

BUNTER THE CAVALIER!

This week's screamingly funny story
of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars.

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Week Ending April 18th, 1925.

The Magnet 2^d

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The First Prize of £5 will be awarded to the reader who sends a correct, or most nearly correct, solution of the puzzle paragraph, and the twelve other prizes will be awarded in order of merit.

The Editor reserves the right to divide the value of the prizes should this be necessary. It is a distinct condition of entry that the Editor's decision be accepted as final.

Solutions containing alterations or alternatives will be disqualified.

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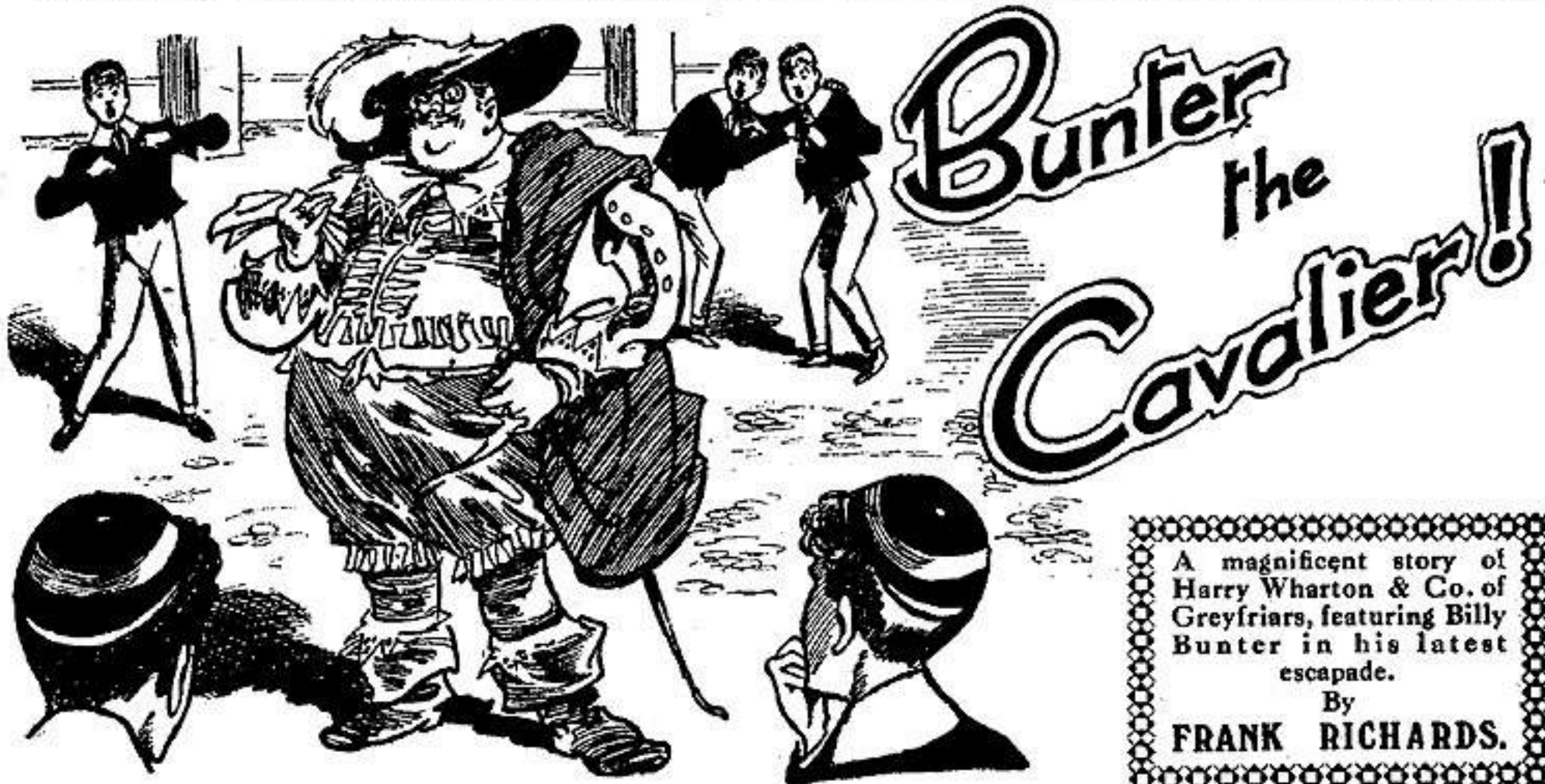
In entering "Puzzle Pars" Competition No. 4, I agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and binding.

Name

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MAGNET Closing date, April 21st.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? For Bunter suddenly to discover that he is a "direct descendant" of Sir William de Bonterre comes as no great shock to his Form-fellows. They've all heard about Bunter's cousin the Marquis, his uncle the Earl, his great, great, great-grandfather, Count Oliver Shakespeare, the fellow who fiddled while the cakes were burning! But this new titled relation beats them all. Bunter adopts him, as it were, lock stock, and barrel!



A magnificent story of
Harry Wharton & Co. of
Greyfriars, featuring Billy
Bunter in his latest
escapade.

By
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Looking for Bunter!

MR. QUELCH, master of the Remove, looked out of his study window.

It was quite a pleasant afternoon, and the old trees in the quadrangle glimmered with the green of spring.

Mr. Quelch's countenance contrasted with the afternoon. It was not pleasant.

Harry Wharton & Co., coming along the gravel path near their Form master's window, noted it; and were quite pleased to reflect that it was a half-holiday, with "no more Quelch" till the following day.

Mr. Quelch, with his head projecting from his study window, somewhat like the head of a tortoise from its shell, glanced this way and that way, like Moses of old.

Then he rapped out:

"Wharton!"

The captain of the Remove stopped at once. His comrades stopped with him.

"Yes, sir!"

"Where is Bunter?"

"Bunter?" repeated Harry.

"Yes! Bunter!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

Where Billy Bunter was, was quite unknown to Harry Wharton. Bunter being an absolutely unimportant individual, the captain of the Remove was not really likely to keep himself posted as to Bunter's whereabouts.

Bunter might be in the tuckshop—the most likely place—or he might be taking a snooze in Toddy's armchair in the study; or he might be going up and down and round about looking for a little loan from some unwary fellow; or he might be scouting in the neighbourhood of the pantry, like a lion seeking what he might devour. Harry Wharton, certainly, did not know; and still more certainly he did not care.

Mr. Quelch seemed to think that Wharton ought to know where he was, as apparently Mr. Quelch wanted Bunter just then. Wharton was captain of the Remove, and head boy in the Form; and that position carried responsibilities

and duties. But, really, there were limits. The most dutiful Form captain, the most assiduous head boy, could not be expected to know, at any given moment, just where to lay a finger on any member of the Form.

"Did you hear me?" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" said Harry.

"Well, where is Bunter?"

Harry Wharton did not explain to Mr. Quelch that such a question was a little unreasonable, and that he could not be expected to produce Bunter all of a sudden, like a conjurer producing a very fat rabbit out of a hat. He did not want to be detained for the afternoon.

Obviously, Mr. Quelch was cross; and when a Form master was cross, he had to be treated with tact.

"I don't know, sir," said Harry.

"Really, Wharton—"

"Shall I look for him, sir?"

"Yes, at once!"

"Very well, sir!" said Harry, as cheerfully as he could.

The Famous Five of the Remove were about to start on a walk over to Cliff House.

They wanted to see Marjorie & Co. at Cliff House. They did not want to see Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter, evidently, was the order of the day.

"Bunter was ordered to come to my study at half-past two," said Mr. Quelch. "I have prepared a detention task for him. It is now three o'clock, and he has not come. Find him at once, Wharton, and send him here—or, rather, bring him here!"

"Very good, sir!"

Mr. Quelch disappeared from the window.

Harry Wharton looked at his chums. "That's that!" he remarked. "I've got to hunt for Bunter, and goodness knows where the fat boulder has hidden himself. You fellows can get off, and leave me to it, if you like."

"Oh, rot!" said Frank Nugent. "We'll help you!"

"Yes, rather!" agreed Bob Cherry.

"The ratherfulness is terrific," assented Hurree Singh.

Johnny Bull, a fellow of few words, gave a grunt of assent.

So the Famous Five, instead of starting for Cliff House School, started to look for Bunter.

Naturally, they headed first for the tuckshop in the corner behind the elms. If Billy Bunter had any money, it was certain that he would be found in Mrs. Dimble's little shop. So the chums of the Remove hoped that he had received, at last, the celebrated postal-order he had long been expecting from one of his titled relations.

They found several Remove fellows in the school shop; but the rotund figure of William George Bunter was not discernible among them.

"You fellows seen Bunter?" asked Harry.

"Look in the Form-room," said Skinner. "He's detained this afternoon."

"He hasn't turned up for detention."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Do you know where he is, Toddy? You're his keeper, you know," said Bob Cherry.

Peter Todd shook his head.

"Haven't seen him since dinner," he answered.

The Famous Five moved on. Their next visit was paid to Study No. 7, in the Remove passage, which belonged to the Todds, Bunter, and Dutton. Wharton looked in; but there was no ample form filling up the study armchair to its full capacity. Bunter was not there.

"Bother!" said the captain of the Remove. "This is really too thick, you know. Where can that fat boulder be?"

"Gone out of gates, perhaps."

"He wouldn't have the nerve, when he's under detention," said Johnny Bull. "Perhaps somebody's asked him to a feed. That would make Bunter forget detention or anything else."

"But who—and where?"

"Let's root along the passage."

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The chums of the Remove proceeded to "root" along the passage, trying study after study.

Most of the Remove fellows were out of doors that fine afternoon; but they found Mauleverer in Study No. 12, taking a rest on his sofa.

"Bunter here, Manly?"

"Thank goodness, no!" said his lordship.

"Have you seen him since dinner?"

"I'm thankful to say I haven't! Surely you fellows don't want to see him?" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer, in surprise.

"Quelchy wants him—he's dodging detention!" growled the captain of the Remove. "Where the thump can he be?"

The Famous Five went on their way. They found Mark Linley in Study No. 13, swotting Greek. But Mark had seen nothing of Bunter.

"Let's draw the box-rooms," suggested Bob Cherry. "If he's not there, we'll give it up, and tell Quelchy to go and eat coke."

The box-rooms were drawn—in vain! Billy Bunter was not to be discovered.

The Owl of the Remove really seemed to have vanished into thin air.

"Well, we've done all we can," said Harry. "Nowhere else we can look for the fat rabbit."

"I suppose he wouldn't be in the library—"

"Bunter! Not likely!"

"He's gone out," said Nugent, decidedly. "Let's go and tell Quelchy. We shall be late at Cliff House."

"Come on, then!"

Harry Wharton & Co. proceeded to Mr. Quelch's study, and Harry tapped at his Form master's door and entered.

"I'm sorry, sir—I can't find Bunter."

"Really, Wharton—" said Mr. Quelch crossly.

"We've looked everywhere, sir."

"It is somewhat hard, Wharton, if a Form master cannot, on occasion, receive a little assistance from his head boy," said Mr. Quelch.

Wharton wisely made no reply to that remark.

He quite understood that an annoyed Form master must be allowed to blow off steam, as it were.

"You may go!" added Mr. Quelch irritably.

"Thank you, sir!"

Wharton closed the door and rejoined his chums in the passage.

"All serene," he said. "Let's cut, before we're set to looking for somebody else. Quelchy's rather savage this afternoon."

And the Famous Five promptly "cut."

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter, the Book-worm!

MR. QUELCH was cross. There was no doubt about that.

Billy Bunter would have been a trial to any Form master. To a Form master with a strict sense of duty he was more than a trial.

Mr. Quelch had a belief—really almost a pathetic belief—that fellows came to Greyfriars to learn things.

There were plenty of fellows at Greyfriars who had no such intention; and William George Bunter was one of them.

Many Form masters would have given up Bunter as a bad job, and allowed him to remain in the state of benighted ignorance in which he was quite happy and contented.

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Not so Mr. Quelch. He had a sense of duty; and his sense of duty was sometimes very painful to a fellow who was both obtuse and lazy.

Billy Bunter would have been satisfied with a much less dutiful Form master.

When Bunter construed "*Arma virumque cano*" into "the armed man and the dog," Mr. Quelch was inclined to tear his hair—or Bunter's.

That morning Bunter's "con" had been even more hopeless than usual; with the result that the Owl of the Remove had been detained for the afternoon; and Mr. Quelch had prepared for him a nice little Latin exercise. It had taken some of Mr. Quelch's time; and Mr. Quelch's time, of course, was valuable.

And Bunter was dodging detention; actually he had not turned up when commanded, and Mr. Quelch's nice little detention task was left on his hands!

No wonder the Remove master was cross.

He had a number of papers to mark that afternoon; and, that task finished and Bunter disposed of, he intended to put in a happy hour or two at his "*History of Greyfriars*," which for many years had been his relaxation and his solace. He was going to enjoy an hour or so looking out books in the school library—musty old tomes, which would have made the Remove fellows' heads ache simply to look at them, but in which Mr. Quelch fairly revelled.

With two or three hefty volumes under either arm, he was going to return to his study and sit down to his happy task.

And this delightful prospect was knocked on the head, so to speak, by the slackness and disobedience of so utterly insignificant a person as the most backward member of his Form—William George Bunter.

Mr. Quelch went on marking papers.

He almost jabbed his pencil into the papers, and it is quite probable that he did not award so many marks as he might have awarded under more propitious circumstances.

At half-past three he was finished. Still Bunter had not appeared, and Mr. Quelch rose from his study table, and looked out of the window again, to see whether the Owl of the Remove was in sight. By that time Harry Wharton & Co. were well on their way to Cliff House, and safely out of range.

Bunter was not to be seen.

Mr. Quelch's eyes glinted under his contracted brows.

He reflected for some moments, undecided whether to seek the missing junior personally, or whether to give him a miss until call-over.

It was possible that the Owl of the Remove had gone out of gates for the afternoon, if he had made up his fat mind definitely to cut detention; in which case seeking him within the walls of Greyfriars would have been a waste of Mr. Quelch's valuable time.

That reflection decided Mr. Quelch to leave Bunter over for the present. It was exceedingly annoying to him. Mr. Quelch was a stickler for discipline—and his commands had been disregarded; indeed, wilfully disobeyed. He did not want to leave Bunter over till roll-call, if he could help it.

But it was pretty clear that he could not help it; so he made up his mind to the inevitable.

He mentally resolved that Bunter should suffer severely for his sins, and with that he tried to dismiss the Owl of the Remove from his mind. But his eyes were still glinting as he left his study and took his way to the school library.

That ancient dusky spot had the effect of restoring his calmness of spirit. Spring sunshine glimmered in at the deep old windows, and glimmered on calf-bound volumes—stack on stack of them.

Volumes that the Greyfriars fellows asked leave to borrow from the library were not, as a rule, bound in calf. These ponderous tomes were seldom disturbed by anyone but Mr. Quelch. According to Skinner of the Remove, the Head sometimes took down an immense volume of the Sermons of some earlier headmaster of Greyfriars, with the object of "cribbing" from its contents.

Once Temple of the Fourth had discovered Dryden's Virgil in the library, and made the happy discovery that it was very useful in "con," and Cecil Reginald Temple had tipped several fellows the glad news, causing a rush on Dryden's Poetical Works.

Mr. Capper, who was the school librarian, had been quite gratified by this development of a taste for poetry on the part of his Form, and he had rather boasted about it in the Masters' room—till the truth dawned upon him, after which Dryden's Poetical Works were barred to the Fourth.

Generally the taste of the Greyfriars fellows ran to much lighter literature; but Mr. Capper was always ready to encourage any fellow who showed a taste for weighty reading. Indeed, fellows in the Fourth had been known to get off detention by asking Mr. Capper's permission to take down some musty volume.

Temple of the Fourth was quite an artist in that kind of leg-pulling. Detained for unpunctuality, or for leaving impots unwritten, Temple would ask Mr. Capper, in his blandest tone, whether he could "have a shot at" Chaucer, after his detention, being "very interested in early English, sir."

Whereupon Mr. Capper would beam on the artful Temple, and, as likely as not let him off his detention, so that he could get on with Chaucer without loss of time.

Of course, it was not exactly nice to have to sit in the library with a bulky volume in incomprehensible Old English when the other fellows were out enjoying themselves. But it was better than detention, and Temple would have, as a rule, a detective story with him—to be slipped into his pocket when Mr. Capper came along to inquire how he was getting on with Chaucer.

It was rather a grievance with the Remove fellows that their own Form master, Mr. Quelch, lacked the delightful innocence of Mr. Capper. They approved of innocence and unsuspectingness in a Form master.

But with Mr. Quelch such a chicken would not fight. Skinner had tried it on once, and Mr. Quelch had questioned him closely afterwards, and elicited the fact that Skinner had not read a single line of Chaucer, and the last state of Skinner was worse than his first.

The Remove master walked into the library and glanced round. In one of the ancient leather chairs a fellow was curled up, with a huge volume open before him. It was a junior, and he was lying back at ease in the big deep chair, with the great volume propped on his knees, hiding him from view, with the exception of his trousers and feet.

Mr. Quelch's lip curled sardonically. He could see the title on the back of the great tome; it was "*Stodge's Cavalier Reliques*." Mr. Quelch knew the date of that volume—1724.

At that date the printers had the troublesome habit of using two different kinds of the letter "s," so that "s"

occurring anywhere but at the end of a word looked, as Temple had said, like a heastly "f," and worried a fellow no end.

Mr. Quelch could guess exactly how much the "Cavalier Reliques," in that style of printing, would be likely to interest a Lower boy.

He had no doubt that this was one of Mr. Capper's boys, and that the happy youth had some much lighter form of literature open inside that great volume, screened from view by the hefty calf covers.

It was no business of Mr. Quelch's; he never interfered in the work of his colleagues; Mr. Capper had his own methods, and the Remove master left him to them.

So he paid no heed, after a sardonic glance, to the junior curled up in the big chair, and who had evidently not heard him enter.

He crossed over to the bookcase he wanted, and stood before it, scanning the volumes.

A sudden ejaculation broke the silence of the big, dusky room.

"Good!"

Mr. Quelch started and spun round.

The ejaculation came from the curled up youth in the big chair, hidden by the big volume: and it came in the voice of William George Bunter of the Remove.

It was not one of Mr. Capper's boys, after all. It was the missing Owl of the Remove. There was Bunter, under his Form-master's eyes!

Mr. Quelch set his lips, and walked across to Bunter.

The fat junior was still unaware of his presence. Apparently he was deeply and intently interested in the volume propped on his fat knees.

Mr. Quelch halted before him, and looked down on him, over the top of the great volume.

Bunter did not look up.

His little round eyes, gleaming through his big spectacles, were fastened on the printed page before him.

So deeply was he engrossed in that ancient book, that he did not observe the Remove master, even when Mr. Quelch towered over him.

Slowly the wrath faded from Mr. Quelch's face, and an expression of great perplexity replaced it.

Bunter was reading the book itself--there was no paper-covered detective story hidden inside the big volume. Amazing as it was, Bunter was earnestly blinking his way through the dim old-fashioned print--with such earnestness that he was blind to his surroundings.

Mr. Quelch was astounded.

Astonished was not the word; he was astounded. Flabbergasted would have described his emotions, if Mr. Quelch had ever heard of such a word.

Bunter--of all fellows! Bunter, the dunce of the Form, the laziest fellow in the Remove; Bunter, who had been heard to describe the classics as piffle, and history as rubbish, and Shakespeare as rot! Mr. Quelch had himself heard Bunter delivering those valuable opinions.

And now--

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

He was quite touched. Bunter, evidently, had an unsuspected studious strain in him. This was why he had forgotten detention--this was why he had failed to appear in Mr. Quelch's study--because he was so intensely earnest in his study of this ancient volume! It was amazing, but there it was! For once, Mr. Quelch felt quite kindly towards his laziest and most backward pupil, and he felt that he had been unjust to Bunter.



"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, staring hard at Bunter. Bunter jumped, and the bulky volume slipped from his fingers. Crash! The weight of that huge volume was considerable. It dropped fair and square upon Mr. Quelch's toe! "Yoooooop!" The yell Mr. Quelch gave rang through the library. (See Chapter 2.)

"Bless my soul!"

Bunter jumped.

The exclamation startled him, and he blinked up at the Remove master.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

The great volume slipped from his fingers.

Crash!

The weight of that huge calf-bound volume was considerable. It went down with a terrific crash. That really would not have mattered very much, if it had gone directly to the floor. But Mr. Quelch was standing directly in front of Bunter, and it was upon his foot that the ponderous tome landed.

"Yoooooop!"

