

BILLY BUNTER AT ST. JIM'S!

SEE THE LONG COMPLETE STORY INSIDE.



No. 738. Vol. XXI.

Week Ending April 1st, 1922.

The Magnet ^{1 1/2}

Library

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."



WHILST BILLY BUNTER SLEEPS THE ST. JIM'S CHUMS GET BUSY!

(A humorous incident from the long complete tale in this issue.)

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VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE!

I must commence my weekly chat on this occasion with the announcement of a very important fact. As every reader of the MAGNET LIBRARY knows, our famous companion paper, the "Popular," has always been on sale on Friday morning of each week. Now, commencing with this week, the "Popular" will be

ON SALE EVERY TUESDAY.

Now, the "Popular" is giving away MAGNIFICENT COLOURED ENGINE PLATES, and I'm quite sure my chums do not want to miss any of this grand

Don't forget, then, to ask for
THE "POPULAR"
On Sale Every Tuesday.

FOR NEXT MONDAY.

"BAGGING BUNTER!"
By Frank Richards.

Our next grand, long, complete school story of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars, is entitled as above. This story deals with the final events in Billy Bunter's escapade in bolting from Greyfriars.

Correspondence.

Edgar T. R. Provis, 82, Hemiker Gardens, East Ham, E.6., wishes to correspond with readers, age about 18.

Harold Percival, 15, Orchard Place, Southampton, wishes to hear from English-speaking reader in St. Malo. This correspondent would also be glad to hear from anyone in Southampton who would teach him cricket.

Stuart Geo. Don, 87, Queen's Road, Reading, Berks, wishes to hear from readers in Australasia interested in stamps.

Robert Sellers, 13, Dundonald Street, Edinburgh, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 10-13.

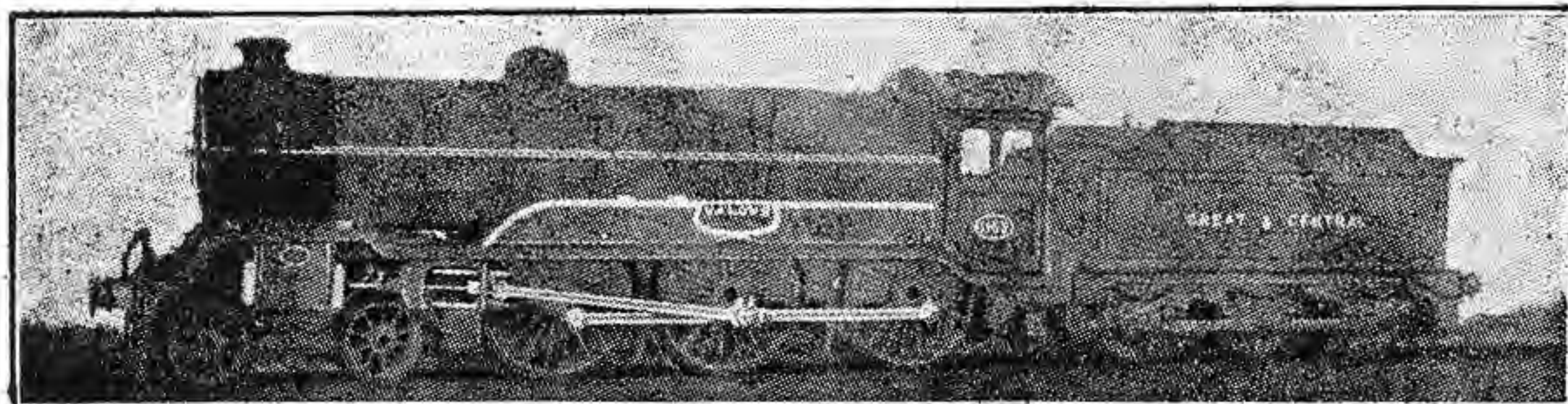
A. Anderson, 12, Lytton Road, Leytonstone, E., wishes to hear from a reader who can duplicate in a variety of colours.

Miss Nancy Bates, 6, Lower Exeter Street, Lisson Grove, Marylebone, N.W.8, wishes to correspond with MAGNET readers, ages 17-18.

John Thornley, 70, Manchester Road, Clifton, nr. Manchester, would like to contribute his serials, "The Iron Claw," "Treasure Island," and "Freckles" to amateur magazines.

Roy F. Dunhill, Marlborough House,

A WONDERFUL COLOURED PLATE OF A FAMOUS GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY EXPRESS ENGINE



GIVEN AWAY FREE IN NEXT TUESDAY'S ISSUE OF THE "POPULAR." ORDER YOUR COPY TO-DAY!

series, so I particularly draw your attention to the fact that you must

ASK FOR THE "POPULAR"
TO-MORROW—TUESDAY.

Will my chums please announce this change of date of publication of the "Popular" to all their friends?

This week's issue of the "Popular" will contain four grand, long, complete school stories, there being an extra special story by Frank Richards, entitled: "A Victory at Last!" This story deals with the amazing "war" between Harry Wharton & Co. and Herbert Vernon-Smith, in which the Bounder does his best to drive the Famous Five from Greyfriars. Readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY must not miss this excellent story of their famous chums in the Remove.

The other three school stories concern the adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co., at Rookwood; Tom Merry & Co., at St. Jim's; and Frank Richards & Co., in the School in the Backwoods. Then there is a fine new serial by Sidney Drew, a grand new competition for big money prizes, and Billy Bunter's famous "Weekly."

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Harry Wharton & Co. have much trouble before they succeed in

"BAGGING BUNTER,"

but Billy gives some other schoolboys a lot more trouble before he is caught and taken back to Greyfriars. This story is extremely funny, and is certain to afford you very much pleasure and amusement.

Make certain of your copy by ordering well in advance!

SPECIAL NUMBER OF THE "HERALD."

Harry Wharton is sending us a very special number of the "Greyfriars' Herald" for our next issue. He has called it an OPTIMISTS' NUMBER.

You can guess from that that there is plenty of fun coming for readers of the "Greyfriars' Herald." When juniors at school start writing about optimism, there are bound to be some extremely interesting views expressed.

Once again, let me ask you to make sure of your copy of next week's number of the MAGNET LIBRARY by ordering well in advance!

Leigh Beck, Canvey-on-Sea, Canvey Island, nr. Benfleet, Essex, wishes to hear from Companion Paper readers.

Will amateur editors send particulars of their magazines, with list of advertisement charges, to Alan S. Richards, 16, Upper Winchester Road, Catford, S.E. 6? A. S. Richards would also be glad to hear from any amateur journalist interested in helping to form a club and start a magazine. Mark envelopes "private."

Joe B. Altner, 78, St. Dominique Street, Quebec, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers in Australia and New Zealand interested in stamp collecting.

Cyril Patterson, 54, Wellington Road, Dunston-on-Tyne, wishes to hear from readers interested in his new Sports and Hobbies Magazine.

C. V. Wahrenquist, 63, Benwell Road, Holloway, N. 7, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere for the exchange of stamps and picture postcards.

Miss Ella Stevens, 39, Shelley Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Hants, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 16-18.

Your Editor.



A Magnificent, Long, Complete School Story, dealing with the Adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., and Billy Bunter's Visit to St. Jim's.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Famous Five are Called In!

"WHARTON!"
 "Yes, Wingate."
 "And Cherry—"
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
 "And Nugent, Bull, and Hurree Singh—"
 "Here we are!"
 "You're wanted in Mr. Quelch's study," said Wingate of the Sixth.
 "Five of you—cut along at once."
 "Oh!"
 "Um!"

Wingate walked on, and the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove looked at one another rather doubtfully.

They were not anxious to visit their respected Form-master, Mr. Quelch, in his study that morning.

At morning lessons, Mr. Quelch had been in his sharpest temper. Lines had fallen in the Remove like leaves in Vallambrosa.

Bob Cherry gave his hands an anticipatory rub.

"Trouble for little us!" he said dismally. "It's all Bunter's fault; but Bunter's out of it, and we're going to catch it. I suppose Quelch feels that it's up to him to take it out of somebody."

"Blow Bunter!" granted Johnny Bull.
 "Perhaps it's not trouble," said Harry Wharton hopefully. "Quelch can't think we had anything to do with Bunter's bolt—"

"There's never any telling what a Form-master may think—and still less what he may do," said Bob pessimistically. "You have to keep a wary eye on 'em at the best of times. Bother Bunter!"

"Bless him!" said Nugent.
 "Well, let's go," said Harry. "Whatever it is, it won't improve by keeping."

The Famous Five made their way rather reluctantly to Mr. Quelch's study, from the quad. The Greyfriars Remove were in a buzz of excitement that morning. The news had spread that Billy

Bunter had "bolted"—cleared off from Greyfriars to escape an impending flogging. It was rather exciting news, and the juniors discussed it to the exclusion of all other topics. Billy Bunter, for once, was right in the limelight—though he was not there to enjoy it.

Mr. Quelch's looks were not promising when Harry Wharton & Co. presented themselves in his study. He was frowning deeply, and his eyes looked more like gimlets than ever. There were streaks and patches on his august countenance, remnants of the weird mixture which the hapless Bunter had "mopped" over his Form-master in mistake for Coker of the Fifth.

Those traces gave Mr. Quelch what his pupils could only consider a rather comic aspect. But they did not venture to smile. Mr. Quelch's expression did not encourage smiling.

"You—er—sent for us, sir!" said Harry Wharton meekly.

The Remove master nodded.

"Yes, Wharton. You are aware that Bunter, of my Form, has quitted the school."

"Yes, sir."

"Without leave," said Mr. Quelch, "an act of—of—of unheard-of audacity and insubordination."

"Yes, sir," murmured Harry.

There was nothing for it but to assent. Form-masters, like lunatics, had to be humoured.

"You are aware," continued Mr. Quelch, "that Bunter was to be flogged and expelled for having committed an audacious offence—nothing less than swamping me—his Form-master—with a hideous concoction of various fluids."

"I—I think, sir—" murmured Bob Cherry.

"What?"

"I think, sir, that—"

"You are not required to think, Cherry."

"Oh!"

"I have sent for you to listen to me."

"Oh! Ah! Yes, sir!" murmured Bob.

Evidently it was necessary to walk warily in dealing with Mr. Quelch that morning.

"Bunter has left a ridiculous and ill-spelt missive for the Head," went on Mr. Quelch. "He admits his offence, but declares that he threw that hideous and offensive concoction over me by mistake. He declares that it was intended for a Fifth Form boy—"

"That's true, sir," said Harry.

"You are quite sure of that, Wharton? It is a very important point."

"Quite sure, sir," said the captain of the Remove. "Bunter's as blind as an owl, sir—I—I mean, he's rather short-sighted, sir, and it was in the dark, too. He certainly thought he was throwing the mixture over Coker of the Fifth."

"That, of course, lessens his offence very considerably," said Mr. Quelch. "If Bunter had explained that, instead of telling me a series of palpable falsehoods, I should not have requested the Head to expel him from Greyfriars. The expulsion will be rescinded; and Dr. Locke agrees with me that a flogging will meet the case. Bunter has run away from school under a misapprehension. He must be brought back."

The Famous Five listened respectfully and attentively. They were relieved to find that it was not, after all, Mr. Quelch's intention to "take it out" of them. That was so much to the good. But they did not quite see why they had been sent for.

"Now," continued Mr. Quelch, proceeding to enlighten them, "no doubt Bunter would return at once, of his own accord, if he knew that he was only to be flogged and not expelled. But he must be found. I do not desire—and the Head does not desire—any unnecessary publicity in this unfortunate affair. The assistance of the police—in finding the foolish boy will only be called upon as a last resource. I thought at first of sending a prefect to seek Bunter, but—"

Mr. Quelch paused.

"But on reflection, I think that

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Bunter's own Form-fellows would probably be more successful," he said. "The sight of a prefect would very likely frighten him into concealment. In short, I have decided to request you boys to undertake to find him and bring him back to the school."

The Co. brightened up wonderfully.

It was a fine spring day, and a sunny sky, and a brisk breeze called them out of doors. Looking for Bunter out of gates was a tremendous improvement on lessons in the Form-room.

"We'll be jolly glad, sir!" exclaimed Bob Cherry heartily.

"Yes, rather, sir!" said Nugent.

"The ratherfulness is terrific, esteemed sir!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Doubtless," continued Mr. Quelch, "you may form some guess as to where Bunter has gone—probably he has hidden himself somewhere in the neighbourhood, and you will be able to trace him. I think it very probable. You will tell the foolish boy that he is not to be expelled—that he will only receive a flogging if he returns at once. If he should refuse to return, you will bring him back in any case. You are empowered to use force. You will understand that you are acting in Bunter's own interests. If he should persist in defying authority, he will not be allowed to return to Greyfriars—which would be a very serious matter for him. For Bunter's own sake, I think you will do your best."

"Rely on us, sir!" said Wharton.

"I do rely on you," said Mr. Quelch, almost genially. "You will be excused afternoon classes, and you will begin your search immediately after dinner. I trust you will have brought Bunter back by calling-over. Thank you, my boys—you may go."

The Famous Five left their Form-master's study in a very satisfied mood.

"Good old Bunter!" murmured Bob Cherry, in the passage. "Fancy Bunter turning out useful for once! He's got us a run out of gates instead of lessons! I'll stand him a jam-tart when we find him."

"If we find him!" said Harry.

"Oh, we'll find him all right!" said Bob confidently. "He can't have gone far—too much weight to carry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter seemed to be thinking more about the flogging than the sack!" remarked Frank Nugent. "I don't know whether he'll jump at the chance of coming back to be flogged."

"We'll make him," said Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

And the Famous Five joined the Remove going in to dinner. And then they made their preparations for hunting Bunter.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Roman Parent!

"O H dear!"

Thus William George Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove was tired. He had walked a couple of miles, and that was more than enough to tire Bunter.

He had had a good many rests by the wayside as he tramped to Courtfield. Bunter had thoughtfully provided himself with all the tuck he could find in the Remove studies before he started. At every rest by the roadside he made a meal. By the time he reached Courtfield all the tuck was gone—inside—and Bunter was feeling the effects of half a dozen meals taken in quick succession. The fat junior

stopped at the post-office, and sat on the stone step to rest and consider.

Billy Bunter had not done much thinking before clearing off from Greyfriars. His fixed idea was that he wasn't going to be flogged. All other considerations were trifles light as air in comparison with that. So long as he escaped flogging, the Owl of the Remove was prepared to leave minor matters to chance.

Besides, he was not without resources. Going home was the very last resource. Bunter had no desire to go home. He was thinking of his old acquaintance, D'Arcy of St. Jim's—whom Bunter always claimed as a very particular pal. He had a vague idea in his fat mind of "planting" himself on D'Arcy somehow. It might not work—but it was worth trying. But he was prepared to go home rather than return to Greyfriars and take his gruel. If he was going to be sent home, anyhow, Bunter argued, what was the good of waiting for a flogging first?

He rolled into the post-office at last, and asked for a trunk call. At that time of day Bunter senior was most likely to be in his office in the City, and Bunter asked for his father's office number. He felt that it would be judicious to apprise the old gentleman of the fact that he had left Greyfriars. There was nothing like getting in one's own version first, Bunter considered. It was best for Mr. Bunter to know that he wasn't to blame in the least, before the Head's letter arrived and perhaps gave quite a different impression.

