

"FROM INDIA TO GREYFRIARS!" This week's grand story of the Greyfriars chums - inside.

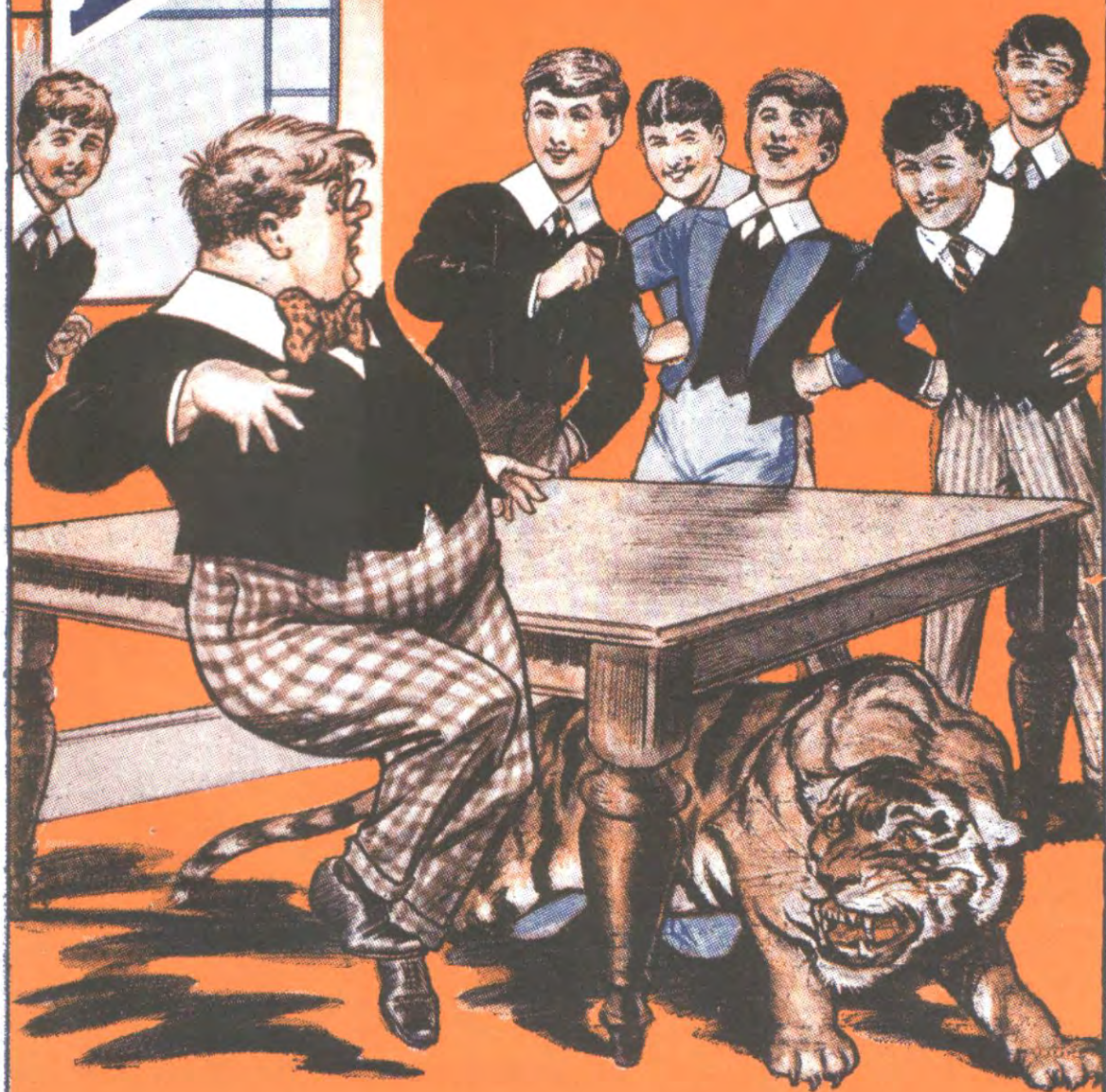
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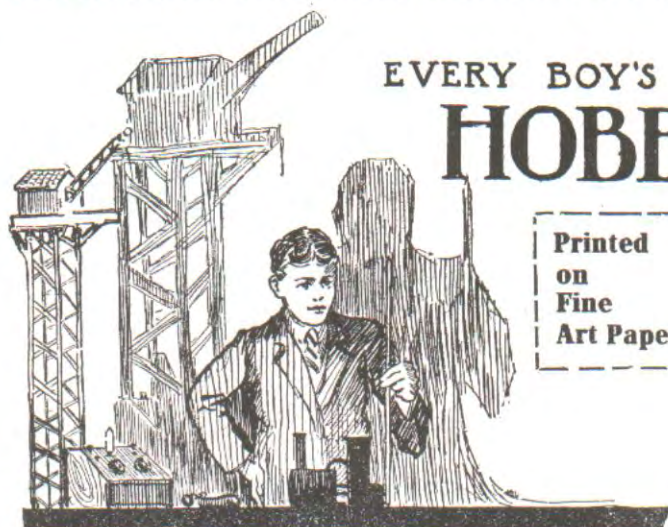
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EVERY MONDAY.



HOW BILLY BUNTER FACED THE "TIGER"!

(An amusing scene in this week's rousing yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)



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Now that the vile plotting of Baji Rao has been nipped in the bud it but remains for Hurree Singh to bring his rascally kinsman to justice. When that task is completed Hurree Singh and his Greyfriars chums are at liberty to sail for England—and Greyfriars!

—THEN BLIGHTY!

From India to Greyfriars!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Greyfriars Chums, dealing with their final adventures in India. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter, Too!

"I'M coming!"

Billy Bunter made that announcement in determined tones. He backed it up with a severe frown.

Billy Bunter was in earnest. Both his tone and his look announced that he was in deep earnest, and that he intended to take no denial.

Harry Wharton & Co. smiled.

The chums of the Remove had come cheerily out of the palace at Bhanipur into the sunny courtyard, where the sayces were holding their horses ready for them.

Bunter followed on.

There was bustle and movement in the palace court. Horsemen were mounting there, with a jingle of bridles and accoutrements. Evidently some expedition was toward—and it was not Bunter's intention to be left out of that expedition.

"I'm coming!" he repeated. "You needn't grin at me, Wharton—"

"Was I grinning?" asked Harry Wharton mildly.

"Yes, like a Cheshire cheese—I mean a Cheshire cat! I'm jolly well coming—see? Just like you fellows to leave a fellow behind!"

"You see—" began Bob Cherry, with a cheery grin.

Bunter held up a fat hand.

"You needn't talk to me, Cherry! I'm coming!"

"But you don't know—" began Johnny Bull.

"I know I'm coming!" said Bunter, with emphasis. "This isn't the first time you've tried to leave me out of things! Do you call it pally?"

"But—" said Frank Nugent.

"You can shut up, Nugent! I don't want any jaw," said Bunter.

"The point is, I'm coming! I was left behind last time there was a picnic. I'm not going to be left behind again! See?"

The chums of the Remove chuckled.

Bunter had seen the preparations for an expedition that morning; he knew that provisions had been packed. To

Bunter's fat mind, that represented a picnic—merely that and nothing more. And when Harry Wharton & Co. obviously were going to start without him, Bunter was indignant. Bunter was not taking any, so to speak. Bunter was far too important a personage to be treated in such an offhand way.

"You can cackle!" said Bunter disdainfully. "But I can jolly well tell you you're not treating me here the same as you do at Greyfriars! Who are you, anyway? Nobody! Did you save Hurree Singh when he was kidnapped by that blinking rajah? No—I did! Did you have a great reception in your honour, and valuable jewels presented to you in recognition of your services? No—I did! I can jolly well tell you that you fellows are precious small beer here—precious small!"

Bunter delivered this oration with crushing disdain gleaming from his big spectacles.

But the chums of the Remove did not appear to be crushed. They seemed rather to be entertained.

"Go it, Bunter!" said Bob Cherry encouragingly.

"Bunter is the goods, and we are merely 'also rans'!" remarked Nugent.

"Is that it, fatty?"

"That's it exactly, Nugent! You can cackle as much as you like, but that is precisely how the matter stands," said Bunter.

"I came out to India to protect Luky. I've protected him. He's grateful—and I admit it. Not so grateful as he ought to be, perhaps—still, he has played up pretty well. As for you fellows, you don't come into the picture at all. Who are you? Nobodies!"

And Billy Bunter turned up his fat little nose—not a difficult task, as Nature had already started it in that direction.

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned serenely.

Bunter in a state of swanking self-satisfaction was entertaining; and there was no doubt that Bunter was satisfied with himself these days. Since he had been instrumental in rescuing Hurree

Jamset Ram Singh from the clutches

of the nabob's rival, Baji Rao, Bunter had swelled and swelled with importance, till he was in an extremely inflated state.

The schoolboy nabob had testified his gratitude substantially. Bunter had been presented with priceless jewels from the palace treasury—a form of gratitude that Bunter could understand and appreciate. More than that, the nabob had treated him with great distinction; the nabob's uncle, the Jam Bahadur, had honoured him; the nabob's old tutor, Mook Mookerjee, had blessed him, with tears in his eyes, for saving Hurree Singh from his enemies; the guards and officials in the palace, from the gorgeous wazir to the humblest naukhar, salaamed to him with deepest respect when they encountered him, and did not smile till his fat back was turned.

All of which had gone to Bunter's head like wine.

He was a great man in these days—greatest of all in his own eyes.

It was quite different from his old position in the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars, where his insignificance and unimportance had been abysmal.

At Greyfriars he was nobody in particular; and the other fellows were great men in the Remove.

Here in Bhanipur he was a great man, and the other fellows were nobodies—in Bunter's eyes, at least.

Bunter wanted them to understand that clearly; but it did not seem to be quite clear to them, somehow.

Somehow, they still seemed to regard Billy Bunter as a fat and fatuous ass, of no particular consequence.

His lofty airs and graces, indeed, they persisted in looking upon as actually comic.

Which was decidedly irritating to Bunter.

"Nobodies!" he repeated. "Nobodies at all! Not even 'also rans'! So just get it into your heads that I don't want any of your cheek! See?"

"Keep it up!" said Bob cheerily.

"You don't know how funny you are,"

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Bunter! You really ought to be on the lions or in a circus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a stir and bustle in the courtyard; Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was coming out to his horse. Dusky guards and servitors salaamed on all sides as the schoolboy nabob made his appearance. Colonel Wharton came out to his horse, which was held by Pandi Din, the khitmutghar. Harry Wharton & Co. made a movement towards their waiting steeds.

"Where's my horse?" demanded Bunter warmly.

"You're not coming, fathead!"

"I've told you I'm coming!" bawled Bunter. "If you fellows aren't a bit more civil, I'll ask Inky to leave you behind. Inky will do anything I ask him. You fellows have got to learn your place!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"James!" roared Bunter.

Kasi Jee, the naukhar, came up, salaaming. He was Bunter's special attendant, and he treated Bunter with the humility and respect that Bunter considered his due. Every day regularly Bunter kicked him—sometimes twice a day. That was what Bunter considered the best method of keeping a "nigger" in order. The naukhar, no doubt, was accustomed to kicks; but it was probable that Bunter overdid it a little.

But Kasi Jee—doubtless for good reasons of his own—took it all with smiling patience and Oriental submission. Especially since Bunter had been honoured by the nabob, and decorated with priceless jewels, had Kasi Jee displayed a fervent attachment to the fat junior. Indeed, Bunter spoke of him complacently as his "faithful nigger." "Bring my horse!" ordered Bunter. "Han, sahib."

"And your own. I shall want you to wait on me."

"Kasi Jee is the sahib's slave!" murmured the naukhar.

"Get a move on!"

"Look here, Bunter—" began Harry Wharton.

"Cheese it!" said Bunter scornfully. "Can't you understand that we're not in the Remove passage at Greyfriars now! You can swank as much as you like there. Here, you're nobody—less than nobody! Shut up!"

"You silly ass!" roared the captain of the Remove. "I tell you you are not coming! This isn't a picnic or an excursion. We're going into the jungle."

"Rats!"

"We're going into danger!"

"Bosh!"

"We're going after Baji Rao—"

"Can it!" said Bunter.

"Take him by the ears, and lead him in," suggested Johnny Bull.

"Good!"

Billy Bunter backed away promptly. The juniors were far from Greyfriars school now, but some of the manners and customs of the Remove passage survived in the palace of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh at Bhanipur.

Bunter cut across to the schoolboy nabob, who was mounting a magnificent horse. The guards made way for him.

"Inky!" shouted Bunter.

"My esteemed Bunter—" said Hurree Singh, glancing down at the Owl of the Remove.

"I'm coming, old chap!" said Bunter. "Those rotters want to leave me behind, same as they did before. I'm sticking to you, old pal!"

"But—" said Hurree Singh.

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"Look here, Inky! What do you mean?" demanded Bunter hotly. "You're not going to back up those rotters against me, I suppose, after all I've done for you?"

"If the esteemed Bunter desires to come, the excellent and ludicrous Bunter is more than welcome," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"That settles it."

Kasi Jee brought Bunter's horse. The fat junior bestowed a triumphant blink on Harry Wharton & Co., but they did not heed him further. It was clear that Bunter did not understand the nature of the expedition in which he was determined to take part; but as he did not choose to listen to reason the chums of the Remove gave him his head, as it were. With the assistance of Kasi Jee Bunter climbed on his horse, and sat in the saddle with the ease and grace of a sack of coke. The naukhar mounted to follow his master.

A trumpet blared.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and his chums rode out of the palace gates, with a hundred troopers. From a window the Jam Bahadur waved a brown hand to his nephew. The troop rode out at the city gates, and followed a road through the paddy-fields, towards the jungles and forests that clothed the slopes of the hills to the north, beyond which, range on range, rose the mighty mass of the Himalayas, crowned with eternal snow.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter is Fed Up!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Tired?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Yes!" growled Bunter.

"Look here! It's jolly well time we stopped for a rest! Nobody travels at noon in India. What the thump is Inky thinking of? Besides, I'm hungry."

Bob chuckled.

All through the morning the party had ridden on without a halt. The paddy-fields were left behind, and the troop rode on by a trampled path through the jungle. It was noon now, and the sun sailed high in a cloudless sky, pouring down blazing heat on hill and plain, jungle and nullah. Bunter had been growing more and more discontented for a long time, and now he was fed-up. When Billy Bunter was fed-up, it was time for the whole universe to sit up and take notice.

Some of the party had separated and taken different paths. Bunter noticed that Colonel Wharton had disappeared, and with him fifty of the Bhanipur cavalymen. The subadar, Lal Chunder, had taken another path, with another party of troopers. The thick jungle had swallowed them from sight. Twenty men still rode with the Nabob of Bhanipur and the Greyfriars juniors. And to Bunter's intense annoyance there was no sign of halting, as the sun reached the zenith, and blazed down with tropical heat.

It was time for repose, and time for tinkering—two very important matters indeed. No wonder Bunter was fed-up.

"What's this game?" demanded Bunter. "Where are we having the picnic, you fellows?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" growled Bunter. "Do you think I'm missing tiffin?"

"It isn't a picnic, you ass!" said Harry Wharton. "We're after Baji Rao, and we're not stopping."

"It's no good trying to pull my leg, Wharton. Nobody in India ever travels in the heat of the day."

"Only on special occasions," said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "This is a special occasion."

"I'm hungry!"

"Your own fault, Bunter," said Bob. "You ate only enough breakfast for a dozen. Why didn't you pack away enough for a dozen?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

Under his sun helmet Bunter's face was crimson and streaming with perspiration.

"I say, Inky!" he bawled.

The Nabob of Bhanipur slackened reins. "What is it, my esteemed Bunter?"

"It's time to halt!"

The schoolboy nabob smiled and shook his head.

"The halfheartedness is not the proper caper, my worthy Bunter," he said. "We ride on till we reach the hills."

"But that's hours yet!" exclaimed Bunter, in dismay.

"Many hours," assented the nabob.

"I'm tired."

"The regretfulness is terrific!"

"I'm hungry!"

"The esteemed Bunter may feed himself the saddle."

"Look here, Inky—"

"You silly owl!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Why didn't you stay behind. You're no use here, and you keep grouching."

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Give us a rest!"

"You see, my esteemed Bunter," explained Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "my excellent and disgusting relative Baji Rao, has fled from Bhanipur, and we are in pursuit of him."

"I told you so, Bunter," said Wharton.

Bunter snorted.

"Well, let him rip!" he said. "What the thump does Baji Rao matter? I'm thinking of lunch."

"The matterfulness is terrific," said Hurree Singh. "The worthy Bunter has not forgotten that Baji Rao kidnapped me and kept me a prisoner, and yet nearly succeeded in taking my place as Nabob of Bhanipur."

"I'm not likely to forget, as it was I who rescued you, Inky!" snorted Bunter.

"The esteemed Bunter helped, and no gratitude is terrific," said the nabob. "But there is no time to lose. Baji Rao is fleeing across the mountains, seeking to escape to his friends the Bolsheviks in Russia, to wait for another opportunity to oust me from my throne. It is not written that Baji Rao shall escape."

"It's a fight to a finish, old fat man," said Bob Cherry.

Bunter blinked at the hills that barred the blue sky ahead, with range on range of the Himalayas beyond.

"Mean to say we're going to follow the blinking rajah into those beastly mountains?" he ejaculated.

"Exactly!"

"Look here, I'm jolly well not!" exclaimed Bunter. "Let's go back to Bhanipur and let Baji Rao rip!"

The schoolboy nabob shook his head, with a smile. It was a smile that was not much like the good-natured grin of Inky of the Remove. In his own country Inky of the Remove was an Indian nabob. He had been kidnapped and imprisoned; for days and nights he had lain in the darkness, in the shadow of death, while his rival was seeking to possess himself of his throne.

Baji Rao, defeated at the last moment, had fled for his life. His castle and



"Huzoor!" panted Nally Das as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and his men gained on the two fugitives. "Save yourself!" The rajah rushed on, but Nally Das, tulwar in hand, threw himself in the way of the leading pursuers, and there was a wild clashing of steel. (See Chapter 3.)

lands were occupied by the nabob's guards, and confiscated for his treason; but the plotting rajah himself had vanished into the jungles and the hills with the few desperate followers who remained to him. But he was not to escape to renew his plotting at a more favourable opportunity. It was not a Greyfriars schoolboy that he had to deal with; it was an Indian nabob, ruthless to a rebel. Bajji Rao had plotted for a crown. He had lost all but his life, and that was to follow. There could be no peace in Bhanipur while Bajji Rao lived to scheme and plot, and stern justice waited for him once he was captured.

"Look here, Inky—" recommended Bunter.

Bunter was not thinking of the peace of Bhanipur, or justice on the rebel rajah, or any of the interests of Hurree Singh. He was thinking of himself, as usual; and probably he would have given all Bhanipur just then for an ample lunch and a nap under a shady deodar.

"We will ride on," said Hurree Singh curtly.

"But look here—"

"The esteemed Bunter may ride back to the city," suggested Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I will send six of my guards with him."

Bunter granted.

Hidden about his fat person were the treasures the grateful nabob had bestowed upon him as a reward for the help he had given in the rescue of Hurree Singh.

Bunter was not likely to trust himself

alone among "niggers" with those treasures about him.

"I say, you fellows, you ride back with me," said Bunter, blinking at the chums of the Remove.

"Fathead!"

"Look here—"

"Don't be an ass, Bunter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "You were warned not to come. Now you've come, make the best of it. We're more than half way to the hills now; we shall be at our halting-place sooner than you could get back to Bhanipur. Make the best of it and don't grouse!"

"Beast! I say, Inky—"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh shook out his rein and rode on again. Billy Bunter followed, his fat face dark with frowns.

There was no help for it.

Bunter had landed himself, as he often did, from sheer fatuous obstinacy. Now it was too late to retreat.

But he grouched and grumbled and groaned dismally as he rode on, perspiring under the blazing sun.

The jungle was left behind; the path lay through a forest, where the big branches interlacing overhead afforded a welcome shade.

