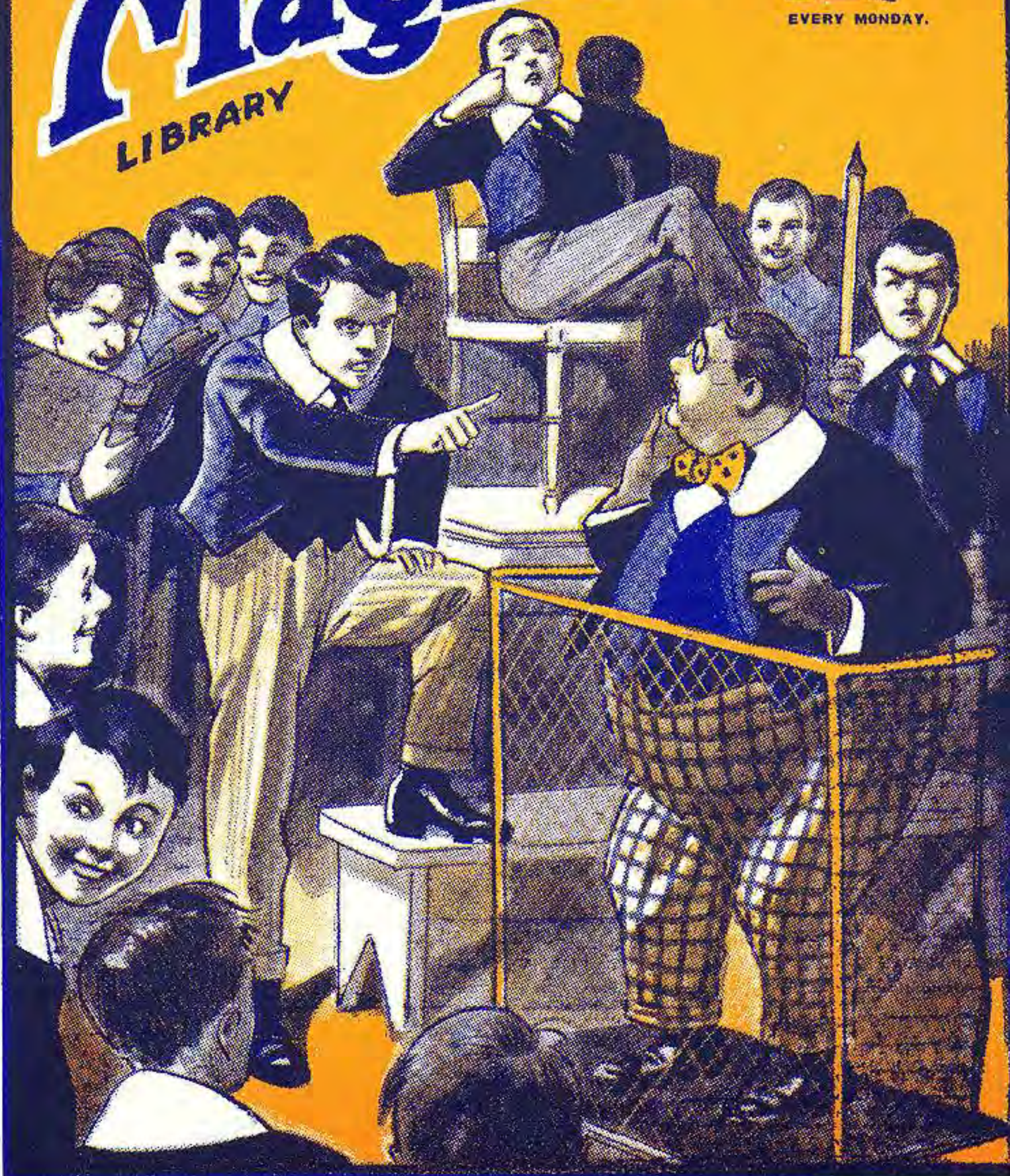


**This week's humorous school story
of the Chums of Greyfriars.**

Week Ending May 21st, 1927.

2nd
EVERY MONDAY.



(A "trying" incident in this week's rollicking story of Harry Wharton & Co. inside.)



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums. Write to him when you are in trouble or need advice. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a speedy reply. Letters should be addressed: **The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.**

"THE CURSE OF LHASA!"

OUR new serial starts in a fortnight's time, and I can promise my chums a real treat in this stirring yarn of the mysteries of Tibet. It breaks new ground. For countless years Tibet has been the hidden country. Travellers were warned off. "Private! No Thoroughfare!" has been the order of the day. But despite all that a handful of enterprising explorers have got through into this secret realm, with its towering mountains and wonder valleys, and you will hear something of extra-special interest and fascination in our grand new serial which draws the curtain aside on events that have never been set down before. Look out for this! In two weeks' time!

CAMPING OUT!

Lots of questions reach me about camping out. What should be taken on one of these trips? The secret is to travel light. Any sports shop will supply a field tent, sizeable and portable. You want to ask permission before pitching camp. This is never withheld, but it is up to the camper to leave the place as he found it. Don't let the frisky sandwich paper go blowing about in a wood or field. Burn all litter, or bury it. To get full enjoyment out of the tour one wants to chance it, and camp where and when fancy dictates. It is the free-as-air spirit which makes for success, and leaves just those jolly things to remember. The successful camping tour should be a surprise packet of bright new adventures. The Lightweight Tent Co., 70, High Holborn, has a good tent.

WANTS TO BE AN AIRMAN!

James Bell, of Johannesburg, has set his heart on being an airman, but the airman is not wanted in South Africa. So he says. But the time will come. Meantime, my chum should join the Airplane Club in his district. By that means he can get in touch with any chances that may be flying round.

A BUNCH OF REQUESTS!

Here's a perfect bouquet of suggestions. A cheery chap in South Wales wants Bunter's ration cut down, and would like to sling Wun Lung back to China. I believe it's a joke, but, anyway, I should not care to face the music if either hideous suggestion were adopted. There would be some jazz! Jack, of Oxford, wants more of Peter Todd and his cousin with the Spanish name, Alonzo, to wit—but not so witty as friend Peter. Peter will be well to the fore in coming yarns. Peter chastises well, and often saves the Bunter bacon. Peter's a brainy fellow, too, and thoroughly likeable. I have another suggestion here about a Greyfriars map. A Midland enthusiast wants a chart of the school, the whole countryside, and the studies, etc. He says this could be served up in sections and subsections, a bit each week. These bits would be cut out and pasted up to make a map which would warm the heart of every Magnetite. The plan of this jigsaw arrangement has something in it, and shall have my earnest attention.

TOO FAR FOR A JOKE!

A puzzled reader asks me how far a joke should be carried. Of course, it depends on the size and weight. Personally I hate carrying things round. They bump into people, and the victims hate you like poison. But my chum says that a man who ought to know what he was talking about told him that Sir Francis Drake went to school with Nero, and that the two good sports used to play bowls together on Plymouth Hoe. My correspondent seems to have thought there was something in this story, but I am inclined to doubt it. Still, it is wise to be wary of the leg-puller, for the maniac stalks abroad and loves to have the unsuspecting individual on toast. He will tell you that the late Boadicea had her hair bobbed, and was first chop in the local hockey team, and that Queen Elizabeth was much addicted to the flat Charleston, and often had a fox-trot with William Shakespeare. It amuses the affable joker, and it does not hurt anybody much.

FEEDING A GRASS SNAKE!

An Uttoxeter correspondent says he has a grass snake, and he is not sure of the creature's diet. He must give the snake small frogs, worms, and meal worms. The latter can be got from a bird shop, and it is easy enough to keep a constant supply of these if they are put in a jar with some bread.

Next Monday's Programme:

"FISH'S BURGLAR HUNT!"

By Frank Richards.

This is an extra long story of your old favourites, Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars, with Fisher T. Fish, the cute American junior, well in the limelight. Fishy's stunts are always popular, and his latest will send you into roars of laughter. Don't miss this top-notch story, boys.

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GET YOUR COPIES TO-DAY, CHUMS!

"THE TRAIL OF ADVENTURE!"

By Lionel Day.

In next week's issue this fine serial, featuring Jack Horner and his pal Squall, will draw to a conclusion. It's a pity in a way, because good stories invariably leave a sense of loneliness and disappointment behind them. Yet it has to be—everything comes to an end some time or another. And so it is with Lionel Day's masterpiece. Still, there's consolation in store for you, chums, in the shape of a topping detective serial which will follow on "The Trail of Adventure."

"HERLOCK SHOLMES AT ST. SAM'S!"

By Dicky Nugent.

This is a scream of a story, introducing the world-famous "defective" Herlock Sholmes, from Shaker Street, and his old friend Dr. Jotson. And these two celebrities give St. Sam's a pretty stir up when they "drop in" from the clouds—via parachutes!

Don't miss this bumper programme whatever you do. Order your MAGNET in good time—saves disappointment, you know. Chin, chin, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

BUNTER IN THE DOCK! For a Removeite to run away from a cheeky fag of the Third Form is an unpardonable offence in the eyes of the Remove, and Billy Bunter, guilty of this grievous slur on the Form's reputation, is tried by the Remove and sentenced to Coventry until he can prove to his Form-fellows' satisfaction that he is not a funk!

Bunter the Bold!



By
FRANK RICHARDS.

A Rousing New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter in a Hurry!

"HELP!"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"
"Rescue!" roared Billy Bunter.

Bob Cherry stared.

Billy Bunter was coming up the Remove staircase at Greyfriars two steps at a time.

Evidently he was in a hurry.

As a rule William George Bunter negotiated a staircase in a slow and very leisurely manner. There was a great deal of Bunter. Perpendicularly he was not impressive. Horizontally he filled a considerable space. He was, as Skinner had said, tall sideways. But at the present moment Billy Bunter, regardless of the weight he had to carry, was bolting up the Remove staircase at frantic speed.

His fat face was crimson, his podgy brow streamed with perspiration, and he gasped and spluttered for breath. But he found breath enough to yell for help as he spotted Bob Cherry staring down from the landing.

"Help! Rescue!"

"What the thump——" ejaculated Bob.

"Keep him off!"

Bunter reached the Remove landing. But he did not stop there.

He rushed along the Remove passage just as Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent came out of Study No. 1 to inquire what the row was about.

They stepped out of Study No. 1 at an unlucky moment for themselves.

Crash!

Bump!

"Oh, my hat!"

A charge with Billy Bunter's weight behind it was no joke. Harry Wharton

spun across the passage and sat down. Frank Nugent staggered back into the doorway and measured his length in Study No. 1.

Bunter staggered for a moment.

The next he was speeding on again. He reached Study No. 7, bolted in, and the slam of the door awoke every echo in the Remove passage.

There was a click as the key turned in the lock. Bunter was locked in his study, safe at last from whatever pursuer was on his trail.

"Ow!" Harry Wharton scrambled breathlessly to his feet. "What on earth's the row?"

"Wow!" gasped Nugent. "I'm winded! Wow!"

"I'll scalp that fat lunatic——"

"Wow!"

"Somebody's after Bunter!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Coker of the Fifth, perhaps! Line up, my infants, and repel boarders!"

There was a pattering of footsteps on the lower stairs. Someone, as yet unseen, was hot on the track of the Owl of the Remove. Harry Wharton joined Bob on the landing, and Johnny Bull and Hurree Janset Ram Singh came hurrying to the spot, followed by Peter Todd and Squiff, and two or three more Remove fellows. If Coker of the Fifth, or any other aggressive senior, was chasing Bunter into the sacred precincts of the Remove passage the Removeites were prepared to give him a warm reception.

The pursuer came in sight on the lower landing. There was a howl of surprise from Bob Cherry.

"It's Tubb!"

"Tubb of the Third!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Tubb!" roared Peter Todd. "That

fat funk was running away from a Third Form fag!"

Tubb of the Third came charging up the Remove staircase.

George Tubb of the Third was a great fighting-man in his own Form. But any Remove man ought to have been able to lick a fag of the Third. For a Remove man to run, with a war-like fag on his trail, was utterly unprecedented. Only William George Bunter, in all the Remove, was capable of such a proceeding.

"Why, I—I—I'll burst him!" gasped Peter Todd indignantly. Peter was Billy Bunter's study-mate in Study No. 7, and he felt keenly the disgrace to his study.

"The blessed funk!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in disgust.

"The funkfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Nevertheless, a cheeky fag must not be allowed to butt into the esteemed Remove passage."

"No fear!"

All the Remove fellows were agreed on that. Bunter was a disgrace to the Form; but the cheek of Tubb of the Third in invading the Remove passage was a matter that had to be dealt with promptly and drastically. Even the hefty Coker of the Fifth was not permitted to throw his weight about in the Remove quarters. Even Loder, the bully of the Sixth, walked delicately when he came up the Remove passage. As for the fags of the Third, they were naturally expected to regard the Remove with fear and trembling. The unexampled audacity of George Tubb was a matter that called for prompt and drastic treatment.

Headless of such considerations, Tubb
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of the Third charged up to the Remove landing.

"Where's that fat rotter?" he exclaimed.

"Collar him!"

"Here, hands off!" roared Tubb. "I'm after Bunter! Leggo!"

The Removites did not let go. They held on—hard. Five or six pairs of hands closed on the warlike Tubb. He was swept off his feet, struggling and wriggling.

"Whoooooh! Leggo!" spluttered Tubb.

The warlike fag—no longer warlike—wriggled and spluttered as he was suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between the heavens and the earth.

"Don't you know that you Third Form microbes are not allowed in this passage?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yow-ow! Leggo!"

"Drop him over the banisters!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!"

"The boilfulness in oil is the proper caper," suggested Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yaroooh! Leggo!"

"Frog's march!" said Harry Wharton.

"Good egg!" said Bob. "Take him home to the Third!"

"Ow! You beasts! Leggo!" wailed Tubb.

"This way!" chuckled Peter Todd.

George Tubb of the Third was carried back the way he had come by a laughing crowd of Removites, as many as could find room for holding on. Down the Remove staircase he went, tapping on each stair in turn, and each tap—which was emphatic—was followed by a wild yell from the hapless Tubb.

Tap, tap, tap, tap!

"Ow, ow, ow! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The crowd swept down the middle landing, and then down the lower stairs, still tapping Tubb as they went. The Removites yelled with merriment, and Tubb of the Third yelled still louder, though not with merriment. In the lower passage there was a shout of alarm from Russell of the Remove.

"Cave! Ware beaks!"

"Quelch!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, appeared in the offing. Tubb of the Third was dropped as suddenly as if he had become red-hot. In an instant the Removites were scampering up the stairs, like rabbits for their burrow. Mr. Quelch arrived on the spot, to find Tubb of the Third sprawling and spluttering at the foot of the stairs, and not another fellow in sight.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "What—what—"

"Grooooh!" gasped Tubb.

"What does this disturbance mean, Tubb?"

Tubb of the Third did not stop to explain. He picked himself up and fled for his life.

Mr. Quelch glanced suspiciously up the staircase, and passed on his way, frowning.

Bob Cherry, peering over the banisters above, reported all clear.

"And now for Bunter!" said Peter Todd.

And the Removites, having dealt faithfully with Tubb of the Third, crowded along the Remove passage to deal with William George Bunter.

Peter thumped at the door of Study No. 7.

"Bunter!"

"Bunter, you fat funk!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, you fellows—" came a gasping voice from within the study.

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"Open the door!"

"I—I say—"

"You're going to be scragged!"

"Beast!"

"Let us in, you fat villain!" shouted Peter.

"Yah!"

"Bunter, you flabby funk—"

"Go and eat coke!" retorted Bunter, safe behind a locked door. "Don't make that row outside my study, or I'll come and lick the lot of you!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You cheeky porpoise!"

"You frabjous funk!"

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

"Will you open this door?" roared Toddy.

"No, I jolly well won't!"

"I'll lick you!"

"Rats!"

"What?" shrieked Peter.

"You couldn't lick a tame cat! Yah!"

"Why, I—I—I—" gasped Peter Todd.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Never mind; he will keep. Let's get back to tea."

And the Removites, having kicked and thumped a little longer on the door of Study No. 7, departed, leaving William George Bunter safe and sound for the present, but with considerable and growing apprehension as to what was to happen in the near future.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

An Alarming Prospect!

BILLY BUNTER opened the door of Study No. 7, about an hour later, and peered out cautiously into the Remove passage through his big spectacles. The passage was clear, and the Owl of the Remove ventured to step out of Study No. 7. Like Moses of old, he glanced this way and that way. Study No. 7 as a refuge had its drawbacks.

It was long past tea-time, and there was nothing in the study for tea. Toddy, apparently, was "leaving" in some other fellow's study. Tea, with W. G. Bunter, was an important function, coming second in importance only to dinner. At dinner Mr. Quelch's eye had been on Bunter, and he had secured only enough helpings for three or four fellows. Since dinner he had eaten absolutely nothing but a cake he had found in Smithy's study and a packet of toffee belonging to Tubb of the Third. So Bunter was almost ravenous. He would have preferred to remain behind a locked door till he was quite certain that the trouble had blown over. But hunger drove him forth from his lair.

It was too late for tea in Hall, and tea in most of the studies was over. But a sound of voices and laughter from Study No. 1 showed that Harry Wharton & Co. were still in their quarters. Billy Bunter rolled along to that study, and hesitated at the door. He could hear Bob Cherry's voice.

"In the Rag?"

"Yes, after prep," said Wharton.

"Good!"

"The fat bounder's still locked in the study," said Peter Todd's voice. "He will be hungry by this time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter shook a fat fist at the door of Study No. 1. These fellows could actually chortle at the idea of William George Bunter missing his tea! Such heartlessness shocked Bunter.

"Any of those meringues left?"

"Yes; here you are."

That decided Bunter.

He had hesitated about entering the study, but if there were meringues going that settled it.

He opened the door and blinked in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!"

There were half a dozen juniors in the study, and they all turned smiling faces on Bunter. Evidently they had been discussing him.

Bunter grinned his most ingratiating grin.

"I say, you fellows, no larks, you know. I say, I'll sample those meringues, if you like."

"The likefulness is not terrific, my esteemed funky Bunter."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Perhaps we'd better let him feed," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "He will need to keep up his strength for what he's got to go through."

"Something in that," agreed Wharton. "Help yourself, Bunter."

Bunter did not need telling twice.

"I say, you fellows," he said with his mouth full, "I—I hope you didn't think I was showing the white feather, you know? You fellows know what a plucky chap I am."

"We do," grinned Bob Cherry. "We does."

"The fact is"—Bunter grabbed a second meringue—"the fact is, I was afraid—"

"We know that."

"I mean, I was afraid—"

"Tell us something we don't know," suggested Johnny Bull.

"Do let a fellow speak!" howled Bunter. "I mean, I was afraid of hurting young Tubb—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I was really afraid of letting myself go, you know," explained Bunter. "You know what a demon I am when my temper's really roused!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! When it comes to pluck, I fancy there isn't any fellow here who can teach me anything," said Bunter, with a sniff. "The Bunters are a plucky family. Look at their record in the War!"

"Where shall we look for it?" chuckled Bob.

Bunter did not answer that question. Perhaps he was too busy with his third meringue to answer frivolous questions, or perhaps he was not prepared to state where that glorious record was to be found.

"You're for it, you fat frog!" growled Peter Todd. "You've disgraced the Form by showing the white feather. You're going to be tried—"

"Eh?"

"And sentenced."

"Half-past eight in the Rag, Bunter," said Harry Wharton.

"He, he, he!"

"Have you got an alarm clock in your pocket, Bunter?" ejaculated Bob Cherry, in surprise.

"Eh? No."

"It sounds like it."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Pass the word round the Form, you fellows," said the captain of the Remove. "Every man will be expected to turn up in the Rag at half-past eight for the Form trial."

"He, he, he!"

"There he goes again!"

"He, he, he! I know you're only joking, you fellows," said Bunter uneasily. "He, he, he! I can take a joke. I say, you fellows, are there any more meringues? Well, I must say that's a measly feed to ask a fellow to. You're rather mean in this study."



"Here, hands off!" yelled Tubb. "I'm after Bunter! Leggo!" But the Removites did not let go. They held on—hard. Tubb of the Third was swept off his feet, struggling and wriggling, and carried back the way he had come. (See Chapter 1.)

And Bunter rolled to the door. "Don't forget to turn up in the Rag, Bunter."

"Yah!" "If you don't come you'll be fetched. You're going to stand your trial for disgracing the Form."

"Beast!" And Billy Bunter departed, to root along the Remove passage in search of further provender.

When Peter Todd came into Study No. 7 for prep, he found the Owl of the Remove there. Bunter gave him an uneasy grin.

"I say, Peter, old chap—" "If you call me old chap, I'll take the poker to you!" growled Peter. "You've disgraced the study."

"I—I say, it's only a joke about a Form trial, isn't it?" urged Bunter. "You'll see."

"Look here, you beast—" "Shut up—prep!"