Bunter had to wait half an hour for his trunk call, but he did not mind; he sat down and rested, and hunted through his pockets for stray bullseyes and aniseed balls. His call came at last.

"Hallo! Is that you, pater?"

"What? Who's speaking?" came a thin, sharp voice on the telephone.

"Billy!"

"What? Who's Billy?"

"It's William!" said the fat junior indignantly. "Who the thump are you? Tell Mr. Bunter that his son is ringing him up, can't you?"

"Oh, very good! Hold on!"

Another voice came through over the wires, a fat voice very like Bunter's own. It did not sound very amiable.

"William, is that you?"

"Yes, dad."

"What the dickens are you ringing me up at the office for, you young juckanapes?"

This was not very encouraging.

"Why aren't you at your lessons at this hour of the morning? What?"

"I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"Has anything happened?"

"Yes."

"Well, what? I'm busy!"

"I've left Greyfriars—"

"What?"

"I've been wronged—"

"What?"

"Wronged!"

"You young idiot!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Do you mean to say that you're coming home in the middle of the term?" boomed the elder Bunter's voice on the telephone.

"Don't you want me home, dad?"

"Of course not!"

"Oh!"

"You're trouble enough in the holidays. I should think you were aware of that."

"Oh!"

"What do you think I pay your fees at Greyfriars for?" demanded the exasperated Mr. Bunter. "By gad! If the headmaster thinks he can send you home

in the middle of the term, he's making a mistake! He's paid to keep you from bothering me for a whole term!"

"Oh!"

"You just go back at once!" snapped Mr. Bunter. "You dare to show your nose at home, and you'll get a licking you won't forget in a hurry. I can promise you that, young hopeful!"

"Oh dear!"

"Anything else?" snapped Mr. Bunter.

"Oh dear! Yes. I've been wronged and—"

"Nonsense!"

"I've been accused of mopping ink and creosote over my Form-master, and he won't believe I didn't do it."

"Didn't you?"

"Yes—I mean no! I meant it for another chap. And I never did it at all!"

"You young fool!"

"Oh, I—I say, they're going to flog me—"

"Serve you right!"

"Oh dear!"

"Tell the Head, from me, to lay it on well," said Mr. Bunter heartlessly. "I've thought several times that you weren't thrashed enough, William. Tell the Head it is my most particular wish that he should make a thorough job of it."

"I don't want to be flogged!" shrieked Bunter.

"Nonsense!"

"I—I've been wronged, you know, and—and I thought you'd receive me at home with open arms, you know, and—and—"

"I shall receive you with a strap, if I see you!" said Mr. Bunter. "Good-bye, William! I hope the flogging will do you good. You need it."

And Bunter senior rang off. Mr. Bunter was a stockbroker, and he was busy that morning with bulls and bears and stags and other fearsome animals that haunt the purlieus of the Stock Exchange. Evidently he had no time to waste on his elder son.

"Well, my hat!" said Bunter.

He put up the receiver in disgust. If he went home, it was clear that there was not going to be a touching reception of a wronged youth. Home was a place to be eluded as long as possible, in the circumstances. His father did not even believe that he was innocent. That was the unkindest cut of all! What was a chap to do when his own father didn't believe that he was innocent? The fact that he wasn't innocent did not worry Bunter. His powerful brain did not descend to logic.

"I'm jolly well not going home!" murmured Bunter, as he left the post-office. "I'm not going back to Greyfriars! Old D'Arcy will be jolly glad to see me, and he'll be able to put me up. I've got to get the train for St. Jim's—that's what I've got to do. How jolly lucky I brought Smithy's overcoat with me!"

Bunter had brought the Bounder's overcoat because it was a much nicer one than his own—Smithy being in class at the time. But it was quite a fine day, and there was no immediate need of an overcoat—and there was a pressing need of cash. Billy Bunter rolled round to Mr. Lazarus' shop, and disposed of the overcoat, receiving in exchange two pound notes and a little ticket.

"I'll let Smithy have the ticket!" he murmured. "I'll settle up the two pounds out of my next postal-order—then Smithy can't complain! I shouldn't wonder if he does, all the same. He's rather a rotter. I'll send him the ticket

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"BAGGING BUNTER!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

by post. Then he can go and get the coat out of the spout if he likes."

There was time to post a letter before the train left Courtfield, and the little ticket was despatched to Herbert Vernon-Smith at Greyfriars.

What Smithy would think, and say, when he received it, did not worry Bunter. His ideas about "gumption and tum" never were very clear; indeed, he was feeling that he had acted very considerably towards Smithy, and hoped that the Bounder would appreciate it. Anyhow, he was safe out of Smithy's reach, and that was all that really mattered.

Bunter took his ticket at Courtfield Junction, and took his seat in the express.

He blinked out of the window rather anxiously as the train started. But there was no sign of pursuit—as yet. At Greyfriars the fellows were still in the Form-rooms. But Bunter felt relieved when the express started, and rolled away with him far from Greyfriars, far from the owner of the pawned overcoat, and far from the threatened flogging. He would be able to plant himself on D'Arcy of St. Jim's for some days, at least, he considered; and beyond that he did not take the trouble to think. Bunter was not a fellow to meet trouble half-way.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Following Up the Clue!

"WHITHER?"

Bob Cherry asked that question as the Famous Five came out of the School House after dinner.

The five were followed by rather envious glances from the other Removees. Nobody, true, was specially interested in finding Bunter; but all the Remove would have been glad of a run out of gates in the place of lessons. But only the Famous Five had been selected—a selection which gave them a very high opinion of their Form-master's judgment.

"Whither, O Chief?" repeated Bob Cherry. "Out of gates first, of course—but after that?"

"Anywhere will do," said Johnny Bull. "Better keep it up till tea-time, anyhow."

"No good coming back before lessons finish," assented Bob. "That's only common sense. Still, we ought to bring in Bunter if we can."

"We want a clue to begin with," remarked Frank Nugent. "Now, if Jack Drake was here—"

"But he isn't," said Harry Wharton. "We've got to pick up a clue for ourselves. Bunter's left plenty of traces behind, if it comes to that. He's raided half the studies in the Remove, and Smithy says his overcoat is gone out of the lobby. Let's try Gosling first. Gossy saw him bolting, and reported it to Quelch. Gossy may know something."

"Good!"

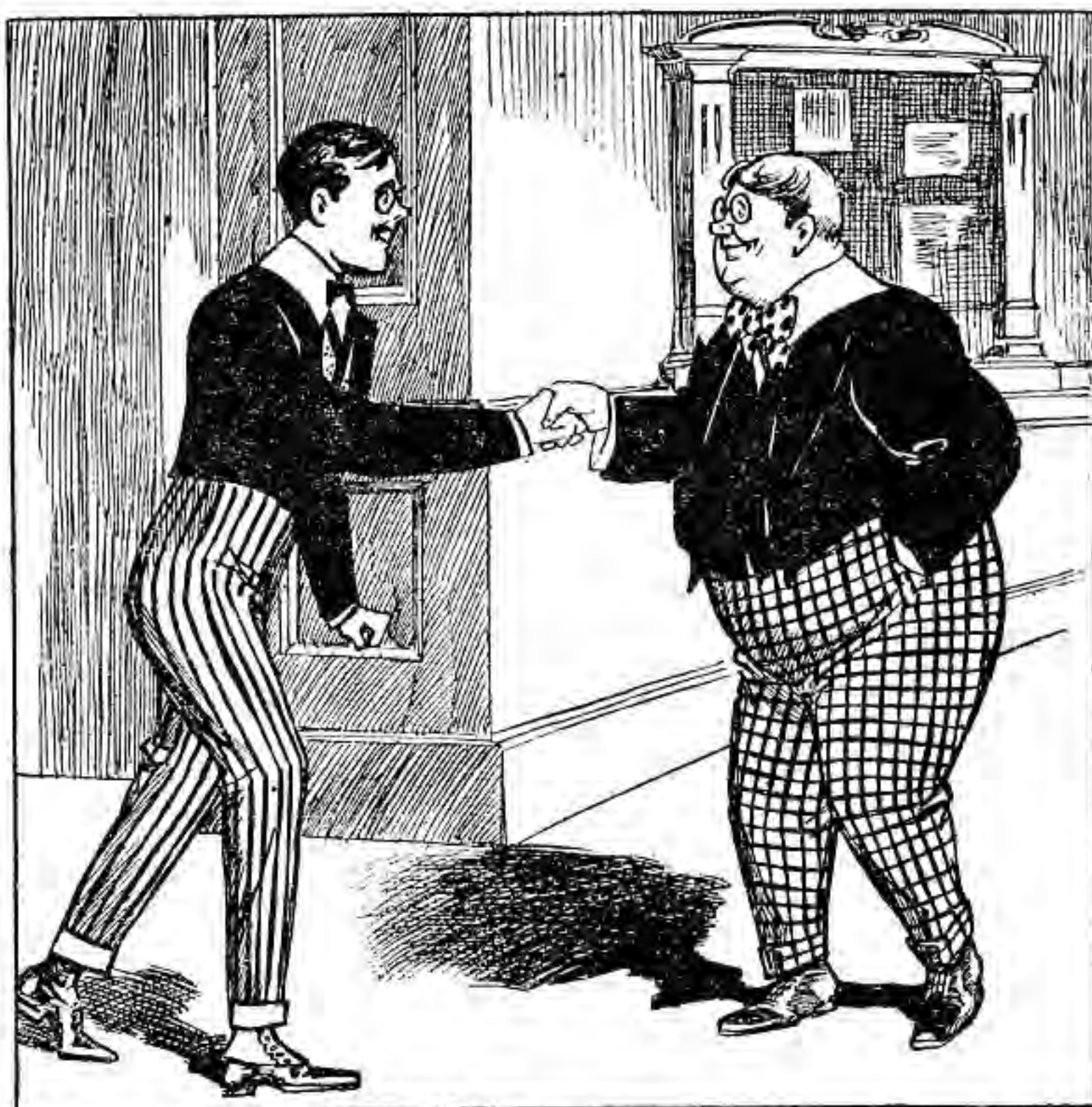
The Famous Five headed for the porter's lodge. They found Mr. Gosling enjoying his after-dinner pipe. Harry Wharton came to the point at once.

"You saw Bunter bolt this morning, Gosling?" he asked.

"Which I did, Master Wharton," said Gosling. "And wot I says is this 'ere—pretty goings hon! That's what I says."

And Gosling shook his ancient head with severe condemnation.

"They never did such things in your young days, did they, Gossy?" asked



Billy Bunter shook hands with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Jolly glad to see you again, old scout!" he said. "Quite a pleasure, isn't it?" "Yaas, wathah!" said Gussy. (See Chapter 5.)

Bob Cherry. "Things were quite different in the reign of George the Third?"

Gosling snorted. He was not a young man, certainly; but it was absurd to suppose that he dated back to George the Third.

"Dry up, Bob!" said Wharton, laughing. "We haven't come here to chip Gossy. Mr. Quelch has commissioned us to find Bunter, Gosling."

"Has he?" said Gosling. "Which I'm surprised at Mr. Quelch. P'raps he don't know you so well as I do."

"Did Bunter say anything about where he was going?"

"He said I could tell the Head he was gone 'ome."

"Gone home!" repeated Wharton.

"If he said that, it means that he's not gone home," said Johnny Bull. "You know Bunter."

"Yes, that's so. Did he say anything else, Gosling?"

Mr. Gosling reflected.

"He said as 'ow he hadn't any idea whatever of going to see young D'Arcy at St. Jim's," he replied.

The Famous Five started.

"D'Arcy!"

"St. Jim's!"

"Great Scott!"

"The fat duffer!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "So that was his fat-headed idea! My hat!"

"Which he said he hadn't any idea of going there," said Gosling. "Not the slightest—they was his words."

"That's just Bunter's brand of cunning," remarked Bob Cherry, as the chums moved away. "Of course, he's off to St. Jim's."

"Looks like it!"

"The lookfulness is terrific," assented Hurree Jamsel Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It will be rather a surprise for D'Arcy, if Bunter rolls in," he remarked. "He can't be expecting visitors in the middle of the term. The fat duffer surely can't think he will be put up at the school. But he's got neck enough for anything. Well, we've found a clue."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"Shall we tell Quelch where we think he is before we start?" he asked.

Wharton shook his head.

"What's the good?" he asked. "He would telephone to Dr. Holmes at St. Jim's, and ask him to kick the fat duffer out. Then we shouldn't be wanted to hunt for him! It's plainly our duty to look for him at St. Jim's! We can raise the railway fares, and I should like to see Tom Merry and the fellows again. Quite a jolly afternoon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"After all, we're not sure that he's at St. Jim's," argued Wharton. "If he's gone there, most likely he's there by now. But we're not sure. Quelch has asked us to hunt for him. If our clues lead us as far as Sussex, we're not to blame."

"I don't think Quelch quite anticipated our going as far as Sussex!" chuckled Bob.

"Still, we've got our duty to do."

"We have—we has!"

"Us for Sussex!" said Johnny Bull decidedly.

"The esteemed weather is fine, and we shall enjoy a trip Sussexfully," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Let us get going at once, before the esteemed

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Quelch has a chance to change his mind."

"Hear, hear!"

It did not take the Famous Five long to make up their minds. Very probably Mr. Quelch had not contemplated anything like a journey to St. Jim's on their part. Still, there was no doubt that he had commissioned them to find Bunter and bring him back. If the quest led them across two counties, across two counties they had to go. And undoubtedly the more counties they crossed the better they would like it. Possibly Mr. Quelch would have changed his mind had they acquainted him with their clue and whither it led. They sagely decided not to worry Mr. Quelch about it. In fact, they decided to start without a moment's delay; and they walked very quickly down the road to Courtfield.

At Courtfield Junction they made a few inquiries. Two or three porters there had seen a person answering to William George Bunter's description—his circumference was often remarked and remembered. The fat youth had taken the eleven o'clock express.

"That settles it!" said Harry Wharton. "He's gone to St. Jim's right enough. That wouldn't be his train for home. All we've got to do is to take the next express."

"That's all!" grinned Bob.

"It's at three," said Harry. "We've got time for some ginger-pop. Come on!"

The Famous Five adjourned to the buffet, where they spent the time quite agreeably till the express was due.

They looked very cheerful when they took their seats in the train and glided out of Courtfield.

"There's French this afternoon in the Form-room!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"What a giddy escape!"

"Bless old Bunter!" said Nugent. "Never felt so friendly towards Bunter in my life!"

"Perhaps he will dodge us at St. Jim's!" suggested Johnny Bull hopefully. "We may stick it out for two or three days—"

"Oh, good!"

"We'll catch him if we can!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "But if he does dodge us, of course—"

"But Quelch couldn't have meant—"

"Never mind what he meant—we only know what he said. We're after Bunter, and we're sticking to his trail until we catch him—or until the cash runs out. We're in luck!"

And the Bunter-hunters chortled, and agreed that they were in great luck.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Visitor at St. Jim's!

BILLY BUNTER stopped at the gates of St. Jim's, and blinked in through the metal bars.

