

STILL LEADING THE FIELD!

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The Magnet 2^d

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EVERY SATURDAY.



BILLY BUNTER'S DREAM!

(See the grand school yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars in this issue.)

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News Pars and Pictures.

GOOD FOR CIRCULATION!

No doubt most of you have heard or read about the gyro wheel, a German invention which was introduced into this country recently. The idea is for the victim to fix himself inside the wheel just like a spoke, and then whirl himself round. It's supposed to be very efficacious for the circulation, we are told. Anyway, when Charlie Paddock, the famous American runner—known as the "fastest human"—sampled it, he didn't stay in the contraption long. Photo shows him upside down in the wheel. He appears to be enjoying himself—but that was before he started revolving!



SHE'S OFF!

The launching of a vessel is a momentous occasion, for it is the culmination of months and months—perhaps years—of toil. In many cases great ships are released by hydraulic or electric rams, and the slipway itself is greased with tons of tallow. Then there's the interesting, time-old ceremony of breaking a bottle of champagne over the bows—drinking to the good health of the vessel, so to speak. Afterwards comes the sight—an impressive sight—of the towering mass of steelwork running smoothly down the slipway into the water with a booming roar. The photograph shows the "Duchess of Richmond" in the slips at Clydebank, just before it was launched by Lady Manton, of Winnipeg.



SHOUTING THE ODDS! King Richard once said: "A horse, a horse; my kingdom for a horse!" Billy Bunter's cry is: "A bookmaker, a bookmaker, my breakfast for a bookmaker!" For Billy has great hopes of making a fortune on the Turf!

BILLY BUNTER'S BOOKMAKER!

Here's a rib-tickling yarn of school life, introducing Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars, and Billy Bunter, the fattest and funniest schoolboy in the world.

BY
Frank Richards.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

"Chuggy!"

"DON'T come in!"
"Eh?"
"Busy!"
explained Billy Bunter.

Harry Wharton stopped in the doorway of Study No. 7 in the Remove.

At the table in that study Billy Bunter sat, with a pen in his hand, a sheet of paper before him, a thoughtful frown on his fat brow, and a smear of ink on his little fat nose. He looked up irritably as the captain of the Remove appeared in the doorway, and waved a fat hand as a signal of dismissal.

Evidently Bunter was busy, and interruptions were not wanted.

"You fat ass!" said Harry politely.

"Shut up!"

"I came here to see Toddy—"

"Toddy's gone out! Buzz off!"

"I'll wait for him!"

"Wait in the passage, then! I'm busy!"

Harry Wharton smiled, came into the study, and seated himself on the corner of the table. It was true that No. 7 was Bunter's study as well as Peter Todd's; but, then, Bunter was nobody—less than nobody, if possible. And Wharton had to see Toddy on the subject of cricket—a matter that was more important than whole tribes of Bunters.

The Owl of the Remove gave him an angry blink through his big spectacles.

"Look here, if you're going to squat there till Toddy comes in—"

"I am!" assented Wharton.

"Then don't talk, and don't jog the table! I'm writing an important letter—an important business letter!" said Bunter impressively.

Wharton chuckled.

"Writing to the Postmaster-General to inquire why your postal-order hasn't come?" he asked. "It's about time that mystery was cleared up!"

"No!" snorted Bunter. "I'm writing to—never mind whom! You can lend me a stamp, if you like!" he added graciously. "Got one?"

"No."

"Well, look here, if you're going

to stick in the study, look through Toddy's desk for me, and see if you can find a stamp."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I've got to catch the collection!" explained Bunter. "I want this letter to go out this afternoon! It's awfully important! May mean a lot of money to me shortly!"

Bunter dipped the pen in the ink again, dropped a couple of blots, and began to scribble once more. Harry Wharton began to whistle by way of passing the time till Peter Todd happened in.

"For goodness' sake, stop that row!" exclaimed Bunter. "How's a fellow to write an important business letter when you're going off like a railway-engine? Chuck it!"

Wharton politely ceased to whistle.

"Just keep mum!" said Bunter.

"Shut up, you know! Not a word!"

"Look here—"

"Shut up! You're like a sheep's head, you know—nearly all jaw! If you're going to sit there, sit quiet!"

Bunter resumed his letter-writing. The writing of that important business letter seemed to be costing the fat junior a lot of effort. For some minutes there was silence in the study, and then Bunter looked up suddenly.