The yell Mr. Quelch gave rang through the library, awakening every echo of that usually reposeful apartment. And the next moment Billy Bunter was treated to the extraordinary sight of a grave, middle-aged Form-master dancing on one foot, and clasp- ing the other with both hands.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter and Bonterre!

"OH! Ow! Ah! Oh! Ooooooh!" "Oh, dear!" gasped Bunter. Billy Bunter blinked at his Form-master in terror.

At the present moment Mr. Quelch was fully occupied with his toe. There was a corn on the toe smitten hard by the crashing tome; a corn that often

gave Mr. Quelch twinges; and which was, indeed, well known in the Lower Fourth. Wet weather brought on twinges of that corn; and that fact was so well known in the Remove that on rainy days the fellows knew that they had to be very, very careful.

It was more than a twinge the Remove master was feeling now.

Supported, like a stork, on one leg, he clasped his injured foot, in deep anguish, uttering a series of ejaculations. For the moment he forgot even Bunter. But the Owl of the Remove was well aware that Mr. Quelch's attention would turn to him, as soon as he had finished, so to speak, his song and dance. And leaving the massy tome where it had fallen, Billy Bunter squirmed out of the chair, and scudded towards the door.

"Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove had just reached the door, when Mr. Quelch's voice called him.

He hesitated.

"BUNTER!"

The fat junior turned reluctantly back.

"Y-e-es, sir!" he mumbled.

"Return here at once."

"If--if--if you please, sir, I--I didn't--I mean I wasn't--I--I--" stam- mered Bunter.

"Come here!"

"Oh, lor'!"

Billy Bunter limped back towards his Form-master. The first anguish had

abated, and Mr. Quelch had abandoned him in fear and trembling. He remembered the detention he had forgotten; he realised that he had not reported to Mr. Quelch when expected; above all, he had dropped a massy tome on a corn that was not to be treated lightly. Bunter stood before his Form-master expecting something only a little short of instant annihilation.

Mr. Quelch sat down in the big chair Bunter had vacated. He crossed one leg over the other, wincing as he did so, to give the damaged foot a rest.

"I—I never meant, sir—" groaned Bunter.

"I am aware that you dropped the book on my foot by accident, Bunter."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"You have caused me very severe pain; but the matter was an accident." Mr. Quelch made a gesture, dismissing the accident, as it were: painful as its results had been. Billy Bunter blinked at him in great astonishment.

"You were under detention this afternoon, Bunter."

"I—I forgot, sir."

Again Bunter waited for annihilation. To his further amazement, Mr. Quelch actually smiled kindly.

"You were reading this book, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Pick it up."

The Owl of the Remove picked it up.

"It is a serious matter to forget instructions given you by your Form-master, Bunter."

"Oh, sir."

"But I should be very far from discouraging any boy in my Form who displayed studious proclivities," said Mr. Quelch. "I am surprised at this, Bunter—but I will say that I am pleased."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"This old volume," continued Mr. Quelch, "is a volume of very great interest. It was written by a man who remembered the Great Rebellion, and gives us many interesting side-lights upon the state of our country in Stuart times. I have never observed before, Bunter, that you were keenly interested in history."

"Nunno, sir!"

"Yet I find you studying this old volume with obvious interest," said Mr. Quelch kindly. He winced as his toe gave him another agonising twinge, but he went on with determined kindness. "I am glad to see this, Bunter."

"Thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter.

The fat junior was quite merry and bright now.

Obviously, he was pardoned for cutting detention and for crashing that huge volume on Mr. Quelch's toe. His unlooked-for studiousness had worked the oracle. Already, in his mind's eye, Bunter could see himself bragging to the fellows in the Rag. He had outdone Temple of the Fourth at his own game, and with the extremely keen and observant Mr. Quelch. Bunter could scarcely believe in his own good luck.

"This is a very unusual volume for a Lower boy to select," went on Mr. Quelch; "and I could not help observing, Bunter, that you were deeply and sincerely interested in it."

"Yes, sir," said Bunter.

"What led you to select this rather rare and seldom-perused volume, Bunter?"

Mr. Quelch was really interested, having discovered this unsuspected trait of studiousness in Bunter.

"You see, sir, I—I—" Bunter hesitated. "My—my father mentioned it to me in a letter, sir."

"Your father—Mr. Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bless my soul!"

Really, it was a day of surprises. Mr. Bunter, the plump and prosperous stockbroker, was not a gentleman whom Mr. Quelch would have expected to feel any interest in an almost unknown old volume dealing with the days of Stuart Kings and crop-headed Parliamentarians, Cavaliers, and Roundheads. He was surprised that Mr. Bunter had ever even heard of such a volume. That the stockbroker had recommended it to his son for study was really amazing.

"A man put the pater on to it, sir," went on Bunter, greatly encouraged by the unusual kindness of his Form master, and expanding confidentially. "The man has something to do with the Herald's Office, I think."

"Eh?"

"The people who work out a pedigree for you, sir, if you get a title," explained Bunter.

"Bless my soul!"

"The pater isn't keen on reading, sir, and he hasn't much time," said Bunter. "But he wrote to me and told me, and asked me to find out if the book happened to be in the library here. So I asked Mr. Capper's leave to come here this afternoon, sir."

"But I do not quite understand," said the perplexed Mr. Quelch.

"You see, sir, my family are mentioned in that book," said Bunter proudly.

"What?"

"There was a Sir William de Bonterre who fought for King Charles," said the Owl of the Remove. "There's a lot about him in that book, sir. Of course, we always knew that we were descended from a distinguished family. We're connected with many titled people—"

"What?"

"And, according to what the man told my pater, sir, the connection of the Bunters with the De Bonterres could be worked out quite easily. It's only a question of paying the necessary fees for the investigation."

"Upon my word!"

"Lots of the fellows in my Form, sir, don't believe that I belong to a distinguished family at all," rattled on Bunter cheerily. "I'm working out my ancestry, sir, and I shall jolly well shut them up with it! There's no doubt, sir, that Sir William de Bonterre was the direct ancestor of my family."

"You absurd boy!"

"What?"

Bunter blinked at his Form master. The kindness had departed from the countenance of Mr. Quelch.

He understood now. It was not studiousness that had drawn Billy Bunter to the library that afterwards had caused him to dig so earnestly into those musty old pages. It was the snobbishness which was one of Bunter's delightful characteristics.

"You utterly absurd boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "There is not the slightest reason to suppose that the name of Bunter is derived from that of Bonterre."

"Oh, really, sir—"

"I find that I have been deceived in you, Bunter. It was not a desire to study the history of your country that led you to peruse this volume, but an absurd desire to make yourself out to be other than you are; a particularly absurd form of snobbishness, Bunter."

"B-b-but—"

"You are a ridiculous boy, Bunter!"

"But my pater thinks, sir—"

Mr. Quelch opened his lips and closed them again. He did not desire to state to Mr. Bunter's son what he thought of

Mr. Bunter's absurdity. If the fat stockbroker chose to believe that he was of knightly descent, and to pay away cash to some unscrupulous adventurer for inventing a pedigree for him, that was Mr. William Samuel Bunter's own business.

"I repeat, Bunter, that you are a ridiculous boy! You are no more descended from Sir William de Bonterre than I am!" rapped out Mr. Quelch sharply.

"Oh, really, sir! You must have noticed that I'm a bit different from the rest of the fellows—more aristocratic and—"

"Bless my soul!"

"Noble, I might say," said Bunter—"dignified! Of course, I know you plebeians don't think so much of these things—"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean, commoners like you sir!"

"Bunter, go to my study at once! On the table you will find a Latin task. Take it to the Form-room, and do not leave the Form-room until you have completed it."

"Oh, sir! I—"

"Another word, Bunter, and I shall cane you!"

"Oh!"

Bunter backed away in alarm. He could not quite see why, but it was clear that he had no more kindness to expect from his Form master.

Mr. Quelch frowned after him, possibly regretting that he had forgiven the Owl of the Remove for the crash on his favourite corn.

Bunter reached the door, and turned back.

"Well?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"If—if you please, sir—"

"If you have anything to say, Bunter, say it."

"If you wouldn't mind, sir, I—I'd prefer you not to address me as—as Bunter in future, sir."

"What?"

"I should greatly prefer, sir, to be addressed by the historical form of my—my name—De Bonterre," said the Owl of the Remove. "The—the fellows would take it more seriously, sir, if—if you set the example. Don't you think so, sir?"

Mr. Quelch did not state what he thought upon that point.

He strode across the room towards Bunter with uplifted hand. Billy Bunter was not a keen youth, but he was keen enough to know that if Mr. Quelch came within smacking distance there would be a terrific smack delivered.

He did not wait.

He flew through the doorway, and the door slammed, and there was a sound of flying feet in the corridor.

Mr. Quelch, with an angry and impatient exclamation, turned back to his books, dismissing from his mind the fat and fatuous descendant of Sir William de Bonterre.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

Surprising!

"THE base varlet!"

Bob Cherry jumped.

Greyfriars was an ancient foundation, and there had been a time, doubtless, when such expressions had been current there. Possibly, in the days of the Stuarts, the headmaster of Greyfriars had said "Gadzooks!" instead of "Bless my soul!" Possibly a Form master would have said "Odds bodkins!" rather than "Upon my word!" And the Greyfriars fellows of those old days might have called one

another varlets and knaves, instead of fatheads, in moments of annoyance.

But such expressions, if ever current at Greyfriars, had undoubtedly long been out of date.

So Bob Cherry was astonished as he paused at the door of the Remove Form-room to hear a voice ejaculate: "The base varlet!"

Varlets, base or otherwise, were hopelessly out of date at Greyfriars, only occasionally resuscitated in an historical play by the school dramatic society.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry blankly.

Harry Wharton & Co. had returned to Greyfriars for tea; and Bob, always a good-natured fellow, had inquired after Bunter. His idea was that the Owl of the Remove must have had a rather dismal afternoon, and he was going to ask Bunter to tea as a sort of consolation prize. Learning from Skinner that the Owl was in the Form-room under detention, Bob made his way thither—in time to hear Bunter characterise some person unknown as a base varlet.

Bob stood in the doorway of the Form-room, so astonished that he could not speak. He stared at Bunter.

That fat youth was not getting busy on his detention task, as certainly he should have been.

He was pacing the Form-room; and Bob noted, with increasing astonishment, that he was not rolling in his usual style. Bunter's mode of progression, as a rule, was about as graceful as that of a barrel. Now the fat junior seemed to have pulled himself together.

His fat chin was held well up; his plump chest was puffed out. One hand rested on his podgy hip, as he strode to and fro.

Bob gazed at him.

The Owl of the Remove was strutting—actually strutting. Bunter really had not the correct figure for strutting. His circumference was against it. His aspect was so ludicrous that Bob would have roared, but for a misgiving that Bunter might be out of his mind. Unless the Owl had taken leave of his fat senses, it was difficult to account for his present attitude and the words that fell from his lips.

"The base varlet!" repeated Bunter. "The scurvy knave! A De Bonterre ordered about by a Quelch! Ha, ha!"

Bunter laughed sardonically.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob.

He was really concerned.

He had come there to comfort the afflicted Owl with the offer of a study spread. But really it seemed that Bunter was more in need of a strait jacket than of a spread.

"Knave!" went on Bunter. "Scurvy knave! 'Sdeath!"

Bob gasped.

There really had been a time when a fellow ejaculated "'Sdeath!" instead of "My hat!" or "Good gracious!" But why the Owl of the Remove should be uttering such antiquated ejaculations was a deep mystery, unless he was "potty."

Bob came into the Form-room.

"Bunter, old man—"

The fat junior started, and spun round towards him.

So deeply had Bunter been immersed in his mysterious reflections, that he had not observed Bob so far.

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "You!"

"Yes, old man! Are you ill, Bunter?"

"No, you ass!"

"What's the matter, then?"

"Eh? Nothing!"

"But there must be something the matter," urged Bob. "Think you'd better go and lie down for a bit."

Bunter stared at him through his big spectacles.

"You silly ass!" he said. "I mean, you scurvy knave!"

"Bunter, old chap—"

"Avaunt!"

"What!" gasped Bob.

"Begone!" said Bunter, with a wave of a fat hand. "Trouble me not!"

"Tut-tut-trouble you not!" stuttered Bob.

"Bah!"

"Are you potty?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Insolent varlet! Begone!"

Bunter swung round loftily, turning his back on the staring junior. He strutted away contemptuously.

An explanation of this weird mystery suddenly occurred to Bob Cherry. He wondered whether Bunter was rehearsing. It was possible that Wibley, the great chief of the Remove Dramatic Society, had assigned him a part in some play he was preparing. Really, that seemed the only possible explanation of Bunter's strange antics.

"Bunter, old man—" began Bob.

"My name is De Bonterre," said the Owl of the Remove loftily. "I will thank you to address me as De Bonterre, or not at all."

"De—de—de Bonterre!"

"Ay!"

"Ay!" stammered Bob. "Do you mean 'yes'?"

"Ay, varlet!"

"Is this a rehearsal?" demanded Bob.

"Are you mugging up a part in one of Wib's plays?"

"Knave!"

"Eh?"

"Scurvy knave!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob helplessly. Apparently it was not a rehearsal. Bob had to return to his original theory that it was "pottiness."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Know," he said disdainfully. "Know you, common fellow, that you are speaking to a descendant of Sir William de Bonterre, Knight and Baronet in the reign of Charles the First. Speak respectfully to your superiors, or not at all!"

"Oh!"

"Keep thy distance!" added Bunter.

"Thy!" murmured Bob. "Thy! Oh dear!"

"Thou art but a common scurvy knave, and thou speakest to one of knightly descent!" explained Bunter.

"Great pip!"

Bob Cherry almost staggered.

"The fact is," went on Bunter, dropping into common or garden English, as it were, "we've found it out lately. It's in a book in the library, too, and we're going to resume our ancient name of De Bonterre, and the pater is going to see whether he can get the title revived. It has always been in our family, of course. The pater, properly speaking, is actually Sir William Samuel Bunter—I mean De Bonterre."

"Phew!"

"So now you understand," said Bunter disdainfully.

Bob Cherry understood at last.



Peter Todd sat up dazedly, holding his jaw. "Billy de Bonterre" did not heed him further. A fat fist was flourished under Tom Dutton's nose. "Do you want any?" howled Bunter. "Caltiff!" "Eh?" gasped Dutton. "Knave!" roared Bunter. "Take that!" A plump fist caught Tom Dutton on the nose, sending him over with a crash and a roar. (See Chapter 6.)

He burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you cackling at me, you knave?" demanded Bunter wrathfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob.

"Silence, caitiff!"

Bob Cherry gurgled. Billy Bunter, in his new character of a strutting descendant of ancient knights was too much for him.

"Oh dear!" gasped Bob. "Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha! Sir William de Bonterre—"

"Bonterre, fathead!"

"Sir William de Bonterre fathead if—"

"Look here, you ass—I mean, take care, knave—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob.

Billy Bunter glared at him as he wiped his eyes. Bunter could see nothing to laugh at; so far as he could see, there was nothing of a humorous nature in his assumption of knightly dignity.

"You can cackle, caitiff," he said scornfully.

"Thanks, I will! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begone!"

"Oh dear! Ha, ha, ha!"

"If I had my ancestral blade I would split you like a capon!" said Bunter ferociously.

"Oh dear! Oh!"

"Keep thy distance, knave, and treat your superiors with respect. I mean, thy superiors. As for Quelch, you'll see that I'll teach him his place," said Billy de Bonterre. "Let him begin on me again, that's all! I'll jolly well tell him off! I'll show him the difference between a De Bonterre and a common schoolmaster! Will—"

"Bunter!"

An icy voice in the doorway broke into Bunter's valorous tirade.

William de Bonterre broke off quite suddenly.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" he gasped.

"Have you finished your task?"

"Nunno, sir!"

"Cherry! What are you doing here?"

"I—I came to speak to—to Bunter, sir—"

"Take fifty lines for speaking to a boy under detention."

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Bob Cherry discreetly departed, leaving Mr. Quelch and William George Bunter to settle between them the question of the unfinished task. Billy Bunter had evidently spent in day-dreaming the time that should have been expended on his task. To judge by the sound of a whacking cane, and a dismal howl in the Form-room, it seemed that the Owl of the Remove was not, after all, dealing with Mr. Quelch in the style of Sir William de Bonterre, but in the old accustomed way of Billy Bunter.

When Bunter emerged from the Form-room his fat hands were tucked under his arms, and he was wriggling with anguish, and he did not look in the least knightly or valorous as he wriggled his way to the Remove passage.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Latest!

"YOU fellows— Ha, ha, ha!"

"What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry staggered into Study No. 1 in the Remove, apparently in a state of hysteria.

He collapsed into a chair and gurgled.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the study, and tea was nearly ready. Frank

Nugent had made the tea, Johnny Bull was buttering the toast, Wharton was sorting out cups and saucers and plates, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was cutting a cake. All those various occupations were suspended, as the juniors stared at Robert Cherry.

"What's the jolly old joke?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Fathead! What—"

"Bunter!" gasped Bob.

"Is he coming to tea?"

"I never asked him—never had a chance. But I think very likely he wouldn't care to have tea in a common Remove study. Nothing short of a knightly feast in marble halls would do now."

"Eh?"

"What?"

Bob Cherry wiped his flowing eyes.

"It's too good!" he stuttered. "You see, we've been mistaken in Bunter all this time. We thought him a common little fat toad, didn't we?"

"We did!"

"The didfulness was terrific!"

"We never knew he was a knightly cavalier—"

"A what?"

"A which?"

"On his looks," went on Bob, "who'd have supposed that he was the lineal descendant of Sir William de Bonterre, who gadzooked in the reign of Charley the First. But he is."

"Is he?"

"So he says, anyhow. He's just discovered it. It's got into his head, right on his brain—if any."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Potty as anything," said Bob. "He's been mugging it up, and he's going to spring it on us. He called me a— Ha, ha, ha!"

"A what?"

"A—a—a scurvy—ha, ha, ha!—a scurvy knave!" shrieked Bob.

"Great Scott!"

"Is the fat idiot potty?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"The potfulness must be terrific!"

"Well, he was always so near it that there wasn't much difference," remarked Johnny Bull. "Dear old Bunter's no end of a snob, along with his other jolly qualities. Of all the asses—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the merry joke?" asked Vernon-Smith, looking into Study No. 1.

Bob Cherry explained, and the Bunder stared, and then chuckled.

"My hat! This will be worth seeing," he said. "I thought I knew every kind of a silly ass Bunter was, but this is a new kind. Always some surprise from dear old Bunter. Hallo, here he comes!"

"Ow!"

Bunter came wriggling up into the Remove passage, with his hands tucked under his arms.

"Hallo, old tulip!" greeted the Bunder. "Had it warm?"

"None of your dashed familiarity, Smith!"

"Eh?"

Bunter untucked his fat hands, as it were, and blinked at Vernon-Smith with a lofty blink.

Undoubtedly the new discovery of his noble descent—real or fancied—had got into Bunter's head.

All his fat thoughts were running on the subject now, and he was in a sort of exalted state, which banished what little common-sense he had—little enough at the best of times.

In his own fat mind he was a lofty and superior person, and he was far too

inflated with conceit and bombast to realise the absurd figure he cut.

"I want you to keep your distance, Smithy!" he said firmly.

"What?"

"You're a common person," explained Bunter. "I don't want to hurt your feelings, Smithy—but there it is. You're common."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Your name's commonplace, and you're commonplace yourself, and your pater's commonplace," said Bunter. "I'm not a snob, I hope, but I'm bound to draw the line somewhere, and I draw it at stockbrokers and stockbrokers' sons, see?"

"My hat! But your own father's a stockbroker, isn't he?"

Bunter paused a moment. In his new pride as the successor of Sir William de Bonterre, he had forgotten that little circumstance.

"No," he said at last. "My pater dabbles in stocks and shares as a— a pastime. In a short time he will resume his rightful style and title of Sir William Samuel de Bonterre."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Smithy.

"Knave!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Caitiff!"

Vernon-Smith almost tottered away. Bunter cast a lofty and scornful glance after him. Then he became conscious of five grinning faces packed in the doorway of Study No. 1.

"Hail!" called out Bob Cherry.

"Eh?"

"Hail, noble knight!"

"How's your halidome?" asked Johnny Bull. "Have you got your halidome with you, Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Insolent knaves!" said Bunter disdainfully.

Apparently Bunter had picked up the phraseology of the "Cavalier Reliques" as suitable to his new character.

"Roll in, Bunter, and tell us all about it," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"I decline!"

"What?"

"I decline to enter your study, Wharton! I dislike vulgar familiarity—it is beneath me."

Bunter rolled on.

"Oh, my hat! I was going to ask you to tea!" shouted Wharton, as the fat junior rolled along the Remove passage.