He was breathing hard, and there were dewdrops of perspiration on his fat brow. He had walked up from the station at Rylcombe, and he was in need of a rest and refreshment. From the gates he had a glimpse of the quadrangle, where there was no one in sight. St. Jim's were at classes; Bunter was too late to catch them at dinner. He had dined on the train, not wisely, but too well; but he was quite prepared for another dinner, if dinner was going. But evidently it had gone.

Bunter rang loudly at the bell.

Taggles, the porter, came down to the gate. He recognised Bunter—he had

seen that cheerful youth at St. Jim's before. Both by diameter and circumference Bunter was easily recognisable.

Taggles was surprised to see him, there and then; but he admitted the Owl of Greyfriars. Bunter bestowed a gracious nod on him.

"Fellows at lessons, what?" he asked.

"Course, at this 'ere time," answered Taggles.

"D'Arcy's here, I suppose?"

"Master D'Arcy's in his Form-room, sir."

"Good! Take him a message, and tell him I've come to see him," said Bunter. "I'll sit down in your lodge for a bit."

Taggles blinked at Bunter.

He remembered him—remembered him well. He remembered also that, on all the occasions when Bunter had visited St. Jim's, Bunter had never deemed it necessary to slip a tip into his horny hand. Taggles grunted.

"Ain't allowed to take messages to the young gentlemen in class, sir," he answered.

"What rot!" said Bunter. "I've come over here specially to see D'Arcy of the Fourth. It's important."

"Tain't allowed, sir!" said Taggles stolidly.

"Look here, you just do as you're told!" said Bunter warmly. "I'll take the responsibility."

"You'll take the message, too, sir, if it's going to be took!" said Taggles genially.

And he closed the gate and went back to his lodge.

"Insolent menial!" murmured Bunter. "I'd jolly well sack that man if I was Head here! Cheeky old ruffian!"

Taggles had left Bunter entirely to his own devices. But the Owl of Greyfriars knew his way about St. Jim's, and he rolled away across the quadrangle.

The quad was quite deserted. The big door of the School House stood open, and Bunter walked in.

He sat down in the hall to rest and consider. All the St. Jim's fellows were in the Form-rooms; D'Arcy of the Fourth among the rest; but Bunter was very anxious to interview Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He was not so keen to see Tom Merry, or Lowther, or Manners—or Blake, or Herries, or Digby, or, indeed, any of D'Arcy's pals.

D'Arcy himself was Bunter's game—as if by instinct, the fat junior realised that the swell of St. Jim's was the only fellow who was likely to allow himself to be burdened with such an incubus as William George Bunter. Not that Bunter looked at it in that light—his conscious view was quite different from his subconscious one.

He was about to ring the bell when Toby, the House page, came along the hall. Toby looked rather surprised at seeing a stranger seated there.

Bunter gave him a patronising nod and smile. Toby's face remained stolid. Bunter, on his frequent visits, had never slipped a half-crown, or even a shilling, into Toby's hand—any more than into Taggles. Toby had as good a memory as Taggles.

"Come here, my lad!" said Bunter loftily. "I've called to see D'Arcy—you remember me?"

"I remember you, sir," said Toby.

"Take a message to D'Arcy at once—tell him that his old friend Bunter is waiting here to see him."

Toby hesitated.

But he was more obliging than Taggles, and he assented.

"Very well, sir," he said, "I don't

think Master D'Arcy will be allowed to come out of class, but I'll take the message to the Form-room."

"And look sharp!" said Bunter, perhaps by way of thanks.

Toby grunted, and walked away. Bunter settled down to wait; but he looked round as there was a footstep. A stalwart gentleman was crossing the hall. He paused as he saw Bunter. The fat junior recognised Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House.

Bunter jumped up at once, with a respectful smirk.

"G-g-good-afternoon, sir!" he stammered.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Railton, looking at him. "What are you doing here, my boy?"

"I've called to see D'Arcy, sir."

"You are a Greyfriars boy, I think?" said Mr. Railton, regarding him attentively.

"Yes, sir—Bunter of the Lower Fourth. I hope you remember me, sir."

"I remember you," said Mr. Railton, with a slight smile. "Is there a holiday at Greyfriars now?"

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter promptly.

Bunter was not a bright youth, but he was bright enough to know that it would not do to tell a Housemaster that he had run away from school. Mr. Railton's question gave him an opening, of which he took advantage at once. Bunter, in these matters, was not under the same restrictions as the late lamented George Washington—who could not tell a lie. Bunter could!

"Indeed!" said Mr. Railton.

"Extra special holiday, sir—Founder's Day, you know," said Bunter glibly. "So I thought I'd come over and see my old friends."

"Um!" said Mr. Railton.

"I thought it a good idea," said Bunter.

Mr. Railton, from his expression, did not seem to share Bunter's view that it was a good idea.

"D'Arcy is at lessons now," he said. "All the boys are at lessons. I am afraid you will have to wait rather a long time, Bunter."

"Oh, I don't mind, sir!" said Bunter cheerfully.

"It is rather a long way from Greyfriars," said Mr. Railton. "You will have to catch an early train to return to your school, surely."

"Not at all, sir," said Bunter. "I've got leave to—stay over the night."

"Indeed!" ejaculated Mr. Railton.

"Yes, sir! D'Arcy's often asked me to come and stay here, so I thought this a good opportunity."

Mr. Railton coughed.

"That was very thoughtless of D'Arcy," he said. "It is—hem—most unusual for the boys to have visitors staying at the school."

"Is it, sir?" said Bunter innocently.

"Most decidedly. In fact, quite unprecedented," said Mr. Railton. "I shall speak to D'Arcy about this. He has acted very thoughtlessly."

"He is rather a thoughtless chap, sir," agreed Bunter. "They—they don't expect me back at Greyfriars to-night, sir."

"Hum! Then we must see what can be done," said Mr. Railton.

He frowned a little, as he went on towards the Sixth Form room. His duties called him there, and he had no more time to bestow on William George Bunter—for which the Owl of Greyfriars was duly thankful.

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"Beast!" murmured Bunter as the Housemaster disappeared. "That's what he calls hospitality, I suppose! I'm jolly well not clearing off, I know that! Beast!"

And Bunter sat down again to wait for Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, quite determined that he was not clearing off from St. Jim's, in spite of Mr. Railton's obvious lack of hearty hospitality.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Pleasant Surprise for D'Arcy!

TAP!
Mr. Lathom, the master of the St. Jim's Fourth, turned rather irritably towards the door of the Form-room, as the tap came. Mr. Lathom did not like interruptions to lessons; in which his pupils were far from agreeing with him. The Fourth were quite pleased to hear the tap at the door; and they hoped that it was the Head who was dropping in for a good long chat with the Form-master.

The Fourth were receiving valuable instruction, just then, in English History. As it happened, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was the recipient of Mr. Lathom's special attention at the moment. Arthur Augustus was a little hazy on such matters as names and dates. He was even rather vague as to the precise date when that most undesirable alien, William of Normandy, had come over—although the founder of the D'Arcy family had come over with him. Mr. Lathom had requested Arthur Augustus to inform him of the date of the Conquest, and Arthur Augustus, at a venture, made it 1588. He was sure that something historical had happened in 1588, and he hoped that it was the Norman invasion.

Mr. Lathom did not seem satisfied with the answer.

"Are you not aware, D'Arcy, that 1588 was the year of the Spanish Armada?" he snapped.

"Bai Jove! Was it, sir?" asked Arthur Augustus innocently.

"Certainly it was!"

"I was suah that somethin' had happened in that yeah, sir! I'm wathah good at dates."

"Then kindly tell me the year of the Norman Conquest!" snapped Mr. Lathom.

"I know there's a double numbah in it, sir. Pewwaps it was 1638."

"Are you under the impression, D'Arcy, that the Norman Conquest was subsequent to the Spanish Armada?" asked Mr. Lathom.

"Bai Jove! Now I come to think of it, sir, it seems wathah impwobable," said Arthur Augustus. "I wemembah now, sir. It was 1288."

"D'Arcy!"

"I—I mean 1188!" said Arthur Augustus hastily.

"D'Arcy, you will write out after lessons that the Norman Conquest took place in the year 1066, one hundred times," said Mr. Lathom.

"Oh deah!"

"And I consider——"

Mr. Lathom's considerations were interrupted by a tap at the Form-room door—much to the relief of Arthur Augustus. He was not anxious to know what Mr. Lathom considered.

Toby, the page, presented himself. Mr. Lathom blinked at him over his glasses.

"Well, what is it?" he asked.

"Young gent, name of Bunter, sir, called to see Master D'Arcy," said Toby.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Lathom.

"Boys are not allowed to receive visitors during class!"

"Buntah!" murmured Arthur Augustus, in surprise. "Oh, bai Jove!"

Mr. Lathom turned to him.

"D'Arcy, what do you mean by asking your friends to call during classes?"

"I—I don't wemembah askin' Buntah to call, sir," stammered Arthur Augustus.

"He would scarcely call without being asked, I suppose?" said the master of the Fourth acidly.

Whereat some of the juniors grinned. They knew William George Bunter better than Mr. Lathom did.

"As the boy has called, you had better see him, D'Arcy," said Mr. Lathom.

"Go at once, and return immediately to your lessons."

"Vewy well, sir."

Arthur Augustus quitted the Form-room, following Toby. He was surprised by Bunter's visit, but he was not sorry to be called away—though he was losing valuable instruction. He did not feel the loss.

"Where is Buntah, Tobay?" he asked in the corridor.

"A-sittin' in the 'all, sir," answered Toby.

"Thank you, deah boy."

Toby departed to the regions below, and Arthur Augustus walked away to the hall to see Bunter. Billy Bunter jumped up as he beheld the swell of St. Jim's, and beamed upon him. He shook hands with Arthur Augustus in the most cordial way.

"Jolly glad to see you again, old

scout!" he exclaimed. "Quite a pleasure, isn't it?"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus politely. "How evah have you got off from lessons to-day, Buntah?"

Bunter hesitated a moment.

"We've got a holiday," he said. "Head's birthday, you know."

"Bai Jove!"

"So I remembered your kind invitation, and came over," said Bunter.

"Wewly, Buntah——"

"I haven't been able to come before," said Bunter. "I've always meant to, but I have such a thumping lot of engagements, you know. I hope you don't think I've been neglecting you?"

"Not in the least."

"This—this holiday was really booked in advance," went on Bunter. "In fact, I had accepted several invitations. But I decided that I'd come over and see you, old chap. 'Dash it all,' I said to myself, 'I can't please everybody; people simply shouldn't keep on asking me.' So I came over, old scout."

"That was vewy good of you, Buntah."

"Not at all, old fellow. I knew you'd be glad to see me, and I remembered your pressing invitation."

The swell of St. Jim's looked perplexed. He had not the remotest recollection of that pressing invitation. He had to take Bunter's word for that.

"So here I am," said Bunter.

"Yaas, heah you are, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, rather puzzled to know what was to be done with his guest now that he was there.

"Bit tired and hungry, but otherwise right as rain," said Bunter. "You're in class now, of course?"



Bunter very quickly negotiated the lock of the study cupboard with the help of the poker. "Oh crumbs!" he ejaculated, as he looked into Tom Merry's cupboard. There was a gigantic plum cake inside, and Bunter's mouth fairly watered as he eyed it. (See Chapter 6.)

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"Yaas, Mr. Lathom is wathah watty, too," said Arthur Augustus. "I—I am weally afwaid that I shall have to go back—"

"That's all right," said Bunter. "Just show me where I can make myself at home, and get back to lessons. I don't want to give you any trouble, of course. No doubt your Housemaster will arrange about a bed for me to-night."

"A—a bed?"

"Yes. I've told him I'm staying the night."

"Oh!"

"May stay several nights," said Bunter airily. "Now I've got a—a holiday, I'm going to give it up to you, old fellow."

"Bai Jove!"

"Make any arrangements you like," continued Bunter. "I never give any trouble. So long as I have a comfortable bed and enough to eat, I never want anything more. A bed in the dorm would do, if it's not convenient for a room to be got ready."

"Oh!"

"You can see your Housemaster about it after lessons," said Bunter airily. "Never mind that now. I'm glad to see that you're so jolly glad to see me, D'Arcy."

"Oh!"

Arthur Augustus was in a state of dismay that almost overcame his polished urbanity.

But he made a great effort, and smiled as genially as possible upon the Owl of Greyfriars.

"I shall have to get back to class," he said. "Pewwaps you had better come up to the study, Buntah."

"I don't mind," said Bunter. "I dare say there's something to eat in the study. I'm a bit peckish."

"Yaas, I—I think so. Pway come this way."

"Good!"

Billy Bunter followed his dismayed host up the staircase to the Fourth Form passage. He rolled cheerfully into Study No. 6.

"Pway make yourself at home, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I must weally cut back to class now, or Mr. Lathom will be feahfully waxy."

Bunter nodded.

"Don't let me detain you, old fellow," he said. "Trust me to make myself at home. I can get my own tea."

"It—it is not quite tea-time yet, Buntah—"

"I'll take a snack. Something in the cupboard, I dare say."

"Yaas, wathah! Pway make yourself comfortable."

"I will!" said Bunter. "Don't you worry. I can rough it! You cut back to class, old chap, and leave me to it!"

"Yaas, deah boy. Pway excuse my leavin' you—"

"Not at all; cut off," said Bunter. "I shall be all right. I know how to look after myself."

"Yaas, I believe you do—I—I—I mean, all wight!" stammered Arthur Augustus. And he left Bunter in Study No. 6, to make himself comfortable and to make himself at home—both of which Bunter proceeded to do at once in the most thorough manner.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Makes Himself at Home!

BILLY BUNTER winked into space when the door of Study No. 6 closed on the elegant figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Then he proceeded to make himself at home.

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It was a long way off tea-time, so far; but that was an unconsidered trifle to Bunter. He was ready for tea—indeed, after tea he would be ready for tea again. In that line Billy Bunter had an almost unlimited capacity. He blinked into the study cupboard. There was half a cake there, there was a pot of jam, and there were several other things—intended to make a tea for four that afternoon. Bunter transferred them to the study table, and they made a snack for one!

Feeling refreshed by that little snack, Bunter next considered the question of tea.

Study No. 6 was cleared of eatables; but Bunter had been told to make himself at home, and he proceeded to do it. He opened the study door and blinked out into the passage. D'Arcy was in the Form-room now with the rest of the Fourth; there was nobody about the Fourth Form passage. Billy Bunter paused a moment to consider. He decided that Tom Merry's study in the Shell was a good cover to draw; and he rolled along cheerily to Study No. 10 in the Shell. In that study the cupboard was locked; but that did not worry Bunter. The fact that it was locked indicated that there was something good in it. Bunter very quickly negotiated the lock, with the help of the study poker. Possibly Arthur Augustus had not intended his guest to make himself at home to this extent. But the Owl of Greyfriars had his own peculiar manners and customs.

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Bunter, as he looked into Tom Merry's study cupboard.

His round eyes beamed behind his big glasses.

There was a gigantic plum-cake—a gift from Miss Priscilla Fawcett to her dearest Tommy. Bunter fairly gloated over it.

"That's why they locked the cupboard!" he murmured. "Must be a precious lot here—when fellows have to lock up their cakes! Unscrupulous lot, I should think!"

Bunter lifted out the cake.

It was large, and it was rich. It was iced on top, and it was simply crammed with plums.