By a broad, beaten track they rode on, on rising ground, ever nearer and nearer to the hills. The great branches shut off the blaze of the sun, but the heat was penetrating. Billy Bunter began to wonder whether he would survive that terrible ride. He was aching from one end of his fat person to the other. Kasi Jee rode behind his master, his eyes on Bunter, with a peculiar

glint in them. The naukar pushed his pony closer at last and spoke to the Owl of the Remove.

"Sahib!"

Bunter blinked at him wearily.

"If the sahib would return Kasi Jee will guide him safely and swiftly back to the city," said the naukar in a low voice.

Bunter shook his head.

"Keep your pecker up, Bunt, old bean!" said Bob (herry encouragingly. "We're all jolly tired; but it's all in the day's work, you know."

"Beast!" said Bunter feebly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob, as there was a rustle under the trees, and a dusky man leaped into view in the path.

"Help!" gasped Bunter.

"Fathead! It's Mahbub, the shikaree," said Wharton.

"Oh! Sure it isn't a dacoit?" gasped Bunter.

"Ass!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh drew rein. Mahbub, the chief shikaree, salaamed to the nabob and spoke in a hurried voice in Hindustani. The face of the school-boy nabob lighted up.

He turned to his chums, with a grin. "Mahbub has brought news!" he said. "He has been on the track of Bajji Rao ever since he fled, and he has tracked him in the forest. He knows where to lay his finger on the rajah."

"Good!" said Bob.

"They are camped by a nullah in the forest, watched by Mahbub's shikarees," said Hurree Singh. "A few miles from

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here. My esteemed chums, if you choose to share the attack with me—"

"What ho!"

"The colonel sahib and the subadar are seeking in other directions," said Hurree Singh. "We cannot wait for them, or Baji Rao may flee again. But we have twenty men—and ourselves. Mahbub tells me that only six or seven are with the rajah."

"I say, you fellows—"

"He has seen Nally Das, the kidnapper, and the Russian Lazaroff, with the rajah," went on Hurree Singh. "The others are chaukees—some of the rajah's retainers who have followed him in his flight. They will fight for their lives! I shall lead my men. But you may—"

"Us, too!" said Bob Cherry. "Do you think you're going to have the scrapping all to yourself?"

The nabob grinned.

"Right ho!" he said cheerily. "We leave the horses here, and follow Mahbub on foot through the forest. The sayces will remain to guard the horses; and Bunter had better stay with them. The esteemed and ludicrous Bunter will be of no usefulness in a scrap."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"If the excellent Bunter prefers to come he shall come," said the nabob.

Bunter blinked at the risky sayces. Certainly he did not like the idea of coming to close quarters with the desperate rajah. Still less did he like the idea of being left alone in the forest with a gang of "niggers." He groaned dimly.

"I'll come!" he said. "The—the fact is I—I'm rather keen on a scrap. Rely on me."

The party dismounted. For half an hour they rested in the shade of the trees. Then, guided by Mahbub through the thick, tangled forest, they proceeded on foot their weapons in their hands, and their eyes open for enemies. And Billy Bunter, in the deepest depths of woe, rolled after them.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Flight of Baji Rao!

BAJI RAO stood in the shadow of a mango tree, with a black brow. The mango grew on the slope of a stony nullah in the midst of the forest. Before the outcast rajah the nullah sloped down steeply to the stream that ran at the bottom. A storm in the distant hills had filled up the water-course, and the stream, usually low and shallow in the summer heats, ran deep and swift and strong. Myriads of insects glanced in the sun over the shining, hurrying water that rippled along the bottom of the nullah. Baji Rao was watching the stream, as if in expectation, with a black and savage brow.

At a little distance from him his men were camped. The retinue of the Rajah Baji Rao was small enough now, greatly changed from what it had been on the day when he had ridden into Bhanipur to take possession of the nabob's palace and city.

The rescue of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh from his imprisonment had changed all things for the plotting rajah. Instead of a palace and a crown, it was utter ruin that had fallen upon him. He had ridden out of the city for his life; he had escaped to his castle, but had not dared to linger there, knowing that the messengers of death were on

his track. He had stayed only to pack his most precious jewels, and then, with a few followers, he had fled again, and fled through the night and the day following, till from utter weariness the fugitives had been forced to halt.

Now they were camped by the nullah, still fearful of pursuit, knowing that the nabob's shikarees were seeking their trail, knowing that the horsemen of Bhanipur would be searching for them far and wide.

The thoughts of the fugitive rajah were bitter enough.

He had gambled desperately, staking all on a cast—a throne on one hand, ruin on the other. And he had lost. His only hope now was to escape over the mighty mountain barrier of India, and find his way to Russian territory, where he had friends, or at least confederates. He had spent years of exile in the Muscovite land, and he hoped to find refuge there again now that he had failed in his bid for a throne—it was all the hope that remained to him.

But he knew that the pursuit would be close.

He had been allowed once to return from exile, and he had repaid his pardon with plotting and villainy. He would not be given another chance. Only his life remained to him to save, and a packet of jewels hidden in his bosom; and he knew that the chance was slight. Many a hundred miles of barren mountains lay between him and safety; and behind were the pursuers, seeking him, and a price was on his head.

Five ruffianly chaukees were all that remained of the many retainers who had thronged his castle. Ruffians as they were, they were loyal to their master, and they had followed him. With them was Lazaroff, the emissary of the Moscow Bolsheviks, whose evil counsels had helped to bring the ambitious rajah to his ruin. Nally Das was also a companion in his flight; but the kam-dar was not to be seen in the camp now.

The chaukees rested under the shade, worn out by the hurried flight. Lazaroff, the Russian, sat smoking cigarettes, with an indifferent face.

The rajah glanced at the Russian, more than once, with a dark glance. He had listened to the counsels of the Russian plotter, and the outcome was—this! Gladly enough would the tyrants of Moscow have placed a puppet nabob on the throne of the mountain kingdom of Bhanipur, opening the passes of the hills to Russian invasion, when at long last the day should come. But the plot had failed: Hurree Singh was still Nabob of Bhanipur, in closest alliance with the British Raj; and the rebel rajah was a fugitive fleeing for his life—that was what the Bolshevik counsels had been worth to him.

It was in the mind of the rajah to repay Lazaroff for his services, with a stroke of his keen scimitar. But he knew that when he came, at last, a fugitive and a refugee, to Moscow, he might need the rascally agent yet, and he dismissed the thought from his mind.

There was a splash in the stream below, and the rajah turned his glance again down the slope of the rocky nullah.

A tiny boat appeared there, coming down the stream, with Nally Das rowing.

Nally Das drew the boat to shore, tied it up, and mounted the rocky slope, to the high bank where the rajah stood.

He salaamed respectfully to the rajah.

Kidnapper, plotter, assassin, as the Hindu kam-dar was, he was a loyal servant of his master, faithful to him in his fallen fortunes. His manner was as full of slavish respect now, as when he had salaamed to his master in his palace. The rajah gave him a gloomy look.

"I have succeeded, Huzoor!" said Nally Das, in his own tongue. "I have the boat—and the way is open for us to go without leaving traces for the men of Bhanipur to follow."

Baji Rao nodded.

For long hours Nally Das had been absent from the camp; and he had returned successful. The rajah noted that there was blood on the haft of the kam-dar's knife—blood on his linen garments. But he asked no questions. The boat had been obtained, and that was all that was necessary. The life of some wretched mountain peasant was not likely to weigh in the estimation of the Rajah Baji Rao.

But his look was still gloomy. Flight only could save him—rapid flight leaving no trail for the pursuers. But the rajah's thoughts were with what he left behind: the fair kingdom and City of Bhanipur over which he had hoped to rule; the castle and lands that had been his own, and which he might have kept had he refused to listen to Bolshevik counsels of evil. Like the dog in the fable, he had snatched at the shadow, and lost the substance. Life was dear; but the prospect before him was dark enough—a fugitive in a strange, half-savage land.

"No time should be lost, Huzoor," said Nally Das. "The horses and the chaukees would be useless in a flight over the great mountains—they must be left here. The boat will carry three."

Baji Rao nodded again.

"There is no help!" he said. "We must go. And yet—" His hand was on the gem-encrusted hilt of his scimitar, and his fierce glance turned back towards the direction of distant Bhanipur.

Lazaroff rose, and threw away a half-smoked cigarette.

"You have the boat—good," he said. "Let us lose no time. The chaukees can save themselves—it matters little. Come."

The rajah did not answer, or stir. His fierce glance was still turned back upon the forest, far beyond which lay the white walls of Bhanipur.

The Russian touched him impatiently on the arm.

"Come!" he repeated. "We waste time."

"Chup raho!" rapped out Nally Das fiercely. "Slave! Do you give orders to the Huzoor?"

Lazaroff stared at him for a moment, and then laughed. In the situation of the fugitives, the Hindu's unabated respect for his master roused his mocking derision.

"Fool!" he answered. "There is no more 'Highness' here—we are all running for our lives; and his highness will be fortunate to escape with as much as that—and to live on the bounty of my friends in Moscow. Give me no more of that. Let us go—you hear me, Baji Rao?"

Nally Das' dusky hand went to the knife in his girdle. At that moment, there was a sudden exclamation from the rajah.

"Too late!"

"What—"

"Look!" said Baji Rao bitterly. The chaukees in the camp had leaped up suddenly. From the edge of the forest came a gleaming of weapons, a glimmer of turbans. The rajah's men grasped their tulwars; it was the enemy.

Lazaroff spun round, and stared at the forest; scarce a hundred yards distant, a score of dusky troopers could be seen, and among them, white faces—the faces of the Greyfriars juniors. Mahbub, the shikaree, was pointing.

The Russian gave one rapid glance; and then he went tramping down the stony nullah towards the boat Nally Das had moored in the stream.

Baji Rao grasped his scimitar. "Huzoor!" panted Nally Das. "Save yourself!"

He shouted to the chaukees, and the five ruffianly retainers of the rajah shouted back. There was a sudden crackling of rifle-fire. The desperadoes were facing the advancing troopers from Bhanipur.

"Come, come!" breathed Nally Das. For a second the rajah hesitated; then he rushed down the slope into the nullah, by the side of the Hindu kam-dar. Life was dear.

Behind them came a rattling of rifles, and loud yells, and the clash of steel. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and his men were coming on fast, and it was only for a few seconds that the rajah's chaukees stood up against overwhelming odds.

Leaving his men to deal with the chaukees, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh passed them, and rushed on the track of the fleeing rajah.

Harry Wharton & Co. followed him fast, and five or six of the soldiers of Bhanipur.

Down the steep, rocky slope into the nullah the rajah rushed, with Nally Das by his side.

Lazaroff had already reached the moored boat; and plunged into it. He was sawing at the grass-ropes, by which it was moored to the bank, with his knife. The moment the rope parted the Russian would flee—without waiting a second for his associates. Nally Das glanced back desperately.

A dozen yards of rocky slope still separated the fugitives from the boat; and the pursuers were almost in touch. Two of the most powerful of the Bhanipur soldiers were bounding like rees on the track, and they had nearly reached the fleeing rajah and his kam-dar.

"Huzoor! Save yourself!" panted Nally Das.

And he turned back.

The rajah rushed on; Nally Das, tulwar in hand, threw himself in the way of the leading pursuers, and there was a wild clashing of steel. One of the soldiers went down, slashed by the kam-dar's tulwar; and Nally Das engaged the other at close quarters. Kidnapper and rascal as the man was, he was giving his life to save his master. A few moments, and five or six tulwars were flashing round him, and Nally Das, fighting like a tiger, was borne down, under raining blows, and gasped for his life.

But he had gained time for his master; the Rajah Baji Rao leaped into the boat, even as Nally Das fell under the slashing steel.

The grass-ropes parted under the knife of the Russian.

The boat leaped out into the rapid, whirling waters, torn away from the bank by the racing current.

Lazaroff seized an oar to steady the rocking boat, the Rajah Baji Rao

stared back, with savagely-gleaming eyes, at the receding bank. On the rocks of the nullah stood Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, scimitar in hand, and the fleeing rajah shook a furious fist at the schoolboy nabob. Three or four rifles cracked out, and the bullets splashed into the water round the racing boat; but a minute more, and the winding of the nullah and the over-hanging mangroves hid it from sight.

The Rajah Baji Rao had escaped!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Tired?" grinned Bob.

"Ow! Yes!" groaned Bunter.

It was night in the jungle.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and his followers were still in pursuit of the fleeing rajah and his solitary companion. But as the stars of midnight glistened

grim relentlessness was a trait in Iuky's character that they liked least. But they knew he was right; justice had to be done. The plotting rajah, whose reckless ambition might have plunged Bhanipur into civil war and bloodshed; the scheming Russian who had sought to carry the evil influence of the Bolsheviks over the Indian frontier, both had to be prevented from working further harm.

The pursuers were proceeding on foot—the thick and tangled jungle was impossible for horses. To Mahbub and his shikarees it was nothing, and the hardy soldiers of Bhanipur tramped on cheerily, while Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, slim and lightly-built as he was, seemed impervious to fatigue. Harry Wharton & Co. were tired, there was no doubt about that, but they stood it out manfully. It was Billy Bunter who, groused, and Billy Bunter who, as usual, proved himself a helpless passenger.

Bunter was simply incapable of tramping long miles through the jungle, and

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"Hold me flat,
Give me a tap,
I'm Arthur Augustus,
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over the wide-spreading jungle the pursuers had halted for a brief rest.

Mahbub, the chief shikaree, was the guide. Mahbub knew every hill and valley, ghaut and nullah, from Kashmir and the Terai to the great passes of the Himalayas. The rajah had escaped, but Mahbub knew precisely where the fugitives would be compelled to abandon the mountain stream, where great rocks barred the water, and it fell in a cascade in which no boat could live. And for that spot, to cut off the fleeing rajah if possible, Hurree Singh and his party were heading through the jungle. If the rajah and the Russian landed and took to the mountains on foot again the shikaree would be on their trail; relentlessly the pursuit was to go on.

The grim determination of the schoolboy nabob did not surprise his chums. They had already learned that in his native land Hurree Singh was not exactly like old Iuky of the Remove.

The rajah was to suffer for his crime, if only to leave Bhanipur in peace when the nabob returned to Greyfriars.

The chums of the Remove did not blame their dusky comrade, though this

he declined to entertain the idea of being sent back to the city under a dusky escort. It was fixed in Bunter's fat mind that no "nigger" was to be trusted. And as he could not be left alone in the jungle—in which case he would certainly have furnished a meal for a hungry tiger before dawn—he had to accompany the party in their prolonged pursuit of the rajah. A dhooly was constructed of bamboos cut in the jungle by the keen knives of the shikarees, and the fat junior was carried in the dhooly, slung on the shoulders of two stalwart natives. Bunter had the easiest time of the party, but Bunter's voice was the only one that was raised in complaint. That, however, was only to be expected.

In the midnight halt Bunter sat with his back to the dhooly and consumed provisions at a great rate. A camp-fire had been lighted, and it blazed cheerily against the black sky. Night in the jungle was sharply cold after the glowing heat of the day. Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round the fire in cheery spirits. They were tired, but

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they were enjoying the adventure. At a little distance from the Greyfriars party the Bhanipur soldiers were camped, and round the camp, hidden in the shadows, Mahbub and his shikarees kept watch and ward.

Somewhere in the trackless jungle, probably many a long mile distant, Colonel Wharton and his party were seeking the fleeing rajah. Since they had parted earlier in the day, no word had passed between the two parties of hunters, but at the nullah Hurree Singh had dispatched two of the shikarees to seek the colonel and inform him that the track of the fugitives had been found. But there was no time to wait for the colonel to rejoin them. The pursuit went on under the command of the nabob, and Inky of the Remove showed that he was quite equal to the occasion.

"We shall enjoyfully take an hour's sleep, my esteemed chums," said the nabob. "After that we go on again fully. Perhaps by morning the hunt will be completely finished."

"An hour?" said Bunter.

"Precisely."

"You mean twelve hours," grunted Bunter.

"I mean exactly one hour, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"Look here, Inky—" bawled Bunter.

"Oh, cheese it, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "Why the thump didn't you stay in the palace, as we advised you?"

"Yah!"

"Too late now," said Bob. "You can get back to Bhanipur, if you like. Kasi Jee will guide you."

"Rats!"

"Or stay here," suggested Johnny Bull. "Think what a morsel you would be to a tiger who hadn't had his supper, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter shuddered.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Dash it all, Bunter, you've got nothing to grouse about, when you're carried in a dhooly while we're walking," said Nugent.

"I'm tired."

"Have another supper, old fat bean, and shut up."

"This is what you call gratitude, I suppose?" said Bunter bitterly. "I really expected something better than this from you, Inky, after all I've done for you."

"My esteemed, idiotic Bunter—"

"Shall we bump him?" asked Bob Cherry, looking round at his chums. "Why not give him something to grouse about?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Well, I'm for a snooze," said Johnny Bull, rising and yawning. "If it's only for an hour, let's make the most of it."

And Johnny rolled himself in a blanket with his feet to the camp-fire, and closed his eyes.

"Good egg!" assented Bob.

"Gimme some blankets!" grunted Bunter. "It's jolly cold here. Rotten country—toasting you by day and freezing you by night. I say, you fellows, are there any snakes about?"

"Lots!" grinned Bob.

"Look here, you beasts, you search for snakes!" exclaimed Bunter hotly. "You know I'm short-sighted, you rotters! Not that I'm afraid of snakes."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" ejaculated Bob Cherry with an alarmed look, pointing to a dried twig that lay near the fire.

"Yaroooooh!"

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It was only a dried twig, but to Bunter it was a deadly reptile. He gave a wild bound to escape.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooooh! Help!"

Bunter plunged round the camp-fire and crashed into Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. He threw his arms round the nabob to keep himself from falling, and dragged Hurree Singh over in his fall.

"Ow!" roared Inky.

"Grooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crack!

The sharp ring of a rifle came from the jungle in the midst of the exclamations from Bunter and the nabob, and the laughter of the other juniors.

The bullet whizzed by the camp-fire and struck the trunk of a mango in a direct line with the spot where Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had been standing.

The nabob's sudden and unexpected fall, in Bunter's grasp, had saved him from the whizzing bullet.

The laughter died away instantly.

"What—" exclaimed Wharton.

"The enemy!"

The camp was in commotion at once. From the shadowy jungle came the shouts of the shikarees. Hurree Jamset was on his feet at once. Bunter remained where he was; he considered that he was safer on the ground, while shooting was going on; and undoubtedly he was right. In the jungle crack on crack of ringing rifles sounded, and a loud and terrible cry rang from the shadows of the night.

The juniors grasped their rifles and stared about them. In spite of the watchfulness of the shikarees, an enemy had crept near the place in the darkness—near enough to take a shot at the nabob in the glow of the camp-fire. Mahbub came panting from the jungle into the radius of flickering light.

"Huzoor!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh questioned the shikaree in Hindustani. He knew how narrow his escape had been; but hardly a muscle of his dusky face flickered. From the jungle came two of the shikarees, bearing a still form—that of one of their comrades, with a deep crimson stain on his garments. They laid the body down; it did not move again.

"What has happened, Inky?" exclaimed Bob breathlessly as Mahbub vanished into the jungle again.

"Someone—an enemy—got through the sentries, creeping like a snake in the jungle grasses," said the nabob quietly. "They did not see him till he had fired. A white man, Mahbub says—they saw him as he fled. It must have been the esteemed and execrable Lazaroff."

"He got away?"

"One of the shikarees seized him." Hurree Singh pointed to the still form that lay in the grass. "The man used his knife and fled. He has escaped; but this proves that we are close on them, my esteemed chums. So close to them that we shall not stay here to rest as I intended. But if my esteemed chums would sleep I will leave a guard—"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry promptly. "We're going on if you do, Inky."

"Yes, rather."

Bunter sat up.

"Are they gone?" he gasped.

"There was only one, and he has gone," said Nugent.

"Good! As for going on, that's all rot!" said Bunter. "I'm going to sleep, see?"

"The esteemed Bunter must try to

sleep in the dhooly," said the nabob gently; and he rapped out orders to his men.