Peter Todd sat down to work. Billy Bunter should have followed his example; but he did not. Work never had appealed to William George Bunter. Besides, he had a worry on his fat mind now. "Form trials" were an institution at Greyfriars—though Bunter had never figured before as the prisoner at the bar. On one occasion Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, had been given a Form trial, and his sentence had been very unpleasant. Certainly, the Bounder's offence on that occasion had been more serious than Bunter's, and the fat junior suspected that the Form trial in his own case was rather in the nature of a jest, by way of entertainment in the Rag. But he could not

be sure, and he was looking forward to it with growing uneasiness.

He sat in the armchair, and blinked at Peter Todd and Tom Dutton as they did their prep. Presently he rose and rolled to the door. Peter looked up.

"Where are you going, Bunter?" "I—I'm going to speak to a— a fellow!" stammered Bunter.

"Sit down!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Sit down!" roared Peter.

Bunter made a jump for the door. Whether the Form trial was to be a jest at his expense, or not, Bunter considered it judicious to be off the scene at half-past eight. But as Bunter jumped for the door, Peter jumped for Bunter.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Bunter sat in the armchair again, with a heavy concussion. Peter locked the door, and put the key in his pocket.

"Look here, you cheeky beast!" howled Bunter.

"Dry up!"

"I'm not going to stay here!" roared Bunter.

"Cheese it!"

"Beast!"

Bunter sat in the armchair and glowered till prep was over. There was a tap at the door of Study No. 7.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob Cherry. "Ready?"

"Coming!" answered Toddy.

He rose and unlocked the door, and took William George Bunter by one fat ear.

"Come on, Bunter!"

"Sha'n't!" roared Bunter.

"Suit yourself!" said Peter cheerily.

"Your ear's coming! You can please

yourself whether you come along with it!"

"Yaroooh!"

Peter Todd left the study, taking Bunter's fat ear with him in a grip of iron. Needless to say, Bunter accompanied the ear. He did not want to; but a parting would have been too painful. He went.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Trial of William George Bunter!

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER blinked uneasily around him in the Rag. That apartment was crowded with Remove fellows. Most of them were grinning. Most of the Form, apparently, regarded the "trial" of W. G. Bunter in the light of an entertainment to fill up the hour before dorm. Nevertheless, there was a certain amount of seriousness in the proceedings.

All the Form agreed that a Remove man who allowed himself to be chased into the Remove quarters by a belligerent fag of the Third, was a fellow of whom an example ought to be made. Undoubtedly it was a disgrace to the Remove, especially as they prided themselves on being a fighting Form.

All the Remove had gathered in the Rag after prep. Lord Mauleverer had been rooted out of his study. Fisher T. Fish had been dragged away from abstruse calculations of the profits he had made on his latest scheme. Skinner and Snoop and Stott had abandoned

a smoke after prep. Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, had lounged in.

Bob Cherry had rounded up all the Form for the important occasion. In such cases, all the Remove were the jury. And as Bunter's trial was expected to afford entertainment, none of the jurymen desired to be exempted from serving.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, here's the prisoner!" said Bob Cherry, as Bunter rolled in, still with Peter Todd's grip on his fat ear, and blinked very uneasily round the Rag. "Put him in the dock!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"But I say——"

"Keep your breath for your defence," said Bob. "Shove him in the dock, Toddy!"

The big fireguard did duty as the prisoner's dock. Billy Bunter was shoved in, and his fat ear released. The prisoner stood rubbing his ear in the dock.

"Mauly!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Yaas?" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Get on the bench. You're judge."

"Oh, begad! Where's the bench?"

"On the table, fathead!"

Lord Mauleverer sighed. The exertion of mounting upon the table seemed to have a dismaying effect on the noble slacker. A chair had been placed on the big table in the Rag for the judge. Lord Mauleverer stood looking at the table thoughtfully, with his hands in his pockets.

"Buck up, Mauly!"

"Yaas."

"Want a helping hand?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yaas."

Bob Cherry grasped his lordship by the back of the neck.

"Yaroooh! Leggo!" roared Lord Mauleverer. "I can get up all right! I don't want any help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mauleverer clambered on the table, and dropped into the judge's seat. He rested there peacefully with half-closed eyes. Peter Todd had constituted himself clerk of the court, to explain the law to the judge. Peter, being the son of a solicitor, was supposed to know lots and lots about law. Squiff of the Remove was prosecuting counsel. But it was a little difficult to find a counsel for the defence.

Nobody wanted to defend Bunter. But Skinner offered his services at last, and was accepted. The court was solemnly pronounced open.

"Prisoner at the bar——"

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"You are accused of funking a scrap with a grubby fag of the Third Form and disgracing the Remove. Guilty, or not guilty?"

"Not guilty!" gasped Bunter.

"Wake up, Mauly!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Eh!" Lord Mauleverer opened his eyes with a start. "All right, I wasn't asleep; I heard all you fellows were saying."

"The prisoner pleads not guilty, my lord," said Peter.

"Yaas. I sentence him——"

"Fathead! He's not tried yet!"

"Oh, all serene!" His lordship closed his tired eyes again.

"Counsel for the prosecution!" rapped out Peter.

"On the ball, Squiff!" called out Johnny Bull.

"Silence in court!"

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Sampson Quincy Ifley Field, known as Squiff to save time, stood up.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows——"

"You have to say, 'Gentlemen of the jury,'" interrupted Peter Todd.

"I have to say what I jolly well like!" retorted the counsel for the prosecution independently.

"Order!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows," repeated Squiff.

"Order!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows—like-wise, gentlemen of the jury," said Squiff, "this depraved character, known to the police as W. G. Bunter——"

"Oh, my hat!"

"This benighted, depraved, dastardly character——" went on Squiff.

"Oh, really, Field——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Look here, he's not going to call me names like that!" hooted the prisoner at the bar indignantly.

"Prosecuting counsel can call the prisoner any names he jolly well likes!" said Squiff. "Shut up!"

"Yah!"

"Prisoners at the bar are not allowed to 'yah' at the counsel," said Peter Todd. "Next time the prisoner interrupts the proceedings, the officers of the court will call him to order."

"Look here, Toddy——"

"Gentlemen of the jury, I ask you to turn your attention to the cringing, beetle-browed ruffian now standing in the dock," resumed Squiff eloquently.

"Great pip!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This depraved and abandoned character——"

"Draw it mild!"

"Order!"

"This cringing toad," went on Squiff, "has funked a scrap with a grubby little microbe called Tubb. Witnesses will be called to prove that he bunked at top speed, with Tubb on his trail, thus disgracing the great and famous Form to which he has the honour to belong—an honour of which he is unworthy. Since this incident, the said Tubb has been cheeky to Remove men, having been seen to put his fingers and thumb to his nose, and heard to call out 'Funks!' when Remove men passed him in the passages. All this was brought about by the dastardly conduct of the prisoner at the bar. I call on Cherry as a witness."

"Cherry!" rapped out Peter Todd.

Bob Cherry stood up.

"Did you see the prisoner at the bar in flight from a ferocious fag of the Third?" asked the prosecuting counsel.

"I did."

"You swear to that?"

"We're not allowed to swear in the Remove. It's considered bad form."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I warn this witness to be careful what he says in this court," said the prosecuting counsel severely. "This court is not a place for jests!"

"Jest so!" assented Bob.

"The witness will stand down. Next witness—Wharton!"

The captain of the Remove came forward.

"Are you prepared to state that you saw the prisoner at the bar in dastardly and ignominious flight from Tubb of the Third?"

"I am. He bumped me over in his hurry," said the captain of the Remove.

"That is my case, gentlemen of the jury and your lordship," said Squiff.

"I call for a severe sentence on the prisoner. The time has come when an example should be made of this depraved character. He is well-known as

a raider of tack—no fellow's study cupboard is safe from him. He is still better known as a funk, as an caves-dropper, and as a fibber. Now he has reached the culmination of a career of crime——"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Go it, Squiff!"

"Ain't he eloquent?" said Bob Cherry admiringly. "Pile it on, Squiff!"

"Silence in court!" rapped out Peter Todd.

"I demand a condign sentence on this cringing, slinking, crawling character," said Squiff. "Gentlemen of the jury and your lordship, I leave my case in your hands with every confidence."

And the counsel for the prosecution, having wound up his eloquent address to the court, stepped back and sat down. The effect was rather spoiled, however, by the circumstance that some practical joker had pulled away Squiff's chair while he was addressing the court. Squiff sat down unexpectedly on the floor with a heavy bump. There was a roar in court.

"Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the gentlemen of the jury; and the judge woke up to chuckle.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Order!"

Squiff scrambled up.

"Who pulled the chair away?" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll jolly well give him a thick ear——"

"Order!" roared Peter Todd. "Prosecuting counsel are not allowed to give thick ears to gentlemen of the jury."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The counsel for the defence will now address the jury," said Peter.

"Go it, Skinner!"

"Look here——" howled Sampson Quincy Ifley Field wrathfully.

"Shut up, Squiff! You've done your bit."

"Order!"

"Gentlemen of the jury," said Skinner, "it is my painful duty to address you on behalf of the wretched delinquent now shivering with just apprehension in the dock."

"Phew!"

"Oh, really, Skinner——"

"I demand the acquittal of the accused," went on Skinner. "I cannot say that he is innocent of the charge laid against him, but I would draw the attention of the jury to extenuating circumstances. The prisoner at the bar is a sneaking funk——"

"Look here, Skinner——" howled Bunter.

"Order!"

"He is a cringing, flabby worm," went on Skinner.

"I say, you're defending him, you know, not prosecuting him," reminded Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My point is this—that funks, like poets, are born, and not made," said the counsel for the defence. "The prisoner at the bar cannot help being a cringing worm——"

"You beast, Skinner——"

"He cannot help being a fat, flabby funk!" went on the counsel for the defence. "If he could help it, it stands to reason he would. On these grounds, and these grounds alone, I appeal for an acquittal."

There was a roar of laughter in court. Skinner's defence of the prisoner struck the jury as being rather more damaging than Squiff's speech for the prosecution. The prisoner at the bar shook a fat fist at his counsel.

"You rotter, Skinner!" he yelled. "You're a funk yourself, and all the fellows know it. Who ran away from the Courtyard Council School chaps? Who let Solly Lazarus lick him? Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The expression on the face of the counsel for the defence almost convulsed the court. They yelled.

Skinner stepped down rather hastily.

"Now, Mauly—"

"All right—I'm not asleep," said the judge hurriedly. "I sentence the prisoner—"

"He's not found guilty yet, ass!"

"Oh! What did you wake me up for, then?" demanded his lordship indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tell the jury to retire and consider their verdict, fathead."

"Oh, yaas! Gentlemen of the jury, you will now retire and find the prisoner guilty," said the judge.

The jury found their verdict without retiring. There was a chorus from all the Remove:

"Guilty!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"I sentence the prisoner—"

Peter Todd nudged the judge.

"You have to ask him first if he has anything to say before sentence is passed on him, you foozler!"

"Oh, all right! Prisoner at the bar, have you anything to say before sentence is passed on you?"

"Lots!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The lotfulness is probably terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, I'm not guilty, you know," gasped Bunter. "I can explain everything. Give me time—"

"It's the judge's business to give you time," said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, I—I never ran away from Tubb of the Third," gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I—I was going to my study for my cricket bat. Tubb happened to be running upstairs at the time. It was merely a coincidence."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Can't you spin a better one than that?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"What—what I mean to say is, that—that I'd forgotten some lines I had to do for Quelchy," stuttered Bunter. "Remembering them all of a sudden, I rushed off to my study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As for Tubb, I did not even know he was there. I never take any notice of Third Form fags. They are beneath my notice!"

"Is that all?" demanded Peter Todd.

"Yes. I—I hope you fellows can take my word."

"What a hopeful nature!" murmured Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm afraid that won't wash, Bunter," said Lord Mauleverer. "I sentence you—"

"Hold on!" yelled Bunter. "I haven't finished yet."

"Buck up, then."

"I—I can explain the whole matter," gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I will tell you exactly what happened. I was having a foot-race with Tubb of the Third—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Just a friendly foot-race," said Bunter, blinking at the jury. "That was how it was. A lot of fellows butted in and stopped Tubb. But I assure you that it was simply a foot-race."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The jury seemed almost in convulsions. The prisoner at the bar had

handed out three different explanations, which, unfortunately, did not agree with one another. But Bunter apparently hoped that one or another of them would satisfy the jury. If so, he was disappointed.

"Sentence, Mauly!" called out Johnny Bull. "It's close on dorn, and we shall have Wingate in here soon."

"Wake up, Mauly!"

"All right, you fellows; I'm wide awake. I sentence the prisoner—"

"I say, Mauly, old chap—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I sentence the prisoner to be sent to Coventry," said the learned judge. "The sentence is to remain in force until the prisoner has redeemed his character by proving that he is not a funk."

"Oh!"

"Look here, we're going to rag him!" shouted Bolsover major.

"Scrag him!" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"Who's judge in this court?" demanded Lord Mauleverer sternly.

"Shut up, Bolsover!"

"He's going to be ragged!" roared Bolsover.

"Shut up! Give Mauly his head," said Harry Wharton. "It's a jolly good idea of Mauly's. Go it, Mauly!"

"The prisoner at the bar will remain in Coventry until he has wiped out this disgrace," said the judge. "As soon as he has proved to the satisfaction of the Remove that he is not a funk the sentence will be rescinded. Until then he will be in Coventry, and any fellow speaking to him, or lending him any money—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Any such fellow will be ragged by the Form. Take the prisoner away!"

Billy Bunter grinned as he stepped out of the prisoner's dock. He had expected a Form ragging, and he had not failed to observe that many of the jury had brought old slippers and fives bats into court, obviously in anticipation of the sentence. There was a good deal of disappointment among the jury. But Bunter, at least, was pleased.

"I say, you fellows, I know it is only a joke," he said. "It's all right; I can take a joke. He, he, he!"

"Br-r-r-r!" growled Bosover major.

"I say, Toddy—"

Peter Todd did not answer. Bunter's sentence was already in force.

"Toddy, old chap, you—"

Peter walked away.

"I say, Whar-

ton—"

The captain of the Remove seemed deaf.

"Bob, old man, will—"

Bob Cherry gave the Owl of the Remove an expressionless stare.

Billy Bunter blinked round at the grinning face. Then he understood.

"I say, you fellows, don't play the goat! I know it's only a joke. He, he, he!"

The fat junior's feeble cackle echoed amid a dead silence.

"Look here, you rotters—"

roared Bunter.

The door of the

Rag opened and Wingate of the Sixth looked in.

"Dorm!" he said laconically.

The Remove fellows streamed out of the Rag. On the way to the Remove dormitory, William George Bunter blinked in great uneasiness at his Form-fellows. If this was a joke, the Removes were keeping it up. Bunter's first impression had been that he had got off cheaply. He was beginning to change his opinion now. The prospect of "Coventry" was horrid to Bunter. Next to eating and sleeping, talking was his strong point. If talking was barred, life would be scarcely worth living to William George Bunter. Even a licking from Tubb of the Third was better than that—even a ragging from the Remove.

"Good-night, Peter, old chap," said Bunter, when Wingate had put out the light in the Remove dormitory and gone.

No answer.

"I know it's only a jape, Peter. He, he, he!"

Silence.

"Peter, you silly ass!"

No answer from Peter.

"You skinny, frabjous, foozling idiot!" hooted Bunter.

There was a chuckle in the Remove dormitory, but no answer. Billy Bunter sat up in bed, blinking in great wrath.

"You silly chump, Peter Todd! Do you think I want you to speak to me? Go and eat coke!"

Another chuckle, but that was all.

"I say, Bob Cherry—"

Grim silence.

"Bob, old chap— I say, Cherry, are you deaf? I say, old chap— Look here, you footling fathead—"

A pillow whizzed through the air, and there was a howl from Bunter.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

It was a hint for Bunter to be quiet. He took the hint, along with the pillow. And there was peace in the Remove dormitory at last.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter in Coventry!

THE next day William George Bunter of the Remove realised that he was up against it.

He was in Coventry; there was no doubt about that.

Whether the whole business was, as Bunter still suspected, more or less of

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a jape, still, there was no doubt that he was in Coventry.

Fellows to whom he spoke seemed stone deaf. Sometimes they grinned—sometimes they chuckled. Generally they looked at Bunter as if he wasn't there. Nobody answered him. Out of the Form-room Bunter was seldom silent. He was not silent now. But it was discouraging to talk when no replies were made to his remarks. Bunter never liked lengthy replies, and seldom listened even to brief ones; he liked the lion's share of the conversation. So, in a way, he ought to have been pleased when fellows to whom he spoke did not utter a word in reply at all. But he was not pleased. Wholly one-sided conversations were neither grateful nor comforting.

And it was all rot, as Bunter explained eloquently to Peter Todd in morning break. So far from being a funk, he was the pluckiest chap in the Lower Fourth. If ever a fellow was bursting with courage, that fellow was W. G. Bunter. So far from being a disgrace to the Form, he was a credit to it, and the Remove ought to have been jolly proud of being the Form at Greyfriars that included Bunter in its ranks. The Owl of the Remove explained this to Peter at great length and with great eloquence. But it seemed doubtful whether Peter heard him. He gave no sign of having done so. He simply looked past Bunter, and seemed quite unconscious of the voice of the charmer, and finally walked away without a sign.

"Beast!" Bunter yelled after him.

Toddy did not turn his head.

"Yah! Come back, and I'll lick you, you lanky freak!" hooted Bunter.

Even that did not stir Toddy. He walked on regardless, and the fat junior's sweetness was wasted on the desert air.

In third lesson that morning Billy Bunter blinked indignantly and reproachfully at his Form-fellows. After third lesson he joined the Famous Five as they came out.

"I say, you fellows—"

Five deaf juniors walked on, grinning.

"You awful beasts!"

Harry Wharton & Co. accelerated and disappeared into the quad.

"I say, Skinner—"

Skinner stared at Bunter and lounged away with Snoop and Stott.

"Yah! Funk!" hooted Bunter. "Who ran away from Solly Lazarus? Yah!"

Skinner scowled, and Snoop and Stott grinned as the three walked away. Skinner, as a matter of fact, was not of the stuff of which heroes are made, any more than Bunter was. His late encounter with Solly Lazarus, of Courtfield County Council School, had not been glorious. Skinner had met Solly in the lanes and made a rude remark concerning Solly's nose—which was, indeed, well developed and, in fact, prominent. Solly had promptly paid attention to Skinner's nose—not with words, but with actions. By the time the argument was finished Skinner's nose had been in a state to attract much more attention than Solly's. Still, Skinner had done his best, such as it was, though he had been hopelessly licked. Skinner did not like being reminded of the incident. But even Skinner, though no warrior, would not have beaten a retreat from a Third Form fag! Tubbs of the Third had no terrors for him.

Billy Bunter bore down on Lord Mauleverer, who quickened his pace to escape. But the Owl of the Remove ran him down.

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"I say, Mauly, you're not turning against an old pal, are you?" pleaded Bunter.

Mauleverer grinned and shook his head.

"You'll stick to me, old chap?"

Another shake of the head.

Apparently Mauly did not regard Bunter as an old pal.

"Look here, you tailor's dummy," said Bunter, "can't you talk? I know you can't talk sense, of course. But can't you speak at all?"

Lord Mauleverer walked away.

"Beast!"

Bunter came in to dinner that day with a morose countenance. He was feeling annoyed. He had rather a suspicion that the fellows were glad that the sentence of Coventry had been passed on him, because it relieved them from the delights of his conversation. Bunter's conversation, though ample, was limited in scope; generally it dealt with only one subject, and that subject was W. G. Bunter. No doubt the Remove were fed-up with it, and glad of a rest. Probably that was partly the reason why the sentence passed on Bunter was so popular.

After dinner Bunter tackled Fisher T. Fish, the transatlantic junior.

Fishy waved him away with a bony hand.

"I say, Fishy, old chap—" murmured Bunter.

Fishy continued to wave him off.

"I say, Fishy, I've found a half-crown—"

The bony hand ceased to wave.

"Have you lost one, Fishy?"

"Yep!"

"Sure it's yours?" asked Bunter.

"Sure! Hand it over!"

Fisher T. Fish forgot all about the sentence of Coventry.

There was a shout from Bolsover major.

"You're talking to Bunter, Fishy! Bump him!"

"I say, he's picked up the half-crown I dropped!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish.

"That's important. Hand it over, Bunter!"

"Bump him!"

Bolsover major and two or three other fellows grasped Fisher T. Fish. Fishy's bony person landed on the quad with a heavy bump.

"Yow, ow, ow! Wooop!" roared Fishy.

"You'll get some more of the same if you talk to Bunter!" said Bolsover major warningly.

"Yow, ow, ow!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, grinning. It dawned upon Fisher T. Fish's cute transatlantic mind that the Owl of the Remove had been pulling his transatlantic leg, and that he had not really found a half-crown. Fishy had got his bumping for nothing. As a rule the American junior was greatly bucked at getting something for nothing. On this occasion he did not feel bucked.