Bunter halted.

"Eh?"

Apparently, in his new-found importance and aristocratic exclusiveness, he was still amenable to the benign influence of tuck.

"Never mind," said the captain of the Remove, "we won't shove any vulgar familiarity at you, Bunter. Ta-ta!"

"I say, you fellows—" Bunter rolled back.

"Fare thee well, Sir William," chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I'll come in to tea," said Bunter.

"The fact is, I—"

"Good-bye!"

"I don't really want to turn you fellows down, you know. I'm going to know you chaps," said Bunter. "I'm keeping up your acquaintance, I am really. After all, I'm no snob."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm going to take notice of you, really," assured Bunter. "I'll come in to tea, old fellows."

"You won't!" chuckled Wharton.

"I say, Harry, old chap—"

Slam!

The door of Study No. 1 closed hard—almost on the noble nose of Sir Billy de Bonterre.

Bunter jumped back.

"Owl! Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from within the study.

Bunter was about to roll on loftily, but he paused. The wind of self-importance filled Bunter almost to bursting; but at teatime he realised that he also required something of a more solid nature. And the lineal descendant of Sir William de Bonterre was, unhappily, in his usual state of impecuniosity.

He turned back, and opened the door of Study No. 1, and blinked in.

"I say, you fellows—"

Biff!

A cushion landed on the knightly countenance of Billy de Bonterre, and he gave a roar and went backwards.

Bump!

"Goal!" roared Bob Cherry:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Right on the wicket! Come in again, Bunter!"

"Come on, Sir William. I've got a loaf ready!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Wow! Beast! Caitiff! Grooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The descendant of the De Bonterres picked himself up, and rolled on to Study No. 7, and Harry Wharton & Co. chorled, and sat down to tea without any knightly company.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

When Knights were Bold!

PETER TODD stared at his fat study-mate William George Bunter as the latter rolled into Study No. 7.

There was a rather thin tea on the table; funds were not ample in Study No. 7. Peter had contributed a loaf, a pat of butter, and sufficient tea for the teapot; Tom Dutton had weighed in with a tin of sardines. Bunter, as usual, had forgotten to stand his "whack"—a little matter that was very frequently forgotten by the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter gave the tea-table a lofty and contemptuous look. He came into the study with a strut, which made Peter stare. The effects of the cane in the Form-room were already wearing off. Billy Bunter stood and surveyed the tea-table, and surveyed Peter.

"Is that what you've got for tea?" he asked.

"Just that, old bean."

"Do you think that's a decent tea for a fellow like me?"

"I think a fellow like you is jolly lucky to get a paw in it," answered Toddy cheerfully. "But perhaps you've got your giddy postal-order at last, and you are going to pay for your keep. Is that it?"

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

"I thought so! Well, shut up, then!" said Peter Todd. "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth, old fat pippin."

Bunter sneered.

"It's honour enough for you, Peter, for a fellow like me to sit down and break bread with him," he said.

"Break which?"

"Break bread!" said Bunter. "This is not the good cheer that a fellow of my quality has a right to expect."

"Blessed if I knew you had any quality!" said Peter. "I thought you were all quantity!"

"Look here, you insolent knave!" roared Bunter.

"What?" yelled Peter.



The uproar in the dormitory brought Wingate on the scene with an ashplant in his hand. The captain of the school opened the door just in time to provide a billet for a whizzing pillow. Crash! "Oh, my hat!" gasped Bunter. (See Chapter 7.)

"Insolent caitiff—"

"Caitiff!" said Peter dazedly.

"Low-born caitiff!" said Bunter. "In the good old times, Peter, I should have called in my faithful squire, and ordered him to give you a round dozen for your knavish insolence!"

Peter looked fixedly at the Owl of the Remove. Knowing nothing of Sir William de Bonterre and the amazing effect of that defunct gentleman upon Bunter's fat imagination, naturally he was surprised.

"Is this a game, Bunter?" he asked at last.

"Silence, knave!"

Bunter sat down to the tea-table.

Thin as the meal was, the knightly junior was prepared to do it full justice, and to annex the lion's share if permitted.

"Pass the sardines!" he grunted.

"Not at all!" said Peter cheerfully; "this isn't sufficiently good cheer, as you call it, for a fellow of your quality."

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"I recommend a fellow of your quality to stand himself a better tea, in some other study," said Peter Todd. "I don't want to rub it in, old fat pippin, but when a fellow sponges on his study for a feed he should be civil. That's a tip."

Billy Bunter glared at Toddy. Knightly disdain did not seem to affect Peter in the least.

"There's such a thing as respect for one's superiors, Toddy," said the Owl of the Remove, at last.

"Trot 'em out!" said Peter.

"I'm your superior, fathead—I mean, knave!" hooted Bunter. "I don't mind telling you, Peter, that it's come out that my family are descended from Sir William de Bonterre, who fought for Charles the First in the great Rebellion against the crop-eared knaves!"

"Must have been an ass not to mind his own business!" yawned Peter. "He didn't make much of a success of it, did he? Charley the First had his head bobbed, all the same!"

"You'd have been a crop-eared Roundhead if you'd lived in those days, Peter!" said Bunter contemptuously.

"Very likely," assented Peter. "I suppose all those old jokers took the side that their bread was buttered on. But this is the first I've heard of Bunters in history."

"De Bonterre—that's how the name was originally spelt," explained the Owl of the Remove. "It was modernised later; there are documents to prove it."

"Where are the giddy documents?"

"They can be obtained, if my father pays the necessary fees to Mr. Spoothem, the inquiry agent. There's nothing to cackle at, Peter Todd. Pass the sardines."

"Sardines are not good enough prog for a De Bonterre," said Peter, shaking his head. "For a Bunter, all very well. But a De Bonterre couldn't be insulted with sardines."

"The fact is, Peter, I'm hungry!"

"Shouldn't wonder," assented Peter.

"Look here, you beast—"

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Billy Bunter stretched out a fat hand to the sardines.

Rap!

"Yooooop!"

Bunter jerked back his hand, and sucked it furiously.

"Oh, you rotter! If I had my ancestor's trusty blade here—ow!—I would spit you like an ortolan—yow! You ought to be jolly glad to see a gentleman of good family at your measly table—wow! Look here, you beast, do you think I'm not going to have any tea?"

Peter nodded.

"Looks like it to me," he assented.

"Knave!"

"Fathead!"

"Caitiff!" snorted Bunter.

Peter Todd rose to his feet. He picked up a fives bat, and came round the table to Bunter.

"This new stunt of yours may be a funny one, old top," he said. "But in the long run it palls. When fellows call me names I generally give them toco. Like that!"

Whack!

"Yaroooh!"

"And like that!"

"Oh! Ow! Beast! Chuck it!" yelled Bunter. "Leggo my collar! I'm not going out of my study! I—I—Yaroooh! This is my study, you rotter, ain't it? Ow! Yooooop!"

Billy Bunter found himself sitting in the Remove passage, and the door of Study No. 7 closed on him.

Peter Todd, apparently, was fed-up with De Bonterre even more than he usually was with Bunter.

Bunter picked himself up, raging.

Billy Bunter, of the Remove, was not unaccustomed to being forcibly ejected from studies where he made himself objectionable.

But the influence of his newly discovered pedigree had gone deep.

It was not now Billy Bunter of the Remove, but the direct descendant of that warlike old fighting-man, Sir William de Bonterre, that Peter Todd had to deal with.

The fighting blood of the De Bonterres boiled in the veins of the Owl of the Remove.

He waited only to get his breath, and then he hurled open the door of Study No. 7 with a crash.

He rushed in.

Peter Todd was sitting down to tea again with Dutton, under the impression that he was done with Bunter till prep.

Never was an impression more mistaken.

He was, as it were, done with Bunter, but he had only started with De Bonterre.

The fat junior came in like a whirlwind. Right at Peter Todd he rushed, hitting out with a fat fist.

Crash!

"Ooooooop!" roared Peter.

The fat fist landed fairly and squarely on Peter's jaw, and a drive like that, with Bunter's terrific weight behind it, was no joke.

Peter Todd spun off his chair, and sprawled headlong on the floor of Study No. 7.

Tom Dutton started to his feet in amazement.

Dutton was deaf, and he had heard nothing of what had been said in the study. Unaware of the knightly descent of De Bonterre of the Remove, he was utterly amazed by this warlike outbreak on the part of Billy Bunter.

"What the thump—" he ejaculated. Bunter glared at him, his very spectacles gleaming with truculence.

"Do you want any?" he roared.

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Peter Todd sat up dazedly, holding his jaw. He held it in a sort of convulsive way, as if to assure himself that it was still there. It felt as if it wasn't.

For the time Peter was out of action. Billy de Bonterre did not heed him further. Like his knightly ancestor, he left Peter for dead, as it were, and turned to another foe. Often and often had Bunter been kicked by Tom Dutton—hard and deservedly. Now the fat fist of De Bonterre was flourished under the astounded nose of the deaf Removeite.

"Do you want any?" howled Bunter.

"Caitiff!"

"Eh?"

"Knave!"

And with that Billy Bunter landed out, and the astounded Dutton caught a fat fist with his nose, and went over with a crash and a roar.

Bunter surveyed his fallen foes for a moment, with his little round eyes gleaming through his spectacles.

It was quite exhilarating to the Owl of the Remove, to feel that he was a fighting-man, like his ancestors of chivalrous days, and to see his foes sprawling at his feet, as doubtless the crop-eared Round-heads had sprawled at the feet of Sir William de Bonterre.

But it was borne in upon Bunter's fat mind that there was one serious drawback to knocking a fellow down. That was, that the fellow might get up again and take drastic vengeance.

Properly speaking, a common person knocked down by a knightly hand ought to have remained down till given gracious permission to rise. But it was clear, from the looks of Peter Todd and Tom Dutton, that such was not in the least their intention.

And Billy de Bonterre backed to the door, as prudence—proverbially the better part of valour—came to his aid, and he disappeared into the Remove passage as the two juniors scrambled up.

"After him!" panted Peter.

"Ow! Collar the fat idiot! Ow!"

Toddy and Tom Dutton rushed into the passage. A fat figure vanished down the staircase in the distance. The newfound courage of the noble scion of the tribe of De Bonterre had oozed away at his fat finger-tips, and Billy Bunter was in full flight.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Unknightly!

"BONTERRE!"

"Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In the Rag that evening there was great merriment.

Bunter was the topic.

Bunter was not there. Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were there, which was a sufficient reason—two sufficient reasons—for Bunter to be elsewhere. In that moment of excitement in the Remove passage, Bunter had understudied his knightly ancestor, and played up valorously, as in the days when knights were bold. But he had dropped promptly from the loftiness of De Bonterre to the lower level of a mere Bunter, and now he was keeping out of sight of his enraged study-mates.

This really was not in accordance with knightly traditions. A bold De Bonterre should have feared no foe in shining armour, and certainly no foe in Eton jacket.

Possibly there was some doubt, after all, about the Owl's knightly descent. Or possibly the bold knightly blood had thinned out a little in the course of generations.

Be that as it might, certainly the present representative of the noble house of De Bonterre was dodging away from the wrath he had provoked, and undoubtedly quaking at the thought of the inevitable meeting with Peter and Tom in the dormitory that night.

Meanwhile, in the Rag, Bunter's latest was a topic that drew forth howls of merriment. It really took the Remove by storm.

It was seldom that Billy Bunter was missed when he was not present. He was a fellow whose absence could be borne with great fortitude. But on the present occasion all the Removeites would have been glad to see him roll into the Rag. All the fellows of a humorous turn were eager to pull Bunter's fat leg. Skinner was already planning a series of japes at the expense of the fatuous Owl.

But the fat junior did not turn up, and the Remove went off to their dormitory at half-past nine, minus the knightly youth.

Wingate of the Sixth came up to see lights out, and noticed at once that the Owl was not in the dormitory.

"Where's Bunter?" he asked.

"Hasn't that fat boulder come up?"

"I say, Wingate—"

"Oh, here you are!"

Bunter rolled in after the captain of Greyfriars. He blinked uneasily at Peter Todd and Tom Dutton. Evidently he had felt it safer to wait till a prefect was on the scene before he rejoined his Form.

Peter Todd did not look at him, however. By that time Peter had forgiven the punch he had received, and recovered from his astonishment at having received it.

But Tom Dutton was still wrathful. Dutton's nose was red and swollen, and there was pain in it. Tom's eyes gleamed at Bunter, and Bunter noted it with misgiving. The blood of the De Bonterres had boiled in his fat veins a few hours ago; but seemingly it had boiled over, and now it was not even simmering.

Lights were out, and Wingate of the Sixth was gone, and Tom Dutton was heard to turn out of bed.

Bunter quaked.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" chorled Bob Cherry. "Turn out, Bunter!"

"Let's see you on the jolly old war-path, Bunter," said Vernon-Smith. "I hear you've been knocking down fellows right and left this evening. You should have let a fellow see you at it."

"I gave an insolent knave a buffet," said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a chorus of chuckles. Bunter was still going strong with the high-flown language of the days of De Bonterre.

"There's nothing to cackle at, you fellows," went on the Owl of the Remove. "Look here! I don't want a row in the dorm."

"Out you get!" said Tom Dutton.

"Look here, Dutton—"

"Eh?"

"Oh, you deaf ass!" howled Bunter.

"Get back to bed. I'm not going to fight a common person!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's such a thing as a fellow's dignity to be considered," explained Bunter. "A fellow of good family, like me, cannot demean himself by scrapping with a fellow of no family. You fellows understand?"

"We do!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you getting out, Bunter?"

"No!" yelled the Owl of the Remove.

"Then I'll jolly well lick you where you are!" said Dutton. "Do you think you can thump a fellow's nose for nothing?"

"You were a saucy knave," said Bunter.

"Eh?"

"Saucy knave!"

"I don't know about being brave," said Dutton. "Brave enough to handle a fat, clumsy idiot like you, anyhow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you duffer——"

"Well, suffer is rather a strong word," said the deaf junior. "I'm not going to make you suffer, Bunter. I'm just going to swipe you with a pillow, as a warning not to punch a fellow's nose—see?"

"I say—— Yaroooooh!"

There was a roar from Bunter as he was seized and rolled out of bed.

Bump!

Bunter landed on the floor in a tangle of bedclothes.

Skinner turned out of bed and lighted a candle-end. All the Remove fellows sat, with grinning faces, to watch the proceedings.

Bunter's amazing prowess in Study No. 7 had astonished the Form when they had heard of it. It did not seem that they were going to be further astonished in the same way. Bunter wriggled out of the bedclothes, and scrambled round his bed.

"Keep him off!" he roared.

"Stand up to him, old pippin!" roared Bob Cherry. "Remember your knightly aunt's sisters—I mean ancestors."

"Remember how Sir Barrel de Bunter laid out the Roundheads!" urged Johnny Bull. "Give the caitiff a buffet on the scone."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Bunter was no longer warlike. He fled along the dormitory, dodging round the beds, as Tom Dutton started operations with a pillow.

"Yaroooooh! Keep him off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"I—I say, you fellows——"

Swipe!

The pillow caught Bunter, and he went sprawling. He roared as he sprawled, with a roar that would have done credit to the celebrated Bull of Bashan.

Swipe, swipe!

The pillow descended on Bunter, and he wriggled and dodged and roared. Still the blood of De Bonterre did not boil. Obviously, the Owl of the Remove had quite forgotten the valorous example of his noble ancestor.

He scrambled up and dodged away again, with Dutton after him. There was a severe pain in Dutton's swollen nose, and he seemed to find solace in swiping the descendant of the De Bonterres.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter dodged and dodged, with Dutton on his track. He fled for the door at last, with the intention of dodging out of the dormitory.

Tom Dutton hurled the pillow after him.

It was a hasty shot, and it missed the fleeing Owl of the Remove. The pillow whizzed past Bunter, and would have crashed on the oak door, but at that moment the door opened.

The uproar had brought Wingate up again, with a frown on his face and an ashplant in his hand.

Every bullet is said to have its billet, and Wingate opened the door just in

time to provide the whizzing pillow with a billet.

Crash!

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Dutton.

Wingate gasped, too, as he flew backwards into the corridor, and sat down there with a heavy concussion.

"Phew! You've done it now!" ejaculated Peter Todd.

"Good shot!" chortled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Dutton undoubtedly had done it.

Wingate of the Sixth reposed on the floor for about the millionth part of a second, and then he was up again, and rushing into the dormitory, ashplant in hand.

He did not heed Bunter; he grasped Dutton, who had hurled the pillow.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Whooooop!" roared Dutton.

Whack, whack, whack!

Billy Bunter dodged into bed. Tom Dutton was glad to follow his example, when the ashplant had finished whacking.

Wingate frowned round the hilarious dormitory and picked up the candle.

"Any more of this, and I'll come along and hand out six to the whole dormitory!" he said.

And the captain of Greyfriars departed.

After that the Remove dormitory settled down to repose. Tom Dutton was not disposed to turn out again.

"Six" was more than enough for him. Billy Bunter chuckled.

"I say, you fellows, I'm rather sorry Wingate came in," he said. "I was just going to give that ass Dutton a jolly good hiding!"

"Give him one to-morrow," suggested Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's scarcely worth my while to take any notice of the fellow's insolence," said Bunter. "I shall overlook the whole matter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!"

Bunter settled down to sleep, and his resounding snore was soon heard in the Remove dormitory. And the next day he kept his word; he overlooked the whole occurrence, and did not give Tom Dutton a "hiding," which was certainly fortunate for somebody.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch is Not Taking Any!

MR. QUELOH eyed Billy Bunter rather sharply in the Remove Form-room in the morning.

Bunter was not in his Form master's good books.

For once, however, the Owl of the Remove did not cringe under the stern eye of the Remove master.

He returned that stern stare with a lofty blink.

GREYFRIARS CELEBRITIES. No. 1. BUNTER, THE GYMNAST.



ANOTHER HUMOROUS CARTOON NEXT WEEK, BOYS!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 897.

Bunter was still inflated with his newly-discovered family pride. He had pondered over the matter, and realised that a descendant of Sir William de Bonterre ought not to care a button for a common schoolmaster. As he had told the Remove fellows, in ancient days the Quelches—if there had been any Quelches at all—must have been serfs to the De Bonterres. They had been varlets and lackeys, to fetch and carry at the lofty command of their knightly lords. Really, there was something ridiculous in the idea of the descendant of the knightly lords cringing in the presence of a descendant of the varlets and lackeys.

The trouble was that Mr. Quelch, varlet or not, was armed with the power of the cane. This was a serious consideration.

In ancient days an insolent varlet could be spitted on a De Bonterre lance, or hewn down by a De Bonterre battle-axe, or tucked up to the gallows by the De Bonterre minions. But in modern days these things, howsoever desirable, were out of the question. Mr. Quelch, obviously could not be spitted, hewn down, or tucked up.

Noble blood, as Bunter said bitterly, was not what it had been. The glory was departed from the house of Israel, as it were.

Certainly the glory had departed from the house of De Bonterre, if that noble house was now represented by Billy Bunter of the Remove.

Between his desire to assert his lofty superiority to common persons like schoolmasters, and his dread of Mr. Quelch's cane, Bunter was in a state of doubt, and he alternated in quite an entertaining manner between impertinence and funk.

He felt that he could at least venture to return the Remove master's stern glance with a lofty stare. A fellow could scarcely be caned for looking a Form master in the face. A cat may look at a king, so surely a De Bonterre might look at a Quelch!

Perhaps, however, it was that cheeky stare which caused the Remove master to put Bunter on to construe first of all.

Bunter's "con" was even more hopeless than usual that morning. The previous evening he had been dodging Toddy and Dutton, instead of giving the necessary attention to his prep.

It was, Bunter considered, rotten cheek on the part of a commoner to expect a De Bonterre to bother his noble head about prep. But he did no venture to say so to Mr. Quelch.

"You will commence, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch.

Bunter did not even know where to begin. Not that the knowledge would have been of much use to him, for he could no more have construed at sight than he could have written the *Ænid* as an original work.

"Second book," murmured Russell.

"Russell!"

"Oh! Yes, sir?"

"Take fifty lines for speaking to Bunter!"

"I am waiting, Bunter."

"Conticuere omnes," whispered Ogilvy, taking the risk of sharing Dick Russell's fate.

He whispered without moving his head, and fortunately escaped Mr. Quelch's attention.

"Bunter—"

"Conticuere omnes!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Well? Go on!"

"Conticuere omnes—"

"What?"

"Conticuere omnes—"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 897.

"You need not repeat the Latin incessantly, Bunter. I am waiting for you to construe!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

"I—I—"

"You did no preparation last night, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch, taking up his cane from his high desk.

"The—the fact is, sir—"

"Did you or did you not prepare this lesson, Bunter?"