The fire was trampled out, and the men of Bhanipur prepared at once to resume the march.

"You'll be all right in the dhooly, Bunter," said Harry, with rather unusual cordiality. "Make yourself comfortable, old bean. We'll shove in the blankets for you."

Bunter blinked at him.

"You're jolly concerned about me all of a sudden," he grunted.

"That's all right; let me help you in."

Bunter was helped into the dhooly and made comfortable there, in a state of great astonishment. The way was resumed, the dhooly swinging on the shoulders of two stout shikarees. Bunter sprawled in it on the blankets, wondering, till he realised, at last, that once more he had proved unexpectedly useful. He put his head out of the dhooly.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"I've saved Inky's life."

"Another happy accident!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"If I hadn't pulled him over just then that fellow would have got him," said Bunter. "That bullet was meant for Inky."

"Quitefully so, my esteemed Bunter," said the nabob. "The thankfulness is terrific. Oncefully more the esteemed and idiotic Bunter has turned up trumpfully."

"Jolly lucky for you I came along," said Bunter. "I suppose you fellows thought I was scared about a snake. Well, I wasn't. I pulled Inky over just in time to save his life. My wonderful presence of mind, you know."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

"That's me all over—the right man in the right place," said Bunter. "Presence of mind is what does it—you can always rely on me for that."

"Oh!"

And Bunter settled down in the dhooly again, very pleased and satisfied with himself. And Harry Wharton & Co. forbore to tell him what they thought of him. The pursuers marched on, by tangled jungle paths, under the glittering Indian stars, to an accompaniment of deep snoring from the dhooly.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Rajah's Fate!

SERGE LAZAROFF tramped savagely through the jungle, breathing hard. His dark face was wet with perspiration; his clothes torn and rent by thorns. Ahead of him was the sound of falling water, guiding the Russian to the spot where he had left Baji Rao.

He emerged from the jungle at last, and tramped across stony ground, to a spot where a mango tree grew beside the falling stream. Under the tree, wrapped in his cloak, the Rajah Baji Rao lay sleeping.

With footfalls as quiet as those of a cat or a lurking tiger, the Russian approached the tree, and halted, looking down with a grim face upon the sleeping rajah.

The two fugitives were in desperate plight now.

The flight by the mountain stream had saved them, for the time. But the boat had gone over the cascade; and they had barely struggled ashore with their lives. Lazaroff would have pushed



"Hallo!" said Bob Cherry, with an alarmed look, pointing to a dried twig that lay near the fire. "Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, thinking at once that it was a deadly reptile. "Help!" He plunged round the camp fire and crashed into Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Claspings the nabob round the neck, he dragged him over in his fall. (See Chapter 4.)

on, anxious to put all the distance possible between himself and pursuit. But the rajah was not capable of the exertion.

Baji Rao had lived in ease and Oriental luxury, seldom stirring from his palace save on the back of an elephant, or in a luxurious palanquin borne on the shoulders of his slaves. The hard and wearing life of the jungle was not for the pampered Eastern despot, with his slack and flabby muscles, unused to performing even the simplest services for himself. Baji Rao had stopped to rest; and Lazaroff had stopped also; and while the rajah rested he had turned back on the pursuers.

The hardy, reckless adventurer was no coward; he had taken his life in his hands in a desperate attempt to stop the pursuit, and turn the tables on the enemy, by shooting down the Nabob of Bhanipur. Fortune had favoured the Bolshevik; he had failed to kill the nabob, but he had escaped from the shikarees with his life.

Now he stood looking down on the sleeping rajah, and the expression on his black-browed, aquiline face might have alarmed Baji Rao had he seen it. But the rajah's eyes were closed in the sleep of utter weariness.

There was a chance yet for the Russian; he was hardy, tireless, resolute, unscrupulous. There was yet a chance for such a man to escape by the mountain passes; but, cumbered with the rajah, there was no chance, and he knew it. The man whose life had been spent in luxurious indolence was not the man for so terrible a journey. Unpursued, escape would have been difficult, but possible; but with the pursuers close on the track, the days, if not the hours, of Baji Rao were numbered.

The rajah did not realise it; but it was clear enough to the companion of his flight. Neither did the rajah

realise that the position was now changed; that he, the once haughty rajah, was now a helpless encumbrance upon the man who had been his spy and scheming adviser and humble sycophant. There were terrible thoughts in the savage mind of the Bolshevik as he stood looking down on the sleeping man.

He stooped over Baji Rao, and softly, quietly, released the scimitar from his girdle. The scimitar, Baji Rao's only weapon, was flung far into the mountain stream; it vanished with a light splash into the water.

Light as the sound was, it awakened Baji Rao.

The rajah's eyes opened, and he stared about him, and called out in Hindustani.

Lazaroff grinned savagely.

The rajah, for the moment, supposed that he was in his palace, and that obsequious slaves awaited his call.

But recollection came the next moment, as the mists of slumber cleared away. Baji Rao sat up, leaning against the mango, and stared at the Russian with evil glinting eyes.

"You are not in your palace now, Huzoor!" said the Russian adventurer with grim irony.

"You have seen them?" asked the rajah. He remembered that Lazaroff had gone to scout for the pursuers when he laid down to rest.

Lazaroff nodded.

"I have seen them."

"And where?"

"Five miles from here; and it seems that they know where to seek us," said Lazaroff. "Had luck befriended me, I should have stopped them—my bullet missed the nabob by inches."

The rajah snarled.

"Fool! Fool and bungler, as usual! But for your counsels, I should never be here!" he exclaimed savagely. "You have brought me to this—you and your rascally friends in Moscow. I have

been a tool in your hands—my lands taken from me, my life in danger, to give the Bolshevik scoundrels a footing on the Indian frontier! A thousand curses—"

The Russian laughed.

"You were willing enough to make a bid for the nabob's throne," he said. "You opened your ears gladly enough to Bolshevik counsels, Baji Rao. Had all gone well you would be reigning now in Bhanipur as nabob. Would you have reproached me then, weakling that you are?"

"Insolent slave!"

The Russian laughed again.

Even in fleeing for his life Baji Rao was still the proud and domineering despot. The change in his situation had made no change in his nature. Through the flight the Russian had had to listen to bitter reproaches and words of scorn. That mattered little to the adventurer so long as he had a purpose to serve. But the rajah was useless to him now; he had become a danger and an encumbrance. And all the bitter insults, all the lofty scorn and contempt, were stored up in Lazaroff's mind, to be repaid now that the time had come.

"Listen to me, Baji Rao," he said.

"Dog! To you I am Huzoor!" said the rajah, his black eyes gleaming at the Russian.

"Fool!" said Lazaroff. "Listen to me! Only a few miles separate us from the enemy, and you—you are helpless burden on my hands. One day more in the jungles and the ghauts, and you will sink down like some helpless infant! I have finished with you, Baji Rao! You will never live to reach Moscow, where you would be useful to us, if only as an agent to stir up discontent in India. You will perish in the mountain passes if you escape the pursuit. I go—but I go alone!"

"Go, then!" said the rajah. "Son of a dog, go!"

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The Russian eyed him, with an evil light in his eyes. Lazaroff's hand was in his ragged cummerbund; it grasped a revolver hidden from sight there.

Baji Rao staggered to his feet. He was worn with weariness, but he was still the savage-tempered, haughty rajah.

"Dog!" he repeated. "Do you dare to bandy words with me, a prince of India? You, who have crawled at my feet!"

"The Bolshevik knows how to crawl until he can stand and issue commands!" said the Russian, laughing. "It is I who give orders now, Baji Rao!"

The rajah's eyes blazed, and he groped for his scimitar. A change came over his dusky face as he found that his weapon was gone. He made a fierce stride towards the Russian, his hands clenched; but stopped suddenly as Lazaroff's hand came out of his cummerbund with a glinting revolver in it.

Baji Rao breathed hard, showing his white teeth like a tiger at bay.

"I go," said the Russian coolly; "but first hand me the packet of jewels concealed in your breast, Baji Rao!"

"You would rob me, then?" hissed the rajah.

"Of what use will they be to you when the jackals and the vultures dispute for your bones?" grinned Lazaroff.

The rajah made a furious movement, and the revolver rose to a level.

"The jewels, or—"

The rajah set his teeth. He understood now—at long last. He knew that the jewels would not save his life.

Lazaroff intended to flee alone, but he did not intend to leave behind him a man who, if by chance he survived, would be a bitter enemy. The Bolshevik was fleeing now; but his treacherous work in India was not done. Baji Rao read death in the mocking eyes of the traitor whose evil counsels had brought him to ruin.

He sprang like a tiger.

So swift was the spring that Lazaroff, watchful as he was, was taken almost by surprise. The rajah reached him before he could pull trigger, and two dusky hands closed on him in a savage grip.

Lazaroff reeled back in the grasp of the rajah, and went heavily to the ground. Baji Rao was upon him, grasping at his throat.

Crack!

The report of the revolver, touching the breast of the rajah as Lazaroff fired, was followed by a deep groan.

Baji Rao rolled from the Russian, and rolled on the ground.

Lazaroff sprang to his feet, panting.

The revolver was turned towards the stretched form on the ground; but a second shot was not needed. Baji Rao did not stir again.

The Russian shrugged his shoulders.

He bent over the rajah, and rose again with the packet of jewels—all that remained to the fleeing rajah of his treasures—in his grasp. Then, without another glance at the fallen man, Lazaroff turned, and tramped away—and the night swallowed him.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The End of the Trail!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Mahbub, the shikaree, came speeding back.

The dusky face of Mahbub was ablaze with excitement as he gabbled Hindustani to the nabob.

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Harry Wharton & Co. listened, without understanding. They could see that the shikaree, who had been scouting ahead, had brought back startling news; but the language he spoke was a sealed book to them.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh turned to his comrades, with a strange expression on his face.

"Our task is done," he said.

"Mahbub has found them?" asked Harry.

"One of them—the rajah," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us go on, my esteemed chums! It was written that my kinsman should not fall by my hand; but Baji Rao's plotting will never trouble my kingdom again."

The Greyfriars party pushed on, asking no more questions. Bunter's deep snore still rumbled from the dhooly.

The sound of falling water came to their ears, echoing through the dim night. They emerged from the jungle at last. Ahead of them a cascade flashed and glittered in the gleam of the stars. Under a mango tree by the water a dozen shikarees were gathered round some object that lay still on the ground.

The shikarees parted respectfully, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh approached. "Good heavens!" muttered Bob, his face paling.

"The rajah!"

It was the Rajah Baji Rao, stretched still and silent under the mango.

Already the jackals had been there, but the hapless rajah was still easily to be recognised.

"Dead!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and his dusky face was grave as he stood looking down upon his enemy, who was never to trouble him or his kingdom more.

"But how—" muttered Nugent.

"Mahbub knows," said the nabob. "He was shot down at close quarters—with a revolver. The Bolshevik—"

"The awful villain!" breathed Bob. "He turned on him then."

Hurree Singh nodded.

"But where is the Russian?"

"Fled! But the son of a dog shall not escape!" said Hurree Singh, his eyes gleaming. "He is unworthy of our trouble; but Mahbub and his men shall follow him, with a reward of a thousand rupees for his head."

Mahbub and a dozen shikarees were already taking the track of the Russian desperado. They vanished along the stream, and the jungle swallowed them from sight; bloodhounds on the track of the Bolshevik, whose face was set towards the North.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gave orders to the soldiers. A palanquin was constructed of wood cut in the jungle, and the body of the rajah placed in it, to be borne back to Bhanipur for interment. Rebel and plotter as Baji Rao had been, he was to sleep with his ancestors in the tombs of the Nabobs of Bhanipur.

The Greyfriars party camped by the edge of the stream.

The palanquin, on the shoulders of half a dozen bearers, bore away the body of the rajah, whose ambition and tortuous plotting and faith in the faithless schemers of Moscow had cost him lands and life.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sat under the mango tree, unfolded in his cloak, with a thoughtful expression on his face, wakeful long after the other juniors had slept.

From the jungle came the howls of jackals and the deeper voice of a tiger, prowling at a distance, sounds that died away in the dawn. Closer at hand was the undisturbed snore of Billy Bunter,

rolled in blankets and sleeping like a top.

The Nabob of Bhanipur was thinking as he sat, wakeful—thinking of the mission that had brought him to Bhanipur, the danger of losing his kingdom, the plotting of Baji Rao, and of his kinsman, Nally Das. The Jam Bahadur had called him home from England. But the need was past now. The rajah had paid for all. Nally Das had fallen. The agent of the Bolsheviks, was fleeing for the mountains, with relentless pursuers on his track, his life forfeit for his crimes.

Once more the schoolboy nabob was free to return to Greyfriars, leaving his kingdom, as before, under the governing of his uncle, the Jam Bahadur, untroubled further by plotters and schemers. After many perils the schoolboy nabob had triumphed over his enemies. Danger had been close, but it was over now, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was able to think of his false and ambitious kinsman without bitterness, and to forgive him now that he had paid the last penalty.

The schoolboy nabob lay down to sleep at last.

The sun rose higher in the heavens, the jungle day brightened. Hot sunshine streamed down over stream and jungle, and the thousand voices of the day awoke.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had been the last of the party to sleep, but he was the first to awaken. He rose and threw aside his cloak and stood in the brilliant sunshine. He looked at the tangled jungle, at the cascading stream in the rocks of the nullah, at the great hills that rose range on range to the north, at the mighty peaks of the Himalayas beyond all.

His dusky brow was clouded with thought. This was his land—his homeland—in England, at Greyfriars, much as he loved the old school, he was a pilgrim and a stranger. He sighed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry threw off his blankets and jumped up.

Hurree Singh looked at him, with a smile.

"Jolly near noon, I think," said Bob.

"We have had a long rest," said the nabob. "We needed it, my esteemed chum. We have many miles to go before we reach the camp where we left the horses."

Bob looked at him curiously. He had heard the sigh of the schoolboy nabob.

"Not feeling down, Inky?" he asked.

The nabob shook his head.

"If you're thinking about the rajah, he deserved it, and a lot more," said Bob. "Don't worry about that."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled faintly.

"I am not worrying about that, my esteemed Bob. It was written that Baji Rao should find his death in the jungle."

"What's the trouble, then?" asked Bob.

The nabob did not reply. But again his wistful glance swept the jungle and the hills and the snow-clad Himalayas.

"You want to come back to Greyfriars?" said Bob.

"Ye-es."

"I understand," said Bob softly. "This country is your home, old chap. You feel about it as we do about England. But some day you'll come back here to reign as a giddy nabob, and in the meantime it's jolly at Greyfriars. We shall be back in time for the new term and the footer."

Hurree Singh nodded.

"Think of a jolly old rag in the Remove passage!" said Bob. "We'll

wake up the Fourth as soon as we get back. We'll jolly well rag Coker of the Fifth—what?"

The nabob grinned.

"We'll beat Highcliffe at footer and mop up St. Jim's and Rookwood," said Bob. "Won't it be jolly to trot round the old quad again and roll Bunter along the Remove passage?"

The nabob chuckled.

"My esteemed chum is right," he said. "The jolliffulness will be terrific."

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter's awake," said Bob. "And I'll bet you two to one in doughnuts that he's hungry."

"The fact is, I'm rather peckish," said Bunter, groping for his spectacles and jamming them on his fat little nose. "What about brekker?"

"Time for tiffin," chuckled Bob. "You can have brekker and tiffin all in one, Bunter. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Turn out, you slackers!"

The Greyfriars party turned out and sat down to tiffin under the mango tree. After tiffin they started—Bunter in the dhooly, the others walking. Late in the afternoon they reached the camp where the sayces had been left with the horses, and mounted to ride back to Bhanipur.

It was night when they reached the city, where they found Colonel Wharton. The colonel had received news of the end of the trail and had returned to Bhanipur. The old military gentleman was glad enough to see the juniors safe and sound again. The Jam Bahadur beamed on the party when they arrived. Evidently the Jam was greatly relieved by the news that he had received from the jungle, and had no regrets to waste on the ambitious rajah. Billy Bunter rolled away to his apartment, followed by the obsequious Kasi Jee. He sat down for the naukars to take off his boots, blinking sleepily at him.

"James!"

"Han sahib!" murmured the naukars.

"I shall be leaving Bhanipur soon now."

The naukars placed his hands on his breast in an attitude of deep sorrow.

"The heart of Kasi Jee is heavy, sahib," he said.

Bunter nodded with approval.

Since the Owl of the Remove had received the magnificent gifts of the nabob Kasi Jee had been unalterably attached to him. He received good words and bad words from Bunter with thankful submission, and even seemed to feel honoured when Bunter kicked him. Bunter's impression was that it was the kickings that had done it. That was, according to Bunter, the way to treat "niggers," and he had no doubt of the attachment of Kasi Jee. James, as he called him, was, as he had told the chums of the Remove, his faithful nigger; and Bunter liked the idea of having a faithful nigger to obey his lightest order and anticipate his lordly wishes.

Kasi Jee, on the other hand, doubtless had his own reasons for his faithful attachment to Bunter. But it was easy to pull the leg of the Owl of the Remove. Bunter only required flattery, and plenty of it, and flattery did not cost the wily Hindu much.

"Don't want to part with me—what?" said Bunter.

"Kasi Jee will mourn when he sees no more the handsome, magnificent sahib!" murmured the naukars.

"Quite so!" agreed Bunter. "Well, I'm thinking of taking you with me, James."

"Sahib!"

"I mean it," said Bunter, with a wave



Baji Rao read death in the mocking eyes of the traitor whose evil counsels had brought him ruin. He sprang like a tiger, and so swift was his spring that Lazaroff, watchful as he was, was taken almost by surprise. Before he could fire two dusky hands closed on his throat in a savage grip. (See Chapter 5.)

of his fat hand. "You're going to be my faithful nigger. See?"

Kasi Jee's eyes gleamed for a moment. Bunter's experience of India had not yet taught him that the natives did not like being called niggers. But the naukars salaamed respectfully.

"Like the idea—what?" asked Bunter.

"The joy in the heart of Kasi Jee is immense, sahib."

"Good!"

Bunter rolled to his bed.

"Put the mosquito-net over me, James. Fathead! Don't bung your silly elbow in my eyes. Take that!"

"Oh!"

Kasi Jee took it and sat down, his dusky ear ringing with the smack. Bunter rolled into bed and was soon snoring. The naukars looked at him and went softly and silently from the room, smiling.

The following morning, when Harry Wharton looked out of his window into the courtyard of the palace, he caught sight of Mahbub, the shikaree. The man had just come in, tired and dusty from the jungle and the road, and on

his shoulder he carried a rice-sack. Somehow or other Harry's gaze riveted on the sack. With a grinning face, Mahbub stopped to speak to the guards, and opened the neck of the rice-sack to show them the contents. From the distance Harry could not see clearly, but he had a glimpse of something that made his face turn white and brought a sick feeling to his heart. Mahbub shouldered the sack again and disappeared under the arches towards the shikarees' quarters. Harry was still standing at the window, with a white face, when Bob Cherry clapped him on the shoulder.

"What's the row?" asked Bob, surprised by his look.

"Mahbub has just come in."

"And—"

"He had something in a sack," said Harry, with a shiver. "You remember that a thousand rupees was offered for the head of Lazaroff?"

Bob nodded silently, and Wharton turned from the window. When the juniors met Hurree Janset Ram Singh later in the morning, Johnny Bull asked him if there was any news of the Bolshevik fugitive.

A grim smile for a moment flickered on the nabob's dusky face.

"The Russian will never reach Moscow," he said. "He will never plot again among the people of India."

And the juniors made no further inquiry; but Harry knew what had been in the rice-sack on Mahbub's shoulder that morning. The shikaree had earned his reward.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Faithful Nigger!

"A THOUSAND pounds!"

"Which?"

"A thousand quid, at least."

Billy Bunter sat in his apartment a few days later making up his packages for the road.

Bright days in Bhanipur had followed the end of the long struggle between the nabob and the rajah. Danger was over, trouble had passed like a summer cloud, and the chums of the Remove enjoyed to the full their days in the palace of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

But the best of things must come to an end, and the time drew nigh for the juniors to take their leave of Bhanipur.