Bunter did not trouble to convey it to Study No. 6. He lifted it to Tom Merry's table, and started.

"Good!" he ejaculated.

Undoubtedly the cake was good. If the proof of the pudding was in the eating, Bunter proved that that cake was good. It was so extensive that it took even Bunter a considerable time to travel through it. But he travelled on, and it disappeared.

By the time he had finished, William George was feeling a little heavy and stuffy. He unfastened a couple of waistcoat buttons, and breathed stertorously.

"Good—perhaps a trifle too rich!" he murmured. "Still, it was jolly good. I hope Tom Merry will have another cake while I'm here! Nothing else—they can keep their old sardines!"

After that cake, Bunter was growing a little particular in his diet. He disdained the sardines, and turned up his nose at bread-and-butter. Really, he felt that he had had almost enough; but he had room for any special delicacies that might turn up. He gave the matter some thought—it was an important matter that justified reflection. Then he returned to the Fourth Form passage, and stopped at Study No. 9. He remembered that Study No. 9 belonged to Levison, Clive, and Cardew, and that Cardew, at least, was a very rich fellow.

It was probable that something good would be found in Cardew's quarters. Bunter proceeded to search for something good.

In Study No. 9, too, the study cupboard was locked. Bunter tried the poker on it, but this time in vain. But there was a tool-chest in the study belonging to Sidney Clive. Bunter found a chisel in it, and the cupboard door was soon opened.

By a stroke of good fortune—for Bunter—Study No. 9 had planned a little spread that day. The good things had been laid in, and they were in the cupboard—ready! Bunter's eyes glistened as he surveyed them—paper bags of pastry, nice little cardboard boxes with tempting things inside them. The fat junior regretted that he had done such extensive justice to Tom Merry's cake. He wished that he had left more room for these excellent things. It was too late to think of that now, however, and Bunter could only resolve to do his best.

It was a very good "best." He began on the meringues, standing at the cupboard and feeding himself industriously. Then he sat down in Cardew's own luxurious armchair, with a large bag of tarts on his fat knees.

One after another the tarts disappeared.

Bunter was eating slowly now. Even his amazing stowage capacity was getting near the limit; he had long passed the Plimsoll line, as it were. His fat face was shiny and smeary, and his eyes had a boiled look behind his spectacles. His breathing was slow and hard. But he kept on manfully. The last tart had gone when he stopped at last.

"Good!" gasped Bunter.

He did not rise from the armchair. Even Bunter did not feel inclined to go in further search of good things.

There were so many good things inside Bunter now, that he would have found it difficult to go in search of more—and still more difficult to dispose of them.

He leaned back in Cardew's armchair, and closed his eyes.

His exertions had tired him.

In a few minutes after the last tart had vanished, Billy Bunter was fast asleep, and a strange, weird sound, like the rumble of distant thunder, echoed through Study No. 9.

Snorrrrrrrrrrr!

In beatific peace, Bunter slumbered, and his deep, unmusical snore echoed through Study No. 9, and for some distance along the Fourth Form passage. His visit to St. Jim's was quite a success.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Justice is Done!

"**Y**OU ass—"
"Weally, Blake—"
"You duffer—"
"Weally, Hewwies—"

"You fathead!"

"Weally, Dig—"

Classes were over at St. Jim's, and the Fourth Form had been dismissed. In the corridor, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's elms were telling him what they thought of him.

"Of all the frabjous fatheads—" resumed Blake.

"Gussy's the giddy limit!" said Herries. "Fancy asking that fat boulder from Greyfriars here—"

"What on earth are you going to do with him, Gussy?" demanded Digby.

"I weally do not know, Dig. Appawently I have asked him to pay me a

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By FRANK RICHARDS.



The GREYFRIARS' HERALD



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by
PATRICK GWYNNE

OLD FRIENDS MEET AGAIN! *There was no longer any room for doubt. Calthorpe roused himself, and held out his hand, taking the hand of the wanderer in a tight grasp. "Jimmy!" he muttered. "Old Jimmy! What have you been doing with yourself all these years?"*

THAT celebrated Old Boy, Dick Calthorpe, was at tea with us in Wingate's study. And we were jolly glad to entertain him. It was a great privilege.

Fifteen years had elapsed since Calthorpe left the school. He had been captain of Greyfriars and skipper of the First Eleven. Quite a shining light, you know.

Now, a good many of these shining lights go from the school, and you never hear of them again. The world swallows them up. They fade away into oblivion.

Dick Calthorpe was an exception. He had never lost touch with Greyfriars. He had visited the school every year since he left, save during the war years, when he had been too busily occupied across the Channel.

Calthorpe was an airman. He was still in the Service, and, among other decorations, he had gained the Distinguished Flying Cross.

When tea was over in Wingate's study, the Old Boy pulled out his pipe.

"Mind if I smoke?" he asked.

"Not a bit!" said Wingate.

Calthorpe lit up, and his glance travelled round the study. It rested on Wingate's footer-cap, which hung on the door-peg.

"A fine distinction, that," he said. "In my time it was considered the greatest honour going, to get one's footer-cap. It's rather easier to get a cap now than it used to be."

Supplement i.]

"Surely all the members of the First Eleven used to be capped?" I exclaimed.

Calthorpe shook his head.

"Footer-caps used only to be given to fellows of extraordinary talent," he said. "Some years there were none awarded at all. A fellow had to do something really great—turn an almost certain defeat into a victory, you know—before he could get his cap. The last fellow I remember gaining the honour was my close chum, Jimmy Darvill."

"How did he manage it?" inquired Faulkner.

"He pulled a game out of the fire. It was the last match of the term—against St. Jim's, so you can guess how keen the rivalry was. Greyfriars hadn't licked St. Jim's for a dog's age, but we were determined to do it on this occasion."

The speaker allowed his pipe to go out. He took it from his mouth, and poised it thoughtfully between his thumb and forefinger.

"However," he resumed, "our luck was dead out. We couldn't hold our strongest eleven. A couple of fellows were cracked just before the match, and our goalie was down with the flu. The two cracks happened to be the backs, so we had to play an entirely reserve defence. It was weak—weak as the tea we used to get in Hall. The goalie was a dud—although we couldn't have got a

better, and the backs were too light to stem the rushes of the St. Jim's forwards.

"The Saints started off at a rare pace. I shall never forget it. They simply swarmed round our goal, and rained in shot after shot. Before we knew where we were, we were a couple of goals down.

"The crowd groaned. So did we. We thought we were in for a record hammering.

"St. Jim's got a third goal, and it fairly took the stuffing out of us. So far, our forwards hadn't even had a sniff of the ball. But just before half-time Jimmy Darvill, who was playing at outside-right, had a pass sent across to him, and he showed his opponents a clean pair of heels. He tricked man after man, and wound up with a shot which had the St. Jim's goalie beaten all ends up.

"Three to one against us was the half-time score. Pretty hopeless—what? Not even the cheeriest optimist on the ground would have cared to back Greyfriars to save the game, much less win it.

"Then came the second half—and Darvill's amazing performance.

"That fellow carried the team on his shoulders. Although I had the reputation of being the best player on the side, I had to play second fiddle to Jimmy Darvill that day. Ye gods, he was great! He made rings round the St. Jim's defenders. They couldn't hold him. When he got a clear opening it was all up, for Jimmy was a

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deadly marksman. He scored a goal five minutes after the resumption; and shortly afterwards he gave me a beautiful pass—such a beauty that I had simply to nod the ball into the net.

"That made the scores level—three goals all. And after that it was give and take, with nothing to choose between the two sides.

"A quarter of an hour from the finish one of our backs—the crazy chump!—handled the ball in the penalty-area. St. Jim's were awarded a spot-kick, and they scored.

"The spectators began to leave the field in dribs and drabs. They regarded it as all over. They appeared to forget the time-honoured axiom that a game isn't lost till it's won.

"In the last ten minutes of the game Jimmy Darvill scored a couple of grand goals off his own bat—or should I say his boot? I won't try to describe how he got those goals. It was sheer wizardry on his part. But got them he did, and Greyfriars won by five goals to four. And this, mark you, after being badly behind at half-time.

"That was how Jimmy Darvill got his cap. It was the only cap presented that season and Jimmy thoroughly deserved it, if ever a fellow did. He was a giddy Trojan!"

The Old Boy paused, and relighted his pipe.

"What became of Darvill, Mr. Calthorpe?"

It was Wingate who asked the question.

"He was swallowed up in the world, like so many others, and never heard of again," said Dick Calthorpe. "At least, I've never heard of him. I'd give a good deal for the pleasure of meeting Jimmy Darvill again. But I don't suppose I ever shall. Possibly he went under in the war."

Wingate had crossed to the window, and was looking out into the Close.

"Hallo! Looks like trouble!" he remarked.

We joined him at the window.

There was a scuffle going on in the school gateway.

Gosling, the porter, was trying to eject a man by force. He would probably have succeeded, for the man appeared weak and ill, and in no condition for a scrap. He was a shabbily-dressed individual, and we took him to be a tramp.

"Better go along and see the fun," remarked Faulkner.

We hurried to the scene. As we approached, Gosling released the man, and turned towards us, his face red with anger and exertion.

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" he panted. "This imperent wagabond is tryin' to force 'issell in 'ere, to see the 'Ead!"

"Then he'd better force himself out again!" said Wingate drily.

The "wagabond" took no notice of Wingate's remark. He was staring hard at Dick Calthorpe. The light of recognition shone in his eyes.

"Why, it—it's old Dick!" he muttered.

Calthorpe frowned.

"I don't know you!" he said curtly.

"What! Surely you remember? I'm Jimmy—Jimmy Darvill!"

Calthorpe eyed the man steadily.

"You certainly have some slight resemblance to Darvill, as I knew him," he said, "and you seem to be trading on that resemblance for some ulterior motive. You are an impostor!"

The man smiled faintly.

"You want proof, Dick?"

Calthorpe nodded. Whereupon the stranger fumbled in an inner pocket, and drew forth a worn and faded cap. It was a Greyfriars footer-cap, and the name of the owner and date of presentation appeared on the lining. The name was James Darvill; the year, 1907.

Dick Calthorpe stood staring at the cap as if spellbound.

There could no longer be any room for doubt. Calthorpe roused himself, and held out his hand taking that of the wanderer in a tight grasp.

"Jimmy," he muttered. "Old Jimmy! What have you been doing with yourself all these years?"

"Struggling for existence, mostly!" was the reply, in bitter tones.

"But I thought you'd been getting along famously!"

"So I did—up to a point. Then a charge was brought against me—a charge of embezzlement. I wonder you didn't read about it in the papers, Dick. I was found not guilty, and acquitted. But the stigma has

remained ever since. After the trial I found it impossible to get a job. When a fellow has figured in police-court proceedings as an accused person, people always regard him with suspicion afterwards, even though he gets off, and leaves the court without a stain on his character. Ever since the war I've been pottering about doing odd jobs; but I've no regular employment. I'm down and out, Dick! And then I thought of the Head of Greyfriars, and wondered if he could help me. I swallowed my pride, and came along to the school."

It was not a happy story that Jimmy Darvill told. It was little short of tragic that this man, who had lived a blameless life, should be dogged all his days by a suspicion of dishonesty.

Gosling, the porter, who had remained within earshot while Darvill told his story, shuffled forward, and mumbled an apology.

"Which I wouldn't 'ave tried to bundle you out neck an' crop, if I'd known!" he said.

"That's all right!" said Darvill, with a faint smile.

Dick Calthorpe took his old school chum by the arm.

"Why, man, you are ill!" he exclaimed. "Your face is positively haggard!"

"Hunger and privation don't improve a man's appearance, Dick," said Darvill grimly.

"You must come along and have some grub, Mr. Darvill, before you see the Head!" Wingate insisted.

The Old Boy was promptly escorted into the school building, and everything possible was done to ensure his comfort.

His interview with the Head brought him a great stroke of luck.

One of Dr. Locke's closest friends, who was also a headmaster, happened to stand in need of a football coach for his school.

Jimmy Darvill was recommended for the post, and he got it. What was more to the point, he kept it, and prospered. And the school which he serves is indeed fortunate, for it could not possibly have a more capable coach than this giant of the past!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

The other day I took the unusual course of inviting a rival editor—the corpulent editor of "Billy Bunter's Weekly"—to tea in my study.

Tea was timed for five o'clock, but Bunter, in his eagerness to get his jaws going, was on the scene at half-past four.

"Jolly good of you to invite me to tea, Wharton," said Bunter, when he had demolished everything that was on the table, with the exception of the actual crockery-ware. "I'll return the compliment one of these days, when my ship comes home."

The fat junior leaned back contentedly in his chair, with his hands clasped in the region of his lowest waistcoat button.

"Do you know, Wharton," he said, after a pause, "I feel sorry for you."

"Sorry for me! Why?"

"Because I cut you out every week—in the journalistic world, you know. Your stupid old 'Greyfriars Herald' isn't a patch on my 'Weekly'! For every fellow who reads the 'Herald,' there are fifty who read my 'Weekly.'"

"Indeed?"

"Yes. It's all a question of good editorship, you know. An editor should have a personality—like me. Then he'll be constantly getting new readers. Now, you're a fellow who's woefully lacking in personality!"

"Thank you!"

"You are also an old stick-in-the-mud!"

I rose to my feet, having reached the limit of my endurance.

The glint in my eyes must have acted as a danger-signal, for Billy Bunter jumped up also, and moved quickly to the door. But before he reached his objective I planted a well-aimed kick behind his plump person, and he gave a wild yell of anguish.

The editor of the rival paper departed from my study in record time. And if he looks for another invitation to tea, he'll be sadly disappointed!

HARRY WHARTON.

THE CHEERY OPTIMIST!

A Tribute to Bob Cherry.

By DICK PENFOLD.

When the rising-bell is ringing,
And the morning's chill and dark,
You will hear Bob Cherry singing
Like a very lively lark.
When not a prospect pleases,
And everything is vile,
Bob's full of japes and wheezes,
And he smiles a sunny smile.

The Bunter-bird is grumbling,
Bolsover major growls,
You hear Bull's deep voice rumbling.
You see old Skinner's scowls.
But Cherry's always chaffing
The pessimistic sort;
You'll never stop him laughing,
For he's a jolly sport.

While Snoop and Stott are groaning
A sort of hymn of hate,
While other chaps are moaning
Against a cruel Fate,
Bob Cherry's always grinning,
Whatever may betide,
Whether he's on the winning
Or on the losing side.

Then here's to Robert Cherry,
The cheeriest chap on earth,
Whose twinkling eyes are merry,
Whose chivvy glows with mirth.
"Keep smiling!" is his maxim,
He simply won't desist;
Whatever cares may tax him,
He's still an optimist!

HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.



FISHER T. FISH.

[Supplement to]



A DVERTISER will undertake any hazardous commission for payment of a quid."

Lord Mauleverer, reclining languidly on his study couch, was glancing through the "Agony Column" of the "Greyfriars Herald," when he came across that announcement.

"Just the sort of merchant I'm lookin' for!" murmured his lordship. "It says: 'Apply to Box No. 2.' Wonder who the advertiser is?"

Mauly wrote a brief note to the box number in question, asking the advertiser to call and see him.

A couple of hours later, Micky Desmond, the Irish junior, came into the study.