At afternoon class Bunter was very morose. Coventry was getting on his fat nerves. That that was the case was evident from his willingness to talk to Fisher T. Fish. Nobody else was willing to do so. When the Remove came out after class the fat junior tackled Vernon-Smith. Rather to his surprise, the Bounder gave him a genial nod. Vernon-Smith was on bad terms with most of the Remove these days, and it rather pleased him to set himself up against the Form.

"I say, Smithy—" began Bunter hopefully.

"Yes, old bean?" said the Bounder amiably.

Bunter's face brightened. He was not particularly desirous of talking to the fellow, who was at this time more or less of an outcast in the Remove. But it was a case of any port in a storm. By this time Bunter had a feeling that he must talk or burst. Nearly a whole day's tattle was bottled up, as it were, inside his fat person.

"Smithy, old chap, I'm jolly glad—"

"Bunter's in Coventry, Smithy!" called out Bob Cherry.

"No concern of mine!" snapped the Bounder. "I shall talk to Bunter if I choose."

"Order of the Form!" said Harry Wharton.

"The Form can go and eat coke!"

"That's right, Smithy!" exclaimed Bunter approvingly. "You're your own master, old chap! You stick to me, and I'll stick to you. I ain't down on you, old fellow, because of your rotten tricks."

"Eh?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fat idiot!" said the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Go and chop chips, you fat dummy!"

"I say, Smithy, old chap, don't be waxy, you know," said Bunter, in alarm. "I've stood up for you, you know—I have really. I've often told the fellows that you can't help being a purse-proud bounder—I say, Smithy, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you!"

But Herbert Vernon-Smith did walk away, lingering only for a moment to twist Bunter's fat ear before he went.

Billy Bunter was left rubbing his ear in dismay. And when he looked in at Vernon-Smith's study at tea-time, with a hopeful countenance, the hope was quite blotted out of his countenance by a cushion that landed there. Bunter yelped and departed.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Calling on the Third!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

The Famous Five were at tea in Study No. 1 when William George Bunter presented himself.

They were discussing cricket over tea, and they went on discussing cricket, apparently oblivious of the fat face in the doorway.

"About the St. Jim's match—" Wharton was saying.

"Harry, old chap—"

"I hear that Tom Merry and his team are in great form. But—"

"Look here, you beasts—"

"But we'll beat them!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "I wish that chap Dallas hadn't left; he was a rod in pickle for them. And we've lost Smithy from the team, too. Still, we're going to beat St. Jim's."

"Can't you hear me, you rotters?" roared Bunter.

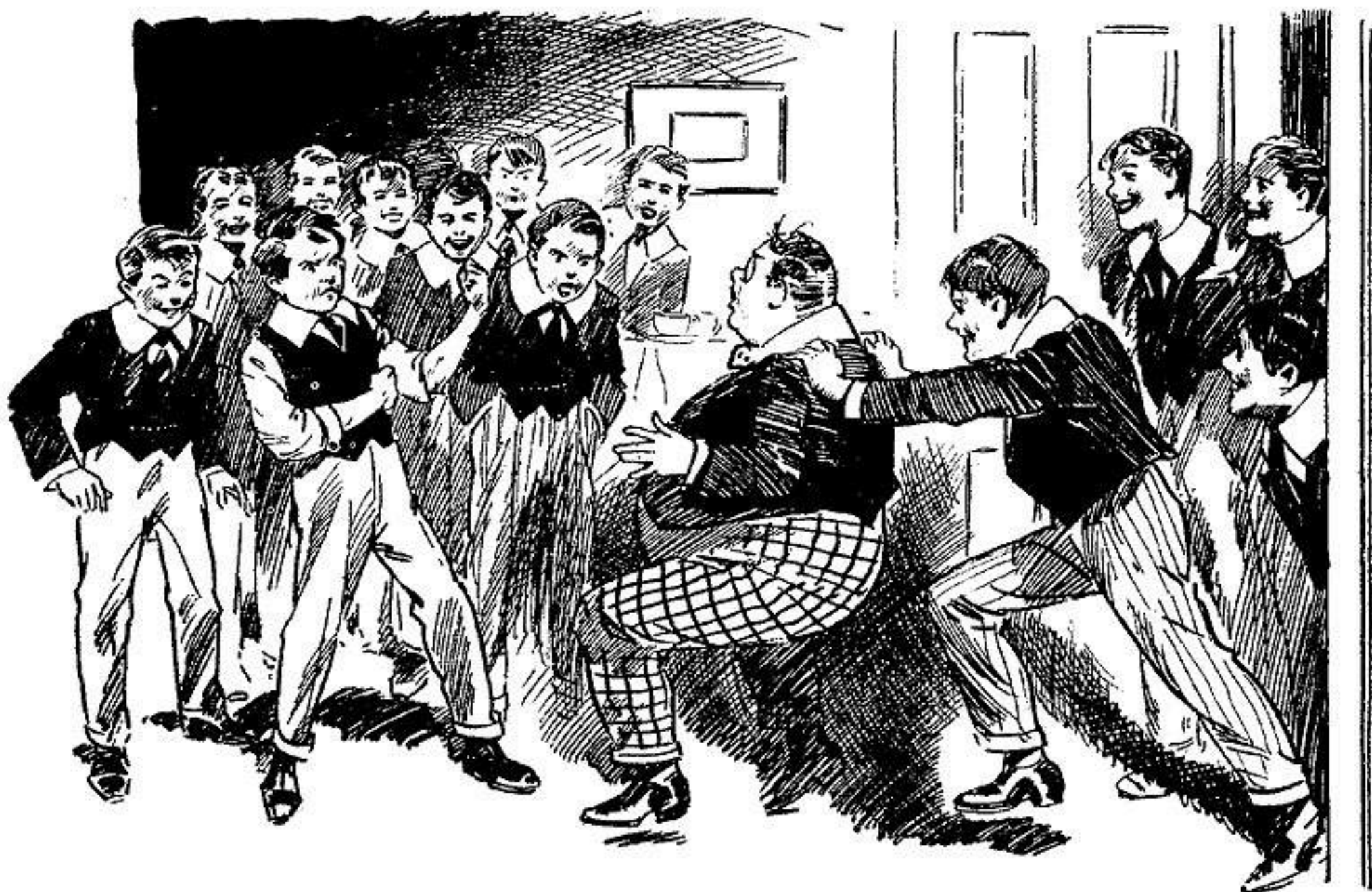
Undoubtedly the Famous Five heard him. But, like the celebrated gladiator, they heard, but they heeded not.

"I say, you fellows, a joke's a joke!" said Bunter, almost tearfully. "I can take a joke. He, he, he! But, I say, I'm fed-up, you know. That beast Toddy has gone out to tea somewhere, and there's nothing in the study. I've only had tea in Hall. I'm hungry."

The Famous Five continued to talk cricket.

Bunter insinuated himself into the study. But as a fat hand reached towards the cake on the table a knife-handle rapped on it, and the Owl of the Remove withdrew it with a yelp.

"Yaroop!"



"Buck up, Bunter!" said Wharton, with a grin, as the fat junior was propelled into the Third Form-room. "I—I—I say, it's a bit infra dig to scrap with a scrubby little beast like Tubb, you know!" gasped Bunter. Once in sight of his diminutive adversary Bunter's courage speedily evaporated, but Bob Cherry obligingly gave him a shove that sent him staggering towards the war-like Tubb. (See Chapter 5.)

There was a chuckle in Study No. 1, but no word.

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter. "Be decent, you know. I never did run away from Tubb of the Third! You fellows know jolly well that I ain't a funk. Look here, I'm fed-up with this! I—I—I want to be let off. I—I'll do anything you like. There!"

There was no answer from the Famous Five. But Bob Cherry, after a little thought, rose from the table, picked a chalk from the table-drawer, and stepped to the looking-glass. On the glass he wrote:

"CHUCK UP FUNKING!"

"Can't you speak, you blinking chump?" hooted Bunter.

Apparently Bob Cherry couldn't. At all events, he didn't.

"But what am I to do?" hooted Bunter.

Bob chalked on the glass again:

"GO AND LICK TUBB."

Bunter blinked at the inscription.

"I say, you fellows, I'd lick Tubb like a shot, of course. But I'm rather sorry for him, you know. I—I don't want to hurt him!"

There was another chuckle in the study.

"You'll chuck up this Coventry rot if I lick Tubb?" demanded Billy Bunter desperately.

The Famous Five relaxed so far as to nod assent.

"I'll go and do it now!" said Bunter. "Mind, it will be your fault if Tubb has to be taken to the school hospital!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, will it do if I lick my minor, Sammy?" asked Bunter hopefully.

The Famous Five chuckled, and shook their heads. Bob Cherry chalked on the glass again:

"TUBB, OR NOTHING!"

"I—I—I'll lick him!" said Bunter, in desperation. "You can come and see me do it, if you like!"

The Famous Five rose from the tea-table at once. Tea was not over yet, but they were willing to leave it unfinished, in order to accompany Billy Bunter on the warpath.

"You'll see that the fags don't pile on me in the Third Form room?" asked Bunter anxiously. "Come on, then!"

The Famous Five left Study No. 1 with him. Bunter rolled away with alacrity towards the stairs. The chums of the Remove followed him down. But Bunter's pace slackened as he reached the lower passage. It slackened still more as he approached the Third Form room.

Many voices could be heard from that room. Most of the Third were there, after class. A feast was toward in the quarters of the Third, and a smell of burnt herrings floated beyond the confines of the Form-room. Bunter stopped at the door.

He put his fat fingers on the handle, but he did not turn the handle. The Famous Five watched him, and waited.

Bunter turned the handle at last. He threw the door open. A mob of fags stared towards the Removes as they came in.

"What do you Remove rotters want here?" demanded George Tubb belligerently. "Chuck them out, you men!"

The Third Form "men" gathered at

once for the fray. But Harry Wharton waved his hand in sign of peace.

"Pax!" he said. "Bunter's come here to lick Tubb. We've come to see fair play."

Tubb grinned.

"Roll him in!" he said. "I'm ready!"

George Tubb squared up to Bunter, evidently ready for combat. Bunter backed hastily through the doorway.

"Come on!" roared Tubb.

"Go it, Bunter!" chirruped Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, you fellows——"

"Buck up, Bunter!"

"I—I say, it's a bit infra dig to scrap with a scrubby little beast like Tubb, you know——"

Bob Cherry propelled the Owl of the Remove into the Third Form room again. Now that he was on the scene of action the fat junior's courage seemed to have oozed out at his fat finger-tips. But William George Bunter was "for it" now.

Bob Cherry gave him a cheery shove that sent him staggering towards the warrior of the Third.

Tubb met him with a tap on the nose, and Bunter sat down suddenly on the floor with a howl.

"Man down!" chortled Paget of the Third.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get up, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Yaroo! I'm injured!"

"Up with him!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

Five pairs of hands grasped Billy Bunter, and lifted him to his feet. He blinked apprehensively at Tubb. That

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warlike fag came on, with left and right; but neither left nor right reached William George Bunter. He turned and darted out of the Form-room.

"Yah! Remove funk!" yelled Tubb.

"They're all funks in the Remove!"

jeered Paget.

"Kick 'em out!" said Bolsover minor.

Bob Cherry had made a grab at Bunter as he fled; but the Owl of the Remove had dodged his grasp, and vanished. Apparently, Bunter had realised, on second thoughts, which are proverbially the best, that the cold shades of "Coventry" were preferable to a terrific encounter with the warlike Tubb. Bunter was gone.

But the Famous Five of the Remove were made of rather different stuff. As the derisive fags closed round them, hooting and jeering, Harry Wharton made a sign to his comrades. Bunter might be a funk and a disgrace to his Form, but fags could not be allowed to cheek the Remove. And, like one man, the Famous Five piled in; and the scene that followed in the quarters of the Third was wildly exciting for several minutes. Jeers and derisive hoots changed to yells and roars of wrath and anguish, as the heroes of the Remove waded through the fags.

When the Famous Five retired, rather breathless, from the scene, the Third Form room was a place of woe. Fags were sprawling in all directions, gasping and spluttering and claspng damaged noses. There was a loud chorus of dismal groans.

Paget staggered to his feet.

"Ow! Let's go after the cads!" he gasped.

"Ow! Wow!" was Tubb's reply.

"Yow-ow-ow! My nose! Wow!"

"Let's go and mop them up, I tell you!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Chuck it, you fat-head! Wow-wow-wow!"

"Oh, my nose!"

"Ow-wow-wow!"

"Groooh!"

"Oh, lor'!"

The Third Form had had enough of the Famous Five, and it was obvious that they did not want any more.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Chance for Bunter!

"PETER, old chap!"

It was the following day, and Peter Todd was sauntering in the quad after morning class. He continued to saunter, heedless of the existence of the fat junior who had joined him.

"This isn't the way to treat a pal, Peter!" said Bunter reproachfully.

Peter sauntered on.

"After all I've done for you, Peter," said Bunter, more in sorrow than in anger. "Look how I've stood by you, Peter. I don't mind your being a skinny freak! I've never told you once what I think of your features!"

Peter Todd paused, and seemed about to speak at that; but he changed his mind, and walked on. Bunter followed him.

"I've taken you up, and chummed with you," went on Bunter. "I've never allowed the difference in our social positions to make any difference to our friendship, Toddy. If I've pointed out sometimes that you're only the son of a poor solicitor, it was only

out of kindness, so that you shouldn't forget your place!"

Peter Todd stopped.

He did not speak.

He reached out to Bunter and took him by the collar. Then, still in silence, he jerked him to the nearest tree, and silently jammed his head against the trunk. Peter was silent, but Bunter was not. As his bullet head collided with the elm Bunter's voice could be heard on the other side of the quadrangle.

"Yaroooooh!"

Peter walked away, leaving Bunter frantically rubbing his head. There was a cackle from Fisher T. Fish, who was strolling on the path. Billy Bunter turned a glare upon the American junior. Bunter was hurt, and even the worm will turn, and it was generally agreed in the Remove that Bunter was a worm. Without even stopping to think—for if he had stopped to think, Bunter's proceedings would have been far otherwise—the Owl of the Remove rushed at Fisher T. Fish, and smote him.

It was Fishy's turn to roar. Bunter's punch, with Bunter's weight behind it, was no joke.

The lean, transatlantic junior was strewn along the ground, roaring. Bunter blinked down at him furiously. A little success was encouraging, and Bunter forgot that he was funky. Moreover, he could see that Fisher T. Fish was in no hurry to rise. That was still more encouraging. Even a funk might be bold in dealing with a more pronounced funk than himself. Bunter, at the moment, was quite warlike.

"Get up!" he howled. "I'm going to lick you! Gerrup, you funk!"

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'll make potato-scrappings of you! Ow!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! A fight!" roared Bob Cherry. "Bunter scrap-ping! Roll up, my infants!"

There was a rush to the path under the elms at once. Billy Bunter in a scrap was a new and interesting sight.

Fisher T. Fish still sprawled, with increasing unwillingness to get up and face that punch again. And the more he displayed unwillingness, the more Bunter's warlike ardour intensified. The fat junior was quite eager for the fray now.

"I say, you fellows, make a ring!" he exclaimed. "I'm going to fight Fishy! I'll show you whether I'm a funk or not! Gerrup, you rotter!"

"Ow! I guess I'll burst you!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Come on!" roared Bunter. "You hold my spees, Bob. I'm going to wallop him till he can't howl! Come on, Fishy!"

"Bravo, Bunter!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"Go it, Bunter!" chirruped Bob. "I'll hold your spees! Get up and take your gruel, Fishy!"

"I—I—I guess——"

"Get up!" roared Bolsover major.

"I guess——"

"This isn't a guessing competition—it's a scrap!" said Bob Cherry. "Get up and tackle the porpoise!"

Fisher T. Fish sat up. Bolsover major grasped him by the collar and jerked him to his feet.

"Now get on with it!" he growled.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Bunter. "I'm going to lick Fishy. Mind, if I lick him, you let me off Coventry. Fishy's bigger'n Tubb of the Third. I'm not going to scrap with a fag. I'm going to thrash Fishy!"

"Done!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "That's fair. If you get through a scrap without funkng, you're let off."

"Come on, you skinny rotter!" roared Bunter.

And as Fisher T. Fish failed to come on, Billy Bunter rushed to the attack.

Fisher T. Fish promptly backed away.

Had he advanced, undoubtedly Bunter would have slackened down and backed away. But as he retreated, Bunter rushed on with undiminished courage. His fat fists thrashed out at Fishy, and the transatlantic junior gave a howl as he caught one with his sharp nose, and sat down again in the quad.

"Man down!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bravo, Bunter!"

"Go it, Fatty!"

"Who's a funk now?" hooted Bunter. "Gerrup, Fishy, you worm! Gerrup, you funk! Gerrup! You're not half licked yet!"

The fat junior danced round Fisher T. Fish, brandishing his fists, amid yells of laughter from the juniors. Fisher T. Fish scrambled to his feet, and Bunter attacked hotly. Fishy backed off once more, followed by the victorious Owl.

Had the way been open for Fisher T. Fish to back off indefinitely, Bunter would probably have proved the victor. But there was a ring of juniors round them, and the ring refused to open a passage for Fisher T. Fish. He backed off till he came up against Bob Cherry, who cheerfully shoved him back towards Bunter.

That did it!

Finding himself at close quarters with his adversary, with nothing for it but fighting, Fisher T. Fish made a desperate effort, and screwed up his courage to the sticking-point. Probably it would have come unstuck very soon if Bunter had kept up the attack. But Bunter promptly retreated as his enemy advanced. The bony fists of the American junior lashed at him, and a sharp set of knuckles crashed on Bunter's fat little nose. There was a yell from Bunter, and he sat down suddenly.

It was Fishy's turn now to dance round a fallen adversary, and yell to him to get up and come on.

"Gerrup, you fat clam!" howled Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm going to make potato-scrappings of you! Gerrup, you gink!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Go it, Bunter!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Yow-ow-ow! I'm hurt!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Up with him!" chuckled Bob.

Bunter was jerked to his feet and hurled at Fisher T. Fish, amid howls of laughter. A bony set of knuckles landed on his fat chin, and he went down again.

"Yow-ow-ow! Keep him off!" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cave!" called out Hazeldene, as Mr. Quelch appeared in the distance on the path under the elms.

And the crowd promptly broke up and scattered. Fisher T. Fish departed with the rest, and Bunter was left sitting on the ground caressing his fat chin with one hand and his podgy nose with the other, and gasping.

Ten minutes later Billy Bunter joined the Famous Five as the Remove were going in to dinner.

"I say, you fellows——"

No answer.

"I say, I should have licked Fishy to the wide if Quelch hadn't butted in, you know," pleaded Bunter.

Silence.

"Look here, you beasts, you're not keeping it up!" hooted Bunter. The Removites walked on regardless. Evidently they were still keeping it up.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"SAMMY, old fellow!" Bunter minor of the Second Form looked suspicious, as was natural in the circumstances.

The voice of Bunter major of the Remove was affectionate, its tones quite honeyed.

That was more than enough to make Sammy Bunter suspicious. Brotherly love was not strongly developed in the Bunter family. If ever it was displayed by some member of the Bunter tribe, it indicated that that member of the tribe wanted something—generally for nothing.

So Sammy Bunter, receiving an affectionate blink through his major's big glasses, responded with a stare through his own spectacles that was not even remotely affectionate, but exceedingly suspicious.

"What's the game?" he inquired.

"Game?" repeated Billy Bunter, in pained tones.

"I mean, what do you want?"

"Sammy, old chap—"

"I haven't had a letter from home," said Sammy—"I haven't had any tip. Did you think I had?"

"Look here, Sammy—"

"Nothing doing, you see," explained Sammy.

"Will you listen to me, you fat little beast?" demanded Billy Bunter, losing his honeyed manner all of a sudden.

Sammy grinned.

"I like that! I'm slim beside you, Billy. Let's see, do you weigh eighteen stone or nineteen, old barrel?"

"If you want a thick ear, Sammy, I'll—"

"Oh, come off!" smiled Sammy. "Don't you make out you're a warrior, Billy, when you're sent to Coventry by all your Form for finking? He, he, he!"

William George Bunter breathed hard. His blink was no longer affectionate; he looked disposed to take his minor by the scruff of the neck and jam his head against the tree. But he restrained that natural desire. He wanted Samuel Bunter's services, and, obviously, the way to obtain them was not by jamming Samuel's bullet head on a tree.

Bunter had been in Coventry several days now, and every day made him more and more fed up with the situation. He had set his fat wits to work to discover a way out.

The sentence passed on him had been by way of making the punishment fit the crime, as it were. The sentence was to run till the hapless Owl of the Remove redeemed his character by displaying courage; which was, in effect, a life sentence. The Remove fellows felt that they would be relieved of Bunter's conversation till the end of the term. That alone, as Bob Cherry had remarked, made life worth living at Greyfriars. And Bunter's burning desire to talk made his sentence no end of a jest, in the opinion of the Remove. They were enjoying the jest, and for that reason alone Bunter was not likely to be let off. Still, if he fulfilled the conditions laid down, he was to be let off. And William George Bunter had indulged his fat brains on the subject, and at last he had evolved a scheme.