They had enjoyed their stay in the little mountain kingdom; they had had a good time there. But they were looking forward to seeing Greyfriars again, to treading the old quadrangle, ragging in the studies, urging the flying ball on the football-field. They had time to reach England for the new term, and they were ready to go. Billy Bunter, indeed, was very keen to get back to civilisation, as he politely expressed it to Hurree Singh. For Bunter was a rich man now.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked in on the fat junior, having finished their own packing, and found him seated with glittering jewels on his fat knees. Bunter had taken out the massive gold chain and the collar of diamonds that had been presented to him by the nabob, and he was fairly gloating over them. Bunter—involuntarily, but indubitably—had been useful when Hurree Singh had been a prisoner in the hands of his rival for a throne, and the nabob's reward had been princely.

But Bunter had no idea of keeping permanently the nabob's gifts. His idea was to turn them into hard cash as soon as he reached England, and now he was examining them and appraising their value. Kasi Jee, packing clothes for his master, watched him out of the corner of his eye with a greedy look. But he dropped his eyes at once as the juniors came in.

"A thousand quid, at least," said Bunter. "What do you fellows think? These things are worth a thousand quid?"

"Quite!" said Wharton dryly.

Bunter blinked at him.

"You wouldn't sell them, in my place?" he sneered.

"No business of mine what you do with them," said the captain of the Remove.

"But you wouldn't?"

"As you ask me—no, I wouldn't!" said Harry curtly.

"Just like you!" said Bunter scornfully. "You'd hoard 'em up—what?"

"I should not sell a gift unless I were jolly hard up, anyhow!" said Wharton.

"Well, it's not my way to hoard," said Bunter loftily. "I'm jolly well going to turn them into money as soon as I set foot in a civilised country, see? And my

belief is that they'll fetch a thousand quid."

"Just like Bunter!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Well, pack them up safely," said Harry. "There are plenty of people about who would like to get their hands on them, Bunter."

"You bet!" grinned Bunter. "I'm going to take jolly good care of them, and I've specially warned James to do the same!"

"James?" repeated Wharton.

"My faithful nigger," said Bunter, with dignity.

"But Kasi Jee isn't coming with us, is he?" said Bob Cherry, in surprise.

"I'm going to take him to England with me."

"My hat!"

"But he belongs to Bhanipur," said Nugent. "I fancy that he's more or less the property of Hurree Singh."

"All the better. I shall ask Inky to give him to me," said Bunter coolly. "Then he will be my property."

"You ass!" said Bob. "That's all very well in a native state; but in British India he will bunk; and, anyhow, you can't play that game in England!"

"James is attached to me," explained Bunter, in an extremely dignified manner. "I've kicked him into a proper state of mind. He's going to be my faithful nigger, like you read of in story-books."

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

"You can cackle," said Bunter contemptuously. "I can tell you, I know how to deal with niggers, and make 'em faithful and attached, and all that. My character impresses them."

"Great pip!"

"They understand that I'm a pukka sahib, not like you fellows."

"Phew!"

"You can chortle, but you fellows will never have a faithful nigger to stick to you, and go through fire and water for you," said Bunter disdainfully. "It's only a fellow of my character that inspires attachment like that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So I'm taking James home with me," said Bunter. "I shall place him at—at Bunter Court when I go back to Greyfriars. Perhaps I might have him at the school—a fellow of my means ought to have a personal servant, even at school. James knows his place and his manners. I've kicked him often enough for that."

"You inspire attachment by kicking him, do you?" asked Bob.

"It's the best way," explained Bunter. "Go easy with them, and they despise you. Kick 'em hard, and kick 'em often, and they'll die for you!"

"Could I make you attached to me the same way?" asked Bob, drawing back his foot.

Bunter dodged round the chair in a great hurry.

"Keep off, you beast!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, you fellows!" said Bob. "We'll make Bunter attached to the lot of us, as he's shown us the way. First kick to me."

"Yarocoh! Keep off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cheeky beasts!" growled Bunter, behind the chair, and eyeing the juniors warily through his big spectacles. "I know you're jolly jealous because I've got a faithful nigger. Look here! You clear out, or I'll order my nigger to take his tulwar to you."

"Good old Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "We looked in to tell you we're starting in an hour. If you're not ready, you'll

be left behind at Bhanipur with your faithful nigger. Like me to help pack?"

"My faithful nigger is doing my packing," said Bunter loftily. "You fellows can clear!"

And the juniors, chuckling, cleared. Bunter's belief that he was able to inspire Kasi Jee, or anyone else, with faithful and loyal attachment, struck them as exceedingly comic. Bunter had no doubts. He was convinced that his manly, masterful character was exactly calculated to inspire loyal attachment in a "nigger." But the other fellows doubted very much whether Kasi Jee was likely to prove a faithful follower of the great William George.

However, they found that it was settled that Kasi Jee was to go. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was, perhaps, a little surprised by Bunter's request, but he acceded at once.

"My esteemed Bunter," he said. "If you desirefully wish the services of the naukhar, the worthy and ludicrous naukhar is at your disposal. He can travel as far as Delhi on the way home—or Bombay—"

"I want him for keeps."

"Oh!" ejaculated the nabob.

"I suppose he belongs to you more or less, Inky," asked Bunter.

"Morefully or lessfully," assented the schoolboy nabob. "There is no slavery in India, my esteemed Bunter; but there are certain ancient customs—and privileges. If the excellent Bunter desires to keep Kasi Jee, he shall keep him."

"Then I'll take him to England," said Bunter. "Even if the Head won't let me have him at Greyfriars to wait on me, I can show him to the fellows there, and then send him to my pater's place, see?"

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

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunter.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had been quite taken by storm, by the idea of Bunter showing off his faithful attendant to the Greyfriars fellows. But he became grave again at once.

"My esteemed Bunter, you shall take the naukhar, and he shall accompany you faithfully to England, if he does not get lostfully mislaid by the way," he assured.

"That's settled, then," said Bunter.

And when Billy Bunter quitted the palace of Bhanipur, he took with him, not only his gold chain and his collar of jewels, but his faithful nigger over and above. He kicked Kasi Jee before starting, in order to leave no doubt in the black man's mind as to who was who, and what was what. But if William George Bunter had been able to discern the thoughts that were going on behind Kasi Jee's submissive smile, he would not have felt quite so assured about the faithfulness of his nigger.

Fortunately for his peace of mind, Billy Bunter was not a thought-reader.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Farewell to Bhanipur!

"HOMEWARD bound!" said Bob Cherry.

In the cool of the early evening, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, nabob of Bhanipur, cast his farewell glance upon the palace of his fathers.

A splendid cavalcade paraded before the palace, to escort the nabob and the white sahibs as far as the frontier.

(Continued on page 17.)

HARRY WHARTON'S Football Supplement



No trouble or expense has been spared to make this supplement interesting and informative. In it all phases of football will be discussed by writers chosen from the foremost football authorities in the land. Readers may, therefore, rely upon the facts, figures, etc., mentioned from week to week in this supplement as being authentic. HARRY WHARTON, Editor.

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WHEN YOU GROW UP!

Football in Ten Years' Time!

By the "REF."

THOSE of us who can "look round the corner" see big changes coming in the football world, and I have just been trying to think about what the game will be like, say, in ten years' time.

That it will continue to grip there cannot be much doubt. Probably by the time you chaps grow up football, as a profession, will be well worth while; it is scarcely well worth while now. However, a lot of people are of opinion that the maximum wage rule is all wrong in football, and that a fellow should be allowed to earn as much from the game as the club for which he plays is prepared to pay. So it may well be that in ten years' time players will receive not eight or nine pounds a week for playing for a first-class team, but fifty pounds a week, or even more. I am not going into an argument as to whether this will be good or bad for the game; I am merely painting a picture of the future as I see it.

Wages have been kept comparatively low in the British Isles because there has been little or no competition for the services of star footballers from other countries. But the competition is coming. Already some of our best players have been lured to America to play for American clubs, and they go because they can get more money over there than they get in this country. This leads me to another thing which may have happened before you grow up—that the British Isles will no longer be able to claim supremacy at football. Other nations are coming along; the game is now played practically all over the world, and in a few years the countries which are only now in the learning stage may have become such experts that they will be able to beat us.

In a few years' time we shall probably send a team to America on Monday, say. They will play a match against America on Wednesday of the same week for the "Ashes" of football, and be back in England for their League match on the Saturday. The travel will be done through the air, and there may be cheap air excursions to take the supporters of England to watch English lads show what they can do against their football rivals in far-away countries.

I would not go so far as to say that when you grow up football will be played indoors in huge covered arenas. But it is pretty certain that in a few years' time practically every up-to-date football ground will be completely under cover so far as the spectators are concerned. Already we are heading that way, for Tottenham Hotspur have at the present moment room for forty thousand under cover.

Television, too, will inevitably be developed in the future, and when you grow up you may be able to watch every movement of a football match, played many miles away, while you sit beside your own fireside.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 970.

"A PEEP BEHIND the SCENES!"

What the Secretary Has to Do!

WHEN you are one of fifty thousand people attending a football match I wonder if you ever give a thought to all the work which has gone on, and is going on, behind the scenes? There must be a hand which pulls the strings; which sees that the arrangements are complete and perfect for the comfort of the spectators, and the carrying on of the club generally. And the man who does all this—who carries a heavy burden of care on his shoulders sometimes—is the man to whom nobody gives a thought—the secretary.

ALWAYS AT IT!

Let us take a walk into the secretary's office on match-day. Of course, we shall find more than the secretary there, for the secretary of each big club has to have many assistants on match-days. Before the game commences there is a regular queue of callers into the office—some wanting tickets, others wanting this, that, or the other. To all of these the secretary must be more or less polite.

Once the people are safely housed the secretary probably goes back to the office to work like a nigger while the game is in progress. I could tell you of secretaries of big football clubs who have not seen half a game on their own ground for years. They are too busy.

CHECKING THE CASH!

This cannot be wondered at in view of the fact that almost as soon as the match has started the gatemen close their turnstiles and troop into the office with the money they have already taken. The money is checked—by weighing, of course—and here may I add that near to many big football clubs the bank is opened on a Saturday evening so that the day's takings can be safely tucked away. Before the takings can be put into the bank they must be checked, naturally, and all the details entered in the books of the club. How rapidly this is done by the staff which is working behind the scenes while the match is in progress can be imagined when you remember that on days when big Cup ties are played the total receipts, down to the nearest shilling, are published in the evening papers along with the result of the games. I have been at big matches where the receipts have been over five thousand pounds, and we have been given the attendance figures and the receipts, absolutely accurately, a quarter of an hour before the end of the game. Now you know why, when a match is in progress on the pitch, there is nothing but hustle and bustle behind the scenes in the secretary's office.

MAN OF ALL WORK!

There are a thousand and one details which the secretary must attend to also. He has to "sign on" the gatemen during the week, and to arrange for the required number of police to keep order during the match. A football club has to pay ten shillings per head for these police. Then the secretary has to pay the wages of the players, keep the minutes of the directors' meetings, attend to all the demands for tickets—free and otherwise—for the coming match. And just to show how the office must attend to details, it may be added that the secretary of every big club must send to the headquarters of football the result of every match in which his side takes part to arrive within forty-eight hours of the match being finished. Seeing that every newspaper has published the result long before, this seems a superfluous; but if he doesn't do it the club is fined.



S. BISHOP, the clever West Ham half-back, is hot stuff at cricket, too! Photo shows him going out to bat for West Ham in their match with Queen's Park Rangers in the "Evening News" Cricket Cup Competition.

Where Referees are Slack!

OFT BROKEN RULES.

By Elisha Scott.

(The Irish International Goalkeeper
of Liverpool.)

LET me say right at the outset of these notes that one of the things I have never been able to understand is the anxiety shown by so many people to get jobs as referees. Not so long ago, in a weak moment, I promised to referee a match of minor importance, and long before the end of the game I had nothing but regrets that I had been so weak. In reference to that game, I can only hope that there was nobody present keeping tally of the mistakes I made. Frankly, it seemed easier to do the wrong thing than the right, and when it was all over I found myself wondering what it must be like for a referee to take on a big match, played by men who are all very much excited and strung up to the highest pitch, with fifty thousand or more people present.

CAN'T EVEN PLEASE HIMSELF.

Of this we can be quite certain—that very seldom does any referee succeed in pleasing everybody. In this connection I am reminded of a reply made by a referee friend of mine when I asked him how he got on in his efforts to please. This was his reply: "I realised long ago that it was no use trying to please those who play or those who watch the big matches, so nowadays I am quite content if I succeed in pleasing myself. But I must confess that I don't even succeed in doing that very often." Probably this referee had the business as nearly right as it is possible to get, for it is a fact that the referee who tries to please everybody is in for a bad time.

MANY PITFALLS.

Having got the foregoing off my chest by way of explanation, and as evidence that I realise as much as most people how difficult is the referee's job, I can now go on to speak of one or two common errors made by referees. Such criticism will, I think, be accepted in the spirit in which it is given—rather

with a desire to help than with an idea of censure. The rules of football are many and varied, and there are some which, in my view, are not adhered to by referees as closely as they might be.

BLOCKING THE FREE KICK.

Picking these rules out at random, one of those which is frequently broken without interference by referees is that relating to those free kicks which are given against the defending side within a short distance of the penalty-area. It is laid down in the rules that on all free-kick occasions the opposing players shall stand ten yards away from the ball; but every spectator will have seen many occasions when the referee has not insisted on this being done. When a free kick against them is being taken outside the penalty-area it is natural that the defenders shall try to get as near the ball as possible, because the nearer they are to it the less likely is a goal to be scored against them. It is quite usual on these occasions to see the referee measure out the ten yards, and when the kicker starts on his run to the ball the opposing players are ten yards

defenders an advantage which the rule-makers did not intend them to possess.

CHARGING THE GOALKEEPER.

Being a goalkeeper myself, I am naturally very closely interested in the rules which specially concern the man between the sticks, and in this connection there are certain directions in which, I think, referees might be a little more strict than they are. One of these concerns charging the goalkeeper. The rules state very clearly that the goalkeeper shall not be charged save when he is in possession of the ball, and I believe that an official ruling has been given that the act of fisting out shall not be construed as "in possession" within the meaning of the act. Yet I do know, as a goalkeeper, that I have often been charged when I have not been holding the ball; but the charge has been allowed to pass unpunished. Think what usually happens when a corner-kick is being taken. There are a host of fellows swarming round the goalkeeper. The ball is dropped in; the goalkeeper shapes to save, but in the act of doing so he gets a gentle charge, which is, nevertheless, sufficient to put him off his balance. This charge, according to the rules, should be punished, and, speaking purely as a goalkeeper, I should like to see our referees more strict in their interpretation of the rule.

LETTING THE GOALKEEPER OFF.

Having stated that the goalkeeper is sometimes handicapped by referees who allow him to be charged, let me now confess that in another direction referees often give goalkeepers more than the rules allow. I am referring now to the business of carrying the ball. The rules say that the goalkeeper is not allowed to take more than two steps with the ball in his possession—that is, without bouncing it on the ground. I am afraid I myself have broken this rule more than once without being punished, and I am quite certain that I have seen many other goalkeepers do the same thing. There are people who argue that the rule is a bad one, and that the goalkeeper should not be so hampered in his movements. With that side of the matter I have nothing to do here; rules are rules, and, I take it, are laid down to be obeyed.



ELISHA SCOTT.

away. But by the time the kicker reaches the ball the defenders have moved up considerably, and I have seen many free kicks allowed to pass when the defenders have been less than six yards from the ball at the moment it was kicked. Clearly the referees who permit this moving up are giving the

Elisha Scott

GOAL KICKS!

Last season Newcastle United ran a third team, which was called the Swifts, but this experiment has now been discontinued. I suppose the Swifts were a bit too slow.

The players of the Blackpool club trained for the present season on the sands—training which should at any rate have put a fair amount of grit into them.

Now that Sheffield Wednesday are back in the First Division it is about time they made up their minds what the name of the club actually is. On the gold watches presented to the players for winning promotion the words Sheffield Wednesday appears. But the official name of the limited company which runs

the club is The Wednesday. Seeing that they now play practically all their matches on a Saturday, why not make a real change and call the club Sheffield Saturday?

A man who has shown surprisingly good form with West Ham is Dowsey, from Sunderland. He is evidently out to prevent all possibility of the supporters of the club pronouncing his name with an "r"—Drowsey.

Billy Gillespie is again captain of Sheffield United, and Joe Smith is the skipper of Bolton Wanderers. I wonder how often these "old heads" will call "Tails" when they toss this season?

Among the players now on the staff at Bury is a new man named Broome. When he gets into the team he should make a clean sweep all right.

When we are in want of a new name for football, why not call it snakes and ladders? Clubs are always going up and down, aren't they? And just when they look like getting to the top somebody usually treads on them.

Last season a lot of football clubs tried to win their matches by what was known as the "W" formation in attack. From what I have already gathered this season the "W" formation has gone West.

Over fifty thousand pounds went to Scotland last season to buy footballers to play in England. Yet it is hinted that even now the Scottish clubs, like Oliver Twist, wouldn't mind a bit more.

No wonder Aston Villa are a contradictory team. By way of a start they have a Walker who is a very fast runner.

YOU MUST PLAY *to a* PLAN!

We won the Cup by tactics, but too many players *don't* think.

By "BILLY" GILLESPIE.

(The Captain of Sheffield United.)

THE alteration in the offside rule, which came into force last season, shows there is a very real necessity for a considerable amount of thought being put into the game. This does not mean that there has not been scope for thought in the past, or that footballers have continually played with their feet only instead of allowing their heads to guide their movements. But I insist that there is special scope for brain-work in the game, and that the future of the sport really depends on the amount of brain-work which is put into it.

PANDERING TO SPEED.

A lot of people I know see nothing but harm in the change in the offside rule. They describe it as mere pandering to the speed merchants: to those who can go like the wind and who have very little knowledge of the mainspring of the game—the art of ball control. These critics of the new offside rule, and the change which it has brought about, point to several games they have witnessed in which there has been very little science, but a great deal of rushing about and aimless kicking. I am not one of those who are, as yet, ready to range themselves dead against the change in the offside rule. There are certain dangers in it—that is obvious; certain grounds for fear. But there are also good reasons to hope; and I want to illustrate, if I can, the hopeful side of the business.

THE REAL DANGER.

If we footballers—we fellows who are now engaged in the top class—decide that the new conditions have cut out all the scope for artistry, all the chance to use our thinking-caps, then I would not give much for the sport in the future as a game to play or a game to watch. But there is no necessity for us to make up our minds to that effect. Rather should we go to the other extreme, and decide that brains still tell—that there is plenty of opportunity for hard thinking, and that the side most likely to pull through is the one whose tactics are the best suited to the particular occasion.

A FOOLISH CHANGE.

I am sorry, at the present time, to notice some really good footballers who have already got into what might be called the panic stage following the offside rule. They seem to have come to the conclusion that henceforward it is the hardest runner, as distinct from the best footballer, who will go farthest in the game. I have in mind as I write one particular set of forwards. Before the change they were capable of playing very pretty football indeed, with the whole of the attackers usually arranged in a more or less straight line across the field. In the past, these attackers have got a lot of goals by neat scheming. Alas! when I saw them last season they had thrown all their old-time plans to the winds, apparently. Instead of the live-in-line formation of their attack, they had decided on a policy of sending

their centre-forward as far up the field as he could get, almost, while the remainder of the attackers concentrated all their energy in sending the ball to him. The result of the change was disastrous. In the first place, it killed the pretty attacking movements which characterised the play of the side before the change in the rule. But even in regard to this particular team I have a hope. It is that through the defeats which came their way they will be compelled to see the folly of cutting out the brain-work—the dangers of relying on dash entirely.

