issue is in the reader's hands, and without a doubt some good sport will have been witnessed.

This country still has many champions to find, and the sooner the better for our prestige.

I understand a battle for the feather-weight championship between Mike Honeyman and the ex-champion, Toney Lee, will have taken place. (This should have proved an interesting contest, although Toney Lee is getting old in years. Youth will conquer once again, I have not the slightest doubt.)

More can be written under this heading as the season advances, and so for the present we will leave it at this.

ATHLETICS.

In this branch of sport we do fairly well; but still, there is room for much improvement, and it is to be hoped that in the near future we may be able to wrest several records from the hands of other countries.

What a wonderful hurdler is E. J. Thomson, the Canadian, who won the 120 metres hurdle race in the Olympic Games in 14 5-5 seconds! This is the world's record.

T. Payne, of Morpeth, the winner of the last London to Brighton walk, followed up this success by leading all the way and winning by twenty minutes from T. P. Fox, of the Lancashire Walking Club, the eighth annual Manchester to Blackpool walk, a distance of 51 1/2 miles.

Payne has now quite a number of these walking events to his credit, and is still good for many more.

(Another fine article next Monday.)

START READING THIS GRAND SERIAL OF ANCIENT ROME TO-DAY!



MARCUS.



MARCUS THE BRAVE

A THRILLING STORY
DEALING WITH NERO, AND HIS GLADIATORS.
BY FAMOUS VICTOR NELSON.



THREADS OF THE STORY.

MARCUS, a gladiator of Ancient Rome, returns from a voyage during which he captures Strongbow, a notorious pirate. As his reward from Nero, the emperor, Marcus claims the hand of Eunice, a Christian slave-girl. Nero, however, spurns him, the girl having been condemned to death in the arena, with many other Christians. Marcus, in his rage, denounces the emperor, who has him thrown into prison with his faithful friend, Leo. The latter escapes, and makes his way safely through the city. Whilst on the banks of the River Tiber, he rescues a small child from drowning. The grandfather of the girl insists upon the gladiator returning to their home, and Leo gladly agrees.

(Now read on.)



EUNICE.

New Friends!

LEO was conducted by his guide into the living-room of the house, and he found himself confronted by six athletic-looking young men, whose features were so strikingly similar that, when seen together as now, the effect was almost startling.

"After the old man had poured out his story and made so much of Leo's action that the latter was flustered with embarrassment, the elderly Roman noticed the gladiator glancing from one to another of the six young men in surprise, and evidently read Leo's thoughts. "It is not so wonderful, after all, master," he said, with a cracked laugh. "They are all brothers, and dress and wear their hair alike on purpose, as they are professional performers—acrobats who sometimes appear before Caesar's Court."

"My brother's names are Mark, Homoe, Spartacus, Chido, and Vinitius. I, myself, am Furinus," the eldest of the troupe announced, as he took both of Leo's hands. "In the names of us all, I thank you, master, for saving the precious life of our one beloved little sister, Irida. If at any time my brothers or I can serve you, you have but to command, for you have earned our everlasting gratitude!"

For just a moment Leo was silent, then he decided to trust these frank-faced, honest-eyed young men, who were obviously so earnest in their thanks and admiration at his deed.

"You can help me now, for I stand sorely in need of friends, Furinus," he said. "I am an escaped prisoner, who was condemned to death by Nero's command."

"They stared at him in surprise. "You have escaped from prison?" Spartacus asked, his clear eyes gleaming with excitement.

"Nay, from the amphitheatre, after escaping death from a pack of famished wolves only by a miracle," Leo answered, and he could not repress a shudder at the recollection, stout-hearted though he was.

"Friends of mine, a man and a young girl, are still in Caesar's power, and I wouldst hide here whilst I form some plan for attempting to free them—that is, if they be spared long enough." His head went up, and he looked from one to another, eagerly searching their faces. "It will mean great risk for you all," he began, "and, if you feel—"

"Risk! By the shade of my mother, we would face any risk to aid you, friend!" Furinus cried, again seizing and wringing his hands. "You have saved the life of one we all love best upon earth! Not only will we hide you here,

but, if the chance comes, we will also help to rescue your friends. What say you, my brothers?"

To a man the five others gave cries of assent.

The Ladder of Salvation!

THE weeks had passed with the so-called games going on daily in the arena, and even Rome grew tired of witnessing sights of inhuman cruelty and bitter suffering.

Day after day, hosts of Christians were driven into the arena by the scourgers. Day after day saw old men, young men, children of all ages, women with tiny babies, and young girls torn to pieces and devoured by lions, tigers, leopards, panthers, and other wild beasts.

Petronius, the Arbitrator of Elegance, avowed not so much at the terrific, never-ending slaughter as by the willingness with which the Christians went to their doom, and met it upon their knees, remonstrated with Nero at length; but the reply he received was characteristic of the arch-fiend who uttered it.

