

BIG MONEY PRIZES OFFERED IN SIMPLE COMPETITION!



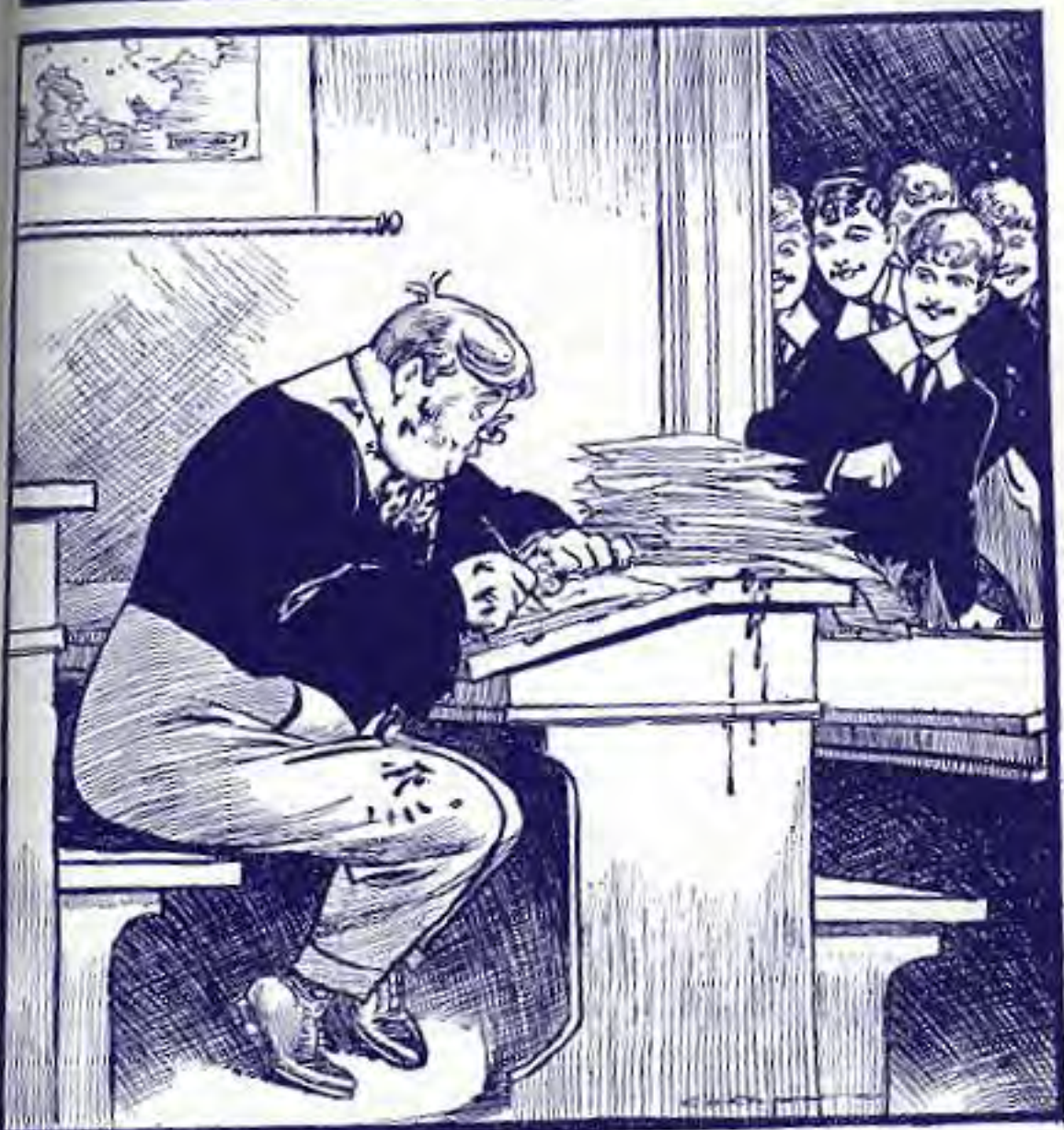
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The Magnet ^{1 1/2}

Library

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."





BILLY BUNTER, THE PLAYWRIGHT, HARD AT WORK!

LA humorous incident from the long complete school story in this issue.



Address your letters to: The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

OUR COMPANION PAPERS.

"THE BOYS' FRIEND" Every Monday
 "THE MAGNET" Every Monday
 "THE POPULAR" Every Tuesday
 "THE GEM" Every Wednesday
 "CHUCKLES" Every Thursday
 "THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL" Published Yearly

FOR NEXT MONDAY!

Our next issue will be a bumper one, I can assure you!

In the first place, Mr. Frank Richards has sent us a story entitled:

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

and it will need no words of mine to tell you that Harry Wharton & Co.'s first trip under the sea brings them intense excitement and thrilling adventure.

It is rather peculiar the way the chums of the Greyfriars Remove get to know the skipper of a diving-ship which comes to work in the bay near by. They get aboard the ship, and are invited to go down beneath the surface with the ship's diver, and explore a wreck. They do so, and they see there much to interest them.

But Billy Bunter, who remains on board the ship, sees far more to interest him than a mere adventure under the water, and it is what Billy sees that ultimately leads to one of the most stirring adventures in which the Greyfriars chums have ever taken part.

No more thrilling story could possibly be published than that relating to the adventures of

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

and I must warn all my chums that there is going to be a record rush for next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY, so they must all order their copies to be saved for them if they don't want to listen to the newsagents' melancholy cries—"Sold out, sir!"

EXTRA SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT.

Our next issue will also contain an extra special supplement. I should think it wanted some "nerve" on Harry Wharton's part to ask the head-master of Greyfriars school to undertake the editorial work for one week only.

However, the Head, in his usual kindly manner, accepted the task, and the result will be seen in the centre pages of next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY.

THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT.

In our next issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY, we shall be publishing a report of the first meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament. I want all my readers to distinctly understand that only very THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

occasionally will the fellows at Greyfriars be allowed to take part in the "speeches" on the hobbies, sports, and all the other things which interest MAGNET readers. The idea of the Parliament is to get readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY to make a "speech"—that is, write a letter—on a subject of general interest to all his or her fellow-readers. Members of Parliament are paid for their work, and I am going to pay readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY for their "speeches" in the Greyfriars Parliament.

I do not think there is any subject barred. But the speeches which are going to get into the printed reports of the Parliament are those which are of most interest to all readers. If you know anything about making anything quickly and cheaply, write it up for the Parliament. I might be able to recognise sterling merit in that "speech," and I shall publish it, together with the reader's name, and shall award him a money prize. The same thing applies to sport, scouting, hobbies—anything of interest to boys and girls. Then, if you think you can debate—that is, argue—on another speech, do so. If your argument is sound and interesting, there's a money prize coming for your "speech."

You get the idea?

Then roll up with your letters, readers—send them in shoals. I shall appreciate fairly short speeches—the shorter the better, in fact, for it gives me the chance to award more prizes.

But, above all, dear chums, please do not forget that it takes at least three weeks before any "speech" can appear in the MAGNET LIBRARY, so don't be disappointed if your name does not appear at once.

OUR GRAND NEW COMPETITION.

All readers of the Companion Papers are invited to enter the grand new competition for big money prizes offered on another page of this issue. I wish to point out that readers may send in as many attempts as they like, for coupons are available in all the Companion Papers—the "Gem," the "Popular," the "Boys' Friend," and MAGNET LIBRARY.

Good luck, and may the cleverest reader win!

A SPECIAL NOTE.

I wish to express the sincere regret I feel at the news which has just reached me concerning the death, after a two years' illness, of Walter F. Standen, of 21, Day Street, Old Swan, Liverpool. He was a staunch supporter of the Companion Papers, and had frequently made use of the correspondence column in the MAGNET. It is, in a sense, a comfort to hear that during his long two years' illness he found a constant interest and solace in the Companion Papers, and the cheery comradeship which they represent. Walter F. Standen faced trouble like a Briton, though the bad injury to his spine he

sustained while at play really left but little hope of recovery. We all of us extend our deep sympathy to his bereaved father and mother. His father has but just returned from a long voyage, but was back in time to say God-speed to the fine fellow who was starting on the longest voyage of all. Readers who have written to this correspondent will understand by this intelligence the reason why they failed to get a reply.

Correspondence.

Harry Stubbs, Preston Road, Grey-mouth, Westland, South Island, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, ages 14-21, with a view of exchanging stamps, etc.

Colen Gibson, Alicia, 40, Nicholson Street, Essendon, Melbourne, Victoria, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

Miss H. A. Fisher, 380, Southwark Park Road, Rotherhithe, S.E. 16, wishes to correspond with readers interested in concert and entertaining work, also wishes to correspond with a young lady with a view of forming a partnership for concert work in the winter.

Robert Brown, 3, Cottage, Comber Road, Ballybeere, Dundonald, Co. Down, Ireland, wishes to correspond with readers serving at sea as stewards.

Miss Margaret Nunn, The Old Hall, Ruswarp, Yorks, wishes to correspond with a girl guide patrol leader, in Warwickshire or Leamington.

Miss Ruby Leader, Fitzroy Street, Burwood, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in the British Empire, particularly India.

Jack Dunn, Agnes Villa, Henry Street, Leichardt, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in all parts of the British Empire. Ages 18-20.

E. Burren, Watree, Spray Street, Terrouri, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers connected with the American railroads, with a view to exchanging postcards, railway magazines, etc.

Eric Mew, 89, Lennox Street, North Richmond, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers.

Ronald P. Langley, 42, Clifton Street, Brighton, Sussex, wishes to hear from readers interested in his Universal Correspondence Club; he also wishes to hear from readers overseas; all letters answered.

T. Grey, 42, Clinton Street, Orange, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers.

Miss Mable West, 32, Tower Road, Aston, Birmingham, wishes to correspond with girl readers in the Colonies and France; ages 18-22.

Miss C. Jewells, 396, Strone Road, Manor Park, Essex, wishes to hear from readers anywhere.

Horace Bray, 33, Fleet Street, Swindon, Wiltshire, wishes to correspond with readers.

F. Bottomley, 48, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, N. 15, wishes to exchange picture-postcards with readers anywhere. He also wishes to hear of a companion for a walking and camping-out holiday. Age about 16. All letters answered. Would start any time. Glad to hear from readers anywhere.

Your Editor.



A Magnificent Long Complete School Tale, dealing with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the Famous Tales of Greyfriars now appearing in the "POPULAR.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Why Bunter Was Late!

MR. QUELCH, master of the Greyfriars Remove, looked at his class, and his eyes glinted. There was a vacant place in the class. Lessons were about to commence; and one member of the Lower Fourth had not put in an appearance. And every fellow present, as he noted the glint in Mr. Quelch's eye, was glad that he was not that member.

For reasons best known to himself, Billy Bunter had not turned up. His reasons for not turning up might be very good ones. But it was certain that they would have to be very good indeed to please Mr. Quelch.

"Wharton!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!"

"Bunter does not seem to be present."

"No, sir."

"Do you know why he is not present?"

Harry Wharton paused a moment before replying.

Billy Bunter was the least punctual fellow at Greyfriars; but he very seldom ventured to be unpunctual where Mr. Quelch was concerned. It was a serious matter in that gentleman's eyes. The vials of wrath were all ready to be poured out on Bunter's devoted head, and Harry Wharton hurriedly considered whether there was anything he could say in favour of the absentee.

"Bunter had a letter this morning, sir," said the captain of the Remove, at last.

"There is nothing unusual in that, Wharton."

"N-no, sir! But he seemed very interested in it, so—perhaps—he—he may have forgotten—"

Harry Wharton broke off at that. Mr. Quelch's face was assuming an expression which Hurree Jamset Ram Singh would have described—justly—as terrific.

"I presume, Wharton, that you do not suppose that Bunter's interest in a letter he may have received, is a sufficient excuse for his absence from class?"

"Nunno, sir! I—I only thought—" stammered Wharton.

"Really, Wharton—" began Mr. Quelch.

The Form-room door opened at that moment, and the Remove master was interrupted.

Billy Bunter rolled into the Form-room.

He had a letter in his hand, and a rather unusual expression on his fat face. He was smiling—or, to be more exact, he was grinning—grinning with glee. His eyes fairly beamed behind his big spectacles. There was a strut in his walk—an air of importance hung about him. He seemed quite indifferent to the fact that he was late for class, and to the still more serious fact that there was thunder on his Form-master's brow. Mr. Quelch's gimlet-eyes turned on him at once—rather to Harry Wharton's relief.

"Oh! It is you, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter.

"You are late, Bunter!"

"Am I, sir?" said Bunter.

"You are!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Sorry, sir! The fact is—"

"Why are you late, Bunter?"

"I really didn't notice the time, sir," said Bunter, blinking at his Form-master.

"The fact is, I've had a rather important letter this morning. I forgot all about classes."

The Removes almost held their breath. Answering Mr. Quelch like this was an act somewhat akin to twisting a tiger's tail. The Remove master clutched the cane on his desk.

"You—forgot—all—about—classes!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, enunciating each word with terrible distinctness.

"Yes, sir!"

"Upon my word! Come here, Bunter!"

Bunter walked towards the Form-master's desk, still, apparently, indifferent to the storm he had raised. Some other matter was occupying the fat mind of the Owl of the Remove—some matter of such transcendent importance, that he was indifferent to ordinary considerations.

Mr. Quelch was about to bid the fat junior hold out his hand, when a new consideration seemed to strike him. He laid down his cane again, and his brow became less thunderous.

"Do you mean, Bunter, that you have received some serious news from your home?" he asked. "If it is a case of illness—"

"Oh, no, sir! The letter wasn't from home!"

Thunder returned to Mr. Quelch's brow.

"Then, Bunter—"

"It was a business letter, sir—"

"A—a—a business letter?" ejaculated the Remove master, quite taken aback.

"That's it, sir!" said Bunter, with a grin of satisfaction.

"Are you out of your senses, Bunter? How could a boy in the Lower Fourth Form receive a business letter?"

"You see, sir—"

"From whom is this letter you speak of, Bunter?"

"From my agents, sir!"

"Your—your—your what?"

"My theatrical agents."

Billy Bunter made that extraordinary answer with calmness. There was a general grin along the ranks of the Remove. But Mr. Quelch did not grin—far from it. He stared at Bunter in amazement and wrath.

"Is that meant for impertinence, Bunter?" he stuttered.

"Certainly not, sir! The fact is, if you'll excuse me, I'd rather not attend lessons to-day, sir," said Bunter.

"You would rather not attend lessons to-day!" repeated Mr. Quelch, like a man in a dream.

"That's it, sir. I shall be busy."

"B-B-busy?"

"With my literary work!" said Bunter.

"Literary work!" said the dazed Remove master. He seemed unable to do anything, for the moment, save repeat Bunter's words parrot-like.

"And if you don't mind, sir," continued the happy Bunter, "I should like THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

a good deal of time off from lessons this term. With my literary engagements, I fear I shan't be able to find much time for lessons."

And Bunter blinked at his Form-master.

"Now look out for the earthquake!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"The awful idiot!" breathed Wharton.

But the earthquake did not happen for the moment. Mr. Quelch was so astounded that he almost forgot to be angry.

"Bunter!" he articulated, at last. "If you are not out of your senses, as I fear, you are guilty of impertinence that calls for the most exemplary punishment. Give me that letter at once."