TALKS ON TACTICS.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that a consideration of tactics had paid in the past, and I do not think there is any question but that tactics will continue to tell in the future. That, at any rate, is my hope. If you ask me, in



"BILLY" GILLESPIE.

referring to the past, to tell you the big reason why we won the Cup the season before last, I should reply in just one word—tactics. If you went to the trouble of analysing our team which won the Cup, I think you would come to the conclusion that there was nothing particularly wonderful about it. We had eleven good, honest triers, of course, with every man determined to keep as fit as a fiddle, and out to do his best for the team. Such a spirit tells, naturally, and no side can really hope to succeed without the team spirit. But before every Cup tie we played in our successful season we got together for a general talk on the tactics which we thought would best see us through our forthcoming test. While the games were actually in progress we also tried to think about our tactics all the time.

A PLAN WHICH WORKED.

As an example, there was one game against West Bromwich Albion in the Fourth Round. Everybody seemed to think the Albion were the potential Cup-

winners, and we at Sheffield certainly appreciated the fact that we were faced with a big ordeal. We thought out beforehand a plan of campaign, and I think I may say it worked. I hope the personal note will be excused here, because it is rather necessary if I am to illustrate my point. It was pretty evident soon after our game started that the Albion had decided that the United left wing was the place whence the danger would come. Their right-half seemed to have been given instructions that he must watch me carefully. I don't mind this sort of thing, of course, and if the Albion had decided that Tunstall and myself would work the damage, it was good tactics on their part to watch us carefully.

THAT FINAL TIE GAME

For this state of affairs, however, we developed a counter-stroke during the game. I made up my mind that feeding my partner in the ordinary way would be rather a waste of time. Instead, I wandered over to the right wing once or twice, and the half-back who had been told off to watch me followed. I liked to see him doing this, and I even went to the length of allowing him to appear successful in his efforts to thwart me. But after wandering a few times, and putting the ball over to the right, I suddenly changed my tactics and swung the object back to the left. Tunstall was unmarked, and he got a goal. That is just one example. Plenty more could be given. Those who were present at the Cup Final of 1925 will remember that in the early stages we fed our right win repeatedly, and Mercer responded finely to the call. But it was Tunstall who got the goal, because, as I think, we had lulled that part of the Cardiff City defence into a false sense of security.

A BAD MASTER.

Just one final word on this question of tactics before I finish. It is all very well to work out a scheme of attack and defence, and no side can be worse off for having a plan of campaign. But good footballers are always masters of their plan—they don't allow it to boss them. By that I mean that an open mind must be maintained, and if it is perfectly obvious that the plan of campaign isn't working, then a change should be made.

Here, of course, is where the real captain comes into his own and proves his value to the side. The good skipper is able to see at a very early stage of the game whether the tactics which have been discussed and agreed upon before the match are working out well and according to plan. If he decides that the tactics are not suited either to the particular opponents or the state of the pitch, then he will pass the word along for the methods to be changed. The switching of a couple of players during the course of a game will make the difference between winning and losing a match. After all, this change of the formation of a team can often be made without any possibility of anything being lost. If your side is two goals down twenty minutes from the end and not playing well, you can only lose if you change your centre-forward. And by putting a new man into the middle for those last few minutes you may turn defeat into victory.

W. Gillespie

Players and Their Pets!



THERE ARE OTHER THINGS OF INTEREST IN THE LIFE OF A FOOTBALLER BESIDES GOALS.

DURING a match on the Manchester City ground last season the assembled spectators had a little reminder that their heroes—the professional players—are very human sort of fellows. The Manchester City team tripped on to the field to start their game, and mixed with the applause there was a big laugh, for sneaking behind the last player and on to the field was a nutty little fox-terrier. It looked to all the world as though it was going out in all seriousness to take its part in the game. The dog was one which belonged to the Manchester City half-back, Charlie Pringle, and also insisted on following him on to the field. Of course, this can't be allowed, and Charlie gave the dog an affectionate pat and sent it home—to the dog's most obvious disgust. Perhaps the dog thought—who can tell?—that it might help Manchester City to win the match and gain the points of which they were in such need.

A CHANGE FROM FOOTBALL!

Charlie Pringle's dog provided only one of the many instances which could be given of players who have pets with which they spend hours when at home.

As a matter of fact, it is most interesting to visit the footballers in their own homes, for there one finds them forgetting all about the strenuous footballing life in looking after their pets. There is nothing, save, perhaps, the scoring of goals, in which Jack Cock takes quite so much interest as in his chickens. He rears them himself, and takes such care of them that his colleagues at Plymouth sometimes ask him if he has shaken hands with them all before starting out to play a match away from home.

PIGEONS!

Bert Smith, the Tottenham Hotspur International half-back, has pets of another kind, being very much interested in homing pigeons. Smith has some very valuable birds at his home in Tottenham, and I believe he is willing to challenge any other footballer to a homing-bird flight. Believe me, though, the footballer who takes up Smith's challenge will need to produce some quick goers.

Another Tottenham player, Tom Clay, catches fish as a spare-time hobby, and he also keeps some of them at home. If you got up any nice autumn morning about seven o'clock, and walked over to the River Lea, which runs near

Tottenham, you would probably find Tommy Clay there, fishing in deadly earnest.

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY!

Many of the Aston Villa players also copy Clay in having fishing as a hobby. The father of Frank Moss, the famous half-back, is probably responsible for this. Moss' father is a great fisherman. Frank is anxious to beat his father's fishing stories, and with Dorrell and Walker can often be seen casting a fly into the rivers and ponds of the Midlands. As Spiers, the Villa goalkeeper, rather fancies himself as an artist, it is not surprising that he has painted a picture of Frank Moss wrestling with a trout—or perhaps it is a salmon.

SPEED MERCHANTS!

While many of the footballers have live pets—cats, dogs, hens, and even white mice—some of them spend their spare time in other interesting ways. Albert Keeping, the full back, of Southampton, is very keen on flying, and one of these days, when the little one-seater aeroplane comes on the market, I sha'n't be a bit surprised to find that Keeping is among the first to fly from one ground to another. On second thoughts, though, flying might be considered rather too dangerous a hobby for the professional footballer. Certainly motor-cycling has proved an expensive hobby, so far as some players are concerned. There is Dixie Dean, for instance, the Everton centre-forward, at present kept out of football owing to injuries sustained while motor-cycling during the summer.

TRICKS of the TRADE!

A new series of articles showing how the experts do their job.

No. 3.—Tommy Clay, the Copy-book Full-back of the Spurs.

TOMMY CLAY came to Tottenham Hotspur in rather peculiar circumstances. Twelve years ago the Spurs had to play Leicester Fosse, as they were then, in a Cup tie, and the game ended in a draw of five goals each. Now, a defence which has had five goals scored against it is often blamed; but the manager of Tottenham Hotspur didn't find fault with the Leicester defence. He thought Tommy Clay had played a fine game, and after the Cup difference between Leicester and the Spurs had been settled, Tom Clay was transferred to the Spurs.

Now this famous right full-back is obviously not so young as he used to be, and possibly not quite so good, either, as he was two or three seasons back. But if any boy asked me to-day which full-back he should go to watch with a view to copying his methods, I should say Clay, every time. He comes as near being

AN IDEAL DEFENDER

as any player in the game, and the lad who successfully copied this Tottenham Hotspur player would not go very far wrong.

Position play is an art which must be developed by every good full-back, and Tommy of the fair hair knows all the tricks of the art of position play. "What a rotten pass!" says the man in the crowd, as he sees the outside-left put the ball right at the toe of Clay. But it isn't necessarily a rotten pass. Clay has made up his mind exactly what the player is likely to do, and has placed

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himself, quietly and without anybody else noticing it, in the position in which he is most likely to intercept the ball.

"When I am wondering where to go—in what position to place myself," said Clay to me not long ago, "I always try to think what the player in possession of the ball is most likely to do. I don't let him think I am going to stop him from doing it, but I get into such a position that I can prevent him from doing it."

Practically every time you will see Clay

TACKLING HIS MAN FROM THE INSIDE,

because Clay knows—as every good full-back should know—that by forcing his

opponent out towards the touchline he is keeping the ball away from his own goal. The full-back who tackles from the outside of the player enables the winger to cut inwards, and thus place the goal he is aiming at in greater danger than would be the case if the winger were forced outwards.

When in real difficulty, Clay never hesitates to pass the ball back to his goalkeeper; but much more frequently does he "kid" his opponent that he is going to pass back. He signals to the goalkeeper to come out a little way; the forward who is worrying Clay then runs on in the hope of getting the backward pass before the goalkeeper. This is what Clay wants him to do, and Tommy will then wheel round and kick the ball away without passing back to the goalkeeper at all.

There are plenty of full-backs who think that the beginning and the end of their job is to

GET THE BALL AND THEN KICK IT

as hard as they can in the direction of the other goal. That is not Clay's way, however. He believes in the gentle kick, rather than the hefty lunge, and often I have seen him just tap the ball along to his half-back with the side of his boot. I once saw Clay play in an International match. When it was over a member of the England selection committee declared that he did not think much of Clay as a full-back, because he did not kick the ball hard enough. What a foolish idea. Clay can kick a ball as hard as any man—watch him firing in a penalty-kick—but he believes that it is a part of the full-back's job to start an attack by his own side, as well as to break up the attacks of the other fellows.



TOMMY CLAY.



(Continued from page 12.)

Five hundred troopers of Bhanipur, in their most gorgeous raiment, mounted round the towering elephant of the Jam Bahadur. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh mounted into the howdah with his uncle, while Harry Wharton & Co. packed into the colonel's car, with Bunter and Colonel Wharton. Pandy Din, the khitmutghar, drove the baggage-car; and he was accompanied by Kasi Jee, the faithful follower of William George Bunter. There was a blare of trumpets and a clash of cymbals, and the procession started down the street to the city gates amid salaaming crowds. "We're going off in style!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"We've had a jolly time, take it in all," said Harry Wharton. "I'm jolly glad we came home with Inky. We'll come along to Bhanipur again some day—what?"

"What-ho!" said Bob.

"I mean to," said Bunter. "I've told Inky that I will be his prime minister when he is of age, and reigns in Bhanipur."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I suppose Inky jumped at the offer!" chuckled Nugent. "In fact, I think the jumpfulness must have been terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's your jolly old treasure, Bunter?" asked Bob. "Is Kasi Jee carrying it for you?"

"No jolly fear!" said Bunter promptly. "Kasi Jee is faithful, of course—deeply attached to his master. But I don't see trusting a thousand quids in his paws."

"Well, that shows a little sense, anyhow," grinned Bob. "It's barely possible that Kasi Jee might disappear over the horizon."

"Oh, he wouldn't leave me for anything," said Bunter confidently. "I don't expect you fellows to understand—there's nothing about you, you see, to inspire these deep and loyal attachments. It's different with me. All the same, I'm keeping the stuff about me; can't be too careful. I've got the things in an inside pocket. Kasi Jee offered to carry them for me."

"Oh!"

"Of course, he's glad to make himself useful in any way he can, being devoted to me."

"Hem!"

"But a fellow can't be too careful!" said Bunter, with a wise shake of the head.

On that point, the chums of the Remove agreed with Bunter. They had no faith whatever in Bunter's system of kicking a black man into loyal attachment, and they could not help thinking that Kasi Jee probably had his own personal reasons for his willingness to accompany the Owl of the Remove from Bhanipur to far-off England—if indeed he was willing at all! It seemed to them probable that Kasi Jee had reasons of his own for leaving Bhanipur, and was very likely to drop out of the party before Bombay was reached. But they did not give

the matter much thought; and certainly they did not guess what was actually working in the wily naukars' mind.

The cavalcade proceeded by easy stages to the frontier of Bhanipur. That night they camped in a "serai" half-way to the frontier; and the next morning, in the cool before the sun was high, resumed the route. At noon they reached the frontier fortress of Bhanipur, and rested there till the heat of the day was past.

At this point, the Jam Bahadur had to part with his nephews and turn back; beyond the border lay British territory. After that point, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh ceased to be the Eastern nabob, and was to become once more Inky of the Remove, and travel in the car with his chums.

The Jam Bahadur embraced the nabob affectionately and took his leave of him with speeches in flowing Hindustani. Then he remounted into the howdah on his tall elephant, after shaking hands all round with the juniors and the colonel. Then Mook Mookerjee, who had travelled with the party as far as the frontier, took his leave; but Hurree Singh's old moon-shee, from whom he had learned English, made his farewells in that language. Harry Wharton & Co. contrived to keep their faces very serious while the wise old moon-shee talked in English.

"Being departful for country beyond the black water," said Mook Mookerjee. "Good fortune and prosperfulness accompany lord and master Nabob. May the sunshine of happiness banish the cloudiness of adversity, and the hand of friendship avert the kick of calamity."

"Hear, hear!" murmured Bob.

"With friendly and ridiculous respect, I taking leave of white sahibs, friends of noble master and nabob," said Mook Mookerjee. "May you live for ever in the shade of the palm trees in your native land; may you be blessed with many beautiful wives."

"Oh!"

"Thanks, old chap!" said Bob Cherry. "The thankfulness of our esteemed selves is terrific."

And Mook Mookerjee salaamed himself away.

There was a blare of trumpets; and the car rolled away on the road to Rawalpindi, and the Jam Bahadur and his troop turned back to Bhanipur.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looked back, till the last turban of the troopers, and the tall elephant of the Jam, had vanished from sight.

Then he settled down in his seat in the car, with a somewhat pensive expression on his dusky face.

He was silent for a long time, as the car rolled rapidly along the road over the mountain pass, with the Punjabi chauffeur at the wheel. Behind came the baggage-cart driven by Pandy Din, with Kasi Jee sitting like an expressionless image of bronze beside the khitmutghar. The sun set behind the mountains; the moon sailed up, streaming silvery light over hill and ghaunt and nullah.

A light gleamed by the roadside; the car halted.

"The dak!" said the colonel.

It was the dak bungalow, at which the party had rested for a night on their way to Bhanipur. It was to shelter them once more, on their homeward journey.

The khansama came out bowing and salaaming, beaming with smiles to greet the travellers.

"I say, you fellows, I'm hungry!" remarked Billy Bunter, as he rolled out of the car.

"Go hon!" murmured Bob.

"You fellows remember staying here on our way up to Bhanipur," said Bunter. "You remember what happened?"

"I remember you landed yourself in trouble, as usual," said Bob.

"Eh? Oh! Yes! I don't mean that, ass! I mean we had a ripping supper—topping! A pilau, I think they call it in their frightful language; but it was jolly good!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently it was only that important matter that had lingered in Bunter's memory.

The khansama bowed and salaamed his guests into the dak, and there was a supper that satisfied even Bunter. After which the juniors turned into the rooms assigned to them. Harry Wharton had the pleasure—or otherwise—of sharing the room in which Bunter lay down to repose, and for some time he was kept awake by the powerful snore of the fat junior at close quarters.

He slumbered at last, however. Whether it was Bunter's hefty snore so close at hand, or some other cause, Wharton awakened about midnight, and he was conscious that there was a movement in the room. The starlight glimmered in at the window through the netting and it showed a dim, dusky form that stooped by Bunter's bed.

Wharton sat up abruptly.

"What's that?" he exclaimed sharply.

"Who's there?"

The dim form by Bunter's bed straightened up at once, and Wharton caught a gleam of glinting eyes.

"Sahib!"

"Is that Kasi Jee?" asked Harry, recognising the voice.

"Hau, sahib."

Harry peered suspiciously at the naukars in the gloom.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Kasi Jee come to see his master," murmured the soft, submissive voice of the naukars. "Me hearing Bunter Sahib making noise with nose in sleeping, and thinking him ill."

Wharton stepped out of his bed.

The explanation was more or less plausible, but the captain of the Remove was not satisfied. He did not quite trust the naukars; Kasi Jee was a little too submissive and cringing for his taste.

"Well, get out!" said Harry.

"To hear is to obey, sahib."

The naukars glided from the room.

Wharton fastened the bar of the door before he returned to bed. Whether the naukars was anxious about his snoring master, to whom he was so devotedly attached, or whether he had some other motive, he had no further chance that night of bestowing his attentions upon William George Bunter.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Asks For It!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. arrived at Rawalpindi the following day. From Rawalpindi the railroad bore them on their way to Lahore and Delhi. At the railway-station Kasi Jee carried the personal baggage of William George Bunter—and the Owl of the Remove strutted considerably. He was the only fellow in the party who had a personal servant, the rest "whacking" out the services of Pandy Din, the khitmutghar. This

was exactly as it should be, in Bunter's opinion.

At the palace in Bhanipur the nabob's hospitality had been boundless; numberless dusky servants had waited on the orders of the sahibs, and Bunter had spread himself to a terrific extent. He missed it all now, but it was a consolation to have retained the special services of a faithful nigger. Bunter's fat swank made the other fellows smile, but the Owl of the Remove did not mind their smiles. He was, as he said, accustomed to jealousy and envy.

But Wharton had not forgotten the incident at the dak bungalow, and while they waited for the Lahore train he spoke seriously to Bunter on the subject. Bunter listened, with a mocking, fat grin. Bunter was the fellow who knew, so to speak, and he was not in need of advice from lesser intellects.

"Better send that chap back, Bunter," said Harry.

"Rats!" said the Owl of the Remove derisively.

"Why do you think he has come with you?" asked Wharton.

"Devoted attachment——"

"You ass!"

"Go it!" said Bunter contemptuously. "I'm used to this! Jealousy and envy all round!"

"Look here," said Harry quietly, "at the dak bungalow in the hills I woke up and found Kasi Jee in the room groping over your bed."

"Well?"

"Well, I don't trust him!"

"You wouldn't!" said Bunter. "You are suspicious!"

Wharton-breathed hard.

"Do have a little sense, Bunter! The man must have some object in sticking to you like this."

"I've told you what it is. He's my faithful nigger."

"Oh dear!"

"It's character that does it," explained Bunter. "You'd never understand, Wharton; no nigger will ever become your faithful follower. Character does it—strong, masterful character and——"

"For goodness' sake, Bunter, don't be such a howling ass!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove impatiently. "Are you paying the man any wages?"

"Certainly not!"

"Then why should he stick to you?"

"Faithful niggers don't need wages. A kind word from me makes him happy," said Bunter loftily. "Like the old song, you know, about somebody who wept with delight when you gave him a smile, and trembled with fear at your frown. See?"

"Have you got your jewels safe?"

"Eh? Yes!"

"Well, Kasi Jee was not nosing in the room for nothing," said Harry. "He said he thought you were ill, and was anxious about you——"

"Quite right! He's so devotedly attached, you see——"

"It looks to me as if he was after your loot."

"What rot!"

"Well, I've given you the tip," said Harry, losing patience. "The man is a wily fellow, and if you don't get shut of him you'll take your chance."

Bunter sneered.

"Pile it on!" he said. "All superior characters get this envious detraction from common people. I'm used to it."

"Oh, my hat!"

Harry Wharton gave it up at that. Bunter was at liberty to do as he liked, and the captain of the Remove, having warned him, left it at that. He could

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not help thinking that before he quitted India Bunter would have a rude awakening on the subject of his faithful nigger; but it was Bunter's own business, and evidently it was useless to talk to the fat and fatuous Owl.

So Kasi Jee boarded the train with the Greyfriars party and travelled with them to Lahore and on to Delhi.

Bunter, in his fat self-satisfaction, declined to believe that the naukhar had any motive but devoted loyalty to a noble and magnificent master. But possibly Wharton's warning lingered in his fat mind, all the same, for he was extremely careful of the gift of Hurree Singh, which he kept about his fat person day and night; and at the various places where the party stopped on their return journey to Bombay Bunter took care never to sleep in a room by himself. If, as Wharton more than half suspected, the naukhar had designs on Bunter's jewels, he had no chance of annexing them before the Greyfriars party arrived at Bombay.

At Bombay the party were to spend several days before taking the steamer for home.

Colonel Wharton had engaged quarters at the Palm Tree Hotel, where Kasi Jee was still in attendance upon Bunter. On their previous visit the Greyfriars party had been hurried in their movements on their way to Bhanipur. They were more at leisure now, and, under the colonel's guidance, the juniors roamed over the wonderful city of the East, and saw all that was to be seen. Bunter, however, preferred to loaf in the hotel veranda, under the cooling punkab, and to keep Kasi Jee continually busy bringing him refreshments, liquid and solid.