Thrashing Tubb of the Third would have been a simple way. But Tubb of the Third was not thrashable by Bunter. Even Fisher T. Fish was not to be licked in combat. That simple way was barred; but there were other ways, and Bunter had thought of one of them. For that reason he required the help of his minor.

So he restrained his wrath, and did not jam Sammy's head on the nearest tree.

Bunter minor turned to walk away, as if he considered the interview at an end. Bunter major roiled after him.

"Hold on, Sammy," he said, as affectionately as he could. "The fact is, I'm in funds."

Sammy stopped at once.

"Lend me a bob," he said.

"I'm going to stand a spread."

"Like me to come?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, my hat!" said the amazed Sammy.

"I'm standing the spread specially for you, old chap," said Bunter. "The fact is, we don't see enough of one another here. I've always been sorry for that; we ought to see a lot of one another, being at the same school."

"You know your way to the Second Form room, don't you?" inquired Sammy.

Bunter did not answer that question.

"Now, you know how I'm fixed in the Remove," went on Bunter. "The fellows make out that I finked—"

"Not much making out about it. You did funk," said Sammy, with brotherly frankness.

Bunter breathed hard again.

"They won't let me off," he said.

"They're keeping up that Coventry rot, you know. Of course, it's really a joke—properly speaking, I'm the most popular fellow in the Form. It's just a rag."

"That's it," said Sammy, with a chuckle. "They know you're bursting to jaw, and they're pulling your leg. I heard Field say that he expected to see you burst any day if you're kept bottled up much longer."

"Field's a cheeky beast, and I'm going to lick him when—when I get time!" grunted Bunter.

"When?" murmured Sammy.

"Don't jaw so much, Sammy—do let a fellow speak!" snapped Bunter. "Now, I'm not going to degrade myself by entering into vulgar scrapping just to amuse those cheeky cads. It's beneath me!"

Sammy winked.

"I decline to do anything of the sort," went on Bunter.

"You needn't mention that—I know you do," said Sammy. "You always did decline to do anything of that sort."

"But there are other ways," said Bunter. "I've simply got to show the fellows what a really plucky chap I am. As soon as they realise that they can't make me out to be a funk the thing will drop. The trouble is that a fellow doesn't get a chance here. For instance, if I saw a chap just going to be run over by a traction-engine, I should rush forward—"

"You mean backward?" asked Sammy.

"No, I don't!" roared Bunter. "I mean forward. I should rush forward and rescue him, regardless of peril!"

"I don't think!"

"Suppose I saw a horse running away with a beautiful girl, like they do in the magazines," said Bunter. "I should spring at the horse's head and save her life at the risk of my own!"

"I shouldn't like to chance it, if I were the girl!"

"Suppose an old man got caught at the level-crossing. I should leap at him and carry him off right under the engine," said Bunter. "Any of these stunts would make the matter all right. Only, you see, a fellow doesn't have a chance. These things don't really happen."

"Wouldn't be much use to you if they did," remarked Sammy. "I can see you charging the front of an engine—I don't think!"

"If you're a cheeky little beast, Sammy, I sha'n't ask you to my spread. Look here, if a thing doesn't happen of its own accord, it can be made to happen. That's my idea. That's where I want your help."

Sammy Bunter chuckled. He knew that his major wanted something, though he couldn't guess yet what it was. The spread was to be a reward for services rendered.

"Now, rescuing a chap who fell into the river would work the oracle," said Bunter. "All I want is an opportunity to display my natural courage. The fellows will have to believe their eyes. Suppose a fellow fell off the school raft into the Sark, and I plunged in and saved him—see?"

"Catch you doing it!"

"Don't be an ass, Sammy! I can swim, I suppose?"

"Like a stone!" agreed Sammy.

"Of course—I'm a splendid swimmer. Now, it's a half-holiday to-day, and a lot of fellows will be down by the river," said Bunter. "You walk along the edge of the raft, looking at the boats, or something, and fall in—"

"Eh?"

"I plunge in after you—"

"Oh!"

"And save your life," said Billy Bunter. "See? Lots of the fellows will be looking on, and that will work the oracle."

Sammy stared at him blankly.

"And suppose you don't jump in after me?" he demanded.

"That's all right—I will."

"And suppose, if you do, you go down like a stone?"

"I tell you I'm a splendid swimmer!"

"You can tell me all the fairy tales you like, Billy, but I'm not going to be found drowned to please you!"

"There would be practically no danger. You fall in, and yell for help, and I jump in only a few seconds after you—"

"A few years, you mean!"

"A few seconds!" roared Bunter.

"Can it?" said Sammy. "Oh, my only sainted aunt! What about my clothes getting wet, if you come to that?"

"You can dry them, I suppose!" said Bunter testily. "I shall get wet, too, sha'n't I?"

"And while you're rescuing me, who's going to rescue you?" inquired Sammy. "You'd need rescuing more than I should."

"I don't want any cheeky jaw from you, Sammy! You help me out, as I've said, and I'll stand you a spread—three kinds of jam, and a cake, and meringues and eclairs."

"Let's talk it over while we have the spread," suggested Sammy.

"Don't be a young ass! Will you do it?"

"I'm not tired of life yet, old bean!" said Sammy Bunter. "When I get really fed-up with life I'll fall in the river and trust to you to pull me out. Not till then."

"Look here, Sammy—"

"Oh, chuck it!" said Sammy Bunter derisively. "Think I believe you'd come in for me? You'd be scared stiff!"

"I tell you—"

"Tell the Marines," suggested Sammy.

Bunter glared.

"Will you do it?" he demanded.

"No jolly fear!"

Every trace of brotherly affection vanished from William George Bunter's fat countenance. He had fairly cudgelled his fat brains to think out that scheme; and, now that he had it cut and dried, the fat fag refused to play up. All Bunter's uncommon mental efforts had been wasted. There was nothing doing, so far as Bunter minor was concerned, and so there remained no reason why his head should not be jammed against a tree.

So, instead of answering, Billy Bunter made a grab at his minor and secured him by the collar.

Bang!

Sammy Bunter let out a terrific yell as his head came into contact with the trunk of an elm.

"Whoop!"

"There, you cheeky little fat villain!" gasped Bunter.

"Yaroooh!"

Bang!

Finding solace in it, Bunter banged Sammy's head again, and yet again. The roars of Bunter minor were like unto the roaring of the celebrated Bull of Bashan.

Bang, bang!

"Yooop! Yarooop! Whoop!" roared Sammy, struggling wildly.

"There!" gasped Bunter.

And he released his unbrotherly minor and rolled away, feeling somewhat comforted. Bunter minor was left roaring.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter On His Own!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were taking a boat out that afternoon. It was a glorious May afternoon, and the Famous Five were going to enjoy a picnic up the river. Billy Bunter rolled down to the school raft after the chums of the Remove. He watched a basket being placed in the boat with longing eyes. Picnics appealed to Bunter.

"I say, you fellows!" he called out as the Famous Five were taking their places in the boat.

The juniors grinned, but did not answer Bunter.

"Like a fellow to steer?" asked Bunter.

No reply.

"Like a fellow to row?" asked Bunter. "I'll pull you right up the river, if you like. You can just take it easy on the cushions."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five seemed rather entertained at the idea of Billy Bunter pulling a boat up the river with six aboard.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, make room for a chap."

Bob Cherry picked up an oar to shove off.

He would have shoved off from the raft had not Bunter been there. As Bunter was there, he shoved off from Bunter.

"Yoooop!"

Bunter sat down suddenly on the raft. Five cheery juniors grinned back at him.

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him as they pulled up the Sark. Bunter picked himself up and shook a fat fist after them.

"Yah! Beasts!" he roared.

There were other fellows taking out boats that sunny afternoon, and Bunter proceeded to offer his services in many directions. His services were not accepted, neither was he answered. The sentence of Coventry was still in full force. The hapless Owl of the Remove was remaining under sentence till he had wiped out the disgrace he had brought upon the Form. It was a dismal prospect. Now that Sammy had failed him, Billy Bunter really did not see how he was to astonish the Remove by a thrilling display of courage.

He rolled away dolorously along the towpath.

It was a beautiful walk along the shining river, deeply wooded on both banks. But scenery did not appeal to Bunter. He was up against a problem he could not solve, and it worried him. There was some satisfaction in remembering how he had banged Sammy's head on the elm; but he wished that he had banged it harder.

At a little distance from the school the towpath was shady and solitary. All of a sudden there came the ringing of a bicycle bell behind Bunter, and he jumped and stared round. Cycling on the towpath was strictly forbidden by by-laws and by the rules laid down for fellows at Greyfriars. Nevertheless, here was Tubb of the Third pedalling recklessly along the towpath as if it belonged to him.

Bunter glared at him.

"Hi! Get out of the way!" bawled Tubb. "Want to be run over, fatty?"

"You're not allowed to cycle here!" yelled Bunter.

"Go hon!"

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

Tubb of the Third was the cause of all his troubles. Never had the Owl of the Remove felt so powerfully inclined to thrash Tubb. As the fag bore down on him on the bicycle, Bunter was tempted to jerk him off the machine and lick him right and left.

Bunter was not good, as a rule, at resisting temptation. But he resisted that temptation.

Instead of dragging Tubb off the machine and thrashing him, Bunter stepped aside to allow the reckless cyclist to pass.

Tubb of the Third released one hand as he passed, snatched Bunter's cap, and threw it into the rushes.

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Bunter.

Tubb went careering on his way, chuckling.

Billy Bunter, with feelings too deep for words, retrieved his cap from the rushes and jammed it savagely on his head. This cheeky fag evidently regarded Bunter of the Remove as a fellow to be ragged without limit. Bunter could only hope that the reckless rider would come to grief in his career along the towpath. It was quite probable, for the path was rough and uneven in places and the bank steep. That would have been a little consolation. But George Tubb disappeared in the distance without disaster.

Bunter rolled on, more dismal than before.

He came to a halt at the sight of a lad sitting on the bank, under a tree, methodically travelling through a bag of aniseed balls.

Bunter recognised him. He was a rather sturdy lad, with a very prominent nose and a good-humoured twinkle in his black eyes. It was Solly Lazarus,

the nephew of old Mr. Lazarus, the second-hand dealer in Courtfield. Bunter stopped and looked at him, and Solly gave him a cheery nod. Bunter had a genial impulse to make rude remarks about his face and nose, but he remembered what had happened to Skinner, who had been too humorous on that subject. Besides, the bag of aniseed balls tempted him. And Bunter, though quite conscious of the great gulf fixed between a lofty person like himself and a common person like Solly, was yearning for somebody to speak to. So Bunter acknowledged Solly's nod gracefully.

"Have some?" said Solly, extending the paper bag.

"Thanks!"

Bunter sat down in the grass and had some.

He helped himself liberally to the aniseed balls. Half the contents of the paper bag went to the first helping.

But Solly did not seem to mind. He grinned cheerily.

"Nithe afternoon, ain't it?" he said amiably.

"Oh, ripping!" said Bunter.

"Taking a little walk—what?"

"That's it. Lot of fellows wanted me to go in the boats, but a fellow gets fed-up with crowds," said Bunter. "It's a bit of a bore, really, being so popular in school. A man never gets a minute to himself."

Solly grinned again. The Courtfield Council School boys sometimes met the Greyfriars juniors at cricket, and Solly had a very shrewd idea exactly how popular Bunter was in his Form. But his manners were a little more polished than Bunter's, so he kept his thoughts to himself.

"Did you notice a kid pass on a bicycle, Lazarus?" asked Bunter.

"Yeth; young Tubb."

"He's a cheeky little beast."

"Ith he?" said Solly.

Bunter was blinking thoughtfully at the Courtfield boy. This fellow, who had licked Skinner of the Remove with the greatest ease, would not have made a mouthful of Tubb. Bunter had declined, for various reasons, to thrash George Tubb himself. But he was distinctly anxious for Tubb to be thrashed.

"I expect he'll come back this way," he remarked.

"Very likely!" assented Solly.

"Rather a lark, to mop him off his bike and wallop him!" suggested Bunter.

Solly stared at him.

"He's down on Jews," said Bunter, by way of rousing Solly's warlike ire. "He's bound to call out something when he passes you."

"He did not call out anything when he pathed me a few minutes ago," said Solly.

"You should hear what he says about your nose," said Bunter.

"Eh?"

"If I were you, old chap, I'd have him off that bike when he comes back, and jolly well lick him, for making jokes about your boko!"

"Tho I will," said Solly quietly, "as soon as I hear him making the jokes. Bunter."

Bunter granted discontentedly. Apparently Solly's leg was not to be pulled so easily as all that.

The Owl of the Remove comforted himself with another liberal helping of aniseed-balls. He sat and munched them, feeling disposed to bestow his fascinating society upon Solly till they were all gone. Solly was an open-hearted and genial youth; but he grew



Bunter's fat fists thrashed out at Fisher T. Fish, and Fishy sat down in the quad, with a loud bump and a howl. "Man down!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Bravo, Bunter!" "Who's a funk now?" hooted Bunter, prancing around the fallen Fishy, and waving his podgy fists. "Gerrup, Fishy, you worm! Gerrup, you funk!" "Ow!" gasped the American junior. (See Chapter 6.)

rather silent and reserved as Bunter rattled on. Billy Bunter's conversation often had that effect on fellows.

The aniseed-balls were all gone at last, and Solly showed an inclination to go, also. But Bunter was not in a hurry. After his long enforced silence it was sheer joy to Bunter to rattle on at full length, enjoying the music of his own voice. Probably Solly was not enjoying it very much, but it was not Bunter's way to bother himself very much about others.

There was a whirr of a machine on the towpath, and Tubb of the Third came in sight again on his return. Billy Bunter blinked at him morosely. Tubb was riding at a reckless pace, and skirting the rough edge of the steep bank in a rather alarming way. Solly Lazarus gave him a rather concerned glance.

"That young duffer will be tumbling into the river if he isn't careful!" he remarked.

"Serve him right!" said Bunter.

"The water is very deep along here," said Solly. "If he goes in he will never get his jigger out of the river again!"

Tubb clanged on his bell as he came abreast of the spot where the two sat under the tree. He released a hand to wave to Solly, and then put the thumb of that hand to his nose, and extended the fingers, by way of greeting to Billy Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove glared at him. Solly chuckled.

But the next moment his chuckle died away, and he leaped to his feet.

"Look out!" he shouted.

But the warning came too late.

Tubb's cheeky gesture at Bunter had done it. The bicycle wobbled on the rough bank, and lurched towards the steep edge which overhung the waters of the Sark, six or seven feet below. Tubb of the Third clutched at his handles again in a hurry, but it was too late.

The wobbling bicycle sprawled over the edge, and there was a startled howl from Tubb as he went.

In an instant bicycle and rider disappeared from the horrified eyes of the two schoolboys on the bank.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bunter.

He sat as if glued to the ground, staring at the spot where Tubb of the Third had vanished. Two loud splashes came from below the bank. Solly Lazarus made a spring across the towpath.

"Come on, Bunter!" he shouted.

And Billy Bunter, much more slowly, picked himself up, and followed the other to the river's edge.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Borrowed Plumes!

"O OOOOOOH! Help!"

It was a choking yell from Tubb.

Solly Lazarus reached the edge of the bank almost in one jump, and stood staring down into the river.

The bicycle had splashed in close to the bank, and was caught upon a straggling bush that grew out of the water. Tubb of the Third had shot off it as it went over, and fallen farther out.

The hapless fag went deep in, and came up spluttering wildly, struggling with the current. He was several feet out of his depth, and Tubb was no great swimmer.

Solly Lazarus saw a white, horrified face looking up from the swirling water and two hands clutching frantically at the empty air. Then Tubb of the Third went under again, swept away by the current; and a second later Solly's hands were together, and he had dived from the bank.

Solly cleft the water like an arrow.

Bunter, tottering to the bank, blinked down through his spectacles.

He saw Solly Lazarus come up, a dozen yards out into the wide river, and Solly had something in his grasp.

Tubb's white face showed over the surface the next moment.

His eyes were closed now; he was quite unconscious. All his weight was on Solly.

Bunter blinked dazedly at them.

Possibly he realised just then that Sammy had been well advised not to take the risk of falling off the raft, with Billy as his potential rescuer. For it was borne in upon Bunter's mind that

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"THE FIGHT FOR THE CUP!"

(Continued from page 15.)

one of those soothing, hush-a-bye-baby sort of voices.

"And now," thundered the speaker at last, "I call upon Frank Fearless to come forward and receive the Cup at my hands!"

That was the signal for everybody to wake up. Sir Freddie was cutting the cackle at last, and coming to the horses!

Frank Fearless rubbed his eyes, and rose to his feet, and made his way towards the raised platform on which the Guvvners were seated in solemn state.

It was a proud moment for Frank Fearless, and Big Hall rang with cheering.

Sir Freddie, beaming over his spectacles at the approaching junior, looked around for the Silver Cup. He failed to spot it.

"Bless my sole!" he mumbled. "Here's a pretty kettle of fish! The Cup is missing!"

The Head, who was prezzant on the platform, looked very unhappy and ill at ease. He gulped hard once or twice and gave a nervous cough.

The rest of the Guvvners began to assist Sir Freddie in his search for the Cup; and soon there was quite a treasure-hunt in progress. Grave and reverend gentlemen crawled around the platform on their hands and knees, muttering in their beards, and apparently under the impression that the Cup had disappeared through a chink in the boards.

The Head did not join in the search. He stood looking on, nervously toying with his beard.

"Gentlemen—" he began, at length.

Flushed of face, Sir Frederick Funguss glanced up.

"Well, Birchmall?" he snapped.

"What is it?"

"Ahem! Ahum!" faltered the Head.

"I—er—ah—regret to inform you that the Cup is not here!"

"Eh?"

All eyes were fixed wonderingly upon the Head.

"A most distressing thing has happened, gentlemen. I would have mentioned it before, but I did not want to interrupt Sir Frederick's speech."

"Tell us the worst!" panted Sir Frederick, scrambling to his feet.

"What has happened to the Cup?"

"The Cup, as you know, was placed in my care, and I locked it in my private safe in the strong-room. Whether it is still there or not I cannot say; but the keys of the safe have been stolen from me."

"Stolen!" gasped the Guvvners.

"Pinched!" cried the Head dramatically. "They were taken from my trousers pocket during the night by some person unknown, and I am therefore unable to open the safe."

"Good gracious!"

"The whole thing is very distressing," said the Head. "I could cry about it. I feel like braking down and blubbing like a child. But there! It's no use crying over spilt milk—or stolen keys. We must resign ourselves to the inevitable. The prezzentation to Fearless cannot take place. The whole thing is 'off.' So let us dismiss the school, and say no more about it."

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"One moment!" said Sir Frederick Funguss. "You seem in a mity hurry, Birchmall. Surely there are ways and means of opening the safe, even without the keys?"

"Of course!" said Colonel Fiery Sparkes. "A peace of bent wire would do the trick. Has any gentleman a peace of wire in his possession?"

There was a paws as the Guvvners went through their pockets. All sorts of articles were produced—penknives and peaces of string and chunks of toffy—but nobody appeared to possess a peace of wire.

At this juncture Mr. Lickham stepped forward.

"I will tell you how the safe can be opened, gentlemen—" he began.

"Dry up, Lickham!" hissed the Head, with a fierce glare at the master of the Fourth. "You keep off the grass—see?"

Mr. Lickham looked astonished; but the Guvvners beckoned to him to proceed, so he proceeded.

"The safe in the strong-room, gentlemen, is not the sort that can be opened with a peace of bent wire, or any such artifice. It is a very strong safe, absolutely burglar-proof—as I discovered when I once attempted to raid it. Before I came to St. Sam's, gentlemen"—Mr. Lickham's honest face flushed a little—"I was by profession a cracker of cribs—a swell mobman. I was known to the underworld as Flash Jim. Opening safes is not eggactly a safe opening; but I was a genius at the game. Many's the crib I've cracked and—"

"Cut it out!" said Sir Frederick sharply. "We don't want to hear about your shady past. How do you suggest we can open this safe?"

"Blow it open!" said Mr. Lickham dramatically.

Sir Frederick stared.

"That's a tall order!" he eggclaimed. "Most of us belong to the Ancient Order of Froth-blowers, but I fear we are not sufficiently strong in the wind to blow open a safe! When it comes to blowing soup, I, personally, have no equal, but a safe—"

Mr. Lickham smiled.

"I mean, blow it open with dinermite," he eggplained.

"Oh!"

"A stick of dinermite will do the trick," said the master of the Fourth.

"It is indeed the only way."

"Have you a stick handy?" asked Colonel Fiery Sparkes.

Mr. Lickham nodded.