"Certainly, sir! I've no objection to your reading it."

"Your objections, Bunter, would not be considered, in any case," said the Remove master, in a grinding voice, and he took the letter from Bunter's fat hand.

Billy Bunter stood calm and serene. He gave the Remove fellows a glance—and his glance was lofty, patronising, and self-sufficient. Bunter did not seem to be alarmed in the least. That was to come!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Sheer Envy!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. watched Mr. Quelch breathlessly while he read that important letter.

Most of the Remove had seen that letter already.

It had arrived for Bunter by the morning's post; and after his first delightful perusal of it, the Owl of the Remove had displayed it far and wide.

All Greyfriars was welcomed to see that important letter, indeed, Bunter was quite anxious for it to be seen.

With regard to its importance, the Remove fellows did not see eye to eye with Bunter. But that, in Bunter's view, was to be attributed to envy. Bunter was accustomed to envy, as he often declared. Fellows were jealous of his good looks, of his fine figure, according to Bunter. Now they were jealous of his literary abilities. Really, it was nothing new.

Bunter watched his Form-master with self-satisfied calmness; the rest of the Remove watched him in breathless anticipation. What would be the effect of that letter upon Mr. Quelch they could not even imagine.

Mr. Quelch gazed at the letter blankly.

It was a typewritten communication upon paper with a business heading. And it ran:

Sharkey & Co.,

Literary and Theatrical Agents,
Walker House, Sharp Street, E.C.

Dear Sir,—We are glad to inform you that our reader has reported favourably upon your sketch, entitled, 'The Mystery of the Moated Grange.'

Your play is very suitable for use as a curtain-raiser, and we hope shortly to place it in a prominent London theatre.

In the meantime, we should be glad to consider any further work from your pen that you may care to send us.

Yours faithfully,

Sharkey & Co.

Master W. G. Bunter,
Greyfriars, Kent.

That was the letter, the important communication which had caused

Bunter to forget morning classes, and had imparted a strut to his walk, and a gleeful grin to his fat countenance.

Mr. Quelch read the letter. He blinked at it. Never had the Form-master been so astonished in the course of his scholastic career.

"Bunter!" he gasped, at last.

"Yes, sir," purred Bunter.

"Did you write this letter yourself?"

Billy Bunter jumped.

"I, sir! Of course not, sir! It's from my Agents—"

"Don't be ridiculous, Bunter!"

"Eh?"

"You have actually received this communication from a firm calling themselves Sharkey and Co.?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"And how, Bunter, did you get into communication with these people?"

"They advertised for plays, sir," said Bunter cheerily. "Brightly-written, entertaining curtain-raisers, sir.

Good pay for good stuff! That's how it was, sir!"

THE GREATEST!

The new volume of the most famous story book for boys and girls



can NOW be obtained at all news-agents and bookstalls. BUY YOUR COPY TO-DAY!

"And are you so inconceivably conceited and foolish, Bunter, as to imagine that you are capable of writing a play suitable for production in a London theatre?"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Answer me, Bunter!"

"I—I don't think you ought to be jealous, too, sir."

"Wha-a-t?"

"All the fellows are jealous," said Bunter. "I expected that. They've always been jealous of my good looks, and my cricket and footer. I'm not surprised that they're green with envy now. But you, sir—I—I really didn't expect it of you, sir!"

Mr. Quelch gazed at Bunter.

He seemed, for the moment, to be suffering from some internal convulsion. He found his voice at last.

"Bunter! I—I hardly know how to deal with you. Are you so obtuse, so crassly obtuse, as to be unable to see that this letter is simply a deception. That anything you may have written cannot possibly be considered seriously,

and that this reply, therefore, is a proof that you have been dealing with swindlers?"

"I fancy I know my way about, sir."

"What?"

"Not so jolly easy to take me in, sir," said Bunter. "They'd have to get up jolly early in the morning to pull the wool over my eyes."

"Bless my soul!"

"I'm fairly wide, sir," said Bunter, with smug satisfaction. "Of course, you don't know much about these matters."

"Bunter!"

"The thing's quite genuine," explained Bunter. "They asked for really good stuff, and I sent them really good stuff. Naturally, they're pleased with it, and want more. Nothing surprising in that, is there, sir?"

"You may take this letter, Bunter."

"Thank you, sir."

"And drop it into the wastepaper-basket."

"Eh?"

"It is useless, I fear, to attempt to explain to a boy of your unusual obtuseness, Bunter. But you must understand this. You are forbidden to hold any further communication with these rogues."

"They're not rogues, sir—"

"Silence! In consideration of your stupidity, Bunter, I will pardon your impertinence. But if you are found to be holding any further communication, of any kind, with these swindlers, you will be very severely punished."

"But I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"That will do. Tear that letter across, and drop it into the wastepaper-basket, at once!"

Bunter did not move.

Disobeying Mr. Quelch was not really to be thought of. But it seemed impossible for the Owl of the Remove to obey.

He stood with the letter in his fat hand, blinking at his Form-master, without moving.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"I—I—" stammered Bunter.

"Obey me!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"B-b-but, sir," stammered Bunter.

"I-I-I want to cut lessons to-day, sir, and get on with my next play—"

"Silence!" almost roared Mr. Quelch.

He jerked the letter from Bunter's hand, and tore it into four pieces. Then he tossed the pieces in the wastepaper-basket.

"Now, Bunter. I have wasted too much time on you. Go to your place, and let me hear no more of this nonsense."

Bunter's eyes were glued on the wastepaper-basket. He seemed scarcely to hear the Form-master. Certainly he did not realise that Mr. Quelch was being amazingly patient with him.

"Bunter!"

"It's a shame!" gasped Bunter.

"Wha-a-t?"

"I—I want—"

Mr. Quelch picked up his cane.

"I am afraid, Bunter, that leniency is wasted upon you," he said. "Hold out your hand."

Swish!

"Yaroooooosh!"

"Silence! Go to your place!"

Billy Bunter tucked his fat hand under his arm, and went to his place. He was not disposed to argue further with Mr. Quelch.

Lessons started that morning rather late—and in a thunderous atmosphere. The Remove fellows were on their very best behaviour—that was only prudent.

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO. OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

Nobody wanted to catch Mr. Quelch's eye. Even Bunter contrived, somehow, to give a little attention to Form-work, though his fat brain was almost filled with dazzling visions of literary triumphs and fame and wealth. It was utterly rotten, as he realised, that a fellow of his gifts should be kept in a Form-room, grinding at lessons just like an ordinary schoolboy. Rotten wasn't the word for it, it was outrageous. But he realised, too, that Mr. Quelch's cane was not to be argued with. And so, during the weary morning, Bunter strove to bring his fat mind down from the heights of Parnassus to common earth, from literary triumphs to common-ordinary grammar and geography, from the sublime to the ridiculous, as it were. And it was just as well for Bunter that he succeeded.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Quite Simple!

"I've got it!" Billy Bunter uttered that ejaculation suddenly, in the common-room that evening.

The Owl of the Remove had been sitting in deep thought for some time. Probably he was thinking over his brilliant prospects, for there was a fat smile on his podgy countenance.

The Remove fellows and the Remove master might believe in Bunter's brilliant prospects as much or as little as they pleased, but there was no doubt that Bunter believed in them.

Of course, he possessed knowledge on the subject that the other fellows didn't possess. He knew that his masterpiece, "The Mystery of the Moated Grange," was a really wonderful piece of literary work. And the other fellows certainly didn't know that!

Several glanced towards William George Bunter as he uttered his sudden ejaculation.

"What have you got, fatty?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Not the giddy cheque?" grinned Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all right," said Bunter. "I've got it! I really wonder I didn't think of it before. Will one of you fellows lend me a stamp?"

"Only a stamp?" ejaculated Peter Todd.

"That's all," said Bunter. "I'm going to write to my agents."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle," said Bunter. "But you'll see. I happen to be short of money—"

"What does it feel like to run out of cash for the first time in your life?" inquired Skinner.

Bunter did not trouble to answer that frivolous question.

"I'm going to write to them," he said, addressing the Common-room generally, "and ask them for an advance."

"My hat!"

"Naturally, they can't send me my cheque till matters are settled," said Bunter airily. "But there's no reason why they shouldn't advance me a fiver on the play."

"I wonder if they've got as much as a fiver?" said Skinner thoughtfully. "Depends on the number of mugs they've diddled lately."

"When the money comes," went on Bunter, unheeding, "even Quelch will have to admit that it's genuine."

"When!" chuckled Squiff.

"I guess I'll believe it when I see the

fiver," said Fisher T. Fish. "At present I calculate I wouldn't give you a continental red cent for that fiver, Bunter."

"Wait and see!" said the Owl of the Remove with a sniff. "Where's that stamp, Toddy?"

Peter Todd hesitated.

"Mr. Quelch has told you you're not to communicate with those spoofers, Bunter, old man," he said. "You'll get into a row."

"I'm chancing that."

"I don't think I ought to help you chance it," said Peter, shaking his head.

"Cut it out, old tulip."

"Will you lend me a stamp?" roared Bunter.

"Not to book you for a licking."

Bunter sniffed scornfully.

Billy Bunter folded up that epistle, placed it in an envelope, and sealed it. He gave a defiant blink at the grinning faces round him.

"Now, who's going to give me a stamp?" he demanded.

"Little me," said Skinner.

"Thanks, old chap."

"Here you are!"

The humorous Skinner stepped towards Bunter and raised his foot. The Owl of the Remove jumped back just in time as Skinner's boot came down with a stamp, fortunately on the floor instead of Bunter's foot.

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"Wharrer you up to?"

"Giving you a stamp!" said Skinner innocently.



"If Bunter has let things slide a bit, in the way of not shelling out, what's the odds?" said Skinner. "Literary men are always a bit absent-minded in money matters. Old Bunter, with his mind on his literary work, isn't likely to worry about petty details of a shilling or two!" "Literary men!" babbled Peter Todd. (See Chapter 6.)

"Well, I'm jolly well going to write all the same," he said, "and you fellows will sing a different tune when the money comes."

And Bunter went to the table and sat down to write.

Several grinning faces looked over his shoulders as he wrote. His letter was well worth reading.

Dear Sirs,—Thank you for your letter received to-day.

I am at present at work on a new play, which I will let you have in dew course. Meenwhile, I shall be very much obliged if you can make it convenient to send me £5.

Yours truly,

W. G. BUNTER.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—you rotter! Gerraway! Did you say you'd lend me a stamp, Wharton?"

The captain of the Remove shook his head.

"Not to get you a licking, old bean."

"I dare say I can find one," snorted Bunter, and he rolled out of the Common-room with his precious letter in his hand, leaving the juniors chuckling.

There was a satisfied expression on his fat face when he came back a quarter of an hour later.

Evidently the letter to Sharkey & Co. had been dropped into the school letter-box.

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO., OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

"That's done!" said Bunter.
 "So you found a stamp?" said Toddy.
 "Yes, old chap. I looked in your desk."

"Why, you fat villain—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you're going to make a fuss about three-halfpence, Toddy, I'll let you have a bob for it when my fiver comes."

"What fiver, you silly owl?"

"The one from my agents."

Peter Todd made no rejoinder to that. It really seemed as if words were wasted on the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter went up to the dormitory that evening as if he were walking on air. He was still in high feather, all the more so because he had thought of that simple expedient for raising the wind. A fiver wasn't much, considering his prospects, but it would see him through his immediate necessities. It would last, perhaps, until the big cheque came.

The next day Bunter watched anxiously for the postman. Possibly he expected Messrs. Sharkey to reply by return of post. If he expected that, he was disappointed.

There was no letter that day. But Bunter's sowing hopes still soared. The next day it was certain. It was so certain that Bunter even went to the length of explaining the matter to Mrs. Mimble, at the tuckshop, and pointed out to the good dame that she really ought not to refuse temporary "tick" to so good a customer, the "tick" being so very temporary. Mrs. Mimble listened to Bunter with her eyes wide open, and an expression of great astonishment on her face. But she did not seem to see eye to eye with Bunter, and no "tick" accrued.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Something for Bunter!

"SEEN Bunter?"
 Bob Cherry was asking that question, a day later, after lessons. He was in search of William George Bunter.

"Where's Bunter?"

Billy Bunter had disappeared from public view. Perhaps he was engaged upon the new masterpiece that Messrs. Sharkey & Co. were willing to consider.

"Where's that fat frog?" Bob Cherry demanded impatiently, for about the tenth time. "Quelchy wants him."

"The silly ass!" said Peter Todd. "I suppose Quelchy's found out that he wrote to those rogues, after all. It's a licking. Well, he asked for it."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Tain't a licking this time," he said.

"It's a registered letter."

"A—a—a what?"

"A giddy registered letter."

"My only hat!"

"It's in Quelchy's study, and Bunter is to go there for it," explained Bob. "Quelchy's told me to send him. Where is he?"

"Blest if I know!" said Peter. "He's not in the study."

"Bunter, Bunter, Bunter!" hooted Bob Cherry.

Bob had no time to waste, as he was ready to go out on his bicycle for a spin with his chums. But Mr. Quelch had asked him to send Bunter to his study, and a Form-master's request was equivalent to a command. So Bob Cherry sought the Owl of the Remove up and down Greyfriars, asking every fellow he met whether he had seen Bunter.

The news of the registered letter spread far and wide.

Skinner seemed quite struck by it. It was borne in upon Skinner's mind that perhaps he had been a little hasty. He caught Bob by the sleeve as that youth passed.

"Hold on a minute, Cherry!"

"Seen Bunter?"

"No; but—"

"Bother him! Bother you! Leggo!"

"Sure it's a registered letter for Bunter?" asked Skinner.

"Quelchy said so. Leggo!"

"Did he say whom it was from?"

"No, ass!"

"I say, there must be money in it if it's registered," said Skinner. "Bunter wrote to those agents for money, you know."

Bob grinned.

"Perhaps they've sent him a fiver," he said.

"The perphassfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, it's a coincidence, at least," said Skinner thoughtfully. "After all, their letter sounded fair and square enough. And Quelchy may have been too jolly keen."

"Oh, rats!" said Bob, and he shook off Skinner's detaining hand, and renewed his search for the missing Owl.

His chums joined him in the search, and a good many other fellows joined in. Many of the Removees were curious now. It was, as Skinner said, at least, a coincidence that a registered letter should arrive for Bunter after he had written to his "agents" for money. It was but seldom that the Owl of the Remove received a registered letter. Obviously, there must be cash in it, or it would not be registered.

"Seen Bunter?" bawled Bob Cherry, in the Form-room passage.

The Common-room, the studies, and the passages had been drawn blank. Bob looked in the Remove Form-room as a last resource. And there he found Bunter, about the last place where he would have expected to find him.

Billy Bunter was seated at his desk in the Form-room, and he had a stack of impot paper before him. He had a pen in his hand, a smudge of ink on his nose, and a thoughtful frown on his brow. The sheet before him was covered with sprawling scribble, a sufficient indication

THE BIGGEST AND BEST STORY BOOK FOR BOYS AND GIRLS IS NOW ON SALE.



A Splendid Feast of Fiction and a Grand Collection of Coloured Plates!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

NEXT MONDAY!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

that Bunter was at his literary labours again. He blinked angrily across the room as Bob Cherry hurled open the door, and appeared in the doorway with nearly a dozen fellows at his heels.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are, then!" exclaimed Bob.