After Bombay, India would be left behind, and if Kasi Jee intended to remain in his native country—as the juniors believed—he would have to quit his magnificent master there. But the fatuous Owl was quite assured that his faithful nigger was prepared to cross the "black water" with him, and Kasi Jee gave no sign of desiring to go.

When the last evening in Bombay came round even Wharton began to wonder a little. The colonel was spending a few hours that evening at a club with some of his old military acquaintances, and the juniors, tired from a ramble in the city, were taking their ease on the hotel veranda till bed-time. Kasi Jee lurked among the great palms in teakwood tubs on the veranda, waiting on the orders of his master. Harry Wharton glanced at him, and glanced at the fat and fatuous face of Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove understood his glance, and grinned.

"You understand now that James is sticking to me, what?" he chuckled.

"The attachfulness of the esteemed Kasi Jee is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh with a curious glance at the naukhar.

"Too terrific to be genuine," grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"Is the loot still safe, Bunter?" grinned Nugent.

"Yes, you ass!"

"Then it beats me!"

"Oh, you fellows will never understand the faithful, dog-like attachment of a black man for a strong, masterful character," said Bunter disdainfully.

"It's really the kicking that does it. I kick James every day for his own good. Sometimes I give him a kind word to make him happy. He would go through fire and water for me."

Bunter blinked at the naukhar.

"James!" he hooted.

"Han, sahib?"

"Didn't I tell you to bring coffee?"

"The coffee coming, noble sahib."

"You've kept me waiting two minutes," said Bunter. "Come here!"

"Noble master——"

Biff!

Kasi Jee received the drive of Bunter's boot with his usual submission. He salaamed away.

"That's the way to treat 'em!" said Bunter. "Masterfulness does it. James is attached to me like a faithful dog, you know."

Kasi Jee came back with a tray laden with coffee-cups. He set it on the little table round which the juniors were grouped, screened from the rest of the veranda by spreading palms. With a deft hand the naukhar poured out the coffee, and salaamed away again.

"Well, the giddy naukhar makes jolly good coffee, anyhow," said Bob Cherry, as he finished his cup.

"I'm going to fix it with the Head to let me keep him at Greyfriars," said Bunter. "He can wait on me in Study No. 7, you know."

"I can see the Head allowing it," chuckled Nugent.

"I say, I'm jolly sleepy," said Johnny Bull. "Are we waiting up till the colonel comes back?"

"He was to be back by nine," said Harry. "May as well wait."

"Pleasant enough here, and these chairs are jolly comfy," yawned Bob, leaning back luxuriously in the long cane chair.

Snore!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter's gone to sleep!"

"No need to tell us that," grinned Johnny Bull drowsily. "All Bombay can hear him."

Bob closed his eyes for a moment. They remained closed. Somehow or other a deep drowsiness came over all the juniors. Ten minutes after drinking that excellent coffee made by the naukhar they were all nodding off, and silence reigned round the table and the coffee-cups, broken only by Billy Bunter's stertorous snore.

There was a soft footfall, and Kasi Jee glided through the palms.

"Sahib!" murmured the naukhar.

No answer. The six Greyfriars juniors were sleeping soundly.

"Sahib!" repeated the naukhar in a louder voice.

No answer, and no movement. Kasi Jee grinned. His black eyes glittered as he stooped over Bunter, and his thievish fingers groped through the pockets of the slumbering Owl.

A couple of minutes were enough for Kasi Jee.

Something that glittered and sparkled glided from his dusky hand into the recesses of his loose, linen garments.

Then the naukhar glided softly away.

Bunter snored on.

A slinking figure glided through the streets of Bombay, to disappear into a native shop in a bazaar at a distance from the hotel. It was Kasi Jee the naukhar who disappeared into the shop, brown-skinned and neatly clad in white linen. It was a black-skinned coolie in tattered garments who emerged, to take a seat in a crowded third-class carriage in a train that pulled out of Bombay for the north. Kasi Jee, disguised

ANSWERS
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and safe, with Bunter's loot safely hidden in his rags, grinned serenely as the train bore him away from Bombay.

Bunter snored on, regardless.

The Owl of the Remove did not know it yet. But Bunter had lost his faithful nigger.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Alas!

COLONEL WHARTON stepped out on to the veranda and glanced about him, and looked a little puzzled. Among the palms under the shaded electric lights a good many people were smoking cigars and chatting, or sipping coffee and sherbet. The colonel expected to find the Greyfriars juniors there, and he strolled along looking for them. Naturally he expected to hear their voices if they were there, and he was quite surprised when he came on them suddenly. The six juniors were all leaning back in their chairs, fast asleep, and of their assiduous attendant, Kasi Jee, nothing was to be seen. Colonel Wharton stopped and stared at the sleeping schoolboys in surprise. Then he touched his nephew on the shoulder.

"Like a log, old chap," said Wharton. "Look at the others! What the dickens made us all go off like that?"

"Blessed if I know! I've got a headache."

"Same here, and a queer taste in my mouth," said Wharton. "Here, Franky, Johnny, Inky!"

The other juniors were awakened. But it was useless to shake Billy Bunter. He slept on regardless.

Shake, shake, shake, shake!

Bunter only grunted and snored.

"Better help him to bed," said Colonel Wharton. "Where is Kasi Jee?"

"About somewhere, I suppose," said Harry. "I haven't seen him since he brought us the coffee."

"Pandy Din!"

The khitmutghar came up.

"Help Bunter sahbi to his room."

Billy Bunter was lifted in the sinewy arms of the khitmutghar, and taken into the hotel, and to his room. The juniors followed, still feeling dazed.

Colonel Wharton followed them, puzzled and perplexed.

Bunter was laid on his bed, still snoring stertorously. Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round him.

"My esteemed chums," murmured

while he was gone. The fat junior's head and face were bathed in cold water, and he soon showed signs of returning consciousness. Probably the treacherous naukhar had given him a rather stronger dose than the other fellows, to make sure of him while robbing him. Bunter's little round eyes opened at last, blinking dizzily.

"I say, you fellows!" he murmured.

"Bunter—"

"Groogh! 'Tain't rising-bell!" mumbled Bunter.

"Fathead! You're not at Greyfriars now," said Bob. "Wake up, Bunter! Sit up, old man!"

"Leave a fellow alone! I'm sleepy!"

"My esteemed Bunter—"

"Shurrup! I'm going to sleep!"

"Bunter!" said the colonel's deep voice. "Pull yourself together, my boy! Something was mixed in your coffee to send you to sleep."

Snore!

"Beast! Lemme alone!"

"I think you have been robbed, Bunter," said the colonel. "You had something of value about you. See if it is safe."

"Eh!"

Bunter started into wide wakefulness. "It looks as if Kasi Jee has picked

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W. DEFFMAN, 288, Southbury Road, Enfield; W. HEWITT, 2, St. Albans Villas, Durants Road, Ponders End, N.
A. McHUGH, 6, Perth Street, Belfast; F. MARGETSON, 80, Homesdale Road, Bromley, Kent; R. RANDALL, 10,
Doveleys Road, Pendleton, Manchester; J. WEEDEN, 91, Mildmay Road, Chelmsford.

"Harry!"

The captain of the Remove did not answer. He did not wake. He slept on, oblivious of the touch on his shoulder.

"Harry!" repeated his uncle, more and more surprised. And he shook the junior vigorously.

Still Wharton did not open his eyes.

All the juniors were breathing steadily. Bunter's snore rumbled among the palms.

Feeling somewhat uneasy, the colonel grasped his nephew by the shoulders and jerked him from the chair.

"Harry, what's the matter with you?"

Wharton's eyes opened at last.

He rubbed them, and stared dizzily at his uncle, and then passed his hand over his head. He seemed dazed.

"I—I've been asleep!" he stammered.

"All of you were asleep," said the astonished old gentleman. "There is something very odd about this."

"I—I feel rather queer," said Harry. "I—I think I dropped off after the coffee. Here, Bob, wake up!"

Bob Cherry woke up as the captain of the Remove shook him. He blinked dazedly at Harry.

"Have I been asleep?" he yawned.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "I have a taste in my worthy mouth. There was something in the coffee."

"In the coffee?" repeated Wharton.

The schoolboy nabob nodded.

"There was a drug in the coffee, my excellent chum, some decoction of opium was mixed in it. The esteemed Kasi Jee has been playing trickfully."

Wharton started.

"Kasi Jee! He made the coffee!" he exclaimed. "You think that the naukhar sent us to sleep on purpose, Inky?"

"The thoughtfulness is terrific!"

"But why?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned. "I fancy you will guess the reason, my esteemed Bob, if you searchfully look through the pockets of the ineffable Bunter. The worthy execrable naukhar had his reasons for following the ridiculous Bunter as far as Bonibay."

"Oh, my hat!"

Colonel Wharton's face set grimly. The nabob's words were quite sufficient to enlighten him.

"You have been drugged, my boys," he said. "A harmless drug, doubtless; the effects will be gone by to-morrow. But it is probable that Bunter's folly has cost him a great deal. Pandy Din, find out at once if the naukhar is still in the hotel."

The khitmutghar hurried away.

Attention was concentrated on Bunter

your pockets, Bunter," said Harry. "Find out at once."

"Rot!"

"You fat duffer—"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Bunter irritably. "Can't you let Kasi Jee alone? This rotten jealousy because I've got a faithful nigger attached to me is getting sickening!"

"Examine your pockets at once, Bunter," said Colonel Wharton. "Do you hear?"

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter sulkily. "I know the stuff is safe enough, and Kasi Jee is all right. I—"

Bunter stopped suddenly as he groped in the pocket where he had so carefully stored the gold chain and the diamond collar. A startling change came over his fat face.

"Yaroooh!"

"Well?" snapped the colonel.

"I've been robbed!" yelled Bunter.

"I thought so! Make sure that the things are gone, and I will communicate with the police at once. It may be barely possible to stop the naukhar."

Bunter went feverishly through his pockets. But the goods were gone. There was no doubt about that. Bunter's visions of wealth had faded; his thousand quids were gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream! He glared suspiciously at the juniors.

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"Look here, you rotters, if this is a lark—"

"What?" ejaculated Wharton.

"If you've taken those things out of my pocket for a rotten joke while I was asleep—"

"You fat idiot!" roared Bob Cherry. "Can't you understand that you were drugged in the coffee Kasi Jee made for you, and that he's picked your pocket and bunked?"

"Rot!"

"Look here, Bunter—" said Nugent. "Bosh! My nigger is too attached to me to do anything of the sort. Send for him!" snorted Bunter.

"Pandy Din is looking for him now," said Johnny Bull. "I'll lay a fiver to a banana that he doesn't find him."

"Rubbish!"

Pandy Din glided back into the room. Colonel Wharton gave him an inquiring look.

"Kasi Jee is gone, sahib. He was seen to leave the hotel an hour ago," said the khinmutghar. "Not being seen to return."

"He's gone out for something, and he will come back," said Bunter, still not convinced.

"Fathead! Where are the things, then?"

"I suppose somebody picked my pocket while I was asleep, if it wasn't you rotters larking! It wasn't my faithful nigger!"

"Ass!"

Colonel Wharton went down to speak to the hotel manager, who sent at once for the police. Billy Bunter was not thinking of sleep now. He had a headache; but he declined to believe that it was the result of a drug administered by the wily naukar.

The police-officer who came to inquire into the robbery, however, took quite a different view; and he promised the colonel that every effort should be made to trace and capture the naukar. But he held out little hope of success; it was easy for the thief to vanish into the trackless warren of the native town, if, indeed, he was not already outside the city and fleeing for parts unknown.

That evening was not a happy one for Bunter.

It was late when he turned in.

Even when he turned in he did not sleep.

His thoughts were on the jewels he had lost—the price of which was to have made him a rich man at home, and to have provided him with endless feeds at Greyfriars. Those feeds were destined never to be devoured by the Owl of the Remove. Late into the night Billy Bunter groaned dismally over his loss—dismally and dolorously.

The next morning the Greyfriars party had to take their passage on the P. & O. boat for Suez, on which their cabins were already booked. Bunter objected strenuously.

"I'm not going without my property!" he howled. "I've been robbed! Look here, let's wait at Bombay at least till Kasi Jee comes back. I'm going to take him home with me, as you know."

"You burbling idiot!" said Bob. "Can't you understand even yet that Kasi Jee has bunked with your loot, and that he will never be seen again within a hundred miles of Bombay?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Our passage is taken on the steamer, Bunter," said Colonel Wharton quietly. "There is no possibility of delay. The matter remains in the hands of the Bombay police, who will do all that is possible; your presence here could give no assistance."

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"But—" gasped Bunter.

"If anything is seen again of Kasi Jee or the jewels, we shall be apprised of it," said the colonel. "But you may as well make up your mind that the loss is irretrievable. The man is probably hundreds of miles away by this time, and he has all India to choose from for a hiding-place. You have only your own folly to thank for what has happened; and I hope that the lesson will not be lost on you!"

"But—"

"That is enough!" The colonel looked at his watch. "We start in one hour from now. Finish your packing, and be ready; and say no more."

"Oh dear!"

There was no help for it.

Perhaps even Bunter realised at last, that it really was his "faithful" nigger who had robbed him, and that there was no chance of ever seeing again either Kasi Jee or the jewels. Anyhow, he had to make up his fat mind to it; and at the appointed time he was on board the steamer with the rest of the Greyfriars party. But he sighed deeply as the steamer glided out into the Indian Ocean.

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh stood on the deck, looking back at the shores of India till they were lost to sight.

Bunter comforted himself with a second breakfast.

During the long run across the Arabian Sea, and through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and up the Red Sea to Suez, Bunter's fat face wore an almost continuously lugubrious expression.

His riches had taken unto themselves wings and flown away; and he had lost his faithful nigger! And Bunter, like Rachel of old, mourned for that which was lost, and could not be comforted.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Back at Greyfriars!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Here we are again!"

It was the first day of the new term at Greyfriars.

From north and south, east and west, Greyfriars fellows were gathering once more at the old school.

The Famous Five of the Remove strolled arm-in-arm across the old quad, exchanging greetings with old acquaintances. Browed by the burning sun of India, the chums of the Remove were back from their long holiday in Eastern climes. And they were glad to see the old school again.

"We had a ripping time in Bhanipur. Inky old man," said Bob Cherry. "No end of a time. But it's jolly to be back."

"The jolliffulness is terrific."

"No end terrific!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Hallo, there's Coker of the Fifth! Give him a yell!"

And the chums of the Remove gave Horace Coker a yell which caused that great man to turn up his nose and walk away in disdain. But the disdain of Coker of the Fifth had no effect on the exuberant spirits of the Famous Five. They walked on regardless.

"You fellows back!" Skinner of the Remove stopped the five cheery juniors.

"By Jove! You look brown!"

"Indian sun," said Nugent.

Skinner of the Remove raised his eyebrows.

"Indian sun!" he repeated. "I didn't know there was an Indian sun at Margate."

"Margate!" said Bob. "We haven't been to Margate for the summer holidays, fathead!"

"Oh! Was it Southend-on-Sea?" asked Skinner innocently.

"We've been in India."

Skinner nodded.

"Knew a chap once who spent his vacation in the South Sea Islands," he said reminiscently. "But at the time he was seen at Blackpool."

"Bump him!" said Bob.

And the cheery juniors bumped Skinner of the Remove, and walked on leaving Skinner roaring, and perhaps wishing that he had not been so funny.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter Listen!" chuckled Bob.

Billy Bunter was the centre of a little crowd of grinning Remove fellows. Bunter was going strong.

"Danger? Well, some!" said Bunter. "Believe me, I never slept at night except with a loaded rifle by my side, and my faithful nigger watching. Tigers! About a dozen. I meant to bring home a tiger's skin for the study, Toddy."

"And why didn't you?" grinned Peter Todd.

"Forgot, you know, in the rush of things," said Bunter. "It was rather a rush all through. I had all the responsibility on my hands. We had a brush with dacoits—"

"With which?" ejaculated Wibley of the Remove.

"Dacoits—that means robbers—Hindustani word, you know. I've picked up a lot of Hindustani at Bhanipur—I used to give commands in his own language to my faithful nigger."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. My faithful nigger—"

"Did you bring him home?" chuckled Vernon-Smith.

"Nunno! Lost him in Bombay—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle," said Bunter. "But you should have seen me in the scrap with the dacoits. It was some scrap. I can tell you. With my trusty rifle and my faithful nigger—"

"Go it!" chortled Squiff.

"But for me, old Inky would have been killed a dozen times at least—"

"Great pip!" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Inky must have more lives than a cat if he could be killed a dozen times."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I mean—"

"Pile it on!" said Smithy encouragingly.

"I carried the thing through," said Bunter. "Wharton and those other asses were a good deal in the way; and that old codger, the colonel, was rather a worry. Passengers, the lot of them, you know. Fortunately, I was there. They looked to me for protection, and I saved them over and over again. When there was danger the word was—'Call Bunter.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry, unable to repress his feelings any longer; and Billy Bunter spun round and blinked at the grinning faces of the Famous Five.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Go it, old fat bean!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Tell the fellows how you squatted on the floor of the car when the dacoits were in the offing—"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"And how you bunked from a dry twig (thinking it was a snake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And how—"

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five walked on, chuckling. Bunter was left to continue his



"Sahib!" murmured Kasi Jee. There was no answer, for the six Greyfriars juniors were sleeping soundly. "Sahib!" repeated the naukhar in a louder voice. But still there was no answer. Kasi Jee grinned, and his black eyes glittered as he stooped over Bunter and his thievish fingers groped through the pockets of the slumbering Owl and withdrew something that glittered and sparkled. (See Chapter 9.)

thrilling narrative of dangers dire by land and sea, to which the Remove fellows listened with great interest, apparently regarding the narration as Bunter's comic turn.

"Good, old Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "He isn't afraid of tigers, or snakes, or dacoits—at Greyfriars. It was rather different at Bhanipur."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a great celebration in Study No. 1 in the Remove that evening.

Most of the Remove fellows were keen to hear the tale of the adventures of the Famous Five in far-off India; and No. 1 study was crammed for the occasion, and there was an overflow meeting in the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter, of course, was there, spreading himself as usual.

All the Remove had been asked to the spread, to celebrate the safe return of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh to Greyfriars. Inky's health was drunk in lemonade and ginger-beer. Bunter suggested champagne, as it was a special occasion—a very special occasion. He offered to stand the champagne himself, if somebody would make him an advance upon a postal-order he was expecting by the next post. Bunter's offer was not accepted.

Harry Wharton & Co. had to tell the tale of their adventures in the East, and they told it—with amplifications by Bunter. According to Bunter, he, W. G. Bunter, had been the "goods," so to speak, all the time, and his companions had been very small-beer in-

deed. And Bunter was greatly annoyed to find that, so far as he was concerned, the company consisted wholly of doubting Thomases. Skinner, indeed, affected to be a doubting Thomas all along the line, which was one of Skinner's pleasant ways.

"Tell us about that scrap in the jungle again, Cherry," urged Skinner. "That bit's really thrilling."

Bob, who was squirting soda-water into a glass of lemonade, glanced at Skinner.

"You've heard it once," he said.

"You can't have too much of a good thing," said Skinner blandly. "I never knew you had such a splendid imagination, old bean."

Some of the juniors chuckled.

"Look here, Skinner—"

"You went through all these deadly perils—dacoits, and tigers, and hissing serpents, and rebel rajahs?" said Skinner.

"We did."

"And then you woke up?" asked Skinner.

There was another chuckle in the study.

Bob Cherry did not reply to Skinner's question in words. He turned the soda-siphon on that doubting youth.

Squi-is-ssh!

"Whooooop!" roared Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner scrambled away frantically. The swishing of the syphon followed him.

"Groogh! Stoppit! Yoop!" spluttered Skinner. "Ooooooh!" And Skinner fled from the study, followed by roars of laughter.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

"Tiger"!

"AND I said, 'Buck up, Cherry!'"

It was Bunter's voice.

Bob Cherry was coming along to No. 7 in the Remove, a few days later, to speak to Peter Todd about the footer. Bunter's voice greeted him as he neared the open door of the study.

