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POOR OLD BUNTER!

(A pathetic scene from the long complete school story of Harry Wharton & Co., the famous Chums of Greyfriarsin, side.)

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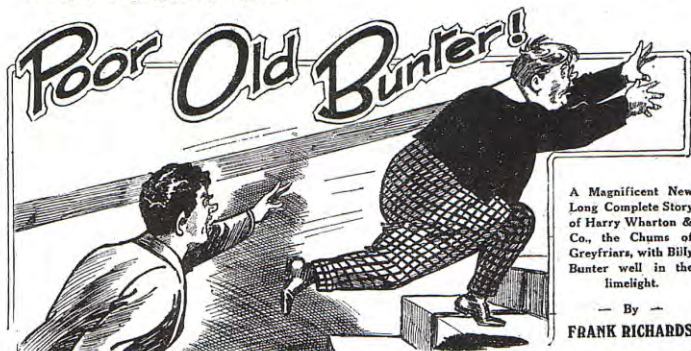
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MAGNET Closing date, April 15th.

BEATING ANANIAS! As an inventor of schoppers, Billy Bunter of the Remove knows no equal. The trouble is that people who have recourse to schoppers usually have bad memories. In this case, Bunter's schoppers are rewarded with "schoppers" of a different sort!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars, with Billy Bunter well in the limelight.

— By —

FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Very Rough on Coker!

"HELP!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Help!" roared Billy Bunter.

Bunter was coming up the Remove staircase.

Generally, Billy mounted that staircase with the speed and energy of a superannuated tortoise. He had a great deal of weight to carry up with him.

But on the present occasion Bunter was putting on steam.

In fact, he fairly flew, and as he flew he roared:

"Help! Rescue! Help!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked out of Study No. 1, which was close to the landing. They stared at the fat junior, amazed at the celerity of his movements. Evidently Bunter had hitherto unsuspected reserves of energy somewhere within his extensive circumference.

"I say, you fellows! Help!"

"What the dickens—"

"Coker!" exclaimed Nugent.

The cause of Bunter's amazing burst of speed was suddenly revealed, as Horace Coker of the Fifth Form came into view on the lower landing.

Coker, too, was putting on speed. Evidently it was a stern chase.

"Stop, you fat villain!" roared Coker.

"Help!"

Up the Remove staircase came Coker of the Fifth, hot on the track of the fat Removeite.

Bunter tottered on to the landing, with Coker close behind. He had won by a short length.

But in a moment more Coker's muscular grasp would have been upon him but for the presence of the Famous Five of the Remove.

Fortunately for Bunter, Harry Wharton & Co. were on the spot.

The cause of the trouble was quite unknown to them. It was extremely probable that Billy Bunter had been looking for trouble and finding it. A smear of jam on his face hinted that he

had been near somebody's study cupboard.

But that was a minor consideration—quite a trifle. The Remove passage was sacred territory. Fellows of other Forms were not allowed to throw their weight about, so to speak, in that passage. Even prefects of the Sixth Form were eyed rather doggedly when they made incursions into the Remove quarters. As for the Fifth or the Fourth, if they came up the Remove staircase on hostile errands, the proper course of action was well known—they had to be rolled down again.

For which reason Harry Wharton & Co. intervened promptly between Billy Bunter and his pursuer; and Coker, grasping at Bunter, was grasped in his turn, and he came down on the landing, smiting the hard floor with a mighty smile.

The roar that came from Coker of the Fifth echoed from one end of the passage to the other.

Bunter staggered against the wall, gasping for breath.

"I say, you fellows, collar him! Roll him down! Oh dear! Groogh! Keep him off! Rag him, you know! Ow!"

"Let go!" roared Coker, struggling.

"Roll up, Remove!" shouted Bob Cherry.

But the Remove fellows did not wait to be called. Six or seven cheery juniors were already rushing to the spot. A Fifth-Form invasion was more than enough to call the merry Removeites to the defence of their staircase.

"Collar him!"

"Bump him!"

"Roll him down!"

"Give him jip!"

Coker of the Fifth was a hefty fellow. He gave the Famous Five plenty of trouble to hold him, sturdy juniors as they were. But half a dozen pairs of hands were added to those of Harry Wharton & Co.

Coker still struggled. But his struggles were quite unavailing.

Bob Cherry had hold of his collar, Johnny Bull of one arm, and Frank Nugent of another. Hurree Singh and

Harry Wharton had an ear each. Vernon-Smith took possession of his hair with both hands. Redwing and Squiff captured his legs.

Ton Brown found room on Coker's prominent nose for a good grip. Other fellows grasped where they could. In fact, so many juniors had arrived swiftly on the scene that there was hardly enough of Coker to go round. The Removeites almost fell over one another in their keenness to get at this cheeky invader of their territory.

"Leggo!" Coker spluttered helplessly. "I'll smash you! I'll pulverise you! Yaroooh! Leggo my hair! Ooooooh! Leave my nose alone! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Roll him down!"

"Roll him over!"

"Pitch into him, you fellows!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"Chasing a fellow like this, you know! I haven't been near his study! I never touched his jam-tarts! I wouldn't!"

"You look as if you'd touched somebody's!" grinned Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Roll him down!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Yaroooh! Leggo!" spluttered Coker.

The struggle on the landing was terrific. But Coker went rolling down, with five or six of the Remove. They reached the lower landing together, and Coker's state by that time was shocking. His hair was a mop, his face was crimson, his collar and tie gone, his coat curling over his head and split up the back, and most of the buttons off his waistcoat. He sprawled on the landing, and panted spasmodically.

"Roll him down!"

"There was a rush of the Removeites after Coker.

On the upper landing Billy Bunter stood and grinned breathlessly.

Coker of the Fifth, it was fairly clear, had caught the fat junior raiding his study cupboard, and had given chase. But he was paying dearly for his temerity in pursuing a Removeite into the Remove passage. It was not the first time that Coker of the Fifth had been

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temerous, and had suffered for it. Improperly speaking, Remove Fugs ought to have treated Coker of the Fifth with deep respect, and trembled at his frown. Coker always seemed to expect that sort of thing; but between what Coker expected and what Coker received there was a great gulf fixed.

"Ho, ho, he!"

Bunter chortled breathlessly. Coker was going down the lower stairs now, escorted by half the Remove. The Remove seemed to be enjoying it. Not so Coker. Coker's howls and threats were almost bloodcurdling. Bunter, blinking down at the scene through his big spectacles, chortled.

A number of buttons belonging to Coker were strewn on the Remove landing, as well as a collar and a tie. Bunter picked up the collar and tie and pitched them over the banisters. And then he noted an envelope lying near his feet—an envelope with "Theatre Royal, Courtfield," printed on the outside. Evidently it had dropped from one of Coker's pockets in the tussle.

Bunter picked it up, and was about to throw it after the collar and tie, when he paused. It was possible that there was something of value in the envelope, in which case it certainly ought not to be thrown downstairs into the midst of a struggling mob. Bunter held it in his fat hand, and blinked down at the enjoyable scene. Really, from the look of things, it seemed that Coker would never get back to the Fifth Form passage all in one piece.

Luckily for Coker, the terrific uproar brought Mr. Quelch on the scene. The master of the Remove arrived with a frown and a cane.

"Ware backs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Cave!"

Coker was instantly released. He sprawled, spluttering on the stairs, what time the Remove scamped up breathlessly to their own quarters, like rabbits to a burrow. So rapid was the retreat that by the time Mr. Quelch had fairly arrived only Coker remained to meet his view—with just a glimpse of vanishing legs on the Remove staircase.

THE SECOND CHAP.

Legal Advice!

PETER TODD came back into Study No. 7, in the Remove passage, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief. Coker's elbow had jammed on Peter's nose in the fray, with rather damaging results to the nose. Billy Bunter, sitting in the study armchair, grinned. Peter's nose, like Marian's in the ballad, was red and raw, and Bunter seemed to find it entertaining.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "Where did you dig up that nose, Toddy?"

Peter gave him a glare.

"Is that the way you thank a chap for coming to your help?" he inquired. "I admit I was an ass! A licking from Coker would do you good."

"Oh, Coker couldn't lick me!" said Bunter cheerily. "I should really have chuckled him downstairs, you know, only—only—"

"Can it!" snapped Peter. "I suppose you have been burgling in his study. What did you amox this time, you fat Hun?"

"I haven't been in his study, and I didn't touch the jam-tarts. Besides, what a rotten fuss to make over a few jam-tarts!" said Bunter scornfully.

"I'm prepared to pay for them when—when my postal-order comes. Not that I had them, you know."

"You ought to stick to the truth, Bunter. You haven't brains enough to tell lies," advised Peter.

"Beast!"

"Well, shut up, now, there's a good chap."

Peter Todd sat down at the study table, upon which lay several large volumes of legal aspect. Peter, as a solicitor's son, took an interest in the law, and in leisure hours pursued what he was pleased to call his legal studies. Billy Bunter sat and blinked at him as he turned the musty pages with a thoughtful frown on his brow.

"I say, Peter—" began the Owl of the Remove.

"Dey up!"

"I suppose a fellow can speak in his own study!" said Peter warily.

"What you suppose isn't evidence," answered Peter Todd. "The actual fact is, that if you jaw, I shall take a five-bat to you. That's a tip."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Silence in court!" said Peter.

"What's the good of all that rot, anyhow?" asked Bunter impatiently. "You ain't old enough to learn how to prove that black's white and white's black, and that things mean what they don't mean, and don't mean what they really do mean. A fellow requires brains to learn all that; so where do you come in, Peter?"

Peter glanced round, apparently in search of the five-bat. Bunter went on hastily:

"Besides, I want to ask your advice, Peter—legal advice."

"Oh!" said Peter, relaxing at once.

Keen youth as Peter was, it was usually easy enough for a fellow to pull his leg on that topic. Undoubtedly the schoolboy lawyer liked to be asked for legal advice.

"That's it, Toddy," said Bunter. "Suppose—"

"Are you stating a suppositious case?" asked Toddy. "I require complete frankness from my clients."

"Your what?" ejaculated Bunter.

"Clients. Now, state your case."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You don't utter frivolous ejaculations in a solicitor's office, Bunter. State your case, and be brief."

Peter's manner was quite business-like.

"Well, suppose—"

"I decline to suppose anything. State your case."

"Look here, Peter, real lawyers shut up, and let their clients talk, and rook them afterwards, you know."

"Well, I'm not going to rook you afterwards, so that makes a difference. Are you going to state your case, or do you prefer to take your affairs to another solicitor?" demanded Peter.

"Well, suppose a chap went into a study—it might be Coker's study or it might not—"

"I think very probably it might, in this case," grinned Peter. "Get on."

"Suppose the fellow—it might be Coker—suspected him of bagging his jam-tarts, and he was perfectly innocent—"

"I shouldn't suppose that if I saw a smear of jam on his chin."

Bunter hastily drew his sleeve across his mouth.

"Suppose the fellow chased him up the stairs, and was going to hammer him jolly hard. And then suppose that, while he was being kicked out, he dropped something in the tussle?"

"Oho!" said Peter, watching the Owl

of the Remove very attentively. "Did Coker drop half-a-crown or something?"

"No, he didn't. It wasn't money."

"Well, I think even you wouldn't freeze on to money," admitted Peter.

"What did Coker drop?"

"I didn't say it was Coker. The fellow's name might have been—been Smith, or Jones, or Todd—some common name," said Bunter.

"You cheeky ass!"

"Real lawyers don't call their clients names, Peter."

"Get on with the washing."

"Suppose the fellow dropped an envelope," argued Bunter. "Then the other fellow picked it up—see?"

"I see."

"Would he be entitled to keep it, as—as a punishment to Coker—I mean, the other fellow—coming after him like a wild Hun?" said Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove eyed Toddy quite anxiously through his big spectacles.

Peter grinned.

He did not need telling that Bunter had bagged something belonging to Coker of the Fifth, and that his fat conscience was a little uneasy about keeping it. That was why he wanted Peter's advice. If the advice agreed with his own intentions, he would be able to carry out those intentions, and feel that the moral responsibility was shifted upon his adviser. And, like most clients who consult legal gentlemen, Bunter wanted advice that coincided with his own views, already fixed.

But Peter was not yet a solicitor in practice, and, as he had no fee to expect from this client, he answered rather in the style of a Greyfriars fellow than of a legal gentleman.

"You fat toad! If you've got something of Coker's, you've got to hand it back at once—see?"

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"And I'll jolly well lick you if you don't," went on Peter, departing still further from all legal precedents.

"There's another thing," said Bunter hastily. "Suppose there was no name on the ticket?"

"What ticket?"

"Did I say ticket? Now, I wonder what made me say ticket?" said Bunter.

"Of course, I don't mean a ticket. Don't run away with the idea that there was a theatre ticket in the envelope, Peter."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Besides, a ticket for a special matinee on Friday wouldn't be any use to me, would it, as I can't get off from lessons on a Friday," said Bunter. "Wednesdays or Saturdays would be all right. Rather fatheaded to give matinees at the Theatre Royal on a Friday afternoon, isn't it, Peter?"

"Perhaps Coker has leave from Mr. Prout," said Toddy. "Anyhow, you're going to take his ticket back to him, Bunter."

"I've no proof that it's Coker's," said Bunter. "The only evidence that it's Coker's is that it was in an envelope addressed to Coker."

"That's enough evidence for anybody but a pickpocket," answered Toddy.

"Take it back to him."

"Besides, now I've put the envelope in the fire, there isn't any evidence at all!" argued Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! What's the price of the ticket?"

"Ten-and-six."

"Just like Coker to blow ten-and-six on a silly matinee," said Peter Todd. "Some fellows have more money than sense. Anyhow, it's Coker's, and you've got to hand it to him—see?"

"Of course, I was only putting a case," said Bunter. "There really isn't any

ticket at all, Peter. But, supposing there was, wouldn't a fellow be justified in keeping it—practically fining Coker ten-an-six for—for assault and battery, you know?"

"When you're sitting on the Bench, old man, you can fine people for assault and battery," said Peter. "At present you're only sitting on an armchair. Besides, judges don't put fines in their own pockets."

"Don't they?" asked Bunter. "What do they fine people for, then? I expect there are pickings, anyhow."

Peter Todd looked round once more. This time he spotted the fives-bat, and picked it up. He rose from the table.

"Now, Bunter, I've given you advice as a lawyer—to keep your hands from picking and stealing, and to give Coker his theatre ticket back. I'm going to back up my legal advice with this fives-bat—see?"

Bunter jumped up.

"Look here, you beast!"

"Are you taking that ticket back to Coker?"

"No!" roared Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove dodged towards the door, as Peter grasped at him. But the schoolboy lawyer's grasp closed on his collar, and Bunter roared in anticipation.

"Now, Bunter!"

"Beast! Leggo!"

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!"

"Are you taking that ticket back to its owner?"

"No!" yelled Bunter.

Whack!

"Whoop! I—I mean yes!" roared the fat junior. "Yow-ow! Leave off! Don't I keep on telling you I'm going to Coker this minute?"

Peter Todd chuckled, and released the Owl of the Remove.

"Hook it, then!" he said.

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled from the study. Peter Todd returned to the table with a grinning face, and sat down to his legal volumes once more, whereupon the grin was replaced by a thoughtful frown. In a few minutes Peter forgot the existence of William George Bunter, and of Coker of the Fifth, and of the Theatre Royal at Courtfield. As for Bunter, he rolled away from Study No. 7, but he did not roll in the direction of Horace Coker's quarters. In spite of the excellent legal advice he had received, the Owl of the Remove did not seem to have made up his fat mind to act upon it.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Whose Ticket?

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were at tea in Study No. 1 when a fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered in at the door.

Five voices answered Bunter all at once.

"Get out!"

"I say, you fellows, would you like to go to a matinee on Friday afternoon?"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

The Famous Five stared at Bunter. Naturally, when the fattest fellow in the Remove butted into the study at teatime, they took it for granted that he was in search of the loaves and fishes. That he had come there to offer anybody a little treat naturally did not cross their minds for a moment. So they were surprised.



"Roll him down!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Yaroooo! Leggo!" howled Coker. The struggle on the landing was terrific. But Coker went rolling down with five or six of the Remove atop of him. "He, he, he!" chortled Billy Bunter.

(See Chapter 1.)

"The fact is," said Bunter, blinking at them, "I've got a seat at the Theatre Royal for the matinee on Friday. My pater sent it to me; but I don't really want it. You see, Mr. Quelch isn't likely to give me leave from class. You know what an old blighter Quelch is. He might give one of you fellows leave. You're his favourites."

"You mean, we're not lazy loafers, and don't worry him in class with dashed laziness and fattedness," growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull! I sha'n't give you the ticket," said Bunter.

"Rats!"

"What about you, Wharton? It's a ten-and-six stall, you know—my uncle always sends me good seats."

"Your uncle?" said Harry.

"Yes; my Uncle George."

"It was your pater a minute ago."

"Oh! I mean—"

"You mean that you're gassing, and haven't a theatre ticket at all?" suggested Frank Nugent.

"The gasfulness is probably terrific," remarked Hurrey Jamset Ram Singh.

"The sealfulness is the belieffulness, my esteemed fabricating Bunter."

"Yah! Look there!"

Billy Bunter jerked a square of cardboard from his pocket, and threw it on the study table.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at it.

Undoubtedly, it was a card of admission to the special matinee at the Theatre Royal, Courtfield, on Friday, at 2.30, stall No. 101, price 10s. 6d.

"Well, seeing is believing," said Bob Cherry, with a laugh. "Did your uncle and your pater go halves in getting you that ticket, Bunter?"

"Exactly."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, there's the ticket," said Bunter. "It's a Shakespeare play—'Hamlet,' you know. Hamlet's by Shakspeare."

"Is it really?" asked Nugent, with deep sarcasm. "Sure it's not by Bernard Shaw or Martin Clifford?"

"Oh, quite!" said Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was deaf and blind to sarcasm. "It's Shakespeare right enough. I remember we had it in the literature class; and Mr. Quelch distinctly said it was one of Shakespeare's plays."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to crackle at. Now, as a matter of fact, I'm not keen on Shakespeare; I prefer the pictures myself," said Bunter. "I really wish Uncle Robert had sent me the money instead."

"Uncle which?"

"Robert."

"Not George?"

Billy Bunter hesitated a moment. He was aware that a certain class of persons ought to have good memories. But he told too many fibs to be able to give much thought to them individually.

"My Uncle Robert George," he explained. "I call him sometimes Uncle Robert and sometimes Uncle George—see? Well, as I'm not going, I thought one of you fellows might like to go."

"That's jolly kind of you, anyhow," said Wharton, in surprise.

"Well, I mean to be kind; I'm a kind-hearted chap," said Bunter. "It's a half-guinea ticket, and I'd like you to have it, Wharton."

"Thanks."

"I'd let you have it at ten shillings."
 "Oh!"
 "Dash it all, nine-and-six!" said Bunter, with reckless generosity. "Is it a go, old chap?"

Harry Wharton laughed.
 "Not quite!" he answered. "I don't suppose a fellow could get off from class on Friday; and I haven't nine-and-six to waste, anyhow."

"From a pal like you, Harry, old chap, I'd take nine shillings."

"You'll have to find a pal quite unlike me to hand over nine shillings," answered the captain of the Remove.

"What about you, Franky?"

"Nothing about me," answered Nugent, laughing.

"You've got more sense than those silly asses, Bob. You'd like to see a Shakespeare matinee," said Bunter. "I'll use my influence with Mr. Quelch to get you an exeat—there!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"My dear man, if you're keen to sell that ticket, I'll give you all the money I've got about me for it."

"How much is that?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Three farthings."

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, Inky, you ought to have that ticket," said Bunter, blinking anxiously at the Nabob of Bhanipur. "It will improve your mind, you know."

"My esteemed mind is not in need of the improvement, my worthy fat Bunter."