"Yes, I always carry a chunk of dinermite with me, in case of emergency. I propose, gentlemen, that we adjern to the strong-room, and blow open the safe forthwith."

Everybody was in favor of this suggestion, eggsept the Head, who glared at Mr. Lickham as if he could eat him.

"Of all the tom-fool suggestions—" began the Head.

But the Guvvners were already hobbling out of Big Hall on their gouty pins; and Doctor Birchmall reluctantly followed.

St. Sam's was left spellbound by this eggstraordinary turn of events. They had been called together to witness the impressive seremony of the Cup being

prezzented; but it seemed that they were to be disappointed.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lickham preceeded the Guvvners into the strong-room. He produced the stick of dinermite from his pocket, and started to lay the fuse.

"There will be a bang, gentlemen," he said, as he grovelled on all-fours; "but don't be alarmed. The effect will be purely local. The safe-door will be blown open, and we will soon ascertain whether the Cup has been stolen or not."

"Lickham, you ass—" began the Head.

But Mr. Lickham was about to "touch off" the dinermite. He was seen to fumble with a box of matches, and the next minnit there was a blinding, defening, parralysing eggsplosion.

BANG!!!

The very foundations of St. Sam's were shaken by that mity detternation. It seemed as if a whole crop of earthquakes was happening at one and the same time.

Mr. Lickham had performed his task thurroughly—much too thurroughly, in fact. Either he had over-estimated the quantity of dinermite required for blowing open a safe, or since the days when he had been known as Flash Jim his hand had lost its cunning.

The strong-room was compleatly wrecked. The safe had been blown to smithereens. There was a whacking grate hole in the sealing, and the floor was bestroon with daybree.

The Guvvners and the Head and Mr. Lickham had been hurled to the floor by the impact of the eggsplosion. There was a wirling mass of arms and legs, and it looked as if a Rugby scrum was in progress.

It was some minnits before the unforchunit victims managed to sort themselves out. When at last they staggered to their feet, their faces were blackened, their clothes scorched, and their beards singed.

All eyes were turned fiercely upon Mr. Lickham.

"You—you blundering booby!" roared Sir Frederick Funguss. "You jolly nearly dispatched the lot of us to kingdom come! I've often had a good blowing up from my wife, but never such a blowing-up as this! Lickham, you mad-man—"

"Oh, bump him!" cried Colonel Fiery Sparkes in tones of eggasperation.

Mr. Lickham backed away in alarm. The angry Guvvners, eagerly assisted by the Head, closed upon him, and wirled him off his feet, and bumped him again and again on the floor of the strong-room till not a breath remained in his body.

"Ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!" gasped the unhappy Form master. "I'll never make any more helpful suggestions—never!"

"That'll learn you!" said the Head, with a leer. Then he turned to the Guvvners. "I am afraid, gentlemen, that your Silver Cup is lost and gone for ever. This missguided dissiple of Guy Forks has blown it sky-high!"

"But it may not have been in the safe at all," protested Sir Frederick. "It may have been stolen. In any case, the keys of the safe were stolen from you, and that is a matter which calls for searching investigation. We must engage a private detective, and this mysterious affair must be sifted to the bottom."

At the mention of a detective the Head's face turned a sickly purple.

"We don't want any tecks hear, turning the school upside-down!" he said hastily.

Sir Frederick frowned.

(Continued on page 27.)

SPECIAL "DICKY" NUGENT THRILLER
FOR NEXT WEEK—

"HERLOCK SHOLMES
AT ST. SAM'S!"

DON'T MISS IT, CHUMS!



(Continued from page 13.)

nothing would have induced him to jump into the river as Lazarus had done.

He stood on the bank, blinking, his fat knees knocking together, expecting every moment to see the two heads vanish under the swirling water.

But they did not vanish.

Solly Lazarus was a strong swimmer, and he was fighting gamely for himself and for the unconscious Tubb.

The current was strong, and it dragged him along; but he kept himself afloat, and he kept Tubb's face above the surface.

Slowly but surely, with his teeth set, Solly fought his way towards the bank, the current sweeping him along farther and farther from the spot where Bunter stood blinking helplessly down.

Closer and closer to the bank he came, farther and farther along, and then Bunter's fat brain stirred at last, and he plunged along the towpath in the direction in which the current was taking Lazarus.

It was an exhausting struggle for Solly, but he won through, and came within reach, at last, of the reeds and rushes that grew thickly under the steep bank.

He clutched at a handful of reeds, and held on, swaying in the current. He dragged himself by a herculean effort to the reeds, and dragged Tubb after him. The water swirled round his waist as he stood precariously in slippery mud, holding Tubb on one arm, his other hand gripping at a willow that overhung the bank.

"Bunter!" he panted.

Billy Bunter arrived on the bank above, and blinked over.

"Help me up with him!" panted Solly.

The rescuer was very nearly at the end of his tether.

"I—I can't reach you!" spluttered Bunter.

"Get down the bank, you idiot!"

"I—I shall get wet!"

Solly gave him a look.

Billy Bunter decided to get down the bank at the risk of getting wet. He grabbed hold of a branch of the willow, and clambered down. He gave a gasp as his heavy weight dragged the branch down and he plunged bodily into the water close under the bank.

"Grooogh!"

"Clumsy!" hissed Solly.

"Oooch!"

Bunter held on frantically to the willow, as he splashed and plunged in the water.

He righted himself at last, standing with the water up to his armpits. He gave Solly a furious blink through his wet spectacles.

"Grooogh! I'm soaked, you beast!"

"Hang that! Take hold of him!"

"I'm drenched!"

"Can you get him up the bank?" hissed Solly.

"No, I can't!"

"Then hold him while I get up, and pull him after me."

"Grooogh!"

Billy Bunter was about as wet as he could possibly be now, so there was no use bothering about that. He planted his feet firmly in the mud, and, still holding to the willow with one hand—nothing would have induced him to let go for a moment—he took Tubb's collar with his other hand, and relieved Solly of the unconscious fag's weight.

Solly Lazarus scrambled actively up the bank, and, getting a grip on a root with his left hand, seized Tubb's collar with his right from Bunter, and pulled the fag up out of the water.

With another desperate scramble, he reached the top of the steeply sloping bank, dragging Tubb after him.

He dropped the fag in the grass on the towpath and sank down beside him, utterly spent, panting spasmodically for breath.

Billy Bunter scrambled up with the help of the willow-branch, and came squelching on the towpath.

"Look at me!" he gasped. "Soaked!"

Solly did not answer and did not even look at him. He lay on the bank, gasping and gasping.

But he sat up in a few minutes and bent anxiously over Tubb. The fag was insensible.

"We must get help for him, Bunter!" he gasped.

"Grooogh!"

"We're a mile from anywhere," said Solly despairingly. "Look here, Bunter, you cut off and get help while I stay with him."

"Ooooooh!"

"You can get to the lock-keeper's house farther up—"

"I'm soaked! Drenched!"

"What does that matter now?" hooted Solly.

"Oh, doesn't it?" howled Bunter indignantly. "I can jolly well tell you that it does! My clothes are ruined!"

"Bother your clothes, you fat ass!"

"Why, you cheeky cad!" hooted Bunter. "I dare say it doesn't matter about your old clothes; but my clothes cost money, I can tell you!"

"Will you run for help?"

"Run yourself!" snorted Bunter.

"I'm going to squeeze the water out of my clothes. I don't want to catch pneumonia, if you do!"

Solly rose to his feet. He was still painfully fatigued from his struggle in the river. But, exhausted as he was, it was probable that he would be able to cover the ground as fast as the slow and unwieldy Owl of the Remove.

"Wait here with him while I go, then!" he snapped.

"Grooogh!"

Solly Lazarus started up the towpath at a run.

Bunter proceeded to wring the water out of his clothes. He was in an exceedingly bad temper. He was, as he had said, soaked and drenched, and it was not a pleasant state to be in. He almost forgot Tubb of the Third till a low moan from the fag recalled his attention.

George Tubb stirred and raised himself dazedly on one elbow and stared round him.

"Oh! What—how—what—?" he stuttered.

Bunter blinked at him.

"You've had a jolly narrow escape, you young idiot!" he snapped. "Look at the state I'm in! All your fault!"

Tubb stared at him.

"I—I fell in!" he stammered.

"Clumsy young idiot!" said Bunter.

Tubb stared at Bunter, and then stared round on the towpath. Solly Lazarus had been out of sight for several minutes. There was no one to be seen on the towpath but Bunter, and Tubb's gaze returned to him in dizzy amazement.

"I—I say—!" he gasped.

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Bunter.

"Look at my clothes! Pretty state I'm in to go back to Greyfriars, you fathead!"

"Did you get me out?"

"Eh?"

"I—I suppose you got me out," faltered Tubb. "Oh dear!" He sank back in the grass.

Bunter stared at him.

Then a sly grin came over his fat face.

Solly Lazarus was gone. Tubb had not the faintest suspicion that Solly had pulled him out of the river, and gone for help to get him back to the school. He did not know—and there was no reason why he should know. On certain occasions Billy Bunter's fat brain could work swiftly. It worked swiftly now.

As in a flash of illumination, he saw where he came in, so to speak. That display of courage, which was to rebut the accusation of finking and to restore him to his old footing in the Remove—here it was ready to his hand! What Sammy Bunter had refused to do, Tubb of the Third had unintentionally done; and though Bunter had not rescued him, that was a trifling detail in the affair which there was no occasion to mention.

"Did you pull me out?" repeated Tubb, sitting up and staring at Bunter.

"What do you think?" said Bunter complacently.

"I—I say, it was jolly plucky!"

Bunter smirked.

"Nothing to me," he answered. "I suppose you didn't think I should sit on the bank and watch you drown, did you?"

"N-no! But—"

"You might thank a chap!" said Bunter loftily. "Not that it matters. Still, you might thank a chap for risking his life to save you from a watery grave."

"Oh!" gasped Tubb. "Thanks!"

And George Tubb sat and fairly blinked at Billy Bunter. Bunter, apparently, had rescued him from the river; and Tubb knew only too well the terrible risk his rescuer must have run. It was the surprise of his life to George Tubb; but, in view of the gratitude due to his rescuer, he felt rather ashamed of being so surprised. But he couldn't help it; he was astounded. And he sat and blinked helplessly at Bunter, while the Owl of the Remove continued to wring water from his clothes.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Brave Bunter!

"HALLO!"

It was a hail from the river. A boat was pulling up from the direction of the school. Jimmy Vivian of the Remove was pulling; his noble relative, Lord Mauleverer, sat at the lines. Both the juniors stared at the bank, where Tubb sat dripping in the grass, and Bunter stood wringing out his clothes. Vivian pulled in close under the shore.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1005.

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2

"Had a tumble in, Bunter?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"He's in Coventry, Mauly," said Vivian.

"Yaas, I forgot! Never mind that now," said his good-natured lordship. "You look wet, Bunter!"

Snort, from Bunter.

"I am wet!" he snapped.

"You been in, too, Tubby?" asked Sir Jimmy Vivian. "Both of you been taking a bath with your clothes on?"

"I—I fell in!" gasped Tubb. "I went over with my bike. I say, will you chaps give me a lift back to the school? I don't believe I can walk; I'm all dizzy."

"Yaas, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Shove in closer, Jimmy. Like a lift, too, Bunter?"

"Yes, rather, Mauly! I'm worn out," said Bunter. "I had a frightful struggle in the river."

"Bunter got me out," said Tubb. "Blessed if I know how he did it; he's no swimmer."

"Oh, really, Tubb——"

"Sorry!" said Tubb at once. "You must be able to swim to get me out as you did. But it beats me how you did it. I thought I was done for when I went under."

"Bunter came in for you and got you out?" yelled Sir Jimmy Vivian.

"Yes."

"Oh crikey!"

"You—you're sure?" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer, in astonishment.

"I shouldn't be alive now if he hadn't," said Tubb, with a shudder. "I lost my senses in the water, and when I came to Bunter had me here on the bank."

"Oh gad!"

"Bunter did!" said Vivian dazedly. "Well, this beats the band! Bunter can't be a funk if he went in out of his depth for you, Tubby!"

"Pluckiest chap in the Remove, and chance it!" said Bunter, with a sniff of disdain. "Like to see you doing it, Vivian!"

"Well, I hope I'd have done it if I'd been on the spot," said Jimmy Vivian. "Still, it was jolly plucky! Hop in, old fat man!"

Bunter scrambled into the boat, and Tubb of the Third followed him. Lord Mauleverer relinquished the stern seat to them.

"My bike——" began Tubb anxiously.

"Oh, bother your bike!" said Bunter crossly. "Let's get back to Greyfriars. Can't you see I'm wet!"

Bunter was wet, and anxious to get dried; but he was still more anxious to get off the scene before Solly Lazarus returned to the spot.

"Oh, let's have a look for the bike!" said Lord Mauleverer. "A few minutes won't hurt!"

"Oh, really Mauly——"

"I can see it," said Sir Jimmy, staring along the river. "It's hanging on a bush farther up. We can get it."

"Look here, don't you waste time!" exclaimed Bunter. "I jolly well want to change my clothes!"

"Can't leave it there?" said Sir Jimmy.

And he put out the oars again and pulled along the bank. The bike was dragged away from the bush and laid across the bows of the boat. Billy Bunter blinked anxiously along the tow-path in the direction of the distant look-keeper's cottage, but there was no sign yet of Solly Lazarus.

"Now buck up, for goodness' sake!" snapped Bunter.

"Right-ho!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1005.

The boat swept round, and Sir Jimmy pulled away with the current towards Greyfriars. In the blazing sunshine of the May afternoon Bunter and Tubb were half-dried by the time they arrived at the school boathouse. Peter Todd was on the raft, and he stared at Bunter and Tubb as they got out of the boat. Three or four other fellows gathered round.

"What's happened?" asked Peter. "You haven't been taking that wash at last that you've needed for whole terms, have you, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"Don't chip Bunter, Toddy," said Lord Mauleverer. "Bunter got Tubb out of the river after he pitched in with his bike."

"Eh?" ejaculated Peter.

"What!" gasped five or six voices.

"Draw it mild!" chuckled Squiff.

"Is this your funny day, Mauly?" asked Hazeldene.

"Fact!" said Mauly.

"Bow-wow!"

"Did Bunter tell you so, old bean?" grinned Bolsover major.

"I say, it's true," said Tubb of the Third. "I went in, and went under, and Bunter must have got me out, for he had me on the bank when I came to. I—I was jolly nearly drowned!"

Tubb shivered.

Billy Bunter blinked disdainfully at the astonished juniors on the raft.

"I hope you're properly ashamed of yourselves now!" he said crushingly.

"You've called me a funk——"

"So you are a funk—a measly funk!" bawled Bolsover major.

"Now I've risked my life to save a fellow?" said Bunter. "Where would Tubb be now if I hadn't got him out?"

"Gammon!"

"I should have been drowned!" said Tubb. "I was jolly nearly drowned as it was! Bunter's a real brick!"

More and more fellows gathered round to hear the amazing news. Bunter rolled away, and Tubb of the Third followed him, leaving Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian to tell the wondrous tale to the astounded Greyfriars fellows. Paget and Bolsover minor of the Third joined Tubb, and led him in, listening with amazement to his statement that Billy Bunter had rescued him from the river.

"But he can't swim for toffee!" said Paget.

"Must be able to swim better than anybody supposed," said Tubb. "You see, he did it."

"But he's a funk!" said Bolsover minor.

"Well, he's a funk in some things," said Tubb, "but not in others, I suppose. He can't scrap for toffee, but most fellows would rather scrap than dive into deep water with a strong current going. Bunter's got that kind of pluck, anyhow!"

"Beats me!" said Paget.

"Hollow!" agreed Bolsover minor.

"Well, it beats me too," said Tubb, "but there it is. I'm jolly well not going to rag Bunter any more—unless he puts on airs about saving a chap's life and all that. I suppose that's his sort. If he does I shall shut him up fast enough!"

And Tubb tramped away to the Third Form dormitory to change his clothes. Billy Bunter had rolled into the Remove dormitory for the same purpose. The Owl of the Remove was feeling very damp and muddy and uncomfortable, but, all the same, he was in a state of great satisfaction. He had worked the oracle, so to speak; he had fulfilled the

condition imposed upon him; he had exhibited undoubted and undoubtable courage, and the sentence of Coventry would be a thing of the past. That he was strutting in borrowed plumes, and assuming the credit that belonged rightfully to Solly Lazarus, was a little matter that did not worry Bunter. He had no attention to waste on petty details like that.

Sammy Bunter blinked in at the doorway of the Remove dormitory while his major was changing. Evidently the fat fag had heard the surprising news. There was a sly grin on Sammy's podgy face.

Bunter blinked at him.

"You've heard?" he asked.

"I've heard!" chuckled Bunter minor.

"I hope you're proud of your brother!" said Billy Bunter loftily.

"Not a lot!" chuckled Sammy. "How much did you give Tubb to fall into the river?"

"What!" roared Bunter.

"Look here, if you're standing Tubb a spread for doing it, I'm coming!" said Sammy. "That's only fair. I suppose you want me to keep it dark?"

Billy Bunter glared at his minor.

"You fat little villain!" he gasped. "Do you think I squared Tubb to fall into the Sark?"

"Of course! Same as you tried to square me to do it!" said Sammy. "What's the good of giving me gammon, Billy? Don't I know you?"

"Tubb fell in on his bicycle by accident——"

"Gammon!"

"It was a sheer accident, and he was nearly drowned——"

"Pile it on!"

"If he hadn't been rescued he would be at the bottom of the river now!" roared Bunter.

"You do it jolly well!" said Sammy. "But there's no need to keep this up in the family, Billy! I know you, you know!"

"I tell you it's all genuine!" shrieked Bunter.

"You can tell me that till you're black in the face if you like!" said Bunter minor. "But what's the good? Tubb must have been an ass to chance it! But I suppose he went into shallow water! He would have sense enough for that!"

"Ten feet deep, at least!"

"You mean inches?" asked Sammy.

"He was under twice!" hooted Bunter. "He was nearly a goner! The water was ten feet deep, and the current was frightfully strong! You know what the river's like a mile above the boat-house!"

"What about the spread?" asked Sammy. "Am I coming? You can't expect me to keep it dark if I don't come."

"Keep what dark?" shrieked Bunter.

"About your squaring Tubb to fall into the water."

Billy Bunter fairly boiled over with wrath. Considering the arrangement Bunter had sought to make with his minor earlier in the afternoon, perhaps Sammy's suspicions were justified. But they were exasperating all the same. Words were wasted on Sammy Bunter. William George made a sudden rush at him, and so ferocious was his look that Sammy turned in the doorway to bolt. He bolted, but a fat foot landed on him as he fled, and he went headlong into the passage with a yell.

"Now come back and have some more!" roared Bunter.

"Yaroooh!"

Sammy did not come back. He did not want any more. Billy Bunter, in



Billy Bunter made a grab at his minor and secured him by the collar. Bang! Sammy Bunter let out a terrific howl as his head came into contact with the trunk of an elm. "Whoooooop!" "There, you cheeky little fat villain!" gasped Bunter major. (See Chapter 7.)

great wrath and indignation, proceeded with his changing. Then he came down to roll out into the quad, and strut there with his fat little nose held high in the air. Half a dozen fellows came up to speak to him at once. The sentence of Coventry had been dropped; every fellow who had heard the story of the gallant rescue of George Tubb had agreed on that at once. Billy Bunter had redeemed his character for courage; Billy Bunter was a hero of sorts. If he was not a fighting-man, at least he was a fellow ready to risk his life to save another fellow—which really was a higher kind of courage, and much more to Bunter's credit. Billy Bunter, lately ostracised by his Form, basked in the sunshine of admiration, and enjoyed it exceedingly.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Telling the Tale!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" "What's the game?" Harry Wharton & Co. had come in from the river. They strolled into the Rag when they came in, and there a surprising sight met their eyes.

There were a dozen fellows in the Rag. Among them was William George Bunter. And Billy Bunter was talking, and the other fellows were not

only answering him, as if he had never been in Coventry at all, but they were treating him with a politeness to which he was very unaccustomed, and indeed with something like respect in their manner. Which was a surprise to the Famous Five, who had heard nothing so far of the happenings of that eventful afternoon.

"What about Coventry?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"That's all off, dear boys," said Lord Mauleverer.

"I should jolly well think so!" exclaimed Bunter, with a disdainful blink at the Famous Five. "After what I've done—"

"Haven't you fellows heard?" asked Tom Brown.

"Heard what?" inquired Wharton.

"About Bunter and Tubb."

"Oh, my hat! Has the savage Tubb been on Bunter's trail again?" asked the captain of the Remove, laughing.

"Bunter's saved his life," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

"Tell us another funny story."

"The gammonfulness is terrific!"

Evidently the Famous Five found it difficult to swallow the statement. Billy Bunter gave a contemptuous sniff.

"If you fellows don't believe it—" he began.