"Are you the fellow who's willin' to undertake any hazardous commission for a quid?" inquired Lord Mauleverer.

Micky Desmond nodded.

"I'm short of pocket-money, he jabbers!" he explained. "And it's meself that wants to raise the wind, entirely!"

"Then I can give you a job," said Mauly. "I want you to recover my fishin'-rod."

"Where is it?"

"I lent it to Ponsonby of Highcliffe, an' the rotter hasn't returned it. I've written to him, but he refuses to give it up."

"My hat!"

"Of course, it's too much fag for me to go over to Highcliffe an' obtain the fishin'-rod by force," Lord Mauleverer went on. "Besides, I should never get it back that way. Pon's pals would rally round, an' kick me off the premises. The same thing would happen to anyone else who went over there. But I've got to get my fishin'-rod back somehow."

Micky Desmond grinned.

"Faith, an' ye can leave it to me, Mauly darlint!" he said.

"You'll recover my fishin'-rod?"

Micky nodded.

"Then you'll deserve the quid—every penny of it, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Micky Desmond lost no time in setting about his task.

It was a half-holiday, and when dinner was over the Irish junior walked over to Highcliffe.

Cecil Ponsonby, the leader of the Highcliffe "Nuts," was lounging in the quad.

The Greyfriars junior did not march up to him, and demand the instant return of Lord Mauleverer's fishing-rod. Such a step would have been foolish and futile. This business, reflected Micky Desmond, would have to be handled diplomatically.

He nodded cheerfully to Ponsonby.

"Doing anything special this afternoon?" he inquired.

"No," said Pon, in surprise. "Why?"

"I wondered if you'd care to come fishing with me," said Micky Desmond. He carried his own fishing-rod under his arm. "There's some fine trout in the Sark, waiting to be pulled out."

Ponsonby stared rather curiously at the Greyfriars junior. He had always regarded Micky Desmond as one of Harry Wharton's satellites, and Pon was at war with Harry Wharton & Co.

Micky Desmond's manner seemed quite friendly, however, and Ponsonby could see no indication of an ulterior motive.

"Yes, I'll come along," he said. "Wait here while I fetch my fishin'-rod."

Ponsonby went into the school building, returning shortly afterwards with a magnificent rod, the property of Lord Mauleverer.

"Ripping rod, that!" remarked Micky Desmond, as they walked off together.

Pon nodded.

"A birthday present from an uncle," he said carelessly.

Supplement iii.]

Micky Desmond knew better than that; but he did not contradict the statement.

Chatting as if they were old friends, the two juniors strolled down to the River Sark.

They took up their positions on the bridge which spanned the river, having baited their lines, they cast them, and awaited results.

Half an hour passed, and the lines still dangled over the bridge. There had not been a suspicion of a bite.

Ponsonby grew irritable.

"You said there were some fine trout here!" he growled. "Wish I could feel one of the beggars tuggin' at the end of my line."

"Faith, an' it's patience ye want to cultivate!" said Micky Desmond. "They'll come an' nibble if we hang on long enough."

Patience, however, was not one of Ponsonby's virtues.

After an hour's wait, he became thoroughly exasperated.

"I'm going to get some tea," he said. "P'raps I shall get better luck afterwards. Comin' along, Desmond?"

"No thanks! I'll stay here," said the Greyfriars junior.

"Look after my rod, then."



After an hour's wait for a bite, Pon became thoroughly exasperated. "I'm going to get some tea!" he said. "Look after my rod for me!" "I'll do that!" said Desmond grimly.

"Shure, an' I'll look after that all right!" said Micky Desmond grimly.

He waited until the rather lean figure of Cecil Ponsonby was out of sight. Then he calmly hauled up the lines, and packed up for the afternoon.

Micky had left Greyfriars armed with one fishing-rod. He returned to it armed with two.

Lord Mauleverer was surprised and delighted when Micky Desmond came into his study and returned his property.

"Good work, Micky!" he said approvingly. "How did you wangle it, dear boy?"

"Faith, an' it was dead easy," was the reply. "I chummed up with Pon, and we went fishing together. Pon got fed-up, and went off to have some tea. So I toddled back to Greyfriars, bringing your rod with me. It hasn't been exactly a 'hazardous commission,' but I'm not above taking my quid."

Lord Mauleverer cheerfully paid over the money. And Micky Desmond grinned and departed, blessed with more pocket-money than he had possessed for many a long day.

MY SOUP KITCHEN!

By BILLY BUNTER.

I have come to the conclusion that it duzzent pay to be a philanthropist. (I'm not quite sure whether I've spelt the word korrekctly. If I haven't, you must forgive me, as I haven't a dickshunary handy).

The other day I konseived the brilliant and brainy notion of starting a soup kitchen at Greyfriars.

There are many unfortunate fellows—espeshully among the fags—who get hungry between meals. Being short of pocket-munney, they can't go along to the tuckshop for a snack. They have to remain hungry—a state of affairs which ought not to be tolerated in any civilised country.

A splendid way to help these poor, famished soles, I reflected, would be to open a soup kitchen.

Accordingly, I pinned the following announcement to the notiss-board in the hall:

"FREE DINNERS!"

Nurrishing soup will be provided by the Greyfriars Soup Kitchen, in Studdy No. 7.—Proprietor, W. G. BUNTER.

No charge will be maid. Bring your own muggs."

At first everything went like a charm. Hungry fags swarmed into Studdy No. 7, bringing their muggs with them. Ugly muggs, too, the majority of them!

I served out soup as fast as I could go, and my customers fairly hugged me in their gratty-chewed.

Everything was going swimmingly, when suddenly the door opened and a crowd of Remove fellows rushed in.

"Bunter, you rotter!" roared Bolsover major. "You've lifted my sorcepan!"

"And mine!" cried Bulstrode.

"And mine, look you!" howled Morgan.

I waved my hand towards the door.

"Leeve my soup kitchen at once!" I commanded.

But the beests wouldn't budge. I was accused of stealing their sorcepans and their plates and their silver spoons and goodness knows what.

"Bump him!" shouted Bolsover.

"Pour his preshus soup down his neck!" said Skinner.

The seen which followed was a very painful one. I was bumped with grate vigger on the floor of the studdy, and a sorcepan of skalding soup was poured down the back of my neck.

After that, of corse, I had to close down my soup kitchen. You can't serve free soup when you keep on being interrupted by a crowd of hoodligns.

I'm going to claim kompensation for the burns and skalds I have reseived. But I don't suppose I shall get a penny, bekawse noboddy will take up my claim.

As I remarked at the beginning of this artikle, fillanthropy duzzent pay. Anz I'm going to give it a miss in the future. No more soup kitchens for me!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 738.

THE NEW PREFECT!.

By Tom Brown.

"Man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority."
—SHAKESPEARE.

Come, bow the knee, ye knaves, to me,
And grovel low before me;
For if you don't, or can't, or won't,
The prospect will be stormy!
The seal of dignity, you know,
Is set upon my brow.
Where'er I go, I fear no foe,
For I'm a prefect now!

Our genial Head has often said
I'm keen on law and order,
To fags who misbehave themselves
I'll be a sort of warder.
I don't know why I got this job,
Or what I did, or how;
I only know my rivals sob,
For I'm a prefect now!

Now, any pranks in junior ranks
Will promptly be reported;
If Joe or Jack should answer back,
Disaster will be courted.
This constant revelry and noise
No longer I'll allow.
You'll find things rather awkward, boys,
For I'm a prefect now!

When in the Hall, if mean or small
Should be my share of grub,
I'll promptly clout the server-out,
And make the merchant blub.
If my demands he should ignore,
There'll be a fearful row.
Like Oliver Twist, I'll call for more,
For I'm a prefect now!

Now, listen all, both great and small,
And bow to my decree.
When I say "Come!" then promptly
come;
When I say "Go!" then flee!
I'll strut and swagger swankily
In future, I avow,
And you must all look up to me,
For I'm a prefect now!

NOTE!

IN FUTURE

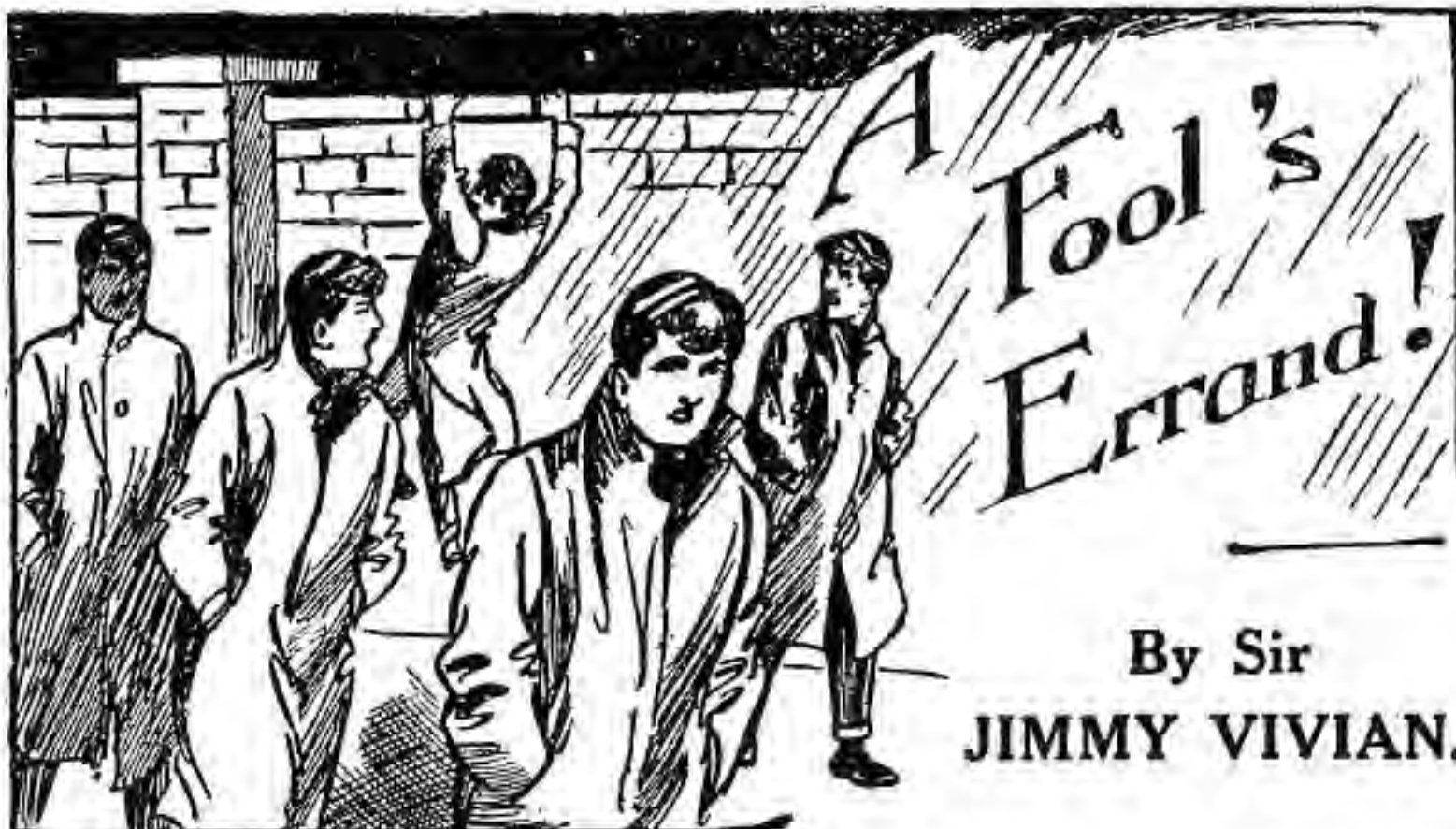
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By Sir
JIMMY VIVIAN.

HARRY WHARTON stood at the window of Study No. 1, looking very anxious. Dusk had fallen in advance of the official time.

Wharton stared from the window at the blackness that spread like a pall over the Close.

The other members of the Famous Five stood behind the captain of the Remove, looking no less anxious.

A loud peal of thunder came to the ears of the juniors.

"Rotten night for Mauly to be out!" remarked Bob Cherry.

Wharton nodded.

Lord Mauleverer, the slacker and dandy of the Remove, had gone on a visit to an outlying village. He had been invited to tea at a big farm and had promised to be back by seven.

The hour had struck long since. But there was no sign of Mauly.

It was a wild night. The wind had worked itself into a frenzy and was shrieking around the turrets and towers of Greyfriars.

Jagged flashes of lightning cut across the sky, and ever and anon the thunder boomed out sternly.

The Famous Five were anxious on Mauly's account.

"He'll have to come back by way of the wood," said Nugent. "It's not the safest place in the world on a night like this. There are lots of trees, and this beastly lightning—"

Nugent broke off abruptly. A blinding flash of lightning lit up the Close with awful vividness.

"We'll wait till bed-time," said Harry Wharton, "and then, if Mauly hasn't come in, we'll get permission to go and search for him."

The others agreed.

Every now and again the juniors went along to Lord Mauleverer's study, to see if he had returned. But there was no sign of him.

Bed-time came. And Wingate of the Sixth, when he learned that Mauly had not come in, was every bit as anxious as the Famous Five.

The thunderstorm was still raging, and was likely to rage for some time yet.

"May we go and search for Mauleverer, Wingate?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I'll ask Mr. Quelch."

"Thanks, awfully!"

But the Remove master did not like the idea of five juniors venturing out in such a storm. He withheld his consent.

"Rotten luck!" muttered Bob Cherry. "I don't like defying Quelch, but I'm afraid we shall have to. We can't sleep comfortably in our beds while Mauly's wandering about at the mercy of this storm!"

The Famous Five waited until nearly eleven o'clock, by which time they judged the coast to be clear. Then they rose and dressed, went downstairs, and set out into the night.

Climbing the school wall, they tramped along the windswept road. But they had not proceeded very far before they realised how hopeless was their quest. It would have been easier to locate a needle in a haystack than to find a wandering junior in this pall of blackness.

Progress was slow, owing to the intense darkness. But at last the search-party

reached the wood, and struck out along the path.

They spoke but little. The fury of the storm was such that they would have had to shout at the top of their lungs to make themselves heard.

For upwards of an hour they searched. And then they were compelled to give it up. They were soaked to the skin, for the rain was now descending in torrents, striking the ground with the force of hailstones.

It was a gloomy and dejected procession that made its way back to Greyfriars.

There was a light burning in Mr. Quelch's study. Evidently the wanderer had not returned, and the master of the Remove was waiting up, in the hope of bearing news.

The Famous Five went up to their dormitory.

Lord Mauleverer's bed was empty.

"Poor old Mauly!" said Bob Cherry, with a catch in his voice. "Hope nothing serious has happened to him!"

"He ought to have been back ages ago," said Harry Wharton, his face grave.

The juniors went to bed. But sleep was impossible, in the circumstances.

For hour after hour they remained awake, thinking of Mauly.

The storm subsided with the dawn. And when the rising-bell rang out, the Close was flooded with sunshine.

The Famous Five were among the first to be up and dressed. With worried faces they went downstairs, and judge of their astonishment when they bumped into a slim figure in the passage. It was Lord Mauleverer!

"Mauly!" gasped Harry Wharton. "So you're back?"