Bunter was "for it," he could see that. Perhaps, on the principle that it was as well to be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, he indulged his keen desire to cheek his Form master.

"The fact is, sir, I hadn't time."

"What?"

"Hadn't time."

"You had no time to prepare your lessons, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch, in an awe-inspiring voice.

"No, sir! Can't be bothered with it!" said Bunter recklessly.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch's face was a study.

Billy Bunter was not of the stuff of which heroes are made, and there were plenty of plucky fellows in the Remove. But assuredly no other Removites would have ventured to make an answer like that.

"You—you—you cannot be bothered with preparation!" articulated Mr. Quelch, finding his voice at last.

"Just that!" said Bunter.

"Stand out before the class, Bunter!"

"What for, sir?"

"I am going to cane you, Bunter, for idleness and impertinence!"

Billy Bunter felt an inward quaking. Certainly at that moment he felt more like a Bunter than a knightly De Bonterre. But he plunged desperately on. The eyes of all the form were upon him, in wonder and expectation. He was filling the limelight. And surely it was possible—barely possible—that a common schoolmaster might be frowned into proper subservience by a descendant of noble knights.

Bunter did not stir.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"I hear you, Quelch."

"What—what did you say?"

"Quelch!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, staring at Bunter blankly. The Remove fellows were breathless now.

That Bunter was every sort of a silly ass, and that his fancied knightly blood had got into his obtuse head, they were aware; but they had not imagined that it would produce this effect. In breathless expectation they waited for the chopper to come down.

Mr. Quelch was so taken aback that he could do nothing but stare at the Owl of the Remove. He seemed deprived of the power of speech and motion.

Remove fellows had sometimes ventured to cheek their Form master in a mild way; but this was new and amazing. Mr. Quelch, indeed, was not quite sure that Bunter was in his right senses.

Bunter blinked at him, greatly encouraged by his silence and immobility. The fat Owl of the Remove had the impression that Mr. Quelch, at last, was being properly impressed, and realising that he had to deal with a fellow of unusual importance. Billy Bunter pursued his supposed success, and rubbed it in, as it were.

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

"You can leave me out, Quelch," he went on. "I'm fed-up with this rotten Latin, anyhow!"

"Shut up, you ass!" breathed Peter Todd.

"Silence, knave!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"As for calling you Quelch," went on Bunter, while the Remove master still stared at him blankly, as if frozen and rooted to the floor, "that is the way for a fellow of my quality to speak to a man of yours. You must remember, sir—I mean, Quelch—that in the good old days men of your low-born kind had to bow and scrape before my ancestors, and were sufficiently honoured if they received a kick and a cuff from a belted knight. Hundreds of Quelches used to obey the orders of the De Bonterres, and—"

"The boy is mad!" said Mr. Quelch, addressing space.

"Oh, chuck it!" said Bunter.

"Bless my soul! Did you—did you say chuck it?" gasped the Remove master.

"I did, knave!"

"Upon my word!"

"Silence, caitiff!" said Bunter, with a wave of a fat hand. "I'm fed-up with you! Gadzooks! Who are you?"

Mr. Quelch was still staring at Bunter as if mesmerized. Bunter sat down victorious.

The Remove master had been reduced to a proper state of mind, in his fat opinion. Bunter was done with him.

Unfortunately, Mr. Quelch was not done with Bunter.

He grasped his cane hard, and came towards the forms. His left hand dropped on Bunter's collar.

"Boy!"

"Unhand me!" roared Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Unhand me! How dare you lay a common hand upon me, you saucy knave?"

Mr. Quelch did not answer that question.

With a powerful grip on Bunter's collar, he hooked the Owl of the Remove out before the class.

"Leggo!" yelled Bunter.

Mr. Quelch did not let go. He whirled Bunter across a desk, and then the cane rose and fell.

Clouds of dust rose from Billy Bunter's trousers, and fiendish yells from Billy Bunter.

Whether Bunter was insane, or whether he was only cheeky, or whether he was under an obsession, Mr. Quelch did not pause to inquire. In any and every case a thrashing seemed to be what he needed, and Mr. Quelch proceeded to administer what he needed.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

From the lofty superiority of De Bonterre the Owl of the Remove came down suddenly to the ordinary Bunter level, as had happened before. He did not turn on Mr. Quelch and smite him with knightly wrath. He squirmed and wriggled and roared in the grasp of the Remove master, while the cane beat the dust from his trousers.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

The yells of Billy Bunter rang through the Remove-room and along the corridor outside. The uproar was terrific.

Mr. Quelch did not leave off whacking till his arm was fatigued. Bunter was more than fatigued by that time.

"Now go to your place, Bunter!"

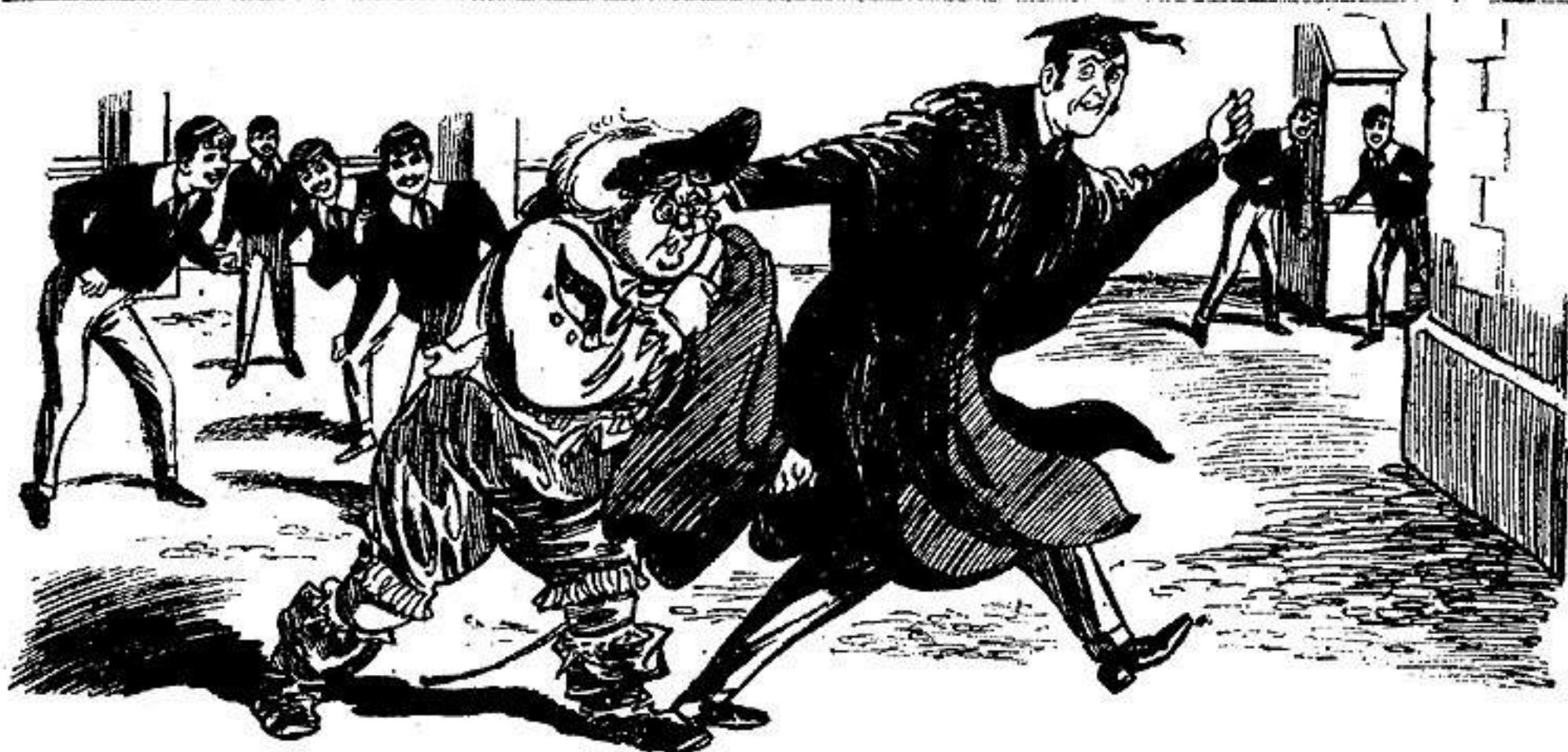
"Ow, ow, ow, wow!"

"If you were not the stupidest boy in my Form, Bunter, I should take you to your headmaster for a flogging."

"Ow, ow! Wow, wow!"

"Any further insolence from you, Bunter, and you will be flogged!"

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



"Bunter!" shrieked Mr. Quelch. "Bah! Stand back, knave!" said Bunter scornfully. "What—what—" gasped the Form-master. "Avaunt! Away! Touch me not, catiff!" That was too much for Mr. Quelch. He swooped down on Bunter and gripped the fat junior's ear between finger and thumb. "Come!" hissed Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 11.)

"Go to your place!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter crawled to his place. All the swank of De Bonterre was taken out of the Owl of the Remove now. From the bottom of his fat heart he repented him that he had ever departed from the manners and customs of Bunter of the Remove. The descendant of the varlets had bestowed a terrific thrashing upon the descendant of the knights, and the knightly youth had to take it "lying down."

"Sit down, Bunter."

Bunter promptly sat down. Bunter or De Bonterre, he was prepared now to obey the slightest command from a common schoolmaster—indeed, to hang upon his words and anticipate his slightest wishes!

But he rose again with equal promptness.

"Please, sir, may I—may I stand up?" he gasped.

Mr. Quelch stared at him, and then he smiled grimly. He realised that Bunter had a natural preference for standing, at present.

"You may stand, Bunter."

"Thank you, sir!" mumbled Bunter.

And he stood through the lesson, wriggling and squirming. Possibly he still cherished a hope of asserting his superiority in the Remove; but he realised only too clearly that Mr. Quelch was not taking any, and it was certain that there would be no more swank from Bunter in the Form-room.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Not Nice for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER seemed rather subdued during the following few days.

The licking he had received in the Remove room seemed to have had a discouraging effect upon him.

He could not, also, be blind to the fact that his newly-discovered knightly descent was a great jest in the Remove—that the fellows considered it, indeed, a scream.

Even Fisher T. Fish chuckled over it, and clipped Bunter unmercifully. Fisher T. Fish, being a native of the great Republic where Jack is as good

as his master, if not a little better, had a natural reverence for anything in the nature of a title. He would have haunted Lord Mauleverer like a shadow had his lordship been able to stand Fishy, which was not the case. But even Fisher T. Fish, with all his Transatlantic keenness on titles, was not impressed by the new prospects of the Bunter family, and he told the Owl of the Remove that Sir William de Bonterre cut no ice with him; and, indeed, he "guessed" and "calculated" that Bunter had no more connection with that dead-and-gone Bonterre than with Julius Cæsar or Nebuchadnezzar.

Bunter remained quite convinced of the fact himself, and he attached the greatest importance to it. He really could not understand how the fellows could regard such an important matter as a "scream."

Proof of his knightly claims was coming to hand, he told the grinning Remove fellows. His father had engaged the services of the inquiry agent who—according to his own account—was in close touch with the Herald's Office, and knew all about pedigrees, and coats-of-arms, and crests, and such things. There was every hope, Bunter declared, that the old title would be revived, old Sir William de Bonterre having been a baronet as well as a knight.

A knighthood expired with the holder, but a baronetcy didn't, and the Bonterre baronetcy was still hanging up somewhere, so to speak, waiting for some claimant to take it down. Mr. William Samuel Bunter, of Bunter Court and Throgmorton Street, was going to be the happy man.

Skinner, in the meantime, was putting in a little historical research. Like Bunter, he went nosing into old books in the school library; and the result of his investigations was new light on the Bonterre family. Skinner had found that the Sir William from whom Bunter of the Remove claimed descent was the third baronet, having been a City cheesemonger in the reign of James the First.

Skinner made known this piece of news in the Rag one evening, amid chuckles from the juniors, and received a glare of wrath from Billy Bunter.

"Nothing of the kind!" hooted

Bunter. "He jolly well wasn't a cheesemonger, you rotter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He jolly well was!" grinned Skinner.

"It's one of the oldest baronetcies in the kingdom," hooted Bunter. "It dates back to the Tudors or the Plantagenets."

"You silly owl!" roared Peter Todd. "Baronetcies were invented by James the First, and never heard of before his time."

"Rot!" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that jolly old King jolly well invented the giddy title because he was hard up, and he sold 'em at a thousand pounds each," said Toddy. "That's how the Bonterre cheesemonger came in for it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rot!" hooted Bunter.

"You see, it's a bit more distinguished to have a late baronetcy than an early one," grinned Bob Cherry. "It was only a question of cash in those days."

Bunter gave Bob a withering blink.

"It's all rot, of course," he said. "Really, you know, I'm not surprised at you common fellows feeling catty and jealousy like this. You plebeians—"

"Us what?" ejaculated Bob.

"Plebeians! You plebeians have always been up against the patricians," said Bunter scornfully. "In the good old days, my ancestors would have had you whipped at the cart's tail, with a murrain to you."

"A—a which?"

"A murrain," said Bunter.

"What the thump's a murrain?"

"That's your low-born ignorance," said Bunter. "A murrain is—is—is a—a murrain, of course."

"Go hon!"

"Things have changed for the worse," said Bunter, whose fat mind had been revelling in contemplation of the great days when knights were bold. "Common people jolly well had to toe the line in the good old days, you know. Saucy varlets were whipped, or tucked up to the gallows, or had their ears slit. One of my ancestors would have cleaved you to the chine for less cheek than you've given me."

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 697.

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 220.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week Ending April 18th, 1925.

MY IDEAL CREW!

Billy Bunter



ADDDED to my many other accomplishments is that of oarsmanship. I can do almost anything with a boat. (In fact, it's no longer a boat, by the time you've finished with it, Billy. It turns turtle!—Ed.).

Without wishing to boast, bragg, or blow my own trumpitt, I may say that I'm the finest oarsman in the Greyfriars Remove, bar none. Stroking a crew comes as easy to me as stroking a cat. You see, oarsmanship is in my blood. I've inherited it from my four fathers. (First time I knew you had four fathers, Billy. Most fellows are content with one!—Ed.). One of my earliest ancestors—Sir Rowlock Bunter—rowed for Ancient Briton against the Romans. He did jolly well, too, and got swamped out—not with water, but with congratulations!

Then there was Sir Barleigh Bunter, who was "first man" in the Oxford boat in 1266. (Undoubtedly he must have been the first man in the Oxford boat, if it was as long ago as all that!—Ed.) Sir Barleigh was a wonderful chap. It was said of him that he carried the crew on his shoulders. I don't see how he could have done that, quite. It's rather a tuff proposition, to ballance seven sturdy fellows on your shoulders, and row at the same time. Still, I suppose we must believe what the historians tell us.

Never mind about the past, though. It's the present that I want to write about.

We've got a junior crew at Greyfriars, and you never saw such a sorry set of spessimens in your life! What they don't know about rowing would fill whole vollumes.

Wharton chose the crew, of course; and I can't congratulate him on his choice. Wharton himself can't row for toffy. I've offered to give him tuition, but he has rejected my offer with skorn.

How can you reezonably eggspect a fellow to select a strong crew, when he

himself is the biggest duffer that ever caught a crab?

I watched Wharton's crew at practiss, and it was positively pancel. They seemed to be competing with each other to see who could make the biggest splash.

But there! How can you eggspect a skinny, scraggy set of fellows like Wharton & Co. to pull a boat along? Johnny Bull was the only fellow in the crew who was at all berly, but he was as clumsy as a hipperpotamus. What we want at Greyfriars is a crew of strong, strapping, sturdy chaps like me. Beefy, brawny fellows with big biceps—that's what we want! My ideal crew would konsist of myself, my miner Sammy, Fatty Wynn and Baggy Trimble, of St. Jim's; Tubby Muffin, of Rookwood; my cousin Wally; and three other fellows of equal proportions. Each member of my crew would weigh fourteen stone, and we'd fairly make the fur fly. Greased lightning wouldn't be in it, once we got on the move! (It would have to be a jolly substantial boat, I'm thinking, to accommodate eight fellows of Billy Bunter's bulk.—Ed.).

I should train my crew on jam-tarts and doe-nuts, and put them through a stiff trial on the river every day. And I should bring them to such a pitch of perfection that we should not only lick all the rival schools with ease, but should be in a position to challenge Oxford and Cambridge.

Some will snigger at this, and think it a flite of fancy on my part. But I only wish I had half a chance to show my prowess as an oarsman! At present, I am kept out of the crew by personal jellusy on Wharton's part. Crowded out of the cricket, crowded out of the footer, crowded out of the rowing—such is my unhappy fate, dear readers. It's awfully sad, when you come to think of it. However, one of these fine days I shall come into my own, and Billy Bunter's brawny boat-crew will be the talk of the land. And it will be a big blow to hopeless duffers like Wharton.

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

THE annual "Battle of the Blues" has been fought and won, I expect, by the time this issue of the "Herald" is in your hands. Perhaps I ought to have taken time by the forelock, and produced our special Boating Number in advance of the great 'Varsity clash. But boating and boat-racing are very popular at this time of the year, so I need not fear that this number will not be topical.

Boating Week is an annual function at Greyfriars, and our senior and junior crews have had a jolly strenuous time. The River Sark has been the scene of some tremendous tussles, and Greyfriars has covered itself with glory against the rival schools. Our senior crew, stroked by burly George Wingate, got into the final against St. Jim's, and won an exciting race by a quarter of of a length. Our junior crew—of which I have the honour to be leader—also reached the final, our opponents being the merry men of Highelife.

There is no getting away from the fact that Frank Courtenay & Co. are stunning sportsmen, and they possess some sturdy and stout-hearted oarsmen. In the early heats they had defeated Rookwood and Courtfield County Council School, so we guessed that they would make us go "all the way" in the final. And they did!

It was a desperate tussle, and resulted in a dead-heat, both boats flashing past the winning-post side by side, with not an inch to choose between them. The race was re-rowed after a "breather," and this time we gained the verdict by the barest possible margin. I was obliged to set a warm pace to my men, and they responded gallantly, Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry, in particular, rowing like Trojans.

On this season's form Johnny Bull is the most powerful oarsman in the Remove. He puts plenty of vim and vigour into his work, and he was as fresh as paint at the end of the race, whereas most of us were in varying states of collapse. Frank Nugent was so utterly "whacked" that he had to be helped out of the boat.

In the Greyfriars Remove we have oarsmen—and oarsmen. Billy Bunter was mightily indignant at not being selected as a member of our crew. He was obliged to take a hack seat—not a hack seat in the boat, however, or it would have sunk like a stone. The fact is Bunter is a massive, but not a muscular youth. He hasn't the stamina for a strenuous boat-race, and, anyway, he can't row! The last time he was in London Bunter took out a boat on the Serpentine in order to show off his prowess before an admiring crowd. The fat duffer promptly capsized, and he would have gone to a watery grave had not help been at hand. We shall have to be very hard up for oarsmen before we call upon the services of William George Bunter!

There are other grumblers in the Remove who consider they have not been given a fair show, but their grumbles and grievances are not going to be ventilated in this issue. We have more important things to write about. And so—to our muttons!

HARRY WHARTON.



IT was Satterday morning, the twenty-eighth day of March, in the year Ann O'Domini—whoever she might be!—1925!

Dr. Birchmall, the aged and venerable headmaster of St. Sam's, sat in his study pouring over his korrespondence. (What was he pouring over it; Dicky—ink?—Ed.)

Suddenly there was a tap on the door. "Trot right in!" said the Head, with his usual diggnity and decorum.

It was Jack Jolly of the Fourth who entered. But Jolly looked anything but Jolly just then. He looked, in fact, Jolly mizzerrable—more mizzerrable than he had looked for a Jolly long time. And this made the Head Jolly curious.

"Golly, Jolly!" he ejaculated. "What ever is the matter, my boy?"

For Jack Jolly had taken out his handkerchief, and was sobbing wildly.

"Boo-hoo!" he wailed. "I—I've just had a tellygram, sir!"

"What of that?" said the Head, in serprize. "I've had tellygrams myself, many a time and oft, but no bones have been broken. Come, dry those tears, and pull yourself together!"

"But—but you don't understand, sir!" whimpered Jack Jolly. "The tellygram I've had is of a trajjick nature."

"Oh!"

"It's from my uncle, sir. It says: 'Come at once; I am sinking fast.'"

"Is your uncle a sailer, Jolly?"

"Nunno, sir."

"He is not at sea?"

Jack shook his head.

"Then how comes he to be sinking fast?"

"He means his life's ebbing away, sir. He is lying—"

"I dare say he is!" mermered the Head. "People whose lives are ebbing away can't go dashing round to the post-offs to send a tellygram!"