"Believe it!" ejaculated Wharton. "Well, it wants some believing, doesn't it?"

"It's straight," said Peter Todd. "We've all asked Tubb about it. Tubb was playing the goat with a bike on the towpath, and fell in. He was jolly nearly drowned by his own account. Bunter got him out."

"Tubb's a better swimmer than Bunter—he couldn't be worse," said Bob Cherry.

"Yah!" from Bunter.

"Draw it mild, you men," said Lord Mauleverer. "Bunter's done a jolly plucky thing. Give credit where it's due, you know."

"I'm accustomed to envy," said Bunter. "But I really think you fellows might draw the line at sneering at a fellow who risked his life to save a chap in the river."

"Well, if you did that, Bunter, you're out of Coventry, and we'll all stand round and cheer," said Johnny Bull. "But you didn't."

"I did!" yelled Bunter.

"It's all right, you fellows," said Hazeldene. "Tubb says so, and I suppose he ought to know. Mauly and Vivian brought them home in a boat, both of them drenched to the skin."

"Let's hear what happened," said Bob.

"Well, I don't mind telling you," said

Bunter. "I'm not the fellow to brag of a little thing like that—not like you fellows, for instance. This is how it happened. I was lying—"

"You generally are!" commented Johnny Bull.

"I was lying on the bank of the river!" roared Bunter.

"And now you're lying in the Rag!"

"I was lying on the bank, and Tubb came along. He was on his bike, and he pitched over into the river. Without stopping to think, I rushed across the towpath and plunged into the raging waves—"

"The raging waves of the Sark?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"I—I mean—" Bunter's fervid imagination was leading him astray once more. "I—I mean, I dived into the river—"

"That's better, even if it isn't true. What next?"

"I seized Tubb by the collar as he was going down the second time. 'Save me, Bunter!' he gasped."

"Fine!" said Bob.

"He turned his eyes on me with an expression of agony I shall never forget!" went on Bunter eloquently.

"Phew!"

"Go easy, old chap!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "Don't spoil a fine thing by piling it on, you know."

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Bunter isn't doin' himself justice," said Mauly. "We know from Tubb that he was unconscious when Bunter pulled him out. He was half-drowned, and never knew what happened from the time he went under till he found himself on the bank with Bunter."

"That—that's what I meant to say," said Bunter. "Don't take the words out of my mouth, Mauly."

"Oh, gad!"

"Seizing the senseless form of the drowning boy in my arms," went on Bunter, "I bore him—"

"That's all right," said Johnny Bull.

"You bore everybody. I dare say you bored Tubb if you saw him at all today."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I bore him," yelled Bunter—"I bore him ashore, struggling for life with the raging billows—I—I mean, the—the current. At that moment all my past life flashed before my eyes."

"It always does in these romances," said Bob Cherry.

"You silly ass, this isn't a romance. This is true."

"Oh, my mistake! Got on."

"All my past life flashed before my eyes." Bunter had a strong leaning towards dramatic details. "Every incident from the time when I played as an innocent child among the stately old oaks at Bunter Court."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I remembered everything—"

"Did you remember the eighteenpence you owed me from last term?" asked Frank Nugent.

Bunter disdained to answer that frivolous question.

"I staggered ashore with Tubb in my arms," he said. "Laying him down in the grass, I sank down, exhausted by my heroic efforts. He gasped out words of heartfelt gratitude in faltering accents."

"But he was unconscious, you know, old bean," hinted Lord Mauleverer.

"I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean, Bunter?" grinned Bob. "Did he do the gasping gratitude act while he was unconscious?"

"I—I mean, he—he would have gasped out words of heartfelt gratitude

if he had been conscious. As he was unconscious, of course, he couldn't."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. It was touch and go," said Bunter. "You fellows may not see it, but this is a serious matter. I might have been drowned."

"Impossible! The proverb says that those who are born to be hanged cannot be drowned."

"Beast! I'd jolly well lick you, Bob Cherry, only—I'm tired out with saving Tubb's life."

"Is there any truth in this yarn?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Why, you—you rotter!" spluttered Bunter, in great indignation. "All the fellows know I shaved his wife—I mean, saved his life. Tubb thanked me with tears in his eyes. It's only because I'm such a modest chap that I'm not going to put in for the Humane Society's medal. I'm entitled to it, after saving Tubb's life with heroic courage."

"Where's Tubb?" asked Johnny Bull.

"In the bike-shed, cleaning down his jigger," said Toddy. "But we've had it from Tubb. Bunter has put a lot of frills on the story, but it's true."

"Well, we'll have it from Tubb, too, before we swallow it," said the Captain of the Remove. "Let's go and see Tubb, you chaps. This Tale of a Tubb is too steep to be swallowed all at once."

And the Famous Five left the Rag, followed by a disdainful sniff from William George Bunter.

They found George Tubb in the bike-shed.

Tubb of the Third was not looking good-tempered. He had quite recovered from the effects of his ducking, but his jigger had not recovered. Tubb was cleaning down the machine with an oily rag, and there was a good deal of oil and grubbiness on Tubb.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!" said Bob Cherry. "I say, Tubb—"

"Oh, don't bother!" growled Tubb.

"We hear that Bunter saved your life—"

"I suppose he's swanking about it!" growled Tubb. "But it's true. I suppose I shall never hear the end of it!"

"Tell us what happened."

"I've told about twenty fellows!" exclaimed Tubb, exasperated. "I'm fed-up with the subject!"

"Sing it over again to us," said Bob.

"Oh, rats! I fell off the bank on my bike in deep water!" snorted Tubb. "Any fellow might have! If my Form master gets to hear of this I shall be licked for biking on the towpath!"

"Serve you right, too! But did Bunter pull you out?"

"He must have!" snapped Tubb. "I was half-drowned, and must have lost my senses. Anyhow, I never knew what happened till I found myself on the bank with Bunter. I remember I was right out in the middle of the river, and that's all I remember, till I came to."

"But Bunter couldn't—"

"Well, he did. And now give us a rest. I've got this dashed bike to clean! You can help me if you like."

"Was anybody else there?" asked Wharton.

"Not when I came to."

"I mean when you fell in."

"That Courtfield kid, Lazarus, was sitting on the bank with Bunter," said Tubb. "But he was gone before I came to. He must have seen Bunter go in for me."

"Didn't he stay to help?"

"Well, I suppose he didn't, as he wasn't there. I was a good way from the place when I went in, when Bunter

got me out—the current must have carried me along a good distance. Lazarus might have come along the bank to lend a hand, but he didn't. And now give us a rest—I tell you I'm fed-up with it! And you can tell Bunter that if he swanks about saving my life I'll jolly well give him a thick ear!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left the bike-shed and walked back to the house. Amazing as it was, they had to be convinced. William George Bunter had fairly earned his pardon, and more than earned it. The Famous Five went into the Rag, where Billy Bunter was still going strong. The Owl of the Remove blinked at them as they came in.

"Satisfied now?" he sneered.

"Yes, old fat man," said Bob Cherry.

"I can't quite understand it—I'd never have thought it of you. But it seems quite straight."

"The straightfulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The admiration of your worthy and ridiculous self is also great."

"Bravo, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "You can't be such a funk as you make out—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Well, I'm jolly glad it's happened," said the captain of the Remove. "It was all the more decent of you, old fat bean, because that cheeky little beast, Tubb, has been ragging you."

"He was making faces at me when he fell in," said Bunter. "That was how he came to take a tumble—letting go his handle-bars to put his fingers to his nose. But, of course, I didn't think about that—seeing him in danger, I rushed to the rescue—"

"Oh, quite!"

"Heedless of the fearful risk, I plunged headlong into the raging torrent—"

"Good man! Coming up to tea in the study?"

Bunter beamed.

"Certainly, old chap! I've rather a lot of engagements on, but I'll turn them down to come and tea with my old pals!"

It was quite a spread in Study No. 1. For once, William George Bunter was a fellow to be honoured; and the Famous Five honoured him in a way he could appreciate. Billy Bunter's fat face beamed brightly over the festive board.

When he rolled away from the study after tea the Owl of the Remove was looking, and feeling, greatly bucked. Fellows nodded to him in the passage and made amicable remarks in passing. "Coventry" was a thing of the past; the word "funk" was not breathed in Bunter's hearing. And William George Bunter was in a state of fat and happy satisfaction; and, indeed, by this time, Bunter almost believed that he really was a very plucky fellow, deserving of admiration. But his satisfaction was not, alas! destined to last.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Solly!

"BUMP him!"

"The bumpfulness is the proper caper!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Hear, hear!"

Those remarks were called forth by the appearance of Solly Lazarus at the gates of Greyfriars.

Harry Wharton & Co. were chatting in the old gateway after tea, when Solly appeared in the offing.

Solly came up with a cheery grin on his face. Evidently he did not expect anything like a hostile reception. He was acquainted with the Famous Five, though he did not see them very often. But when they met they were always civil and friendly. But the present occasion was an exception.

Solly Lazarus, according to Tubb, had been on the spot when the fag tumbled into the Sark. Any fellow on the spot might have been expected to lend a hand in the rescue, even if he did not care to take the risk of diving into deep water after a drowning fag. The very least Solly could have done, in the opinion of the Greyfriars fellows, was to have lent a hand when Bunter was saving Tubb's life. Instead of which he had not even troubled to walk along the towpath to the spot where Bunter had pulled Tubb out of the river. That, at least, was the impression given by Bunter's description of the episode. Certainly, Solly had not been on the scene when Tubb recovered consciousness; Tubb was a witness to that.

It really looked as if Solly, while knowing that two fellows were in dire danger, had gone on his way regardless. Which was the limit, as Bob Cherry remarked. Nobody was bound to do heroic stunts; but every fellow was expected to bear a hand when another fellow was in danger.

So the Famous Five fixed quite grim

the school, he had found both Tubb and Bunter gone. It had occurred to him that a passing boat might have given the juniors a lift—as had, in fact, happened; and as there was nothing more that he could do, Solly had gone home to tea. After tea, however, he decided to walk along to the school to ask how Tubb was. He had been unconscious, and had looked bad enough when Solly had last seen him.

The Greyfriars juniors moved out of the gateway as Solly arrived, and circled round him. From their point of view he was a fellow to be made an example of, and they did not mean to let him get away unpunished now that he had ventured into the lion's-den.

likely be at the bottom of the river now," said Bob Cherry.

"That it th tho!" assented Solly.

"Collar him!"

"Bump him!"

"Give him beans!"

"Hands off!" roared Solly, as the Removites closed in on him.

But the juniors collared him, unheeding. Solly Lazarus put up his hands at once, and hit out. There was a roar from Johnny Bull, as he caught Solly's knuckles with his nose. Johnny sat down quite suddenly.

"Bump him!"

Solly was a good fighting-man; but the odds were too great. He had no time for more hitting; hands closed



The wobbling cycle sprawled over the edge of the bank and there was a startled howl from its rider. Next moment Tubb and his bicycle had disappeared from the horrified eyes of Solly Lazarus and Billy Bunter. "Oh, my hat!" gasped Bunter. He sat as if glued to the ground whilst Solly darted to his feet and sprang across the tow-path to the rescue. (See Chapter 8.)

looks on Master Lazarus, and several other fellows who were at hand looked at him just as grimly. A surprise was waiting for the unsuspecting Solly.

"We'll jolly well give him the bumping of his life!" said Bob Cherry. "I suppose he's come along to ask whether anybody was drowned. Rather late in the day to bother about that."

"Yes, rather!" said Johnny Bull.

"He ought to have gone in for Tubb," said Nugent. "He's a good swimmer—he's won a prize for swimming in Court-field. If a dud like Bunter could go in for a chap, so could he!"

"I should jolly well think so. We'll make an example of him," said Peter Todd.

Solly came sauntering up, all unsuspecting. He knew nothing of Bunter's version of the story, of course; all he knew was that when he had got back to the spot with help to carry Tubb to

Solly looked a little surprised. He discerned now that the Remove fellows were looking hostile, though he could not guess the cause.

"No larks, you know," said Solly. "I haven't come along here for a rag. I came to ask after Tubb."

"A lot you care!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Solly raised his eyebrows.

"That it th not very thivil," he remarked. "Thivility coths nothing, you know. I hope young Tubb is all therene."

"Tubb is serene enough," said Harry Wharton. "No thanks to you!"

"I don't quite understand," said Solly, more and more surprised. "Young Tubb had rather a narrow escape, I think."

"No doubt about that; and if a chap hadn't gone in for him he would most

on him on all sides, and he was swept off his feet.

"You rotterth!" he roared. "Leggo! By Chove, I'll jolly well lick you all round!"

"Give him jip!" yelled Bob.

Bump!

Solly Lazarus was bumped in the gateway, with a hefty bump. He gave a wild yell.

"Give him another!"

"And another!"

"Go it!"

Bump!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" yelled the hapless Solly. "Leggo, you beast! By Chove, I'll let young Tubb drown next time!"

"What! What do you mean, you ass?" demanded Wharton. "We're jolly well bumping you because you did leave him to drown. He would have been drowned right enough if Bunter hadn't gone in for him."

"What?" shrieked Solly Lazarus.

"Give him another!" roared Johnny Bull.

"You thilly asses!" howled Solly. "Who thays Bunter went in for him!"

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"Eh? Bunter does."

"Oh, thissors!"

"Hold on a minute!" said Harry Wharton hastily. "I—I—I think there may be a mistake. Look here, young Lazarus, you were on the bank when Tubb tumbled into the river."

"Yeth!" gasped Solly.

"You didn't lend Bunter a hand in getting him out," hooted Bob Cherry. "You just walked away and left him to it."

"Oh! My only Uncle Tham!" ejaculated Solly. "Did Bunter tell you so?"

"Well, didn't you?" demanded Nagent.

Solly grinned.

"Not quite!" he said. "Mean to thay that Bunter hasn't told you what happened?"

"Yes, he has," said Peter Todd, with a very keen look at Solly. "He's told us that he dived in after Tubb and got him out."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Solly. "I can thee him doing it! He would have gone down like a thtone if he had!"

"Well, that's what I should have thought," said Peter. "But he did it, all the same. You were there, and you must have seen him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, cut the cackle, and tell us just what happened," said Harry Wharton. "I thought Bunter's yarn was steep."

"Thteep isn't the word for it!" chuckled Solly. "Oh, my Uncle Tham! Didn't Tubb know who pulled him out?"

"He was unconscious; he thinks Bunter did."

"Well, who did, if Bunter didn't?" demanded Bob.

Solly Lazarus grinned.

The Removites looked at one another. The same suspicion was in all minds now; and the juniors realised that they had been a little hasty in meting out punishment.

"Was it you, Lazarus?" asked the captain of the Remove, with a deep breath.

"Of courthe it was," said Solly. "I can thwim a little, but I can tell you it was touch and go. Bunter couldn't have thwum well enough, if he had had the pluck to go in. And he hadn't."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"I thought Bunter would have told you what had happened," said Solly. "I never guessed he was stuffing you. I came along to ask whether young Tubb had got over it; he looked very bad when I left him to go for help."

"Oh!" exclaimed Wharton. He understood now why Solly had not been on the scene when George Tubb came to.

Solly dusted his trousers. He had been bumped rather hard; but he was grinning good-naturedly.

"I—I say, we're sorry!" stammered Wharton.

"All therene, dear boy!" said Solly. "It was a mithtake. I had no idea Bunter had been stuffing you when I came along. I only wanted to ask how young Tubb was. Good-bye!"

"Hold on—come in and see Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "We want this thing clear."

And the juniors marched Solly in at the gates. Bunter was in view, airing himself and his glory in the quad. Bob Cherry shouted to him:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove blinked round.

He gave a sudden start, and his big spectacles almost fell off, at the sight of Solly Lazarus among the Removites.

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Bunter blinked at Solly for a moment, as if that genial and good-natured youth was some ghastly spectre. Then he turned and bolted for the House.

"Stop him!" roared Bob.

And Billy Bunter was promptly rounded up.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"I—I—I SAY, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"You fat spoofer!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We might have known it was spoof, you fat villain!" said Peter Todd. "We all know you can't swim for toffee, and that you funk going in at ducker."

"Oh, really, Peter! After the heroic way I rescued young Tubb—"

"You didn't!" roared Peter. "It was Lazarus."

"I—I say, young Lazarus is an awful fibber, you know," stuttered Bunter. "If he says he rescued Tubb, he—he's pulling your leg, you know. He doesn't know what he's talking about. He wasn't there—"

"Why, you've told us he was there!" hooted Bob Cherry. "Tubb told us so, too."

"I—I mean"—gasped Bunter—"I—I mean, he—he ran away! Young Tubb knows that I saved his life—don't you, Tubb?" pleaded Bunter, as George Tubb of the Third joined the crowd of juniors round the Owl of the Remove and the grinning Solly.

"You told me so," answered Tubb of the Third. "I never saw who got me out, as I've said. You were with me and you said you did it."

"I went to fetch help to get you to the thechool," explained Solly. "You were gone when I got back with thome Courtfield chaps."

"I—I say, you fellows, that's gammon!" exclaimed Bunter. "Lazarus is pulling your leg, you know. Like his check to come along here and make out that he rescued Tubb! He never went in for Tubb, and he never called to me to help him get Tubb up the bank, and that wasn't how I got wet. I got wet plunging heroically into the river to fetch Tubb out. Without thinking of the risk, I plunged headlong into the raging flood—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle, but it wanted some pluck!" hooted Bunter.

"So you're still sticking to it?" demanded Bob.

"Yes, rather! It—it's true, you know," explained Bunter. "It's simply sickening for Lazarus to butt in like this! I never supposed for a moment that he would turn up here, though I might have guessed that a common fellow like that would try to make capital out of it."

"Out of what?" demanded Bob.

"I—I mean—" stuttered Bunter. "N-nothing, you know. Lazarus hadn't anything to do with it, really. Not a thing. Besides, he couldn't have got Tubb up the bank without my help. He'll admit that."

Solly chuckled.

"You fat villain!" exclaimed Harry Wharton wrathfully. "You've taken us all in, and made us believe that Lazarus left you and Tubb in the lurch, and we bumped him for it before we found out—"

"He, he, he!"

"So you were spoofing!" roared Tubb of the Third. "Swanking about saving

a fellow's life, and spoofing all the time!"

"Oh, really, Tubb—"

"Lemme get at him!" roared the indignant Tubb.

"I—I say, you fellows, keep him off!" yelled Bunter, dodging behind Bob Cherry in alarm. "Don't you be an ungrateful beast, Tubb, after I saved your life! Lazarus hadn't anything to do with it. I can tell you you'd both have been drowned if I hadn't helped you up the bank. I got soaked to the skin, helping both of you—"

"So Lazarus was there, after all?" chuckled Bob.

"Eh! No, he wasn't! I mean—"

"Never mind what you mean!" said Harry Wharton. "You've spoofed us, you fat fibber, and we might have known it. You're sent to Coventry. Get out!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Lemme get at him!" roared Tubb.

Bob Cherry took the Owl of the Remove by one fat ear and twirled him towards Tubb. That incensed youth commenced warlike operations at once.

"That's for your nose!" he roared.

"Yooop!"

"And that—"

But Bunter was fleeing for his life, and he disappeared into the House, with the enraged Tubb in hot pursuit, followed by a roar of laughter from the juniors. Billy Bunter's glory had been grateful and comforting; but it had been brief. Now he had fallen from his high estate, and great was the fall thereof. And his last state was worse than his first, as he dimly realised as he gasped in his study, with the door locked, and Tubb of the Third breathing blood-curdling threats through the keyhole—keeping it up till Bolsover major came along and kicked him out of the Remove passage.

Billy Bunter eyed Peter Todd uneasily when that youth came up to prep.

"I say, old chap—" he murmured.

Peter did not answer.

"I say, you're not starting that Coventry rot again, are you, old fellow?"

No reply.

"After I saved young Tubb's life—Yaroooh! Keep that bat away, you beast!" roared Bunter.

Peter Todd grinned, and sat down to prep.

Billy Bunter's fat face was glum when the Remove went up to their dormitory that night. The sentence of Coventry was in full force again.

"I say, you fellows!" he pleaded.

Silence.

"Wharton, old fellow—"

Grim silence.

"Bob, old chap— I say, Franky, old fellow— Look here, you beasts! Yah! Who wants to talk to you? Beasts!"

And Bunter went wrathfully to bed.

The Owl of the Remove was in Coventry again; and there he remained till the Removites tired of the jest, and the matter was allowed to drop. But that was not for some days; and by that time the amount of unuttered conversation bottled up inside Billy Bunter was beyond calculation or computation. But he was let off at last; only just in time, according to Bob Cherry, to prevent him from bursting like a balloon.

THE END.

(Now look out for next week's magnificent yarn of the Chums of Greyfriars, entitled: "FISH'S BURGLAR HUNT!" You will enjoy every line of it!)

FOR SERVICES RENDERED! Mean-as-Mud-Parker, Jack's rascally guardian—the man who has persecuted him and made his life a misery—actually has the nerve to approach Jack's titled relative for a reward . . . but he doesn't get the reward he expected!