"Do you think, Petronius," Caesar had asked haughtily, "that my soul is less than that of Brutus, who, for the welfare of Rome, did not even spare his own sons?"

At this, Petronius understood that all argument was useless. Nero loved to watch others suffer and die. It made him realise to the full his great power, and he was capable of any diabolical deed once he had an excuse for it; and his excuse now was the well-planned falsehood as to the Christians having started the great fire.

When he thought the people were growing bored at seeing his victims killed by animals, he had scores of Christians brought into the arena and crucified, whilst about a week later, others were tied to stakes in the gardens of Caesar, covered with pitch, and not blazing, perishing in the most excruciating agony.

Almost daily Nero had made inquiries concerning Leo, whose undignified handling of him he had not forgotten; but always he received the same reply—that the gladiator still remained at large—that he had contrived to vanish as completely as if the earth had suddenly yawned at his feet and enveloped him.

Although so long had passed since they had faced the wolves in the arena, both Marcus and Eunice remained alive. Neither the gladiator nor the girl could understand why they continued to be spared, and existed in mingled hope and suspense, until there came the day when both were conducted from their cells

and taken, not to the arena, but to a newly-erected theatre in Rome.

It was a magnificent structure, consisting of three parts, the space for the orchestra, or "dancing-ground," the stage buildings, and the auditorium.

In front the building resembled a temple or palace, with a great dome that projected partly over the platform running before the stage buildings, which could really be called the stage itself.

The theatre was built on the slope of a hill, and thus a natural substructure for the tier upon tier of seats in the mighty auditorium was provided. This was semi-circular, and open to the sky.

Marcus was surprised when the fetters were struck from his hands and they were bound instead with cords; but, later, he was to understand the reason for this only too well.

With pretorians closely guarding him, he stood amongst the stage buildings just out of sight from the auditorium, and he became aware that the actors and actresses on the platform were engaged in the playing of a drama which he had witnessed some two years previously, and readily recognised.

He remembered more than well one incident that had yet to come—recalled how he had smiled over it. A girl slave was sentenced to be bound to the bars of a den in which was a lion; and her lover was tied near, that he might witness her tortures and hear her screams when the brute thrust its paws between the grille and clawed at her until she succumbed. The "lion" had been a man sewn in a skin, and the scene had been more humorous than tragic, though that was not intended.

Suddenly Marcus drew a sharp breath. At the other side of the stage, also out of sight of the vast audience that thronged the tier upon tier of seats, stood Eunice, between two giant Sicambrians.

Marcus' first sensation was a thrill of relief and joy, for he had not known whether or not the girl had perished; then dread clutched at his heart. Certainly Eunice was alive as yet, but why had she been brought here, unless it was to meet some terrible end? Perhaps—The gladiator started badly, and there broke from him a cry of horror and despair as he saw six Herculean negro slaves draw on to the stage a den holding a gigantic lion, and at the same time the pretorians forced Eunice forward.

Simultaneously, he himself was marched on to the stage, which had now been left free of actors; but he had guessed at the awful truth before his guards commenced to bind him to a stake.

He and the girl he loved were to be

substituted for the actor and actress who played the parts of the doomed slave-maiden and her lover, and it was no make-believe lion that was to be made use of on this occasion. Could human brain have devised a more fiendish plan?

Marcus struggled like a madman to burst his bonds and reach Eunice as her guards forced her towards the den, and the lion which was at present kept in the farther half of its cage by a dividing grille, bounded up with a monstrous roar; but it was all to no avail.

The bonds cut into his flesh, but did not budge an inch, and, held in the terrible fascination of horror, the lad had to watch the brutal soldiers lash Eunice's slender figure to the bars.

Their work done, they stepped back—all save one, who prepared to draw out the grille that would allow the now excited and snarling king of beasts to reach her. With his hand resting upon the grille, the soldier paused, and half turned towards the auditorium.

"It was plain that the whole brutal scene had been rehearsed, if only with an empty den, and the pretorians, especially instructed to give at this supreme moment, in order to raise greater effect to the dastardly thing he was about to do.

Up in his magnificent box, where he sat with his golden-haired consort, Poppa Sabina, and a host of courtiers, Nero had the inevitable emerald held to his eyes, and was gazing cruelly over the happenings upon the stage.

He chuckled softly.
"What say you, Petronius?" he asked of his friend and adviser-in-chief, who was seated upon his left-hand side. "Have I not this time excelled myself in providing thrills for the people? Watch the agony of the maiden's lover as he struggles with his bonds and tries to reach her side! By Hercules, this is reality—the suffering of real life, and not the make-believe emotion of a pack of numbers! I am inspired, Petronius, and methinks I will write a poem around this scene!"

The Arbitrer of Elegance had started as he realised Nero was addressing him, and hastily composed his features, which he felt sure had shown his horror and disgust.