"Get out!"

"What?"

"Don't worry!" said Bunter. "I've come here for quiet! It's too noisy in the Remove passage for literary work."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I can't be disturbed by a lot of noisy schoolboys!" said Bunter.

"N-n-noisy schoolboys!"

"Yes. Get out, for goodness' sake! I'm right in the flow of composition," said Bunter. "For goodness' sake clear off! I shall lose the thread."

"You silly ass!" roared Bob.

"Quiet!" said Bunter.

"I've been looking for you—"

Bunter's expression changed. "Is it a feed?" he inquired. Apparently Bunter was willing for the flow of literary composition to be interrupted by a feed.

"No, you fat duffer! Quelchy wants you."

"Blow Quelchy!"

"He's got a registered letter for you, and you're to go to his study and get it!" hooted Bob.

"Oh!"

Bob Cherry strode away, having delivered his message. He was not in the slightest degree interested in Bunter or his registered letter. His chums went with him, and the Famous Five wheeled out their bikes without wasting a further thought on William George Bunter.

But there were other fellows who were interested. Skinner and Snoop and Stott and Fisher T. Fish were deeply interested.

Bunter rose from his desk with alacrity. News of a registered letter was enough to make him active. His fat face beamed.

"So it's come!" he said.

"I—I say, do you think it's from Sharkey's, Bunter?" asked Skinner, quite civilly.

Bunter laughed.

"Of course."

"You—you weren't expecting a registered letter from anybody else?"

"Well, it might be from one of my titled relations," said Bunter. "I'm expecting a postal-order, as a matter of fact."

"Oh, can that!" growled Skinner. He did not want to hear just then about Bunter's long-expected postal-order.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Better get off to Quelchy," said Bolsover major. "I say, I wish you luck, Bunter."

"Not much doubt about the luck!" said Bunter cheerily, and he rolled out of the Form-room, and made his way to Mr. Quelch's study.

Skinner & Co. remained in the Form-room and looked at one another. They were quite thoughtful.

"It can't be," said Skinner slowly, "and yet—" He paused, and looked at the literary work Bunter had left on his desk. His comrades looked at it, too, and there was a chuckle. Encouraged by Messrs. Sharkey's letter, Bunter was hard at work upon a new masterpiece. His second effort equalled his first.

IN THE DEED OF NITEL

Seen: The Heart of a Forrester.

Enter the Robber Chief.

Ha! Whair is my trusty hand! What

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO. OF GREYFRIARS. :: BY FRANK RICHARDS

causes this delay?" "Tis now the appointed hour!"

"Nobody outside Colney Hatch would pay Bunter anything for that tosh!" said Bolver major. "Why, the spelling is enough to give 'em fits!"

"I don't know," said Skinner thoughtfully. "Look at the awful rot that's published and paid for! The printer would set the spelling right, I dare say. Of course, it's utter rot. But look at the rot that's paid for every day! Anyhow, Bunter's got a registered letter, and it's possible—" Skinner paused.

"You never can tell," remarked Stott.

"Of course, I shouldn't think of—of turning on civility to a chap because—because—ahem—" Skinner paused again. "Still, Bunter's got his good points. I've often thought that there's more in Bunter than meets the eye."

"I guess I've had the same idea," remarked Fisher T. Fish, with a sage nod of his transatlantic head.

"Not a bad sort, taking him all in all," said Snoop. "I think some of the fellows are hard on him. I thought it was mean of Toddy, refusing to lend him a stamp the other day."

"I must say I thought so, too," said Skinner.

"I was going to lend him the stamp, but I hadn't one about me," said Snoop. "If old Bunter wants to borrow a stamp of me, I'm sure I shouldn't refuse him in the mean way Toddy and Wharton did."

"The fact is, Wharton and his crowd may be a bit jealous of Bunter, just as Billy says!" remarked Skinner. "I don't believe in running a chap down. Let's go and see how he's getting on."

And Skinner & Co., whose opinion of Bunter had improved so suddenly, left the Farm-room and repaired to the corridor outside Mr. Quelch's study door, to wait there for Bunter. And according to the news Bunter brought out of that study with him, so was his reception likely to be from Skinner & Co.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not a Fiver!

MR. QUELCH looked up as Bunter entered the study with a bright and happy anticipation in his fat face. Bunter had not the slightest doubt that the registered letter was from Sharkey & Co. He had asked them for a fiver; and doubtless they had realised that the hard cash would be more useful to a fellow at school than a cheque. That was how it was! So the Owl of the Remove presented himself before his Form-master with a face glowing with anticipation.

"Ah, I sent for you, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, laying down his pen. "A registered letter was delivered for you this afternoon."

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"As I cannot trust you, Bunter, to avoid correspondence with those disreputable persons against whom I warned you, I am supervising your letters," said Mr. Quelch severely. "This registered letter, therefore, is in my hands, and you will open it in my presence."

"I—I suppose you'll believe it's all right when they send me my money, sir?"

"What?"

"Seeing is believing, sir, ain't it?" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Quelch looked at him.

"Do you still place faith in those wretched, catch penny advertisers, Bunter?"

"C-c-certainly, sir."

"You are a very foolish boy, Bunter." Bunter did not answer that. In his own opinion there certainly was a fool in the study, and his name was not Bunter. But he could hardly venture to state that to his Form-master.

"If these people send you money, Bunter, certainly it will be evidence of their bona fides," said Mr. Quelch. "But such a thing is not likely to happen."

"But—but the letter's registered, sir!" stammered Bunter. "They—they wouldn't register it if there wasn't money in it!"

"You may open it," said Mr. Quelch dryly, and he pushed the sealed envelope across the table to Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove fairly grabbed the letter.

He jabbed his thumb into the envelope, and wrenched it open. He jerked out the letter from inside and unfolded it. A ten-shilling note was revealed.

Bunter's face fell.

He was expecting five pounds from his "agents." What the thump did they mean by sending him ten shillings?

His face fell still more as he glanced at the letter and recognised a handwriting he knew. It was not the type-written communication from Sharkey & Co. that he had been anticipating! The hand was the hand of his Cousin Walter, who was away from Greyfriars for a short time.

Bunter blinked at it.

"W-w-wally!" he gasped.

"From whom is that letter, Bunter?"

Bunter almost groaned. "Ten shillings was ten shillings, and it was an unexpected windfall. But his disappointment was great."

"Oh, dear! My—my Cousin Wally,

sir!" he answered. "I—I asked him for a—a loan, sir. It—it was weeks ago. I—I'd forgotten."

He blinked at the letter. More recent matters had quite driven from his mind a cadging letter he had written to Wally. Moreover, he had hardly expected it to turn up trumps. Still, it had cost nothing to write, as he had used the school note-paper, and a stamp of Toddy's. Wally's letter was quite kind and cheery.

"Dear Billy,—Sorry to hear that you're so hard up; but, really, it's a permanent sort of state with you, isn't it? But I know what it's like, old bean—I've been there! I can spare ten bob all right, and if it's of use to you you're welcome. Here you are, my jolly old fat tulip! I shall be back at Greyfriars in a week or so's time. Your affectionate cousin,

"WALTER BUNTER."

"I think I had better see the letter, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch. "I am sorry to say that I cannot take the word of a boy in my Form; but in your case I cannot."

Bunter silently passed him the letter. The Remove master glanced at it, and smiled.

"This is very kind of your cousin, Bunter," he said.

"Oh, very!" groaned Bunter.

"You may take that ten-shilling note, Bunter, as your cousin has so kindly and generously sent it to you," said Mr. Quelch. "But I cannot allow this to be repeated. You will understand, Bunter, that junior boys here are expected to keep within their allowances; and



Stott dashed on Coker as he was rising and Horace went down again with Stott sprawling over him. "Back up!" shrieked Stott. Skinner took his courage in both hands and jumped at Coker. "Come on!" he yelled. "Fishy—Bunter—Snoopey—come on, quick!" (See Chapter 7.)

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO., OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

certainly not to write what are, in effect, begging letters. I trust you will remember this, Bunter."

"Oh, yes, sir!" mumbled Bunter.

"Very well. You do not seem to be pleased by this generosity from a master of the school, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, looking severely at the Owl of the Remove.

"I—I thought—" faltered Bunter.

"You absurd boy! You thought that the persona whose advertisement you answered, were sending you money?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"You are ridiculous, Bunter. I command you to dismiss that folly from your mind altogether," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "You may leave my study."

Billy Bunter shoved Wally's letter into his pocket, and picked up the ten-shilling note from the table. There was, after all, a little comfort in the ten-shilling note. He did not bother about feeling grateful to Wally; but he was glad to have ten shillings.

With the note in his fat fingers, he rolled to the door and left the study. He gave a jump as he closed the study door behind him. Four Remove fellows were waiting near the door, with expectant faces. They caught sight of the currency note in Bunter's fat fingers, and Bunter immediately put it into his pocket. He did not mean to settle up any little debts with that ten-shilling note, if that was what Skinner & Co. wanted.

"Well?" said Skinner breathlessly.

"Well!" snapped Bunter.

"What—what did they say?"

"Is it all right?" asked Stott.

Bunter blinked at them for an instant, perplexed. Then he understood. Skinner & Co. were waiting for news from Sharkey's!

Bunter had gone into the study fully believing that the registered letter was from Messrs. Sharkey & Co. His belief had had its effect on Skinner & Co., and now they wanted to know. Billy Bunter was not a bright youth, but there was a certain cunning mingled with his obtuseness. He caught on, as it were, instantly, and he shoved Wally's letter a little deeper into his pocket. It was important—very important—for nothing to be known about that letter, in the circumstances.

"Is what all right?" asked Bunter carelessly.

"About the cheque—"

"The play—"

"Sharkey's, you know—"

Bunter blinked at the eager quartette loftily.

"Of course it's all right!" he answered.

"Didn't I tell you it was all right?"

"Well, you told us so," said Skinner.

"But—" Harold Skinner paused. It was not a judicious moment to state his opinion of Bunter's veracity; not if it was, indeed, "all right."

"But what?" said Bunter scornfully. "If you mean that you doubted my word, Skinner—"

"Not at all, old fellow," said Skinner hastily. "But—but you might have been mistaken, you know."

"What rot!" said Bunter. "How could I be mistaken? You saw their letter the other day—it was plain enough, wasn't it?"

"It was," agreed Skinner. "But—"

"But has the cheque come, then?" gasped Snoop.

Billy Bunter began to swell. Be it said, in excuse for Bunter, that he fully believed that the cheque was coming. If he took credit now for success in his literary ventures, he was only taking it by the forelock, as it were—assuming in

advance what was bound to happen shortly—according to his anticipations. And Bunter, who loved swank, never had anything to swank about, which was hard on him. Bunter elevated his fat little nose, puffed out his chest, and regarded Skinner & Co. with the most lofty and dignified of blinks.

"Has the cheque come?" he repeated.

"Yes. Has it?"

"Oh, really, Snoop! Do you think Sharkey & Co. would register a letter to me if there wasn't any money in it?"

"Well, I suppose not—"

"But I'm not going to talk about it," said Bunter loftily. "You fellows can think what you like! I'm quite indifferent. Probably I shan't be at Greyfriars much longer—can't waste any time mugging lessons when there's big cheques waiting for me! Can't stop now—I'm in rather a hurry!"

Bunter rolled on.

"Where are you off to, Bunter?" asked Skinner.

"Tuckshop!" said Bunter briefly.

Skinner started.

"In funds—what?" he asked.

"Naturally."

"Oh!" said Skinner.

Billy Bunter rolled away. Skinner & Co. looked after him, and then looked at one another.

"I guess it's the genuine goods!" murmured Fisher T. Fish.

"Looks like it!" said Stott.

"He's such a dashed gammon-merchant," said Skinner. "Let's get to the tuckshop, anyhow. If he's in funds, dash it all, he can stand treat."

"Good!"

And Skinner & Co. followed on the track of Billy Bunter, and trailed him to the school shop, where they found him seated on a high stool at Mrs. Mimble's counter, disposing of refreshments, liquid and solid, on a generous scale.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Toddy!

PETER TODD strolled across the Close and entered Mrs. Mimble's little shop, with a thoughtful brow and a calculating eye. It was tea-time, and Peter had the handsome sum of one-and-threepence to expend on a study tea. Ninepence belonged to Peter, sixpence had been contributed by his study-mate, Tom Dutton. Nothing was to be expected from his other study-mate, William George Bunter, in the way of cash. All that was to be expected of Bunter was that he would turn up to tea. In that the Owl of the Remove was not likely to fail.

With fifteenpence to expend on a tea for three, Peter Todd needed to calculate carefully. The problem was exercising his mind when he entered the school shop and beheld an unexpected sight there.

Bunter—whom he had last seen in his usual "stony" state—was enjoying a feast of the gods. Four or five fellows were loading round him with genial faces.

"Why, you fat boulder!" exclaimed Peter Todd indignantly.

Bunter was negotiating an ice cream. He finished it before he troubled to look round at Toddy.

"Oh, you!" he said carelessly.

"Little me!" said Peter. "If you're in funds for once, you fat frog, why can't you stand your whack in a study tea, instead of gorging here on your own?"

"Oh, really, Toddy!"

"Don't you think it's almost time you stood your whack?" demanded Toddy

warmly. "You haven't started yet, this term!"

"Don't you worry," said Bunter loftily. "If I owe you and Dutton anything, I'll jolly soon settle up, and with interest, too!"

"When?" scoffed Peter.

"I'm expecting—"

"If you say 'postal-order' I'll mop you off that chair and shove a jam-tart down the back of your neck!" snorted Peter.

"A cheque!"

"Oh, it's a cheque now, is it?" grunted Peter. "Is the postal-order getting a bit too aged to be trotted out again?"

"Oh, draw it mild, Toddy," said Skinner. "What are you pitching into old Bunter for like that?"

"Old Bunter?" said Peter, staring at him.

"If Bunter has let things slide a bit, in the way of not shelling out, what's the odds?" said Skinner. "Literary men are always a bit absent-minded in money matters."

"Literary men!" babbled Peter.

"Old Bunter, with his mind in his literary work, isn't likely to worry about petty details of a shilling or two," said Skinner.

"Of course not!" said Snoop. "The fact is, Toddy, you ought to be proud of having Bunter in your study, without carping at him in this small, miserable way."

"Just what I was thinking," concurred Stott. "I know I'd be jolly pleased to have Bunter in my study. It's a distinction."

"I guess so!" said Fisher T. Fish. "It's not every fellow in the Lower Fourth who can bag cheques from theatrical agents."

Peter Todd gazed at Skinner & Co. like a fellow in a dream. He was so astounded that he could only gaze, with his mouth open, like a fish out of water.

Bunter grinned with fat, self-satisfaction, and started on another ice. He was getting his due at last—his due long over-due, as it were.

"I say, you fellows, try these ices," he said hospitably.

Skinner winked at Snoop with the eye that was farthest from Bunter. The Owl of the Remove liked his flattery laid on thick—with a trowel, as it were. Skinner & Co. had laid it on with a trowel, and it was already producing ices!

"I don't mind if I do," said Stott.

"You're a jolly good fellow, Bunter."

"Generous!" said Snoop.