"I eggspect he got somebody to despatch it for him, sir," said Jack Jolly. "He is lying between life and deth! I am dreadfully afraid that he will expire—"

"Chuck in his mitt, do you mean?"

"Yessir!"

"Then why can't you put it in plane English? I am sorry for your uncle, of course. I've been at debt's door myself. But what is it you want, Jolly? What can I do for you in this time of crysis?"

"I want your permission to go and see my uncle before he breethes his last, sir."

The Head grinned—which was a very hartless thing to do in the serkumstances.

"Does your uncle happen to live at Putney, Jolly?" he inkwired, with a sly wink which the junior failed to notiss.

"No, sir."

"Then he lives at Mortlake, I presoom?"

"No, sir."

"Well, never mind," said the Head. "You can go and see him, anyway."

"Thanks awfully, sir!"

And Jack Jolly made a snivelling exit from the Head's study.

Dr. Birchmall was smiling as he continued to pour over his korrespondence. Even the fact that his morning meal konsisted, for the most part, of unpaid bills did not chase away the Head's smile.

There was another tap on the door. This time the Head's visitor was Swotter of the Sixth.

"Sorry to trubble you, sir," said Swotter; "but I've just had a message from my grandmother. She tumbled down three flites of staires, and is not eggspected to recover."

"Poor sole!" mermered the Head. "And

I suppose your grandparent wishes to see you before she—er—kicks the bucket?"

"Yes, sir," said Swotter, whose berly frame was shaken with sobs.

"Very well," said the Head kindly. "You may go, my boy. I hope it will be an exciting race!" he added, under his breth, as Swotter took his departure.

As soon as the Sixth-Former's footmarks had died away Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, appeared on the seen. He was in a state of grate agitation.

"I have reseved a summons—" he began.

"My hat!" said the Head. "What have you been up to now, Lickham? Braking the law again—hey?"

"I don't mean a perlice-court summons, sir. I have reseved a summons from my brother. He is an airman, as you know, and constant flying has given him a bad attack of sky-attica. He is at present hoverling—"

"Then he'd no bizzness to be!" said the Head. "He ought to give up flying at once!"

"Hovering between life and deth, sir," eggsplained Mr. Lickham. "Much as I hate to leave my dewties at St. Sam's, even for a few hours, I feel I ought to ask your permission to hasten to my brother's side."

"Did you say your brother's side or the waterside?" mermered the Head. "I see by the morning paper that the Boat Race is due to be rode to-day."

Mr. Lickham blushed to the roots of his hare.

"Yes, yes, sir; but that has nothing to do with my brother's illness," he said.

"Indeed!" said the Head. "I should have thought that your brother's illness and the Boat Race were one and the same thing! However, we won't wrangle about it. Off you go!"

And Mr. Lickham went.

But if the Head hoped to be left in plice after that his hopes were roothlessly shattered. Quite a stream of callers flocked into his study during the next hour, and it was astonishing what a lot of illness had broken out among the relations of the St. Sam's fellows. There seemed to be a wholesale epidemic of flou, newmonia, hooping-koff, and other kinds of scarlet-fever.

Happily, the Head happened to be in a jecial frame of mind that morning, and in every case leave of absence was reddily granted.

By the time eleven o'clock came St. Sam's was almost drained of masters and skollers. They were hurrying with all speed to the various dethbeds, which were all situated in the same plaice—namely, at Putney!

The 5.30 p.m. trane from Waterloo was crowded with St. Sam's fellows, returning from their visits to the sick. Evidently all their relatives had turned the corner, and were well on the road to recovery, for the St. Sam's fellows were looking quite merry and bright. Some were wearing light blue rosettes in their buttonholes; others were wearing dark blue ditto.

Mr. Lickham was on the platform, but he did not wish to be seen by any of the St. Sam's fellows, so he lay doggo behind a milkean till the train was about to start. Then he made a dart for a first-class carriage.

Mr. Lickham scrambled in, brethless, and was serprized and sumwhat annoyed to find a berly navy sitting opposit.

"What is this low, vulger fellow doing hear?" muttered the Form master. "Is he not aware that this is a first-class carriage, speshully reserved for ortocrats and plewtocrats?"

The navy regarded Mr. Lickham with a cheery grin, and the Form master frowned.

"Do not make grimaces at me, my good man!" he said. "You have no bizzness in this carriage at all! Corduroy trowsers and a muffler and a cheap cloth cap! You are a low, common person!"

The navy was still grinning.

"Keep yer 'air on, guv'nor!" he said. "I got as much right to be in this 'ere carriage as wot you 'ave! Look!"

And, to Mr. Lickham's amazement, the navy perduced a first-class ticket.

"Bless my sole!" gasped the Form master. And then he relapsed into a puzzled silence.

The navy drew a clay pipe from his pocket and lit up. The fumes of his fowl shagg made Mr. Lickham koff and splutter. And he continued to koff and splutter as the trane thundered on its way. He glared fiercely at his fellow-passenger, who remained blissfully unconcerned.

The trane was nearing St. Sam's when the navy suddenly looked up at Mr. Lickham and spoke. But this time his voice was cultured and refined.

"Well, my dear Lickham, and how did you find that brother of yours? Has he clucked up the giddy sponge, so to speak? If so, I trust you will send me an invite to the funeral!"

Mr. Lickham nearly toppled off his seat, for his fellow-passenger was none other than the headmaster of St. Sam's!

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" gasped the Form master, in dismay. "I had no idear it was you, sir, or I should never have allooded to you as a low, common person! A thowsand apologies!"

"That's all right!" said the Head cheerfully. "I saw you on the towing-path at Putney. I suppose your brother recovered from his illness in time to take you to see the Boat Race?"

Mr. Lickham flushed crimson.

"Don't be alarmed," said the Head. "I'm not going to call you over the coals for going to the Boat Race. I've been to see it myself! Couldn't resist the temptation, you know. But it was nessessary for me to adopt this disguise, in case any of the Guvvners of St. Sam's were knocking around. I'm not supposed to be absent from my duties. I say, Lickham, wasn't it a stunning race?"

Mr. Lickham was too dazed to answer, and he staggered from the train when it stopped at its destination like a man in a dream.

That evening the Head was back in gown and mortar-board as usual. He made tender inkwries as to the health of Jack Jolly's uncle, and Swotter's grandmother, and all the other invalids. And the fellows little dreamed that a certain berly navy who had blocked their view on the towing-path had been their respected and venerable headmaster!

THE END.

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(Continued from page 13.)

"Oh, my hat!"

"I don't know whether you ever had any ancestors, Bob Cherry—"

"Well, I must have had a few, I think," chuckled Bob. "I didn't grow all of a sudden, like Topsy in the story."

"Well, if you ever had any, my ancestors walloped them at the Battle of Hastings," said Bunter.

"Oh, great pip!"

"The De Bonterres were a noble Norman house," said the Owl of the Remove. "You can tell that by the Frenchified name. They came over with the Conqueror."

"There was no Undesirable Aliens Act in those days!" remarked Wibley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And they jolly well knocked out you common Saxon churls," said Bunter disdainfully. "Lots of fellows named Cherry and Bull and Skinner and Wibley got it in the neck at the Battle of Hastings, when my ancestors got at them. Licked to the wide!"

"Well, that's a long way back," remarked Bob Cherry. "I can't say I specially remember what happened to my family at the Battle of Hastings; it was before my time. But if your ancestors licked mine, old fat man, it's high time that the matter was set right."

"Eh?"

"So the descendant of my ancestors is going to jolly well wallop the descendant of yours, and level up," said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter suddenly dropped the discussion and retired hurriedly from the Rag, amid a roar of laughter. Apparently he did not want the Battle of Hastings to be fought over again at Greyfriars. It was quite certain that the victory would not have rested with the Normans in this case.

"Dear old Bunter!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "He grows funnier every day."

Billy Bunter retired to his study in a morose humour. It was rather unfortunate that he had not inherited any of the knightly prowess of the De Bonterres along with their noble blood. As for the noble blood, Bunter was quite convinced about that. He was determined not to credit Skinner's story of the City cheesemonger.

When Peter Todd came in for prep, Bunter eyed him morosely and bitterly.

"It's rather hard cheese, Toddy," he said. "This rotten modern democracy, I suppose. There's no respect left for noble blood and ancient lineage. I'm treated on a footing of equality by all sorts of common fellows. I even have to share a study with a poor devil of a solicitor's son! Bit sickening, isn't it?"

"More than that," said Peter cheerfully. "It's frightfully sickening—for the solicitor's son."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Lot of difference between past and present," remarked Peter. "Now, in the jolly old past, you'd have called in your minions to put me on the rack, or something nice like that, wouldn't you?"

"I jolly well would!"

"And in the jolly old present, instead

of that, a poor devil of a solicitor's son takes you by the collar, like that—"

"Leggo!"

"And kicks you for your cheek, like that—"

"Yaroooooh!"

"And shifts you out of the study, like that—"

Bump!

Peter Todd grinned cheerily at the Owl of the Remove from the study doorway. Bunter sat and glared.

"What a change from past to present—what?" asked Peter. "Jolly old De Bonterre would have jumped up and rushed at me with his jolly old battle-axe if I started kicking him. And my opinion is that you'll jump up and rush for the stairs when I begin kicking."

Biff, biff!

Peter Todd was right.

Bunter rushed for the stairs.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Soft Sawder!

"COME in, sir!"

Bunter started.

It was Skinner of the Remove who addressed him, and the manner of Harold Skinner was full of respect—cramped with it.

The Owl of the Remove stared at him. Skinner was standing in his study doorway, and Vernon-Smith was there with him. The two juniors had been talking and grinning when Bunter came along, but at the sight of the knightly Owl they became grave at once.

"Deign to enter!" said Smithy.

Bunter eyed them suspiciously.

This, it is true, was precisely the manner in which a De Bonterre ought to have been addressed by common persons. But Bunter had almost given up the hope of ever being treated in the Greyfriars Remove with the respect that was due to his noble descent.

He suspected a jape. But Skinner and the Bounder were extremely grave.

"It's humble quarters to ask you into," said Skinner respectfully; "but we should be honoured, sir."

"Pray step in!" urged the Bounder. "We've got a bag of tarts here. Perhaps your honour will deign to taste them."

That decided Bunter.

Jape or not, he could see a bag of jam-tarts on the study table, and he rolled in. The discovery of his knightly descent had not caused Bunter's famous appetite to deteriorate in any way; he was still as fond of tuck as ever. He would not have been surprised, when he was in the study, if Skinner and the Bounder had collared him, and dabbed a jam-tart on his fat little nose; but it was worth the risk.

But he was not collared, he was not dabbed. Amazing as it was, apparently the two juniors were impressed at last with Bunter's superiority, and had resolved to pay him the respect that was his due.

Really, it was not surprising, when Bunter came to think of it. The really surprising thing was that common persons had ever ventured to cheek him.

"Will you sit down, sir?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, don't call me sir, you know!" said Bunter.

"Excuse me, sir. I know what is due to my betters," said Skinner firmly. "If you honour my study with your presence, sir, it is up to me to show that I appreciate the honour."

"Exactly!" said the Bounder. "May I serve you, Bunter?"

"Thanks, old chap!"

Bunter sat down.

Skinner and Smithy remained standing, apparently feeling that it would be improper for common persons to sit in a knightly presence.

Vernon-Smith rolled the tarts out of the bag upon a plate, and Skinner took the plate and presented it to Bunter on bended knees.

Bunter proceeded to devour the tarts.

His fat face was irradiated with smiles.

This was what he had a right to expect, but what he had almost given up expecting. In the atmosphere of solemn gravity in Skinner's study he no longer suspected a jape. Anyhow, he was getting the tarts; there was no mistake about that.

Tart after tart vanished with great promptness. It was not very long since Bunter had had his dinner, but one dinner was nothing to the Owl of the Remove. He could have demolished several dinners, and then any number of tarts. In the gastronomic line, at least, William George Bunter was a man of prowess.

"Like them, sir?" asked Skinner.

"Good!"

"We hope that you forgive us, your honour," said Skinner. "You see, we never really understood at first how matters stood. Our lowborn ignorance, you know."

"I know," assented Bunter.

Vernon-Smith eyed the Owl of the Remove curiously. It seemed almost incredible that even the fatuous fat junior could swallow this. But Bunter swallowed it as he swallowed the tarts, and with as much enjoyment. He was merely getting his just due, like the king coming into his own again, as it were.

Skinner winked at the Bounder with the eye furthest from Bunter.

"Now that we understand, we're taking our proper place," went on Skinner. "Our proper place is one of respect and obedience."

"Just that!" agreed Bunter.

"The other fellows will come round," went on Skinner. "I think they're coming round already. Another tart, your worship?"

"Yes, rather!"

Snoop came into the study. He stared at the sight of Harold Skinner on his knees serving the lordly Bunter with tarts.

"What on earth's this game?" demanded Snoop.

"Game?" repeated Skinner. "Don't be disrespectful to Bunter, Snoop!"

"Eh?"

"I mean, De Bonterre. De Bonterre has kindly consented to honour this study for a few minutes of his valuable time," said Skinner. "If you are to remain a friend of mine, Snoop, you will treat De Bonterre with the respect due to his noble lineage."

Bunter blinked at the gasping Snoop. "You hear that?" he said loftily.

"I—I suppose I'm dreaming!" said Sidney James Snoop blankly. "Look here! What are you wasting tarts for on that fat dummy?"

"Silence!" said the Bounder.

"Look here, Smithy—"

"At a word from De Bonterre," said Skinner, "we shall take you by the scruff of the neck and chuck you out of the study, Snoop."

"Will you, by gum!" exclaimed Snoop.

"Certainly!" said Smithy. "As common persons, we are bound to obey any order De Bonterre chooses to give us. That's how it was in the days of chivalry, and how it ought to be now. Isn't it, Bunter?"

"Exactly!"

"Well, my only Aunt Georgina!" ejaculated Snoop. "I suppose it's a jape, or are you fellows off your rockers?"

Billy Bunter blinked at him, and blinked at Smithy and Skinner. He was taking in flattery and soft sawder, like a cat lapping milk, and he was already swelling with importance. He raised a fat hand and pointed to Snoop.

"Throw that base varlet out!" he commanded.

Inflated as he was with flattered conceit, Bunter hardly expected his two faithful admirers to carry out that order. But they did! Skinner and Smithy closed in on Snoop and collared him, and Sidney James Snoop, with a yell of infuriated protest, was hurled into the Remove passage. He landed there with a bump and a roar.

"Oh, good!" chuckled Bunter.

"Any more commands, sir?" asked Skinner, while the dazed Snoop picked himself up, and limped away, to spread the news in the Remove that Skinner and Smithy had gone suddenly mad.

"Yes," said Bunter, greatly elated. "Any more tarts?"

"Certainly! Another bag in the cupboard."

"Hand them over, then!"

"To hear is to obey!" said Skinner meekly.

"And jolly well look sharp!" added Bunter, in a dictatorial tone.

"Yes, sir," said Skinner, as if he were answering a Form master.

Bunter started on the second bag of tarts.

He was enjoying life now.

"May I make a suggestion, your worship?" inquired Vernon-Smith humbly.

Bunter glanced at him.

"Speak, varlet!" he said loftily.

Really, the Owl of the Remove seemed quite to fancy himself old Sir William de Bonterre come to life again, as it were.

"We understand," said the Bounder gravely. "We know our place. The rest of the fellows don't. Low-born ignorance, you know. Now, my idea is that if they saw you dressed in proper style, like your noble ancestor De Bonterre, it would dawn upon them how the land lies. See?"

"Eh?"

"We've got the things here," said the Bounder, unrolling a bundle that lay on the study table. "I got them from the costunnier's in Courtfield. I've had to pay for the hire; but that's nothing when it's in your service, Bunter—I mean, De Bonterre."

"Nothing at all," agreed Bunter fatuously.

"Dressed as a Cavalier, you will make the fellows really understand how it is," explained Smithy. "My belief is that you will simply have to show yourself to impress the Remove and the school generally. You see, you've got the figure of a Cavalier—"

"The fine, commanding figure," remarked Skinner.

"The lofty look and gesture!" said Smithy.

"An eye like Mars, to threaten and command!"

"You'll look just like one of those old Vandyck portraits, stepped out of its frame!"

"Just like that!"

"Handsome and stately!"

"It will make an impression!"

"Bound to!"

"Certain!"

Skinner and Smithy alternated, as they unpacked the costume from the bundle. Bunter blinked through his big spectacles at the silken doublet, the

Spanish leather boots, the lace ruffles, the plumed hat, and the sword and other appurtenances of a cavalier of Stuart times. The costume was, perhaps, a little the worse for wear; doubtless it had been lent out by Mr. Lazarus for plays and fancy-dress occasions a good many times. It was not, perhaps, in the cleanest possible state. Bunter, fortunately, was not particular upon such points.

His eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

Smithy's suggestion, amazing as it was, exactly "jumped" with the Owl's own peculiar ideas. He had not the slightest doubt that he would make a

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most impressive figure in Cavalier garb—not the slightest doubt that in such a guise he would impress an admiring school. He had claimed to be a noble Cavalier by descent, and in Cavalier garb he would look the part—he was sure of that.

Smithy and Skinner eyed him almost hungrily.

They were sure that Bunter was ass enough to be fooled to almost any extent; and they had wasted bags of tarts on this jape, if it was not a success. If Bunter fell to the bait, it was worth many bags of tarts, they considered. The mere idea of Bunter strutting in the quadrangle of Greyfriars in such a costume made it difficult for them to keep serious. Fortunately for the success of their little scheme, they succeeded.

As a matter of fact, they need not have had any doubts. Bunter swallowed the bait like a greedy gudgeon.

"Jolly good idea!" he exclaimed heartily.

"You—you deign to approve?" gasped the Bounder.

"Certainly! I mean, ay! Quite a good idea for a common, low-born fellow like you, Smithy!"

"Oh! Ah! Yes! Exactly!"

"May we have the honour of helping your lordship to dress?" asked Skinner. "I know it's an honour—we feel it! Say the word, sir!"

"Certainly!" said his lordship.

And Skinner and Smithy had the honour of helping Billy Bunter to change out of Etons into the costume of a Stuart Cavalier, and with amazing efforts they contrived to stifle their merriment until Bunter was safe out of the study and strutting down the Remove passage in his remarkable guise. Then they shrieked.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Greyfriars Cavalier!

"WHO—"

"What—"

"Great pip!"

There was a buzz of amazement in the Greyfriars quad. From all sides fellows stared at a remarkable figure that walked, or rather strutted, in full view in the spring sunshine.

For the moment Bunter was not recognised.

The plumed Cavalier hat was some sizes too large for Bunter, and it rather shaded his fat face, and hid the gleam of his spectacles. The nodding plume, too, nodded into his eyes.

Smithy and Skinner had had to take in several reefs, as it were, to make the Cavalier costume fit Bunter longitudinally. Sideways, they had had to let it out a good deal.

In Spanish leather boots, and silken doublet, and lace ruffles, and plumed hat, and dangling sword, Bunter strutted along the gravel path, quite unconscious of anything comic in the figure he cut.

His fat imagination was filled with the idea that he was impressive—that in this style he was demonstrating that he was a worthy descendant of Sir William de Bonterre. Almost by this time he believed that he really was a De Bonterre, and he had no doubt whatever that he looked the part.

Harry Wharton & Co., coming along the path, stopped dead as they saw him, and stared. From all sides fellows stared in amazement.

"Who—which—what is it?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Bunter!" gasped Wharton.

"Bunter in that rig!"

"The fat idiot! What on earth's the game?"

"Bunter!" yelled Temple of the Fourth. "Oh, my hat! This is Bunter; roll up, you fellows! No charge for admission!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a crowd round Bunter at once.

The Owl of the Remove dashed the nodding plume out of his eyes, pushed his capacious hat back, and stared at the juniors with a lofty, dignified stare.

His look was crushing and contemptuous; his very spectacles gleamed with disdain.

"Gadzooks! What means this insolence?" he exclaimed.

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"Gadzooks!" gasped Bob.
 "Oh, my hat! Bunter, you silly dummy—"
 "Bunter, you terrific fathead—"
 "Avaunt, knaves!" exclaimed Bunter.
 "Odds bodikins—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "By my troth—"
 "Oh, dear! Hold me, somebody!" gasped Peter Todd.

"Who is it—what is it?" yelled Coker of the Fifth. "Is the fat duffer potty? What does it mean?"

Bunter eyed Coker contemptuously. It really seemed that, under the influence of the Cavalier costume and his fat imagination, Bunter really believed himself to be a strutting Cavalier—a De Bonterre of Stuart days, and not a fat schoolboy at all.