"So this is the child of your brain, O Divine One!" he exclaimed. "But, there, I ought to have known that, for verily no other mind but yours could devise a spectacle such as this!"

Nero turned sharply in his seat, and regarded him scornfully for a long moment. The emperor had believed he had detected in his friend's tone mingled repulsion and sarcasm. As he gazed at him, however, and saw nothing save rapid observation, Petronius' handsome face, Nero thought he must have been mistaken.

"The whole plan came to me in a flash one morning when I walked in the gardens of the palace at Antium," he said, "though they I did not have yonder gladiator and maiden in my mind as this"—he laughed—"chief actors in the scene! You see when they are?"

"The gladiator, Marcus, and the slave-maiden he was to have married, are they not?" Petronius asked, frowning, and almost unconsciously giving a sid shake of his head.

"The same—the dog who dared to insult me, and his Christian sweetheart!" Nero returned harshly, his puffy and unhealthy face hardening as he directed his gaze once again towards the stage.
"Ah! See, Petronius! The soldier is about to let the lion reach her!"

This was true. Having remained, striking an attitude, until the nerves of the

vast throng of spectators were strung up to the highest tension, the pretorian was dragging away the grille that kept the lion in the farther part of the cage.

Marcus wanted to close his eyes to shut out the terrible sight that he felt must come within the next few seconds; but he found it impossible. In fascination—the fascination of horror—he watched the dividing grille being drawn away.

Unnoticed by all, another pair of eyes watched the pretorian—the eyes of Leo.

Thirty feet above, the latter—disguised by a false fair beard and moustache, and attired in the garb of one of Nero's Sarmatian guards—lay stretched flat upon the parapet of the dome that, it will be remembered, partially overhung the stage.

There were six other men with him, though they also lay prone and were out of sight behind him. They were respectively Furnius, Mark, Horace, Spartacus, Chilo, and Vinitius—in other words, the troupe of acrobats whom Leo had fallen in with on making his escape from the amphitheatre.

Leo drew back sharply from peering over the edge of the parapet to the stage.

"Now!" he breathed, his voice hoarse, "For the love of the gods, be quick!"

The soldier looked towards Marcus, grinning fiendishly, and enjoying the lad's white-tipped agony.

The lion roared deep down in its tawny chest, and crouched ready to spring. Marcus saw a shudder shake Eunice, and she tried to force herself away from the bars, but it was useless. She was lashed far too tightly to the cage for that.

The pretorian seized the grille with his hands, and braced himself to drag it fully out. But there happened then that which amazed every soul in the mighty theatre, and seemed to Marcus like a trick of his fevered imagination.

From the overhanging dome shot a line of human figures—six young men, who formed a chain, and were hanging upside-down.

Upon the roof of the dome Leo had a rope about his waist, the end of which was secured round a great ornamental statue of Apollo. It was his herculean strength that had made the amazing feat of the troupe of acrobats possible.

He held the ankles of Mark, and a grille from the latter's waist to Leo's broad shoulders helped to support the first of the acrobats.

In turn, Mark held the ankles of, and was similarly secured to, his brother Spartacus; Spartacus clutched the ankles of Horace, Horace the ankles of Chilo, whilst the latter supported Vinitius.

Lastly, Vinitius, the most agile, perhaps, of the six brothers, held, head-downwards, Furnius, who had in his hand a keen-bladed knife.

Whilst the grille was only partially drawn out, the pretorian suddenly found Furnius hanging in an inverted position beside him, and the man started back, with a gasp of amazement.

The lion leapt at the opening left by the partly-removed grille uttered a furious roar, and got its head and shoulders through the gap. A heave of its powerful body, and it had sent the grille farther ajar, and with a snarl that might almost have been of triumph, sprang towards Eunice.

Its jaws were agape, its yellow orbs blazing with the lust to rend and kill. It raised its powerful paw, the claws extended, and struck through the bars at the girl's golden head.

Marcus caught and held his breath. Eunice was saved, but only by the matter of the merest second. Furnius slashed

through her bonds, and, clutching her shoulders with his strong hands, fairly flung her on one side.

The lion's paw came through the bars of the cage, striking the empty air, it was true, but missing the girl only by inches. As for Eunice, she lost her balance and fell to her knees, but she staggered up as half a dozen soldiers rushed upon the stage and hastened forward to seize her.

The line of acrobats broke. Furnius landed upon his hands, his feet thrudged to the platform, and he jumped upright. In a flash he was by the side of Marcus and cutting his bonds.

The acrobat had two swords thrust through a grille at his waist. He drew them both, and put one in the young gladiator's hand.

"Quick! Be ready, friend, to help fight our way out!" he cried. "Help awaits us outside!"

Vinitius, the second acrobat from the end of the chain, had turned a neat somersault, and landed upon his feet. Swiftly he swung round and stood his brother Chilo, as he followed his example.