"Vanilla for me," said Skinner. "I say, Billy, you're going to read in some of your play this evening, aren't you?"

"Do, old chap," said Snoop.

"I guess I shall be all ears, if you will, Bunter," said Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter nodded.

"I don't mind," he said. "I'll tell you what—I'll get you all free passes for the theatre when my first play comes out."

"Oh, good! Good man, Bunter!"

Peter Todd rubbed his rather long nose in amazement. He could not make head or tail of all this.

"Are you fellows pulling Bunter's leg?" he asked at last. "What are you giving the fat duffer this stuff for?"

Skinner paused in eating his ice to look round at Peter Todd with severe reprobation.

"Don't you think it's time you chucked this, Toddy?" he asked.

"Clucked what?"

"This envious detraction of the cleverest fellow at Greyfriars."

(Continued on page 13.)

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO. OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS

REXT MONDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.



EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

We are now at that period of the year when cricket is going out, and football is coming in.

The Greyfriars Remove has had a very successful cricket season, although rain interfered with many of our midsummer matches.

Here are the records of the Remove's leading batsmen, compiled at the end of the season:

	No. of In- nings	No. of Runs	Times Not out	High- Score	Per- cent- age
Bob Cherry	25	550	1	120	22.00
H. Vernon-Smith	23	575	1	103	21.29
H. Wharton	30	544	3	115	20.14
Mark Linley	25	495	0	95	19.80

And this is the record of one of our mis-leading batsmen:

W. G. Bunter	24	12	0	2	00.50
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In the bowling department, Hurree Singh stands supreme. He has captured over a hundred wickets at small cost, and he must be regarded as our best and most dangerous bowler. Vernon-Smith also showed good form with the ball when the wicket was to his liking.

Now we are beginning to turn our attention to football, and I have no doubt we shall experience a very successful season.

The Remove Form is rich in football talent. Bulstrode will keep goal, and I don't think we need look farther than Johnny Bull and Tom Brown for a first-class pair of backs. The halves will be Bob Cherry, Peter Todd, and Mark Linley—a brilliant trio. The forward line will probably consist of Vernon-Smith, Dick Penfold, Frank Nugent, Hurree Singh, and your humble servant—though other players will be given a chance from time to time. Tom Redwing, Dick Russell, and Squiff will be certain of getting games in the first eleven.

This is more in the nature of a Sports Column than an Editorial; but I know, from the large number of letters that I receive, that my readers take a keen interest in Greyfriars sport, and I think the above particulars will please them.

I hope that all my chums will experience a happy and successful footer season.

HARRY WHARTON.

BUNTER THE FOOTBALLER!

By Dick Penfold.

Some fellows say that I'm an ass, And cannot dribble, shoot, or pass.

Some say I am a hopeless dud, (I've half a mind to have their blood!)

I never falter, never yield, When playing on the football-field.

My keen admirer, cousin Elsie, Says, "Some day you will play for Chelsea!"

My Uncle Joshua prefers That I should join the famous Spurs.

My minor, in the Lower School, Says, "Why not play for Liverpool?"

And Mr. Quelch cries very sternly, "I've recommended you to Burnley!"

I'm sure that I should be delighted To play for Hull, or Leeds United.

And it will be an awful pity If I'm not "bagged" by Bristol City!

I say, you fellows! What a joke If I were asked to play for Stoke!

Thousands would come by bus and tram To see me playing for West Ham.

And I believe that there is still a Good chance for me at Aston Villa.

Kind tributes (I am always earning 'em) Have reached me from a team called Birmingham.

I grow more famous every minute; In fact, Steve Bloomer isn't in it!

Just watch me through the coming season. I'll do great deeds—it stands to reason!

STARTING NEXT WEEK!

A wonderful new feature—

The GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT

Look out for it!

SOCIETY SNAPSHOTS!

By Bob Cherry.

Lord Mauleverer is resting over the week-end—as usual!

Mr. Herbert Vernon-Smith, who stood a study feed to his friends last night, is now in the sanny, suffering from chicken-pox. This is what comes of having cold chicken on the menu. We advised him to stick to ham!

Mr. Harold Skinner had an appointment with Mr. Quelch in the latter's study after breakfast. Mr. Skinner's condition is reported to be critical!

Mr. William Gosling has been appointed official rat-catcher at Greyfriars. We would draw his attention to the fact that there is a fat rat in Study No. 7!

It has been suggested in certain quarters that sandals be worn at Greyfriars. Mr. William Bunter is strongly opposed to this, on the grounds that he will no longer be able to plead, when found listening at study key-holes, that his bootlace came undone!

We understand that Mr. George Potter and Mr. William Greene have taken out a special dog licence on behalf of Horace Coker. They have also been ordered to keep him muzzled!

Mr. Alonzo Todd has been conveyed to the Cottage Hospital in a critical condition. It is believed that he swallowed a number of dictionaries!

Mr. William George Bunter, and Mr. Samuel, of that ilk, recently had an eating contest to decide who could eat the greater number of rounds of toast. The referee stopped the contest at the fifteenth round!

A certain American gentleman was recently overturned in a punt in the River Sark. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Richard Rake, the celebrated angler, is said to have landed a good-sized fish!

On the occasion of his birthday, Mr. Tom Dutton was presented by his long-suffering schoolfellows with an ear-trumpet!

Mr. Gerald Loder has secured a new fax. We trust he will securely lock his study door before smoking it!

Hurree Jamsat Ran Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, has proved himself to be the esteemed and ludicrously cheerful champion of the Remove. No need to ask, "Why did Hurree Singh?" Winning a chess championship is enough to make any fellow burst into song!

Next Week! The Head of Greyfriars will edit the "Herald"!

ALONZO STEALS A MARCH!

A Funny Story of the Duffer of Greyfriars.

By BOB CHERRY.

"**W**HEREFORE that worried brow?" Frank Nugent asked the question of Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo was looking about as cheerful as an undertaker.

"My dear Nugent," he said, "I am labouring under a crushing disappointment. I have just been to the library, and I cannot obtain the book I want."

"Oh! What book's that?"

"The Gallery of Modern Geniuses." Every day, for the last fortnight, I have been to the library to get it, only to find myself forestalled by Hoskins of the Shell. Hoskins always gets there first, and walks off with the book. Believe me, I could weep!"

"Don't!" said Nugent, "There are no fire-buckets handy!"

"But I badly want that book, you know! What do you advise me to do, my dear fellow?"

"Do? Why, you chump, you must steal a march on Hoskins!"

Alonzo stared.

"Steal a march?" he stuttered.

"Certainly!"

Alonzo walked away, looking very perturbed.

Among the golden precepts of his Uncle Benjamin was the following:

"To steal a pin, it is a sin
Beyond all human healing;
So always keep your little hands
From picking and from stealing!"

Yet Frank Nugent, who was admittedly one of the most honourable fellows in the Remove, had advised him to steal a march!

"It—it can't be dishonest," murmured the guileless Alonzo, "or Nugent would never have urged me to do it. I will proceed to Hoskins' study, and carry out the suggestion."

Alonzo trotted along to Hoskins' study.

The musician of the Shell was not at home. He was, as a matter of fact, reclining under the lime-trees on the cricket-field, reading "The Gallery of Modern Geniuses."

There was a piano in Hoskins' study. And on the music-stand was a copy of "The Robbers' March," from the play of "Chu Chin Chow." Hoskins was very fond of that rousing piece of music. It was, in fact, his favourite march.

For a moment Alonzo hesitated. Doubts were still in his mind. Was he really justified in stealing this march?

"I—I cannot bring myself to do it!" he muttered. "When I recall the wise words of my Uncle Benjamin, they bid me pause!"

Alonzo reached out his hand and took the music off the stand. Then he put it back again. He repeated this performance about half a dozen times.

In spite of Frank Nugent's encouragement, he could not bring himself to steal the music and take it away.

And while he stood there, still hesitating, the door of the study was thrown open, and Claude Hoskins came in.

Alonzo spun round with a guilty start.

"Oh dear!" he muttered.

Hoskins glared at the Remove junior.

"What are you doing in my study?" he demanded.

"I—I—I—"

"Tell me quickly, or it will be the worse for you!"

"I—I came here to steal—"

"W-w-what?"

"To steal a march!"

Hoskins gave a gasp of amazement. He could hardly believe the evidence of his ears. He knew that Alonzo Todd was a peculiar fellow—that he often behaved in an eccentric manner. But he had never supposed Alonzo to be a thief.

"Do you realise what you're saying, kid?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, my dear Hoskins."

"You—you were actually going to pinch my march?"

Alonzo hung his head.

"Nugent did not seem to think it would be a wicked thing to do," he said. "In fact, he strongly advised me to do so."

Hoskins' face grew dark with anger.

"Oh! So Nugent put you up to this, did he? It was his idea of a joke, I expect. I'll jape him!"

Hoskins dashed out of the study, and made his way to the Remove quarters.

A moment later a roaring lion sprang through the doorway of Study No. 1. The roaring lion was Hoskins.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, who were within, sprang to their feet.

Hoskins took no notice of the captain of the Remove. He addressed himself to Frank Nugent—with his fists!

Utterly unprepared for the assault, Nugent dodged round and round the table, striving frantically to ward off the rain of blows.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

"Here, what's the game?" panted Nugent.

"Hold him off, Harry! He's off his rocker!"

Harry Wharton sprang towards the incensed Shell fellow and dragged him back.

"What the dickens do you mean by hammering Nugent like that?" he demanded.

Hoskins writhed and wriggled in a vain attempt to get free.

"He—he prompted Todd to steal a march of mine!" he shouted.

"What!"

"Oh, the ass! Oh, the mad duffer!" exclaimed Nugent, caressing his damaged nose.

"I didn't tell him to steal your music, Hoskins. He was telling me about a library book he wanted—said you always got there first and took it. So I suggested that he stole a march on you. And the asinine chump took it literally!"

"Oh!" said Hoskins.

He saw daylight now.

Once again Alonzo Todd had caused a scene through taking a thing literally.

Crimson with wrath, Frank Nugent stepped out into the passage, with a view to punishing Alonzo's head.

Loney saw him coming, and there was something about Nugent's expression that he did not like. He wisely fled!



Utterly unprepared for the assault, Nugent dodged round the study striving frantically to ward off Hoskins' blows.

OUR CYCLING CORNER!

By Tom Brown.

A five-mile cycling race, open to every two-legged junior in the Remove, was promoted on Wednesday afternoon. (Billy Bunter, of course, was not eligible to compete. He isn't a two-legged fellow, for he's an ass!)

Forty-one competitors lined up with their machines in the school gateway. Those who hadn't machines of their own had begged, borrowed, or stolen them. Little Wun Lung, I noticed, had borrowed Mr. Capper's bike. It was much too big for him, and his feet didn't touch the pedals. Consequently, the Chinese junior came to grief shortly after the start.

My own machine was in excellent trim, and it skimmed the road like a swallow. There was a big congestion at the start of the race, the road not being wide enough to accommodate forty-odd cyclists. Several fellows were knocked off their bikes and put out of action. The others forged ahead.

In Friardale, Bob Cherry took the lead. He didn't have it long. He had an argument with a brewer's dray, against the tailboard of which he collided with a mighty crash. Poor old Bob! He collected such a beautiful crop of bruises that he was compelled to retire from the race.

Frank Nugent was the next victim. He ran over a prize pig which was being taken to market; and the owner of the pig said a few words to Frank with his whip. He gave Nugent such a fearful tanning that the poor beggar could take no further part in the race.

Shortly afterwards Harry Wharton happened to ride over the fragments of a ginger-beer bottle which was lying in the roadway. A couple of loud pops announced that both of Wharton's tyres were punctured. Whilst he was trying to repair the damage the rest of us swept past him.

Vernon-Smith was particularly unlucky to ride into a bunch of fowls taking an afternoon walk along the lane. When he had sorted himself out, he discovered three lifeless birds on the ground near his battered machine, and an angry cottager standing over him, brandishing a pitchfork. It was pretty clear that the Bounder wouldn't get away without paying for the damage, and I left them arguing about the amount of compensation.

One by one the noble army of cyclists came to grief, until I, Tom Brown, was the only unscathed competitor left in the running. I finished the course in great style (as Billy Bunter would say after a helping of roast beef), and I felt that I had deserved well of my country.

(Our contributor's imagination seems to be playing him tricks. I have no knowledge whatever of the cycling race he refers to. But doubtless Brownie is leg-pulling—as usual!—Ed.)

More Special Numbers of the "Herald" on the way!

GOSLING'S BENEFIT!

By S. Q. I. FIELD.



"All contributions thankfully received, sir," said Bunter, rattling the cigar-box. "I'm acting as treasurer of the Gosling Benefit Fund!"

"Am I intruding, sir?" It was Billy Bunter who asked the question. It was Mr. Quelch who answered it. And he answered it in tones of thunder. "You certainly are, Bunter! Can you not see that I am busy at my typewriter?" "Yessir. But if you could spare a moment—"

Mr. Quelch glared at Billy Bunter and at the cigar-box, with a slit in the lid, which the fat junior carried.

"What are you doing with that box, Bunter?" he demanded.

"Collecting, sir."

"With what object?"

"Ahem! I—I'm making a collection on behalf of Gosling, the porter, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave a jump. His expression was very stern. His frowning brow was a storm-signal which Billy Bunter failed to notice.

"You see, sir," Billy went on, thrusting the cigar-box under the Form-master's nose, "it happens to be Gosling's benefit."

"Benefit!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Yessir! It's his birthday. He's ninety-three to-day!"

"Bunter!"

"Or sixty-three—I forget which. I know I'm not more than thirty years out!"

Mr. Quelch eyed Billy Bunter with the glare of a basilisk. The fat junior went rambling on.

"All contributions thankfully received, sir!" he said. "I'm acting as treasurer of the Gosling Benefit Fund. I'm going round collecting subscriptions, so that we can buy Gosling a suitable present. Gosling's a decent sort, and I thought you might like to head the subscription-list with a quid, sir."

Billy Bunter rattled the cigar-box in anticipation.

"Bunter," thundered Mr. Quelch, "am I to understand that you have already succeeded in collecting money?"

"Yessir!"

"Hand me that box!"

Rather reluctantly, Bunter obeyed. Mr. Quelch prised open the lid with a penknife. Instead of containing money, as Bunter had asserted, the box contained a number of old buttons and pieces of metal. The fat junior had evidently put them there in order to make an impression, and to persuade people to contribute to the fund.

"I am thankful to see there is no money here, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch. "Had you obtained money by false pretences, it would have been a very serious matter!"

"Oh, really, sir, I hope you don't question my honesty! If you would spare a quid for the fund—"

"I have already given a sum of money to a fund on behalf of Gosling," said Mr. Quelch. "Fish has already been round collecting subscriptions—"

"Fish!"

Mr. Quelch nodded grimly.

"I am satisfied that Fish was a genuine collector on behalf of the fund," he said.

"I cannot say the same about you, Bunter! Your dishonourable propensities are well known! You are endeavouring to collect a sum of money, and convert it to your own use!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"You must have been quite aware that there was already a fund for Gosling," said Mr. Quelch. "It was Fish's idea, and he announced it on the school notice-board."

"Ahem! I—I'm rather short-sighted, sir, so I expect I mistook Fish's notice for something else."