The TRAIL of ADVENTURE!

by
Lionel
Day



A Powerful and Dramatic Story of Mystery and Intrigue.

The Last Lap!

SQUALL wormed his way closer, and, raising his right foreleg, touched the boy's waistcoat with his paw. His jaws were wrinkled almost as if he were laughing. Jack flung his arms round the dog's neck.

"You dear old fellow—why, what ever is the matter?"

Squall put both his paws now on Jack's waistcoat. His master hugged him close.

"Squall—why, Squall, where are we?"

The wolf-dog, being unable to give him any information on this point, contented himself with putting his paws on Jack's shoulders and licking his face. Jack staggered to his feet. An eerie feeling of terror possessed him.

"I don't know how I got here!" he gasped. "What does it all mean?"

He put his hands to his head. The last thing he remembered was the cabin of the Emerald. Mrs. Bowker had put him to bed after giving him something to eat. He had been very tired. And now he had awakened up in this strange, magnificent place. Of that long walk through London and across the country—of the journey by train—of the trek across the park—of his entry into the house, he remembered nothing.

He had no clue to tell him of how that mysterious influence with which Black Michael had bound his mind and brain had suddenly been lifted by the tragedy that had happened, at the very moment of his awakening, in the far off London police-court.

As far as he knew to the contrary, he might have been dropped from the clouds and landed by some miracle in that room.

He glanced down at his feet. Now he saw that his boots were covered with dust and mud, and that the upper of one of them had cracked, leaving a gaping hole from which his foot protruded. The discovery only increased his perplexity. Those boots were not new, it was true, but they had been quite sound the last time he had looked at them. And how did all that dust and mud come there? A sudden, great

desire to cry came upon him. His eyes filled with tears, but he fought them back bravely.

"I don't understand it, Squall," he stammered helplessly. "I can't make it out. From my boots I seem to have been walking a long distance, and yet I don't remember a thing."

He stood there searching his brain. Before his vision there rose a series of pictures so lacking in sequence that they were not unlike a mangled film projected on the screen in a cinema-house.

He had taken Tommy down to the stables in a village a few miles from

Dillingham. It had been late when he got back, and Mr. and Mrs. Bowker were asleep. He remembered their snores. And Squall's behaviour had been so extraordinary that to pacify him he had opened the panel in the wall of the cabin and allowed him to enter the hold.

Then there was a gap. He had a vague recollection of something like a nightmare in which he had struggled violently with some invisible foes. Presently, a long time afterwards, he had awakened up to find himself not in the comfortable bunk of the Emerald, but in a strange, dark compartment. He was bound to some sort of bed with cords and there was a gag in his mouth. He had lain there for what seemed an eternity. All about him he had heard rumbles and gurgles and the tumbling of water, but he had been unable to utter any cry for help. He remembered now how he had thought his enemies must have brought him there to die—a horrible, lingering death in that darkness—and as bravely as he could he had tried to face what seemed inevitable.

For a time he must have lost consciousness, for the next thing he recalled was a violent banging, followed by a swinging motion. Then there was another interval in which he could hear voices—voices that frightened him, for he recognised them as the voices of members of Black Michael's gang. Suddenly there was a patch of faint light. The door had been opened. He could see men's cruel, brutal faces bending over him. But someone mercifully cut the cords that bound his limbs, and he was able at last to raise his stiffened, tortured body. They made him get up. He was walking out of that room, where he had suffered so much. He was in his flannel nightshirt. He felt a breath of cool air upon his forehead—enormously refreshing it was—he caught a reflection of numerous lights on a dark stretch of water, and then something seemed to cut his memory short.

When the next picture appeared, he

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

JACK HORNER, who has run away from his rascally guardian, finds himself pursued from place to place by a sinister individual who goes by the name of

BLACK MICHAEL. This consummate scoundrel knows that Jack is heir to a valuable property and a title. Should he die, Black Michael automatically inherits both title and estates. Knowing nothing of these things, Jack, accompanied by his faithful wolf-dog, Squall, flies to London and seeks sanctuary with

BILL BOWKER and his good wife, who own the monkey-bout Emerald. The relentless Black Michael follows Jack wherever he goes, however, and bringing his hypnotic powers to bear, eventually succeeds in capturing Jack and taking him to his headquarters in Limehouse. Ultimately Jack is discovered and rescued by Bill Bowker, who forces Black Michael to remove the hypnotic spell he has cast over the lad. Black Michael promises to do so, but the wily scoundrel secretly exhorts Jack to journey to Weald Manor, where, doubtless, he hopes to do away with him. Unfortunately for Black Michael, he is taken away to the police station, and later is brought before the magistrate to answer his long list of crimes. Penal servitude stares him in the face, and rather than suffer that, Black Michael takes poison in the dock and thus slips through the net of the law once again. Meanwhile, Jack, obeying the commands imposed upon him whilst under Black Michael's hypnotic power, journeys to Weald Manor, accompanied by Squall. The lad suddenly awakes from his hypnotic trance simultaneously with the death of Black Michael, and to his astonishment finds himself in a large room where he has no business to be. "Where am I, Squall?" he asks blankly.

(Now read on.)

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was in the cabin of the Emerald with Jim Snow, who had come by some injury, and Bill and Mrs. Bowker. He had had a good meal and had then been put to bed—and now he was here.

These ragged recollections seemed to have no sense nor reason. There were obvious gaps in them which he sought in vain to fill up. And then suddenly he abandoned the attempt. He was in a place where he had no business to be. He must get out of it as quickly as possible, before anyone came and found him. It would be all so difficult to explain. Nobody would believe that he couldn't remember.

"Come on, Squall!" he whispered. "You must know how I got here, and you must show me the way out."

The dog, as if understanding him, turned towards the door. As Jack followed him he realised how utterly footsore and weary he was. Even with that soft carpet beneath his feet it was painful to move. And he was hungry—desperately hungry. A horror seized upon him that he was going to faint before he reached the open air. He leaned forward and caught Squall by the collar.

"Take me out of this, Squall," he whispered—"quick!"

They were out of the door now, in a passage—a long, broad, airy passage. As in a haze he could see muddy footmarks on the floor. They were his footmarks, he told himself stupidly. They led him directly to a door at the farther end of the passage.

That that was the way he had come was proved by the unhesitating course that Squall took. Now he had reached the door. He opened it with fumbling fingers; he was outside. Somewhere the sun was shining, and the air was pleasantly warm. It was a huge house, he saw, and the discovery only made him increase his haste. It would never do for anyone to find him there. They would think him a thief. It was hopeless to think of explaining.

Not ten yards away was the edge of a wood. He staggered towards that friendly shelter. He was among the trees. Squall was straining at his collar, forcing him on, as if he were taking him to some place that he knew of. Suddenly the trees about him vanished. He was on a grassy track. There were no shadows here, nothing but sunlight. He halted, utterly dazed and bewildered.

There ahead of him was the neat, flower-strewn garden and the old creeper-covered house—the house where the old lady lived who had been so kind to him—the scene of that amazing adventure with Brilliant Sing. As he recognised the place—while yet his brain was reeling under the discovery—he saw standing at the gate the very old lady herself.

Jack staggered forward. His throat was dry, his lips parched, and he was fainting for want of food. He managed to get within a yard of the gate. He tried to speak, but no sound came from his lips. He could only look mutely at the old lady's face, and then quite suddenly he fell face forward on the turf.

Parker Tries It On!

AS Jack fell forward on the turf Squall leapt astride his body, his ruff bristling, his ears back, his fangs bared. Obviously he wished to make it clear to all and sundry that any one who dared to approach his master did so at his own risk.

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The old lady standing at the gate had been utterly taken aback by the unexpectedness of the scene. She had been lost in her sad thoughts, dreaming there in the sunlit garden of the past that never could be recalled, when she had seen the small, stocky figure of a boy holding the collar of an enormous dog emerge from the woods, cross the grassy track, and approach the place where she was standing.

Her mind was just beginning to stir with memories and associations. She was just beginning to become conscious of the fact that she had seen that boy and that dog before—when the child collapsed at her feet. She stared down at him for a moment.

"Why, it's my cavalier," she exclaimed—"it's Jack!"

She opened the gate, and, without fear, approached the dog.

"I remember your name. You're Squall—and a very faithful, dear dog you are to stand by your master like that!"

Squall seemed instinctively to know that she was a friend. He allowed her to bend over Jack and gently touch his hair.

"The poor boy's fainted!" the old lady muttered. "Poor little waif! I can't leave him here!"

To move the boy was beyond her strength, but she turned and called to someone in the garden. A man in his shirt-sleeves appeared and touched his hat.

"Reynolds," she exclaimed, "will you please lift this boy up and carry him, very gently, please, into the house?"

"Yes, my lady."

The man approached Jack. Instantly Squall bristled and crouched, as if to spring. The old lady put her hand on the dog's head caressingly.

"It's all right, Squall. We're friends. I'm going to look after your master, and you as well."

As if reassured by this statement, Squall allowed the gardener to lift Jack up in his arms.

"Seems to me as if he fainted, my lady."

"All the more need to get him quickly to the house and into bed. Please hurry, Reynolds."

She followed the man and his burden up the garden. As soon as they reached the house she summoned the parlour-maid.

"Mary," she said, "you remember this poor boy, don't you?"

Jack had been placed in a big chair in the hall, where he lay all huddled up, his freckled face very pale, quite unconscious. Mary gave one look at him, and then, forgetful of her manners, dropped down on her knees by his side and took his hands in hers.

"Oh, my lady, it's little Jack—him as you told me to give the cake and the fruit and the cowslip-wine to. He was such a nice, well-behaved boy, though he did go away without saying good-bye!"

"You must look after him, Mary. I don't know how the poor lad came to be in this state, but I can't turn him away. I think the first thing is to give him a bath, and then put him in the Blue Room."

"And what about his dog, ma'am?"

The old lady smiled.

"I think Squall will decide the matter for himself and without consulting us, Mary. I am sure he won't leave his master's side."

Her surmise was correct. Squall superintended the bath, and when Jack,

now sleepily conscious of his surroundings, was carried into the pretty bedroom and laid between the sheets, he flopped down on the carpet by his side.

"We must try and find out something about this lad," the old lady exclaimed. "But he mustn't be worried just yet. I think a glass of warm milk, with an egg beaten up in it, would be the wisest thing to give him. It is clear that he is absolutely exhausted. I don't want to question him, but if he has friends we ought to communicate with them. I'll see if he has any letters or papers in the pocket of his coat."

Jack's coat had been hung over the back of the chair, and the old lady was in the act of approaching it when another servant entered the room.

"If you please, my lady, there's a man called, who wants to see you. He told me to tell your ladyship that the matter was very urgent and important."

The old lady appeared somewhat annoyed. Then she turned to Mary.

"Give him his egg and milk, Mary, and then try and persuade him to go to sleep. I'll come up and examine his clothes afterwards, when I've seen this tiresome man."

She walked downstairs with the aid of her ebony stick, and entered the big morning-room, where her unknown visitor was waiting. He was a tall man, with a heavy face and close-set, blue eyes. He was dressed in what were, obviously, his Sunday clothes. He eyed the old lady nervously as she advanced across the room.

"Have I the honour of speaking to Lady Horner?" he inquired, in a strong North-Country accent.

"Yes, I am Lady Horner—the dowager Lady Horner. May I ask your name?"

She seated herself, and waved him to a chair.

"My name is Parker, your ladyship—George Parker. You'll not know either the name or me."

"That is quite true, Mr. Parker. And may I ask what business has brought you here?"

George Parker fingered his bowler hat nervously. It was clear that he was very far from being at ease.

"I live at a place called Dane's Farm, in Cumberland, my lady. My wife was a Miss Riching when I married her. She had a sister, Jenny, twenty years younger than herself, who married a lad of your name."

Up to that moment the old lady's face had worn a look of polite indifference; but now, as he made that announcement, a little flush crept to her cheeks and one hand went flutteringly to her heart.

"His name," she gasped—"the name of the man who married your wife's sister—Jenny Richings."

"Richard Horner was his name," George Parker replied, looking stolidly at the carpet; "and he were killed in France in 1916."

There was silence for a moment. The old lady's lips were moving, but she uttered no word. She was watching George Parker's heavy face, with a very passion of anxiety.

"He married her in 1911, did this here Richard Horner. There was a son born—name of John—in 1912."

A cry escaped from the old lady's lips.

"I knew that. My lawyers discovered the entry of his birth. The Richard Horner you speak of was my son. And I remember your name now. Only lately I thought of making inquiries through the Ministry of Pensions, and they informed me that an



"Reynolds," exclaimed the old lady, "will you please lift this boy up and carry him, very gently, please, into the house?" "Yes, my lady!" The gardener approached Jack. Instantly Squall bristled and crouched as if to spring.
(See page 24.)

allowance was being paid to the guardians of the son of Sergeant Richard Horner, killed in action in France. You were written to by my solicitors. I understood that they had received no replies to their communications."

George Parker reddened.

"I'm not one as believes in putting things down on paper, your ladyship; you never know where it may lead to. But I don't mind talking where there's no witnesses, and what you say can't be used against you afterwards."

"I have no wish to instruct you in manners, Mr. Parker," the old lady said acidly. "Now that you are here, perhaps you will be good enough to tell me what you must know I am more than anxious to learn?"

George Parker went on stolidly, as if reciting something that he had learned by heart.

"When this here Richard Horner was killed his widow, my sister-in-law, come along to stay with us for a bit of a holiday. After a week in the place she dropped dead with heart failure. That'll be ten years ago, as far as I can recollect."

"And the boy?" the old lady interrupted, as if no longer able to contain her anxiety.

"The boy was brought up by his aunt and myself. We instructed him in

religion, and how to behave himself. We did our very best for the lad. He was the apple of our eye. Nothing was too good for him. His aunt worshipped the very ground that lad walked on. But, as often happens, especially with the young, he 'adn't, I'm sorry to say, any sense of gratitude. A matter of two months ago or more he runs away from us, and we never set eyes on him again."

The old lady lay back in her chair and closed her eyes. She was trembling violently.

"We put the matter in the hands of the police; we spared no money, your ladyship; we had the country searched from one end to the other; but we couldn't find him nowhere. And then, your ladyship, a matter of two days ago I was going after my sheep, and I comes to a cave. It was raining, and I goes in to shelter. And there I found this."

As he spoke he produced, with the air of a conjurer, a boy's cap. He had actually found it in the cave in which Jack had hidden on the night of his flight when he had had his first encounter with Curly and the other members of Black Michael's gang.

"And there was something else there, besides, my lady. There was blood! I took the police up to the place and showed 'em. Human bloodstains they said they was; and it seemed to me just what must have happened to him was

this—the lad hurt himself clambering over the fells in the darkness, crawled into that cave for shelter, and then, finding that he was bleeding and likely to die, tried to make for home again. It's a wild bit of country there, my lady; and just below that cave there's one of them quaking bogs."

"You mean that he died, then?"

The old lady's voice was so low that it was little more than a whisper.

"I'm afraid that's about the size of it, my lady. Having had that letter from your lawyers, I says to my wife I'd better go down and see your ladyship. She's his grandmother, and she'll likely be interested to hear."

The Hand of Providence!

PARKER coughed behind his hand. It was obvious that he had got through the first part of his "lesson."

"I had always hoped——" the old lady began, and then stopped abruptly, with what sounded like a sob.

"I know just how you must be feelin', my lady," Parker remarked. "His aunt and me were properly put out about it. The apple of our eye, he was, and we spent a deal of money on him, my lady. The best of victuals we give him. A thousand pounds wouldn't more than

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repay us for the ten years' keeping of him—what with clothes and one thing and another."

For the first time, he glanced at the old lady with a furtive, anxious look, as if he were concerned to see how she took this statement.

"We were proper fond of the boy; but, of course, my lady, there were them as were nearer to him by blood, and we looks to them for some sort of compensation for all that we've been put to."

"You had the grant from the Ministry of Pensions, didn't you, Mr. Parker?"

George Parker shrugged his shoulders.

"What's twelve shillings a week, my lady? Why, it hardly paid for the boy's boots, let alone the best of victuals as we give 'im, and all our kindness and attention—not to mention instruction. It couldn't be done under a hundred a year, leaving out of account that twelve bob a week."

The old lady eyed him curiously.

"Where did you send him to school?"

"To the only school there was round our parts. We hadn't got any choice, my lady. It was the National School or nothing. And he got a good education there. I was always at him to be learning. A proper scholar he was. Took the scholarship at the Grammar School."

"And did he go to the Grammar School, Mr. Parker?"

George Parker coloured.

"Well, no," he muttered, "we didn't send him, my lady. You see, we thought it would be best if he could earn his own living; and he'd only just left school when he run away."

"Humph!" said the old lady. "There's just a few questions I should like to ask you, Mr. Parker. A gentleman called Mr. Michael Horner, who was the heir to this property had my son Richard died childless, didn't approach you at any time, I suppose?"

"Never heard the name!" George Parker replied stolidly.

"Curious!" said the old lady. "He told me himself in this very house that he had seen you."

The colour deepened on George Parker's cheeks.

"Then he told you a lie! Never 'eard 'is name!"

He tried to meet the old lady's eyes, but evidently gave up the attempt. That fixed gaze of hers seemed to read into the very depths of his crooked soul. He knew that she knew he was lying. He determined to bring the interview to an abrupt end.

"About all this expense we've been put to, my lady. I'll take a thousand pounds, though it won't really repay us. You must understand, my lady, that I'm a poor man."

"I'm sure you are a poor man!" the old lady exclaimed; but it was not quite clear that she referred to his balance in the bank. "I must have time to think this over, Mr. Parker. Naturally, there will be inquiries to be made. In due course I will communicate with you through my solicitors."

She rose to show that the interview was at an end. George Parker followed her example, standing there fumbling with his hat.

"You won't forget that he was the apple of our eye, my lady?" he said.

"It shall be duly remembered, Mr. Parker."

As Mean-as-mud Parker backed out of the room, with the uncomfortable feeling that he had somehow not been quite as successful in his mission as he

had hoped to be, the old lady stood quite still. Then slowly her eyes wandered to a picture on the wall. It was the picture of a handsome young man of nineteen with a strong resemblance to herself.

"Oh, Dick," she sobbed, holding out her hand to the picture, "you were my youngest and my best loved! Oh, Dick, if only you could come back to me—if only there was someone of yours I could cherish! But the last hope's dead now! Even your little son— Oh, Dick— Dick—"

She dropped on her chair and buried her face in her hands, her whole body shaken with sobs. Before her eyes there rose up all the past. Dick, her second child, had quarrelled with his father and gone away to earn his own living. While her husband was alive she had not dared to communicate with him. Then the War had come. Her eldest son, John, had been too delicate to go. She had been secretly glad of that. Dick had died in France, still unforgotten. And then there had been that dreadful day, six years ago, when John had died suddenly of pneumonia, and her husband had had a stroke.

She saw herself once more in that vision of the past, utterly alone, without husband or children. From nowhere it seemed a cousin she had lost sight of for years—a Michael Horner—had put in a claim for the title and property. She had opposed his claim desperately, and in the process had discovered that Dick had been married. If there had been a child, then he would be heir to the title and the property. She had clung to that hope, using every device that the law allowed her to oppose Michael Horner. And now she had just learnt, too late, that there had been a child, and that he was dead.

"I am so old and so lonely!" she sobbed. "O Heaven, give me strength to bear this!"

For the better part of an hour she wrestled with her despair, and then brought herself to face the inevitable. She could no longer oppose Michael Horner's claim. Weald Park and the title and everything else would be his. She must cut herself adrift from all her old ties and associations. She would

have to go away. Even that house was Michael Horner's.

Once having faced the inevitable, she grew calmer. She must go on with existence. Suddenly she remembered the task upon which she had been engaged when she had been interrupted by the visit of George Parker. She made her way upstairs again to the Blue Room. Jack was lying there asleep, and looking very small in the big bed. Squall lifted his head as she entered the room, and then let it sink again between his paws as he recognised a friend.

"Poor little waif!" she whispered. "Poor little waif! I must try to find out whether he has any friends or relations with whom I can communicate."

Without taking Jack's coat from the back of the chair over which it hung, she felt in the pockets. There was nothing in the side pockets except some string, a penknife, and a box of matches. She investigated the inner pockets. There was a little package tied up in oiled silk.

She walked across to the window so that she could investigate it more easily. She untied the faded bit of ribbon with which it was bound. Inside were two photographs—ordinary, cheap postcard photographs. The first one she looked at was that of a woman—a pretty girl of about twenty-two, with a grave, intelligent face. At the bottom was scrawled:

"To my darling Jack.—From his loving Mother, 1915."

"Poor boy!" she whispered to herself. "I suppose the mother must be dead and he cherishes this memory of her!"