A double somersault brought Horace to his feet on the platform between them. He nearly fell, but they caught and saved him; then, together with Marcus, the four brothers rushed straight at the soldiers who had made for Eunice.

Like Furnius, Horace, Chilo, and Vinitius all had swords at their belts, and now they had drawn them, and the blades met those of the soldiers with a metallic clash.

Away in the auditorium all was in an uproar. There were those who thought the whole spectacle must have been pre-arranged and rehearsed, and they clapped and shouted their delight. Others, who had expected to see Eunice killed by the lion, shrieked their disapproval, groaned, and hissed.

In his box Nero had come to his feet. He was staring through his emerald towards the stage, hardly able to believe his eyes.

He saw the four acrobats and Marcus engaged in deadly combat with the pretorians, who were now being joined by dozens of others from either side of the platform.

Relieved of much of his burden, Leo released one hand from the ankles of Mark, and with it jerked over the parapet a long rope that was also tied securely to the statue of Apollo.

Seizing this, Spartacus cut the grille stretching between them, gave his brother the word to let go, righted himself, and swarmed down the rope with the agility of a monkey. He leapt his sword, and he joined in the fray.

In his turn, Mark clutched at the rope. Leo slashed through the grille that ran between them, and the last of the plucky acrobats went swiftly down to help in the unequal fight going on with the soldiers below.

It did not take Leo long to release himself and snatch up a formidable-looking javelin that lay near on the parapet. With the weapon thrust through his belt, the disguised gladiator followed his friends to the stage.

Not accustomed to slinging down a rope as were the acrobats, poor Leo lost his hold about three-quarters of the way down, and landed in a sitting posture with a terrific and painful bump. But he was up again in less time than it takes to write, and then it was bad for the soldiers he encountered.

Leo was a born fighter in the ordinary way, but just now he was mad with rage at the inhuman treatment Nero and his

feelings had melted out to his friends, and he was "going red."

Men after man went down before his lightning-like lunges, until the stage presented a scene of combat hard to describe.

There must have been fully forty soldiers in the fight; but in the matter of a minute more than half of them were down, either slain, or too badly injured to rise again.

Marcus and his acrobats used their swords to splendid purpose, and when Leo joined in the combat it was not long before it was as good as ended.

Awed, and with their morale shaken, the soldiers suddenly wavered and fell back, and, shouting to Marcus to look after Eunice, whom her champions had surrounded and protected, Leo led a rush for the nearest exit of the building.

Marcus was dazed with amazement at hearing Leo's voice come from the lips of the bearded Scambrinian whom he had seen slip down the rope and join in the fray on his and the acrobats' behalf; but he had not time to speculate upon the mystery or ask questions now.

He snatched up Eunice in his arms, and rushed after Leo and Mark and Spartacus, as they swept through the depleted ranks of the pretorian, sending them scattering, and felling those who were still game enough to attempt to bar their way.

With Horace, Vitellius, Chilo, and Pannus covering their retreat, Leo, Mark, and Spartacus, left the platform, and reached the exit of the theatre. Marcus, holding the trembling Eunice to him and whispering words of hope, was close upon their heels. But they were not to escape so easily.

Fifty to sixty pretorian guards, who had been posted at various parts of the auditorium, had by this time succeeded in pushing their way through the excited spectators and reaching the stage. Nervous, too, had issued orders that had caused many soldiers again to hurry round to the street, where the several exits on the stage side of the building were situated.

With their swords drawn, these latter were standing ready to confront the escaping prisoners and their friends as soon as they left the building.

Leo, Mark, and Spartacus dashed out into the night, to find a horde of men in gleaming helmets and breastplates rushing at them.

They fell back, fighting desperately with the foremost of these fresh foes, and Leo raised his voice in a mighty shout.

"Help, Help! To the rescue!" he fairly yelled, sending his lance through the shoulder of a giant pretorian and wheeling half-round to ward off the furious attack of another. "Taeon! Help!"

The soldiers, who had been confident of slaying the acrobats and earning their imperial master's thanks and approval by bringing Marcus and Eunice back to the theatre as prisoners, received an unpleasant surprise.

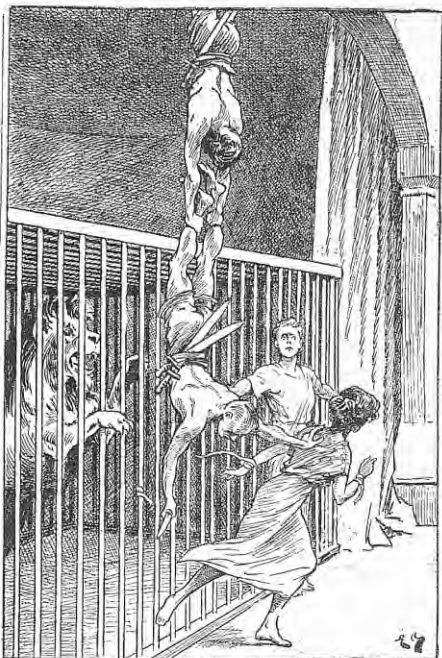
From out of the shadows of the numerous buildings across the wide road

Marcus, who had stood Eunice upon her feet and basted, sword in hand, to help Leo and the two acrobats, uttered a cry of amazement as the newcomers rushed near enough to be recognised.