"Do you no end of good," urged Bunter. "You hear jolly good English in Shakespeare; and look what a queer lingo you talk."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't you know that Inky learned English from the best moonshies in Bhanipur, and thinks it much better than the home-grown article?" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows, don't you want that ticket?" asked Bunter. "I'll take seven-and-six for it. I don't want it wasted after my father sent it specially to me, you know."

"Your father? Not your Uncle Robert George?" chuckled Wharton. "Where on earth did Bunter get that ticket, you fellows?"

"Found it, I should think."

"In somebody's pocket, most likely," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"I think we'd better keep that ticket and put a notice on the board, inquiring after the owner!" suggested Nugent.

Billy Bunter grabbed up the ticket in a great hurry.

"Look here, you beakts—"

"Hand it over, Bunter," said Wharton. "You can place it in my hands as Form captain. I'll find the owner."

"It's mine!" roared Bunter indignantly. "It came in a registered letter this morning from my Uncle Reginald."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! Go and eat coles, the lot of you!" snapped Bunter, and he jammed the theatre ticket in his pocket again, and rolled out of Study No. 1, leaving the chums of the Remove laughing.

Whether that theatre ticket really belonged to Bunter or not the Famous Five could not determine. But one fact was quite certain. There was no sale for it in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

No Exeat!

BILLY BUNTER wore a frown upon his fat face when he sat down in the Remove Form-room the following morning.

The ticket for the Courtfield theatre still reposed in his pocket.

Bunter had quite satisfied himself that he was justified in keeping that ticket.

Not that Bunter was a dishonest fellow. He would have repudiated the suggestion with scorn.

Bunter never did anything that was against his conscience. But there was no doubt that his conscience was remarkably accommodating.

He had thought the matter out, and Bunter's fat brain moved in mysterious ways its wonders to perform.

In the first place, Coker was a beast, and had chased Bunter up the Remove staircase, and Bunter had had a narrow escape from a terrific licking. Coker, therefore, deserved to be fined ten-and-six. Bunter, as the aggrieved party, had a right to the fine.

Then, at the time of that stern chase, Bunter and Coker had been in a state of warfare. There was no doubt on that point. And spoils from the enemy were just spoils in times of hostility.

Moreover, there was no name on the ticket, and consequently no evidence that it was Coker's at all.

Besides, Coker had not come up to the Remove passage inquiring after any lost ticket. If Coker did not inquire after his lost ticket, the presumption was that he hadn't lost one. If he had lost one and hadn't yet discovered the loss, that was Coker's look-out.

For all these reasons Billy Bunter felt that the ticket was justly his. Moreover, possession was nine points of the law, and the ticket was undoubtedly in Bunter's possession, which made nine points in Bunter's favour and only one in Coker's.

As he sat down in the Form-room Bunter was not worrying about the morality of his proceedings. He had settled that matter with his elastic conscience. Still, he looked worried. He had offered that ticket, at reduced prices, to half the Remove, and he had found no takers.

It was improbable that the Remove master would grant a member of his Form an exeat to go to a theatre—very improbable. Without an exeat on Friday the ticket was valueless. And the Remove fellows were not very keen on Shakespeare, anyhow. The general opinion in the Remove was that they had enough of the immortal William in class. Some fellows thought they had even too much. They were willing to admit that Shakespeare was a good thing, but maintained that it was possible to have too much of a good thing.

So there were no takers in the Remove for Bunter's ticket. Fisher T. Fish had offered him two cents, and that was all, and Bunter had scornfully rejected that offer.

Bunter was no keener on William Shakespeare than other fellows in the Lower Fourth. Still, a theatre was a theatre, and ever so much better than classes. So he had made up his fat mind to go himself—if he could get the necessary exeat.

That, as Hamlet himself might have said, was the question.

Bunter was not a favourite pupil with his Form master. His laziness was phenomenal. He took more trouble to dodge work than other fellows took to get it done.

Mr. Quelch tried to be patient with

his obtuseness, though perhaps he did not always succeed. With laziness he could not be expected to keep very patient. Consequently, Bunter was often in hot water.

Still, he had resolved to try his luck. Quelch might be rather less of a beast than usual, and might give him an exeat. There was nothing to lose even if there was nothing to gain.

Unluckily, Bunter's construe that morning was even worse than usual. Most of the previous evening had been spent in futile attempts to sell Coker's matinee ticket. Bunter had had little time for prep. Mr. Quelch, as usual, disregarded the fact that a busy fellow like Bunter couldn't always find time to mug up Virgil.

He was bitterly sarcastic over Bunter's "con."

Bunter was quite in a perspiration by the time Mr. Quelch had finished with him, and he realised that his chances of an exeat were slimmer than ever.

Bunter decided to wait till classes were over for the morning, and to tackle Mr. Quelch as the juniors went out.

So when the signal to dismiss was given, and the Remove marched away, the fat junior paused at the Form master's desk.

Mr. Quelch, busy looking over papers, did not notice him.

The Form-room cleared, excepting for Bunter, who stood by the high desk, waiting to catch Mr. Quelch's eye, and blinking nervously at the Remove master's severe face bent over the papers.

He coughed at last, and Mr. Quelch gave quite a start as he looked up.

"Dear me! What are you waiting for, Bunter?"

"I—I—"

"Well?"

"If you please, sir—"

"Kindly be brief, Bunter."

"Yes, sir. Can—I have leave on Friday afternoon, sir? It's very important."

Mr. Quelch froze him with a look.

"Do you mean leave from class, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you consider that you have made so much progress with your lessons that you can afford to miss a class?"

That was Mr. Quelch's way. Putting questions to a fellow, like that old toad Socrates, as Skinner had described it. A fellow couldn't answer Mr. Quelch's questions as he would have liked to answer. Bunter would have liked to reply to Mr. Quelch's question in the affirmative, but he was aware that it would not do.

So he remained silent, blinking at Mr. Quelch.

"Are you aware, Bunter, that you are at Greyfriars for purposes of education?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter, departing from the truth, as usual. Bunter wasn't there for any such purpose, if he could help it.

"Is it your belief, Bunter, that your education will be furthered by leave from classes when you are already the most backward boy in the Form?"

"Oh, sir!"

Really, Bunter did not quite know how to answer these leading questions. He wondered why the beast couldn't say "Yes" or "No," and have done with it. But he could not venture to put even that thought into words.

"No, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, coming to the point at last. "I shall give you no leave on Friday, or any other day. I should hesitate to do so, even if you were not the idlest boy in

the Form. I should require a very good reason to be given for such a departure from rule. As the matter stands, you are the very last boy in the Remove whom I should think of excusing from lessons. You may go, Bunter."

"But, sir—"
"I said you may go, Bunter," said Mr. Quetch, in a formidable voice.

But Bunter was desperate. Leaving that matinee ticket unused was a sheer waste of ten-and-sixpence. True, it was Coker's ten-and-six. But that did not affect the matter. Bunter was not going to waste ten shillings and sixpence if he could help it. So he plunged on.

"Yes, sir! Thank you, sir! But if you'll let me explain—"

Mr. Quetch held up his hand.
"I desire to hear no pretexts or excuses for idleness, Bunter. Leave the Form-room!"

"But, sir—" gasped Bunter.

"Leave the Form-room!" exclaimed Mr. Quetch. "Another word, and I shall cane you, Bunter!"

Bunter fairly bolted.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

No Sale!

"ROTTER!"

"Hard cheese, old fat man!" Skinner and Snop were quite sympathetic. Generally they did not waste much sympathy on Billy Bunter. But they were interested in the half-guinea ticket. Half-guinea theatre tickets looked as if there was cash about somewhere.

Besides, Skinner of the Remove had an idea in his astute brain on the subject of that theatre-ticket. Skinner, as usual, was on the make; and when he was on the make he could be sympathetic, and even affectionate.

"Isn't it the Bunt?" said Bunter, glad of the sympathy, though he would have preferred an exact. "Here's a stall at the theatre, for a Shakespeare play, too—my pater's blue half-guinea on this ticket, and now it's got to be wasted. Quetchy was telling us the other day in class that we ought to give our time to the study of Shakespeare—great master of English, and so on—lots of pills and all that kind! Now I want to go to a Shakespeare play, he won't let me off! He didn't even give me a chance to tell him it was Shakespeare! Just snatched a chap's head off, you know."

"Your pater must have been an ass," said Snop. "I'd rather have a bob wot at the pictures, myself!"

"So would I," agreed Bunter. "Sell, a stall at the theatre is a stall at the theatre, you know, and it's expensive. Not that that matters to my uncle—he's got lots of money!"

"What about trading it?" said Skinner.

"I've tried nearly every chap in the Remove," said Bunter ruefully. "But of course, they know they can't get off on a Friday."

"But there's the seniors," said Skinner. "The fact is, Bunter, I think I can help you to dispose of that ticket."

Bunter brightened up.

"Who's the man?" he asked.

Skinner winked.

"That's telling. But I happen to know of a senior chap who's got leave on Friday; I heard him mention it yesterday. I dare say he would be glad to have that ticket at half-price, say."

"Well, tell me who the chap is, and I'll tickle him after dinner," said Bunter eagerly. "I—I'll let you have sixpence off what I got for the ticket, Skinner."

"Not good enough, old pippin. Halves!"

"Rats!" said Bunter promptly.

"Keep your old ticket, then!" said Skinner, and he walked away with his hands in his pockets.

"Beast!"

Bunter went in to dinner with the ticket still in his pocket. After dinner he tried several fellows in the Fourth Form, offering the half-guinea ticket at huge reductions. But there were no takers. Nobody in the Fourth expected that Mr. Capper would let him off class on Friday afternoon, even to see a Shakespeare play. Fry of the Fourth made a sporting offer of sixpence; but Bunter had not yet come down to that. He rejected Fry's offer with a snort.

Then he sought Skinner again—as that astute youth fully expected. Bunter was willing by this time to let the half-guinea stall go for half-a-crown. After all, he had got it cheap!

"You might tell a fellow that chap's name, Skinner," he said persuasively. "If he's got an exact for Friday, it stands to reason he'd be glad of a stall at the theatre at half-price!"

"Likely enough," assented Skinner. "Is it halves?"

"No, it isn't!" snapped Bunter. "Good-bye, old man!"

"You're a mean beast, Skinner, but—but—it's halves, if we get five bob for the ticket," said Bunter desperately.

"Good-bye, old man!"

"No jolly fear! I'll see the chap and see you afterwards!"

Skinner smiled genially.

"I'll see him, and see you afterwards," he suggested.

"Look here, Skinner—"

"Look here, Bunter—"

"If you don't trust me, Skinner—"

"I may be an ass," remarked Skinner, "but I'm not a silly ass!"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Let's go together," said Skinner.

"The chap's in the quad now, and I'll come with you, and see how much he hands out for the ticket—what?"

"Oh, all right!"

"Come on, then!"

Skinner started towards the Cloisters where Coker, Potter, and Greene of the Fifth were lounging. Bunter blinked at them, and blinked at Skinner in alarm. A sudden dawning suspicion occurred to him.

"I—I—I say, is it Coker?" he gasped.

"Just Coker!" assented Skinner.

"Oh, my hat!"

"What are you stopping for?" asked Skinner, puzzled. "Coker's money is as good as anybody else's, isn't it?"

"Nunno!"

Bunter halted. Certainly he had no idea of offering that ticket for sale to Coker of the Fifth!

Skinner stared at him.

"What's biting you now?" he demanded.

"Coker's just the swanking sort of ass to give you the full price for the ticket, if you pull his leg a bit. I shouldn't wonder if he handed out the whole half-guinea—it would be like him, in his swanking style."



"M-my cousin's gone!" wailed Bunter. "It's awful, you know—boo-hoo!"
"How did it happen?" asked Harry Wharton. "Influenza," said Bunter. "He fell into the Seine while he was out boating, and caught pneumonia, and was drowned." "Influenza, pneumonia, and drowning, all at once!" grinned Wharton. "Enough to kill any chap, I should say!" (See Chapter 6.)

"I—I—" Bunter stammered. "Oh, come on!" said Skinner impatiently. "I know he's got an exeat for Friday; I tell you I heard him mention it to Tomlinson of the Fifth. He's just the man you want to see!"

"I—I—" "Come on, Bunter! Why, my hat! Where are you going?" shouted Skinner.

Billy Bunter did not delay to explain where he was going. He went. Skinner stared after him angrily.

The sale was apparently off for no reason that Harold Skinner could understand. But clearly it was off.

"Bunter!" yelled Skinner. Bunter disappeared into the School House.

"Well, of all the silly owls!" exclaimed Skinner, much annoyed and disappointed.

Bunter's mysterious conduct was past his fathoming. After a little reflection, however, Skinner wondered whether it was because of the Owl's little trouble with Coker the previous day. Possibly he did not care to venture too near Horace Coker, in case the incident of the raised tarts was not quite forgotten. Skinner decided that that was it, and he decided to undertake the negotiation himself. So he walked across to Coker & Co., who eyed him with the disdain naturally felt by Fifth-Form men for mere fags of the Lower Fourth.

"Bent it," said Coker briefly.

"Just a word, Coker," said Skinner, very civilly. With a profit in view, Skinner's civility was unlimited, and he would not have dreamed, just then, of telling Coker what he thought of him. "I hear that Mr. Prout has given you an exeat for Friday afternoon."

"No bizney of yours," said Coker.

"Oh, no! But if you'd like a seat for the Theatre Royal at Courtfield, I know how you can get one cheap."

Coker sniffed. "I don't want cheap tickets," he answered loftily. "If I go to a theatre, I can afford to pay for my seat."

"Well, you can pay full price if you like—that's what a generous fellow like you would do, of course," said Skinner smoothly. "I know money's nothing to you, Coker, and your generosity is pretty well known."

Coker thawed considerably; in fact, he looked quite genial. Potter and Greene exchanged a private wink.

"You see, a Remove chap can't get an exeat like a senior," said Skinner. "It's a pity for the ticket to be wasted; and I know you like being kind to Lower boys, Coker—when they behave themselves, of course."

"That's so," agreed Coker. "I wouldn't mind taking the ticket off your hands, my lad; but, as it happens, I've booked a seat at the theatre for the Friday matinee, and I've got the ticket in my pocket now. So there's nothing doing."

"Oh, what rotten luck!" said Skinner. "You've got a ticket for the same matinee?"

"Just that."

"Oh!" Skinner realised that civility was wasted on Coker of the Fifth. If he had a ticket already, he could hardly be ejected into buying another. So Skinner changed his tune with startling suddenness. "What on earth are you going to see a Shakespeare play for, Coker?"

"Eh?" "Chaplin films are nearer your mark, you know, though I don't feel sure that you'd understand even them," said Skinner. "Take my tip, Coker, and don't try Shakespeare. It will give you a pain in the place where your brain would be, if you had any!"

And Skinner of the Remove scowled off before the muscular grasp of Coker of the Fifth could reach him.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Trying It On!

"I'VE got it!" Bunter of the Remove uttered that exclamation suddenly the following morning.

He was not referring to the half-guinea ticket. Certainly he had got that. No buyer had turned up, and the ticket was still in Billy Bunter's pocket. The Owl of the Remove had given up hope of discovering a buyer; and it was settled, in his fat mind, that somehow or anyhow he was going to get an exeat on Friday, and go to the theatre himself. To that problem Bunter had given much thought—much more thought than he ever bestowed on the less-important problems of Euclid.

He was thinking the matter over in the break that morning when his eyes fell on Trotter, the page. The sight of

Trotter evidently put a new idea into Bunter's head, starting his powerful intellect on a new track.

He had got it at last!

On the occasion when a League match was being played at Courtfield, Trotter, the page, had received leave of absence from Mrs. Kebble, the house-dame, to attend his grandmother's funeral. When the circus came to Friarale, Trotter asked, and obtained, leave of absence to attend the funeral of his grandfather. A new picture at Courtfield Palace coincided with the sudden demise of Trotter's uncle, and Trotter was given leave to attend the funeral. On Lantham Fair day, Trotter had required leave to give the funeral of his aunt his personal supervision. But by that time Mrs. Kebble seemed to think that there were too many sudden deaths in the Trotter family, or perhaps she considered that Trotter was displaying an unhealthy interest in funerals. Trotter did not go to Lantham Fair.

It had been quite a joke among the Remove fellows, who had heard of it. It was clear that, had not Mrs. Kebble grown suspicious, Trotter would have slain all his relations, one after another, to the thirtieth and fortieth generation—a massacre of the innocents that would have put Herod himself to the blush.

Bunter grinned. He had got it!

Like Ulysses of old, Bunter was a man of many wiles. But this particular wile he had not, so far, made any use of. It was a fib Bunter had not yet told, though the fib he had told outnumbered the sands on the seashore.

A funeral on Friday!

It was as easy as falling off a form!

Trotter, quite unconscious of the scheme he had unintentionally set going in Bunter's fat brain, passed on his way.

Billy Bunter sauntered under the elms, thinking it out.

A funeral on Friday was the thing; there could be no doubt about that. Mr. Queek, beast as he was, could hardly be beast enough to refuse a fellow leave to attend the funeral of a near relation.

If he did, Bunter felt that he would be justified in making an appeal to the Head! Mr. Locke was much too humane to be hard on any fellow at such a trying time.

The question now was, who was to be the happy victim? Bunter thought of his sister Bessie; but Bessie was at Cliff House School, quite close to Greyfriars—much too close for safety. His young brother Sammy was, of course, useless for the purpose. Sammy was in the Second Form at Greyfriars. Bunter considered his pater. Undoubtedly any fellow would simply have to ask to get leave from school for his father's funeral. Still, there were difficulties in the way. Mr. Bunter sometimes telephoned to Greyfriars; and it would be awkward, to say the least, if he should happen to telephone on the day of his own funeral. At least it would make Bunter's story rather improbable.

Bessie, Sammy, and the pater being eliminated, Bunter considered his cousin, Walter Bunter. Wally Bunter had once been a great deal at Greyfriars, but now he was working in an office in Paris. Paris was a good distance off—a safe distance. Bunter nodded with approval as he reflected on that.

Wally had caught the flu at Paris, and expired in twenty-four hours. Or perhaps pneumonia would be better. Better still, he had fallen into the Seine while boating, and had been drowned. This would undoubtedly be pathetic, and would get Bunter a lot of sympathy from

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the Remove fellows who knew Wally, as well as an exeat from Mr. Quelch.

Still, there were difficulties in the way. Bunter remembered that Wally wrote sometimes to Harry Wharton. Of course, it did not matter if Wally was alive and well again after Friday. But if the funeral took place in Paris, as was really probable, Bunter could not very well make out that he was going to attend it on Friday afternoon.

The matter obviously required thinking out.

Bunter thought it out.

By the time the Remove went in for third lesson, Bunter had decided that Wally had returned suddenly to England, had caught a sudden cold on the Channel boat, and expired at Mr. Bunter's house. The funeral was arranged for Friday.

In these sad circumstances, Billy Bunter might have been expected to look rather downcast in third lesson. As a matter of fact, he looked considerably bucked. He was out of his trouble at last, and on Friday he was going to the theatre with Coker's ticket.

Several times he was on the point of confiding his bereavement to Mr. Quelch, but he hesitated till it was too late. With great sagacity, he resolved to try the story on some of the Remove fellows first, to see how it worked—trying it on the dog, as it were!

After third lesson, the Famous Five went out to punt a footer before dinner, and the Owl of the Remove followed them. Further reflection had made Bunter realise that a little sorrow would not be misplaced on such an occasion. He was, in fact, doing a very unusual amount of thinking now. So his fat face was lugubrious as he rolled up to the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the merry trouble?" asked Bob Cherry, catching the lugubrious look.

Harry Wharton had a letter in his hand, which he had just been reading out to his comrades. He now looked at Bunter instead.

"Anything happened, fatty?" he asked.

"It—it's awful!" said Bunter.

"Somebody bagged your cake?"

Bunter took off his spectacles and wiped his eyes. He replaced his glasses and blinked pathetically at the chums of the Remove.

"You fellows knew Wally," he said.

"Wally! What's the matter with Wally?"