"I am not going to argue with you, Bunter. I am very glad indeed that I have been able to nip this project in the bud! You will leave this cigar-box in my custody! I shall now come you!"

"C-c-cane me, sir!" stammered Billy Bunter, in dismay.

"Most certainly! Your conduct has been despicable!"

So saying, Mr. Quelch armed himself with his most formidable cane, and administered three stinging cuts on each of Billy Bunter's upturned palms.

The punishment was severe, but it fitted the crime; for there could be no doubt that Bunter had tried to raise money by false pretences. He had hoped to rake in quite a lot of shekels, ostensibly for the benefit of William Gosling, but, in reality, for the benefit of William Bunter!

The Owl of the Remove was looking very dejected as he crawled out of the Form-master's study.

In the corridor he bumped into Fisher T. Fish.

The American junior carried a collecting-box, and he was grinning.

Fish was no more honest than Bunter. If anything, he was less. But he had been first in the field with the idea of getting Gosling a birthday-present, and he had assured Mr. Quelch that everything would be fair and square and above-board. He had undertaken to furnish Mr. Quelch with a list showing the exact amount of the subscriptions he had managed to raise.

"Guess the fund's going strong," said Fish. "Going to drop a couple of cents in the box, Bunter?"

"Bless your box!" growled Billy.

Billy Bunter rolled away without contributing anything to the fund. As a matter of fact, he had nothing to contribute.

The energetic Fish made a tour of all the Greyfriars studies, and by the end of the day the money-box was nearly full and very weighty.

It was rumoured that evening that Fisher T. Fish had collected over five pounds for Gosling's benefit.

Gosling became quite excited when this information came to his ears.

"Which I oughter get a werry 'andsome present for five pounds!" he told himself.

Gosling stood on the doorstep of his lodge, and beamed out upon a kindly world.

Usually crusty and ill-tempered, the school porter now felt distinctly amiable.

Fisher T. Fish approached on his bicycle.

"Hallo, Gossy!" he sang out. "Guess I'm just going to nip over to that one-eyed town of Courtfield to buy your birthday-present!"

"Which it's werry kind of you, Master Fish—"

"Shucks!"

Fish pedalled through the school gateway, and vanished down the dusty road.

Whilst the junior was gone, Gosling dreamed dreams on the subject of the forthcoming present.

Fish was back in record time. He jumped off his machine, and drew a small paper package from his pocket. Gosling eyed it eagerly.

"Guess this ought to be presented to you

in public, really," said Fish. "But if that happened, you'd have to make a speech, and I sorter calculate that you're no hand at speechifying."

"Indeed, I ain't, Master Fish."

The junior handed over the paper package with much ceremony.

Eagerly Gosling unwrapped the paper. Then he uttered a snort of anger and disgust.

The object revealed to Gosling's gaze was nothing more precious than a toothpick—not a gold toothpick, not a silver one, but just a common or garden affair.

Gosling stood as if stupefied. He tried to speak, but for a time words refused to come.

A figure in cap and gown approached the school gates. It was Mr. Quelch.

At last Gosling found tongue.

"Look here, sir!" he exclaimed angrily. "I hunderstood as 'ow the sum of five pounds 'ad been collected on my behalf, an' that I was to 'ave a 'andsome present!"

"That is so, Gosling," said Mr. Quelch.

"Ere's the 'andsome present!" roared Gosling. "Look what Master Fish 'as brought me! A toothpick, as ever was! An' I've 'ardly a tooth in my 'ead!"

Mr. Quelch frowned at Fisher T. Fish.

"How much did you pay for this article, Fish?" he demanded.

"Two bob," replied the American junior.

"But you collected over five pounds, according to the list of subscriptions which you showed me!"

"Yep!" said Fish.

"Then what has become of the remainder of the money?"

"I guess I deducted the sum of four pounds eighteen shillings for expenses, sir!"

"Expenses!" gasped Mr. Quelch.



Gosling gave a snort of rage when he saw the contents of the parcel. The object revealed to his gaze was nothing more precious than a toothpick.

Fish nodded.

"That's business, sir," he explained. "A galoot who goes around collecting money for a charitable object always deducts his own expenses—time taken, and so forth!"

"Oh!" murmured Mr. Quelch faintly.

Of course, Fish was made to hand over the money at the finish, and Gosling received a really magnificent birthday-present.

The enterprising Fish also received an award, in the shape of a severe caning. And nobody had any sympathy to waste on the cute business man of the Remove!

The Finest Schoolboy Journal Supplement—bar none!

Supplement iii.]

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

CANDID CONFESSIONS!

By Our Special Representative.

This Week - - - - - HAROLD SKINNER.

I FOUND Skinner of the Remove reclining in the depths of the armchair in his study. His feet were resting on the mantelpiece. From his lips dangled a cigarette—a chocolate one, fortunately. I don't approve of smoking.

Skinner smiled blandly as I stepped into the study.

"Take a chair!" he said.

I looked round in search of one.

"You've bagged the only chair there is," I said.

"Take a seat on the mat, then."

"I'm not a dog, thanks! I'll bag the window-sill."

"As you please," said Skinner, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Have you dropped in to tea?"

"No," I replied. "I'm rather particular who I sit down to tea with. The object of my visit is to wring a few confessions out of you. I propose to ask you a number of questions, and I shall jot down your replies in my note-book."

"Go right ahead!" said Skinner, without removing his feet from the mantelpiece or the chocolate cigarette from his lips.

"To begin with," I said, "what are you?"

"A distinguished member of society," mumbled Skinner, as the end of the cigarette melted in his mouth.

"Go on!" I ejaculated. "I had no idea you were that. I asked Bob Cherry what you were, and he said 'A beastly worm!'"

"Bob Cherry's a beast!" grunted Skinner. "I shall sue him for slander."

"What's your profession?" I asked.

"I'm a practical joker."

"What a curious occupation!"

"I get a tremendous lot of fun out of it, I can tell you!"

"Tell me some of your experiences as a practical joker," I said.

Skinner crossed his legs, and in doing so he kicked a valuable ornament off the mantelpiece, and it crashed into the fireplace. But the ornament was the property of Vernon-Smith, so Skinner did not mind.

"Oh, I've played hundreds of jokes in my time!" he said. "One of the best was when I prevailed upon Alonzo Todd to eat the Head's dinner. Alonzo was a new kid at the time, and I told him that a special feed had been prepared for him in the Head's quarters. He swallowed the bait beautifully! But I got it in the neck afterwards!" added Skinner, with a rueful grin.

"Alonzo not only swallowed the bait, but the Head's dinner into the bargain!" I said. "Rather a rotten trick to play on an innocent new kid, don't you think?"

"Not at all!" said Skinner. "It was a jolly good practical joke, in my opinion—only the Head didn't quite see the humorous side of it!"

"Tell me some more of your stunts."

"With pleasure! Another jolly good jape was when Billy Bunter sent a story to a London paper. I telephoned him next day, and pretended to be the editor. 'Master Bunter,' I said, 'your story is the best I have read in all my eighty-eight years' experience. I have accepted it for publication, and shall have pleasure in paying you at the rate of half-a-crown a word.'"

"And Bunter took it all in?"

"Yes, rather! He was awfully bucked about it. He walked on air for a couple of days."

"And then?"

"Why, his story was returned from the editor, with a rejection-slip, saying it was N.G. Poor old Bunter had a pink fit!"

"I can quite believe you. By the way, have you ever played a jape on a Form-master?"

"Dozens of 'em! One of the best was when I toddled into old Prout's bed-room one night, disguised as a ghost. I talked to him in ghostly language for about five minutes, and poor old Prout got into a panic! He

jumped out of bed, and grabbed his Winchester repeater, and I hopped it pretty quick! Prout went rushing round the corridors, letting off steam—and bullets. Jove, what a night!"

"Did you get hit?"

"Of course not!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you, I'm one of the best practical jokers of modern times," said Skinner modestly. "Only the other day I rigged up a really wonderful booby-trap on the door of Study No. 1—Harry Wharton's editorial sanctum, you know. What are you looking at me like that for?"

"Proceed!" I said hoarsely.

"This booby-trap," said Skinner, "consisted of ink and glue and treacle and feathers—all mixed together in a big paper bag. Nothing like it has ever been seen before or since. Having poised the fearful concoction on the door, I bolted."

"Then you didn't see the result of the booby-trap?"

"No. But I've no doubt that Harry Wharton got it on his napper. It must have smothered his face and toes, and made him look a thing of beauty and a joy for ever! Here, what are you doing?" added Skinner, in alarm, for I was peeling off my coat.

"That booby-trap," I said grimly, "didn't descend on Harry Wharton at all. It descended on me!"

"You!"

"Yes. I was the victim. And it took me a couple of days to get all the treacle out of my hair. I had no idea who was responsible for the booby-trap, until you kindly confessed just now. And I'm going to give you a hammering!"

Skinner at last removed his feet from the mantelpiece, and the chocolate cigarette from his lips. He hurriedly rose up from the armchair.

"D-d-don't lick me!" he stuttered. "I won't do it again!"

I didn't feel in a merciful mood at that moment.

Rushing at Skinner with clenched fists, I proceeded to paste him with blows.

Bliff! Thud! Thump! Thwack!

"Yaroooooh!" yelled Skinner. "Chuck it, you madman! You'll knock my front teeth out, if you keep on like that!"

"I'll make you an even less beautiful object than you are at present, anyway!" I panted. And I kept my word!

Practical jokes may be all right, but not when they are directed against oneself!

HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.

THE SMILE THAT WON'T COME OFF



JIMMY SILVER (Rookwood).

THE REMOVE DEBATING SOCIETY!

A brief account of the latest debate.

By MARK LINLEY.

The members of the Remove Debating Society assembled in the Rag on Saturday evening last, the subject for debate being, "Which are the more enjoyable—indoor or outdoor games?"

The leader of the "outdoor" enthusiasts was Robert Cherry; while Lord Mauleverer led the opposition.

Cherry, in a brilliant opening speech, said there was really no comparison between outdoor and indoor sports. The former were delightful and beneficial in every way; the latter were merely a side-show.

"One only plays a game like chess when it happens to be dark or wet," said the speaker. "Who would dream of sitting in a stuffy study on a glorious summer afternoon playing chess? And who but a fanatic would attempt to compare chess with cricket or camping? Outdoor sports are far and away the more preferable."

Harry Wharton followed up with a brief speech, in which he endorsed all that Bob Cherry had said.

Other speeches in favour of outdoor sports were made by Vernon-Smith, Peter Todd, and Tom Redwing. The speakers were loudly cheered.

When Lord Mauleverer rose to speak on behalf of the Opposition there were rowdy scenes, his lordship being bombarded with peashooters. However, he manfully stood his ground.

"Outdoor sports, gentlemen," he began, "are a fearful fog! They take toll of a fellow's energy, don't you know! Fancy dashin' about after a cricket-ball in the broilin' sunshine! Fancy goin' for a twenty-mile bike ride when the thermometer's at eighty! Mr. Cherry spoke of fanatics. Those are the fanatics—the fellows who go tearin' about gettin' sunstroke when they ought to be indoors playin' a quiet game of draughts. (Mingled booing and cheering.) "There is everythin' to be said in favour of indoor games. They are not exhaustin'; they are just mildly stimulin', invigoratin', an' refreshin'." (A voice: "Have you got a grudge against the letter 'g,' Mauly?")

Harold Skinner agreed in every way with "his noble schoolfellow." He declared that outdoor games were much too exacting and tiring, and that indoor pastimes were the proper caper. (A voice: "All you think about is playing poker!") Skinner retorted that poker was a jolly sight more enjoyable than cricket, and a fellow could play it for hours on end without getting heart disease through over-exertion.

Sidney Snoop followed with a watery speech. His voice scarcely rose above a whisper, and nobody heard what he said, and nobody wanted to. He rambled on in a mumbling undertone for about half an hour, and the majority of the audience dozed off to sleep.

Finally, the ballot was taken, and the voting resulted as follows:

In favour of outdoor sports	- - - 32
In favour of indoor sports	- - - 7
Neutral	- - - 3

Majority 25

Ginger-beer and buns were served after the debate, W. G. Bunter acting as caterer—and chief consumer!

A Wonderful Journalistic Scoop! The Head's Number Next Week!

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SKINNER'S CHUM!

(Continued from page 8.)

Peter looked dazed.

"The—the cleverest fellow at Greyfriars!" he stuttered. "Who's that?"

"Old Bunter."

"My only Aunt Sempronia Ann!" gasped Peter.

"Yes, draw it mild, Toddy!" said Bunter. "It's about time, you know. Envy of a fellow's success is a bit mean."

"Mean isn't the word for it," said Skinner. "I must say it's a bit sickening, Toddy. The fact is, I'm fed up with it. If a fellow can't feel proud of having Bunter in his study, the least he can do is to shut up and not give way to this jealousy."

"I've often told you so myself, Toddy," said Bunter.

"What's this game?" roared Peter Todd. "Has a miracle happened, and Bunter's postal-order come at last?"

"I simply disdain to answer that!" said Skinner.

"I've heard that there was a registered letter for Bunter," said Peter, a light breaking on his bewildered mind. "Has your pater sent you a tip, fatty?"

"No, you ass!"

"Anyhow, you're in funds!" said Toddy.

Bunter slapped his pocket, and there was a jingle. It was the jingle of a French penny and a bunch of old keys. But it sounded quite opulent.

"I should jolly well think so," said Bunter.

"Then where on earth have you been raising the wind?" demanded Peter.

"I decline to discuss the matter at all with you, Toddy," said Bunter.

"You've doubted my word."

"Your word!" gasped Peter. "Oh, my hat! Your word! Well, I suppose it's no good expecting you to stand your whack in the study; but if you're in funds, you needn't come in to tea. Fifteenpence will go farther without a prize-porker to feed out of it!"

"I wasn't thinking of coming to tea," said Bunter disdainfully. "You're too jolly mean in the study to suit me, Toddy. I dare say I owe you a few shillings. Remind me when I come in to prep, and I'll settle up."

"Cheese it!" snapped Toddy. "Catch you settling up, if you were rolling in it. But I'd like to know where you've raised the wind—I hope it wasn't in another fellow's pocket."

"Why, you cheeky beast—"

"Look here, you ring off, Peter Todd!" said Skinner hotly. "We're not going to hear you running a pal down like this!"

"So Bunter's your pal, is he?" snorted Peter. "There must have been something quite decent in the registered letter, then."

"Don't mind him, you fellows," said Bunter. "I'm accustomed to this sort of thing from envious detractors. Have another ice all round."

"Good old Bunter!"

"As for you, Toddy, I sha'n't stand you anything!" said Bunter. "You've been altogether too mean in the study. Only yesterday you helped yourself and Dutton to the cake, when I told you that I could finish it. If there's one thing I can't stand, it's selfishness. I've got my own friends, and they're welcome to share in my good luck. My friends believe in me, and my—my abilities," said Bunter, with dignity.

"Jolly sudden, isn't it?" asked Toddy sarcastically.

"Well, we may have been rather—rather surprised at first," said Skinner, remembering some remarks he had made—which he hoped Bunter would not remember. "It's a bit out of the common for a schoolboy to make a big literary success first shot. But money talks! Bunter dropped a line to his agents for money, and they sent it. Not much room for doubt after that—unless a fellow's fairly green with jealousy."