"I've been back hours, dear boy," said Mauly sheepishly. "All night, to be precise."

"Then where the merry dickens have you stowed yourself all this time?" demanded Nugent.

Mauly explained.

"I got in just after lockin'-up," he said. "Slipped over the school wall, an' staggered into the buildin'. I was utterly done up. I'd tramped miles an' miles in that beastly storm, an' I hadn't the energy to crawl along to my own study. I just managed to totter as far as the library. There was a fire there, an' I hopped down in front of it an' went off to sleep."

"My hat!"

"I've only just woke up!" said Lord Mauleverer apologetically. "Hope there hasn't been anxiety on my account!"

"Oh, no!" said Bob Cherry sarcastically. "You've only kept Quelch up all night, and given us an hour's search and a drenching for nothing!"

"Begad! I'm awfully sorry, dear boys!" said Mauly, with genuine concern.

"You'd better go and express your sorrow to Quelch," said Johnny Bull. "I expect he's nearly off his dot with worry, by this time!"

Lord Mauleverer wended his way to Mr. Quelch's study.

His lordship felt decidedly apprehensive.

Mr. Quelch was not the sort of person to sacrifice a night's rest unnecessarily without making somebody sit up for it.

The Remove master, however, was so relieved to find that Mauly was safe and sound that he didn't punish him. And so, as in the story-books, all ended happily.

[Supplement iv.]

HUNTING BUNTER!

(Continued from page 8.)

visit, though I do not wemembah doin' so. He said it was a pwessin' invitation."

Snort from Jack Blake.

"A chap is bound to be hospitable, you know," said Arthur Augustus feebly. "It is poss that Bunter has made a mistake—some othah fellow may have given him a pwessin' invitation, and he has mixed up that othah fellow with me, you know."

Another snort from Blake.

"Of all the chumps——" he said.

"Weally, deah boy——"

"Chaps ain't allowed to have visitors staying at the school, except under very special circumstances," said Herries. "Very likely Mr. Railton won't let him put up here. What's he left Greyfriars for?"

"He says there is a holiday——"

"I suppose there must be a holiday, or he wouldn't be away from school," said Digby. "He couldn't have taken French leave, I suppose?"

"Wathah not!"

"I don't know," said Blake. "There isn't any Greyfriars holiday on this date, that I know of. Looks to me as if the fat idiot has bunked off without leave."

"That is a wathah slangy expwession, Blake!"

"If he has, the sooner he bunks back again the better!" said Herries decidedly. "Where have you stowed the slug, D'Arcy?"

"It is wathah discourteous to allude to a visitah as a slug, Hewwies."

"Snail, then," said Herries. "Where is he?"

"I left him in Studay No. 6, and asked him to make himself at home," said Arthur Augustus.

"Trust him to do that," said Blake. "Let's go and sort him out. I'll jolly soon find out whether he's got leave from school. I don't believe he has for a minute. We should know if they had a holiday there."

"He said it was the Head's birthday, deah boy."

"Our Head doesn't give us a holiday on his giddy birthday," said Blake.

"Sounds to me like gammon."

"Weally, Blake——"

"Let's go and dig him out, anyhow," said Herries.

The chums of the Fourth proceeded to their study. They found that famous apartment vacant; but there were signs of Bunter's occupation. Crumbs were on the table and the floor, and there was nothing eatable left in the cupboard. Evidently Bunter had been there!

"Well, he made himself at home all right!" grunted Herries.

"I twust that you do not gwudge hospitality to a visitah, Hewwies?" said Arthur Augustus mildly.

"There are visitors and visitors," grunted Herries. "Bunter's the limit! Where has he tallowed off to now?"

There was a sound of bumping and a strenuous voice in the passage.

"Yarooog! It wasn't—I didn't—yoop! Leggo, you rotters!"

"Hallo, is that somebody pitching into your merry guest Gussy?" grinned Blake.

"It sounds like Twimble's voice——"

"Yaroooh! Help! It wasn't me! Grooogh!"

Blake & Co. hurried out of the study. At the corner of the passage Baggy

Trimble of the Fourth was wriggling and roaring in the grasp of three Shell fellows—Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther. The Terrible Three of St. Jim's looked excited and wrathful.

"Give him another!" gasped Monty Lowther.

"Bai Jove! What has Twimble been doin', you fellows?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Bagging our cake!" roared Manners.

"I haven't!" yelled Trimble.

"Who has, then?" demanded Tom Merry.

"How should I know, fathead? The cupboard was locked when I looked in just before lessons," wailed Trimble.

"Leggo!"

"You've burst the lock!" snorted Manners.

"Yah! I didn't!"

"It's busted now, and there's hardly a crumb left of the cake," said Tom Merry, in great exasperation. "I locked it up specially to keep it safe from your clutches, you fat burglar!"

"I know you did, you rotter," gasped Trimble, "and I—I never touched it! Honest Injun!"

"Rats!"

"I tell you——" yelled Trimble.

"Give him another!"

Bump!

"Whooooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "Are you fellows quite sure that it was Trimble this time?"

"Of course we're sure!" snapped Tom Merry. "Is there anybody else at St. Jim's who would burst the lock of a fellow's cupboard and scoff his cake?"

"Ha, ha! I think there is—to-day."

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus looked startled. "I—I say, deah boys, I—I think vewy likely it was not Twimble this time."

"Rot!" said Lowther. "Give him another!"

"Yarooooooh!"

"Hold on!" chuckled Blake. "There's another Trimble here now—a trimbler Trimble than this one."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway hold on, you fellows!" said Arthur Augustus, in great distress.

"Bunter is heah this aftahnoon——"

"Bunter!" repeated Tom Merry.

"That fat Greyfriars boulder?"

"Ahem! Yaas. He has come ovah to visit me."

"Well, I suppose your dashed visitors don't go round burgling fellows' studies, do they?" demanded Lowther.

"I—I think it is possible that—that he may——"

"Ha, ha! I think it jolly likely!" roared Blake. "Gussy told Bunter to make himself at home. He's done it!"

The Terrible Three released Baggy Trimble. That podgy youth sat on the floor of the Shell passage and roared.

"Yah! Rotters! I told you it wasn't me! Ow, ow, ow!"

"Well, if it wasn't you this time, you can take that bumping for the time when it was you last time," said Manners.

"Stop that row, for goodness' sake!"

"Yow-ow-woop!"

"If it was Bunter," said Monty Lowther ferociously, "we'll give him beans. Where is he?"

"Weally, Lowthah——"

"Where is the fat villain?" roared Manners.

"Oh deah! I twust, you fellows, that you are not goin' to be guilty of discourtesy towards a guest?"

"I'll guest him!" said Lowther.

"Guests who burgle a fellow's cake want bumping—hard. What on earth is Bunter doing here, anyhow? It's not a holiday!"

"Look here, I'm hurt!" roared Trimble.

"Well, don't make a row about it!" snapped Lowther.

"Why, you rotter——"

"Better give him another bump," said Manners. "Very likely it was Trimble. If it wasn't, it's only an accident."

Baggy Trimble scuttled away down the passage. There was a doubt now about his guilt, and Baggy did not want the benefit of the doubt in the form of a bumping.

"I weally feah that it must have been Bunter," murmured Arthur Augustus distressfully. "I—I told him to make himself at home——"

"Ass!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"If it was Bunter, we're going to scalp Bunter," said Monty Lowther. "When you have guests like that, Gussy, you should keep them muzzled."

"I—I twust you fellows will ovahlook this—this painful incident," stammered Arthur Augustus. "It would weally be vewy awkward if you started waggin' my guest."

Tom Merry burst into a laugh.

"After all, we've bumped Trimble," he said. "Justice is done, though the wrong chap's got the justice. Let Bunter rip."

"That's all very well," began Lowther warmly. "But that cake——"

"Well, there's no getting the cake back now," said Tom. "Never mind, there was a ten-bob note along with the cake, and the tuckshop's open. Come on!"

"Bai Jove! I am weally vewy much obliged to you, Tom Mewwy, for ovah-lookin' this wathah painful mattah!"

"Bow-wow!"

The Terrible Three departed for the tuckshop, and Arthur Augustus looked dubiously at his chums.

"Of course, it is not weally pwoved that it was Bunter," he murmured.

"Don't we know Bunter?" growled Herries.

"Yaas, but——"

"Let's look for the fat brute," said Blake. "Probably he's burgling some-

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NEXT MONDAY!

where else now. We'd better stop him before he begins on the Head's safe."

"Bai Jove!"

The chums of the Fourth proceeded to look for Bunter. That fat youth had already been found, however, by other parties. At that precise moment Levison, Clive, and Cardew were standing in Study No. 9 and gazing in blank amazement at the sleeping beauty in the armchair.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Serious News for W. G. Bunter!

"WHAT is it?" asked Cardew.
"It's alive," said Levison, with a laugh. "It's breathing!"

"I've seen that fat mug before somewhere," said Clive. "Isn't it that fat codger called Bunter?"

"That's it!" said Levison.

"What on earth is he doing here?"

"Snoring."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Levison & Co. had heard Bunter's resonant snore as they came to the study, and it had surprised them. They had been still more surprised to see William George fast asleep in the armchair. He did not waken. Bunter was an earnest youth in some things—at least, in eating and sleeping. When he did either he did it thoroughly. He was plunged deep in the embrace of Morpheus now, with his eyes shut and his mouth open, and his deep, steady snore echoed and re-echoed.

"It's Gussy's giddy guest," said Levison. "You remember Toby came to the Form-room to tell Gussy the animal had rolled in. Looks as if he scented out our feed from Greyfriars and came over on purpose."

"All the meringues and the tarts gone," said Cardew, glancing into the cupboard. "But he's left some things. That's not like Bunter! Must have fallen asleep before he could finish. Pretty cool to smash a cupboard lock and bag the tuck! If Bunter always acts like this when he's on a visit, he must be a popular guest."

"Wake him up and roll him out," said Clive. "My hat! What a snore! It reminds me of the Gothas in the air-raids."

"Hold on a minute," said Cardew. "We oughtn't to kick a guest, ought we? We really oughtn't to disturb his balmy slumbers. Let him rip! As he's Gussy's guest, we ought to show him some little attention."

"What rot!"

"Not at all," said Cardew. "Bunter's doin' the sleepin'-beauty act, and I suggest beautifyin' him. He's not very beautiful at present, is he?"

"Ha, ha! Not quite!"

"Wait till I've touched him up, though," said Cardew. "He seems to have made free with the tool-chest. Now he shall have something out of the colour-box."

"You'll wake him," said Levison.

"He looks as if he would need a cannon to do that. I'll touch him lightly with my fairy fingers," grinned Cardew.

Ralph Reckness Cardew sorted out his colour-box. The voices in the study did not awaken Bunter; he slept on serenely. Deep and resonant, his powerful snore rolled through Study No. 9.

Levison and Clive chuckled softly as Cardew began operations with tubes of colour. Bunter did not stir. There was

a soft smile on his fat face as he slept; probably he was dreaming of the meringues or the tarts, or perhaps of Tom Merry's cake. He did not stir as Cardew's light touch hovered over his plump countenance.

In a few minutes, Bunter's fat face was a deep crimson in hue, his fat cheeks, and chin, and nose, and ears, all glared with bright colour. His aspect was so startling that Levison and Clive gurgled as they watched. But Cardew was quite grave. Having finished Bunter's new complexion, he dabbed little spots of black all over the crimson.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Levison. "That will do, Cardew!"

Cardew stood back to survey his handiwork.

"Yes, I think that looks rather decent," he assented. "Quite a Cubist effect, I think!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Cardew put away the colour-box. Then he gently shook Bunter by the shoulder to awaken him. But a gentle shake was of no use to Bunter; he snored on.

"My hat! This chap knows how to sleep!" remarked Cardew. "The giddy Seven Sleepers were a joke to him! Hi! Wake up, Rip Van Winkle!"

But Rip Van Winkle did not wake.

"Try cold water!" suggested Clive, with a chuckle.

"Or a pin!" said Levison.

"I'll try both."

Cardew picked the kettle from the fender, and trickled cold water down Bunter's neck. There was no need of a pin; the cold water worked the oracle. Bunter awoke with a jump.

"Grooogh! Wharrermarrer?" he mumbled. "'Tain't rising-bell! What—who—oh! Ow! I say, you fellows, have I been asleep?" Billy Bunter set his glasses straight on his fat little nose, and blinked at the chums of Study No. 9. "I think I must have dropped off for a minute! My neck feels wet—some beast has been spilling water over me! Rotten trick!"

"How jolly nice to see you here, Bunter!" said Cardew politely.

"Grooogh!"

"Are you ill, old fellow?"

"Ill? No!"

"You're not looking quite your usual bonny self," said Cardew gently.

"I'm all right," said Bunter, sitting up. "Ready for tea, too. D'Arcy's out of the Form-room now, I suppose. Might have looked for me, I think. Some fellows have no manners!"

Bunter had awakened in rather a peevish mood, probably owing to the large and varied consignment of goods he had taken on board before sleeping. He had a feeling as if Tom Merry's cake was not on the best of terms with Cardew's meringues. Bunter's state just then was like the state of Europe in 1914—trouble was threatening with the Central Powers.

"Sure you're not ill?" asked Cardew gravely.

"Of course I'm not! Do I look ill?" snapped Bunter.

"Well, you look a little—unusual," said Cardew. "When a chap's face comes out in spots like that—"

"Spots!" repeated Bunter.

"Look at yourself in the glass, old chap. Blest if I've ever seen a fellow look quite like that before!"

Bunter bounced out of the armchair and blinked into the looking glass. He gave a wild howl as he saw his reflection there.

"Oh! Help! Oh dear! What's the matter?"

"Looks like smallpox——"

"Yaroooh!"

"Might be nothing worse than measles——"

"Yooop!"

"Have you ever had measles, Bunter?"

"I don't know! Oh dear! Oh crumbs! I'm ill! I'm dying!" gasped Bunter. "Oh Jerusalem!"

"Distemper, perhaps, though," said Cardew thoughtfully. "They say that all dogs have distemper some time or other—especially fat ones. Have you ever had distemper?"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"What about influenza?" asked Levison.

"Influenza!" said Cardew thoughtfully. "There's a lot of influenza about. Come to think of it, it's spotted influenza."

"Which?" ejaculated Clive.

"Spotted influenza!" said Cardew seriously. "The most dangerous kind, you know. Ordinary influenza is not spotted—you may know that. Spotted influenza is very rare——"

"Jolly rare, I should think."

"But often fatal——"

"Yaroooh!" howled Bunter.

"It's generally accompanied," said Cardew, "by a slight pain under the waistband—have you any pain under the waistband, Bunter?"

"Oh dear! Yes, awful!" gasped Bunter.

As a matter of fact, Bunter had a feeling of discomfort in that region. It was due to Tom Merry's cake; certainly not to influenza, spotted or unspotted. But Bunter was always ready to take alarm on the subject of his precious health; and certainly his complexion, at that moment, might have alarmed anybody. A bright crimson face covered with black spots certainly indicated that something was wrong somewhere.

Billy Bunter blinked in anguish and terror at Study No. 9. Cardew kept perfectly grave, and Levison contrived not to laugh; but Clive had to turn away to the window to conceal his emotion.

"You really feel a pain?" asked Cardew.