"Caitiff!" he snapped.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gadzooks, this is too much! Have at you!" shouted Bunter, and he hooked out the Cavalier sword from its scabbard.

"Oh, my hat! Look out!"

"Mind your eye!"

Coker of the Fifth jumped back in a great hurry. The Cavalier sword was, fortunately, made only of tin—Mr. Lazarus did not supply the genuine article. But it looked very dangerous as Bunter flourished it round his head.

The flashing blade caught the rays of the sun as it flourished. There was a general backing away of the Greyfriars fellows.

"Mind what you're at, you fat duffer!" yelled Wharton.

"Knave!"

"You shrieking idiot—" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Varlet!"

"Cave!" yelled Ogilvy. "Here comes Quelch!"

"Who cares for Quelch?" exclaimed Bunter recklessly. "Let him dare to offer me an affront, and I will spit him like a partridge."

"Phew!"

Mr. Quelch came striding up with a brow like thunder. From his study window the Remove master had seen that amazing figure parading the quad, and for a minute or two he had not been able to believe his eyes.

Then forth from his study, like a lion from his lair, the Remove master rushed, and he was bearing down on Bunter with an expression on his face that might have scared even the original Sir William de Bonterre himself, swashing cavalier as he had been in the good old days.

"Bunter!" shrieked Mr. Quelch.

"Bah! Stand back, knave!"

"What? What?"

"Avaunt! Away! Touch me not, caitiff."

"The boy is mad—"

"Mad as a batter!" exclaimed Wingate, of the Sixth. "Bunter, you young ass, put that thing down at once."

"Sdeath—"

"What—what—what is he saying?" stammered Mr. Quelch.

"Sdeath!" repeated Bunter truculently.

"Bless my soul! Bunter—"

"Base varlet, away with you!" roared Bunter, brandishing his tin sword. "Another word, and I will cleave thee to the chine, thou scurvy knave."

Mr. Quelch did not utter another word. He felt that it was a time for actions, not for words. He swooped down on Bunter.

The Greyfriars cavalier fairly crumpled up under that swoop. Reality came back, as it were, under the grasp of his Form-master.

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There was a howl, as a finger and thumb that seemed like an iron vice closed on the fat ear of Bunter de Bonterre.

"You ridiculous boy—"

"Ow!"

"Come with me."

"Wow!"

With that iron grip on his ear, the Greyfriars Cavalier was led away. He did not resist. He did not cleave Mr. Quelch to the chine. He squirmed along by the side of the exasperated Form-master, squeaking.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, dear! Ha, ha, ha!"

A swarm of fellows followed Mr. Quelch and the Cavalier, shrieking with merriment. Vernon-Smith and Skinner were in the crowd now, yelling. Bunter blinked at them, and he understood at last that his fat leg had been pulled.

"Ow! You rotters! Ow—"

"Come!" hissed Mr. Quelch.

Bunter went. His plumed hat hung over one side of his head, and his sword trailed dismally on the ground, as he limped along with that iron grip on his fat ear.

Mr. Quelch gave the yelling crowd of Greyfriars fellows a glance of rebuke.

"Silence!" he exclaimed. "Bunter's crass folly is not a laughing matter."

"Isn't it?" murmured Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The fellows could not help it—even Mr. Quelch's grim frown could not keep back the yells of laughter. Mr. Quelch had said that it was not a laughing matter; but he was alone in his opinion; everybody else was convinced that it was!

Boars of laughter followed the Remove master, as he marched Bunter into the House, still with that iron grip on his ear. They disappeared from sight, leaving the crowd rocking with merriment.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bob Cherry, wiping his eyes. "Oh, dear, Bunter will be the death of me yet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter—Bunter the Cavalier!" sobbed Johnny Bull. "Oh, my hat! Gadzooks! Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared. In Mr. Quelch's study, by this time, the Greyfriars Cavalier also was roaring. But he was not roaring with merriment—far from it.

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Satisfaction!

"BOB!"
 "Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
 Bob Cherry grinned as he looked at Bunter. But Bunter was not grinning. His fat face was very serious.

Bunter had had quite a painful time with Mr. Quelch. Fortunately for him, the Remove master, on learning how the Owl's fat leg had been pulled, had handed out some of the punishment to the practical jokers. Bunter had been licked, and Skinner and Smithy received five hundred lines each, as well as a severe lecture. But they did not mind; they felt that the sight of the Greyfriars cavalier parading in the quad was worth it. Billy Bunter gave them deadly looks in class that afternoon; deadly thoughts were working in the fat brain of the descendant of the De Bonterres. After class, he sought Bob Cherry.

"Where's the giddy clobber?" asked Bob, grinning. "Are you sticking to Etons now, Bunter?"

"I've been spoofed," said Bunter. "That villain Skinner—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle! That beast Smithy hired that clobber—what he thinks is a practical joke, I suppose," said Bunter. "I don't see where the joke comes in, myself. I daresay Smithy won't, either, when 'old Lazarus' asks him to pay for the things. I've shoved them into the dust-bin."

"Oh, my hat! That's one on Smithy!" gasped Bob.

"But look here, Cherry—I want a friend."

"A—friend?"

"Yes. I'm going to have satisfaction."

"Satisfaction?"

"That's it! I'm not going to thrash Skinner—"

"I wouldn't!" agreed Bob. "I wouldn't thrash Smithy either. Let 'em off, old bean!"

"Well, Smith will have to shell out some quids to old Lazarus," said Bunter. "Serve him right! But it was Skinner's wheeze—Smithy only helped him. Pulling my leg, you know! I'm not going to thrash Skinner—common scrapping with fists is rather too undignified for a fellow of my descent. But I'm going to have satisfaction, so I want a friend to act for me."

Bob Cherry blinked at him.

Bunter, evidently, was still in the grip of his obsession. He was still Bunter the cavalier!

"You—you! You want a friend to act for you?" stammered Bob.

"To take my challenge to Skinner," explained Bunter.

"Your—your challenge?"

"Yes. Will you be my second?"

"Oh, dear!"

"As the challenged party, Skinner has the choice of weapons," said Bunter. "Pistols or swords, it's all the same to me."

"Well, you ferocious oyster!" gasped Bob.

"I am going to pink him—"

"Pink him!"

"Yes. I sha'n't cleave him to the chine," said Bunter magnanimously. "But—sdeath! I shall pink the dastardly knave!"

"Oh, my hat! I—I wouldn't cleave him to the—the giddy chine!" gasped Bob. "They have inquests in these days on fellows who get cleaved to the jolly old chine. The Head would have to come and bail you out."

"If it was in the good old days," said Bunter gloomily, "I would order my minions to seize the knave, and slit

his weasand. These times aren't fit for a gentleman to live in. Common people are cheeky, and they can't be cleaved down or tucked up. Look at Quelchy—caning me, you know, when properly speaking he ought to tremble at my frown. He doesn't."

"Nunno—I've noticed that he doesn't! Quite the other way about, in fact," stuttered Bob.

"Well, will you act for me?" demanded Bunter. "I am going to pink Skinner. This insult can be wiped out only in blood."

"My dear chap, I'm the very man you want," said Bob cordially, "I'll act for you—leave it to me."

"Be it so!" said Bunter.

And the Greyfriars cavalier rolled away. Bob Cherry suppressed his mirth till the cavalier was gone.

Then he went to the Rag, where he found Skinner and a good many Removites. Skinner was giving a description of the dressing-up of Bunter in his study, amid peals of laughter.

"You're for it, Skinner," said Bob. "Have you made your will?"

"My will?" said Skinner, staring at him. "What the dickens are you driving at?"

"You'd better sign the 'Daily Mail' insurance coupon, at least. I've brought you a challenge."

"Bunter?" grinned Skinner. "Well, I could knock the fat idiot into a cocked hat with one hand! I'm ready."

"As the challenged party, you have the choice of weapons—"

"Weapons!" yelled Skinner.

"Swords or pistols?" asked Bob.

"Bunter demands satisfaction. He's asked me to act as his friend in this little matter. It's to be a duel to the giddy death. Bunter is going to pink you. Name your weapons!"

Skinner gasped.

"Is he really such a potty idiot?"

"He is—he are! You're for it. Never saw such a ferocious bunny rabbit in my life," grinned Bob. "We've got to fix this up. We'll make it Saturday afternoon, and the duel can take place in the wood, where Quelchy can't butt in and spoil sport."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good egg!"

There was a roar of laughter in the Rag. But Skinner looked rather thoughtful.

"I say, a jape's all very well," he said, "but I'm not going to have Bunter prancing round me with a real sword. He might do some damage."

"My dear man, you can't refuse a chap satisfaction, after giving him a giddy insult that can only be wiped out in blood. That's how Bunter put it—blood. He's after blood!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all very well," said Skinner, rather uneasily.

"Of course it is," said Bob. "Now you know what to expect. I'll go and tell Bunter it's fixed up."

And Bob Cherry went to look for the Greyfriars cavalier.

"Saturday afternoon, in the wood, at half-past three," he said. "The weapons will be swords."

"Good!" said Bunter.

"It will be a duel to the death," went on Bob. "One man will have to remain dead on the ground!"

"Oh!"

"Skinner's out for blood, too," explained Bob. "Of course, the whole thing will have to be kept secret. If you are killed—"

"Ow!"

"We shall bury you in the wood, and say nothing. It will be supposed that you have run away from school."



"Now then—choose your weapons," said Vernon-Smith gravely. Skinner, with a flourish, picked one of the "property" swords from the case and made it whistle about his head. "This will suit me," he said. "Now then, Bunter—" Billy Bunter advanced a trembling hand towards the remaining sword. "Take up your trusty blade, Bunter!" "Sha'n't!" gasped the fat junior. "I—I—lemme pass! I—I—I'm going b-b-back!" (See Chapter 13.)

"Ugh!"

"You'd better write a few letters first, to be posted after your death—"

"Mmmmm!"

"Otherwise your titled relations may go on sending you postal-orders when you will be in kingdom come," said Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We're getting the swords and things, and I shall take a spade—"

"A—a—a spade?"

"Yes, to bury you, you know."

"Wow!"

"Or Skinner, whichever it happens to be. We shall have to be jolly secret about it, of course. Coroner's inquests are a lot of trouble; and policemen, of course, don't understand these little affairs of honour between gentlemen. Not a word, you know. Keep it dark."

Bob Cherry strolled away, leaving the Greyfriars cavalier with quite a thoughtful expression on his fat face. Bunter had demanded satisfaction; but, somehow, he did not seem quite satisfied now that he was—apparently—going to get it.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not to the Death!

SATURDAY was looked forward to quite keenly by a crowd of Remove fellows. It was to be quite a unique occasion. Duels to the death were quite unknown, so far, at Greyfriars; and, as a matter of fact, they were never likely to become better known there. But all the fellows in the secret preserved a deep gravity on the

subject. Bunter the Cavalier, and his natural desire to wipe out an insult in blood, seemed to be taken quite seriously—in fact, with a seriousness that was not wholly pleasing to Bunter himself.

Bunter had wanted his claims to be taken with seriousness; he had wanted to be acknowledged; but now that he had his wish there seemed to be a drawback somewhere. On further reflection, it had occurred to Bunter's fat brain that "satisfaction" was, in some respects, not quite satisfactory. A duel in the French style would have suited him, with both parties retiring unhurt as a matter of course. But—to judge by the seriousness of the Remove fellows—this was to be the real business.

In Study No. 7 Peter Todd was grave as a judge, and unusually kind to Bunter. On Friday he stood Bunter quite a good spread in the study, with the remark—which Bunter thought very tactless—that it might be the last one he would ever enjoy.

On Saturday morning, Bunter, after deep cogitation, spoke to Bob Cherry in break.

"I—I say, Cherry—"

"Don't worry, old man," said Bob reassuringly. "It's all right. Either you or Skinner will perish this afternoon."

"The—the fact is, I—I don't want to perish—I mean, I don't want Skinner to perish," stammered Bunter. "I—I'm willing to accept his apology."

"Nothing doing," said Bob. "Skinner's quite determined. Accommodation is out of the question."

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"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Better say nothing more, Bunter. You'll make the fellows think you're funky, which would be an awful come-down for a De Bonterre."

"Of—of course, I'm as brave as a lion," said Bunter. "You know how plucky I am, Cherry."

"I do!" assented Bob gravely. "Just!"

"But I'm sorry for Skinner."

"That's all right. Very likely Skinner will get the best of it," said Bob comfortingly. "By the way, we've taken the spade there to be ready. Would you like your name cut on a tree near the spot, or anything like that?"

"Oh dear!"

Billy Bunter was very thoughtful in third lesson. He blinked at Skinner, and Skinner gave him a ferocious look. At dinner it was noticed that Bunter ate only enough for two or three fellows. The prospect of the afternoon's tragedy had affected his appetite.

After dinner, Bunter disappeared from sight.

It was nearly three o'clock when Harry Wharton & Co., seeking him, found him in a box-room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Just time to get to the giddy trysting-place, Bunter."

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Had you forgotten the duel, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

"The—the fact is—"

"Come on! No time to lose. Skinner

and his second will be on the ground ready by this time."

"What about a doctor?" asked Nugent.

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"No need for a doctor. This is a duel to the death, you know. One of the champions pegs out on the spot!"

"Ow!"

"We don't want a doctor, we want a spade, and we've got that. Come on!"

Billy Bunter was marched away by the Famous Five. Several times his mouth opened, but he closed it again. The more he thought about the duel in Friardale Wood, and of the spade that Bob Cherry had so thoughtfully placed in readiness, the less Bunter liked it. His footsteps lagged as the chums of the Remove walked him out of the school and along the lane.

"I—I say, you fellows, this really is against the law, you know," he stammered at last.

"A fig for the law!" said Johnny Bull. "Gallant Cavaliers are above the law. Besides, it's a secret."

"The—the fact is—"

"This way."

Billy Bunter was marched into the wood. In a leafy glade, Skinner and a number of Remove fellows were already waiting. Bunter, with a lingering hope that it was all a jape, blinked round him, hoping to see grinning faces. But every face was intensely serious.

"Here he is!" said Vernon-Smith.

"You're only just in time, Bunter,"

said Skinner, with a truculent scowl. "I'm waiting for you!"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Where are the swords?" asked Wharton.

"Here they are," said Smithy.

"Choose your weapons, and measure the length, you two. No time to waste. We don't want to be interrupted."

Smithy opened a case—hired for the occasion from Mr. Lazarus of Court-field—and two gleaming blades were exposed to view. Bunter glanced at them and shuddered. Then his gaze became fixed on an object leaning against a tree close at hand. It was a spade. It stood by an oblong pit that had been dug at the foot of the tree.

"We thought we'd get it all ready," said Vernon-Smith, following Bunter's glance.

"Oh dear!"

"Now then, choose your weapons."

Skinner, with a flourish, picked one of the "property" swords from the case. He made it whistle round his head.

"This will suit me," he said.

"Now then, Bunter—"

"Go it, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter advanced a trembling hand towards the remaining sword. He blinked round with an almost haggard blink at the stern, severe faces that surrounded him. There was not really much danger in that "stage" sword if Bunter had clutched it. But he did not clutch it. Skinner's weapon was making horrid circles in the air, and Skinner's look was determined and ferocious. The fat heart of Bunter the Cavalier failed him. It was clear that the fighting blood of De Bonterre had thinned out in the course of generations, or else it had not descended to Billy Bunter at all. The fat hand jerked back.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Take up your trusty blade, Bunter."

"Sha'n't!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I— You lemme pass!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'm going back!"

"Coward!" roared Skinner. "Have at you!"

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter jumped back as Skinner made a pass at him. The tin sword did not come within a yard of Bunter; but it was enough for the Owl of the Remove—too much, in fact.

He spun round and ran for it.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Stop!" bawled Bob Cherry. "You're not killed yet!"

Bunter tore on desperately. He took one wild glance back, and saw Skinner chasing after him, brandishing a gleaming blade. Then he put on speed that would have done him credit on the cinder-path.

"Stop!" roared Johnny Bull. "We're waiting to bury you, Bunter!"

Bunter, apparently, did not want to be buried. He sped on.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The yell of laughter that rang through the trees reached the ears of the fleeing Owl.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter paused. He looked back. Skinner had pitched down the tin sword, and no longer looked ferocious, he was yelling with laughter. The whole crowd of juniors rocked with mirth.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you rotters! I knew it was a jape all along—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You saucy knaves—"

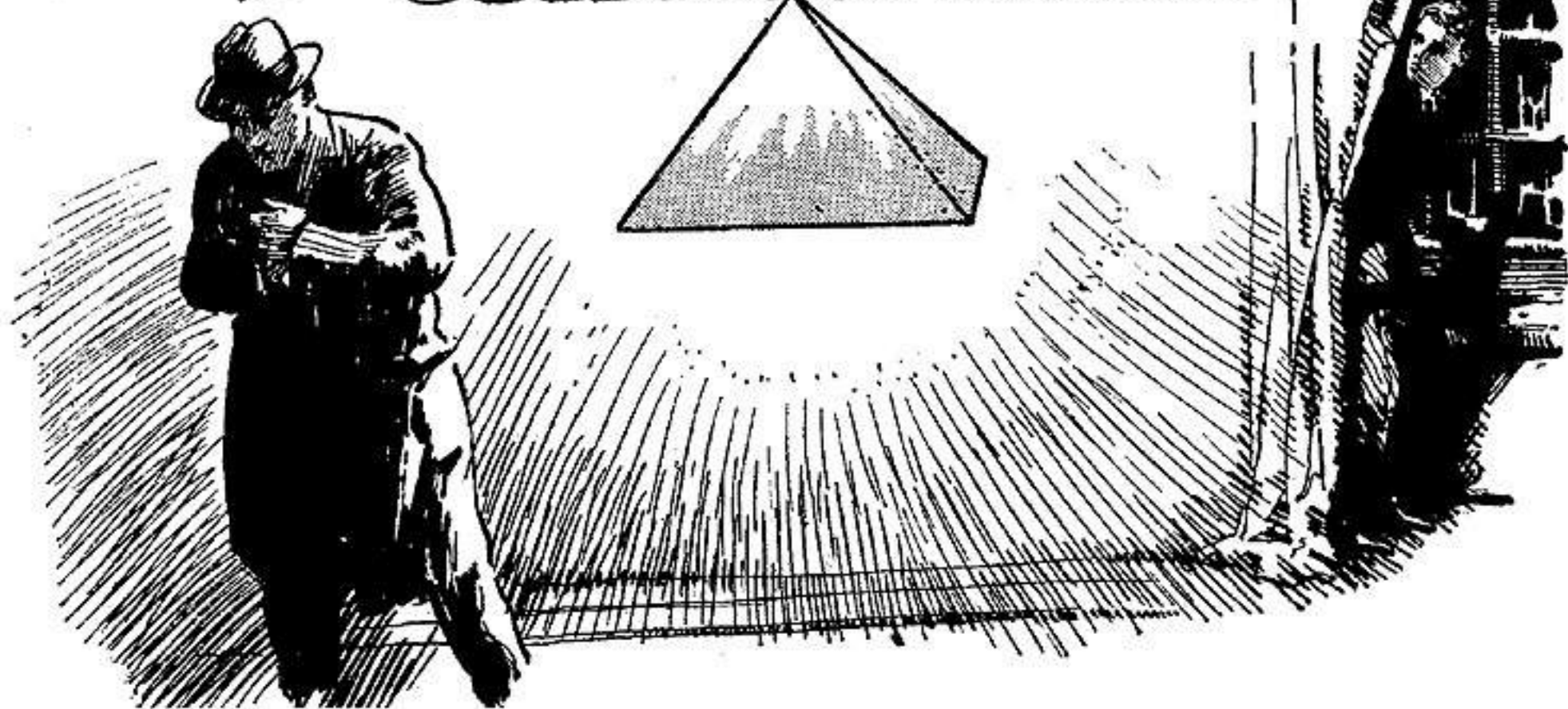
(Continued on page 27.)



"Throw that base varlet out!" commanded De Bonterre. Inflated as he was with flattered conceit, Bunter hardly expected his two faithful admirers to carry out his bidding. But they did. Skinner and the Bouncer closed in on Snoop and hurled him into the Remove passage. "Oh, good!" said Bunter. "Any more commands, sir?" asked Skinner. (See Chapter 10.)

THE SMALL THINGS THAT COUNT! A fragment of a letter is hardly a generous clue for a boy detective to work on, but a keen pair of ears, a keen pair of eyes, and a clear head will do wonders. Jack Drake finds that fragments gradually piece into a whole!

The GOLDEN PYRAMID



In a Tight Corner!

"HERE, you keep your prying eyes away, old son!" exclaimed Jack, darting forward. "That bit of paper is no concern of yours!"