"They've sent him money!" stuttered Toddy.

"He asked them for a fiver, and they sent it!" said Skinner. "Quechy changed the fiver for him, and Bunter's spending his money like the decent, generous fellow he is. Bunter needn't mind envious chaps running him down. His own friends know his value."

"Have a jam-tart, Skinner, old chap," said Bunter.

"Thanks, old chap, I will."

Mrs. Mumble was making a calculation on a fragment of wrapping-paper with a stump of pencil.

"That makes nine-and-six, Master Bunter," she said. "That will leave sixpence out of the ten-shilling note."

"That's all right," said Bunter. "I don't want any change. Give me another ice."

Peter Todd blinked at Bunter, and he said no more. He looked quite dazed as he laid out his fifteenpence for tea. If Bunter had received cash from Messrs. Sharkey & Co., Peter had to acknowledge that he, Peter, had been amazingly mistaken. Peter did not want to acknowledge that. Was it possible, after all, that the advertising "agents" were genuine, and that they really had seen some value in Bunter's egregious scribble—which to his Form-fellows only seemed to be the most absurd "tosh." Certainly they would not have sent him a remittance unless they were absolutely certain of having value for their money. Peter shook his head—it was not possible!

But Bunter was in funds—he had expended a ten-shilling note with princely liberality, and he jingled more in his pockets. Skinner & Co. fully believed in the fiver from Sharkey's—and Skinner was the sharpest and most unbelieveing fellow at Greyfriars. Skinner

really prided himself upon doubting everybody and everything.

Peter had to admit that it was a puzzle. He left the tuckshop in a state of the greatest astonishment.

When Billy Bunter came out, he did not come alone. He had four faithful and attached chums with him—chums who listened to the words of William George as if they were pearls of wisdom falling from his podgy lips. Bunter walked with his fat little nose in the air, lofty and serene—almost believing, by this time, that he really had had a remittance from his "agents."

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Backing Up Bunter!

"YOU young sweep!"

Billy Bunter jumped.

He was in the Remove Form-room—deserted at that hour excepting by Bunter and his chums. Bunter was quite pleased to keep his promise to read out his latest literary production to Skinner & Co. A few hours before, nobody would have listened to him, for love or money—most certainly not Harold Skinner. But all was changed now.

If Bunter was getting hard cash for his literary works, Bunter was a fellow worth cultivating. Skinner & Co. agreed upon that heartily. They admitted that Bunter had been greatly misunderstood. Other fellows might continue to run him down, if they liked, but he had faithful friends to stand by him now—at least, so long as the hard cash lasted. Bunter in funds really was a fellow worth knowing, for he never could keep money long—it was certain to go, and Skinner & Co. were prepared loyally to help it in its going. All that was necessary was to pull Bunter's fat leg—and Skinner did not mind taking that trouble; indeed, he found some entertainment in it.

Skinner and Stott, Snoop and Fishy had come to the Form-room with Bunter, ready to hear him read out his latest lucubrations. They were ready to hear and to admire that great work, "In the Dedd of Nite!" Skinner, indeed really was curious to hear it, and to ascertain whether there was anything in it but sheer idiocy—as he had supposed.

Bunter was just going to begin, when Coker of the Fifth appeared in the doorway.

Coker of the Fifth had a grim look on his rugged face, and a cane in his hand.

He was looking for Bunter.

Now he had found him—in a quiet spot where Bunter couldn't dodge, and where just punishment could be soundly administered. Coker of the Fifth stepped in, and closed the door behind him. And Billy Bunter backed round a desk in great dismay.

For days and days and days he had been dodging Coker. Coker of the Fifth had let the sun go down on his wrath—more than once. Now his just wrath was to be wreaked at last.

He came over towards Bunter, and the Owl of the Remove eyed him warily across the desk.

"Got you!" said the Fifth-Former.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Now you're going through it, you young villain!"

"I—I say, Coker, you leave Bunter alone!" said Skinner.

Coker of the Fifth gave him a glare.

"You chipping in?" he asked pleasantly. "I don't mind thrashing

★★★★★

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"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO.,
OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 761.

NEXT
MONDAY!

you, Skinner, before I thrash Bunter, if you're keen on it. Say the word!"

Skinner backed promptly away. Apparently he wasn't keen on it.

"Look here—" began Stott feebly.

"I guess—" began Fisher T. Fish. Bunter's chums were in a difficulty. Certainly if they failed to stand by him now they could hardly continue to bask in Bunter's smiles. Now, with vengeance hovering over him, it was time for Bunter's chums to rally round Bunter.

Never had Skinner & Co. felt less like rallying.

In the tuckshop they were prepared to rally. But rallying round for a fight with the burly Coker was quite another matter.

Coker gave them a contemptuous glare and turned to Bunter again.

"You're for it now!" he announced.

"Look here, what has Bunter done, Coker?" asked Skinner. "You're not a prefect, you know!"

Coker glared at him.

"I daresay you know what he's done," he answered. "I gave him a manuscript to get typed for me in Courtfield, and the money to pay for it. He lost it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you cackle at me, Skinner, I'll tan you!" roared Coker. "He lost my manuscript, and paid the money to get his own rot typed. Not that I care about the seven-and-six. But my manuscript—"

"It wasn't any good!" said Bunter, defensively.

"What?"

"I looked at it," said Bunter. "It was awful rot! You can take my word for it, Coker."

If Billy Bunter expected Coker to be placated by that statement he was over-sanguine. Coker gave him a look that a basilisk might have envied.

"You—you cheeky young scoundrel!" he gasped.

"Oh, really, Coker."

"Come out from behind that desk!" roared Coker.

"I—I say, Coker—"

"Are you coming out?"

"N-n-o."

"Then I'll fetch you."

Coker came trampling round the desk. Billy Bunter dodged round the other

end of it, and made a wild break for the door.

Coker was after him like a shot. Before the Owl of the Remove was half-way to the door Coker's grip was on his collar, and he was swung round.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "Help!"

"Now, you fat sweep—" Whack!

"Yooop! Help! I say, you fellows, buck up!" yelled Bunter, struggling frantically in Horace Coker's grip.

"Stand by a fellow, you know!" Whack!

"Help! Back me up, you fellows!" shrieked Bunter. "Skinner, you cad! Fishy, you rotter— Yaroooh! I'll never speak to you again— Yaroooh!"

Whack! whack!

Skinner & Co. exchanged faltering glances. There were four of them; quite enough to deal even with the burly Coker, if they had put their beef into it. But they were not of the stuff of which heroes are made. They simply hated the idea of tackling Horace Coker in his wrath.

But it was quite certain that if they failed Bunter now, in the hour of peril, they would forfeit his valuable friendship. After leaving him to be licked by Coker of the Fifth, under their very eyes, they could scarcely expect to annex a further share in the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

"I—I say, let's back up, you chaps!" gasped Skinner. "We're four to one— five with Bunter—"

"I—I guess I—I've got to speak to a fellow—" stammered Fisher T. Fish.

"Yaroooh! Help!" roared Bunter.

Whack! whack! whack!

"Back up, you chaps!" exclaimed Skinner desperately.

And, with a courage that surprised himself, Skinner rushed at Coker, and laid violent hands upon him.

Coker was rather taken by surprise. Certainly he never expected fellows like Skinner & Co. to venture to handle him. He had had such experiences with Harry Wharton & Co., but Skinner's crowd were made of different stuff. So he was quite surprised when Skinner grasped him, and in his surprise he was dragged away from Bunter, lost his footing, and went with a crash on the floor.

Skinner, surprised at his success, and,

in fact, almost frightened out of his wits at what he had done, stood and gasped and stared at Coker. But Stott rushed in. The enemy was down; and Stott, at least, realised that it was safer to keep him down.

Stott crashed on Coker as he was rising, and Coker went down again, with Stott sprawling over him.

"Back up!" shrieked Stott.

Skinner took his courage in both hands—what there was of it—and jumped on Coker.

"Come on!" he yelled. "Fishy! Snoopy! Bunter! Come on—quick!"

"We-we-we're coming!" gasped Snoop.

"Keep him down!" roared Stott.

Snoop joined in. Coker grasped Skinner and Stott in his powerful hands and was hurling them off, when Snoop arrived, and dropped on his knees on Coker's crimson face.

Coker's head crashed on the floor, and there was a suffocated yell of anguish from Coker.

The three juniors were punching hard now, only thinking of keeping Coker down; they dared not think of what would happen if he rose. Fisher T. Fish, observing that Coker was already rather over-matched, sailed into the combat, and added his bony fists. Bunter was sitting on the floor and roaring. But as Coker fairly collapsed under four frantically punching juniors, Billy Bunter joined in too.

"Give him jip!" yelled Bunter.

"Gerrooooooh!" came in a muffled roar from Coker.

"Give him socks!" panted Skinner.

"Punch him!" spluttered Fisher T. Fish. "Give him sockdolagers! That's one for your eye, Coker!"

"Yaroooh!"

Horace Coker struggled furiously. But he was over-matched with five foes upon him, especially as he was sprawling on his back and had no chance to rise. Bunter's heavy weight was on his legs, pinning him down. Skinner and Snoop were kneeling on his chest. Fishy and Stott had grasped his arms. And a shower of punches descended on Horace Coker.

Coker of the Fifth had been roughly handled before in his little troubles with the Remove. But never had he been so roughly handled as in this struggle with the funks of the Form. Skinner & Co. had the upper hand, and they pitched into Coker with terrific vim. The roars and howls of Coker rang far beyond the Form-room.

"Yaroooh! Lemme gerrup! I-I-I'll let Bunter off!" gurgled Coker. "Oh, my hat! Oh, my eye! Lemme gerrup! Yooop!"

"He's licked!" yelled Stott. "Kick him out of the Form-room!"

"I say, you fellows, give him some more."

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" The door of the Form-room was thrown open, and the Famous Five stared in. They fairly jumped at the sight of Horace Coker of the Fifth squirming and wriggling in the grasp of Skinner & Co.

"You-ow-ow-ow!" gurgled Coker.

"Draggemoff! Lemme gerrup! Ooooooh!"

"Well, my only hat!" ejaculated Harry Wharton. "Here, let him crawl off now, you fellows, he's had enough."

"He hasn't!" roared Bunter. "Give him some more."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But the Famous Five took compassion on Coker, and they jerked his assailants

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A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO., OF GREYFRIARS. :: By FRANK RICHARDS.

off, and allowed the great Horace to rise. They chortled as they looked at him. Horace Coker looked a wreck—dishevelled, dusty, his collar torn out, his hair like a mop, his trousers rumpled, and his jacket split. He leaned on a desk and pumped in breath.

"Give him some more!" yelled Bunter. "Here, lemme get at him with this ruler!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Coker, the great Coker, limped out of the Form-room as fast as he could limp. He had had enough. He was glad to get into the safety of the Fifth Form passage unpursued.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Very Pally Pals!

"Y'OU giddy heroes—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. roared. Skinner and his comrades were gasping and panting, and they all looked considerably the worse for wear. They had been too much for Coker of the Fifth; numbers had told. But Coker had put up a terrific fight, and the damage he had done was enormous. Coker, indeed, had not received nearly so much damage as he had distributed among Skinner & Co.

Skinner leaned on a desk—Scott sprawled across one—Snoop sat on the floor and pumped in breath. Bunter gurgled spasmodically. Fisher T. Fish was the least damaged of the five, having, with true transatlantic cuteness, kept out of the war until the result was a foregone conclusion. But even Fishy had received some hard knocks—and his long, sharp nose was streaming red, and his bony face had several marks on its bony surfaces.

"Well, you look a jolly crowd!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"The jollifunness is terrific," grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh; "but why did you esteemed funks tackle the terrific Coker?"

Skinner gasped. He almost wondered himself where he had found the nerve to tackle Coker. But he had tackled him: there was no doubt about that. Skinner felt severely damaged; but at least he had proved a claim to the good things that were coming to Bunter.

"We've licked him," he gasped. "The rotten bully came here to bully Bunter, you know—"

"And you chipped in?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove, in amazement.

"Of course!" said Skinner.

"The of-coursefulness is not great," said Hurree Singh, "but the surprise-funness is terrific!"

"Blessed if I catch on," said Frank Nugent; "what on earth did you care whether Coker thrashed Bunter or not?"

"A fellow stands by a pal!" said Skinner, loftily—as loftily as he could while he was squeezing an eye with one hand and dabbing a nose with the other.

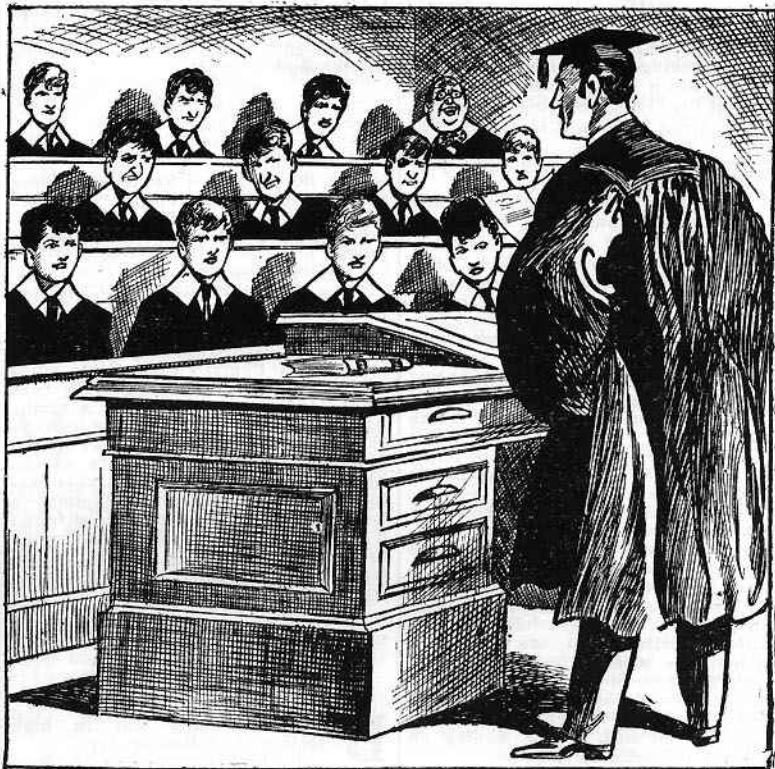
"Oh! Bunter's your pal, is he?" said Johnny Bull, in wonder.

"I say, you fellows, you wouldn't have stood by me like this!" said Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five contemptuously; "you've never chipped in when Coker was after me—"

"No fear!" said Wharton. "You swindled Coker out of seven and six, and you ought to have had a hiding."

"Oh, really Wharton—"

"The swindlefulness was terrific, my esteemed dishonest Bunter," said the



"My boys," said Mr. Queleh, "I am going to read this letter, which has been sent to Bunter, aloud to the whole class. It will be a warning to any boys here who may be deceived by specious advertisements inserted in the papers by unscrupulous rogues!" The form-master took up a letter and the class watched him in breathless interest. (See Chapter 10.)

nabob of Bhanipur. "You asked for the ludicrous thrashing."

"Yah!" snorted Bunter, "not that I want you to chip in. I've got friends to stand by me."

"But—how—why—" said Wharton in amazement.