Almost the whole crew of the Conqueror, the vessel he had commanded, was here to fight on his and his friends' account, and, led by Taeon, in metal helmet and breastplate, the soldiers looked a formidable set of foes.

They numbered over a hundred, and every man was armed, either with sword or javelin, which they lost no time in using.

The crash of metal upon metal became



From the overhanging dome shot a line of human figures—six young men, who formed a chain. As the lion leapt toward the girl, the first acrobat severed the ropes that bound her and fairly flung her on one side. (See page 16.)

deafening. The soldiers had long had to nurse their resentment and anger at the treatment of the commander they had respected and loved, and, now that they were at last given a chance to fight for him, they were terrible in their dash, courage, and ruthlessness.

Leo, Mark, and Spartacus found the way clear to leave the portals of the exit as the pretorians retreated before the soldiers' first overwhelming rush.

Seizing the hand of Eunice and dragging her with him, Marcus followed them.

"Courage, dear one! We shall win through!" he breathed, as he stood her against the wall and slipped in front of her, with his sword held ready to protect her. Then, next moment, he was engaged in a life-and-death duel with a pretorian officer who had fought his way near.

Just as Marcus broke through the man's guard and hurled him to his knees, badly wounded, the other acrobats who had been fighting with the soldiers who

had sought to pursue Marcus and Eunice had to give up the unequal struggle, and came rushing out into the street.

All showed signs of the fray, though the wounds they had received were not sufficiently serious to prevent their continuing to fight. The soldiers poured out after them, but it was only to be met by Taeon and many of his men; for now the gallant third-in-command of the Conqueror had cut his way through the ranks of the enemy and neared Marcus and his friends.

But, as pretorian after pretorian rushed through the exit, the combat swung first in favour of one side, then the other.

Momentarily at least, finding themselves attacked both from the front and on their flank by the soldiers that had slashed their way through in the street, the soldiers had to give away ground. They fell slowly back from Marcus, Leo and the acrobats, though they contested every inch of the way.

(Continued on page 20.)
THE MAGNET LIBRARY, No. 555.

"NEVER SAY DIE!"

A Splendid, Interesting, and Instructive Article on First Aid.

By GEORGE HOWE.

"WELL, old Popcorn, have you recovered? You went off in a hurry."

"You were getting too hot for me. If I had had a 'touch of the sun,' it might have been awkward!"

"Rather! Well keep cool this time by talking about the air and water-respiration and drowning."

"Here's a poser for you: Why does a man drown?"

"Let me ask you one. Why do you breathe?"

"To live, I suppose."

"That's no proper answer. Breathing keeps you from being poisoned by your own gas. I don't mean what you do, though that may be possible. When you get home, blow through a glass tube into some lime-water. The water will turn milky. What is that a sign of?"

"Carbonic acid gas."

"Right. You know it is a poison. Too much of it in the body poisons the centres in the brain which control the circulation of the blood and the breathing, and quickly causes loss of consciousness. Unless something can be done to get rid of this gas, and to get the blood-purifier, oxygen, into the body, death follows. What you said is true in that sense. Anything which stops the breathing, whether drowning, strangulation, choking or gassing, stops life."

"Is gassing the same as that other thing—aphyse—? Mother the thing! I can't remember it!"

"Apophysia is the word you want. They are not quite the same. You may find 'suffocation' easier than 'apophysia,' but you may be apophysiated without being gassed, though you can't be gassed without being apophysiated."

"Oh, yes I can! If I had much of your 'gas,' I should be very lively."

"Good boy! Keep cool, and I'll try not to 'gas' you."

Whenever the breathing is stopped, the first thing to do is to take out the stopper. In drowning, the stopper is the water. You can't take the water away, so you take the person out of the water.

In hanging or strangulation, cut the rope or whatever is round the neck. Some people foolishly think they mustn't do that until the policeman arrives. Never mind about the policeman. A life is worth more than a copper! Besides, he would thank you for doing it. I have heard of a man forgetting to cut the rope. But that was in a First Aid examination.

In choking, either pull the obstruction out of the top of the throat with the finger and thumb, or the hooked finger, taking care first to wrap a handkerchief round the finger in case of a bite, or, if the obstruction cannot be hooked out, push it down the gullet.