"He—he—he's—"

"He's what?"

"Dead!" gasped Bunter.

"My only hat!"

"It's awful, isn't it?" said Bunter. "I was so fond of old Wally. Of course, he was only a poor relation, and much too cheeky, considering his position. Still, it's frightfully sad, isn't it?"

The Famous Five stared at Bunter. Wharton glanced, for a moment, at the letter in his hand, and then stared at Bunter again. The juniors were surprised by Bunter's sad news; there was no doubt about that. But Bunter could not see that they looked particularly grieved. Yet they had liked Wally Bunter. They had chummed with him, and, for some inexplicable reason, had thought much more of him than they did of his cousin William George.

Bunter was a little disgusted.

"I thought you fellows liked him," he said reproachfully.

"Oh, we liked him all right!" said Bob Cherry, staring blankly at Billy Bunter. "We like him now."



"I say, you fellows—" began Bunter. "Dribble the fat bounder across the quad!" roared Bob Cherry. "Good!" "Go it, Bunter!" Bump! "Yaroooh! Help! Fire!" roared Bunter. "Oh, my hat! I was only j-j-joking—yeeep—only a little—yaroooh—joke—" Billy Bunter fled for his life. (See Chapter 6.)

"He's gone!" said Bunter. "It's awful, you know—in fact, fearful."

"How did it happen?" asked Harry.

"Influenza," said Bunter. "He fell into the Seine while he was out boating, and caught pneumonia, and was drowned—"

Bunter checked himself. He was getting a little mixed.

"Influenza, pneumonia, and drowning, all at once?" said Wharton. "Enough to finish any chap, I should think. Did the influenza make him fall into the Seine, or did he go out boating because he had pneumonia?"

"He, ha, ha!"

Bunter fairly blinked. Those busts were actually laughing—after receiving the sad news of Wally Bunter's lamentable fate. It was almost incredible.

"I say, you fellows, it's not a laughing matter," said the Owl of the Remove warily. "I'm frightfully cut up."

"When did it happen?" asked Nugent.

"Last Sunday. He was out with a party of friends in the boat, you know, and a steamer came along, and—and capsized the boat."

"Did he catch influenza from the steamer?"

"Oh, really, Wharton?"

"Oh, pneumonia from the boat?" asked Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"What are you spinning us this horrid yarn for, you fat villain?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"It's not a yarn!" howled Bunter.

"Can't you see I'm awfully cut up—prostrated with grief, in fact. I sha'n't be able to eat my dinner."

"The grieffulness must be terrific!"

"The funeral's arranged for Friday," said Bunter. "I'm going to ask Mr. Quelch to let me off to attend it. He's bound to give me an exeat, in the circumstances. Don't you think so?"

"To go to Paris?"

Bunter started.

Again it was borne in upon his fat mind that liars should have good memories. He was truly glad that he had tried the story on the Removes before trying it on Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean, he's at my pater's house now," he said. "The actual fact is, that he came home suddenly—"

"After he was drowned?"

"Nunno!"

"Or after he died of pneumonia?"

"No, you ass! He caught a chill on the Channel boat, coming home suddenly—after he'd caught influenza, you know. It turned to galloping pneumonia—"

"My hat!"

"He expired in my pater's arms at Bunter Court," said Bunter. "Isn't it awful?"

"It would be, if it happened," agreed Wharton. "Wally must be a tough old fellow to stand all this—influenza, pneumonia, drowning in the Seine, and chills on a Channel steamer. Did he die more than once?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"He must have, if he expired in your

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water's arms after being drowned in the Seine," argued Johnny Bull.

"He—he wasn't exactly drowned in the Seine—"

"Not exactly? Only a little bit?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, this isn't a joke!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "I'm surprised at you—shocked and disgusted, in fact. This awful news doesn't touch you the least little bit."

"Not the slightest," agreed Wharton. "You see, this letter in my hand is from Wally Bunter—"

"Eh?"

"I had it this morning, and only yesterday he was quite alive and well, which would be jolly surprising if he was drowned last Sunday—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't know you'd had a letter from Wally," gasped Bunter.

"No; or you wouldn't have sprung this fatheaded yarn on us," said Harry Wharton.

"But—but it's true, all the same. I made a mistake about Sunday. It was yesterday that he crossed the Channel and capsize—"

"Capsize?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"I—I mean caught a fatal chill—"

"Not much difference!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It turned to pneumonia, and he had just time to reach Bunter Court before he—"

"Before he fell into the Seine?"

"No, you idiot! Before he expired in my father's arms!" howled Bunter.

"So he came home to England yesterday, did he?"

"Yes, by the—the morning boat!"

"Just at the time he was posting this letter in Paris?"

"Oh!"

"Oh!"

"And in this letter he says that his firm are sending him on business to Bordeaux, and he started yesterday afternoon," went on Wharton. "Are you sure he didn't catch influenza in the train to Bordeaux, or fall into the Garonne from the train window, or pick up pneumonia at one of the railway-stations?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!" mumbled Bunter.

At that point Billy Bunter gave Wally up as a hopeless case. Obviously, some other member of the Bunter clan would have to die before Friday. Wally Bunter was too obviously and undeniably alive.

"Now, what are you spinning us such a yarn for?" demanded Wharton. "If we hadn't known, we might have believed you. Is it a new stunt of yours to make fellows' flesh creep?"

"I—I—"

"He was going to touch us for the fare to the funeral, I suppose," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"My esteemed chums," said Harrow Jamset Ram Singh, "the excellent and rascally Bunter has been telling us worthy and ludicrous falsehoods. If I may make a suggestive remark, I suggest bumping the ludicrous Bunter, as a warning to stick to the esteemed verities."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows— Yarooooop!"

Bump!

"Dribble him across the qund!"

shouted Bob Cherry.

"Good!"

"Go it!"

"Yaroooo! Help! Fire!" roared Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! I was only j-j-joking— Yooop! Only a little— yaroooo!—joke! Oh erikay!"

"Good!"

"Yaroooo!"

"Good!"

"Good!"

"Good!"

Billy Bunter fled for his life.

"The merry Removeites pursued him as far as the House, and by the time Bunter escaped he felt like a Soccer ball after a hard game.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter. "Oh, my hat! Awful cads, not to take a fellow's word! Oh crumbs! Ow! Vow!"

Bunter had a tired look when he rolled in to dinner. Also he had a worried look. He was still sticking to his scheme. But it was clear that that sudden death in the Bunter family would want some more thinking out.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Sudden Death of Bunter's Uncle!

GROAN!

Mr. Quelch started violently. It was an unaccounted sound in the Remove Form-room.

Sometimes howls were heard there, when the Remove master got busy with the cane. Groans, certainly, would often have expressed the feelings of the Remove fellows while they were receiving valuable instruction from their Form master. But they never expressed their feelings in that way, even at maths. So that when that miserable groan was heard, Mr. Quelch naturally was surprised and disconcerted.

He stared round the Form-room. So did most of the Remove fellows, in equal surprise.

"What on earth's the matter with Bunter?" murmured Bob Cherry.

It was Bunter who had groaned.

Deep and hair-raising, that groan had come from the very depths of Billy Bunter's fat circumference. If it was a joke, he was looking very serious about it. Besides, it couldn't be a joke: Mr. Quelch was not a master to be joked with in the Form-room. Twisting a tiger's tail would have been a light and pleasant occupation, in comparison.

Yet Bunter, having drawn general attention upon himself by groaning dully, groaned again as Mr. Quelch's glittering eye fastened on him.

Deep and distinct came that horrid groan, as if in reply to the grim glance of the Form master.

"Bunter!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Groan!"

"Boy!"

"Groan!"

"Are you ill, Bunter?" almost

shouted Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir! Oh, sir! Oh, dear!"

"Bunter! How dare you? What is—"

"I'm sorry, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"But I—I can't help it, sir."

"You cannot help making those dreadful noises, Bunter? What do you mean?"

"It's grief, sir."

"Grief?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir, awful grief!"

And to show how awful his grief was, William George Bunter groaned again, in the most hair-raising manner.

Mr. Quelch looked at him fixedly.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged

glances of wonder. Surely Bunter was

not going to "spring" the story of

Wally's sad fate on Mr. Quelch. True,

he was ass enough for anything; but

surely there was a limit, even for Bunter.

If Bunter was going to attempt

to work on Mr. Quelch's feelings with

a story like that, it was one more

proof that fools rush in where angels

fear to tread.

"Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, after

quite a long pause, "I should be sorry

to be severe with you if you have any

actual cause of grief. Am I to understand that you have received bad news from home?"

"Groan!"

"Answer me, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" moaned Bunter. "My

uncle—"

"Has anything happened to your

uncle, Bunter?"

"Boo-hoo!"

"Bunter!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Boo-hoo!" roared Bunter. "Oh,

dear! Can't help it, sir! I'm not a

chap for blubbing, as any of the fel-

lows will tell you! But my p-p-poor

uncle, my p-p-poor, dear uncle— Boo-

hoo-hoo—"

Bunter was fairly going it now. He

had taken the plunge, and he was not

doing it by halves.

"Bunter! Calm yourself! Is your

uncle ill?"

"Worse than that, sir," groaned

Bunter, rubbing his eyes energetically.

"Oh dear! He—he—he—"

"He what?"

"Died suddenly, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Bogad! Poor old Bunter!" mur-

mured Lord Mauleverer, with quite a

sympathetic glance at the Owl of the

Remove.

The juniors were all serious now. If

a near relation of Billy Bunter's had

died, and Bunter took it to heart, they

were prepared to forget all the Owl's

little failings, and sympathise with

him. All the more, because they had

never suspected him of deep family

attachments before. Apparently there

was some family affection in Bunter

than he had ever been given credit for.

Harry Wharton & Co. could not help

recalling the story of Wally's sudden

death, told them only a few hours be-

fore. Now, it seemed, it was Bunter's

uncle instead of his cousin. Without

being unduly suspicious, they couldn't

help wondering whether this was only

the same yarn in an altered form—a

variation on the original theme, as a

musician would say.

But it looked genuine enough. Bob

Cherry's kind heart smote him as, look-

ing at Bunter, he saw real tears on his

fat cheeks.

Bunter was "blubbing."

It was not uncommon for Bunter to

"blub," after an application of his

Form master's cane or a prefect's ash-

plant. But there had been no cane or

ashplant on the scene. Bunter was

weeping—apparently with grief. Bob

was not near enough for him to notice a

smell of onions!

Mr. Quelch stared at Bunter, quite

distracted and moved. It was a very

unusual happening, and he hardly

knew how to deal with the matter for

the moment. Under his crusty exterior,

Mr. Quelch had quite a kind and

humane heart, though his Form did

not suspect it.

"My dear Bunter! Try to control

yourself!" said the Remove master,

quite gently.

"Boo-hoo!"

"When did you receive this distress-

ing news, Bunter?"

"I—I had a letter, sir—"

Mr. Quelch looked perplexed.

"This morning, do you mean, Bun-

ter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bless my soul! But if the news was

in a letter this morning—"

Mr. Quelch stared harder at Bunter.

Really, if the fat junior had been in

possession of the sad news since early

morning, his outbreak of grief in the

Form-room was very sudden and rather

belated.

Bunter understood that. Still, he could not have claimed to have received the distressing news by the afternoon's post, for the simple reason that the afternoon's post was not yet in.

"I—I didn't open the letter at once, sir," he stammered. "I—I had it in my pocket. I never knew—I didn't dream it was about my poor Uncle William—my p-p-poor uncle! Boo-hoo!"

"I understand, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch kindly. "I feel for you, Bunter. I feel for you very much indeed. Your grief for your uncle does you credit, Bunter."

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Bunter.

"No doubt you are feeling very upset," said Mr. Quelch. "If you choose, Bunter, you may leave the Form-room. You are excused from class for the remainder of the day."

Bunter jumped up. He had not expected that. This sudden demise in his family had been intended only to gain him an exeat on Friday. Quite unexpectedly, it had earned him an extra afternoon's slackening. He had, so to speak, bided better than he knew!

"Thank you, sir," said Bunter, quite brightly. Then, remembering that grief and sorrow were the order of the day, he rubbed his eyes again with his handkerchief, in which a slice of onion was carefully concealed. Tears ran down Bunter's fat cheeks as he removed the handkerchief.

"If you please, sir—" he gasped.

"Well, Bunter?"

"The funeral—the fuf-fuf-funeral—"

Bunter sobbed.

"Yes, my boy?"

"The fuf-fuf-funeral's on Fruf-Fruf-Friday, sir! Can I go home on Fruf-fruf-friday for the fuf-fuf-funeral, sir?"

"Does your father desire you to do so, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir! My uncle was very fond of me, sir, and he will miss me if I am not there—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I mean my father will miss me, sir," gasped Bunter. "N-n-not my uncle, of course, sir. My p-p-poor uncle!"

"Quite so, Bunter! Certainly, you may go home to pay your last respects to your deceased relative, if it is your father's desire. Was your uncle in poor health, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir, ailing a long time," said Bunter. "Years and years, sir."

"Oh! Then this sad news is not quite unexpected."

"Oh, yes, sir," gasped Bunter.

"Quite unexpected! You see, sir, we always hoped he would get well. But he caught influenza suddenly, and it turned to pneumonia—boo-hoo. I—I was looking forward to seeing Uncle George in the vacation, sir, and now—"

Boo-hoo!"

"Your Uncle George?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"But you said your Uncle William"

Bunter gasped.

"My Uncle William George, sir! I'm named after him. My name's William George, sir."

"I understand! Well, you may go, Bunter, though if you think lessons would distract your mind from this painful subject, remain in the Form-room by all means," said Mr. Quelch kindly.

"Oh, no, sir!" said Bunter promptly.

"I think a walk would do no good, sir."

"Very well, Bunter, you may go."

The Form-room door closed behind Bunter.

The Remove fellows were left in quite a serious mood. Knowing Bunter so well, some of them had lingering doubts as to the truth of the story. But real tears rolling down Bunter's cheeks had a very convincing look. After all, every fellow's uncles were mortal, and even Bunter told the truth sometimes—rarely, no doubt; but still, it had happened. As for Mr. Quelch, keen gentleman as he was, not a doubt crossed his mind. That any member of his Form would attempt to pull his majestic leg in this egregious way was not a suspicion that was likely to occur to Mr. Quelch.

Class continued in the Remove-room in quite a subdued atmosphere.

Billy Bunter rolled away, scarcely believing in his good luck. He had told Mr. Quelch that a walk would do him good, and he walked as far as his study in the Remove passage, where he sat down in the study armchair and grinned gleefully. It was all right now for Friday—Horace Cokkr's matinee ticket would not be wasted. The dodge that had served Trotter so well on the occasion of league matches and circuses had served Billy Bunter's turn, turning out better than he had dared to expect. And from the point of view of the Owl of the Remove all was calm and bright.

In the Remove Form-room Mr. Quelch sniffed two or three times with a rather puzzled air.

"Has any boy been bringing onions into the Form-room?" he asked at last.

No reply.

"There is a distinct smell of onions," said Mr. Quelch crossly.

He sniffed again and dismissed the subject. Linger in the Remove room was a faint aroma of Spanish onions; but Mr. Quelch did not think of connecting it, in his mind, with the tears of grief that had rolled down Billy Bunter's fat cheeks!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Trifle Mixed!

"P OOR old Bunter!"

"Poor old Fatty!"

"Poor old porpoise!"

Such were the remarks of the Remove fellows when class was dismissed that afternoon.

Vernon-Smith winked, and Skinner and Snoop grinned. But these fellows were always sceptical, and their unbelief rather shocked most of the Remove. There was no doubt that sympathy for Bunter was very widespread.

"Blessed if I expected to see Bunter take such a thing like this!" said Bob Cherry in the corridor when the Remove came out. "He looked awfully cut up, poor old chap."

"He was blubbing, at any rate," said Nugent. "He must have been fond of his uncle, I suppose. It's a bit rotten."

"Perhaps this uncle is one of his titled relations who sent his postal-orders!" suggested Skinner, and there was a cackle from Snoop.

"Oh, dry up, Skinner!"

"Cheese it!"

"This isn't a joking matter, Skinner," said the captain of the Remove.



"Bunter," said Mr. Quelch kindly, "calm yourself. Is your uncle ill?"

"Boo-hoo!" wailed Bunter. "W-worse than that, sir. Boo-hoo—he-he—he—" "He what?" rapped Mr. Quelch. "D-d-died suddenly, sir," said Bunter, rubbing his eyes with the onion energetically. "Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 7.)

"Isn't it?" said Skinner, with an air of surprise. "My mistake—I thought it was."

"Well it isn't!" snapped Wharton. "Never mind Bunter's titled relations and postal-orders now; he's lost a near relation!"

"Has he?" yawned Skinner. "More gain than loss, I think. He's gained an afternoon off from class and an excuse on Friday—I know that. I also happen to know that he's got a booked seat for the theatre on Friday."

"Oh, rot! Bunter wouldn't—" began Bob.

"Is there anything Bunter wouldn't do to get out of classes?" asked Skinner.

"If there is I'd like to hear of it."

"He wouldn't dare!"

"Too jolly risky with Quelch!" said Johnny Bull. "I'm no funk, I hope; but I wouldn't care to pull Quelch's leg with a story like that if it wasn't true."

"No fear!" said Squiff.

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," said Skinner sapiently. "My belief is that Bunter's uncle is all right—if he has an uncle. Still, I'm glad to see any fellow beat Quelch, so more power to his fat old elbow. I wonder if he could take a pal along to the jolly old funeral?" Still, that wouldn't be much, as he's got only one ticket for the matinee at Courtfield."

"Oh, cheese it!" said Bob.

"Skinner walked away laughing."

Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded to the Remove passage in a serious and thoughtful mood. As a matter of fact, Skinner's scepticism had infected them a little. They could not help noticing certain points of similarity between the sudden deaths of Wally Bunter and Uncle William George. Really, a suspicious fellow might have thought that Bunter had switched off the influence and pneumonia from Wally to another relative, in order to produce a more credible story. In Study No. 1 the Famous Five looked at one another rather uneasily.

"I suppose it's straight," said Harry Wharton slowly.

"I—I suppose so," said Frank Nugent.

"But Bunter was certainly telling us some awful whoppers this morning about his cousin. And this yarn sounds much the same."

"The sameness is terrific," remarked Ilsema Janet Ram Singh.

"But if it is true, the sympathy is great!"

"If it's true, I'm sorry for the kid," said Bob Cherry uncomfortably. "I—I think it's true. Poor old Bunter!"

"Let's ask him to tea," said Frank.

"A feed wouldn't be much comfort, in the circumstances, would it?" said Harry Wharton doubtfully.

"I think it would—to Bunter. Fellows take these things differently, you know. And Bunter will take this in his own way."

"Well, asking him will show sympathy, anyway," said Harry. "Let's go along and see him. I suppose he's in his study."

The Famous Five proceeded along the Remove passage to Study No. 7. They found Peter Todd standing inside the study, looking at Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was fast asleep in the armchair, and a deep, unmusical snore rumbled through Study No. 7.

Peter glanced at the five as they appeared in the doorway.

"Want to see the sleeping beauty?" he asked.

"You believe it about his uncle, Toddy?"

"Well, I did in the Form-room," THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 895.

said Peter. "Of course, I never believe anything Bunter says, as a matter of principle. But I never thought that even Bunter would have the neck to spoof Quelch before the whole Form. But, look here—"

He picked up Bunter's handkerchief rather gingerly—it was not a spotlessly clear article. From the handkerchief a slice of onion fell to the floor.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"I fancy that's where the tears came from," said Peter, with a grin. "Of course, he may have been grieved. But I can't help thinking it was more onions than grief."

Harry Wharton whistled.

The clumps of the Remove gazed on the sleeping beauty, as Peter called him. Bunter's eyes looked very red, and anyone might have supposed that he had been weeping bitterly. But undoubtedly a rubbing with a slice of onion would have made any fellow's eyes red.

The fat junior's eyes opened. He blinked at the group of Removites in the study.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Feel better, Bunter?"