The captain of the Remove simply couldn't understand it. All the Lower Fourth knew how the Owl had "diddled" the great Coker, and agreed that he fully deserved to be licked for it. And Skinner & Co. were the very last fellows in the school likely to stand by anybody, pal or not, in the hour of danger. Yet they had tackled the burly Coker in defence of William George Bunter. It was simply astounding. The Famous Five, having come in from a cycle spin, had not yet heard the story of the registered letter. That would have enlightened them as to the astonishing heroism of Skinner & Co.

Billy Bunter waved a fat hand at them scornfully.

"You can cut off!" he said. "I don't want your help! I can tell you that you're going to be left out in the cold when my big cheques come along."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The bigfulness of the esteemed cheques will not be terrific, my fat and ridiculous Bunter!"

Billy Bunter sniffed.

"That's all you know!" he said, disdainfully. "Not that I intend to tell you anything about it. I may have had an advance of a few pounds from my agents and I may not. I'm not going to take you into my confidence."

Bob Cherry gave a jump.

"You've got some tin—from Sharkey's!" he stuttered.

"Find out!" retorted Bunter loftily.

"Blessed if it doesn't look like it, though," said Johnny Bull, in wonder. "That would account for Skinner—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five left the form-room, wondering. The din of battle had drawn them thither; they had wondered what was up; but certainly they had not anticipated finding Skinner & Co. engaged in deadly combat with Horace Coker.

Skinner and Co. were not in a hurry to go. They did not feel energetic enough to make a move. Never had they felt so utterly wrecked. One of Skinner's eyes was darkening—every nose in the five was streaming red—and the heroes had too many bumps and bruises, aches and pains, to think of counting them. It was likely to be a long time before Skinner & Co. recovered from that tussle with the hefty Fifth-former.

Fisher T. Fish was the first to limp away. Then one by one the damaged heroes limped off.

They were feeling as if life was scarcely worth living; true, they had retained the valuable friendship of William George Bunter; but Skinner, as he rubbed his eye and nose, and groaned, was feeling doubtful whether the game was worth the candle. He had not expected his new friendship to land him into things like this.

Over prep that evening in Skinner's study there were many deep groans.

Every now and then Skinner, Stott, or Snoop left off prep to rub some injured part.

After prep Skinner looked at his face in the looking-glass, and made some remarks which it was just as well for him that his headmaster could not hear.

"I'm going to have a black eye," he muttered at last.

"Look at my nose!" mumbled Stott.

"And mine!" groaned Snoop.

"That rotter Fishy got off best," said Stott. "He kept out of the worst of it! Just like him."

"I—I suppose it was worth it," said Skinner, after a pause. "Bunter would never have spoken to us again if we'd left him in the lurch. And—among ourselves—the fat fool's worth cultivating now!"

"We've proved our giddy friendship, at any rate!" groaned Stott. "I hope it will turn out to have been worth while."

"Well, there's not much doubt about that. He's got the goods, as Fishy would put it."

"I—I suppose he has. But he's such an awful spoofer!" said Stott. Stott's prize nose seemed to incline him to scepticism, somehow.

Skinner's eyes glinted.

"I don't see how he can be spoofing us this time," he said. "He had the registered letter, and we saw him splashing the money about. But—but if he's taken us in—if I've got this eye for nothing—" Skinner gasped. Words failed him as he thought of the bare possibility. In such a case, boiling oil would be too good for Bunter.

Skinner left the study in a thoughtful mood. He came on Billy Bunter in the passage coming out of No. 7. Bunter gave him a nod and a blink. Then he grinned as he spotted Skinner's darkening eye.

"He, he! You're going to have a black eye, old chap!" said Bunter, apparently seeing something comic in that circumstance.

Skinner suppressed his feelings.

"I stood by you, Billy, old fellow," he murmured.

"You did, old chap," said Bunter, and I shan't forget it. Got any engagement for next Saturday, Skinner?"

"Not yet, Billy," said Skinner, hopefully.

"I was thinking of taking a little party down to the bun-shop at Court-field," explained Bunter airily. "I shall be getting something from my agents before then—"

"Something more you mean?"

"Yes, I—I mean something more," said Bunter hastily. "If you'd care to come, Skinner, I was thinking of a feed at the bun-shop and a motor for the afternoon—"

"Rely on me, old fellow," said Skinner, affectionately.

"Done, then," said Bunter, "I shan't take Toddy. Toddy's just refused to lend me half-a-crown!"

"You don't want Toddy's measly half-a-crown now you're rolling in it," said Skinner.

"Don't I?" said Bunter. "I mean, I—I've been settling up some accounts—you know what fellows are when they find you've got some ready money—dunning a chap for trifles he's almost forgotten. And I've had a bit of a feed—"

"You don't mean to say you've got through the fiver!" ejaculated Skinner, in amazement.

"Jolly nearly," said Bunter. "I'm

not a chap to hoard up money. When I have it, it goes. Plenty more to come."

"Ye-e-es," said Skinner, eyeing Bunter doubtfully.

"And the fact is," said Bunter confidentially, "I actually could do with half-a-crown now, Skinner."

"C-c-c-could you?"

"I could!"

Billy Bunter looked fixedly at Skinner through his big spectacles. Skinner paused and hesitated. Then slowly, painfully, he extracted a half-crown from his pocket.

"Here you are, old top!"

"Thanks!" said Bunter carelessly, and he slipped the coin into his pocket and rolled away.

Skinner looked after him with mingled feelings. If Bunter's cheque was going to materialise, the half-crown was well spent. It was a sprat to catch a whale. And it seemed certain, fairly certain, Skinner considered. But if, after all, the sprat was expended, and there was no whale to be caught—Skinner was torn between contending emotions—a keen desire to be Bunter's dearest friend if he was going to be rich, and a longing to kick him hard if he wasn't. It was really a very painful and troublesome frame of mind to be in.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Pig in Clover!

BILLY BUNTER was in high feather the following day.

If the ten-shilling note from Wally had been a fiver from Sharkey & Co., Bunter could scarcely have been more exalted.

Whether Bunter realised just why Skinner & Co. had rallied round him would be hard to say. It was more agreeable to believe that their sudden friendship and admiration were genuine, and Bunter generally contrived to believe what he wanted to believe. Certainly the flattery he received from his new friends had its effect upon him. He was getting his due at last, like the king coming into his own again, as it were. When he talked his friends listened with admiring attention, and that was quite a new experience for Bunter, and a very pleasant one.

Moreover, this new and touching friendship had an actual cash value. He had already "touched" Skinner for half-a-crown. In the morning he extracted a couple of shillings from Snoop, and by dinner-time he had even succeeded in borrowing from Fisher T. Fish.

When Bunter sought a little loan of five bob from Fishy, the cute transatlantic junior was in a sorely troubled frame of mind. Like Skinner, he was willing to risk a sprat to catch a whale. But, like Skinner, he was haunted by a lingering doubt. In anguish of spirit, Fisher T. Fish turned it over in his mind; but he finally decided to part with the five shillings, though each one, as it went, was like having a tooth drawn out.

Bunter, indeed, had almost forgotten by this time that the remittance had been from his cousin Wally. Skinner & Co. believed that it was an advance from his "agents," and Bunter almost believed it himself—at least, as much as he believed in Bunter Court and the Bunter butler and his celebrated postal-order. Indeed, the hapless Owl's obtuse mind was so confused with numberless prevarications and exaggerations, that it would have been a little difficult for him

to state exactly what he did or didn't believe.

Certainly he believed in Sharkey & Co., and believed that it was only a matter of time—probably a very short time—before the cheques began to roll in. In that, at least, Bunter had the most complete faith. Following the lead of Skinner & Co., more and more of the Remove fellows began to think that there was "something in it." Even Harry Wharton & Co. were perplexed. And Bunter was very indignant that his own study-mate, Peter Todd, remained absolutely sceptical. Peter would not lend even so much as sixpence on Bunter's glorious prospects.

"Don't be mean, Toddy," said Bunter, who, having disposed of Fishy's five shillings internally, in the shape of tuck, was seeking, like Alexander, for fresh worlds to conquer in the same line. "Next week I shall be rolling in it. I can jolly well tell you, Toddy, that it's worth while to stand in with me. Skinner can see that."

"Looks like it!" agreed Toddy.

"Skinner's pretty keen," said Bunter. "He knows what's what. You don't, Toddy."

"Possibly!" assented Toddy. "But there's such a thing as being too keen. These keen chaps over-reach themselves sometimes."

"It's a bit rotten for a fellow to be short of tin when the money's just going to roll in, Toddy."

"Wait for it to roll!" suggested Toddy.

"May come by any post now," urged Bunter. "Sharkey's are taking their time, but they're bound to answer my letter."

Peter looked at him curiously.

"Your letter?" he repeated. "But isn't it understood that they have answered your letter, and that you've had a fiver?"

Bunter jumped. Once more he had forgotten that persons of his own description ought to have good memories.

"Yes, exactly!" he stammered. "That—that's what I meant to say, Toddy. They—they have answered my letter."

"They haven't!" said Peter decidedly. "If an answer comes from Sharkeys', Quelch will know you've disobeyed his order, Fatty, and you'll get a licking."

"Not if there's money in it!" grinned Bunter. "Quelch said himself that if they sent me any money it would be evidence that they were genuine. I'm not afraid of that. Quelch will have to own up when the money comes, you see."

"When it comes!" said Peter. "So it hasn't come?"

Bunter gave another jump.

"I—I mean—"

"If a fiver had come from those rogues Quelch would know already," said Peter.

"Of—of course! He—he does—"

"I see," said Peter, soft as the cooing dove. "And when you just said that Quelch will have to own up, you were using the future tense by mistake?"

"Exactly!" gasped Bunter.

"Dear old Bunter!" said Peter Todd. "Isn't it an odd thing—"

"What is?"

"That after the number of whoppers you've told you still can't tell one properly?" said Toddy. "They say that experience makes fools wise, but it never has that effect on you, old bean."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You got a remittance yesterday," said Peter musingly, "and it came in

that registered letter. But from whom the dickens did it come?"

"From—from Sharkey's."

"Can it!" said Peter. "It wasn't from your father, or Quelch would have let you have the letter without any fuss. He would know the fist. It wasn't from one of your titled relations, because you haven't any."

"Look here, you beast—"

"But—" Peter Todd started, and a light broke on him. "Have you had any answer from Wally—I mean. Mr. Bunter—yet?"

"W-W-Wally?" stammered Bunter.

"Week before last you were writing to your cousin, asking him for a loan."

"I—I wasn't!" howled Bunter.

"You wrote the letter in this study, and asked me how many 'm's' there were in remittance," said Peter.

"I—I didn't!"

"Don't you remember I told you you were a fat rotter to try to stick your cousin for money?" asked Peter.

"No, I don't."

"Don't you remember I said you were a disgusting bounder?"

"Beast!"

"So that's it, is it? I wonder you have the cheek to do it now he's a Form-master here. Good job he's away resting for a bit," said Peter, eyeing Bunter narrowly. "Poor old Wally let you stick him for a loan, and you've let Skinner believe—"

"I—I say, Toddy, you're mistaken, you know. D-d-don't you get saying anything like that to Skinner," stammered Bunter. "He—he would think that—"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"Skinner's a keen chap," he said. "You've said so yourself, Bunty. I'll ask him his opinion."

Billy Bunter looked greatly alarmed.

"I—I say, Toddy, old chap, don't be a beast, you know," he said. "I—I—Skinner's standing me tea in the study to-day, and—and it's going to be rather a spread. He's coming here for me. D-d-don't you get butting in and making Skinner suspicious, you know."

Peter Todd roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! So Skinner's buttering you because you got a remittance from your cousin Wally, and he thinks—"

"Shurrup!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.

There were footsteps in the passage, and Billy Bunter blinked at Toddy in alarm.

"Keep it dark, old chap!" he whispered beseechingly. "I—I say, it comes to the same thing, you know; the cheque's coming along soon, and—and there's a spread in Skinner's study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Peter.

There was a tap at the door, and Harold Skinner looked in. He did not bestow any notice upon Peter Todd, but gave Bunter a friendly and cordial smile.

"Ready, old chap?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter, with a beseeching blink at Peter. "Let—let's get out—"

He was very anxious to get Skinner away from Peter Todd.

Peter glanced at Skinner's darkened eye and reddened nose, and had an internal convulsion. Skinner had earned those adornments as a result of Mr. Wally Bunter's remittance in response to Bunter's cadging letter. Peter could not help wondering what Harold Skinner would have thought if he had known.

"You've got a lovely eye there, Skinner," he remarked.

"I don't mind," said Skinner cheerfully. "I got it standing up for a pal."

"Just like you, Skinner," said Peter admiringly. "Loyal and devoted and all that. Bunter's lucky in his pals. Only a really attractive fellow like Bunter is capable of inspiring these sudden friendships. It was rather sudden, wasn't it?"

"You go and eat coke!" said Skinner sulkily. "Come on, Bunter, old top. We're waiting for you."

Skinner led Billy Bunter away, and Peter Todd winked at the door after it had closed on them. He thought that there would be rather a surprise for Bunter's pals before long—and in his mind's eye Peter Todd could see the sad breaking of a great friendship.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Not Enough for Bunter!

MR. QUELCH had a very grave expression upon his face when he came into the Remove Form-room the following day to take his class. The Remove were all in their places—Billy Bunter with a fat smile on his face. Skinner had found a book for him; Stott had lent him a new pen; Snoop had passed him a packet of toffee; and even Fisher T. Fish, though it gave him an inward pain, had handed Bunter a bag of aniseed balls. Several other fellows had given Bunter smiling nods—his popularity was growing slowly but surely.

Mr. Quelch's glance rested upon Bunter for a moment. Then he went to his desk.

"Something's up this morning!" Bob

Cherry murmured to Harry Wharton, and the captain of the Remove nodded. Most of the juniors noticed that there was "something up," and wondered what it was.

"Before we commence," said Mr. Quelch, and his glance lingered on Bunter again, "there is a matter I must refer to. Bunter!"

The Owl started.

"Yes, sir? It wasn't me, sir!"

"What?"

"If cook thinks it was me, sir—"

"Cook?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"I haven't been near the pantry, sir!"

I—I hope you can take my word, sir!

I—I was in my study at the time—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter, you obtuse boy, it appears that you have surreptitiously visited the pantry—"

"Not at all, sir! I—I was just saying it wasn't me—"

"You should say, 'It was not I,' Bunter," said Mr. Quelch severely.