Don't forget two things. (1) When the tongue falls back, as it does when an unconscious person is on his back, the wind-pipe is closed by the epiglottis, and (2) Depressing the tongue partly closes the epiglottis, but leaves the gullet open for

food to go down to the stomach. This is the natural action when food is swallowed. So you need not be afraid of pushing the obstruction down if it is anything that will not hurt the stomach.

In gassing, get the person away from the gas. Don't go; you know you asked for this. For your own safety, have all the doors and windows opened while you are tying a handkerchief folded corner to corner, and wetted, if possible, round your face. Leave the eyes clear and the loose ends hanging over your nose and mouth. If the room is full of smoke or of a gas lighter than air, crawl in on your hands and knees, keeping your head as near the floor as convenient, and drag the person out, even if it has to be done by the hair. Should the gas be petrol or any other gas heavier than air, such as carbonic acid gas, walk upright, and get the person as high up as you can. The fireman's lift is useful, especially in such a case, and as you are stronger and could soon become expert, it would be quicker than dragging.

This is how it is done. Get him face downwards with his arms at his sides. Kneel on the right knee near his head, and pass your hands under his armpits from front to back. Raise him until his body rests on your left knee, then shift your hands down to his waist, and, clapping him tightly, stand up. His head should be on your left shoulder. Grasp his left wrist with your right hand, stoop down until your shoulder is on a level with his hips, pulling on his left arm at the same time, so as to bring his body over your shoulders. Put your left arm between his thighs (but round the thighs in the case of a woman), get him balanced on your back, and stand up. Now grasp his left wrist with your left hand, leaving your right hand free.

Artificial respiration is necessary if breathing has ceased. Don't think a person is dead because he looks like it. There is only one certain sign of death, and nobody but a doctor has a right to say whether life has ceased or not. Never say die! People have lived after artificial

respiration has been given for more than two hours.

Supposing a man has been taken out of the water, apparently drowned. Someone has been sent for the doctor. Another goes to the nearest house for blankets, hot-water bottles, some stimulant, and, if possible, a change of clothing and a vehicle to take him to the nearest place where he can be put to bed.

Without troubling to undo his clothing, turn him face downwards, with his head on one side, his arms straight above his head, palms down. Kneel with one knee on either side of his hips; place your hands just above the small of his back, the thumbs horizontally across his back and nearly touching his spine, the fingers spread out and grasping the lower ribs. Stiffen the arms and lean forward, pressing steadily and firmly, while you count three slowly. This forces the air and water from the chest. Without lifting your hands, swing back towards your heels, releasing the pressure on the ribs, while you count two. This allows the air to enter the lungs. Repeat this double action of pressure and relaxation about fifteen times to the minute.

While you are doing this, someone else can be putting hot flannels on his body, hot-water bottles to his feet, and rubbing his limbs vigorously towards the heart. It is better to raise the limbs while the friction is being applied.

The method I have told you is Professor Schafer's. I like it best, as there is no time wasted, and it is easy. Other methods are giving way to it, but Lalor's is used when the ribs are broken, or for children. For this method, lay the man on his back, a folded garment under his shoulder-blades, the head straight. Clear the mouth, loosen the clothing about the neck, and take hold of the tip of the tongue with your finger and thumb; a handkerchief over the tip of the tongue will prevent it slipping. Draw the tongue well forward while you count two slowly. Without letting go, allow the tongue to drop back. Repeat the two movements fifteen times each minute.

When natural breathing has begun, cover the man with a blanket, and take off his clothes under it, somebody rubbing his limbs and body towards the heart all the time. Wrap him in blankets or dry clothing, turn him on his right side, and give him teaspoonfuls of warm water, tea, coffee, or brandy and warm water as soon as he can swallow, but not before. NEVER GIVE ANYTHING BY THE MOUTH TO AN UNCONSCIOUS PERSON. If you have any smelling-salts, let him sniff. Encourage sleep, but don't leave him until the doctor comes. Warmth and plenty of fresh air are essential.

"I have heard of a man being taken out of the water and held up by his feet to get the water out of him."

"That only shows that all the mad folk are not in asylums."

THE END.

"FOR FREEDOM AND THE CUP!"

By Martin Clifford,

is the title of the Grand Long Complete School and Football Story in

"THE GEM" LIBRARY,

Out on Wednesday - - 1d.

BILLY BUNTER—FORM-MASTER!

The First of a Screamingly Funny Set of Comic Pictures, drawn by J. MacWIL.



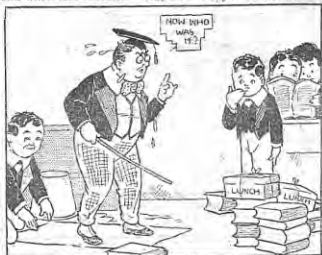
1. Dear Magnetites All,—In this brand-new, forty laugh-power series of fine art engravings we shall follow the mishap-provoking adventures of that prize porpoise, William George Bunter, whose ambition is to be a schoolmaster, with sole power over a Form of juniors and a well-stocked larder.