"Eli! There's nothing the matter with me," said Bunter, sitting up and jamming his glasses on his fat little nose.

"My hat! What about your uncle?"

Evidently Bunter had forgotten his sudden bereavement. This reminded of it, he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand and snuffed.

"It's awful, isn't it?" he said.

"Is it true?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You know you were spinning us a silly yarn this morning about your cousin dying suddenly," said Bob, eyeing the Owl of the Remove. "Now it's your uncle. It looks to me—" Bob paused.

"I call that unfeeling," said Bunter bitterly. "With my poor old Uncle Herbert lying at this very moment—"

"Uncle Herbert?" roared Bob.

"Yes, my poor dear Uncle Herbert—"

"It was William George when you told Quelch!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Eli? It wasn't!"

"Wasn't!" stuttered Wharton. "Why, we all heard you—"

"I—I—I mean, it—it was my Uncle William George, Herbert," stammered Bunter. "That's his full name, you know. I don't think you ought to catch your fellows when at this very moment he's lying—"

"That's nothing new in the Bunter family!" growled Johnny Bull. "I jolly well know that his nephew's lying at this moment, anyhow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! If you can't be sympathetic, at least you might respect a fellow's grief," said Bunter. "It quite knocked me over when I got that letter from Uncle Herbert, saying that he was dead."

"A letter from your uncle, saying that he was dead!" shrieked Peter Todd.

"Oh, my only hat!"

"Some uncle!" said Bob.

"I—I mean, the letter from my father saying that he was dead. That's what I meant to say. Of course, my uncle couldn't write, being dead, you know."

"Go lion!"

"I was frightfully upset," said Bunter. "I was awfully fond of him. You know my affectionate nature."

"Oh scissors!"

"I used to play around his knees when I was a little nipper," said Bunter touchingly. "He used to pat me on the head and call me 'Dear little Billy.' He was fond of me."

"No accounting for tastes."

"Beast! And now he's lying—"

"You're lying, at any rate," said Bob. "Your uncle's got too many names to be quite genuine, Bunter. Why didn't you decide on which uncle it was, and make a note on your shirtcuff?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't think I ever saw such heartless fellows as you lot," said Bunter. "But even you fellows might do one thing for a fellow prostrated with grief like I am. Look here, I'm short of money—"

"Thew!"

"I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"

"Go it!"

"And father forgot to enclose my fare home on Friday. I simply must have some ready cash. I shall want something to eat between the acts."

"Between the acts of a funeral?" shrieked Bob.

"Nunno! Of—of course not! I mean—"

"You mean that you've spoofed Quelch with this yarn to get an excuse on Friday to go to a theatre? Why, of course, that's the giddy ticket you were trying to sell to us the other day!" exclaimed Bob.

"Nothing of the kind," said Bunter hastily. "Look here, I shall want my railway fare! If you fellows will lend me a pound I'll settle up off—"

"No, not out of your postal-order!" urged Bob Cherry. "We shall be getting our old-age pensions by that time!"

"Out of what I got under my uncle's will," said Bunter firmly. "He can't have left me less than a few thousands. I was his favourite nephew, you know, and I'm certain he's cut up well. In fact, my Uncle Richard was one of my very richest relations."

"Your Uncle Richard?" said Wharton. "And is your Uncle Herbert going to leave you your Uncle Richard's money?"

"I—I—I mean—"

"Go it! What do you mean?" asked Peter Todd. "What thundering whopper are you trying to think out now?"

"I was speaking of my Uncle William George Herbert Richard Bunter," explained the Owl of the Remove. "He had all those names. He was named after four peers in our family."

"Keep it up!" said Peter admiringly. "If Ananias wasn't dead already, I believe he would die of envy when he heard Bunter."

"Oh, really, Toddy—" Bunter rubbed his eyes, and blinked at the grinning juniors, who were quite of Skinner's opinion by this time. "The fact is, I'm so fearfully upset that I hardly know what I'm saying. You saw me weeping for my poor uncle."

"With the help of a slice of onion!" grinned Peter. "Quelch noticed the niff, too, after you were gone."

Bunter jumped.

"I—I say, Quelch didn't think, did he—"

"Ha, ha! No."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter, in great relief. "Quelch's an awfully suspicious old card, you know. He might suspect that I'd been pulling his leg. It's rather ungentlemanly to doubt a fellow's word; but, after all, Quelch's no gentleman."

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2!

"I say, you fellows, you're going to lend me a quid for Friday. You wouldn't like me to miss my uncle's funeral for want of a paltry pound, would you?"

"We'll make it two pounds if you'll go to your own funeral," said Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"That's the best we can do. Come on, you fellows; let's leave Bunter to his giddy grief."

"Boo-hoo!" wailed Bunter, in a last attempt to soften the hard hearts of these doubting Thomases.

"Feeling it bad?" asked Nugent.

"Awful!"

"Has it affected your appetite?"

"Of course it has. I couldn't touch a morsel," said Bunter. "If I could chook—chook—choke me, Boo-hoo!"

"No good our asking you to tea, then?"

Bunter's sobbing suddenly ceased.

"Yes, rather; I'll come with pleasure, old chap."

"He, ha, ha!"

"You jolly well won't, you fat spoofing boulder!" said Harry Wharton, in disgust. "Come on, you chaps."

"I say, you fellows—"

But the Famous Five were gone, no longer feeling the slightest sympathy for the grief-stricken Owl of the Remove. Peter Todd chuckled as Bunter eyed him rather anxiously.

"I say, Peter, you're going to have something decent for tea?" asked the fat junior. "At a time like this—"

"What's the good?" said Peter. "You're too sorrowful to eat anything. A morsel would choke you."

"The fact is, I feel I need food to buck me up," said Bunter. "Grief takes it out of a chap, you know. A good tea would set me up quite a lot. In fact, it's just what I need."

"Sosses and chips?" said Peter thoughtfully.

"Yes, old chap."

"Poached eggs and rashers of bacon and kidneys."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Yes. Ripping!"

"And a plant cake."

"Good!"

"And doughnuts, and some chocolate eclairs."

"You're a good chap, Peter."

"One of the best," agreed Peter Todd. "What about meringues and grapes to wind up with?"

"Topping, old chap!"

"You really think a feed like that would buck you up, and help you to bear this awful bereavement?"

"Certain!"

"Then I hope you'll get it," said Peter genially. "Good-bye! I'm leaving with Russell myself."

And Peter Todd strolled out of Study No. 7, leaving Bunter speechless, and glaring after him with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Little Misunderstanding!

"WHERE'S Bunter?"

Coker of the Fifth asked the question.

Billy Bunter heard it, but he answered not. Bunter had rolled into Study No. 4 in the Remove, teanted by Redwing and the Bounder, hoping to extract a tea from Smithy on the strength of his grief and sorrow. Redwing regarded him rather doubtfully, Smithy not doubtfully at all. Smithy picked up a loaf and poised it in the air.



Bunter jumped out of the doorway of Study No. 4 just as Coker arrived. Whiz! The loaf followed Bunter through the doorway. Crash! The fat junior had dodged in time; but Horace Coker had arrived at the psychological moment. Coker caught the flying loaf with his ear. "Varoooo! What—what—who buzzed that loaf at me?" he roared. (See Chapter 9.)

"Fado out!" said the Bounder tersely.

"I—I say, you fellows, I'm feeling awfully bad," said Bunter pathetically. "I haven't come to tea, of course. I can't really eat at a time like this. But a few words of sympathy—"

"Dash it all, if it's really true—"

said Redwing.

"It isn't," said Vernon-Smith.

"My p-p-poor uncle!" said Bunter, almost tearfully. "I'm feeling absolutely broken up—appetite quite gone, you know."

"Go along with it," suggested Smithy.

"The sooner you are quite gone, too, the better."

"I call that heartless, Smithy."

"Call it what you like, old fat bean. Shut the door after you."

"Beast!"

Smithy took aim with the loaf, and Bunter stood ready to dodge.

"I say, you fellows, I'm feeling frightfully grieved and sorrowful, and all that," urged Bunter. "If you'd seen my Uncle Francis, and known what a splendid chap he was, you'd understand. I haven't been able to eat my tea, though Todd urged me to take a little nourishment, and Wharton fairly begged me to come to a spread in Study No. 1. Still, I think I could nibble just a bit of that cake—just a tiny fraction."

Bunter made a tentative movement towards the cake.

"Do!" said the Bounder. "You get this loaf right on your boko at the same minute!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

It was at this juncture that the powerful voice of Horace Coker of the Fifth Form was heard in the passage. Coker of the Fifth was asking for Bunter; and but for the fact that Bunter was

inside Smithy's study, he would have been in full view of the Fifth-Former coming up the passage.

Bunter quaked.

The affair of the tarts was over and done with; Coker was not a man to bear long grudges. But Bunter had no doubt whatever that Coker had now discovered the loss of the theatre-ticket, and was coming along to inquire after it. That was the most natural conclusion for Bunter to jump to, and he jumped to it.

"Outside!" grinned Smithy. "Coker wants you."

"I say, Smithy, don't be a beast, let a fellow get behind the door!" gasped Bunter.

"I give you two seconds!" said Smithy, taking careful aim with the loaf.

"Oh dear!"

"Where's Bunter?" repeated Coker's powerful voice in the Remove passage.

Bunter shuddered.

Between Smithy in the study, and Coker in the passage, Bunter was in the same situation as the unfortunate gentleman who was between the devil and the deep sea.

"Smithy, old man—"

"Time's up!"

"Oh, you awful rotter!"

Smithy's hand swept the loaf forward. Bunter jumped out of the doorway, just as Coker arrived outside on his progress up the Remove passage.

Whiz!

The loaf followed Bunter through the doorway.

But the Owl of the Remove was not unaccustomed to dodging missiles in study doorways at tea-time.

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 895.

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 219.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON

Week Ending April 11th, 1925.

IMAGINARY ARRESTS!

By TOM BROWN.

HORACE COKER (17), a burly youth, who, gave his address as Greyfriars School, appeared before the Court of Justice on Tuesday, to answer a charge of riding a motor-cycle to the public danger. Evidence of arrest was given by P.-c. Tozer. "Which I was patrolin' my beat, yer Washups, when I see the accused comin' towards me at a speed of forty-five miles an hour. 'I did up my 'and, an' bellered 'Stop! But the accused took no notice. He came rushin' on, zigzaggin' all over the road, an' scatterin' the traffic an' pedestrians in all directions. I made a note of 'is conduct, an' arrested him later in the day, at Greyfriars. 'I continued 'im, an' told 'im 'e would 'ave to appear at this 'ere court." The accused, giving evidence, declared that he was crawling along at a snail's pace. In fact, several snails overtook him on the road. "My speed 'as been grossly exaggerated by the constable," he added. Nevertheless, the Bench decided that a case had been made out, and the accused was fined ten shillings and costs. He shook his fist at P.-c. Tozer on leaving the court.

AT the same court, Gerold Ansheton Loder, also of Greyfriars School, appeared before the justices on a charge of pinching. The chairman said he was horrified to find a boy of Loder's standing—a prefect at a large public school—stooping to such a base offence as stealing. The accused hotly denied having stolen anything. P.-c. Tozer then explained that Loder was not guilty of theft, but of pinching. "But they are one and the same thing," said the chairman. "Nunno, Yer Washup," replied the constable. "The accused is charged with pinching the arm of a small fag?" "Then the charge must be altered to one of crusty," said the chairman. "As it stands at present it is rather misleading. Evidence having been given by Loder's victim—Sniveller of the Second—the Bench decided to convict, and the accused was sentenced to receive a liberal application of the birch.

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER, a plump and podgy prisoner, of the same address as the foregoing, was then rolled into the dock, and charged with lifting a meat-pie. The chairman refused to hear any evidence, saying that the charge was entirely frivolous. "There is no law to prevent a person from lifting a pie, if he wishes to test his muscular strength," said the chairman. "I have lifted a good many pies in my time." "Then you deserve six months!" came a voice from the back of the court. The chairman at once ordered the court to be cleared, and the charge against Bunter was dismissed.

FOR trotting a hoop through the Close at Greyfriars, without showing a rear-light or giving warning of his approach, Master Richard Nugent was fined three-hundred. Notice of appeal was given.

AT the conclusion of the court proceedings the chairman of the bench "allotted to Police-constable Tozer as a very 'arresting' personality!

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OUR COMIC CONSTABLE!



after "Annie Laurie."

BY DICK PENFOLD.

O H, Friardale's lanes are bonnie,
And its quaint and cobbled street;

And 'tis there that P.-c. Tozer
Patrols his daily beat.
He walks with solemn tread,
And a stern, accusing eye;
And with laughing at old Tozer
I could lay me down and die!

His form is plump and portly,
His face is like a boot;
And when the youngsters spy him,
'They very promptly scoot.
Then hail him from afar
With shouts of "Booby!" and "Gus!"
And with laughing at old Tozer
I could lay me down and die!

Like a mighty crash of thunder
Is the fall of his fairy feet;
Oh, pity the luckless beetles
His steps on in the street!
And pity the village youths
Who "His Majesty" defy;
And with laughing at old Tozer
I could lay me down and die!

The Law is an ass, they tell us,
But Tozer is a bigger;
And when he's on the warpath
He cuts a comic figure!
He will order my "harrest,"
If this verse should catch his eye;
And with laughing at old Tozer
I could lay me down and die!

A SPLASH!

NEXT WEEK'S
SPECIAL
"BOATING" NUMBER.

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

POLICEMEN are sometimes regarded with awe, and sometimes with amusement.

Our local limb of the law, Police-constable William Tozer, inspires amusement, rather than awe. Tozer is a portly and pompous individual, and he patrols his beat with majestic strides. It was once said of Julius Cæsar that he bestrode the narrow world like a Colossus. Well, P.-c. Tozer is a second edition of the immortal Julius, the narrow world that he bestrodes being the village of Friardale.

"A policeman's lot is not a happy one," sang W. S. Gilbert. But I don't see that P.-c. Tozer has a great deal to complain about. His job is a sinecure, really, for I believe the average number of arrests in Friardale does not exceed one per annum! Life flows along like a placid stream in the quiet Kentish village, and riots and breaches of the peace are of rare occurrence.

There is little love lost between P.-c. Tozer and the Greyfriars fellows. Tozer is in cordial agreement with Gosling, the porter, that "all young rips oughter be drowned at birth." And if ever we gave the worthy Tozer just cause to take us into custody, I am sure he would arrest us with great gusto.

Tozer has been rather in the background of late, so I thought it would be a good idea to resurrect him for this suspicious occasion. He gets plenty of the limelight in this issue; but if a copy of the "Herald" should fall into his hands, I don't think he will smile when he peruses it. On the contrary, his plump cheeks will be dyed purple with indignation, and he will hurl invective upon the editorial staff and all its works!

P.-c. Tozer marches ponderously up to Greyfriars occasionally, not to pay his attentions to the cook—for there happens to be a Mrs. Tozer—but to report some trifling misdemeanour to the Head. So now you will understand why there is little love lost between the portly constable and the boys of Greyfriars. But we don't exactly hate Tozer. We merely treat him with "silent content," as Billy Banter would say.

Our contributors' views on the subject of policemen will be found in another column. They make amusing reading. But then, I shouldn't accept them for publication if they didn't!

HARRY WHARTON.

[Supplement to



THE ARM OF THE LAW!

An Interview with
P.C. Tozer of Friardale

(By) Bob Cherry

I FOUND P.-c. Tozer taking his ease in his inn. That is to say, he had just come off duty, and was sitting, unhelmeted, in the little police-station at Friardale, brewing himself a cup of cocoa.

The worthy constable looked up in some surprise as I toddled in.

"Come to give yourself up?" he inquired.

"Rats!" I retorted. "I've nothing to give myself up for. I've committed no murders or felonies or robberies with violence."

"Ho!" grunted Tozer. "Then p'raps you've lost something?"

I shook my head.

"Wot 'ave you come 'ere for, then?" demanded the portly constable.

"To interview you, Tozer," I replied, taking out my notebook and pencil. "The readers of the 'Greyfriars Herald' want to know something about you. So I'm going to take down your depositions, if you don't mind. To begin at the beginning, where were you born?"

"Lunnon," said Tozer.

"Never heard of it."

"Then your jography wants polishin' up, Master Cherry. Lunnon's the biggest city in the world, as ever was."

"Oh, London!" I gasped, light beginning to dawn on me. "While I'm polishing up my geography, Tozer, you'd better polish up your pronunciation."

Tozer frowned.

"None o' your cheek, Master Cherry!"

"Born in London," I murmured, making an entry in my notebook.

"When? Seventy years ago, I presume."

"Wot!" roared Tozer. "Don't you dare to hinninate that I'm seventy years of hage, you himperant young rascal!"

"Keep your hair on, Tozer! Where were you educated—Eton?"

Tozer snorted.

"None o' yer swell schools for me," he said scornfully. "I went to a ordinary school in a ordinary street, an' I'm proud to own it!"

"Extra-ordinary!" I murmured.

"And when, my dear Tozer, did you first cherish the ambition to become a luminous light of the police force?"

"When I was quite a young lad," said Tozer reminiscently. "I often used to stand an' watch the constable on point duty, directin' the traffic. An' I said

to meself, said I, 'That's the job for me!'"

"But there's no traffic to direct in Friardale," I protested, "barring Coker's motor-bike and a few perambulators."

"I wasn't always 'ere in Friardale," was the reply. "I served five years of me time in Lunnon—at Pentonville to be exact."

"My hat!" I gasped. "What was that for, Tozer—burglary?"

"When I said servin' me time, I meant as constable, not as a convict!" he growled. "Look 'ere, Master Cherry, I'm fed-up with these hisnolent questions! Jest you 'op it! D'you 'ear?"

I heard, but I did not heed. I stood my ground, and managed to pacify the irate Tozer. I then proceeded with my cross-examination, and gleaned some very interesting information. Tozer told me of all the tight corners he had been in and of all the burglaries he had frustrated, and of all the secret societies he had tracked down and brought to book.

Ahem!

I was about to put further questions to Tozer when the telephone-bell rang loudly. Tozer shuffled across to the instrument, and placed the receiver to his ear, and took the message. Then he turned to me in a state of great excitement.

"Which I must 'urry off," he said.

"There's a burglary at Friardale Grange, an' the burglar is still on the premises. I must go an' harvest 'im, in the name of the lor! You'll read all about my latest capture. Master Cherry, in the local paper."

But when I purchased the local "rag" a few days later, I read that the enterprising burglar had got away with a rich haul, and had successfully outwitted the local police.



My Views on Policemen!

Contributed by a number of
Greyfriars Celebrities.

ALONZO TODD:

I have quite a warm corner in my heart for policemen. When I was a tiny toddler, living with my Uncle Benjamin, in London, I wandered far from home one day, and became lost in the bewildering labyrinth of the modern Babylon. Utterly exhausted, I laid myself down on a seat in Hyde Park—I did not know it was Hyde Park at the time—and cried myself to sleep. When I awoke a uniformed figure stood gazing down at me in a kindly way. He asked me where I lived, but I was too much of an infant to furnish the full details. However, I managed to give the constable a few clues, and he gathered me up in his arms and carried me all the way home. My dear uncle had become distracted by my long absence, and, oh, what a joyous res-

urrection! We both wept in chorus. Uncle Ben in a deep bass, and myself in a shrill treble. Needless to state, my uncle handsomely rewarded the kind-hearted constable, and I have regarded policemen with veneration and affection ever since.

BILLY BUNTER:

Policemen are all all right so long as you rub them up the right way. Of course, if you walk up to a policeman and start making remarks about the sighs of his feet, you must expect him to cut up rusty. One day, in my youth and innocence, I did this to P.-c. Tozer of Friardale, and he looked at me as if he would slay me on the spot. He had a down on me for some time afterwards. But one day I humbly apologised, and gave Tozer a hansom "tip" into the bargain. He has been as nice as pie since then. In fact, whenever I go

down to the village he always opens the door of the bunshop for me. He antisipates where I want to go, you see. The fact is, old Tozer's got more intelligence than the Greyfriars fellows give him credit for.