Bob frowned.

Ever since the return of the party from India to Greyfriars, Bunter had been going strong on the subject of his adventures in the East. It was an inexhaustible topic with Bunter. And the oftener he told his adventures, the more wonderful they became.

Bunter was not content with blowing his own trumpet. He enhanced his own wonderful performances by derisive descriptions of the doings of the other fellows. Bunter, apparently, had been "IT" all the time; the other fellows were not even also rans. Certainly, nobody in the Remove believed that in the hour of peril, the Famous Five had only been brought up to the scratch by the heroic example of W. G. Bunter. But that was the view

of W. G. B. himself, and he enlarged upon it more and more. He was telling the tale to Peter Todd now.

"And I said 'Buck up, Cherry,'" went on Bunter's fat voice. "He was trembling in every limb, you know—crouching behind me. There was the tiger—only a dozen feet away—"

"Can it!" suggested Peter.

"You can believe me or not, Toddy—but there was the tiger—and Cherry hiding behind me for protection, and Wharton under the table, and the other fellows running for dear life. Did I falter? No fear! I can tell you, that if I had missed then, you'd never have seen any of those chaps again! They were simply paralysed with fear. Fortunately, I kept my presence of mind. I told Cherry to buck up; I called out to Wharton to pull himself together. And then—"

Bob Cherry changed his mind about calling in at No. 7. He walked on down the Remove passage, leaving Bunter to continue the thrilling yarn to an unbelieving Peter.

"Hallo, what's the trouble?" asked Harry Wharton, as Bob looked into No. 1 Study with a frowning brow.

"Bunter's going it again."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Let him rip!" he said.

"That's all very well," said Bob. "But he's spinning a yarn about a tiger, which he faced with wonderful presence of mind, while I was hiding behind him, paralysed with funk—"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Nugent.

"And you were hiding under a table, Wharton—"

"Was I?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove warmly.

"And the other fellows were running for their lives—"

"The silly owl!"

"It's too thick," said Bob; "and I've thought of a wheeze. If Bunter is so jolly bold when tigers are about, we'll give him a chance to show off his jolly old courage. If a tiger looked into his study—"

"Eh! You can't borrow a tiger for the occasion," said Harry. "We're not in Bhanipur now, you know."

"We can borrow the tiger-skin from the Head's library."

"Oh!"

"The tiger's head is done up like life," grinned Bob. "It will be enough for Bunter to get a glimpse of it. You fellows come and help me, and then Inky can bring Bunter down to the Rag—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

For some little time after that, the chums of the Remove were busy. Then Hurree Janset Ram Singh's smiling dusky face looked into No. 7 Study. Peter Todd had gone down; Billy Bunter was reclining at his ease in the study armchair. He blinked at the schoolboy nabob through his big spectacles.

"My esteemed Bunter, are you staying alone here?" he exclaimed.

"Eh, why not?" asked Bunter.

"You have not heard of an escaped tiger from an esteemed menagerie, which has been seen near the school?" asked the nabob.

"Ow!"

Bunter jumped out of the armchair as if moved by a spring.

"All the fellows are in the Rag, keeping togetherfully!" said Hurree Singh. "The presence of the excellent and ludicrous Bunter would inspire them with terrific courage."

"I'll come!" gasped Bunter.

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He rolled hurriedly from the study. Certainly Bunter did not intend to remain alone if there was an escaped tiger in the neighbourhood of Greyfriars. He clutched hold of Hurree Singh's arm, and rolled away with the nabob to the Rag, where he found nearly all the Remove gathered. Bob Cherry was not to be seen there; but Harry Wharton was at the door; he opened it hastily to let in Bunter and Hurree Singh, and closed it again very quickly.

"Lock it!" exclaimed Bunter.

Wharton locked the door.

Bunter gave a hurried glance at the windows—they were all closed.

"I—I say, you fellows, is—is it certain that the tiger was seen near the school?" he exclaimed.

"I don't think it's certain," said Wharton gravely; "but you can't be too careful."

"Thank goodness Bunter's here!" said Johnny Bull. "If the tiger gets into the school—"

"Ow!"

"Bunter will face it, while we get clear. We rely on you, Bunter."

Billy Bunter blinked round him. The windows were shut, the door was locked; and if there was an escaped tiger in the neighbourhood—which was not certain, by no means certain—the juniors

In an instant he was seized in the grasp of Johnny Bull, and dragged back.

"Save us, Bunter!" gasped Johnny.

"Yaroo! Leggo! Help!"

"Save us, Bunter!" chorused the Removites.

Bunter struggled desperately to escape. But he struggled in vain. Five or six juniors seized him, and he was held between them and the glaring head of the growling tiger.

"Bunter to the front!" panted Teddy.

"Keep him in front! Bunter's the chap to face tigers!"

"Save us, Bunter!" sobbed Nugent.

"Yoop! Leggo! Help! Fire! Oh, crumbs! Leggo!" shrieked Bunter, struggling frantically. "It's coming for me! Leggo! Yoooop!"

The tiger was crawling out from under the table.

Billy Bunter made a desperate effort, and broke loose, and raced for the door. To turn back the key, tear the door open, and bolt into the passage, occupied Bunter a moment. He flew down the passage on the wings of the wind.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A roar of laughter followed him from the Rag. Bob Cherry emerged from under the table, and threw off the tiger-skin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, crumbs!" sobbed Bob Cherry, wiping his eyes. "Where's Bunter? Why isn't he facing the tiger? Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites yelled.

Ten minutes later, Peter Todd tried the door of No. 7 in the Remove. It was locked; and there was a howl of terror within as Peter rattled the handle.

"Ow! Help! Yaroooh! Keep off! Help!"

"You silly ass!" roared Peter. And there was a roar of laughter along the Remove passage.

"I—I say—is that you, Peter?" gasped Bunter.

"Yes, ass! Open the door!"

"W-where's the tiger?"

"Gone!" chuckled Peter.

Bunter unlocked the study door, and blinked out into the Remove passage, which was crowded with laughing juniors. Bunter blinked at them in surprise.

"I—I say, sure it's gone, Peter?" he exclaimed.

"Quite!" said Peter cheerily. "Bob took it back to the Head's library."

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"You see, if the Head missed his tiger-skin, there would be a row," explained Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter gasped.

"Why, you—you—you beast! M-m-mean to say it wasn't a real tiger?" he spluttered.

"Ha, ha, ha! Not quite."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Billy Bunter blinked at the hilarious Removites.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Save us, Bunter!" chortled Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of—of course. I—I knew it wasn't a tiger!" gasped Bunter. "I—I knew it was a lark. I—I'll bet I made you fellows think I was scared. He, he, he!"

"You did!" chortled Bob. "No doubt about that! You did."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites And Billy Bunter gave it up.

THE END.

FOR NEXT WEEK!



This grand yarn of the Greyfriars Chums will send you into fits of laughter. Mind you read it, boys'.

really seemed safe enough in the Rag. Bunter's confidence revived.

"That's all right, you chaps," he said valorously. "You rely on me. Keep your eyes on me, and follow my example. Why, bless you, I'm used to tigers—when I was in the jungle, they roared round me every night, without disturbing me in the least. I was telling Toddy how I faced a tiger, when the other chaps were simply paralysed with funk—"

Grrrrrrrrrrrr!

Bunter started.

Grrrrrrrrrr!

It was a hideous growl, and it proceeded from under the big table in the Rag. Bunter spun round towards the table, his little round eyes almost bulging through his spectacles.

"Wha-a-at's that?" he gasped.

"The tiger!" yelled Nugent.

"Help! Save us, Bunter!"

"Yaroooh!" howled Bunter. "Oh, dear! Help! Help! Fire! Murder! Help! Yarooooooooooop!"

From under the big table, a head emerged—a dreadful-looking head, with glaring eyes and bristling whiskers. Behind it a glimpse could be had of a long striped body.

Grrrrrrrrrrrr!

Bunter made a wild dash for the door.

WHO KILLED JOSEPH COMBER? Young Tommy Comber, a fugitive from the "place of correction"—the Bellerophon—possesses a secret in his napper worth a huge fortune. But money means little to him until he can discover his uncle's dastardly assassin!

The Boy With the Million-Pound Secret!

By DAVID GOODWIN.



The Reward!

"TWENTY POUNDS REWARD!

Missing Boy,

THOMAS COMBER.

"Escaped from Reformatory Ship Bellerophon. Age 15. Light brown hair. Eyes blue. Complexion fair, slightly freckled. Eyebrows light, curved. Nose straight. Chin rather square. Height 5 ft. 6 in.; strongly built for his age.

"Last seen on Grays Marshes, Essex. Believed to be in London.

"Twenty pounds will be paid to any person supplying information which will lead to the capture of the said Thomas Comber."

THE placard was pinned on the notice-board outside Greville Street Police Station, South London. There was a large portrait on it of Thomas Comber, rather a good-looking boy, with a cheery, open face, wearing the uniform of a ship's boy of the Navy, but slightly different. It was really the uniform of boy prisoners on the Bellerophon, the famous reformatory ship.

In front of the notice-board stood a boy who looked about sixteen, or a little older, with black hair and a slightly hooked nose. He was reading the poster with intense interest, and when he had finished it he shrugged his shoulders.

"Funny thing they haven't copped him yet, isn't it?" he said.

There was a small crowd of boys and men beside him, all intent on the poster.

"Yes, it is!" said a big youth with a red head. "But I'll lay they'll soon have him now. All the coppers in London are lookin' for him, and half the other folks, too. They've doubled the reward for the kid since last week."

"Who is he?" exclaimed a voice. "What they want him for?"

"Don't you know?" retorted the red-headed boy. "Why, he's the fellow who

did that job down on the island at the mouth o' the Thames, when the old man was found dead and the safe was burgled. They've got him down in the papers this morning. Here!"

He pulled a newspaper out of his pocket, and read out a paragraph of it aloud, the others pressing round:

"COMBER STILL AT LARGE.

"The boy, Thomas Comber, who made such a sensational escape from the Bellerophon two weeks ago, is apparently still eluding the army of searchers who are looking for him.

"Comber is the boy who was sentenced at the Maidstone Assizes to three years' detention on a charge of theft. It will be remembered that he lived alone with his uncle, Joseph Comber, who was found dead in a bungalow on Curlew Island under circumstances that pointed to foul play. The safe in the bungalow had been rifled of the money it contained.

The crime was probably the work of more than one person.

"Thomas Comber was charged with the murder, but the evidence was not considered strong enough to convict him of actually being a party to it; there was nothing to show that he had been the cause of his uncle's death. But some of the stolen money was found on him when he was arrested, and he was unable to account satisfactorily for his possession of it. Too young to send to prison, he became one of the inmates of that very strict place of correction, the Bellerophon. He is said to be the only boy prisoner who has ever successfully escaped from her.

"It is remarkable that a boy of fifteen, all by himself, and apparently with no money or resources, should be able to baffle the police for so long; he has been at liberty now for a fortnight. The reward for his recapture has been raised to twenty pounds.

"A strange story was told at the trial that the dead man, Joseph Comber, was the inventor of a wonderful secret explosive powder, which was worth a fortune. But no proof was given of this, and it is thought that the story, and not the powder, was an invention. Certainly nobody believes in it."

The owner of the newspaper thrust it back into his pocket.

"There you are!" he said. "And, like a good many more, I'm keepin' me eyes open for that kid. I got his face and description by heart, and if ever I catch a glimpse of him, I'll lay I'll track him down!"

The boy with the black hair turned to him with a smile.

"I hope you'll find him, mate," he said pleasantly. "What'd you do if you found yourself next him?"

"Do? I'd fetch him a clip on the head quick that'd knock him out, an' make sure of him. Then I'd hand him over to the nearest cop, an' claim the reward."

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"I see. But suppose he fetched you a clip on the head first, and then got clear away?"

"I'm not a mug!" said the red-headed youth indignantly. "I'm eighteen. I am, an' I could handle six like him. He's for the Bellerophon, if ever I come across him!"

"No doubt. An' what do you suppose they'll do to him there?"

"Flog him, I reckon, and give him an extra year or two. Anyway, it'd be a bit of sport for me, an' profit, too!"

"Profit all right," said the younger boy; "don't see much sport in it myself."

"What would you do?" asked the black-haired boy, turning to him.

The other hesitated.

"I dunno," he said. "I could do with twenty quid. But the chap's up against it pretty bad, ain't he? I'd hate to be sent to quod and flogged."

"He deserves it, don't he?" sneered the big youth.

"There's some says he's innocent, and didn't ought to have been sent to quod at all," replied the boy. "And they tell me he's a good half-back, for a kid. I don't believe a chap that plays a straight game of football would do in his uncle or steal money. Anyway, I reckon he's got trouble enough, and I think I'd shut me eye if I saw him. Tain't my business to be a copper."

"Put it there, mate!" said the black-haired boy, with a smile, holding out his hand. "I'm a footballer myself. P'r'aps the chap is innocent, after all."

"You're a pair o' fools, both of you!" jeered the big youth. "Much I'd care what he was when the money was up—nor you either."

"Pass along there, please!" said a tall police-sergeant, appearing in the station doorway. "Don't block the pavement."

The crowd melted away, but the boy with the black hair still lingered. The poster of the runaway prisoner seemed to fascinate him, and he took a last look at the portrait.

"Want the twenty pounds, young 'un?" said the policeman, grinning at him.

The boy laughed.

"It'd come in useful, sergeant," he said, and a thrill ran through him as the words passed his lips.

YOU MUST READ



"PLAY UP, THE BLUE CRUSADERS!"

By A. S. HARDY.

A remarkable Footer serial starting in the

POPULAR.

On Sale Tuesday.

For the black-haired boy was Tom Comber himself!

No one there would have believed it, not even the policeman. And yet it was true.

The portrait on the poster was as unlike him as a Chinaman is unlike a Red Indian. His hair was black, his skin dark, his nose slightly hooked. The expression of his face, everything about him was different, except his build. Tom Comber himself found it difficult to believe when he looked at his own picture. It was a wonderful disguise.

Tom knew he could never have made it himself, nor anything like it. It was the work of an expert, a master of disguises, Dr. Shane O'Hara. Since he had passed through O'Hara's clever hands, Tom, the runaway prisoner from the Bellerophon, could look a policeman in the face and run hardly any risk at all.

He might have claimed the twenty pounds himself. But he did not need it. He had more than twenty pounds in his pockets, most of which this clever man, O'Hara, had given him, and he was dressed in smart clothes. And at that moment he ought to have been in the punishment-cell aboard the Bellerophon.

He nodded a farewell to the policeman, and walked round the corner into the next street. He was on his way to the post-office. But before he reached it he saw somebody coming towards him whom he knew, and who knew him. In fact, it was the only person in all London at that moment who did know Tom Comber.

It was his old chum, Dan Bennett, of Gravesend, from whom he had parted only half an hour ago. Dan hurried straight up to him.

"Tommy!" he exclaimed.

"Hush!" said Tom. "Don't call me that!"

"Gee, I forgot!" said Dan. "Pat Roche is the name you go by, old bird, ain't it? It takes some getting used to. Anyway, there's nobody to hear us. Got the money packed up?"

"Yes; there's thirty pounds to spare. But I hate taking your money, Dan. You've persuaded me into running away like this, and sometimes I think I'm a fool to do it. But you're a real good friend to me, anyway. What about my ticket to America?"

"Don't buy it in London," said Dan. "Get your ticket at the offices at Tilbury, where your ship sails from, in the morning. You can get a special third-class ticket for six quid. I sha'n't be easy in my mind till I know you're out of England."

Tommy Comber hesitated.

"I suppose I've really got to go, Dan?" he said wistfully.

"You've got to go!" exclaimed Dan, gripping him by the arm. "You've got to shake off these scoundrelly chaps who helped you escape and disguised you. They're only using you for their own purposes, and they're a bad lot. You've got to pay back the money they gave you and hook it. You'll be all right in America. You'll make your fortune there with this secret Comberite explosive, and I'll come out by the next steamer and join you. If you stay here you'll be sent back to prison."

"All right. I suppose you know best," said Tommy, giving it up.

"Of course I know best. I don't want to see you done in. Cut out Dr. O'Hara for good. And now we'd better separate. I'll be at Tilbury in the morning to see you off."

There was a swift hand-grip, and the chums parted. Tommy Comber entered the post-office at the corner. He took a fat envelope out of his pocket. Inside it

was fifty pounds in banknotes. He got the postmaster to register it and sent it off. It was addressed to

DR. SHANE O'HARA,

Old Moat House,
Lagden,
Essex.

Rogues in Council!

"MERTON," said Dr. O'Hara, "I believe this confounded boy means to give us the slip!"

"The more fool you for letting him go to London!" growled Merton Haynes.

"Don't you fear," replied Dr. O'Hara grimly. "He may think himself free, but he is never going to get away from me. I've got him like that!"

He lifted his long, bony hand and closed the fingers together in a sudden grip.

The two men were standing by the table in a private sitting-room at the great Tilbury Hotel, near Tilbury Docks. Dr. O'Hara was a man of about fifty, tall and thin, with a yellow, hawk-like face. He wore a pointed beard, and his eyes, behind a pair of horn spectacles, were extraordinarily hard and piercing.

The other, Merton Haynes, was not so tall as O'Hara, but much broader and bigger, with a dark, heavy face and black eyes. His hands were like small hams. He looked rather like a prosperous prize-fighter, and he wore a costly diamond in his tie. He was looking very sullen and dangerous.

"What do you expect, when you give a cub of fifteen such a sum as fifty pounds and turn him loose like that?" he said. "What will Karkoff say? Karkoff isn't a fool!"

"I have sent word to Karkoff to come and join us here," replied O'Hara. "And just then there was a knock at the door. I expect that is he."

"Gentleman to see you, sir," said a pageboy, opening the door.

"Show him in," said O'Hara.

The newcomer entered.

He was a big, well-built man, with an air of command. His face was grim and sinister. He wore a clipped, grizzled moustache, and looked rather like a military officer. In spite of his foreign name he spoke perfect English. The other two rose to their feet as soon as he entered.

"What about this boy, doctor?" he said. "Why have you asked me to come down to this wretched hole? Do you mean to say that all our plans depend on that confounded boy, Tom Comber, that you have picked up? Why, that's the lad the police are looking for, isn't it?"

"Quite right, Karkoff," said O'Hara calmly. "And they may look for him till all's blue, they won't find him—unless I give him away. But we may want some more money to carry on the business with. That boy is worth millions to us."

"If I'm to find more money I've got to hear more about it. I've never known you make a mistake yet, doctor. But we're backing a dark horse in this boy."

"Sit down there, Karkoff," said O'Hara, "and you shall hear just how it stands."

The three men seated themselves.

"Now," said O'Hara, "I'll put the thing in a nutshell. This boy, Tommy Comber, lived with his uncle, Joseph Comber, who was a retired chemist, on Curlew Island. Old Joseph Comber invented a wonderful secret explosive, of which a few pounds would blow up a town. It's twenty times more powerful than anything else of its kind in

the world. He called it Comberite Powder, and he kept it an absolute dead secret.

"Two months ago Joseph Comber was found dead on the island—murdered, and his safe had been robbed. Suspicion fell on the boy, who was acquitted of the murder for want of proof, but got three years for theft of money from the safe. The boy, Tom Comber, was innocent."

O'Hara smiled, and, leaning forward, tapped Karkoff on the knee.

"Nobody knows, or even suspects, who killed Joseph Comber," he said.

Karkoff gave a nod of understanding and smiled at him grimly.

"Of course, whoever did the job wasn't after money but was after the secret of this wonderful powder, eh?" he said.

"Exactly, my dear Karkoff," said Dr. O'Hara. "And, of course, they failed to find it."

"Then who has it? Who has got the secret?"

"The boy—Tommy Comber. His uncle left him the secret. Tom Comber was sent to the prison-ship Bellerophon, which lies anchored in the Thames. He escaped and was chased. I got hold of him. I hid him in my house at Lagden and I disguised him. Nobody can beat me at that. I'm a surgeon and a master of disguise, as you know. I changed the colour of his hair, I even altered his features. His mother wouldn't know him. Here's a photo of him as he was before."