2. But the first morning he found that his duties were not all daze and doughnuts, for one of the naughty nippers crawled under the desk and tipped his large and ludicrous leg. So Billy clambered on to the desk, to discover the why and wherefore thereof. "Ha, ha! Easy!" he waffled.



3. Whereupon Percy Pic, junior, gave him a hearty push into the cleansing old bucket of H₂O. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the laddets. "Ooo!" Groggled the great W. G. B. "Now who was the pushing young fellow-me-lad who did that?"



4. "Spunk up!" he said, glancing through his little round spectacles. "Speak up! There's no need to be afraid. I shall not award the culprit more than two thousand cuts on each hand and a million lines from Spokenhove's novel, 'Henry the Unpleasant'."



5. Then Bertie Baddeley whipped away the carpet from beneath Billy's dainty tootsies. "Tee, hee! That's one for his nob!" he guffawed, as our frabjous Form-master prised open the lunch-boxes with his handsome chivvy.



6. But, oh! What's this? As you know, Billy never neglects a chance of filling his face, and he seized the opportunity and the lunches with both hands. "Oo-er! Good bye to our grub!" groaned the juniors in unison.

MARCUS THE BRAVE

(Continued from page 17.)

"Recapture the prisoners! You cowardly dogs! Are you the soldiers of a mighty nation or faint-hearted maidens?" cried one young pretorian officer in a snoring tone to the detachment of men he was leading. "At them—at them, I say!"

Stung to fresh efforts by his words, his men gathered themselves together, and, with him fighting fearlessly and doggedly at their head, they made a combined rush, which swept Tacon and his men to

one side, and confronted Marcus and the little group who fought with him.

Marcus found himself face to face with the officer, and, parrying a lunge of the latter's sword, wounded his right arm and put him out of action; but it was only a second later that the combined assault of four of the officer's men hurled the young gladiator off his feet.

As he went down to a huddled heap, the soldiers sprang over his body, and hurled themselves at Leo and the acrobats.

Overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers, the plucky gladiator and his equally brave companions were forced

back, so that the frightened girl was left for the time being standing alone.

With a cry of triumph, a huge pretorian leapt at her, and, in spite of her desperate struggles, picked her bodily up in his arms. Then, whilst his comrades covered his retreat and continued to press Leo and her other companions hard, the man rushed back into the theatre with the girl.

Madly Leo fought to reach her; but his heart was heavy with despair.

She was again a prisoner—being carried back into Nero's power!

(Another instalment of this magnificent adventure story next week.)



FACTORY TO RIDER

Packed Free. Carriage Paid. Fifteen Days' Free Trial. LOWEST CASH PRICES. EASY PAYMENT TERMS. Prompt delivery. Save Dealers' Profits. Big Bargains. Soap Saddles and Second-hand Cycles. Satisfaction guaranteed. Money Refunded. Write for Free Price List and Special Offer of Sample Bicycle.

CYCLE COMPANY, INCORP. Dept. B 607, BIRMINGHAM.

Boys!



MAKE THIS PERFECT MINIATURE BIPLANE.

This model is the outcome of five years' experimental and research work. It is radically different from any entirely new method-of-construction, which allows the model being made from a special set of quality of paper. Movable parts are fitted. Automatic stability is obtained by fitting the lifting planes on the new MASCO principle. All details are reproduced in the model, including Instrument Board, Air-pump, Pilot's Table, Petrol Service Tank, etc. The model is provided with elastic shock absorbers on the chassis axle and tail-rod. These avoid broken parts in the event of bad landings. The span of the model is 12 in., length 12 in., height 5 in. We guarantee that the model will perform all the evolutions of any present-day aeroplane. Our guarantee has been amply proved by the fact that we have received hundreds of letters of appreciation from model enthusiasts.

Complete set of parts and illustrated instructions. PRICE 1/4. Post Free. (Stamps unacceptable.)

Orders for two or more sets at 10d. per set.

Foreign postage, 1d. extra per set.

THE MASCO PATENTS MFG. CO.

Dept. B, Rosebery Crescent, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

"CURLY HAIR!" "Miscellaneous at once," writes Major. Thousands of you thousands, proud men. "Curly" cuts straightest hair. 1/6, 2/6 (stamps accepted). SUMMERS (Dept. A.P.), Upper Russell St., Brighton.



direct from factory at wholesale prices and SAVE POUNDS. World's best massive Table Gramophone. Hornless and exquisitely coloured monomer horn. Mead-o-phones to select from. Grand Gramophones in Columbia, Regal, Zenophone, Patho, Edison Bell and Decca's. Immediate delivery. Sent on to day's trial, packed free, carriage paid, 25 records (24 tapes) and 20 needles included. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Send postcard now for the biggest and most temptingly illustrated set catalogue. Write to MEAD CO. (DEPT. G105), BASFALL HEATH, BIRMINGHAM.