But Van Dom had already picked it up, and was staring at it intently. He was evidently so lost in his study of it that he did not even hear Jack's command.

"I say, Drake, old man," he murmured, at last. "This is a funny sort of letter, isn't it?"

"Never mind what it is!" snapped Jack, angry with himself now for having left it about. "Hand it over—come on, now!"

"Really, Drake," protested the Phantom, in an injured tone, "there's not the slightest need for you to lose your temper in that vulgar fashion! I was just looking at the peculiar form of type—"

"Well, go and look at the peculiar form of your own face!" retorted Jack, snatching at the paper. "I've got something else to do besides wasting time with you, Van Dom!"

"Yes, but half a minute. I— Yow-ow-ow! Leggo, you beast!"

But Jack Drake did not "leggo." Gently, but firmly, he recovered the fragment of paper from the grasp of the Phantom.

Then he marched that highly indignant junior towards the door, and poised one foot in readiness for a well-directed kick.

"Now, are you going quietly, or shall I help you out?" he muttered ominously.

"Really, Drake!" protested the Phantom. "Your behaviour is distinctly vulgar, and only goes to prove what I have always said, namely, that you must have been very badly brought up, and— Here, lemme go! You're spoiling my clobber, you rotter! Take your dirty paws off me! I— Ow-ow-ow—varrooh!"

Bump! Jack Drake did not waste any further words, and the Phantom quickly found himself landed with what the novelists

would call a "dull, sickening thud" outside the door, which was promptly slammed in his face.

He picked himself up painfully and dusted his clothes.

"Beast!" he breathed. "Rotter!"

He was about to amble off down the corridor, but changed his mind.

Creeping back to the door, he pushed it open, then dodged quickly back as a

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective.

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

INSPECTOR PYECROFT, 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 Dude.)

Ferrers Locke is engaged to find Gordon Carr, who has mysteriously disappeared from Stormpoint 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 Devon moors apparently dead. On top of this, Mr. Rennie, the master of the Remove at Stormpoint College, is also unaccountably missing.

While Drake proceeds to Stormpoint College, Locke journeys down to Moorvale, Devon.

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 Pyecroft, he explores it.

Meantime, Drake, at Stormpoint, is following up the clue of a half-burnt letter found in Mr. Rennie's room. While he is hunting for further clues in the missing master's room, Adolphus van Dom, a Remove junior commonly known as the Phantom, appears on the scene.

Drake, aware of the Phantom's propensities for "gossiping" realises that he has left the half-burnt letter on the table. What is more, the Phantom displays an unusual interest in it.

(Now read on.)

book, flung with a well-directed aim by Jack Drake, thudded heavily against the swiftly closed door.

Nothing daunted, the Phantom waited a moment or two, and then gently pushed the door open again. Jack's back was now turned towards him, as Locke's assistant was busy examining the ashes in the firegrate.

"Of course, if you don't want to know who owns the typewriter that wrote that letter—" began the Phantom aggressively.

Jack Drake spun round as if he had been shot.

"What's that you say?" he exclaimed, coming forward.

"Don't you dare to touch me, Jack Drake!" almost shrieked the Skeleton of the Remove, backing hastily before Jack's thunderous look. "I haven't done anything to you—"

"What did you say about a typewriter, you strip of liquorice?" repeated Jack, breathing hard, and at the same time fastening an iron grip on the Phantom's collar.

"Yow-ow! Lemme go! You're hurting me, you beast!" howled Van Dom, wriggling in vain in his frantic attempts to break loose from Jack's vice-like grip.

"What—did—you—say—about—a—type—"

"I—I said I—I'd be awfully glad to let you into the secret of—of the typer that wrote that letter!" gasped the Phantom. "But let go of me first, you rotter; you're spoiling my clobber!"

With an angry grunt Jack Drake released him, and Van Dom staggered away, backing against the wall and staring at Locke's assistant with eyes that goggled with fear.

"Now, then, you walking ghost," breathed Jack, "just repeat what you said just now. Do I understand you know something about the ownership of the typewriter which was used to write this letter?"

And he picked up the half-burnt fragment and waved it in Van Dom's face.

"Well," began the Phantom, calmer now, "I won't go so far as to say—"

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"You'll go so far just now on the end of my boot," muttered Jack sulphurously, "that you'll slip off the edge of the earth, if you don't be quick! Now, come on, out with it!"

The Phantom licked his lips tentatively before speaking again. He saw at once that he had created an impression, and he reckoned a big chance had come his way which he was not going to let slip by if he could help it.

"I—I say, Drake, old cabbage," he murmured sweetly, "I—I'm feeling awfully peckish. In—in fact, I'm jolly well starving, you know! They say you're a very kind-hearted sort of chap—"

Jack Drake smothered the grin which rose to his lips, and thrust his hand into his pocket.

"How much is it worth?" he snapped, jingling some coins suggestively.

"Well, really, Drake—"

"Aw, cut out the sobstuff! Is five bob any good to you?"

The Phantom's big eyes gleamed greedily.

"Make it seven-and-six, old fag-end!" he murmured gently.

"You ghastly little blackmailer!" snorted Jack disgustedly, thrusting the money into the other's ready palm. "Now, cough it up, you rotter! What do you know about this letter?"

The Phantom counted the money with irritating slowness before deigning to make a reply, even going to the length of testing one or two of the coins between his teeth. Then he carefully stowed them away in his pocket and turned to Jack, who was regarding him with a baleful glare.

"There's a letter 'a' in that type-writing," he whispered knowingly, "which is slightly out of place. See it?"

Jack glanced quickly at the paper and then nodded.

"That's right enough," he replied, "What about it?"

"Also, the type is unusually small and clean cut," went on the Phantom, taking his time about it and thoroughly enjoying his temporary place in the sun. "Which means that the machine on which that letter was typed is one of those interchangeable-type affairs. You know, a Hammond or a Blick—"

"Possibly," agreed Jack guardedly. "But other machines have this small type. It's called 'Elite,' and is almost universal to-day."

"I don't know anything about that," answered the Phantom slowly. "I'm not a detective, you know. That's your business. Though how you ever got round old Ferrers Locke into believing you could detect a snail's trail, beats me! If I'd been Ferrers Locke— Here, keep your dirty hands off me, you rotter! You're spoiling my clobber, and— Ow—yow—yaro—o-oh!"

"Are you going to cough it up sharp, or shall I shake your bones up till they rattle?" hissed Jack, banging the Phantom's skinny frame heavily against the wall.

"If—if you'd only give a fellow a— a breathing chance," gasped the Skeleton of the Remove indignantly, "I could tell you that old man Mardyke, the master of the Fifth, has a Hammond typer exactly like that—"

Jack Drake started. Then, without another word, he swung round abruptly on his heel and hurried from the room, leaving the Phantom staring after him indignantly, and rubbing himself all over, to the accompaniment of sundry groans and muttered maledictions.

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What the Phantom had suggested had opened up a new line of thought for Jack Drake. The very mention of the name of Mr. Septimus Mardyke, the master of the Fifth, had aroused Jack's immediate interest.

Jack had not yet come into contact with the furtive, mean-minded master of the Fifth, but he had discovered from Terry that Mardyke was a shady person, and very unpopular with his pupils. The boy sleuth did not, of course, at this juncture, imagine for a moment that Mr. Mardyke could have any connection with the mystery of Stormpoint College. He felt that it was at least worth while looking into the Phantom's suggestion.

As it happened, the time was singularly ripe for such an investigation, for Mr. Mardyke was at that moment engaged with his Form. Jack glanced at his watch, and saw that the class would be breaking up within the next ten minutes.

"I'll have to put a spurt on," he muttered.

Through a couple of previous visits to Stormpoint College to see his pal, Jack had already mastered the geography of the place, and therefore had no difficulty in locating Mr. Mardyke's room.

Just to make doubly sure, he knocked at the door. Then, receiving no reply, he turned the handle and entered, closing the door softly behind him.

In a few minutes he had found what he had come for, and gave a gasp of surprise and satisfaction when he saw that the typewriter used by Mr. Mardyke was indeed one of the interchangeable-type pattern.

He glanced round quickly in search of some paper, found a blank sheet, and inserted it in the machine. A few quick taps on the keys gave him a couple of specimen lines.

"Jupiter!" he gasped, at last. "It's the very identical! Dropped letter 'a,' clogged-up letters 'o' and 'u,' and green ink! I wonder what his little game is, anyway?"

For a moment he stood studying the lines of type and comparing them thoughtfully with those on the half-burnt letter.

Then suddenly he gasped and veered round towards the door, at the same time thrusting the pieces of paper quickly into his pocket.

"My hat! Old Mardyke must have broken up class earlier than usual! He's coming along the passage!" he gasped.

In a flash he realised that it was too late to make his escape. Mr. Mardyke's heavy footsteps were drawing steadily nearer. Jack knew the master's almost shambling walk only too well; but, as if that were not enough proof, he now caught the sound of Mr. Mardyke's rasping voice.

"Just step into my study, will you?" the master was saying. "We can talk in private there, and without fear of disturbance—"

Jack glanced round him wildly. He was caught like a rat in a trap!

Mystery Talk!

THE footsteps outside the door drew steadily nearer, and at length halted, while the door-knob rattled slightly as a hand was placed upon it.

Jack Drake felt his heart thumping against his ribs. He was not afraid of Mr. Mardyke. Only a coward at heart could go in dread of the undersized, crafty-eyed master.

But he realised instinctively what it would mean for him to be found here,

in Mardyke's room, at this most critical stage in his investigations. He knew that it was of paramount importance that his connection with the case, and, above all, his suspicions of the Fifth Form master, should be kept secret from everyone.

He glanced round the room desperately.

His eyes fell on the window, but he knew in advance that it would be worse than useless to try to escape that way. There was a sheer drop of some forty feet to the ground beneath, and, besides, even if he attempted this, he would be almost certain to attract the attention of someone in the quad. And he did not want to be held up with a lot of awkward questions just now.

The door-knob turned.

Jack's heart sank to his boots.

Then, just as he was beginning to resign himself to the inevitable discovery, he caught sight of a tall, narrow cupboard, set back in an angle of the wall, and almost hidden by a large armchair, which was placed in front of it.

His next movements came as near to those of a lightning flash as any human being's actions will ever do.

He streaked across the room, moving as silently as a panther, swept the armchair out of the way, dragged open the door of the cupboard—which, he was immensely relieved to find, was unlocked—and then wriggled into the extremely narrow space available, dragging the door towards him again and holding it fast. He dared not close it altogether, or he would have been deprived of sufficient air to breathe.

He had barely accomplished this when the door of the room was pushed open and Mr. Mardyke entered with his mysterious companion.

Jack Drake was compelled to keep the cupboard door slightly ajar, and by so doing was able to catch just a glimpse of the room itself.

He saw that the man who accompanied the Fifth Form master was a big, burly fellow, with close-cropped hair and hob-nailed boots, which clumped heavily as he walked.

Mr. Mardyke paused suspiciously as he entered the room and threw up his head, his beady eyes narrowing for a moment.

"What—what was that?" he muttered nervously.

"Didn't 'ear anythink!" growled his companion, in surprise.

"I'll swear I heard a noise in this room just as we were about to enter!" persisted the Fifth Form master—"as if—as if someone were moving about in here."

Jack held his breath. Would Mardyke notice that the armchair had been moved from its customary position?

"Bosh!" returned the burly fellow, with a laugh. "There's nobody 'ere now, anyway, unless, o' course, he's got the gift of invisibility—"

And he gave a coarse laugh at his own stupid joke.

Mr. Mardyke veered round with an irritated frown.

"How many times must I remind you not to raise your voice, Hobbs?" he snapped. "Remember, I'm interviewing you with the idea, perhaps, of giving you a job as gardener here!"

"Keep your 'air on, guv'nor!" Mr. Hobbs said.

He stared insolently at his timid companion, and then flung himself into a chair.

"Always ready for a fren'ly talk!" he grunted. "There's nothink like a nice, affable talk. An' o' course, that's allus been my motter. 'Affability is the thief o' time,' says I, an' nothink would hever—"



Drake streaked across the room, swept the armchair out of the way, and wriggled into the cupboard. He had barely accomplished this when the door of the room was opened and Mr. Mardyke entered with his mysterious companion. (See page 22.)

"Silence!" Mr. Mardyke almost roared the command, and spoke as if he were addressing some unruly member of his own class rather than a visitor. "Your mutilation of the King's English is positively nauseating! I suppose nothing on this earth will ever make you learn to speak properly."

"I dunno," Mr. Hobbs scratched his head reflectively. "O' course, a bloke might pick up a few 'ints mixin' in your 'igh-class company. An' then there's them blessed Cross Word puzzles. Wunnerful eddicational discovery they are, you know! I was on'y readin' in the noosp—"

"Will you kindly cease this detestable circumlocution and apply yourself to the business in hand?" almost shrieked Mr. Mardyke. "Upon my soul, I never could understand how you were ever tolerated by a man like the Chief, an old boy of this college—"

"Maybe the Chief understands," put in Hobbs, with a knowing grin. "Maybe he didn't 'ave no choice."

Mr. Mardyke sniffed.

"Of course, I know that men of your—er—type are not above a little blackmail when it offers profit. I suppose you've found out something—er—not quite pleasant regarding our friend—hey?"

Mr. Hobbs placed his finger to his nose and winked again.

"Nothink doin', Mr. Mardyke!" he replied. "Wot I knows, I knows. And I ain't goin' to share my knowledge with nobody else, neither! But to get down to business, as you say. The Chief sent

me 'ere to see you about that little affair of the man called—er—Rendy—"

"Rennie, you mean," cut in Mardyke; "and, for Heaven's sake, keep your voice down, man! Well, what about it? I suppose the Chief knows what happened? I got into communication—"

"That's just it!" interrupted Hobbs. "The Chief does know—not 'arf! And he's no end savage about it. Says we 'as enough on our 'ands with that there young upstart Carr, without addin' to our worries."

"I had no alternative!" returned the master acidly. "Rennie got suspicious. He always did make a confounded favourite of that wretched youngster Carr. And when Carr—er—disappeared, he raised no end of a fuss. Anybody'd think it was his own son!"

"Yus; but the Chief says that don't constitoot no valid reason fer fixin' Rennie. However, here's a note. You can see for yourself what he thinks about it all."

And he pulled something from his pocket and passed it across to Mardyke.

The master was seated in a position just out of line with Jack Drake's spy-hole, but Locke's assistant could hear the ripping open of an envelope, and an oath from the lips of Mr. Mardyke.

"Of course, this is all so much nonsense!" snapped Mardyke at last. "It's a pity the Chief can't come over here and see into matters for himself. He little knows the difficulties placed in my way. Rennie made himself a nuisance. He began to find out more than was good for any of us. If I had not done

what I did do, there might have been the very dickens to pay."

"Of course, you know that young Carr's father 'as turned up?" returned Hobbs, after a pause.

Mr. Mardyke jumped.

"Has he, by thunder?" he gasped. "I heard he was on the way. Dr. Lambton, like the meddling old fool he is, disregarded all my suggestions not to worry the boy's father, and insisted on cabling to Johannesburg—"

"Meantersay you haven't 'eard what's happened?" interposed Hobbs, in a surprised tone. "Why, the noospapers is full of it this morning—"

"I'm too busy to waste time reading newspapers!" snapped Mr. Mardyke. "They're a pack of lies, anyway."

"Well, there's no lyin' about Sir Merton Carr, you c'n take it from me!" returned Hobbs. "I only wish it was all a mistake. If you'd take the trouble to glance over the late editions of this morning's papers, you'd find a bit o' noos there as'd make you sit up and take notice!"

He broke off, and pulled a much-torn newspaper from his pocket.

"'Ere y'are," he went on, unfolding the paper, and turning its pages till he came to a heavily-marked paragraph in the "Stop Press." "Man's dead body found on Dartmoor—believed to be that of Sir Merton Carr! 'Ow's that for a bit o' mental uplift, hey?"

"Gug-good heavens!" stuttered the master, snatching the newspaper from

the man's grasp and studying the paragraph intently. "So—so he's dead, is he? I see the police believe there was a fight. That means he was murdered—and—"

"'Ere, back pedal, you fool!" Hobbs' voice seemed to have a trace of fear in it now. "Don't talk so loud—"

"What on earth does it matter to you?" cut in Mardyke, with sudden curiosity. "You've got nothing to do with Sir Merton Carr, anyway."

"That's the truest word you ever spoke," returned Hobbs, with an obvious sigh of relief. "As you say, what does it matter to me? I ain't got nothink on Sir Merton—never as 'ad—"

"What the man was doing right down there, at Dartmoor, I can't guess!" went on the master, speaking more to himself than to his visitor. "He came to England to look into the disappearance of his confounded son. He should have come straight here, to Storm-point—"

His voice died away and he suddenly shot a glance at his visitor. Hobbs paled slightly as he noticed the new light which had crept into the master's eyes. Mr. Mardyke rose slowly from his seat, his eyes never leaving Hobbs' face.

"Ye gods, I've got it!" he cried at last. "Sir Merton's body was found this morning, according to what this newspaper says. That means he was attacked only last night. And the spot where he was found was very near indeed to—"

"'Ere, what are you drivin' at, anyway?" gasped Hobbs, also springing up.

"You were down there last night," went on the master, his beady eyes glittering now. "You've just come from there with this message from the Chief, and I know he's there, anyway!"

"Wot the thunder d'you mean, hang you?" cried Hobbs hoarsely, backing away a step as Mr. Mardyke approached him.

"You know very well what I mean, Mr. Ebenezer Hobbs!" hissed Mardyke, a triumphant gleam in his eyes. "Just

as you know, nobody better, who it was who attacked Sir Merton—just as you know who it was who killed him!"

"It's a lie!" almost shouted Hobbs, starting back.

"Oh no, it isn't, my friend!" muttered Mardyke. "And you know it isn't—I can tell that by your face. You've gone as white as a ghost, man! I can see it all now! Carr was a smarter man than any of us ever bargained for! He came to England, found out somehow where the Chief was and got on his track right away. Then you ran into him, nosing round in dangerous places, and—"

"By Heaven, I'll—"

A roar like that of a fear-maddened bull burst from the sagging lips of Hobbs and next instant he had rushed upon the frail, undersized figure of Mr. Mardyke, who fell back with a sudden bleat of surprise and fear.

"I'll larn ye to keep your meddlin' tongue quiet, see if I don't!" snarled the enraged man, fixing his hands round the master's scraggy neck and forcing him steadily back.

"Here, keep your filthy hands off me, you scum!" gasped the master chokingly. "Keep away, I tell you, I—help—"

His voice broke off abruptly as Hobbs pinned him against the wall and secured such a grip on his throat that the master was rapidly going black in the face.

"You just keep your tongue quiet, hang you!" hissed Hobbs, almost beside himself with rage and fear, "or I'll break every bone in your body for you! You don't know anything about this, d'yeat? I wasn't anywhere near the place where Sir Merton was found. I don't know a thing about it, you understand? I'm as innocent as—as an unborn babe, d'y'get me? An' if ever you as much as breathe anythink else but that to a livin' soul, your number's up!"

With a snort of disgust he flung the Fifth Form master from him, causing Mr. Mardyke to slide with a choking gasp to the floor, where he lay still, breathing heavily.

Then, with a final glance and a muttered curse, Hobbs turned on his heel and lumbered heavily from the room, closing the door behind him.

Hector Strood Meets His Match!

JACK DRAKE watched and listened to the amazing scene with bated breath.

Though the conversation between Mardyke and his ruffianly visitor had been largely mysterious, Jack realised fully now that his suspicions regarding Mr. Mardyke's connection with the disappearance of Mr. Rennie had not been misplaced. On the contrary, they had been startlingly confirmed, and the dialogue between Mardyke and Hobbs conclusively proved that, not only did the master know what had become of Mr. Rennie, but had actually engineered that unfortunate gentleman's disappearance.

In other words, Mr. Rennie had been kidnapped, or otherwise disposed of, by Mr. Mardyke himself!

Jack Drake positively thrilled at the prospect of conveying this most important information to his beloved "guy'nor," Ferrers Locke.

But meantime, Mr. Mardyke was left alone in the room and, though Jack could not see him, he could hear the master's laboured, almost sobbing breath, as he sprawled, for the moment, helplessly on the floor.

Jack waited in tense expectation, wondering if Mardyke had been very seriously hurt. Locke's assistant knew that he had been the unwilling witness of a struggle which might easily have ended in a tragedy, had not the man Hobbs remembered himself just in time. The Fifth Form master was as putty in that great, hulking ruffian's hands.

After a few moments, Jack heard sounds of Mr. Mardyke dragging himself to his feet, accompanied by much groaning and a string of distinctly unscholarly language.