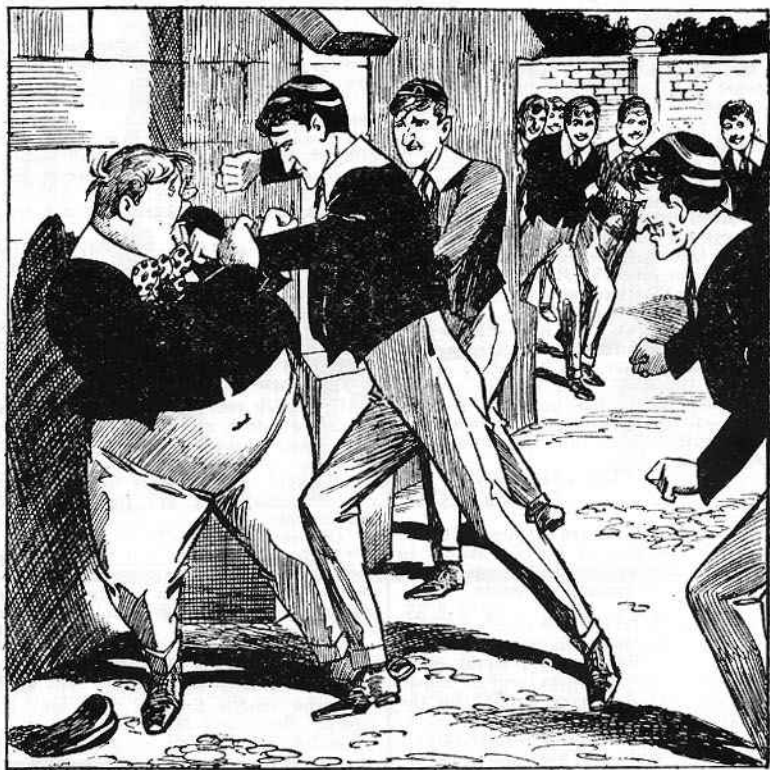
"Yes, sir; I know it wasn't you, sir," said Bunter fatuously. "I'm sure you wouldn't take a cake out of the pantry, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bless my soul! Bunter, be silent! I shall take no notice of the confession you have made, Bunter, as it is not with that matter that I have to deal."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He realised that he had been a little too "previous," as it were.

"The matter I have to deal with, Bunter, is your ridiculous connection with a firm of rogues and swindlers



"I say, you fellows, it's all right now," said Billy Bunter cheerily. "I want you to lend me five guineas—"

He got no farther. Something like an earthquake happened next, as Skinner & Co. fell upon him like one man, and smote him hip and thigh. "I say, wharra you at—help—yaroop—murder—!"

(See Chapter 10.)

NEXT
MONDAY!

"THE SCHOOLBOY DIVERS!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF HARRY WHARTON & CO.,
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calling themselves Sharkey & Co.," said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice.

"Oh, I say—" "A letter has arrived for you this morning," Bunter, from these—these persons."

Bunter started, and his fat face beamed.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Is—is it the cheque, sir?"

"As it is my duty to supervise your correspondence at present, Bunter, I have perused the letter."

"I don't mind, sir, so long as you hand me the cheque," said the Owl of the Remove. "Of course, I want the cheque, sir."

"You densely stupid boy, there is no cheque."

"Well, sir, the—banknote—"

"There is no banknote. Only a boy of your peculiar stupidity could have expected to receive money from these persons," said the Remove master. "I hope, Bunter, that this letter will be sufficient to convince even you that you have been led away by your folly and conceit."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Skinner & Co. exchanged startled glances.

"What the thump—" murmured Stott.

Fisher T. Fish clenched his hands under his desk. Was it a spoof, after all? Had he wasted five shillings, not to mention a bag of aniseed balls? The thought was anguish. Fish grew almost pale.

"Silence, please!" said Mr. Quelch.

"My boys, I am going to read this letter aloud to the whole class. It will be a warning to any boys here who may be deceived by specious advertisements inserted in the papers by unscrupulous rogues."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch took a letter from the pocket of his gown, and the whole class watched him in breathless interest.

Bunter's eyes were large and round behind his big glasses. Skinner & Co. seemed even more anxious than Bunter.

Bunter's pals, in fact, were on tenter-hooks. Skinner passed one hand over his discoloured eye. If he had bagged that eye for nothing—

Mr. Quelch proceeded to read the letter aloud, and the Removites listened with strained attention.

"Dear Sir,—We are now able to give you definite information with regard to your curtain-raiser, the "Mystery of the Moated Grange." Our fee for placing this with a London manager will be £5 5s.—five guineas. On the receipt of your remittance we shall take immediate steps.

"Yours faithfully,
"SHARKEY & CO.

"P.S.—With regard to your letter of the 15th, we are, of course, unable to accede to your request for an advance in cash, as we act merely as agents."

Mr. Quelch laid down the letter and looked at his class. His gaze dwelt, not unkindly, on Bunter. He could make allowances for obtuseness, and he hoped the lesson would be good enough for the egregious youth.

"You understand now, Bunter, I presume," he said. "These unscrupulous persons are, of course, only desirous of extracting money. Their previous communications were intended merely to flatter the vanity of their victims. I greatly fear that there are some members of the public foolish enough to send them

money. I trust, Bunter, that this experience will act as a warning to you, and to any other boys here who may be equally foolish."

Billy Bunter blinked at him. He did not even notice Skinner & Co., who were looking at Bunter as if they could bite him. The postscript had interested Skinner & Co. most. It was obvious now, of course, that that celebrated registered letter, whosoever it had come from, had not come from Sharkey & Co. Skinner and Snoop and Stott looked at Bunter, and at one another, with feelings too deep for words. As for Fisher T. Fish, he groaned aloud.

"You hear me, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!"

"You realise that you have been dealing with unscrupulous rogues?" said Mr. Quelch. "You will take warning by this."

"Not at all, sir!"

"What?"

"Gimme my letter, sir!" said Bunter, coming out before the class.

"Bunter! Is it possible that you are not convinced—" stuttered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter gave him a blink.

"It's all right, sir," he said confidently.

"You see, sir, they told me my play was a real corker—besides, I knew that! Five guineas isn't much for placing it—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Of course, I shall send them the five guineas, sir!" said Bunter.

"You will send them the five guineas," gasped Mr. Quelch. "Boy!"

"That's a mere nothing, sir, out of the enormous sums I expect to receive for the performing rights."

"Bless my soul!"

"And—and I'll tell you what, sir," said Bunter eagerly, "I'm short of money, sir! If you would lend me the five guineas, sir—"

"Lend you the five guineas!" said Mr. Quelch faintly.

"Yes, sir; I'd be ever so much obliged, and, of course, I would return it immediately I got my big cheque—"

"Your—your cheque?"

"Yes, sir; from Sharkey & Co, you know."

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

There was a loud chortle in the Remove. William George Bunter, evidently, was just the kind of person that Sharkey & Co. desired to get into touch with. He had exactly the kind of intelligence that they needed for their business to keep them in a flourishing state.

Mr. Quelch recovered at last. He tore the letter across, and dropped it into the wastepaper basket. Then he picked up his cane.

"Bunter! It is useless to explain to you—obviously, you are too obtuse to understand—"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"I can only forbid you to have any further dealings with these unscrupulous people, and punish you for having done so against my command. Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

Swish!

"Now go to your place, Bunter. Boys, this is not a laughing matter! The next boy who laughs in this class will be caned!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Sudden gravity fell upon the Grey-

friars Remove. And in deep gravity the morning's lessons began.

After lessons there was a surprise for Billy Bunter. He joined Skinner & Co. at once—much to their satisfaction, for they had expected to have to hunt him down. Bunter, apparently, was not yet aware that Messrs. Sharkey's letter had slain, suddenly, and on the spot, the deep and tender friendship of Skinner & Co. had felt for him. They glared at him as he came up—with Hunnish ferocity. The Owl of the Remove did not even notice it. He weighed in cheerily:

"I say, you fellows, it's all right now. I want you to lend me five guineas—"

He got no farther.

Something like an earthquake happened next. It seemed like half a dozen earthquakes rolled into one, to Bunter. Skinner & Co. fell upon him as one man, and smote him hip and thigh.

"I say—wharrer you at—help—yooop—help—fire—yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Bunter's in trouble with his pals!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five rushed to the rescue. They cheerily knocked Skinner & Co. right and left. Bunter was dragged away from his enraged pals, breathless, gasping, and feeling as if he had been under a very large motor-car. And as soon as he recovered his breath, his first remark was:

"I say, you fellows, will you lend me five guineas?"

Billy Bunter wore a mournful look for some days afterwards.

His friends had deserted him—and though perhaps Bunter did not miss their friendship much, he missed their little loans, and tea in their studies. But that was not the worst.

Nobody would lend him five guineas—nobody would even lend him sixpence towards that sum. The chance of a lifetime had to be lost, because he was quite unable to pay the fee demanded by Messrs. Sharkey & Co. It was in vain that Bunter told the Removites, almost with tears in his eyes, what a chance it was. In vain he explained to them that fame and fortune were, so to speak, knocking at his study door and only waiting to be let in. The Remove fellows only chuckled; and there was "nothing doing!"

THE END.

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ANSWERS

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THE BROAD HIGHWAY!

"A READER'S SUGGESTION."
By Harry Wharton.

A SHORT while ago I received a letter from a reader of mine in which he states that:

"I am extremely keen on camping, and have been out on the open trail on several occasions this summer. It's all been very wonderful to get so close to nature as you do when you are camping, and now I go out almost every week-end when I have the opportunity.

"Week-end camps have come to stay in this country. A good many people like myself cannot get away except for the week-end, and that is why the popularity has been soaring so high of late.

"It occurred to me whilst at camp one day that it would be a good stunt to organise a camping club in my district for fellows of all ages. But organising a thing of this description is not an easy matter, to my mind. In fact, I don't really know how to begin. So would you publish an article in 'The Broad Highway' dealing with the organisation of a camping club?

"I am sure all the readers of the good old MAGNET will heartily welcome such a thing. 'Camping Enthusiast.'

I agree with my ardent supporter that this would certainly be a splendid stunt indeed. I also thank him for the suggestion, which has, however, been simmering at the back of my mind for some time, and hope that the hints given in the following article will be of some use to him, and to other chums.

A great number of my readers belong to that splendid movement the Boy Scouts, and, of course, have the opportunity of going to camp very often with the troop to which they belong. But there are still many of my chums who cannot join the scouts, for several reasons—chiefly, I think, because they have not the time during the week days to give to scouting—and to these chaps more than to the others will the camping-club idea appeal.

The organisation of such a club is a thing which requires a certain amount of careful consideration. I do not think a thing of this sort should be rushed through. But I honestly believe that, once started, there will be no lack of support from all sides. The writer of the above letter will no doubt be pleased to hear that, entailing little cost, a camping club can be successfully floated, as you might say.

"Camping Enthusiast" mentions in his letter the popularity of week-end camping. I would like to add, whilst agreeing with my reader, that a week-end camp is one of the finest tonics in the world, and, taken often, acts like a good medicine. It keeps you in perfect health, and affords a tremendous amount of real pleasure.

Frank Nugent, in the accompanying article, tells how they started a camping club at Greyfriars, and how it was organised.

A CAMPING CLUB! By Frank Nugent.

I CANNOT say that the whole idea emanated from my massive brain-box, although I have worked out the process of the organisation. Harry Wharton gave me the idea and asked me to do the rest. Well, that is what I have endeavoured to do—to give you the necessary hints, so that you can set to work at once and carry on the good work.

In organising a camping club there need not be a fixed number of members. It may, and probably will, start in the small way, but there is no doubt about the increase after it has been once founded.

We will say that there are four of you who have banded together to form the club. You hold a meeting at one of your homes, and the very first thing you do is to decide on the name of the club. You might call yourselves:

"The Forest Wanderers," "The Woodland Nomads," "The Pathfinders," "The Highway Clan," "The Free-roadsters," "Sons

(Continued on page 20.)

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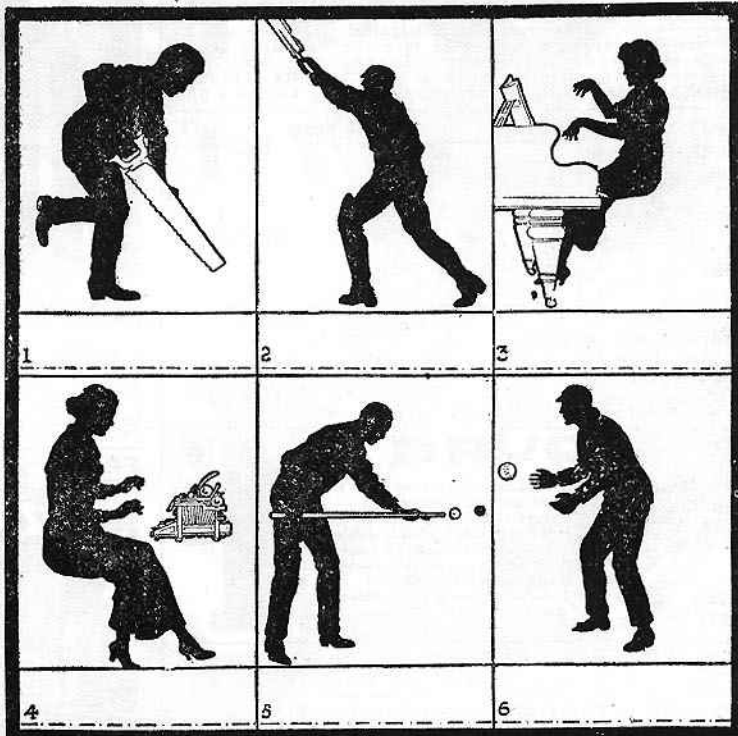
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When you have solved this week's picture-puzzles, keep them by you in some safe place. There will be six sets in all, and when the final set appears you will be told where and when to send your efforts.

You may send as many complete sets of efforts as you please.

The First Prize of £25 will be awarded to the reader who succeeds in submitting a set of solutions exactly the same, or nearest to, the set of solutions in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties, the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. No competitor will be awarded more than one share of the prizes.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Boys' Friend," the "Gem," and the "Popular," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

It must be distinctly understood that the decision of the Editor is final and binding.

THE BROAD HIGHWAY!

(Continued from page 19.)

of the Morning." "Sons of the Forest and Fire."

These are a few names which may help you to obtain the one you want. Get something woodcrafty and campy about it, for it makes it more exciting.

Then, having got your name, you will require a crest, or badge and a totem, which should really be carried to every camp. One of you should design the crest. Draw it on wood, and cut it out with a fretsaw. Then it should be painted, and fixed on the top of an ash-staff. For the smaller crests for the equipment or camp-shirts, work the design on a piece of stuff, either in silk or paint it on. All tents should be marked in this way.

Of the laws of the tribe or club you can best decide whilst at camp, where you get the right atmosphere about the place to give you inspiration. They should be something after this style of thing:

1. Always keep clean and tidy.
2. Behave like a real camper and a man.
3. Uphold the laws of camping.
4. Attend as many camps as possible, and so on. Then follows the club call, or special whistle, and secret handshake, and, if you like, a code.

All these things will make the club more interesting, and it will give you plenty to do and think about at camp.

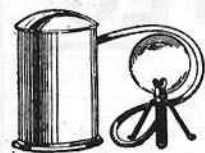
As there is a chairman or president to all societies, so there must be a club leader, whose opinion on any matter is taken—like the editor's decision—as final. Then you will want a secretary—or "scribe," as he should

really be called—whose duty it is to keep the log-book, the accounts, and write the letters where it is necessary to obtain permission to camp on certain parts of the country, and other such secretarial duties.

Another member should be appointed to the position of "keeper of the equipment," and should see that the camping paraphernalia is in good order, and repairs made where necessary—a duty, I might add, which, whilst being hard, is extremely interesting. All work other than that mentioned should be shared by the rest of the members. "Many hands make light work." Week-day meetings can be held, and as many week-end camps as possible.

(There will be another interesting and instructive article dealing further with the organisation of a Camping Club next week.)

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