CLAUDE HOSKINS:

I regard policemen with pity and contempt. They have no music in their souls. One day I played a concertina in the village street, and that silly chump Tozer came waddling up, and threatened to arrest me for causing a disturbance. A disturbance, indeed! If Tozer had been at all musical he would have gone into raptures over my playing, and probably accompanied it with a dance. Instead of which, he said: "You go along orf out of it, or I'll hureest yer in the name of the lor!" The pompous ass! I've no patience with people who can't appreciate good music when they hear it.

DICKY NUGENT:

I can't say that I love policemen eggastically. They have a nasty way of looking you up and down, and making you feel very gilty, espeshally after you've just raised an orchard, or been up to other antics of a simmler kind. old Tozer, the local bobby, gives you a look that seems to pierce you and throw and throw, and you go sort of wobbly at the knees, and feel jolly uncomfortable. What's the use of policemen, I should like to know? My major, Frank, says that they are necessary evils, in order to preserve law and order. But what's the use of law and order?

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(Continued from page 13.)

He squirmed round the corner just in time, and escaped.

But it is said that every bullet has its billet; and the same applied to Smithy's loaf.

Bunter had dedged in time; but Horace Coker had arrived at the psychological moment!

Crash! Coker caught the loaf with his ear. There was a roar in the Remove passage.

Bunter fled at top speed, and Coker staggered against the opposite wall, clutching at his damaged ear, as the loaf dropped at his feet.

"Yaroorh! What—what—who buzzed that loaf at me?" roared Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You young villain!"

Coker glared into Study No. 4.

"Sorry!" chuckled the Bounder. "It was meant for Bunter—but you're welcome to it, Coker!"

"My hat! I'll jolly well—" Coker rushed into the study, forgetting Bunter for the moment.

Smithy and Redwing jumped up promptly.

"Rescue. Remove!" yelled the Bounder. "Fifth-Form cads!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Roll up, Remove!" came an answering yell in Bob Cherry's powerful tones.

There was a rush of footsteps in the Remove passage. Smithy's doorway was crammed with Removites, ready and eager to repel a Fifth-Form invasion.

"Coker again!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Coker never seems to know when he's had enough. Give him some more!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The rutherfordness is terrific!"

"Collar him! Down with Coker! Down with the Fifth!"

"Hands off!" roared Coker. "I haven't come here for a row! I came here to see Bunter!"

"Collar him!"

"Down with the Fifth!"

"Yaroorh! Yooop! Whooop!" roared Coker, as he went down on Smithy's carpet under a rush of Removites.

"Sit on him!"

"Bump him!"

"Here, Bunter! Bunter! Come and sit on Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This way, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, you fellows, have you got him safe?" gasped Billy Bunter, from the Remove passage. He was quite willing, indeed eager, to sit on Coker, if Coker was safely held.

"Safe as houses!" Come on!"

Bunter blinked into the study and grinned.

Coker undoubtedly was safely held; nine or ten Removites were grasping him, and flattening him on the floor. Coker was roaring and struggling like an enraged bull.

"Sit on him, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, leave him to me!" chorled Bunter. "I'll give him a nip! I'll give him coming up to our

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passage after a fellow! Cheeky cad, you know. Lemme gerrat him!"

Billy Bunter rolled in, and sat on Coker.

He sat on him hard.

There was a gasp from Coker, a prolonged and agonised gasp, like air escaping from a badly-punctured tyre.

Bunter was not a light-weight. Coker had a feeling as if a steam-hammer had descended on him. He collapsed under the Owl of the Remove, and gasped spasmodically.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. "You were unquivering after Bunter, old man—here he is!"

"Ow!" spluttered Coker.

"Rag him, you fellows!" shouted Bunter. "I've got the beast safe! I say, you fellows, pour the ink over him! Give him the ink on his chivvy! Put the enders over him! Mop the usles on to his hair! Give him beans!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groogh! Gerroff! I—I came here—yaroorh! Keep that ink away, you young rotters! Oh, my hat! Yaroorph!"

A bottle of ink was up-ended over Coker's countenance. He roared and spluttered, and the Remove yelled with laughter. A bottle of gum followed, and the sticky contents trickled and meandered over Coker of the Fifth.

"Coker will get fed up with butting into our passage in the long run," chuckled Harry Wharton. "Give him some more."

"Here's the jam," said Smithy.

"Good egg!"

Coker struggled frantically. But Billy Bunter's weight, fairly planted on him, held him pinned. Jam was rubbed into Coker's hair, mixing with the ink and the gum. The roars of Horace Coker were like unto the roars of the Bull of Bashan. Undoubtedly Coker was learning that the Remove passage was no safe place for a Fifth-Form fellow to venture into. The din in Smithy's study was terrific; every fellow there seemed to be enjoying himself, excepting Coker.

"Cave! Perfect!" shouted Ogilvy from the passage.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Hook it!"

Wingate of the Sixth came striding up the passage, with a frown on his face and an asphalt in his hand. There was a scampering of the merry Removites from Study No. 4. But the study was still crowded when Wingate arrived at the door, and stared grimly in.

"What's this awful row? You young rascals! Do you know you can be heard all over Greyfriars? What the thump are you doing here, Coker?"

Billy Bunter rolled off Coker, grinning. Coker of the Fifth sat up, gasping, spluttering, and clawing at the jam and gum in his hair. His face was scarcely recognizable.

"It's all right, Wingate," said Smithy cheerfully. "Coker came in and asked for it."

"The askfulness was terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grooogh!" spluttered Coker of the Fifth. "Oooohh! You young villains! Ow! Groogh! Moooooh!"

Wingate grinned. He could not help it, the aspect of Coker would almost have made a stone image grin.

"Look here, Coker, this won't do," said Wingate. "What the thump do you expect if you built in among the fags like this? You can't take the law into your own hands, though you seem to think you can."

"He came here after me," squeaked Bunter. "I say, Wingate, give him the asphalt."

Coker spluttered.

"I—I—I—"

"If Bunter's been up to some of his tricks you can report him to a prefect, Coker," snapped the captain of Greyfriars. "See? Now, what has Bunter done?"

"Nothing," said Bunter promptly.

"Chose it! What has Bunter done, Coker?"

"Grooogh! Nothing! Ow!"

"Nothing!" repeated Wingate. "What do you mean? What were you after him for, then?"

"Groogh! I wasn't after him," gasped Coker. He staggered to his feet, still clawing jam and gum. "Ow! Groogh! I—I came here—groogh!—to speak to Bunter. Ow! I'd heard that his uncle was dead, and I was going to—groogh!—express sympathy. Ooooh!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"What?"

"Mmmmmmm!" spluttered Coker.

"These young villains buzzed a loaf at me, and piled on me, before a fellow could speak. That fat scoundrel sat on me, and nearly squashed me. I was going—groogh!—to express my sympathy with him—ow!—and as the little beast is always hard up, I was going to—sooch!—offer him a loan, if he wanted one, for going home to thie—oooooh!—funeral. Oh dear!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Bunter's face was a study.

"You—you were teasing—oh, he-stuttered. From the bottom of his fat heart Bunter wished that he had not sat on Horace Coker so hard. Still, how was a fellow to have guessed this? Certainly Bunter had not guessed it."

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

Wingate burst into a laugh.

"There seems to have been some misunderstanding," he said. "Oh dear! You young swamps had better ask a fellow what he wants, next time. Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a laughing matter, Wingate!" yelled Coker.

"Isn't it?" chuckled Wingate. "It looks like it to me. You'd better clear off, Coker, and clean yourself—you need it. No more of this ragging, you kids, or you'll hear from me."

Wingate walked away, laughing, apparently able to see only the comic side of that unfortunate misunderstanding.

Coker staggered after him, leaving the Remove fellows shrieking. Only Bunter was serious. Bunter rolled after the Fifth-Former in a great hurry, hoping against hope that it was not too late for the little loan.

"I say, Coker—" Bunter plucked at Horace Coker's sleeve. "I say, Coker, old man—thanks, you know—you're a splendid chap. I say, I'll be glad of—" Yaroorph!"

Coker did not answer in words. He turned on Billy Bunter and smote him. It was a mighty swipe. Bunter flew.

Then Coker stamped away down the Remove staircase, heading for the nearest bath-room. Evidently Coker was no longer feeling sympathetic. It was doubtful, indeed, whether Coker would have sympathised just then had the whole Bunter tribe perished at one fell swoop. He might even have regarded such a happening as a boon and a blessing.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Too Kind!

M R. QUELCH glanced at Billy Bunter quite kindly at the breakfast table on Friday morning.

The Remove master had never had a very high opinion of his promising

pupil, but he was thinking much of Bunter now.

There were traits in Bunter's character that leaped to the eye, as it were; nobody needed a longer acquaintance than a few minutes with Bunter to discern that he was greedy, and untruthful, and a little unscrupulous, and uncommonly obtuse, and given to considering the interests of only one inhabitant of the globe—William George Bunter.

But Shakespeare had observed that there is some soul of goodness in things evil, would men observingly distil it out.

Some soul of goodness there must be in Bunter, the Remove master considered, as witness his deep grief for his defunct relative.

Nobody would have expected Bunter to feel the loss as he had, apparently, felt it. He really did not seem to be a fellow of strong affections and attachments. Mr. Quelch had been surprised, and moved, by the sight of tears coursing down Bunter's fat cheeks, in the Form-room, when he told of the sad and sudden fate of his uncle, William George Herbert Richard. The aroma of onions had not enlightened him, and he felt that he had been a little unjust to Bunter.

So, by the natural swing of the pendulum, the Remove master gave him a little more than justice now. He was satisfied that there was, after all, tender affection and a regard for others hidden somewhere within Bunter's fat circumference. William George Bunter had risen very much in his Form master's estimation.

True, Bunter did not look so grieved that morning. At breakfast-time only one subject occupied Bunter's mind—breakfast. He had quite forgotten, for the moment, his deceased relative.

"Bunter!"
The Owl of the Remove blinked round.
"Yes, sir."

"I hope you feel better this morning, my boy," said Mr. Quelch kindly.

"Quite well, thank you, sir," said Bunter. Then he remembered. "I—I mean as—well as can be expected, sir. I'm trying to bear up, sir!"

"That is right, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch approvingly.

"It's not the thing to give way too much, is it, sir?" said Bunter, encouraged.
"A fellow ought to bear his grief and his—his sorrow in a manly way, oughtn't he, sir?"

"Quite so, Bunter."

"A chap shouldn't wear his heart on his sleeve, for daws to peck at, sir, as Swinburne says," said Bunter.

"Shakespeare!" murmured Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir, I mean Shakespeare," said Bunter hastily. "Of course, sir, I—I feel very bad, really, sir. I don't think I can eat anything!"

"You must try to do so, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, very kindly. "You must take nourishment, my boy. You have a long journey to make to-day."

Bunter was about to reply that it was not a very long journey to Courtfield, but he remembered in time that it must be his uncle's funeral that Mr. Quelch was alluding to.

"Oh! Yes, sir! Quite so, sir!"
"Eat as much as you can, my boy," said Mr. Quelch.

"Thank you, sir!"

Bunter was not always so obedient to his Form master as might have been desired. On this matter, however, he was prepared to set an example of implicit obedience to the whole Form.

Had Bunter really had an Uncle William George Herbert Richard, and had he been suddenly deprived of that

relative, it was exceedingly doubtful whether the circumstance would have affected his appetite. As the deceased uncle existed only in Bunter's fat imagination, there was no doubt on the subject at all—Bunter's appetite was in its usual vigorous state. He proceeded to take a little nourishment, and proceeded still further to take quite a lot.

Mr. Quelch's attention was drawn to him again a little later. Fierce whispers were proceeding between Bunter and Skinner, who sat next to him.

Mr. Quelch frowned at Skinner.

"What is the matter there?" he exclaimed.

"Bunter's bagged my egg!" said Skinner in a voice of suppressed fury.

"I—I didn't notice—" gasped Bunter.

"Skinner, I am surprised that you should take heed of such a trifle at such a time," said the Remove master severely. "I am very much surprised, indeed, Skinner."

"But, sir—"

"That will do, Skinner!" said Mr. Quelch, frowning.

And Harold Skinner relapsed into infuriated silence.

SOLUTION OF CROSS WORD PUZZLE No. 9

C	O	M	B	S		D	A	S	I	S
O	V	A	L		E	H				
K	I	D		I	M	P		E	K	E
E	D		S	T	E	A	M		Y	E
R		C	H	A	W		C	E	R	D
F	O	O	L		K	A	I	L		
B		T	R	I	D	E	N	T		E
U	S		T	A	R	T	S		P	M
N	I	P		N	I	S		A	R	M
T	R	E	E		P		G	L	E	E
Y	E	A	R	S		S	L	E	P	T

And Sidney James Snoop did not venture even to whisper when Bunter annexed a pot of jam which Snoop had smuggled to the breakfast-table for his own particular behoof. Bunter was a privileged person this morning, and Snoop only gave him a deadly Hunnish look.

After breakfast Mr. Quelch spoke again to the Owl of the Remove, as the juniors were going out.

"Have you looked out your train, Bunter?"

Bunter started.

"Oh! No, sir."

"I will do so for you, Bunter," said the Remove master. "At what time does the ceremony take place?"

"Two-thirty, sir," said Bunter.

He was thinking of the matinee at the Theatre Royal, Courtfield.

"Two-thirty," Mr. Quelch considered.

"How long will the journey take you, Bunter?"

"About half an hour, sir," answered Bunter, still thinking of the theatre at Courtfield.

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"You could not possibly reach your home in half an hour, Bunter."

"Oh! No, sir. I meant—" Bunter stammered.

"What did you mean, Bunter?"

"I—I'm so upset, sir, I—I forgot it takes an hour and a half to get home, sir. That's what I meant to say."

"If you wish to reach home in time for lunch, Bunter, you may take the eleven o'clock train."

"Oh, no, sir!"

Bunter blinked at Mr. Quelch in dismay. This meant missing his dinner, and Bunter did not want to sit through a matinee at the Theatre Royal in a state of quaking emptiness. He would have preferred a meal to a matinee any day.

"What do you wish, then, Bunter?"

"I—I think if I start immediately after dinner, sir, it will be all right. In fact, my father thinks I'd better get there only in time for the—the funeral."

"Very well, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch. "I will find a train for you."

"Thank you, sir!" murmured Bunter; and he departed, glad to make his escape.

Mr. Quelch was very kind, unusually kind; but Bunter could have dispensed with all this kindness. He really did not want to know anything about trains for home, when he was only going three miles to the nearest town. But he could not, of course, explain that to Mr. Quelch.

That morning Bunter rolled into the Form-room with the rest of the Remove, but he had a very easy time there.

A fellow in such a state of grief was not expected to get his prep done, and Bunter was not called on to construe. In fact, he was not called on to do anything. He had the pleasure of loafing at his desk, while the other fellows absorbed knowledge from Mr. Quelch. This suited Bunter admirably. Greyfriars would have seemed to him a really tip-top school had this been the regular daily programme.

He rolled out quite cheerfully in morning break, and grinned at the Famous Five very brightly. That afternoon he was going to a theatre—quite inexpensively—while the rest of the Remove were grinding geography with Mr. Quelch, and mathematics with Mr. Lascelles. Bunter hated geography and loathed mathematics. Bunter really could not quite contain his satisfaction at his happy prospects.

"I say, you fellows, don't you wish you were coming?" he chuckled.

"To the funeral?" asked Bob Cherry.

Bunter had forgotten the funeral again!

"Nunno! I mean, yes—that is—"

"You haven't been able to sail the ticket, then?" asked Harry Wharton.

"The—the ticket?"

"Well, you've got your exeat all right," remarked Johnny Bull; "but I shouldn't care to be in your shoes if Quelch spots the little game."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"The wrath of the esteemed Quelch would be terrific," grinned Hurree Jamsai Ram Singh.

"Shush! Here's Quelch!" murmured Wharton. "The fat boulder ought to be licked; but, for goodness' sake, don't give him away!"

And the Famous Five were silent as Mr. Quelch looked out of the doorway of the House.

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir," said Bunter.

"I have looked out a fast train for you," said Mr. Quelch. "You will have time to have your dinner here, Bunter, and I will ask Gosling to drive you to the station for the one-fifteen."

"Oh, sir, I—I'd rather walk!"

"You would have scarcely time to walk the distance, Bunter, and catch the train," said Mr. Quelch kindly. "I will speak to Gosling."

"I—I'd rather not give a lot of trouble, sir," stammered Bunter, quite dismayed at the prospect of being driven to Friarale by Gosling, when it would be time for him to walk in the opposite direction to Courtfield.

"That is nothing, Bunter, in the circumstances."

"Oh, very well, sir," mumbled Bunter. He reflected that he could, after all, catch a train from Friarale to Courtfield.

"Quite so, Bunter. You will be prepared to start immediately after dinner, and you must make as good a dinner as possible."

"I—I will, sir."

"Very good, Bunter. I will now telephone to your father, and tell him the precise time to expect you."

Mr. Quelch turned back into the house.

Bunter did not answer. He couldn't.

He stood rooted to the ground in utter, overwhelming dismay.

His fat jaw dropped; his little, round eyes looked almost haggard behind his big spectacles. The Famous Five looked at him, and so webogene was his dismayed face that they checked their inclination to chuckle.

Bunter's little scheme had worked out well—too well! He had gained his exit, and Coker's ticket was still in his pocket. All was well, but for this unexpected kindness on the part of his Form master.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter at last. "Jolly good of Quelch," said Nugent. "Don't you want him to speak to your father over the phone, Bunter?"

Bunter groaned.

Only a deep, awful groan could express his feelings at that terrific moment. What his father would think when Mr. Quelch telephoned that Bunter would be home in time for a funeral that was not going to take place at all was a problem. But that did not matter so much as what Mr. Quelch would think when he learned from Mr. Bunter—as of course he would—that there was no funeral and no defunct uncle—nothing at all in fact, but a trick of the Owl of the Remove to cut classes for the afternoon!

"Well, you've done it now!" commented Johnny Bull.

"The donefulness is terrific!"

Bunter did not answer, he only groaned. He was only too awfully conscious that he had "done it." Othello, Hamlet, and other excitable characters, who have committed homicide in a thoughtless moment, never repented of their deeds so deeply as Bunter repented of having extinguished a non-existent uncle. But repentance came too late; and it was painfully, awfully clear to Bunter now that he was not going to enjoy his afternoon.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Unfortunate for Skinner!

"SKINNER, of course!" said Coker of the Fifth savagely.

Potter and Greene did not seem very interested.

Coker was in the quad with his comrades, and Coker was going through his pockets, one after another, in an angry and excited search for something that was not there.

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Coker had been quite cheery that morning. He had an exit from his Form master for the afternoon, and a ticket for the Theatre Royal in his pocket—at least, so he supposed. Mr. Poot had been kind enough to grant him the exit, rather surprised and pleased by Coker's interest in a Shakespearean performance. The ticket had cost Coker ten-and-sixpence, but that was a trifle to Coker. He had had it in his pocket for days; also, it had been missing for some days, but Coker had not noticed that little circumstance.

Now, as he was going to the Theatre Royal that day, it occurred to Coker to look at the ticket; upon which he had made the unpleasant discovery that it was no longer in his possession.

Pocket after pocket was searched in vain.

The ticket, and the envelope that had contained it, had vanished—gone from Coker's gaze like a beautiful dream.

"You've dropped it somewhere," yawned Potter.

"Rot!"

"Well, if it's gone, it's gone," remarked Greene philosophically. Greene could afford to be philosophic on the subject. It was not his ticket.

As a matter of fact, Coker's chums were feeling rather "stuffy" with Coker about this. Generally they shared in all Coker's little excursions, and generally at Coker's expense. But on this occasion Horace had not thought of booking seats for them also, though very likely Mr. Poot would have given an exit for three had he done so. Coker, indeed, did not conceal his opinion that Shakespeare was rather above the intellects of Potter and Greene.