She thought for a moment of the memories she cherished—the sad, bitter memories; then she turned to the other photograph. It was the picture of a tall, well-made man in khaki. On his arm were the stripes of a sergeant. She blinked at the photograph, her hands beginning to tremble. A mist gathered before her old eyes. She fumbled for her glasses. At last she managed to adjust them on the bridge of her nose. Now she could see clearly at last the face of the man in the photograph.

"Dick!" she gasped. "My Dick!"

She gave a frightened, half-furtive look over her shoulder at the little figure sleeping so soundly in the bed. Could this really be true? Had Providence, that had dealt so hardly with her, suddenly now, at long last, given her her heart's desire?

She stumbled to a chair and sat down, exerting all her will-power to bring her dazed senses to bear upon that photograph. There was something written in the corner in a handwriting so dear and well-remembered, that the mere sight of it was like a stab at her heart.

"To my dear old Jack, from his loving daddy—"

She let that faded photograph drop from her hand on to the floor. It seemed as if she had lost all power of movement. A miracle had happened. By the strange dispensation of Fate—by some odd shuffling of the cards of chance—her dead son's child, whom she had just been told was dead, had come to her—was there in her house—the little homeless waif. The shock was so surprising that she seemed hardly able to breathe.

(See next week's MAGNET for the concluding chapters of this great serial, chums!)



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Every Tuesday, 2d.

"THE FIGHT FOR THE CUP!"

(Continued from page 16.)

"As Chairman of the Guvverning Body, I must insist upon a detective being engaged—at once!" he said.

"Oh, all right!" said the Head, in tones of resignation. "Supposing I send for Ferret Slooth? He's a jolly good man."

"Ferret Slooth?" ekkoed Colonel Fiery Sparkes. "The blind detective? Why, he's worse than useless! Not only is he compleatly blind, but he is stone deaf into the bargain, besides being lame

and lazy. Bah! A most defective detective. Now if you want a really good man, you needn't look farther than the famous Herlock Sholmes, of Shaker Street!"

At the meer mention of that name—that name which struck icy terror into the hearts of boldest criminals—the Head's face blanched until it was the ciller of beetroot, and his neeze fairly knocked together.

"No, no!" he cried horsely. "Not Sholmes, gentlemen! Not Sholmes, I implore you! Take my advice, and let me send for Ferret Slooth."

But the Head was overruled by the Guvverners, who seemed one and all to have a touching faith in Herlock Sholmes, that master-slooth who had brought many a cunning skoundrel to the steak or the gallows.

"Birchemall," cried Sir Frederick

Funguss, turning to the Head, "you will wire immediately for Mr. Herlock Sholmes to come and investigate this matter of the missing Cup. Immediately, do you hear? The matter brooks of no delay. If, as I suspect, the Cup has been stolen, then the rascally sneak-theef must be laid by the heels!"

The Head shuddered.

A few minnits later he might have been seen peddling down to the villidge post-offis on his ancient bisickle.

Herlock Sholmes was about to be wired for, and in a few hours the world-famous detective would make his day-booo at St. Sam's!

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's sparkling story: "HERLOCK SHOLMES AT ST. SAM'S!" It's a fair corker, chums!)

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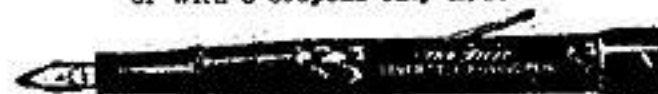
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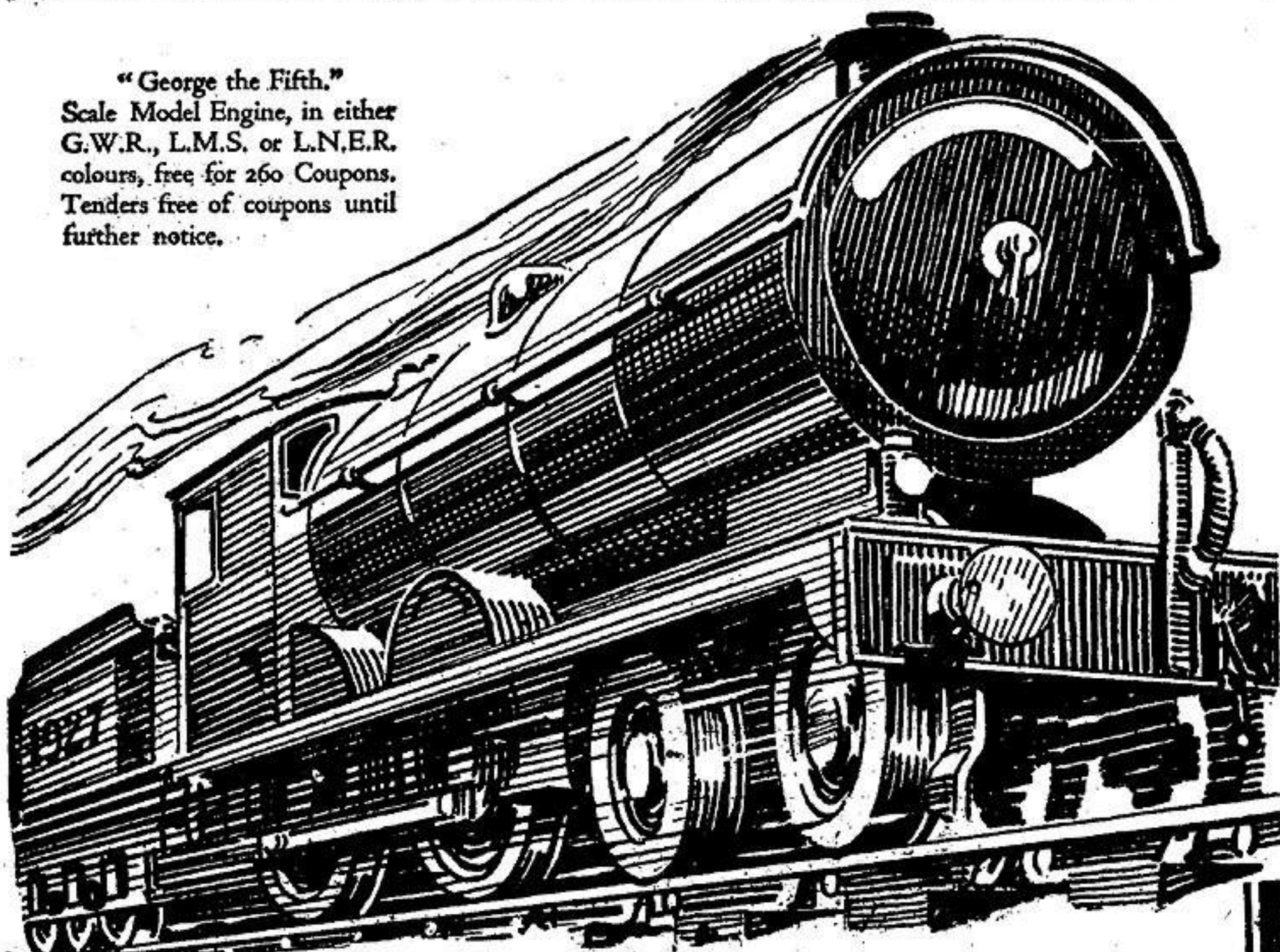
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"PUT your feet into it, boy!" said the Head sharply. Yawnington, the slacker of the Fourth, sighed wearily. He was in his study, with his jacket off and his shirt-sleeves rolled up. A punching-ball was suspended from the ceiling, and Yawnington was dealing it a series of gentle taps.

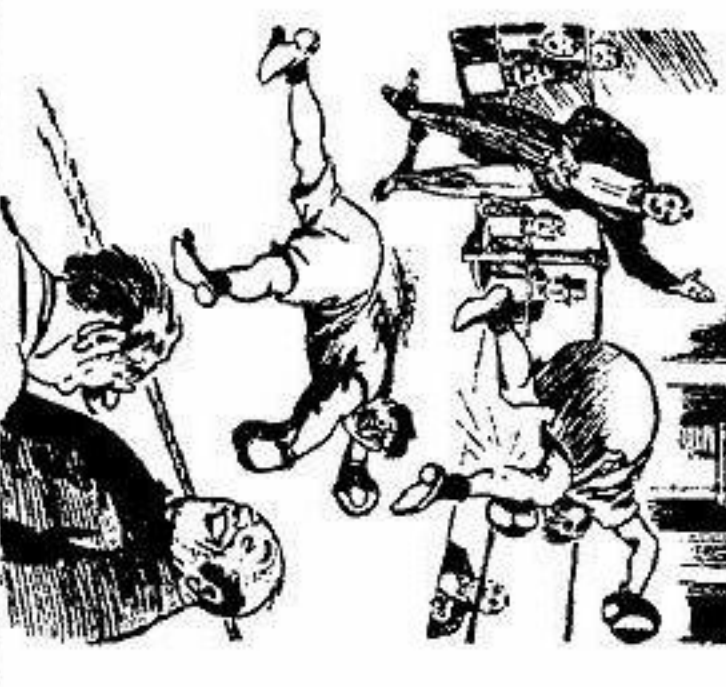
Doctor Birchmell, sprawling in the armchair, was watching the slacker's puny efforts in scorn and content.

"Come, come, Yawnington! In a short time you will be called upon to face Frank Fearless in the boxing ring, to decide who shall be the winner of the magnificent Silver Cup offered by the Governors. But you will have to punch a jolly sight harder than that if you hope to beat Fearless and win the Cup. Put some pep into it, boy!"

"I'm afraid I haven't got any pep left, sir," he said. "The sports took it all out of me. I feel like a limp sack."

"Rats!" growled the Head. "Put yourself together, Yawnington. Just imagine, for a moment, that that punching-ball is Frank Fearless' face, and punch and pummel it for all you're worth!"

Yawnington landed out with his left.



On the memorable occasion when Dr. Birchmell knocked out Slogger Sam he did it with his teeth. He bit him in the calf while he himself was down for the count!

but there was no force behind the blow. In fact, it was nothing more than a caress. The punching-ball rocked gently two and fro.

With a snort of impatience the Head rose to his feet.

"Bah! Yawn!" he ejaculated, relapsing into junior slang, as was his habit whenever he felt annoyed. "You poor, puny pigmy! Let me show you how to punch. It is many years now since I was known as 'Big' Birchmell, the terror of the Ring; but I have not forgotten how to deal a hefty sockdologer. Watch me!"

Yawnington watched.

The Head, sweeping aside his gown, clenched his fist and glared fixedly at the punching-ball as if he was trying to mesmerize it. Then, shooting out his arm, straight from the shoulder, he dealt the ball a truly terrific punch.

Bliff!

The punching-ball smote the ceiling with a sickening thud. Then, before he Head could jump clear, it rebounded with the force of a cannon-ball and smote Doctor Birchmell fairly and squarely on his prominent belly. It was a case of the smiter smitten!

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"Yarooooo!" With a feeblish yell the Head sat down suddenly on the study carpet. Yawnington, nearly bursting himself with laughing, helped the old buffer to his feet.

"Ow-ow!" moaned the Head, tenderly caressing his nose. "Bother the beastly ball! It seems that I punched it not wisely, but too well. Now, if only you can deal young Fearless a blow like that it will knock him into the middle of next week!"

"I'll do my best, sir!" murmured Yawnington.

"You had better!" said the Head grimly. "I have spent much valuable time in training and tutoring you, and I am determined that my tuition shall not be wasted. I promise your grateful grandfather, Sir Frederick Fungus, the esteemed Chairman of our Board of Governors, that you should win the Cup. And Sir Frederick has promised, in return, that if I succeed in working the oracle he will fork up a fiver. As the family coughers are in rather a low state at the moment, a fiver will be jolly acceptable. You must win this boxing match, Yawnington, or perish in the attempt. Do you hear?"

"I hear, sir," sighed Yawnington.

"I shall be acting as referee," the Head went on. "In that capacity I must, as a sportsman, be perfectly impartial, and conduct the contest without fear or favor. Nevertheless, if I see half a chance to wangle you the verdict I shall jump at it."

"My hat!" gasped Yawnington. The Head's idea of being impartial struck him as being rather odd.

Suddenly there was a tap on the door, and Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, poked his head into the study. "Waiting for you, sir!" said Mr. Lickham. "It is past time for the boxing contest to commence. The Jim is crowded, and the boys are growing restless."

"Coming now, Lickham!" said the Head. "I've just been giving Yawnington a little punching demonstration."

"Looks to me as if the boot was on the other foot, sir," said the Form-master. "Your nose is inflamed more than usual, and it is visibly swelling."

"Yes," grunted the Head. "But the punching-ball is responsible for that, Lickham. I biffed the beastly thing, and it retaliated. The unfortunate mishap has fairly put my nose out of joint. But let's get along to the Jim!"

"The Head and Mr. Lickham quitted the study, with Yawnington at their heels."

"I fancy Frank Fearless will win," vociferated Mr. Lickham.

"Rats!" vociferated the Head. "But Fearless is the better boxer of the two," vociferated Mr. Lickham.

"Go and eat coke!" vociferated the Head.

"Fearless is awfully handy with his docks," vociferated Mr. Lickham.

"But what of Yawnington?" vociferated the Head. "Have I not personally coached him for this contest? Have I not shown him what's what and which is which? Have I not put him wise to all the finer points of the noble art of self-defence?"

"You have, sir; and for that very reason I am confident that Fearless will win!"

"Why, you—you—" spluttered the Head, turning fiercely upon Mr. Lickham.

"Lush, sir!" murmured the Form-master. "Here is the Jim, where strong language is not allowed."

The Head stalked into the crowded Jim, and there was a cheer from the

The Fight for the Cup!

DICKY NUGENT.

A full-of-punch story of the cheery heroes of St. Sam's, with Dr. Birchmell a "senior wangler" well in the limelight.



If Yawnington, the slacker of the Fourth, can pull off his bout with Frank Fearless, he wins the silver cup and the Head wins a fiver!

waiting throng, which mollified him somewhat. Mr. Lickham and Yawnington followed him in.

Grate was the excitement in the ranks of the St. Sam's fellows. They were all agog with enthusiasm for the fourth-coming fight. All day long the same question had been on every lip: "Fearless or Yawnington?" Every body had asked that question, except one fellow, who always liked to be different from the rest, and he had asked: "Yawnington or Fearless?"

And now, as Frank Fearless and Yawnington came face to face in the boxing-ring, the question was repeated all over the Jim.

There was only one answer to it, of course!

Frank Fearless was a first-class fighting-man. He had the advantage of height, wiry build, curvilinear stam-miner, punching power, footwork, head-work, offensive, and defensive. And yet, with the cunning old Head on his side, it was just possible that Yawnington would create a staggering surprise.

Briskly the Head stepped into the ring. He pulled out an enormous gold watch and consulted it.

"Time, gentlemen, time!" he whispered out.

Just as the Jim was in a buzz.

"Go it, Frank Fearless!"

"On the ball, Yawnington!"

The grating fight started in dramatic fashion. Frank Fearless led off with a right swing to the Head's nose. And



Doctor Birchmell's already damaged nasal organ suffered some more. But it was the silly old buffer's own fault, for getting right in the line of fire.

"Yarooo!" yelled the Head, dabbing frantically at his nose. "Fearless, you young rascal! That will count as a fowl against you."

Frank Fearless neither heard nor heeded. He was fighting like a fury, driving his opponent round and round the ring. Left, right! Left, right! His fists shot out, and poor old Yawnington was peppered, and pounded, and pounded in every part of his anatomy. He fled shrieking round the ring, with Frank Fearless following up feverishly.

The Head, forgetting his injured nose for a moment, looked on in grate alarm.

"This was not a very suspicious start for his youthful protegee, unless Yawnington pulled himself together he would soon be on his back, blinking up at the stars and constellations which would suddenly appear on the ceiling of the Jim."

"Buck up, Yawnington!" The Head's voice was hoarse with anxiety. "Stand up to him, man! Go for him! Biff him on the boko! Close his shutters for him!"

At these heartrending words Yawnington braced himself up and stopped giving ground before the whirlwind rush of Frank Fearless.

"That's better!" said the Head. "Now fetch out at him. Bite him low! Kick him! Scratch him! Bite him!"

"Really, really, sir!" protested Mr. Lickham. "Surely such tactics are not allowed?"

"No! they are done on the quiet," said the Head.

"But surely, sir, kicking and scratching and biting are not permissible!" the Head snorted.

"You must remember, my dear Lickham, that this is a boxing match, not a game of kiss-in-the-ring," he said. "I do not approve of kid-glove methods. On that memorable occasion when I knocked out Slogger Sam, in my fighting days, I did it with my teeth. I bit him in the calf while I was down for the count!"

The St. Sam's fellows fairly gasped at this unblushing confession. They knew that their headmaster was a pretty shady customer, but they had never dreamed that he would descend to such heights as that.

"Go it, Yawnington!" bellowed the Head. "Don't stand there day-dreaming! Atta boy! Why don't you dodge behind him and give him a tuppenny in the small of the back?"

"Shame!" roared the St. Sam's fellows at this impudent suggestion.

But Yawnington, slacker and duffer though he was, had a much better sense of fair play than the Head. He would not have dreamed, for instance, of biting Frank Fearless in the calf. He could not stoop so low.

Frank Fearless rushed to the attack once more, and Yawnington staggered back under an avalanche of blows.

It was clear to everybody that one round would be quite enough for Frank Fearless—and more than enough for his opponent.

The Head looked on, with black rage seething in his breast, and despair narrowing at his eyelids. Vainly he stormed and raved at his pupil, urging him to bite, and scratch, and kick, and fowl. It was all no use. And the Head saw his prominent fiver from Sir Frederick Fungus swiftly and surely vanishing.

"Man down!" came the cry, as Yawnington was felled by a terrific pile-driver.

The Head clenched his hands and gritted his teeth. He bent over the prostrate boxer, and fairly hooted at him.

"Get up, Yawnington! On your feet, man! You're not beaten yet!"

Yawnington lay like a log. And the Head rung his hands despairingly.

"Count him out, sir!" shouted several voices.

"Do your duty, referee!"

Reluctantly the Head started to count. And he hung it out as long as he possibly could, in the hope that Yawnington would recover and rise. But it was a vain hope.

The Head counted up to "nine," and he waited a full five minutes before adding the fateful "Out!" But the word was rung from his reluctant lips at last.

"Out! Fearless wins the fight!"

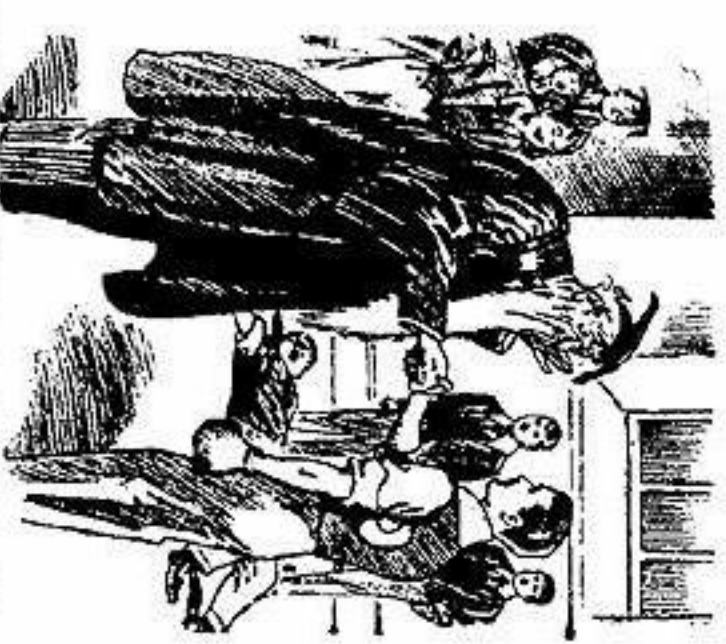
"Hurrah!"

And, incidentally, he wins the Silver Cup presented by the Governors to the best junior sportsman.

"Bravo, Fearless!"

The Head turned to the smiling victor.

"Congratulations, Fearless!" he cried allowed. Then, lowering his voice, he added: "You young rotter! You could



"Congratulations, Fearless!" cried the Head allowed. Then, lowering his voice, he added: "You young rotter! Why didn't you let Yawnington lick you? I'll take it out of your hide for this!"

see that I wanted Yawnington to win! Why didn't you let him lick you? Bang goes my fiver! I'll take it out of your hide for this!"

The onlookers, thinking that the Head was still showering congratulations upon the conquering hero, cheered wildly.

The fight was over; the best man had won; and nothing now remained but for the haughty Silver Cup to be presented in Big Hall.

But there's many a slip 'twixt the Cup and the lip, and much water was to flow under the bridges before that haughty Silver Cup reposed proudly on the study mantle-piece of Fearless of the Fourth!

II.

ST. SAM'S awoke with a start—not in their dormitories, but in Big Hall, where Sir Frederick Fungus, Chairman of the Board of Governors, had been "chin-wagging" for over two hours. Even the Head and the masters had nodded off to sleep for Sir Freddie had

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