"Frightful!"

"Any shortness of breath?"

"Ow! Yes! Lots!"

"Then there isn't much doubt what's the matter with you," said Cardew. "I'm awfully sorry, old chap! Keep a bit farther off, if you don't mind—I don't want to catch spotted influenza. In case of a fatal termination of this dreadful illness——"

"Ow!"

"In case of a fatal termination, they do you very reasonable funerals at Wayland," said Cardew. "Mr. Moldy, in the High Street——"

"Ow! Beast!"

"I'm only thinking of saving you trouble, Bunter. I understand that prices have come down a good deal, and Mr. Moldy will do you a quite respectable but inexpensive interment——"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Billy Bunter staggered out of Study No. 9. Evidently he did not want information on the subject of cheap

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interments. Cardew called after him in anxious tones:

"Mind where you go, Bunter! You don't want to give it to all the fellows—take care——"

"Yah!"

"Hadn't you better cut off to the box-room?" called out Cardew. "You could perish quietly in a corner there without worrying anybody——"

"Beast!"

Bunter was gone.

Cardew closed the door of the study and smiled.

"Dear old Bunter!" he remarked. "It's so nice to do our little bit to make his visit a success. Now, if you chaps are ready for tea——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Levison and Clive.

Cardew chuckled.

"He's left us enough for tea," he remarked. "Must have had a good meal before he arrived here—he's only eaten enough for four or five. I wonder if he will go to see a doctor."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Study No. 9 sat down to tea in quite a hilarious mood. At that moment, William George Bunter was feeling anything but hilarious—though he was causing a good deal of hilarity to others.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Not Dying!

TOM MERRY fairly jumped as he met Bunter in the passage. Tom and Manners and Lowther were coming back from the tuckshop, with supplies for tea, when they happened on Bunter. The sight of an excited, crimson face, spotted with black, was startling enough. One of Tom's bundles went with a crash to the floor.

"What—who—what——" stuttered Tom.

"What the merry dickens——" yelled Manners.

"It's the giddy Wild Man from Borneo!" exclaimed Monty Lowther.

"Or is it Tarzan of the Japes?"

"Help, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"It's Bunter," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Where did you dig up that cheery complexion, Bunter?"

"I'm dying!"

"Dyed, you mean," said Lowther. "Is it a fast dye?"

"I've caught it since I've been here!" howled Bunter. "I was all right when I left Greyfriars. I caught it in Cardew's study."

"Caught what?" exclaimed Tom.

"Spotted influenza."

"Spotted which?"

"Spotted whatter?"

"Spotted influenza!" howled Bunter. "This place isn't sanitary—it isn't healthy! Somebody ought to be prosecuted! Fancy a chap catching spotted influenza in a study! Oh dear! I've got frightful pains—shooting, red-hot pains! Oh! Ow!"

"Who told you you had spotted influenza?" gasped Tom Merry.

"Cardew——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Just like you to laugh!" howled Bunter. "You don't care if I fall dying at your feet!"

"Don't you start dying at my feet," said Monty Lowther warningly. "I'll jolly well tread on you if you do!"

"Beast! It's awfully catching; you fellows have very likely caught it already. Help me to bed, and send for a doctor!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"



Jack Blake & Co. collared Bunter and yanked him up the passage again. Billy Bunter struggled desperately. There was a wild yell from Gussy as a fat fist landed on his aristocratic nose. "Oh cwumbs!" "Don't let the fat bounder get away!" yelled Blake. (See Chapter 9.)

"Beasts!" yelled Bunter.

The Terrible Three staggered against the corridor wall, yelling with laughter. Bunter did not seem likely to get any help from them. The fat junior blinked at them in rage and astonishment. For fellows to roar with merriment like this over his serious illness was really too heartless.

"Do you realise that I've got a fatal disease?" he yelled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I hope you've caught it!" shrieked Bunter. "It's pretty sure you have; you'll be coming out in spots soon——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Terrible Three.

"Beasts!"

Bunter rushed on towards Study No. 6 in the Fourth. He was D'Arcy's guest, and it was up to D'Arcy to look after him in this fearful crisis. But there was nobody in Study No. 6; Blake & Co. were looking for him elsewhere. Bunter was not to be neglected at that moment, when his valuable life was in danger. He stood and yelled:

"Help!"

"What the thunder——" Julian of the Fourth looked into the study. "What's happening—what—what—— Oh, holy smoke! What's that? Another guy?"

"Where's D'Arcy?" yelled Bunter. "Send him here! Tell him I'm dying! Nice sort of chap to neglect a guest in this way! Just what I might have expected here! You cackling rotter——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Julian, quite overcome by Bunter's rich complexion. He clung to the doorpost and yelled.

"You awful rotter! Send for a doctor!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! What's the mattah heah?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, hurrying up the passage. "Did I heah Buntah's voice?"

Julian staggered away, gasping. Arthur Augustus stepped quickly into the study and then he jumped.

"Buntah!" he ejaculated.

"Help, you beast!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I'm dying!"

"Bai Jove! I twust it is not so bad as that, Buntah! What is the mattah with your face, deah boy?"

"It's spotted influenza. I caught it here!" howled Bunter. "Filthy place, I call it——"

"Bai Jove!"

"Get a doctor—quick! Telephone for him! Ask the Head to send his ear for him! Can't you see I'm dying?"

"Oh deah!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "You weally have a vewy stwange look, Buntah! But you can't be dyin', old chap; your voice sounds quite vigorous."

"You dummy——"

"Bai Jove!"

"You silly chump——"

"Buntah!"

"You — you glass-eyed tailor's dummy——"

"Weally——"

"I believe you want to see me peg out in agony before your eyes!" shrieked Bunter, sinking into the armchair. "You'll catch it, too, you beast; that's one comfort!"

"Oh cwumbs!"

"What the thump——" Jack Blake came into the study with Herries and

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Dig. "Found the blighter? Why—what—what—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Laugh away!" hooted Bunter. "You'll laugh on the other side of your silly mouths when there's an inquest! Send for a doctor!"

"You don't want a doctor," grinned Blake. "You want a wash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Help! I've got frightful shooting pains!" groaned Bunter. "Cardew said spotted influenza caused internal pains. I've got 'em! Like red-hot daggers and burning knives! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, concentrating his eyeglass on Billy Bunter's startling countenance. "It looks to me, you fellows, as if Buntah has been paintin' his face."

"Help!"

"This is wathah a sillay joke to play, Buntah—"

"Send for a doctor!" wailed Bunter. "Can't you see I'm dying? I'm suffering frightfully—burning pins and needles—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I won't stay here to die!" yelled Bunter. "I'm going to the Head for help—you rotters! Yah!"

Bunter rolled out of the armchair, and rolled out of the study. He left Blake & Co. roaring.

"Bai Jove! The sillay ass must not go downstairs in that state!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "Stop him!"

The chums of the Fourth rushed after Bunter. The Owl of Greyfriars had already reached the stairs.

"Stop!" shouted Blake.

"Yah!"

"Don't go down like that!" yelled Arthur Augustus. "There is nothin' the mattah with you, Buntah—"

"Beast!"

Bunter rolled on, but Study No. 6 put on speed, and overtook him on the stairs. Certainly they did not want Bunter to cause a sensation in the School House by going down with that remarkable complexion. They collared him and yanked him up to the passage again. Billy Bunter struggled desperately. With his life at stake, he was not likely to yield tamely. There was a wild howl from Arthur Augustus, as a fat fist landed on his aristocratic nose.

"Oh cwumbs!"

"Come back, you fat idiot—"

"Yaroooh! Help!"

"Stop! I tell you—"

"Beast! Leggo!"

"There's nothing the matter with you!" shrieked Blake. "It's only paint on your face!"

"What?"

Bunter's struggles ceased. A good deal of his startling complexion had rubbed off in the tussle, and some of it was on Blake & Co.'s jackets.

"Pip-pip-paint!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, you born idiot—"

"He must have painted it himself," said Herries. "He knows it's paint. He's trying to pull our legs, or else he's potty."

"Potty, I should say," remarked Digby.

"Oh deah! My nose is swellin'!" said the unhappy Arthur Augustus. "Weally, Buntah, if you are goin' to play these wickulous twicks—"

"Paint!" mumbled Bunter. "How could it be paint?" He rubbed his sleeve across his fat face, and obtained proof enough that it was paint. He blinked at his sleeve. "That—that

beast Cardew! He—he must have done it while I was asleep in his study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tain't a laughing matter!" yelled Bunter. "He told me I'd got spotted influenza—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle! If this is what you call hospitality, I don't think much of St. Jim's!" hooted Bunter. "Playing tricks on a visitor, and collaring him, after pressing him to come on a visit."

"Weally, Buntah—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The passage was crowded with juniors now, and they all seemed interested in Bunter's high colour. Blake seized him by the arm, and rushed him away to a bath-room.

"Clean yourself, and shut up!" he said.

"Oh, really, Blake—"

"Above all, shut up!" said Blake. "That's important."

And he left Bunter busy with hot water and soap, and returned to Study No. 6.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Run to Earth!

"HERE we are again!"

Bob Cherry made that remark as five Greyfriars juniors came in at the gates of St. Jim's.

Taggles touched his hat respectfully. He remembered Harry Wharton & Co., as well as Bunter; and with a much more agreeable remembrance.

"Top of the afternoon, old top!" said Bob Cherry genially. "Have you seen a fat object, something like an over-fed balloon, blow in to-day?"

Taggles looked puzzled for a moment, and then he grinned, as he recognised the description.

"Master Bunter?" he asked.

"Right on the wicket," said Bob. "You've seen him, then?"

"Yes, Master Cherry."

"He's here?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes; he came this afternoon," said Taggles. "Came to see Master D'Arcy, sir."

"Good! Know where he is now?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Somewhere in the School House, I s'pose, sir."

"Thanks!"

The Famous Five walked on. They had run down their quarry; the Bunter-hunt had been a success. They were feeling rather pleased with themselves at having followed up a clue so successfully.

"The fat boulder's here, then," said Frank Nugent. "The fellows can't know that he's run away from school—"

"Not likely," said Johnny Bull.

"Bunter's spun them some yarn, of course. We'd better see D'Arcy if we can, and get him to hand over the goods quietly. No good making a fuss here."

"That's right!" assented Wharton.

The Famous Five arrived at the School House, exchanging greetings with a good many fellows they knew on the way. Wildrake of the Fourth met them as they came in, and greeted them cheerily.

"Lucky barges, bagging extra holidays like this," said Wildrake.

"Not exactly a holiday," said Wharton. "We've called in here to take Bunter home. He's bolted!"

"My hat! I guess Bunter's let on that it was a holiday at Greyfriars," said Wildrake. "Gussy thinks so—"

"The fat boulder's stuffed him," said Johnny Bull, with a grunt. "Know

where he is now, Wildrake? We want to get him away quietly if we can—no good bothering your headmaster with him."

"I guess you'll find him in Study No. 6—it's teatime," said Wildrake, with a laugh.

"Good. I suppose we can go up?"

"I guess so."

Harry Wharton & Co. ascended the staircase. They were greeted on all sides as they came into the Fourth Form quarters. Their reception was quite unlike Bunter's. Harry tapped at the door of Study No. 6, in which apartment there was a murmur of voices.

"Oh, roll in, you image!" came Blake's voice.

Wharton pushed open the door. Three grim faces were turned towards him—and one distressful face. But the looks of Blake & Co. changed at once when they saw their visitors.

"Oh, I thought it was Bunter!" exclaimed Blake. "Trot in, old scouts! Jolly glad to see you!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Just in time for tea," said Herries heartily.

"Bunter hasn't mentioned that you were coming over, too!" remarked Digby.

"He doesn't know," said Harry, laughing. "We've come to pack him up and take him back."

"Bai Jove! It's vewy kind of you to take so much twouble about Buntah, you fellows."

"Well, our Form-master asked us," said Wharton, "and a Form-master's request is rather like a royal invitation—you have to play up, you know. The fat ass bolted this morning—"

"Bolted!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

"I knew he hadn't got a holiday!" said Blake, with a nod. "I knew it was only his gammon!"

"Bai Jove! Has the awful duffah actually run away fwom school?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "He told me—ahem—"

"Where is he now?" asked Bob.

"Washing his face," grinned Blake.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Have you been teaching him new manners and customs already?" exclaimed Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He seems to have gone to sleep in Cardew's study, and woke up with his chivvy decorated," explained Blake.

"They told him it was spotted measles, or something, and he's been raising Cain. Now he's washing off the spots. He will be surprised to see you fellows here, won't he?"

"I fancy so," said Harry, laughing. "We've got to take him back, and I hope he'll come quietly. He's got a licking in store, but it will be the sack if he doesn't come home."

"The weckless young ass!" said Arthur Augustus. "If I had known that he had run away fwom school—"

"How were you to know?" said Blake. "With a brain like yours, old chap, you couldn't be expected to see the obvious, could you?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"You're staying to tea," said Blake. "We'll ask Merry and Manners and Lowther, and make a spread of it. Somebody's bagged their cake, so—ahem—"

"I can guess who's bagged the cake," said Bob Cherry. "Good old Bunter—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here it is!"

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Billy Bunter rolled in at the doorway. It was getting dusky, and the light was not yet on in the room. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not for the moment recognise Harry Wharton & Co.

"I say, you fellows, is tea ready?" asked Bunter. "I'm rather peckish—"

"You must be," said Blake.

"When I have a guest at Greyfriars," said Bunter, "I give him plenty to eat. I don't leave him all the afternoon on a few odds and ends."

"Bai Jove!"

"You seem to have gathered up a good few odds and ends," remarked Herries.

"And you seem to have bolted from school!" said Blake.

Bunter started.

"Not at all, Blake! I've already told D'Arcy it was a holiday—Founder's Day at Greyfriars."

"Bai Jove! You told me it was the Head's birthday, Buntah!"

"I told somebody it was Founder's Day—that must have been Railton, I suppose," said Bunter. "As a matter of fact, it's both—the Head's birthday happens to come on Founder's Day this year—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!"

"Is the Head's birthday a movable feast?" grinned Blake.

"Yes, exactly. Now about tea," said Bunter. "I shall be staying here a few days—"

"Will you, by Jove?"

"Yes; but if you think I've run away from school, you're quite mistaken. I never mopped anything over Mr. Quelch in mistake for Coker, and he's not going to flog me if I go back, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five, unable to keep silent any longer. The Owl of the Remove gave them a startled blink.

"Who—what—why—is it you fellows? Oh dear!"

Blake lighted the gas.

"I—I say, you fellows, what are you doing at St. Jim's?" exclaimed Bunter, eyeing Harry Wharton & Co. in alarm. "How—how—how did you know I was here? I mean, if you come after me—"

"Quelch sent us to yank you home," said Bob.

"I decline to go back," said Bunter, with dignity. "I shall be all right. My old pal D'Arcy is anxious for me to stay with him for a bit, and he's going to fix it up with his Housemaster—"

"But—but if you have run away from school, Buntah—" stammered Arthur Augustus.

"Not exactly run away," said Bunter. "I've shaken the dust of Greyfriars from my feet. I left a letter to tell the Head so. I shan't go back unless my innocence is proved."

"But you weren't innocent!" howled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"We've got a message from Quelch," said Harry Wharton. "Quelch knows you meant your silly mixture for Coker, and you're not to be sacked. Only flogged."