He handed it to Karkoff.

"I've seen this at the police-stations," said Karkoff.

"And here's one of him as he is now."

"Great powers, it's wonderful!" exclaimed Karkoff, looking at the new snapshot. "He's just like that boy servant of yours, Pat Roche, as you call him."

"That's right. I copied him from Pat. And Tom Comber goes by the name of Pat Roche. Very well. I struck a bargain with the boy. I have bought Curlew Island and fitted up the house on it with all the necessary things. He is to make Comberite Powder, prove that it's the right stuff, and show what it can do. We pay expenses and keep him out of prison. He is promised a share in the money that it brings—perhaps."

"But, my good O'Hara," exclaimed Karkoff, "why didn't you make him give up the secret itself? If I had that boy alone in a house I would soon have it out of him!"

"That won't do," replied Dr. O'Hara. "We should have to keep him till we had proved it. It would take too long and we might never get it at all. It is safest to let him do the work, which is very dangerous work, and then make him deliver the goods. The boy's no fool, he requires careful handling. He thinks he has got a hold on us, and I pretended to accept his terms. I'm a good judge, and I think he's honest. I gave him fifty pounds to carry on with and permission to go to London till we're ready for him on the island."

"And, of course, he's bolted with the fifty pounds!" snarled Merton Haynes.

"By giving him that fifty pounds," said Dr. O'Hara, "I've got him tight. Of course, I've had him watched. Something queer has happened. He has been to a shipping office, and I believe he thinks of leaving the country. He has come to Tilbury this morning, where the only steamer for America is leaving. But I'm going to have him yet."

"It's a curious thing," he added, with a smile, "but I believe that boy is

ENOUGH TO MAKE A CAT LAUGH!

The Ripping Novelty
GIVEN AWAY FREE

in this week's

"GEM"

will keep you amused for hours on end, chums. There's nothing difficult to be done. In the words of the songster—slightly varied:

*"Every time you tap me I move in a trice,
But you never catch me looking with the same face twice . . ."*



DON'T MISS THIS WONDERFUL FACIOGRAPH NOVELTY, CHUMS!

honest. I don't know why he's going. He may have got frightened, though I should have said he was a youngster that nothing could frighten. He has plenty of pluck. And I've brought you here, Karkoff, to tell you how things stand. We've got to keep that boy. He's worth millions to us!"

Karkoff hit the table with his fist. "Get hold of him at any cost, O'Hara!" he cried. "He must not escape us!"

Dr. O'Hara nodded.

"He won't. I'll kill him before I let him slip through my fingers. He'll never get aboard the steamer. And now it's time I was going down to the docks. Don't you be afraid. I'll bring him here."

"Then I'll clear out," said Karkoff quickly. "The boy had better not see me. He may know too much. It would be awkward at the finish."

"There is always one sure way of keeping a boy quiet," replied Dr. O'Hara, with a curious smile. And he left the hotel.

The great liner s.s. Livadia lay in the main dock with steam up and the Blue Peter flying from her foremast. Among the crowd that was moving towards the gates and the shipping office a boy was making his way, gripping a small bag in one hand. It was Tommy Comber.

He passed a policeman who was directing the crowd. The policeman took a look at everybody who went by, for all who go on board a foreign-bound ship at any time are noticed by the police. But he took no notice of Tom Comber. Nobody could have dreamed that this boy was the runaway prisoner for whom a reward was offered. Tommy was going aboard early, and he realised that in less than an hour he would be off English soil on his way to New York. It was a great moment.

Just then a hand was laid gently on his shoulder, and a thrill ran through him. He looked up and found himself meeting the cold, penetrating eyes of Dr. Shane O'Hara. Tommy felt as if he had been suddenly turned to stone.

Here was the last man in the world he wanted to see—the man who knew his secret and who held him in his power,

and he had turned up just at the very moment when Tommy thought he was rid of him for ever.

"Well, Tommy Comber!" said Dr. O'Hara very quietly.

It was the biggest jolt Tommy had ever had. But he looked the doctor in the eye.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he said still more quietly. "How are you, doctor?" "And where were you thinking of going this fine morning?" asked the doctor, fixing him with a deadly eye.

"Where am I going?" repeated Tommy. "On board the Livadia yonder, for New York."

"No, you are not," said O'Hara. And his strong fingers tightened on Tommy's shoulder. "On the contrary, the only ship that you can go aboard in this river, Tommy, is the prison ship Bellerophon, where they will flog you and keep you for three years. Do you see that policeman by the dock gates there?"

"I see him," said Tommy. "He's big enough to see without a telescope."

"Unless you obey me," said O'Hara. "that policeman will have you by the collar in ten seconds."

Tommy drew a long breath, and his face turned white. Then his eye flashed defiantly, and he stuck out his jaw.

"All right, sir," he said defiantly. "I'm done. I like it better than going with you. Let's go to the cop—both of us together. Tell him how you faked my face and hid me from the police, and he can take the pair of us. I'll tell him myself."

"That is exactly what will happen," said O'Hara grimly; "and I am quite prepared for it, sooner than let you get away! No man—much less a boy—ever played fast and loose with me and got away with it. Unless you come with me and hear what I have to say to you, we both go to that policeman. Choose quickly!"

Tommy looked at him and saw that he meant it. And, though Tommy vowed to himself that he would not surrender, there was no good in throwing a chance away.

"Very well, sir," he said. "I'll listen to you. But you'll have to be quick. That ship sails in half an hour, and I'm not going to miss her."

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O'Hara made no answer; but walked up the street, keeping close to Tommy, who, in spite of his cool behaviour, was feeling inwardly desperate and hopeless. He had no idea where he was going till he found himself taken into a private sitting-room at the Tilbury Hotel.

As soon as Tommy was inside the room Mr. Merton Haynes sprang up, with a glad, savage cry, slammed the door, and locked it.

"Got him!" he snarled. "Well done, O'Hara! You're a wonder!"

The gentleman who called himself Karkoff had disappeared. Dr. O'Hara, who had always seemed so oily and smooth-spoken, turned upon Tommy like a demon.

"You little thief!" he said fiercely. "And I was fool enough to think you honest!"

One Against Three.

"SO I am honest!" retorted Tommy hotly. "I was shopped for something I never did at all."

"I let you have fifty pounds, and here you are trying to sneak out of England with it."

"Why, I sent you back the fifty pounds!" exclaimed Tommy. "It went off last night by registered post. Here's the receipt! It was addressed to your house at Lagden; you ought to have got it!"

Dr. O'Hara was staggered. He had not been at Lagden that morning. He gazed at Tommy in amazement.

"What on earth did you do that for?" he asked more quietly. "Why—why?"

"Why?" said Tommy. "I'll tell you. The game isn't good enough, sir—that's why. I don't know who you are; you're a set of crooks. For all I can tell, I'm to be in your power, hidden by you from the police. I'm to make this secret powder of mine, and hand it to you for a bit of money. I don't even know what you'll do with it, or what'll happen to me when you've got it. It's a wash-out, sir. I don't mean to be in any man's power; I'd rather be free to manage my own affairs. So I sent you a letter saying so, and I sent you your fifty pounds, so you'd lose nothing by it. And there's no harm done; the game's off!"

Merton Haynes rose, his face purple.

"Then back you go to prison!" he said hoarsely. "Back to the Bellerophon for three years! And right now! That's what you get by it!"

Tommy turned to him.

"Send me back!" he retorted. "I said it before, and I mean it! I ain't goin' to be threatened nor bullied by you. Sooner have the Bellerophon than that! I'll do my three years. Give me up this minute! Then you don't get the powder—you'll never get it now."

"Don't we?" hissed Merton Haynes. "There's a quicker way. I'll wring that secret out of your body before I leave this room!"

"You can't do it!" said Tommy. "The last thing my uncle said to me the day before he was killed was, 'Don't let anybody get that secret out of you—not if they cut the skin off you!' And you'll not get it from me, I warn you."

"I'll show you your mistake!" said Haynes, moving towards Tommy, his eyes burning with cruelty.

Tommy snatched up a poker from the hearth, but he knew he had no chance against the two men. Haynes was closing in on him.

"Stop!" said O'Hara suddenly in a commanding voice. "Stop, Haynes—wait!"

He turned to Tommy.

"We don't threaten you, we don't force you yet; but tell me one thing first, boy," he said quietly. "Do you think you are behaving honestly?"

"Yes, I am!" retorted Tommy. "What do you go on about honesty for? Of course I am! I sent you back the money!"

"The money!" returned O'Hara, looking at him with contempt. "Didn't we have your word as well? Listen! Didn't you come to my house, exhausted, hunted, and starving? Didn't I take you in, feed you, cure you of sickness, shelter you from your enemies? Didn't we do all this for you? And you told us you were innocent!"

Tommy was dumb.

"Did we treat you fairly? Had you anything but kindness from me? Say we wanted something in return, oughtn't we to get it? Why, a dog that I took in and fed would show me some gratitude! It wouldn't insult me and snarl at me and try to bite my hand! Tommy, you made your own terms with us, and I agreed to them. You looked me in the face and said, 'Yes, I'll do this; I'll carry on the job.' And I trusted you, let you go free, with money in your pocket; I left it to your honour. But when you're out of reach you laugh at us, turn the whole bargain down, and sneak away. Great powers, boy, tell me if that's what you call honest? If it is, you may walk free out of this house—and be hanged to you! I'll never trust anybody again as long as I live!"

Tommy had flushed red to the roots of his hair; then he slowly turned very white. He said nothing, but walked to the window and stared out of it.

"No, by gum, it isn't!" he said huskily at last. "I can't say I'm playing the game."

O'Hara cast a swift glance at Haynes and remained silent.

Tommy struggled with himself. There was no doubt Dr. O'Hara was right. Dan Bennett had persuaded him into clearing out, and Dan's advice was common-sense enough. But it certainly wasn't playing fair to his two partners. They had treated him well. They had taken a big risk for him.

"It's rotten!" he said suddenly, turning to O'Hara.

"Rotten it is!" said O'Hara.

The extraordinary thing was that Tommy felt just as if the referee had blown a whistle and ordered him off the ground for foul play. He had given in to Dan Bennett. And now quite suddenly he knew that in his heart he had never wanted to go at all. If there was anything he hated, it was running away. There was a big stake to play for. He didn't care for the danger. What he wanted was to stay in England and see it through—fight it right out to the end!

"Look here, sir," he said to O'Hara, "I'm sorry! I haven't played the game. But I suppose it's too late now—"

"No, it's not too late. Do you hear that noise? That's the Livadia's whistle blowing. She leaves in ten minutes. You could catch her still. But if you'll put out your hand, Tommy, and swear you'll play the game, I'll trust you yet," said O'Hara.

"I'm ready!" said Tommy. "And it's jolly good of you."

"You'll go to Curlew Island on Tuesday? You'll make Comberite Powder,

and take your share of it? You'll see this thing through to the finish, come what may?"

Tommy held out his hand and gripped Dr. O'Hara's strong, slim fingers.

"On my word, I will!" said he. "Right through to the end, and as long as you play straight by me, I'll stick by you tighter than glue! You shall have Comberite Powder!"

"Well done!" said O'Hara, clapping him on the shoulder.

Merton Haynes looked on in silence, admiring the doctor's victory. He saw that O'Hara understood Tommy better than he himself did.

"Tommy, I know you'll never let us down again. You're straight. It was only a bit of a panic that you got into your head. It's done with and forgotten. And now we start fair. Listen! That's your steamer hooting; she's leaving the pier. Are you sorry?"

"By crumps, no, sir. I'm not sorry—I'm glad!" exclaimed Tommy. "I never really wanted to go. I've been a fool! And there's another reason—and a bigger one—that I'm staying for!" he said. "I'll never rest till I know the truth—till I find out who it was that killed my Uncle Joseph on Curlew Island!"

There was a moment's silence.

"Yes," said Dr. O'Hara quietly. "Yes, quite right, my boy—quite right! I hope you may discover that. If you do, then your name will be cleared, and you will be free indeed!"

"It's not only that," said Tommy. He looked the two men in the face. "I want my uncle avenged, and his murderer punished. I want the fellow who did it hanged!"

Dr. O'Hara nodded gravely.

"That would be justice indeed," he said. "And have you any notion, my boy, to whom your uncle owes his death?"

"Yes," said Tommy. "As sure as I stand here, I believe it was my cousin, Chuffer Foss, who lives over the water at Gravesend. He hates me. He hated my uncle. But I believe Chuffer Foss did it with his own hand."

O'Hara shook his head gently.

"Perhaps!" he said gently. "I don't know much about that. It happened before I came. But maybe this Chuffer Foss had nothing to do with it."

"Then he was in league with those who did!" exclaimed Tommy. "But I say he did it himself! And when I was tried they called him as a witness, and he lied about me and got me sent to prison! That's Chuffer Foss!"

"Then it's a good thing he is never likely to come near you, even if he knew where you are!" said Dr. O'Hara, with a grim smile. "He is badly frightened, I expect, since he heard of your escape."

"Frightened! You bet he is!" said Tommy; "and has reason to be! I hear he's bunked from Gravesend."

"All the better," replied O'Hara. "Don't forget, Tommy, the thing that matters, the thing you're on your honour to do—work out that secret, and make the powder for us, while we guard you from the police."

"I won't forget it. Curlew Island on Tuesday. I'll be there," said Tommy. "It won't take me a week to make good!"

"And I'll send you back the fifty pounds to your London address tomorrow," concluded O'Hara, shaking him warmly by the hand. "And before the year is out you'll be rich. Off



Tommy Comber was walking along the quayside when a hand was laid gently on his shoulder. A thrill ran through the youngster as he looked up and found himself meeting the cold, penetrating eyes of O'Hara. (See page 25:)

with you now, my boy! Get back to town! You had better leave the hotel before we do. Go on your own."

There was a hurried farewell, and Tommy left the two men, who had threatened and cursed him half an hour ago, now on the best of terms. He quitted the Tilbury Hotel, and walked joyously down the street, feeling very cock-a-whoop with himself.

Looking for Chuffer!

AT the street corner Tommy ran right into Dan Bennett, who greeted him with a frenzy of anger and alarm.

"Great 'Scott, kid!" cried Dan. "What in thunder have you been up to? You've missed your ship. Look yonder!"

The Livadia, in all the pride of her 17,000 tons, looking like a floating city, was steaming majestically down the river.

"Let her rip!" said Tommy. "It's off! No New York for me! More fun between Curlew Island and good old London, every time! There's a new reel on the film, Danny."

"But, what the—"

"Come along," said Tommy, "and I'll tell you all about it!"

He led the bewildered Dan to a quiet place behind the docks, and, sitting him down on a barrel, told his chum everything that had happened in the hotel.

"So that's that!" said Tommy. "You did your best for me, old boy. But, you see, I'd never have got away anyhow. Not without wings. It can't be done. And, by gum, I'm glad of it! I hate to be a quitter!"

"You mean to say you'll carry on at Curlew Island, in hiding from the police, an' make your stuff for that gang of hoboes?"

"Surest thing, you know! I'll keep my bargain. Let 'em beat me if they can!"

Dan ran his fingers through his tousled hair.

"I still think I gave you the right advice," he said. "It's awful dangerous! But, gosh," he said, "you can't help yourself!" He paused, then added regretfully: "What sport it's goin' to be! I wish I was in it!"

"Well, come in it!" said Tommy eagerly. "You and me together, Danny! Go halves with me in my share of Comberite: we'll face the giddy music together, and down with everybody who tries to queer the pitch!"

"Good for you!" cried Dan, gripping him by the fist. "I'm there! I say, wonder what your O'Hara gang will think of me?"

"If they don't like it, let 'em lump it!" said Tommy. "You're my pal, and so you were long before they ever turned up. I'll keep my bargain with 'em, but I'm not going to be bossed!" He smote his chum on the back. "Dan,

you and me'll be Kings of Curlew Island!"

"We'll make the feathers fly!"

"But it's beastly risky for you, bein' mixed up with me," said Tommy, checking himself. "I don't know if I ought—"

"Oh, that be blowed!" retorted Dan. "When I told you to go I was only anxious about yourself. I like a bit o' risk. There's no fun without it. Look here, I've got just the thing for us—an old motor-boat."

"Motor-boat!"

"Yes; the We're Here! she's called."

"Where is she?"

"Yonder at the jetty. I came down from London Bridge this morning in her."

"That's fine!" said Tommy. "You've got a double gun, haven't you? With the We're Here and a gun we'll own a giddy navy! Fight the Bellerophon, if we have to!" he added, grinning. "We don't go down to the island till Tuesday, but I think we'll have a look round there before then. I want to go across to Gravesend this evening."

"What for?" asked Dan, and Tommy's mouth tightened.

"Chuffer Foss!" he said.

(Will Tommy succeed in finding his rascally cousin? Will he discover his uncle's assassin? These questions are answered in next week's thrilling instalment, chums.)

TO AND FROM YOUR EDITOR!

OUR COMPANION PAPER'S FREE GIFT WEEK!

READERS of the MAGNET are, in the majority of cases, also readers of our grand companion paper, the "Gem." Therefore, the announcement that in this week's bumper issue of the "Gem" there is a wonderful facigraph novelty of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy being given away Free will be of general interest. This Novelty is aptly styled the "boy with a thousand faces," for the piece of chain wire which is the ingenious method by which these faces materialise is a very wizard and reveals a different "chivvy," every time it moves. This Free Gift will prove very popular, I have not the slightest doubt. Certainly it will give hours of enjoyment. You Magnetites who make it your business to get the "Gem," every week would be well advised to give your order as early as possible, for there's bound to be a rush to secure this stunning Free Gift.

SAVING SILVER PAPER!

A correspondent from Northampton writes and tells me that he has started collecting "silver paper," and hopes one day to hand over a pretty hefty sized ball of it to one of the hospitals. But already he has found a snag. He tells me that so far he has collected a fair

amount of this silver paper and rolled it into the size of a tennis-ball, or perhaps a little smaller. Now, every additional piece of paper he tries to "stick" on peels off. What is the best method to make the silver paper adhere to the ball? I'm not sure as to the best method, but another reader writes and tells me that a few drops of milk sprinkled over the sheets of silver paper about to be rolled on to the main ball is the "proper caper." Then place the ball over the "flat" sheets of silver paper and begin to roll the ball on to them, using the palm of the hand. My correspondent from Northampton had better try this wheeze and let me know how he progresses.

MIGHTY KEEN TO TRAVEL!

A Rotherham chum tells me he is eager to see Palestine, Egypt, India, and other places, and he asks whether in order to do so he should join the Navy or the Merchant Service, also if he could work his passage on ships. In reply, I would point out to this reader that if he feels he is cut out for the sea there is nothing to prevent him applying at the Naval Recruiting Office, 38, Bernard Street, Sheffield, or to any shipping company for the Mercantile Marine. He had a better wash out all notion of working his passage. He has no experience, and would not be much use to any skipper, if any. But I am inclined to think this globe-trotting ambition should be shelved. It would be common sense to stick to his job at home, save his spare cash, and wait for a chance to see a bit of the world. The opportunity may

turn up, and when he is a few years older he will be better able to appreciate the wonders of the foreign countries he wishes to see.

FOR NEXT WEEK!

"COKER THE REBEL!"

By Frank Richards.

This is a real laughter rousing yarn of the Chums of Greyfriars, and will be well received. Everyone knows Coker, and what a born idiot he is, and "Coker" yarns are popular the world over. Mind you read next week's story, chums.

"THE BOY WITH THE MILLION- POUND SECRET!"

By David Goodwin.

You have sampled the opening chapters of this amazing sequel to "Curlew Island," and I'll wager my best Sunday hat that you like it. Next week's grand, long instalment is even better. Get ready to receive it!

THE SUPPLEMENT!

You footer fans can look out for a striking article from the pen of John Hill, the Burnley International, in next week's supplement, also Tom Cairns, the Scottish International, of Glasgow Rangers, has something to say on this art of teaching football. Order your MAGNET in good time, chums. Cheerio!

Your Editor.

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