CUT THIS OUT

"The Magnet." PEN COUPON. Value 2d. Send this coupon with P.O. for only 5/- direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 119, Fleet St., London, E.C.4. In return you will receive (post free) a splendid Fleet Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fount Pen, Value 10/6. If you save 12 further coupons, each will cost you 2d. off the price, so you may save 12 coupons and only 5/-. Say whether you want a fine medium, or broad nib. This great offer is made to introduce the famous Fleet Pen to the Magnet readers. (Foreign postage extra). Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Sell Filling, or Safety Models, 2/- extra.

GET
OAT
NOW

GET
OAT
NOW

FREE New "Big Bargains"
Catalogue Paid Free.
Watches, Alarm & Striking Clocks, Jewellery, Gramophones, Month Organs, Novelties, Toys, Xmas Cards, Etc., Etc. (Extra Strong Value).
Gold and Silver 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100.
All Post Free. Satisfaction or Money Back. **FRANK'S** Presents House, Dept. 3B, Hastings.

GREAT MUSICAL DISCOVERY.

THE CHILLA-PHONE
PATENT NO. 5814-17

THE CHILLA-PHONE
PATENT NO. 5814-17

Hasse 31 Octaves.
R. FIELD (Dept. 33), Hall Avenue, HUDDERSFIELD.

DO YOU LACK SELF-CONFIDENCE?

Do you suffer from nervous indigestion, constipation, lack of energy, or will power? You can acquire strong nerves, which will give you absolute self-confidence, if you use the Meno-Servy Strengthening Treatment. Used by Vice-Admiral to Seaman, Colonel to Private, D.S.O.'s, M.C.'s, M.M.'s, and D.O.M.'s. Merely send 3 penny stamps for particulars—GODFREY FLEIGHT-SMITH, Ltd., 547, Imperial Buildings, Langate Circus, London, E.C.4.

INCREASE YOUR HEIGHT SEVERAL INCHES

without appliances 7/6
Rosa System never fails. Price 7/6, complete. Particulars 2d. stamp.
100 P. ROSS, 16, LANGDALE ROAD, SCARBOROUGH.

ELECTRIC LIGHT—Battery, Bracket, Lamp, Lampholder, Switch, Wire, Indicator, 4/9 (Postage 6d.).

Catalogues Model Engines, Railways, Dynamoes, etc., 4d.—MODEL CO., 38, Queen's Road, Aston, Birmingham.

TOBACCO HABIT POSITIVELY CURED IN THREE DAYS.

Famous Specialist's Prescription, 1/6.—H. HUGHES (Box B.P.), HOLMES MANCHESTER.

HOME CINEMATOPHONES, 41—Great Bargains, Interesting Hobby.

Standard Films, 12ft. Free—Desk E. DEAN CINEMA CO., 24, Brighton Avenue, West Ealing, London.

PHOTO POSTCARDS OF YOURSELF, 1/3 doz. 12 by 10 IN.

LABORATORY, 6d. ALSO CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL, CATALOGUE AND SAMPLES FREE—MACKETTS, JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

25 COMIC SONGS, 8 Funny Recitations, 30 Parlor Games, 15 Tricks, etc., etc. 1/-, carr. 6d.—HILL CO., 6, Trianglo, Clarendon, Rom.

GHOSTS! YOUR OWN appear and disappear at will. A SCIENTIFIC WONDER! Causes great fun. 1/3, post free.—MILLET CO., 5, Winchester Road, Tottenham, S. 17.

FREE BOOK
FOR
Engineers

ENGINEERING. EARN MORE MONEY. KNOW YOUR TRADE.

Complete Correspondence Courses in:
ENGINEERING, MECHANICS, ELECTRICITY, MOTOR-CAR ENGINEERING, AERONAUTICS, AERO ENGINES.

Write and say which subject you wish to study, and we will send you a FREE Book pointing out your chances and explaining our system. State age and send 2d. stamp for postage.

THE TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF ST. BRITAIN, LTD., 40, Thanet House, 211 & 213, Strand, London, W.C.2.

ARE YOU SHORT?

If so, let the Givran System help you to increase your height. Mr. Briggs reports a record of 5 inches; Driver H. P. 3 inches; Mr. Hatfield 4 inches; Miss Davies 3 inches; Mr. London 3 inches; Mr. Kellor 4 inches; Mr. Leedley 4 inches. This System requires only ten minutes morning and evening, and greatly improves the health, vigour, and carriage. So appliances or drugs. Send 3 penny stamps for further particulars and 2100 (Lancaster to Enquiry Dept., S.M.P., 17, Strand Green Road, London, S. 4).



WHEN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS
BE SURE TO MENTION THIS PAPER.