So Potter and Greene, so far as they were interested at all, were rather amused when it turned out that Coker had lost his ticket.

Coker was not amused. He was wrathful.

"Skinner, of course!" he repeated. "That young scoundrel Skinner of the Remove! I've dropped that ticket somewhere—"

"You would!" agreed Potter.

"Don't be a silly owl, Potter, if you can help it. I fancy I must have dropped it when those Remove fags were dragging me the other day—that's the likely enough. Anyhow, Skinner's got it!"

"How the thump do you know that?" asked Greene curiously.

"He picked it up, of course. Didn't he offer to sell me a ticket the other day for that very matinee—a half-guinea ticket?" said Coker hotly. "Of course, he couldn't have known it was my ticket. He picked it up, and kept it—dishonest young rascal! Actually offered to sell it to me, you know. You fellows remember!"

Potter and Greene, remembered, and they grinned. They had wondered a little at the time how it was that Skinner of the Remove had that ticket on his hands to dispose of. Now they knew!

"The cheek of it!" said Coker, breathing wrath. "The dishonesty of it, you know! My theatre ticket! I'll jolly well make that young scoundrel cough it up, and give him a jolly good licking into the bargain!"

And Horace Coker started in search of Skinner of the Remove.

He passed Billy Bunter in the quad, and called to him:

"Seen Skinner?"

Bunter did not answer; he did not even hear. Bunter's face was long and lugubrious. He looked like a fellow who had landed himself into awful trouble—as indeed he had.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?" snapped Coker.

Bunter rolled on dully without heeding. Coker made a movement to follow, but he checked himself and continued in search of Skinner. There was no time to waste if he was to deal with Skinner before third lesson.

"Seen Skinner?" he called out to the Famous Five.

"Over yonder by the study windows," answered Wharton.

"Good!"

Coker rushed across towards the windows, where Skinner was loafing with Snoop and Stott.

"Skinner, you young rotter—"

"Hallo! What's biting you?" asked Skinner cheerily, staring at Horace Coker's enraged face. "Got a pain anywhere?"

"You young villain!" roared Coker.

"Pile it on!" said Skinner. "Anything happened, old bean? Mind you don't burst your crop!"

"Where's my ticket?"

"Ticket?" repeated Skinner.

"Yes, you young scoundrel! The ticket I lost!"

"Lost the ticket, did you?" said Skinner coolly. "That was careless. Coker. Now you won't be able to get your watch out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What-a-at?" ejaculated Coker.

"Groat, Scott!" exclaimed Bolsover major. "Has Coker really been pawing his watch, Skinner? A number of Remove fellows had gathered round, attracted by the roar of Horace Coker."

Skinner shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, he says he's lost the ticket," he answered. "I suppose it isn't a tram-ticket he's lost, or a railway-ticket?"

"My hat! Fancy old Coker putting his watch up the spout!" grinned Bob Cherry.

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

"You cheeky young villains, it's nothing of the kind!" howled Coker. "I'm speaking of a theatre-ticket. I dropped a ticket somewhere for the Theatre Royal, at Courtfield, and Skinner's got it—picked it up somewhere—practically stolen it!"

"I say, that's rather thick, Skinner!" said Snoop.

"It's not true!" yelled Skinner indignantly. "I haven't seen any silly old theatre-ticket!"

"Well, you young Hun!" gasped Coker. "You offered to sell it to me the other day—not knowing it was my own ticket, I suppose. Mean to say you bought that ticket you were offering me?"

Skinner started.

"Oh, that ticket!"

"Yes, that ticket!" snorted Coker. "I dare say you didn't know it was mine when you found it, but you know it now; and, anyhow, you know all the time that it wasn't yours!"

"W-w-was it yours?" stammered Skinner.

"You know it was! Hand it over, and take a jolly good licking for bagging it into the bargain!"

"Look here! Hands off!" yelled Skinner, as the angry Fifth-Former colored him.

"Shell out that ticket!" shouted Coker, shaking him.

"I can't—I—"

Shake, shake, shake!

"Ow! Oh, rescue, you fellows!" shrieked Skinner, fairly crumpling up in Horace Coker's powerful grasp.

"Shell out Coker's ticket, if you've got it," said Harry Wharton. "You know jolly well you've got no right to it!"

"I haven't got it!"
"He actually offered to sell it to me!"
roared Coker. Shake, shake, shake!
"Hand out that theatre-ticket, you
young pickpocket!"
"I haven't—I never—I wasn't—
Yaroooooh!" spluttered Skinner. "You
silly ass! You frabjous owl! Oh, my
hat! Ow! Oh!"

Whack, whack, whack!
Coker's heavy hand smote Skinner, and
the hapless Removite roared with
anguish.

"Yarooo! Help! Rescue! It's a
mistake! Ow! Help!"

Smack, smack, smack!

"Yaroooooooh!"
"Here, 'nuff's as good as a feast!"
exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Chase it,
Coker, and give him a chance to
explain."

"No need to explain. He's got my
ticket. I tell you he offered to sell it to
me—"

"Hands off, Coker!"

"Stand back, you cheeky fags!" yelled
Coker.

But the Removites did not stand back.
They collared Horace Coker, and
dragged him off his victim by main
force.

Skinner reeled against the wall, gasp-
ing and stuttering. Horace Coker had a
heavy hand, and Skinner had felt the full
weight of it.

"Hold that fathead Coker," said Harry
Wharton, taking the lead in the proceed-
ings. "Now then, Skinner, if you've got
something belonging to Coker—"

"Groogh! I haven't! Ow, ow!"

"Oh, come off!" said Potter of the
Fifth. "You offered to sell Coker a
ticket for the matinee at the Theatre
Royal. We heard you!"

"I know I did!" gasped Skinner.
"But I haven't the ticket. I was offer-
ing it for Bunter. Bunter's got it."

"Bunter!" gasped Coker.

"Bunter!" chirruped Peter Todd.
"Ha, ha! Of course! Bunter! I re-
member now. Bunter's the man!"

"Bunter had the ticket to sell,"
spluttered Skinner. "He asked me to
help him find a chap to buy it. I thought
of Coker because I knew he had an axat.
That's all. I never knew the silly idiot
had lost his silly ticket and that Bunter
had picked it up! Ow!"

"My hat! That must be the ticket he
was trying to sell us in the study!"
exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"The jolly old ticket he has been
hawking up and down the Remove for
days!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "Coker's
all the time!"

"The ticket he's using to-day!" chir-
ruped Peter. "The ticket he's got an
axat for—the ticket he's slaughtered his
uncle for—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites roared. Skinner did
not laugh; he was feeling too sore and
breathless. Coker had not handled
him gently.

"So Bunter's got it, has he?" ex-
claimed Coker. "If that's the fact,
Skinner—"

"Of course it's the fact, you silly
owl!" hooted Skinner furiously.

"Well in that case, I've licked you
for nothing; but I dare say you de-
serve it for something else," said Coker.

"You blithering chump!"

"The more you Remove fags are
licked, the better," said Coker. "That's
my opinion."

"And the more you Fifth Form asses
are kicked, the better, that's my
opinion," said Bob Cherry. "Give him
jip, you fellows!"

The Remove fellows rushed at Coker.
Undoubtedly, Coker's methods had



"Groogh! I wasn't after Bunter!" gasped Coker, scrambling to his feet and
clawing at the jam and gum that covered him. "I was going to express—my
sympathy with him—ow—and offer him a loan if he wanted one—for going
home—yowp—to the funeral. Oh dear!" Wingate burst into a laugh.
"Ha, ha, ha! There seems to have been a misunderstanding," he said.
(See Chapter 9.)

been high-handed, and his victim was
a member of the Remove, though not
a very creditable member. So the Re-
movites swarmed over Coker, and the
great man of the Fifth fled for his
life, pursued by a mob of juniors. And
it was some solace to Skinner to see
Horace Coker rolled over in the quad,
and his hat squashed on his head.

Mr. Prout, rolling majestically into
view, put a stop to the rag, and Horace
Coker was left to himself. He stayed
only to get his second wind, before he
set out in search of Billy Bunter, evi-
dently the present possessor of the
Courtfield Theatre ticket.

Bunter was leaning up against the
school shop, lugubrious and dismal, ex-
pecting every moment to hear that Mr.
Queleh wanted him. He blinked dis-
mally at Coker, as the enraged Fifth-
Former spotted him, and bore down on
him.

"You young villain! I—I—"

Bunter did not stay to hear any
more, or to let Coker get within reach.
He dodged away, and fled for the
House.

"Stop!" roared Coker.

He rushed furiously in pursuit.

"I say, you fellows! Rescue!" yelled
Bunter, as he sprinted for the shelter
of the House.

But the Remove fellows only
grinned; there was no rescue for Bun-
ter. It was pretty well known that

that he was in possession of Coker's
property; and the opinion of the Re-
move was that a licking would do him
good, and perhaps teach him to keep
his hands from picking and stealing.
Billy Bunter fled on frantically, with
Coker gaining at every step.

Bunter put on a spurt, and bolted up
the steps of the House, with Horace
Coker close behind.

A lean, commanding figure appeared
in the doorway.

"Bunter!"

It was Mr. Queleh.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He halted, panting. Coker halted,
too; even Coker could not venture to
collar the junior in the presence of his
Form master. Mr. Queleh gave the
Fifth-Former a severe look, and then
centred his attention upon Bunter. And
Bunter wriggled with direful anticipa-
tion.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Facing the Music!

"BUNTER!"

"Oh dear! Yes, sir!"

groaned Bunter.

Mr. Queleh's face was grim
and stern. The Greyfriars fellows
gathered round the steps, realising
that something was going to happen.

It was fairly clear now that Mr. Quelch was in possession of the facts regarding the sudden and lamentable demise of Bunter's uncle.

Seldom had the Remove fellows seen their Form master looking so grim. If there was a comic side to the affair, it was absolutely lost upon Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter! I have spoken to your father on the telephone."

"Have you, sir?" mumbled Bunter.

"Mr. Bunter was not at home. I was told that he was gone to the City as usual!" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, sir!"

"As this was very surprising, in the circumstances you had described to me, Bunter, I rang up Mr. Bunter's number in the City. Mr. Bunter was astonished to hear that you were coming home to-day—"

"W-w-was he, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"He stated that nothing whatever had happened in his family—"

"Oh!"

"And there was to be no funeral—"

"Moummmm!"

"You have misled me, Bunter!"

"Oh dear!"

"You have wilfully deceived me!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Do not utter ridiculous and slangy ejaculations, Bunter! You have affected to be suffering from a sad loss, when nothing of the kind has occurred. You have tricked me into giving you leave from school for this afternoon!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter wriggled.

"I-I haven't—I-I wasn't—I-I never—"

"He stuttered."

"I-I-I assure you, sir, my p-p-poor uncle—"

"What!"

Your father has told me that nothing has happened to any relative of yours, Bunter. The severest punishment—"

Bunter quaked.

"He—he's mistaken, sir!" he gasped desperately. "The—the pater's rather absent-minded, sir, and—and he may have forgotten—"

"Forgotten!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! He's got an awful memory, and—and he may have gone off to the City as usual, and—and forgotten the funeral, sir," stuttered Bunter.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch, staring blankly at the Owl of the Remove.

The Remove fellows stared, too. Bunter's reckless fibbing generally verged on the incredible; but this time it looked as if Bunter had got to the limit.

"Bunter! I—I hardly know what to say to you!" stuttered the Remove master. "Such incredibly reckless untruthfulness—"

"Oh, sir! I-I assure you, sir, I'm willing to give you my word, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I suppose you can take my word, sir!"

"Take your word!" said Mr. Quelch dazedly.

"Yes, sir! And—and may I go now, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"You may not go, Bunter! Bless my soul! I shall begin to doubt soon whether you are in your right senses!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Why have you played this trick, Bunter?"

"Trick, sir! I-I haven't! I-I couldn't help my cousin—I mean my uncle—falling into the Seine—"

"What?"

"I mean falling off the Channel boat, and—and catching pneumonia, which turned to influenza—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter was getting rather confused. Under Mr. Quelch's basilisk eyes, his

fat wits were scattered. His usual system was to back up one untruth with another bigger, like Pelion piled on Ossa, till he hardly knew himself how much was truth and how much the reverse. He plunged on desperately.

"I—I'm awfully cut up, sir! My poor cousin—"

"Your poor cousin?"

"Yes, sir—I mean, my poor uncle. My p-p-poor uncle! It's fairly knocked me over, sir! I—I was his favourite son—I mean, his favourite cousin—that is, his favourite nephew, and—and—"

"Silence!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"Oh dear! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "If—if you don't mind, sir, I—I should prefer the matter to drop. It—it's a painful subject, sir—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! This boy's absurd untruthfulness is not a proper subject for merriment!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch—a point on which the Removeites did not agree with him at all.

"Bunter! You have deceived me in order to obtain leave from class this afternoon. There is no funeral at your home; you were not going there. Where were you going, wretched boy?"

"My hat! My ticket!" ejaculated Coker.

"What do you mean, Coker? Do you know anything about this?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, rather, sir! I—"

"What? You, a senior boy in the Fifth Form, were a party to this miserable deception—this abject trickery which—"

Coker jumped.

"Oh no! No, sir! Nothing of the kind! I mean, Bunter's got my theatre-ticket—my ticket for the matinee at the Theatre Royal at Courtfield this afternoon. I—I was just after him to get it back, sir, when you butted in—I mean, when you—"

"Bless my soul! This trickery, then, was to obtain an exit to go to a theatre, Bunter?"

"No, sir! I mean, yes, sir! That is, I—"

"Have you a theatre ticket in your possession, Bunter, that belongs to this Fifth-Form boy?"

"Nunno, sir! I—I found it—"

"You found it?"

"I—I-I mean my uncle sent it to me, sir—that is, my father—I mean to say that—"

"I told me that theatre ticket at once, Bunter!"

"Oh dear!"

The half-guinea ticket, the cause of so much excitement, and of Bunter's latest and most remarkable stunt, passed into the hand of the Remove master. Bunter's eyes followed it sorrowfully.

"Had you a theatre-ticket in your possession, Coker?"

"Certainly, sir! I know the number on it. I dropped it—"

"You picked up this ticket, Bunter?"

"I—I—I—"

"Yes or no?" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

"And instead of seeking out the owner you kept it in your hands?"

"No, sir!"

"What! Where has it been, then?"

"In—in my trousers' pocket, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! You utterly obtuse boy! Are you not aware, Bunter, that you have acted dishonestly?"

"I, sir!" exclaimed Bunter. "Findings keepings, sir—I mean, Coker's such a beast, sir, that I felt justified in keeping the ticket, in the—the circumstances. Besides, it's not Coker's ticket—"

(Continued on page 28.)

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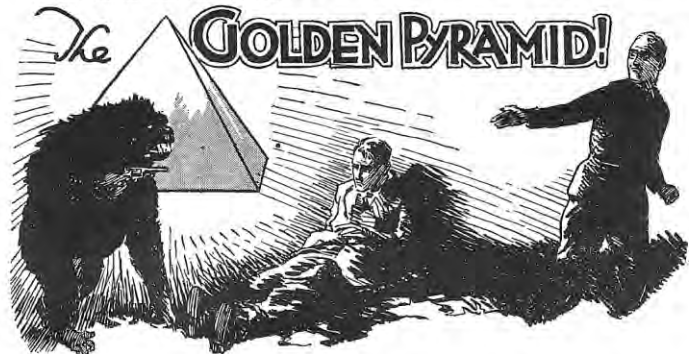
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AN INTERESTING TRIO! No ordinary man is the guardian of the cave, but a full-sized gorilla with a loaded revolver. Its master, Arthur the Duke, is as complete a scoundrel as it is possible to meet. Between them lies Ferrers Locke, a captive, no ordinary man, either, but a master of detective craft. Two to one, and yet the odds are on the world-famous sleuth winning through!



The Man with the Monocle!

THIS was no man they were dealing with, but a huge specimen of the gorilla—and apparently an amazingly clever and well-trained one at that, for the giant creature seemed to be able to handle a revolver as well as any man.

The great brute, having flung Pycroft contemptuously aside, now turned towards Ferrers Locke. The detective's mind was moving at a more rapid pace than it had ever done before, striving to see a way out of this terrible predicament.

But it seemed there was no way. They were both utterly at the mercy of this horrible travesty of a man, and Locke began to feel his heart sinking within him.

Apparently the gorilla was in no hurry, for it continued to stare at Locke intently, its beady eyes roving all over the detective's supple figure in what was doubtless intended to be an appraising glance.

The sleuth was beginning to feel the strain of standing for so long in such an unnatural position, yet he knew that he dared not lower his hands by so much as an inch, for fear that the gorilla should spring upon him and with one twist of its amazing arms smash every bone in his body.

Pycroft lay where he had been thrown, apparently having been knocked temporarily senseless as the result of his terrific impact with the rock-like floor.

Ferrers Locke began to give up hope. The position was desperate indeed.

And then the gorilla moved once more, this time crouching a step or so closer, its ugly feet making no sound as it almost glided along.

Then, when it had come so close that its hot breath sprayed all over Locke's upturned face, causing him to cough and choke in disgust and repulsion, the animal stretched out its free hand—the other was still gripping the revolver—and began to run it lightly over Locke's clothing, as if in search of something.

The detective remained perfectly rigid. But now his eyes had moved from their survey of the gorilla and were directed to a spot some yards behind.

The figure of Pycroft, which had lain so tragically still up to now, had suddenly begun to move.

Very, very slowly the C.I.D. man uncurled himself—so slowly, indeed, that it almost seemed as if he were not moving at all.

But Locke's eyes were of the keenest, and even in the misleading shadows of

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective.

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

INSPECTOR PYCROFT, of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

SIR MERTON CARR, a South African mining magnate.

GORDON, his son.

GERALD ARTHUR BRISTOW, a professional crook, nephew of Sir Merton (known also as Arthur the Duke).

Ferrers Locke is engaged to find Gordon Carr, who has mysteriously disappeared from Sturmpoint College. Soon after the sleuth takes up the case he learns that Sir Merton Carr—who had made a hurried journey to England—has been found on the Decon moor apparently dead. On top of this, Mr. Rennie, the master of the Beacon at Sturmpoint College, is also unaccountably missing.

While Drake proceeds to Sturmpoint College, Locke journeys down to Moorvale, Decon.

On arrival there he discovers that Sir Merton Carr is alive—very much alive. Locke confronts the baronet, and asks him to explain his actions. But Sir Merton will explain nothing. He begs the sleuth, however, to throw up the case, which Locke, naturally, refuses to do. Then begins a hunt for the Golden Pyramid—a cone of pure gold, around which is woven some deep mystery. Ferrers Locke finds the Pyramid and pockets it. He also comes across a secret cave, and, with Pycroft, he explores it. Suddenly from out the depths of the cave appears a shaggy monster, armed with a revolver. Evidently the guardian of this secret cave, the monster turns upon Pycroft and flings him to the ground, after which, with revolver held at the ready, it advances upon Ferrers Locke.

(Now read on.)

the cave, intensified though they were by the all too meagre light of the up-turned torch, he knew he had not been mistaken.

Pycroft had recovered somewhat from the effects of his fall, and, happily, had kept his wits about him sufficiently to realise that he must move carefully if he were not to attract the renewed attention of the gorilla and expose himself to the certain risk of another ferocious attack on the part of that terrible creature.

Inch by inch Pycroft dragged himself round, working gradually on all fours until at last he was able to stand erect.

It was a long and painful process, and Locke was inwardly glad that the gorilla, for some unknown reason, seemed still very much taken up with its examination of his clothing, running its paw through his pockets, tapping them and shaking them, for all the world as if it were seeking something it could not find.

The gorilla's great paw moved very slowly, but, strangely enough it did not attempt to molest the detective in any way. It seemed completely absorbed in its curious task, though, at the same time, it kept the revolver still directed, with unerring aim, at Locke's head.