"I refuse to be flogged!"

"Fathead!"

"You fellows have wasted your time," said Bunter. "I'm not going back to Greyfriars."

"It's the sack if you don't!" hooted Bob Cherry.

"I don't mind."

"What?"

"I'm quite prepared to leave Greyfriars for good," said Bunter, with dignity. "I shall ask my pater to send me to St. Jim's!"

"Will you?" ejaculated Blake.

"Yes, old chap. It can be fixed up for me to share this study—"

"Share this study?"

"Yes; and we'll be great pals," said Bunter calmly, while the chums of Study No. 6 eyed him almost in horror. The bare idea of William George Bunter as a permanent inmate of Study No. 6 almost overcame them. They could only gaze at the fat and fatuous Owl. "You can tell Quelch so, Wharton. Tell him I despise him!"

"I can see myself doing it!" gasped Wharton.

"He's never understood me, or valued me, as I should be valued here," said Bunter, while Blake & Co. still gazed at him speechlessly. "You fellows never have, either. Toddy hasn't! I shouldn't wonder if Smithy makes a fuss about his coat if I go back, though I sent him the ticket. The fact is, I'm rather fed up with Greyfriars. I'm going to stay here until it's fixed for me to stick to St. Jim's. I shall be pretty comfortable in this study."

"In this study!" said Blake faintly.

"Yes. We shall get on all right," said Bunter. "I'm not a particular fellow. I can rough it a bit."

"Oh! You—you can rough it?" stuttered Digby.

"Certainly! I shall want the arm-chair, but I'm sure you fellows wouldn't want to be selfish about that. You'll find me a useful fellow here, too, to give you tips about footer and cricket—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"By the way, Wharton," continued Bunter, with great dignity, "you can tell Quelch to send my letters on here. I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"I shouldn't like it to be lost—it's been delayed already," said Bunter. "Now you fellows may as well get off. We're going to have tea, and I hate a crowd in my study."

Apparently it was Bunter's study already.

"My only Aunt Sempronia Ann!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Ain't he a corker, ain't he a dazzling bute? Are you fellows going to waste a meal on him before we roll him home?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway wemain to tea, Buntah!" said Arthur Augustus faintly.

"Certainly, old fellow! We shall be having lots of teas together, as we shall be study-mates when I'm fixed at St. Jim's," said Bunter affably.

"Oh dear!"

"You crass jabberwock!" said Harry Wharton, in measured tones. "We're catching the train at Wayland, and you're going with us!"

"Rats!"

"And if you don't walk, you'll be carried."

"Go and eat coke!" said Bunter contemptuously. "If you fellows give any trouble you'll go out of my study on your necks. My pals will stand by me."

"Why don't they put him in a museum?" gasped Blake. "Bunter's wasted in a school. He ought to be on the films. Try to get this into your fat head, Bunter—"



"You take one of his ears, Bob, and I'll take the other," said Harry Wharton. "Leggo!" roared Bunter. "I'm coming, ain't I? Leggo my ears! I'm coming!" Bunter rolled out of the study in the midst of the Famous Five. Jack Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three followed, chortling. (See Chapter 11.)

"Eh?"

"You're going back to Greyfriars, and you're going before lock-up. And if you ever persuade your father to send you to St. Jim's, you'll be lynched the day you arrive here."

"Yaas, wathah! I—I—I mean, pway do not be wude to Buntah, Blake."

"Now, let's have tea," said Blake. "If you fellows want any help getting that oyster to the station, I've got a boot at your service."

"Same here!" said Digby heartily.

"I've got two!" said Herries.

"Well, of all the rotten, ungrateful beasts—" said Bunter.

"Weally, Buntah—"

"I've a good mind not to stay to tea with you," said Bunter. "In fact, I don't see how I can overlook this."

"There's a doot to the study," remarked Herries.

Bunter seemed suddenly deaf.

"On the whole, I'll stay to tea," he remarked. "I shall certainly refuse to dig in this study when I come to St. Jim's. You needn't say anything, Blake, you—"

"I—"

"Too late!" said Bunter, with a wave of his fat hand. "You needn't say a word. I decline to accept your apology."

"I was going to say—"

"It's too late! You've done it now!"

"I was going to say," roared Blake, "that if you don't shut up, you sha'n't stay to tea!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove decided to shut up. In the circumstances, it was evidently the wisest course.

and Billy Bunter—thirteen fellows in all, or fourteen, counting Bunter as two. There was not much room, but there was plenty of hospitality and good cheer, and Harry Wharton & Co. had quite a good time. Billy Bunter looked rather morose at first; but under the genial influence of ample tuck his fat face gradually cleared, and he smiled.

He was called upon to give a description of the incident for which the "chopper" had come down on him at Greyfriars, and he did so, at considerable length, quite enjoying the limelight he was getting. He wound up by remarking that he couldn't very well return to Greyfriars until his innocence was proved. And he asked Tom Merry & Co. what they thought of a Form-master who doubted a fellow's word—a question to which the St. Jim's fellows really could not find an answer.

After tea, Harry Wharton & Co. prepared to take their leave—keeping a wary eye on Bunter in case he should attempt to bolt. Bunter settled down in the study armchair as the party broke up.

"Get a move on, Bunter," remarked Bob Cherry.

"I'm not coming!"

"Fathead!"

"I can't very well desert D'Arcy, after promising to stay with him a few days," explained Bunter.

"I—I excuse you, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I weally wecommend you to weturn to Gweyfwiahs at once."

"I'm not going to do anything of the kind," said Bunter calmly. "Good-bye, you chaps! Give my message to Quelch—specially that I despise him!"

"You take one of his ears, Bob, and I'll take the other," said Harry.

"Yaroooop!"

"Coming?" asked Bob.

"No!" roared Bunter.

"Your flaps are coming," said Bob cheerily. "If you don't come, too, it will be a painful parting."

"Leggo! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Can I help?" asked Blake politely. "Perhaps if I roll him out of the chair and—"

"Why, you beast, if this is what you

call hospitality— Yaroooop!" roared Bunter, as Blake tilted up the armchair, and he rolled out on to the study carpet.

"Roll him downstairs," suggested Herries. "He'll go easiest that way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo!" roared Bunter. "I'm coming, ain't I? Leggo my ears! Leggo my neck! You awful rotters! I'm coming!"

Bunter rolled out of the study in the midst of the Famous Five. Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three followed, chortling.

"We'll see you to the gates," said Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Billy Bunter's fat face was furious, as he was walked out of the School House in the midst of the crowd of grinning juniors. He blinked this way, and he blinked that, but there was no escape for him. He was marched away through the dusky quadrangle to the gates.

"Good-bye, you fellows!"

"Pleasant journey! Mind you don't lose Bunter off the train!" chuckled Blake. "Good-bye, old fat oyster!"

"Yah!"

Harry Wharton & Co. started down the dusky road with their captive. Billy Bunter rolled in their midst, in a state of fury. The gates of St. Jim's clanged behind them—that refuge was closed to the fugitive of Greyfriars.

"Now, hoof it, you chaps," said Harry Wharton. "We've got to catch the local at Rylcombe, or we shall lose the express at Wayland Junction. We shall be pretty late home, anyhow."

"I'm not going!" roared Bunter.

"Kick him, somebody!"

"Yooooop!"

Bunter went! There really was no arguing with the methods of persuasion that were applied to him.

The six juniors proceeded down the dark lane at a good rate. When Billy Bunter lagged he was gently touched up behind, and he yelled and started again. The village lights appeared in sight ahead. Billy Bunter was in quite a state of desperation by this time. He was quite determined not to go back to Greyfriars and take his flogging, if he could help it. The nearer that flogging came, the more unpleasant it seemed.

True, the "sack" was a much more serious matter; but it was not so painful, and Bunter felt that he could bear it with fortitude. Greyfriars wasn't the only school, and so fascinating a youth was certain to be welcomed anywhere. Even going home was better than going back to Greyfriars. Bunter senior's strap was not so hefty as the Head's birch. The Owl of the Remove blinked round desperately in search of an avenue of escape.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Come on," said Wharton.

"Don't be beasts, you know," urged Bunter. "I don't want to be flogged, you know. I'm not strong enough."

"Would you rather be expelled, you duffer?" said Nugent.

"Yes. Lots!"

"Well, if you don't know what's good for you, you have to be looked after, you know," said Bob Cherry. "Try not to be such a silly ass, old chap. And do get on! I'm tired of booting you!"

"Beast!"

They were quite near the village now, and Bunter, apparently resigning himself to his fate, trotted on actively.

"That's right," said Bob Cherry approvingly. "It's for your own good, Bunt, though you haven't brains

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Night Out!

THERE was quite a merry party to tea in Study No. 6. That celebrated apartment had often been crowded before on special occasions, but it held a record crowd now. There were the four owners of the study, and the Famous Five of Greyfriars, and Tom Merry, and Manners, and Lowther,

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enough to understand it. You can look on us as your keepers, you know."

Bunter did not reply. He stumbled suddenly over a stone and fell, and gave a deep groan.

"Ow, ow! Oh dear!"

Harry Wharton uttered an impatient exclamation.

"Get up, you fat owl!"

"My ankle's sprained," said Bunter faintly.

"Spoofing, as usual!" said Johnny Bull, with a grunt. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remarked that the spooffulness was terrific.

Groan!

"I'll jolly soon see," said Bob Cherry.

He stooped over the Owl of the Remove. The next moment he received a sudden surprise.

A fat fist was dashed at his nose, and it landed there with a crash. Bob Cherry rolled over with a roar. Bunter was on his feet in a twinkling, and springing away across the road. There was a gap in the hedge, and Billy Bunter was through the gap like a flash. Never had the fat Owl of the Remove moved with such wonderful celerity. Harry Wharton & Co. grabbed at him a second too late.

Bob Cherry staggered up, clasping his nose.

"Why, I—I—I'll—" he stuttered in breathless wrath.

"After him!" yelled Wharton.

Bunter was through the hedge and speeding away across the dark field. The

They had succeeded in their quest, only for their captive to slip through their fingers at the last moment. There was a shriek of an engine in the distance.

"The train's going," said Nugent.

"And we're staying!" growled Johnny Bull. "We can't go back to Greyfriars without him. At least, we don't want to."

"He can't be going back to St. Jim's," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully.

"Now that they know he's run away from school, even Bunter will have sense enough to know he wouldn't be allowed to stay there. I—I suppose he's going home."

"We've got to bag him."

Wharton reflected.

"Quelch's sent us after him," he said. "We don't want to go back and say we've failed. After all, I'm not specially keen on lessons to-morrow morning."

"Ha, ha! I could miss them without feeling it very deeply," said Bob. "But—but Quelch couldn't have meant us to make a night of it."

"Phew!"

"I'll get him on the telephone," said Wharton. "We can 'phone from Rylcombe. We'll tell him how the matter stands."

"Good!"

Looking for Bunter in the dark was evidently a hopeless case—a good deal like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. The Famous Five walked on to the village, where Wharton obtained a trunk-call at the post-office. By that time the

Bring him safely back to Greyfriars with you," said Mr. Quelch. "I had no idea—no intention whatever—that you should go so far. But as you have found Bunter, well and good. I shall expect you—"

"But he's got away, sir!"

"What?"

"We're going to find him all right, Mr. Quelch," said Wharton hurriedly. "I—I thought I'd ring you up so that you'd know we were safe and sound."

"You will return—"

"As soon as we've got him, sir. All right!"

"I mean—"

"I understand, sir! We'll get him all right!"

"Listen to me! You will return—"

"Right-ho, sir! Time's up!"

Harry Wharton rang off, having thus considerably relieved Mr. Quelch's mind on the score of the safety of five of his most promising pupils. What Mr. Quelch would have said if the captain of the Remove had held the line longer, Wharton, naturally, did not know. It was a case where, ignorance being bliss, it was folly to be wise.

"All serene," said Harry, as he rejoined his chums. "Quelch won't be worrying about us now. At least, he oughtn't to."

"You've told him—"

"That we're still after Bunter, and we're coming back with him when we get him."

"Good!"

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THIS WEEK'S STORY—

"SELF CONDEMNED!"

EVERY WEDNESDAY

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD

PRICE THREE-HALFPENCE

Famous Five went whooping in pursuit. In the daylight they would have run the fat junior down in a couple of minutes. But the darkness favoured the fugitive. They could not see more than a couple of yards, and on the inner side of the hedge they halted.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Wharton. "He can't be far away. Listen!"

The juniors listened breathlessly. Bunter could not be out of hearing yet. There was a sound of a movement close at hand, a rustle at the hedge.

"There he is!" shouted Bob. "Come on!"

The Famous Five rushed in the direction of the sound, and hurled themselves upon a shadowy form.

"Look out!" yelled Bob.

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's a bull!"

The chums of the Remove backed away as the disturbed bull loomed up before them and bellowed. They were back in the road, through the gap in the hedge, in a marvellously short time. A bull at close quarters in the dark was not attractive company.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry. "We've lost him now! Bunter! Bunter! Come back, you fat idiot! I'm going to smash you! Come back, you podgy oyster! I'll spicicate you!" But there was no sign or sound of William George Bunter. The fat junior was in full flight for parts unknown.

The Famous Five looked at one another in dismay.

Famous Five had quite decided that they were not at all eager to return to Greyfriars. Another day out of school had its attractions. They had done their best; their consciences were clear on that point; and if the hunt for Bunter kept them away from Greyfriars another day, surely they were not to blame! Indeed, personally they had no objections whatever to keeping on their travels for a week or so.

"Must let him know what's on, so that he won't worry about us," said Bob Cherry considerably. "But ring off at the right moment, old chap. Don't give him time to tell you to catch the first train back."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Leave it to me!" he said.

The call came through at last, and Mr. Quelch's voice was heard on the wires.

"Bless my soul! Is that you, Wharton? Where have you been all this time?"

"Looking for Bunter, sir."

"Really, Wharton—"

"We've found him, sir!" said Harry. "Very good. Where are you speaking from?"

"Rylcombe, in Sussex, sir."

"Upon my word! I had no intention—no intention whatever—"

"We looked for him at St. Jim's, sir."

"You should not—"

"But we found him there, sir!"

"In that case, Wharton, very good."

"He didn't tell you to come back at once?" asked Nugent.

Wharton shook his head.

"Time was up!" he said regretfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. put up at the Red Lion, in Rylcombe, that night. Where William George Bunter had found repose for his weary head they did not know, and they did not bother very much about it. To-morrow would be time to think of Bunter, when the Bunter-hunt began again. The chase was growing quite exciting and interesting, and the chums of the Remove felt more than ever it was a huge improvement on grinding Latin in the Form-room.

And at Greyfriars they were expected, and expected in vain. Vernon-Smith of the Remove had received a letter containing a little ticket, which made him yearn to see Billy Bunter again with a deep yearning. But the Bounder was disappointed. And Mr. Quelch, if he expected to see the Bunter-hunters again that night, was disappointed, too.

There were six places vacant in the Remove Form room the following morning. Bunter, the bolter, was still absent, and Harry Wharton & Co. were still hunting Bunter.

THE END.

(You must read next Monday's MAGNET Library story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter, entitled "Bagging Bunter!" Order your copy to-day!)

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