For a moment, the master stood swaying in the centre of the room, his hand tenderly caressing his throat. Then he moved across to a mirror and inspected himself minutely, adjusting his collar and tie and generally endeavouring to make himself look more presentable.

"Thank Heaven that scoundrel left no noticeable marks!" muttered Mr. Mardyke, as he surveyed his injured neck in the glass. "I should have had a dickens of a job explaining it away to the other masters. But I'll get even with the brute yet—I'll have him crawling at my feet, whining for mercy, before I've done with him, the ruffian!"

With which comforting reflection Mr. Mardyke turned and made his way from the room, banging the door behind him.

Jack Drake waited until the sound of the master's footsteps had died away down the corridor.

Then he pushed open the cupboard door and clambered out, taking a deep breath as he did so.

"Gee, I'm glad to get free of that blessed upright coffin!" he gasped. "Another ten minutes cooped up in there and I'd have been a subject for an inquest!"

He stood in the centre of the room uncertainly for a moment, wondering what he should do next. His first impulse was to take advantage of the fact that he was once again alone, and turn the place inside out in the hope of finding some clues.

But he decided that it would be wiser to get clear of the place, for the present at any rate. Mr. Mardyke might return at any moment, and Jack had

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Strood came thundering on again, to meet a straight left, beautifully delivered, landing full on his mouth and sending his bullet-head back with a nasty jerk. "Pile it on, Drake!" shrieked the Phantom. "Send him to sleep! I'll lead the applause!" (See page 26.)

no desire to come into conflict with the Fifth Form master at this critical juncture.

He crept out of the room, closing the door noiselessly behind him, and hastened off down the corridor.

Dr. Lampton had very thoughtfully provided him with a private room for his own use; in addition to his being allowed, at Val Terry's express request, to share his study.

Jack felt he wanted to be alone for the present and decided he would go to the room set aside for him and think things out.

He was pleased to find, when he reached it, that a welcome fire blazed in the grate and a bundle of the latest newspapers lay ready to hand. Dr. Lampton was a severe man, but he was also possessed of rare understanding and knew Jack's passion for newspapers.

But Jack did not do more than glance at them now, for his mind was too crowded with other matters.

He sat down in the armchair before the fire and gave himself up to thinking out what next should be done.

There were three clear courses open to him, and the difficulty was to decide which was the wisest.

Should he communicate direct with Ferrers Locke, informing the detective in detail of what had happened, and await his instructions?

Jack gravely considered this course, until he realised that to do this would mean the loss of at least forty-eight hours ere Locke's reply could reasonably be expected to arrive at Stormpoint.

"That would be a wicked waste of time!" he muttered at last, shaking his head, "and time is tremendously important with us just now."

He decided against this method, and turned to the second idea which had occurred to him, which, briefly, was that he should go at once to Dr. Lampton, lay all the facts before him, and leave the Head to send for Mr. Mardyke, and compel him to tell all he knew. Certainly this course would make for rapid results and would bring things to a head far more quickly than any other.

But here again wiser counsels prevailed. There was, Jack realised, as much against as for this line of action.

After all, Jack had nothing beyond his bare word to substantiate his statements. Mr. Mardyke would only have to pretend to be highly astonished and indignant, and to deny, categorically, every word Jack Drake might say against him, and Jack could do nothing against that.

Besides, such an action would only put the Fifth Form master wise regarding Jack's suspicions, and the man would then take elaborate steps to baffle Locke's assistant at every turn.

Also, Mr. Mardyke's angry denials, and Jack's inability to bring proof of what, after all, must inevitably appear to Dr. Lampton to be a most wildly sensational statement, might conceivably turn the balance against Jack and cause Dr. Lampton to be angry over what he might reasonably term an unjustifiable attack on the honour of one of his masters.

No; it was only too plain that this course would not work.

There remained but one other line of procedure, and that was to await developments, to keep a studious watch on Mr. Mardyke, and, if necessary, shadow him wherever he went. Sooner or later he would be bound to give himself away, even if only by the slightest hint, and

then the way would be clear for Jack to telegraph to Locke.

The more he thought about this last plan the more Jack preferred it above the other two. It might mean a certain amount of delay, but Jack failed to see how that was to be avoided in the circumstances. At any rate, it was quite evident to him that nothing but failure was to be expected from being too precipitate, and Jack felt positive in his own mind that if Locke himself were here at Stormpoint he would do precisely the same thing.

"Yes; I guess that's the best way—to wait and watch!" muttered Jack at last. "And, meantime, I think I'll take a little stroll and get a bit of fresh air. I can't seem to get the stifling feeling of that blessed cupboard out of my lungs yet!"

He rose from his seat and left the room, making his way down to the big stretch of ground on the west side of the school known as Big Quad.

Thanks to the little scene in Mr. Mardyke's room, Jack had been prevented from turning up in Hall for the midday meal, which was now over. But he did not mind this so much, for he had had a good breakfast in London that morning, and had followed this up with a tasty snack on the train, while en route to Stormpoint.

He strolled across Big Quad towards the Cloisters, which marked that part of the college which was in disuse. Stormpoint had once been an old monastery, and only the more modern side of it was now in use as a school, the rest having been left in a state of crumbling, picturesque ruin.

As he was approaching the Cloisters THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 897.

Jack suddenly halted, and his brows drew together in a frown.

From a spot a few yards beyond one of the crumbling walls, had come the sound of voices—voices with which he was only too familiar.

In the ordinary way he would have taken no notice of this, but he had suddenly caught the mention of his own name, and that by a Fifth-Former with whom he was scarcely on the best of terms.

"That's Hector Strood, or I'm dreaming!" he muttered. "Busy bullying one of the fags, as usual, I suppose!"

The voice he had heard was raised in tones of anger. Evidently Strood was at his old game of frightening the life out of one of the juniors.

Jack had had previous encounters with Hector Strood, the bullying Fifth-Former, and he knew well enough that Strood could no more speak civilly to a junior than a leopard could change its spots.

He caught up his breath as the next words came to his ears.

"Don't you try to lie to me, you miserable bag of bones!" It was Strood right enough, and his voice was thick with anger. "I tell you I saw you talking to that meddling schoolboy detective, that fellow, Jack Drake—"

"It's not true, Strood!" came the response, in a high-pitched key. "I—I mean, even if I was speaking to Drake, what has that got to do with you? I was only— Here, keep your filthy hands off me, you beast! You're spoiling my clobber, and— Ow! Yow! Yaroop!"

"Gee-whiz!" gasped Jack. "That's the Phantom in trouble again!"

He started forward at a run now, for he knew that unless he interfered something drastic would happen.

Aside from the fact that Adolphus van Dom, the Skeleton of the Remove, stood a poor enough chance at the hands of Strood, there was the additional danger that Strood would force the Phantom to talk—an easy enough matter, as Jack Drake very well knew.

The Phantom was never so happy as when he was the centre of attention, and though he meant no harm, his methods of creating a stir were not always strictly in accordance with good taste.

Jack Drake streaked across Big Quad and dashed round the Cloisters till he came to an open, moss-covered piece of ground surrounded by the crumbling walls of the ruined wing.

Here he caught sight of the Phantom, wriggling and bleating in the fierce grip of a heavily built, red-haired fellow, who was at this moment engaged in his favourite pastime of twisting the hapless junior's arm.

"Let me go, you beast!" howled the Phantom, between his gasps of pain. "I—I'll tell you all about it, honest, I will! But let me go first. You're spoiling my clobber! I swear I'll tell you everything, you rotter! I'll— Ow! Yowp! Yaro-o-oh!"

His excited words broke off in a howl of genuine anguish as Strood twisted his thin, bony arm steadily back, causing the tears to rush to the Phantom's eyes and his teeth to clench together in an ecstasy of pain.

"Here, let him alone, you rotten bully!" shouted Jack Drake, as he pounded across the green towards the struggling two.

At the sound of Jack's voice Hector Strood swung round, dropping the Phantom's arm. The Fifth-Former's face was livid with rage as he scowled at the newcomer.

"Oh, so you're on the spot again, spying, as usual, are you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes junior!" he sneered.

Jack's eyes blazed.

"I was not spying, and you jolly well know it, you rotten coward!" he flashed back.

"It's no business of yours what I choose to do here!" snarled Strood, advancing in a threatening manner. "You're nobody at Stormpoint, only a darned, meddlesome outsider!"

He turned on his heel, and was about to advance upon the hapless junior again, when he felt a vice-like grip on his arm, and gasped as he was literally flung round face to face with Jack Drake.

"Say that again, Hector Strood!" breathed Jack. "Go on, say it again!" Strood wrenched himself free.

"Keep your interfering paws off me, Drake!" he snapped. "I'm not here to be spied on, whoever else may be! Confine your sneaking, prying methods to some of the others—the Phantom, for

instance. Prowl round his study and see what you can pinch under the pretence of picking up clues! Here, keep your distance, you rotten little prig, I— Ow-yow!"

He broke off with a wild yell as Jack Drake, his temper getting the better of him, suddenly flung up his hand and brought it against Strood's face with a resounding slap.

"Now perhaps you'll fight!" panted Jack, beginning to wrestle out of his coat.

"He, he, he!" cackled the Phantom, dancing round them with glee. "Sock it into him, Jack Drake! Give him beans! I'll be your second!"

He fell back with a gasp, as Hector Strood flung out one arm and sent the bony junior spinning.

Then, without troubling to take off his jacket, the Fifth-Former bore down upon Jack Drake, his face working with rage, his fists waving in the air like an over-worked windmill.

Jack sprang lightly to one side, and Strood went stumbling past him. Then, with a growl, he pulled himself up, forced himself to be more controlled, and forthwith took up an attitude which Jack knew spelt the real thing.

Hector Strood was no mean boxer. In fact, he might have developed into something sensational were it not for his ungovernable temper, which had, on countless previous occasions, caused him to be howled out of the ring in gym.

He fell now into his old pose—a queer half crouch, with his long left extended and his right arm across his chest, his eyes glowering in an expression of sullen but dangerous ferocity and hatred.

There was something almost suggestive of the gorilla in the bully's attitude as he now squatted low, and then shuffled forward, with a curious, flat-footed glide.

Jack Drake dropped into his guard just in time. But even then he was unable to prevent the coming of that great, slashing left drive. It sent him spinning away, and ere he could properly recover his balance Strood was on him again, his long, lithe arm darting in and out through Jack's guard, and pummelling him till the whole world seemed to spin round.

For a moment it seemed a certainty that Drake would be knocked out.

And then the tables were suddenly and dramatically turned.

With a sudden dexterous twist Jack slipped under his opponent's long arm and flashed away.

Then, almost before Strood could realise it, Jack had streaked back, thrust aside the other's guard, and landed three sharp, vicious jabs in quick succession on his opponent's broad chest and muscles.

Pile-driving punches they were, and they sent Strood staggering back with a gasp of dismayed surprise.

But he came thundering on again, to meet with a straight left, beautifully delivered, landing full on his mouth, and sending his bullet head back with a nasty jerk.

He spun round like a top, staggered away, and only by the utmost effort succeeded in recovering his balance. Then, with a half-strangled cry of rage, he rushed forward again.

"Pile it on, Drake!" screamed the Phantom. "Send him to sleep. I'll lead the applause!"

Hard atop of the Phantom's excited shouts there came a concerted roar of

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approval, and Jack gasped as he realised what he had not noticed before.

A crowd of fellows, mostly juniors, had collected, apparently from nowhere, and had formed themselves into a ring round the contestants. Jack caught a fragmentary glimpse of Val Terry and Howard Rayne, who were grinning delightedly, and now began to join in the shouting.

"Give him socks!"

"Push his ugly dial in!"

"Good old Fighting Drake!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Jack Drake had no time to listen to them.

Hector Strood was rushing at him again, his face bruised and bleeding, his eyes glittering with ungovernable rage. That last blow from Jack had snatched away the last shred of self-control, and Strood had become "the savage" again, as he had done so often before. It meant the ruination of all his hopes, and every one of the excited onlookers sensed the meaning of it in a flash.

"He's savaging again!"

"Strood's lost his head!"

"Now's your chance, Drake!"

A concerted howl went up from the crowd, but Jack was too busy to notice it.

Strood had closed in on him again, his long arms moving like pistons, and next instant the two were swaying together in a fierce exchange.

To those not in the know, it almost seemed as if Strood was steadily blotting out his opponent. But such was very far from being the case.

Strood was fighting like a human hurricane, but two-thirds of his efforts were wasted.

In his blind rage he missed his opportunities, and was too slow—seconds late in his delivery.

Again and again the lithe, muscular arms of Jack Drake smothered and blocked each wild, fury-driven punch, allowing the bully's fists to swing to right and left, then returning swiftly with a batter of blows, to dodge back to distance again.

It was a real old-fashioned fight with bare fists—a steady, merciless grueling, with no quarter asked or given.

And at last it came to its inevitable end.

Strood, by a temporary change of fortune, had worked his opponent into a corner, and was trying to smother him; but even as the long arms reached out to make their clinch, Drake evaded the effort, slipping again under the outstretched arms.

Then his fist thudded on the broad side of the bully, causing him to stagger sideways with a gasp.

Strood came on again; but this time Jack was just too swift for him, his fist smashing into the bully's mouth, checking his headlong rush.

Swift as lightning, Drake followed this up with a right hook, and Strood collapsed with a heavy crash to the ground and lay still.

Warning the Phantom!

"KNOCKED out!"

"Cheers for Drake!"

"Thus are the mighty fallen!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack smiled faintly as the crowd, realising that the fight was at an end, suddenly surged round him.

Hector Strood lay still for some moments, breathing heavily. But at length he stirred, and Jack stopped forward to help him up.

"Get out of my way, confound you!"

The Fifth-Former angrily thrust aside Jack's extended hand and scrambled to

his feet, swaying giddily for a moment. Then he glowered round upon the others malevolently.

"Lot of grinning jackasses!" he hooted. "Suppose you think it's a blessed circus?"

"With you as the performing elephant?" asked Val Terry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Strood glared, opened his mouth, but, thinking better of it, turned on his heel and slouched away in sullen silence. He had been badly battered, and only his amazing strength and stamina saved him from a day in sanny.

Jack Drake's fists were not made to be played with, as Strood had learned to his cost.

"What was all the trouble about?" asked Howard Rayne, coming forward.

"Oh, only Strood was bullying the Phantom!" answered Jack, who was disinclined to talk.

Val Terry moved forward at a glance from Jack, and touched Rayne on the arm.

"Let's barge off, old fruit!" he muttered. "Drake's down here on biz, and I expect he'd rather be left alone for a bit."

Howard Rayne nodded understandingly, and followed in the wake of his leader. The rest of the juniors, following the Remove captain's example, melted away, the Phantom being last of all to go.

But just as he was moving off he gave a smothered squeal as he felt a sudden arresting grip on his bony arm.

"Keep your hands off me! You're

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for rounding off the following verse:

"I guess I'd knock spots off you, Fry!"
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"You're a swanking galoot,
Who could do with a boot——"

with:

"But the 'Fish,' like the 'worm,'
didn't try."

THE TWELVE CONSOLATION PRIZES OF POCKET-KNIVES for the next best have been awarded to the following:

Isabel Austin, 17, Pitcroft Road, North End, Portsmouth.

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Basil Culshaw, 433, Smithdown Road, Liverpool.

William E. Day, 73, High Street, Greenhithe, Kent.

William C. Edbrooke, 22, Oddfellows Row, Bridgend, Glam.

G. Laurence, 113, Petherton Road, Highbury, London, N. 5.

Geo. B. Shaw, 94, Addison Way, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London.

Arthur Steele, 14, Penarth Road, Cardiff.

Bernard Wallis, 14, Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol.

Wm. Wright, 30, Forbes Street, West Gorton Manchester.

spoiling my clobber——" he began; and then subsided into silence as he caught a stern look from Jack Drake, who had stopped him.

"A word with you, my pippin!" muttered Jack, drawing the skeleton of the Remove round a bend in the ruined wall.

"Cer-certainly; of--of course, Drake, old fruit!" stammered the Phantom, with suspicious friendliness. "But--but first leave go of my arm. You're hurting me and spoiling my clobber."

"Hang your clobber!" snapped Jack. "Confound your clobber!"

"Well, I must say——" protested the Phantom.

"That's just what you must not do!" returned Jack, with a glare.

"Must not what?" inquired Adolphus van Dom in an injured, mystified tone. "Pon my soul, Drake, you are the limit, always talking in riddles!"

"That's an improvement on the way you talk, anyway," rejoined Jack.

"When you talk, everything you say is as plain as the nose on your face. That's what I want to warn you about."

"But what I want to know——"

"You know a jolly sight too much already!" snapped Drake impatiently.

"Now, look here, van Dom, if ever I catch you as much as whispering a solitary syllable to a living soul about what you found in Mr. Rennie's study I'll skin you!"

(Now look out for next week's ripping instalment of this powerful detective serial, chums. Young Jack Drake scores where cleverer and older heads fail.)

BUNTER, THE CAVALIER!

(Continued from page 20.)

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. And the wood echoed with merriment as Billy Bunter de Bonterre, with a face like unto a freshly boiled beetroot, limped away.

There was a letter in the rack for Bunter when he reached Greyfriars. It was addressed in Mr. Bunter's hand, and the Owl of the Remove jerked it open, in the faint hope of discovering a postal-order inside.

There was no postal-order, but there was a paragraph that made Bunter blink. It ran:

"By the way, it will be better to say nothing to anyone about the matter I mentioned in my last letter. The inquiry agent I told you about has been suddenly arrested on a charge of fraud, and it transpires that he has no connection whatever with the Heralds' Office. I have learned, too, that Sir William de Bonterre died childless, which makes it very improbable that we are descended from him. I hope you have not made any reference to the matter."

Possibly the uproarious merriment of the Remove fellows over the deadly duel might have had the effect of curing Bunter. This unexpected news gave his cure the finishing touch, and put the lid on, so to speak.

Billy Bunter would have been glad to forget the whole thing. But he was not allowed to do so in a hurry. He was more than fed-up with the subject by the time the Remove fellows ceased chortling over Bunter the Cavalier.

(There will be another magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co. next week, boys, entitled "The Schoolboy Sculptor," featuring Dick Russell of the Greyfriars Remove. Mind you read it!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 897.

NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME!

"THE SCHOOLBOY SCULPTOR!"

By Frank Richards.

NEXT Monday's ripping complete story of the Greyfriars chums centres round Dick Russell, one of the quiet yet tremendously popular members of the Remove.

Harry Wharton, who has always held Russell in high esteem, is dismayed to find him cutting games practice, is more dismayed and anxious than ever when Russell, night after night, leaves the dormitory after lights out. Thinking that Russell is falling into bad ways, and desirous of preventing a decent fellow from treading the downward path—which, from personal experience, Wharton knows is a thorny one—the captain of the Remove chips in with kindly intent. He is relieved to find, however, that he has been mistaken, for Russell, a clean, healthy-minded junior, is no more playing the giddy goat than Wharton is himself. What at first Wharton thinks to be the initial stages of a "goer," turns out to be nothing

more than an unusual interest in sculpture, which difficult art, Russell has always been interested in. Day and night Russell is working on a model, feverishly anxious to finish it in time for exhibition at a "show" in Court-field.

DOLLARS!

When this part of the secret comes to light, several juniors of the Skinner & Co. kidney take a hand. Amongst them is Fisher T. Fish, who, as ever, keen to make a few dollars, buys a model bust in the village at a knock-out price, and sells it to Russell at about two hundred per cent profit. Bunter, too, mistakes a certain packing-case that arrives at Greyfriars for Russell for a "whopping" hamper. What he discovers instead of tuck I'm leaving to Mr. Richards to describe, likewise the secret of the bust that Fishy sells to Russell. There is unusual strength in the theme of this coming story, boys—a story that will be remembered for many a long day to come as "one of the best." Don't miss it!

"THE GOLDEN PYRAMID!"

Look out for next Monday's continuation of this powerful detective story, boys. Jack Drake is well to the fore.

This clever assistant of Ferrers Locke comes across Gordon Carr, who has been missing for weeks past. How he achieves this feat, and the thrilling adventures that follow it, make excellent reading.

"LONDON!"

Harry Wharton & Co. have decided to feature our famous capital in their next supplement. Gosling's periodical visits to the metropolis are described by the great William himself. Billy Bunter, Alonzo Todd, etc., also air their views in "What I Think of London." A great supplement this, chums! Mind you read it!

British Model Launches.

Those of my readers who are interested in model Boats will be particularly pleased with those now being produced by Hobbies Ltd. They are a splendid production, well made and finished, and very reasonable in price. The makers have issued a wallet containing illustrations and particulars of three of their latest models, and application for it should be made to:

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