And now Pycroft was moving steadily forward. Ferrers Locke smiled slightly as he saw that the C.I.D. man had somehow managed to drag out his automatic, which gleamed now and again as he moved.

Locke watched his friend entranced, inwardly praying that the gorilla would not turn aside, and so discover what Pycroft was in the act of doing.

And then the very thing that the detective and Pycroft had both hoped against hope wouldn't happen, took place.

Pycroft, careful and cautious though he was, was nevertheless greatly handicapped by the semi-darkness of the cave, and inadvertently stumbled against something which caused him to stagger forward and give a slight gasp of surprise and dismay.

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The sound was very slight indeed; but the gorilla seemed to have the ears of a cat, for, with a low growl, it straightened up and then swung round.

On that instant, in sheer desperation, Pycroft raised his automatic and pulled the trigger.

The weapon spat viciously. There was a flash of flame and a deafening roar, which reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the cave, waking a thousand echoes.

Hard atop of it came a nerve-racking scream of pain and fury from the gorilla as it sprang into the air, dropping its own revolver and spinning round, for a moment, like a living top.

And then—
And then Ferrers Locke's blood ran cold in his veins!

Ordinarily, Inspector Pycroft was a fairly good shot, and at such a close range there was really no excuse for missing the mark.

But apparently the shock of realising that he had been discovered, added to the realisation at the back of his mind that his own life was now in greater danger than ever, had caused the C.I.D. man's hand to falter, with the result that, though he pulled the trigger, his bullet had failed to hit the gorilla in a vital spot, but had merely wounded the animal.

And Locke knew what that meant!

Just for a moment the great brute seemed dazed with pain. Then, with another ear-splitting roar, it swung round towards Pycroft, its little beady eyes blood-red with fury, its great jaws sagging open, revealing the double row of jagged, yellow teeth, its long, hairy arms outflung.

Pycroft gave a yell and fled blindly across the cave, but the gorilla descended upon him in a flash.

At the same moment, Locke, momentarily freed from the animal's vigilant eyes, brought his hands down and literally tore his revolver from his pocket, dashing forward, with a yell of encouragement to Pycroft, who, however, was so utterly overcome with fear that he scarcely heard his friend's shout.

Even as the gorilla's outstretched, hairy arms sought a grip on the hapless Yarn man, Locke levelled his revolver and pulled the trigger.

And then he gave a cry of utter despair.

The revolver's trigger merely clicked harmlessly, and, though he tugged at it again and again, it made no difference.

For some amazing reason the weapon refused to act, and they were now left utterly at the mercy of a wounded and fear-maddened wild beast!

Locke turned his head away in horror as he saw the gorilla's hairy arms encircling the helpless figure of Pycroft. But, by a stroke of good luck, the inspector somehow contrived to slip aside in the nick of time, to dart away again towards another part of the cave.

And then Locke himself gave chase, thinking only of his friend, and realising that if he could but divert the monster's attention to himself it might give the Yarn man a chance to make good his escape.

Catching up with the lumbering brute, Locke flung himself upon it, at the same time yelling to Pycroft to get clear.

The gorilla, momentarily astonished by this attack from behind, stopped, hesitated, and then swung round, with a roar of rage, upon the detective, who now found himself faced with the most frightful encounter of his life—a fight

to the death with a mad beast of the jungle.

What happened in the next few moments Ferrers Locke never really was able to recollect.

Baulked, temporarily, of its other prey, the gorilla proceeded instantly to vent its whole rage upon the detective, and bore down upon him now in a terrific onslaught.

The detective skipped nimbly aside, and the animal blundered past, to pull up, with another bellow, against the wall of the cave.

By the time it had turned round again, Locke, whose foot had caught against something, had bent down and picked it up, breathing a prayer of thankfulness as he realised that it was the revolver which the animal had dropped.

Locke retreated swiftly to the opposite wall as the gorilla came at him again, and then levelled the revolver, and jabbed desperately with his finger at the trigger.

But even as he did so the gorilla flung out a hairy arm and seized the detective's wrist in a vice-like grip. The revolver barked noisily, its bullet flying wide of the mark; and Locke, with a sudden gasp of pain, was compelled to drop the weapon to the ground again.

And then the gorilla flung its whole weight upon him, and sought to lock him in a strangling embrace.

Ferrers Locke began to fight with all the madness of sheer desperation, but it was like battering his fists against an iron wall. The gorilla, completely ignoring the detective's rain of blows, merely folded his body in its great arms and drew him closer and closer, until the sleuth found all the breath choked out of him, and his head gyrating in a dizzy, red mist.

Then, with startling suddenness, there came a new sound. To Locke, whose head was whirling madly, it seemed to come from some immeasurable distance—the sound of a man's voice raised in tones of imperative command.

Hardly had the echoes of that voice died down when the grip of the gorilla relaxed and finally fell away, and Locke stopped back, gasping and reeling, against the wall of the cave. He would have said to the ground had not something suddenly appeared as if from nowhere and caught him even as he fell.

By sheer force of will the detective compelled himself to keep his senses, and after some moments he had sufficiently controlled himself to be able to gaze around him.

The gorilla had apparently vanished altogether, as had Pycroft. Ferrers Locke found himself propped against the wall of the cave, while standing before him was the figure of a man—a strangely familiar figure, which awoke queer memories in the detective's mind—memories of a long, dimly-lighted corridor, of an encounter in the dark, a sudden blow—

He jerked himself round with an effort, and stared full into the face of this tall, immaculately dressed figure. Then he gave a gasp of astonishment.

"The man with the monocle!" he muttered, passing a hand wearily over his perspiring brow. "The mysterious raider of the Hotel Meridian!"

The other bowed mockingly, and as he did so Locke saw that he held, loosely and apparently carelessly, in his hands, a businesslike automatic.

"Pleased to meet you again, Mr. Ferrers Locke!" he said, with a mocking laugh. "I hope Emperor, my pet gorilla, did not unduly inconvenience

you. He is inclined to be playful, you know."

The sleuth was too astounded to make answer. He knew the man before him to be Gerald Bristow!

Trapped in a Maze of Mystery!

"AND now, Mr. Locke, may I trouble you to let me have the Golden Pyramid?"

The man with the monocle spoke in bland, conversational tones, and with no more effort than if he had been asking for the salt at table. His lips were parted in a cheerful, if somewhat mocking, smile, and he seemed in the friendliest of tempers.

A dozen questions rushed to the lips of Ferrers Locke, but he forced them back. Astounded though he was, he yet had the good sense to realise that this was neither the time nor the place to ask questions.

And, besides, something warned him to be silent, even to feign ignorance, regarding the tiny golden pyramid which was even then reposing in a secret pocket in the lining of his coat.

He turned towards the man with the monocle with an expression of mild surprise and wonder.

"The Golden Pyramid?" he repeated vaguely. "I'm afraid you've got me guessing, Mr. Gerald Bristow!"

The genial smile vanished from the other's face like a chalk-mark from a slate. His eyes widened in startled dismay for a moment.

"What do you mean?" he muttered at last. "Why do you address me by that name?"

Locke smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

"Because," he murmured, "unlike, probably, everything else about you, it happens to belong to you! Still, friend Shakespeare has told us that a rose by any other name is just as sweet. I wouldn't insult the rose by comparison with you, but—well, what would you have me call you? Glass-Eye Gerald? Or, perhaps, Arthur the Dude?"

The other's eyes gleamed, and his face became livid. He stepped closer to the detective, moving his automatic threateningly.

"Enough of this cheap foolery, Locke!" he snarled. "Granted you've got my label—Gerald Arthur Bristow, Arthur the Dude, have it whatever way you like. It's all the same to me, seeing that you're powerless to injure me now. All I'm concerned with at the moment is the Golden Pyramid. As a business man, you will appreciate that time is money. Therefore, I'll be obliged if you will kindly hand over the Pyramid without further beating about the bush!"

But Ferrers Locke merely gazed in blank astonishment at the other.

"My dear fellow, I wish you'd be more explicit," he murmured. "What is this mysterious Golden Pyramid, regarding which you will persist in exuding so much hot air? I should be very interested to know!"

"You know all about it well enough!" he snarled. "I know between

eleventh and twelve. I've told you, Locke, I'm in no mood for fooling! Are you going to hand over that pyramid without further nonsense, or—"

"Or what?"

"Or be kept a close prisoner here until I've broken down this game of bluff of yours!" flashed Bristow at once. "Until I've wiped that confounded mocking smile off your lips, and forced you to whine for mercy!"

"Dear me, what a long holiday you're in for, then!" sighed Locke in



Ferrers Locke's torch was shining directly upon what looked like a large and bulky sack. Its mouth was open and, within, Pycroft's eye caught the glint and gleam of something that looked uncommonly like jewellery. "Loot, by thunder!" he gasped. (See Page 25.)

the same bantering tone. "Take my up, Bristow, old man, and give it up like a sensible chap. The last fellow who tried your little stunt of will-breaking on me was carried out on a stretcher in a state of mental paralysis through overstraining the brain!"

Bristow glared at the detective in speechless rage for a moment, then swung round on his heel and rapped out a sharp command, and a moment later there crept forth from the shadows of the cave the great, hairy figure of Emperor, the gorilla.

Pierce though the animal undoubtedly was, its behaviour was as docile as that of a child before the man with the monocle, who was obviously its master.

Bristow held the revolver out, and the gorilla seized it, and, on another sharp word from the man, levelled it straight at Locke's head.

"Watch him!" hissed the man with the monocle, "and if he moves, shoot to kill!"

A low growl came from the gorilla, and its yellow eyes gleamed in the half-light of the cave. The animal had not forgotten its recent encounter with Locke, and the detective realised that it would take very little indeed to make the gorilla set upon him with renewed fury, if only from a desire for vengeance.

But it merely obeyed orders now, standing like a great, hairy statue in front of Locke, the automatic held rigidly before it, its beady eyes directed in an immovable stare upon Locke's face.

And now Bristow stepped quickly forward and began a systematic search

of Locke's clothing, while the detective stood obligingly still, a faint smile still playing round his lips.

Inwardly Locke was admiring Bristow's thoroughness, for the man with the monocle must surely have gone over almost every inch of the detective's clothing, turning every single pocket inside out in his desperate quest of the tiny pyramid of gold.

As the search proceeded, Bristow seemed to lose something of his jaunty self-confidence, and his knowing smile gave place to an expression of growing wonderment and, finally, dismay.

He stepped back at last, his whole bearing a study in baffled amazement.

"I know jolly well you picked up that pyramid just outside this cave, Locke," he snapped tensely, "because I was in hiding barely a few yards off, and saw you stoop down myself—"

"Is that so?" murmured the detective. "Then why on earth didn't you tackle me on the spot? But, of course, I forgot. Your starchy headman, the gorilla, was perhaps not near enough for your personal comfort in case of any little scrap that might have ensued!"

"You can keep your funny remarks to yourself, Locke!" snarled the man, breathing hard. "I've told you I saw you pick up that Pyramid, and, therefore, I know I'm on the right track. I can't trace it on you anywhere, but, at least, you've not left this cave since you first entered it, thanks to the vigilance of my gorilla. Therefore, the stone must be somewhere within your easy reach."

"Pon my soul, Bristow, you ought to have been a detective!" smiled Locke

tantalisingly. "Such amazing deductive powers—"

"Cut it out!" almost howled the other, who, obviously, was not blessed with a sense of humour. "You'll smile on the other side of your face before I've done with you!"

He turned and began pacing restlessly up and down for a few moments. Then he swung round on the detective once more.

"I'll give you one last chance, Locke," he breathed. "If you will hand over the Golden Pyramid right now and give me your solemn word to resign from this case you're engaged upon, we'll say no more about it, and you can leave this place a free man!"

"Well, I must say that's a generous offer, if you like!" returned Ferrers Locke at once.

Bristow grinned in self-satisfied conceit.

"Yes, I'm a good-hearted chap when I like a fellow," he replied magnanimously. "And I rather like you, Locke, in spite of your nose-parker profession. You're a sport, you know—one of the old reliables—"

"Really, my dear old flick!" Locke held up a hand deprecatingly. "You embarrass me with your compliments. Pray desist!"

"I believe in telling a fellow what I think about him," asserted Bristow, drawing himself up. "Nothing like being frank and open, you know. 'Straight and true' is my motto all the time—"

"Is it, now?" Locke raised his eyebrows in mild surprise. "Really, I shouldn't have thought it!"

The other's smile vanished, and gave place to a lowering scowl.

"You're trying to be funny again!" he growled. "Now, come on, hand over the Golden Pyramid, and we'll call it quits."

"But my dear fellow, I've just told you that I don't know what you're talking about!" remonstrated Locke, in the same even tone.

Bristow cursed under his breath, and planted himself in front of the detective.

"You'll decide to know more about it before I've done with you, Mr. Ferrers Locke!" he snarled. "You'll wish you'd never been born by the time I've made you pay for your cheap and nasty insults."

And forthwith he strode across the cave, returning a few moments later with a length of cord with which he proceeded to bind Locke's hands and legs, finally throwing the detective to the ground, where he lay helpless and inert.

"Watch him!" Bristow turned to the gorilla now. "And don't you dare to move out of this cave until I return!"

A deep growl came from Emperor, the gorilla—a growl which almost made Locke shudder.

Next moment, with a mocking laugh, Gerald Bristow, the man with the monocle, had taken his departure, leaving the detective a helpless prisoner in the power of this gigantic creature of the jungle.

The End of Emperor, the Man-Ape!

WITH the departure of Bristow, a deathlike silence settled down over the cavern and its two solitary occupants.

Though Locke had bantered lightly with the man with the monocle, the detective never lost sight of the fact that he was dealing with a very desperate man, who would probably stick at nothing to gain his own ends.

But, although he realised that he was in a tight corner, the sleuth was obstinately resolved not to part with the mysterious little pyramid he had accidentally stumbled upon just outside the cave. And this resolve on his part was only strengthened by Bristow's apparently frantic efforts to gain possession of the pyramid. Obviously, thought Locke, this tiny little emblem had a history and a very important bearing upon the case which he was now investigating.

Whilst lying there helpless on the floor of the cave, his mind was kept furiously busy, seeking a possible solution to the series of extraordinary happenings of the past few hours—the disappearance of Gordon Carr, the roistering fight between Carr's father, Sir Merton, and some unknown man, the ultimate disappearance of Sir Merton and his equally amazing reappearance with the unexplainable request to Locke to abandon the case.

And now the Golden Pyramid!

What was the secret of that tiny golden emblem?

Why was Gerald Bristow so desperately anxious to get hold of it?

And—by Jove, yes! Why had Sir Merton Carr seemed so disturbed in mind about this self-same thing?

"You didn't happen to come across a sort of small stone—in the shape of a pyramid, and made of solid gold—I suppose?"

That was the amazing question Sir Merton had put to Locke only a few hours before. And the mining magnate had exhibited at the same time the most profound anxiety with regard to the fate of that golden pyramid. He had also

promptly shut up like a book the instant Locke had ventured to question him upon it.

Evidently the Golden Pyramid was not only much coveted. It was also the guardian of some queer secret. Locke felt sure that Bristow did not know the details of that secret.

But did Sir Merton Carr? That was the problem!

All of which only served to make Ferrers Locke's determination to hang on to the pyramid the more immovable. He was resolved now, more than ever, that it should not pass out of his possession until the inscrutable riddle surrounding it had been solved and made clear.

But, meantime, he was a helpless prisoner in the hands of Gerald Bristow. And his mind now came sharply back to the stark reality of his present grave predicament.

Bristow had left him lying on his back, partly propped against the wall. By turning his head slightly, he could just catch a glimpse of the towering figure of Emperor, the gorilla, who stood, as immovable as a rock, on guard over him.

Bristow had fastened the detective's wrists behind his back, and now Locke tried, very slowly and gently, in case the vigilant eyes of the gorilla should notice him, to wriggle his hands free.

But Bristow had done his work only too well. The slightest movement only caused the thin whip-cord to bite into Locke's skin so that he almost gasped aloud in pain.

The detective was forced now to realise that he was in one of the tightest corners of his life, for even if he succeeded in freeing himself from his bonds, he had yet to reckon with Emperor, the gorilla. And he did not relish the prospect of a second encounter with that murderous-looking brute.

Time dragged on, and Ferrers Locke's limbs began to ache. The earthen floor of the cave exuded dampness and moisture, and very soon the detective began to experience all the fearful agonies of cramp. Yet he dared not move, even if he could, for Bristow had ordered the gorilla to shoot "on the slightest sign of movement." And Locke knew that Emperor would not fail to carry out that order!

It was just when the detective was beginning to feel that he could stand no more of it that his eye caught the merest suggestion of movement away at the furthest corner of the cavern.

At first he had ignored it, believing it to be a trick of the shadows.

But a moment later he noticed it again—a very slow but unmistakable movement which gradually resolved itself into the vague outline of a crouching human figure. And that figure was creeping deliberately forward from the shadows inch by inch, without making the slightest sound!

Locke found himself watching it as if mesmerised. He knew at once that it was not Bristow returning, by the very fact that its movements were so obviously cautious. There would be no need for Bristow to be cautious in his own stronghold, anyway!

Inch by inch the figure moved nearer and began to take more definite shape.

After a few moments, Locke thought he detected something familiar about it and his mind began to work now at a furious speed.

And then, with startling suddenness, something happened which momentarily took Locke's breath away.

There came a sudden upward movement on the part of the shadowy figure,

followed by the gleam of something that looked blue-gray in the faint light cast by the guttering candle, which Bristow had thoughtfully provided.

At the same moment, Emperor, with a sudden snarl, swung round. But even as he did so, there came a spurt of flame, followed by a deafening report, which rang again and again in Locke's ears.

And hard on top of that the most frightful scream he had ever heard burst from the giant gorilla, which suddenly flung up its great hairy arms, letting fall the revolver.

For a long, terrible moment the great creature swayed drunkenly where it stood. Then it collapsed with a heavy crash to the ground, where, after a second or so, it lay perfectly still.

Then the mysterious figure of the shadow came boldly forth, and Ferrers Locke's lips parted in an exclamation of surprised delight.

"Pycroft!" he almost shouted. "Good old Pycroft!"

"Come at Once! Urgent!"

TWO minutes later Ferrers Locke stood clear of the bonds which had held him so long and painfully in their grip. His whole body tingled with pain, but he was so relieved by Pycroft's timely appearance that he gave little thought to his discomfort, which, after all, was only to be temporary.

The inspector put his finger to his lips to impose silence, and then crossed over to where the still form of the gorilla lay stretched out upon the floor of the cavern.

For a minute or so he bent over it, examining it carefully. Then he straightened up and came over to where Ferrers Locke was standing.

"That's the end of him," muttered Pycroft with a sigh of relief. "The thought of the bare existence of that ugly brute has been on my mind ever since I so luckily managed to make a get-away from this awful hole."

But how did you manage to evade Bristow's cunning Locke?

"Bristow?" repeated Pycroft inquiringly. "Oh, I suppose you mean that dude with the pane of glass in his eye? Oh, that was easy. You see, there are two means of getting in and out of this cave. While Bristow was coming in at his end I slipped out at Cother. Then I lay in wait, knowing that you couldn't very well get free with him and that ape bossing around. And when I was fairly sure Bristow had cleared off again I crept back."

"Good for you, old man!" muttered Locke, gripping the inspector's hand. "You've probably saved me from a painful, not to say sticky, end."

Pycroft laughed in an embarrassed fashion.

"Fiddlesticks!" he grunted. "Only did what anybody else would do in the circumstances."

Then, after a momentary silence, the inspector turned to Locke with a significant gesture.

"Look here, old man," he muttered. "Bristow's cleared off somewhere, but he's sure to come back, so we'll have to look lively if we want to make a get-away."

Locke nodded. "I'm sorry to have to sneak off," he admitted with a rueful laugh, "as I'd dearly like to stay and wait for friend Bristow. But I'm afraid the time isn't ripe to put him away just yet. In other words, he'll be far more useful to us at large for the present. But I'm going to risk his return for a few minutes, anyway."



Jack Drake was eventually hoisted shoulder-high and marched forthwith out of the station and down the winding street of the village, with Tony Latchett's jazz-band leading the way. (See this page.)

"What on earth for?" gasped Pycroft.

"To have a prow round this cavern of mystery," returned Locke with a wink. "You don't suppose Bristow's living the life of a troglodyte for fun, do you?"

"You mean you think this cave is used for hiding something away?" exclaimed Pycroft wonderingly.

"I shouldn't wonder," replied Locke at once. "And anyway, I don't want to throw away any chances. Once Bristow returns and finds his bird has flown he'll get the wind up. And if he's got anything stowed away here, you can be sure he'll pretty soon shift it to safer quarters."

Forthwith Ferrers Locke started on a quick but thorough search, aided by his electric torch, which he now retrieved from where it had been flung during his recent encounter with the gorilla.

When he and Pycroft had first discovered this cave, Locke fancied he had glimpsed something lying back in the shadows at the far corner, and he now made his way direct to this spot.

A moment later he gave an ejaculation of surprised satisfaction, and Pycroft, who had been busy scouting around, with the aid of the candle, at the other end of the cave, now hurriedly joined him.

Locke's torch was shining directly upon what looked like a large and bulky sack. Its mouth was open, and, within, Pycroft's eye caught the glint and gleam of something that looked uncommonly like jewellery.

"Loot, by thunder!" he gasped.

Locke nodded.

"The local newspaper is full of a series of mysterious thefts in this district and for miles around," he muttered. "And you yourself know that Scotland Yard has been up against it for weeks in regard to a mysterious gang of thieves who have been fitting about the country on a most irritatingly successful tour de force. I shouldn't be at all surprised to find that this cave is one of the many funk holes of the gang—"

"And that Bristow is at the head of it?" suggested Pycroft suddenly.

"I don't know that—yet," was Locke's guarded response.

Then, realising that time was short, they resumed their search of the place, but without making any further discoveries.

At length they decided to take their departure, taking with them, of course, the sack of jewellery and plate for more leisurely inspection later.

It was just as they were making their way through the exit of the cave by which they had first entered that Locke halted and gazed thoughtfully down on to the ground at his feet:

"I had almost forgotten our mysterious friend of the hobnailed boots," he murmured thoughtfully, as he stared once more at the tracks which still remained in the damp clay. "I wonder who he is?"

"One of the gang, I suppose," suggested Pycroft slowly.

"My dear Pycroft, your perspicacity astounds me!" exclaimed Locke, his old bantering tone returning. "One of these days you will really have to think about becoming a detective, you know."

Pycroft scowled, muttered something uncomplimentary, and subsided into injured silence.

And together they trudged their way back to the country inn, each lost in thought, Locke's hand now and again straying to the secret pocket in his coat where reposed the enigmatical Golden Pyramid.

Arrived back at the inn, Ferrers Locke found a telegram awaiting him.

He opened it at once, and then gave a low exclamation of surprise.

"From Jack Drake, at Stormpoint," he said, turning to Pycroft. "Like to have a look at it?"

He handed the telegram to the inspector, whose eyes widened as he read its brief and dramatic message.

"Can you come at once? Urgent!"

The Secret of Stormpoint!

WHEN Jack Drake arrived at Stormpoint he was scarcely prepared for the frantic welcome which was accorded to him. His pal, Val Terry, captain of the Remove, had broken the news to his Form-fellows, with the result that all the Lower Fourth at Stormpoint were anxious to meet the boy detective. They turned out in full strength to greet him. The crowd that met Drake at the little village station positively staggered him by its size, not to say its collective voice, which was raised in a concerted roar of delight as he stepped from the train.

"Three cheers for Drake!" called Terry.

"Collar him!"

"Welcome to Stormpoint, Sherlock, junior!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack Drake grinned, but fell back with a gasp a moment later as he saw the crowd descending upon him, led by Tony Latchett, who was evidently the self-appointed conductor of a sort of hybrid jazz-band, now engaged in trying to blare forth the refrain of "Horsey, Keep Your Tail Up!"

"Here, steady on, you fellows!" he cried. "One at a time, you know. Hi, Terry, you chump, that's my best Sunday hat! Dragingoff, somebody! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors, as Jack went down beneath the rush and disappeared altogether from sight.

The resultant din was terrific, and brought Mr. Scraggs, the stationmaster, and his solitary assistant, Judson, rushing on to the scene in a state of great excitement.

But they were very promptly swept aside as the boys surged round Jack Drake, who was eventually hoisted shoulder high and marched forthwith out of the station and down the winding street of the village with Tony Latchett's jazz-band leading the way.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 896.

Jack Drake gave up trying to resist, and decided to let them do as they liked. As a matter of fact, his seemed to be the only voice that didn't matter in this case, and he very quickly realised that it was hopeless even to try to make himself heard above the blare of Tony Latchett's jazz-band and the yells of the others who were marching in mass formation all round him.

Fortunately the college was not very far from the village, which overlooked its great, towering walls perched high on the summit of a hill, at the base of which the silver ribbon of the River Hex wound its peaceful way.

Arrived at the school gates, they set him down, and Jack breathed a sigh of relief. But next moment his satisfaction changed to utter dismay as he glanced down at his clothes, which were literally smothered in dust, while his hat had long since disappeared altogether. His tie had likewise disappeared an arc in the direction of his left ear, while his erstwhile snow-white collar hung dimly on half a stud.

Altogether he looked more like something new in scarecrows than the official representative of one of Britain's leading detectives.

"My sainted aunt!" he gasped, in a horrified whisper, as he beheld himself, while the others stood round grinning. "Look what you've done to my clobber, you fabulous idiots! How the blump do you think I can face Dr. Lampton in this rig-out?"

"Tell him you're disguised as King Tut's A.D.C.!" suggested Howard Rayne, with a wink at the others.

"Or a boiled cabbage!" remarked Tony Latchett.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Val Terry elbowed his way through the crowd, and linked his arm through that of Jack.

"Come along with We, Us & Co., old

flick," he said. "We'll soon give you a nice little scrub down!"

"Good egg!" returned Jack. "But you'd better get a move on. The guy now wired to the Head saying I'd be here by twelve o'clock sharp, and it's close on half-past twelve now!"

They made their way to Val Terry's study, No. 14 in the Remove passage, where Jack Drake was provided with a clean collar and tie and had a wash and general brush-up, after which he made his way to the Head's study.

Dr. Lampton, with whom Locke's assistant was already acquainted, rose with a smile and held out his hand as Jack entered. There was a slightly reproving look in his eye.

"You're rather late, my boy," he said. Jack Drake flushed.

"Yes, sir," he answered. "I—er—that is—well, I met a few friends—"

"So I gathered," returned the Head, with a twinkle in his eye, "from the uproar in the quad a few minutes ago. But never mind about that now. We have other and far more serious business to discuss."

And his face became suddenly grave as he motioned Jack Drake to a seat.

"I have already explained to Mr. Locke," began the Head at once, "that, following upon the altogether amazing disappearance of Gordon Carr, we have had another startling surprise in the vanishing of Mr. Rennie, the master of the Remove."

"It seems, from what I have been able to gather, that Mr. Rennie went down to the village shortly after half-past seven last night, telling Mr. Ridgewell, the master of the Sixth, that he was going to visit a friend."

"Up to a very late hour he had not returned, but we did not worry very much, as Mr. Rennie often stays late when visiting this particular friend. They are both very keen on chess, and

are apt to forget the time in the excitement of their game."

"But when, this morning, we found Mr. Rennie was still absent, and that his bed had not even been slept in, we began to feel very anxious. I sent a messenger down to the house of Mr. Rennie's friend, and he returned with the astounding news that Mr. Rennie had not even been there!"

In the circumstances, it was, of course, my business, during the afternoon, who immediately began a search, but, far without the slightest result, except that, when looking over Mr. Rennie's room, they found some fragments of a half-burnt letter. I explained to Sergeant Heston, the local officer in charge, that Mr. Locke had been called in, and he thereupon very kindly allowed me to retain this—er—clue to submit to you when you arrived."

And Dr. Lampton opened a drawer in his desk and took out a large white envelope, which he handed to Jack Drake.

Jack opened it, and extracted from it what looked like a piece of charred paper, much crumpled, and almost totally destroyed, obviously by fire.

He spread it out carefully on the desk before him, and studied it intently for some moments.

It was evidently a portion of a letter which had been typewritten, but only isolated fragments of sentences were decipherable, as follows:

"... rr. Unless you ... use to
into ... self ... his matter, steps
will ... ken ... at a ... p
to your ... ence—G. A. B."

Jack Drake's brows drew together in a frown as he studied this queer jargon of letters.

Then suddenly he pulled a pencil and notebook from his pocket, and began to jot down something, which he handed to Dr. Lampton.

"I think what I have written there, sir," he said quietly, "might conceivably be a reasonable translation of these fragmentary sentences."

Dr. Lampton looked at Jack's notes, and then gazed as he read:

"... Carr—Unless you cease to interest yourself in this matter, steps will be taken to put a stop to your interference.—G. A. B."

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "Then—then my first suspicions must be correct! The disappearance of Mr. Rennie must have some definite connection with the equally mystifying disappearance of young Gordon Carr!"

"It certainly looks like it, sir," returned Jack quietly—"that is, if my transcription is correct."

"I see no reason to doubt it, my boy!" muttered the Head, with an anxious frown. "This is indeed a terrible business. And now, to make matters infinitely worse, I see by the late editions of the London morning papers that somebody in Devonshire has stumbled upon the dead body of a man believed to be that of Sir Merton Carr!"

"Oh, so the newspapers have got hold of it already, have they?" murmured Jack Drake, with a smile. "Yes, I believe it's true enough, sir. Inspector Pycroft came round from Scotland Yard only this morning with the news, and it seemed so important that Mr. Locke decided to accompany him immediately to

ALL THE WINNERS!

RESULT OF "CROSS WORD" LIMERICK COMPETITION No. 6.

In this competition the FIRST PRIZE of £5 for the best "last line" sent in, has been awarded to:

ALBERT STEVENS,

56, Lefevre Road,
Bow, London, E. 3.

for rounding off the following verse:

"I feel in fine form for a fight,"

Said Bolsover major one night.

"Now, Wharton, you warn."

I'll soon make you squirm—"

with:

"But science proved stronger than might."

The TWELVE CONSOLATION PRIZES of POCKET-KNIVES have been awarded to the following:

- A. BONHAM, 25, Clarke Road, Northampton.
- C. BOVINGDON, 66, Colville Road, Stn. Acton, London, W. 3.
- W. CAWNERMAN, Trades' Club & Inst., Southbury Road, Ponders' End, N.
- P. CHARLES, 521, Fishponds Road, Fishponds, Bristol.
- P. G. ELLIS, 9, Medcalf Road, Enfield Lock, Middlesex.
- KITTY C. L. FRENCH, Groat Glenn, nr. Leicester.
- VICTOR R. HILL, "The Cedars," Wells, Somerset.
- FREDERICK KNIGHT, 12, Upper Hollingdean Road, Brighton.
- ROBERT McALLUM, 69, Prince Edward Street, Crosshill, Glasgow.
- J. RATTLE, 115, Clarendon Road, Hove, Sussex.
- G. RICHARDSON, 42, James Street, Southampton.
- C. A. THURLOW, 43, Fountain Road, Beverley Road, Hull.

Devonshire, and send me on to Stormpoint."

"A very wise decision, I'm sure," agreed Dr. Launton. "And now, my boy, if you care to get busy, the entire school is at your disposal."

And a few minutes later Jack Drake had taken leave of the Head and was busy inspecting the private room of the missing master, Mr. Remmie, giving special attention to the fireplace where the half-burnt letter had been found.

While he was in the act of making these investigations he heard a step in the corridor, and looked round as the door of the room opened.

"Hallo, Phantom!" he exclaimed suddenly. "What do you want?"

The Clue of the Typewriter!

THE person whom Jack Drake had addressed as the Phantom well deserved this queer name.

He was an unusually tall youth of about fourteen, with long, raven-black hair, which hung in straight lines over his almost egg-shaped head. His eyes were sunken, his long, peak-like nose pinched, and his lips white and bloodless, while his whole figure was almost like that of a living skeleton.

But though he presented such an alarming appearance, there was really very little wrong with Adolphus van Dom of the Remove. His amazing sparseness of flesh was as natural to him as was, apparently, his equally amazing appetite, which, while never being properly satisfied, never seemed to add so much as a single pound to his weight.

He drifted into the room now like an elongated shadow, and stood peering through his huge tortoiseshell spectacles at Jack Drake.

"I'm very glad to see you down here, Drake, old man," he said ingratiatingly. "Thanks!" murmured Jack, watching him closely for a moment.

Jack Drake had already learned that the Phantom was a comparatively harmless fellow, whose one besetting sin was an inordinate curiosity and a seemingly incurable habit of prying into affairs that were no concern of his.

Everything possible, from kindly lectures to ruthless bumping, had been tried on the Phantom, but without effect. He was beyond redemption.

"I suppose you're looking into the disappearance of Gordon Carr and Mr. Remmie?" went on the Phantom, after a pause.

"Your supposer is in good working order, then, old fruit," blandly returned Jack Drake.

Then, as the Phantom still continued to stare stonily at him, Jack turned on his heel and resumed his investigations. Time might be no so special moment to the Phantom, but to Jack Drake it was everything, and he couldn't afford to waste it answering a lot of futile questions.

But a few moments later he spun round with an ejaculation of annoyance.

Out of the corner of his eye he had glimpsed Van Dom bending over a table, staring intently at the half-burnt fragment of the mysterious letter which Dr. Launton had handed to Jack, and which he had, for the moment, laid lying on the table. Little thinking that the Phantom would float on the scene.

"What interest has the Phantom in this letter? Is he able to throw any light upon the mystery? Must you read next week's continuation of this fine story, boys, for the answer to these questions?"

NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME!

BUNTER, THE CAVALIER!

HOWS that for a surprise? Anyone less cavalierly than the fatuous Remmie it would be hard to find.

But imagination is a great thing, a sort of magic carpet that carries one over a whole heap of difficulties. Bunter has never lacked imagination—in fact, he has more than his share of it. That his imagination runs away with him has proved conclusively, but Bunter apparently never will learn his lesson.

A PEDIGREE!

Titled relations have always played a big part in Bunter's career. He has an uncle the marquis, a cousin the duke, another uncle the earl, and so on ad lib. It pleases the fat Remmie to draw upon his imagination in this fashion, although, perhaps, no one knows better than himself that these titled folk live only in the realms of his imagination. The Remmies can stand these constant references to the landed gentry only, as Bob Chewy has often remarked, Bunter hasn't "landed" them yet! But W. G. B. lives in hopes. He's certain that he descends from "good stock," in a plentiful quantity of "blue blood," in it.

THE MAN OF THE MOMENT!

Then there comes into the lives of the Bunter family a certain gentleman who, for a "small fee," offers to dig up their genealogical tree. This gentleman has discovered that there lived, in the reign of King Charles, a certain gallant, by name Sir William de Bonterre. The connection is obvious—to William George Bunter. Sir William was the direct ancestor of his family. Therefore, Bunter, or "Bonterre," is entitled to respect; he is no longer a mere commoner. Strange as it may seem, little respect comes his way. Even Mr. Quelea continues to deal with the worst pupil in his form as though he were still a common Bunter, and not a de Bonterre! These cards the story moves at a rattling pace until the reader is shaking his frame with laughter. There's nothing like a good laugh, and—Jove, you all know how Mr. Richards can play that card! It's simply IT, the winning Joker. Don't miss this coming story whatever you do, chums. It's a real corker!

"THE GOLDEN PYRAMID!"

In this instalment we see young Jack Drake getting to business at Stormpoint. He hits on a clue at the outset, and, with his usual clear-sightedness, follows it up. Mr. Mordley, the Fifth Form master, scarcely likes the boy's truth, but, in regard to the matter, keeps his eyes on Fenners' Locke's clever assistant, chums; he's got a trump card up his sleeve.

CARTOONS!

In next Monday's issue of this paper you will find a ripping cartoon of one of the principal Greyfriars characters. Mr. Chapman is responsible, and I think he's hit the bullseye. What Tom Webster is to the "Daily Mail," so Mr. Chapman is to the MAGNET. Stood by, boys, for a laugh!

"BOATING!"

That's the subject the "Boat" staff has chosen for their next Supplement. The greatest boat race in the world has been laid out, and won by this time, by interest in this thrilling aquatic sport has not abated. At Greyfriars the yearly "river" contests are taking place—just as important to the "Prats as any Oxford or Cambridge affair. Bunter has a lot to say on the subject of "crews" and his own remarkable powers of endurance. Look out for this number, chums!

"PUZZLE PARLS" No. 4.

Next week's MAGNET will contain another simple "picture-puzzle" that carries with it the ripping offer of Five Pennies to the winner and twelve consolation Prizes for meritorious efforts. There is another fascinating competition coming along, and, by way of variation, I am going to award some splendid cameras, made by the famous Kodak firm, instead of money prizes. How's that? Think how splendid it would be to have a camera by you when the nice weather comes along. Every reader will stand the same chance of bagging one of these ripping prizes. Look out, then, boys, for the new competition. Meantime, get busy on "Puzzle Parls" Nos. 5 and 6!

The "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY!"

Most likely there is nothing quite so welcome as some bright new idea connected with a subject which appeals to you. The fresh notion gives a new view of life. It starts a whole train of useful speculations, and sets a fellow asking himself why he had not thought of all that before. Now, this is just what the new "Schoolboys' Own Library," NOW ON SALE, is calculated to accomplish.

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This new "Library," with its two numbers monthly, price 4d. apiece, will offer to all readers of the Companion Papers exactly what they have been looking for so eagerly. The "Schoolboys' Own Library," not only carries on the tale of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Rookwood, St. Kit's, and other great schools which we know and appreciate; but, thanks to the length of the yarns it can supply, it is in a position to extend the interest felt in the affairs of a big company of popular characters. As we all realise, an intensely interesting story is never quite long enough. Sympathy has been excited, and the reader's imagination instinctively carries him beyond the confines of the printed page. There is the wish to know more about what is happening; one asks for a bit more at the termination of each chapter. The new "Library" marks a step in advance. It is an answer to the perpetual request for longer yarns about the schools.

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POOR OLD BUNTER!

(Continued from page 20.)

"Enough! Your leave from school to-day is rescinded, Bunter. You will be detained on Saturday afternoon to compensate for the time you obtained away from class yesterday under false pretences."

"Oh!"

"And for your untruthfulness, Bunter, I shall censure you most severely—"

"Oh!"

"I shall inflict such a punishment, Bunter, as will be an example to any other boy inclined to mislead and deceive."

"I—I don't want to set an example,

sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'd much rather, sir, you censored some other chap, sir, as an example to me!"

"Enough!"

Mr. Queech's grasp closed on Bunter's collar, and the Owl of the Remove was marched into the House. He went in fear and trembling—and his fear and trembling were more than justified. Third lesson was a little late that day in the Remove room; Mr. Queech was busy with Bunter; and loud sounds of anguish were heard proceeding from the Remove master's study. When the hapless Owl of the Remove limped into the Form-room, he looked as if he found life scarcely worth living.

All that day he had a disinclina-

tion to sit down at all. After lessons he was heard groaning in Study No. 7. It was not till supper that he recovered a little—doubtless the scent of a supper of sosses and chips in Study No. 1 helped to revive him. His fat face and big spectacles looked in on the Famous Five in that celebrated study. There was an unanimous hoot of:

"Buzz!"

The door of Study No. 1 slammed on the bereaved Bunter, And that was all the sympathy received—and undoubtedly deserved—by Poor Old Bunter!

THE END.

(Mind you read "Bunter, the Cavalier!"—next Monday's ripping Greyfriars story, boys.)

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