"I say, Wharton, how many k's in 'account'?"

The captain of the Remove grinned, but did not answer. Bunter blinked at him impatiently.

"Deaf, you silly ass?" he hooted. Apparently Wharton was deaf, or at least dumb. He did not speak.

"Wharton, you silly fathead! I asked you how many k's there were in 'account'!" roared Bunter. "Don't you know?"

Dead silence.

"Can't you answer, you chump?" howled Bunter, exasperated.

"You told me to sit quiet!" explained Wharton at last. "I'm trying to do as I'm told, like a good little boy!"

"You silly ass!"

Tell me how many k's there are in 'account'!"

"None, you burbling banded-snatch! Two c's!" said Harry, laughing.

"Sure?" asked Bunter doubtfully.

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

Bunter shook his head.

"I don't think you're right," he

said. "I think I'd better put in a k. You don't know much about spelling, Wharton! I shall put a k!"

"Put as many k's as you like, old fat bean! Three or four if you think they'd look nice!" said Harry.

"Shut up!" said Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove resumed his laborious task. But another orthographical difficulty stopped him again.

"Is it a double d in 'credit'?" he asked.

"Ha, ha! Only one!"

"I think you're wrong," said Bunter.

"I'll try two, anyhow. There, the thing's done now! Now I want an envelope. You might have hunted for a stamp for me! I shall lose the post at this rate!"

Bunter turned the letter over on the blotting-pad and blotted it carefully—blots and all. Then he found an envelope and addressed it, with the usual allowance of blots and smears. Here again a difficulty arose.

"Does 'Avenue' end with a double o?" he asked doubtfully. "Is it a double o or 'ew'?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Make it 'ue,'" suggested Wharton.

"That's rot!" said Bunter. "You don't know how to spell, Wharton! I wonder Quelch isn't down on you more than he is!"

Wharton chuckled, and said no more. If Bunter chose to spell "Avenue" with a double o or an "ew," he was welcome to do so.

The envelope was addressed, Bunter screening it with a fat hand as he addressed it. Apparently he did not want the captain of the Remove to see the address. He need not have taken the trouble, as Wharton was not curious.

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and had no desire whatever to see it. But this, apparently, was a very secret matter that required great caution. Having finished writing, blotting, and smearing on the envelope, Bunter turned it over on the blotting-pad.

"That's done!" he said, folding the letter and placing it in the envelope. "Now about a stamp?" He blinked at Wharton. "You might have found one for me, you slacker! Still, I suppose it will be all right without a stamp. Chuggy will take the letter in all right and pay on it; he's not the man to refuse business!"

"Chuggy?" repeated Wharton, rather struck by that remarkable name.

"Oh, no! I'm not writing to anybody named Chuggy!" said Bunter hastily. "If you think I saw his advertisement, and this is an answer to it, you're mistaken! Nothing of the sort!"

"Fathead!"

"Beast! I say, you might run down to the letter-box with this for me," said Bunter. "I can trust you not to look at the address, can't I?"

"You can trust me not to look at the address, and you can trust me not to run down to the letter-box with it!" answered Wharton cheerily. "I'm quite trustworthy in both respects!"

"Beast!"

And William George Bunter rolled out of Study No. 7 to take that important business letter down to the school letter-box himself. And a few minutes after he had gone Peter Todd arrived at Study No. 7, and with him arrived William Wibley of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Difference of Opinion!

"LOOK here, Toddy—"

William Wibley was speaking in rather excited tones as he came up the Remove passage with Peter Todd.

"Oh rot!" answered Toddy.

"I tell you—"

"Rats!"

"Look here—" roared Wibley.

Harry Wharton grinned as he heard Wibley's excited voice. Wibley of the Remove was President—head-cook and bottlerwasher, as Bob Cherry called it—of the Remove Dramatic Society. William Wibley lived, and moved, and had his being, in amateur theatricals. That he was a good man at that game, all the Remove acknowledged; and when the R.D.S. gave a play, Wibley took the lead as a matter of course. But Wibley's enthusiasm was not fully shared by the other members of the society. Wibley regarded lessons, for instance, as trifles light as air in comparison with theatricals; and there the Removites concurred. But he also regarded games as things that did not matter, in comparison with his theatrical stunts. There the Removites did not concur; but thought—and stated—that Wibley was a howling ass.

A new play was on the carpet now, and Wibley's study in the Remove was fairly stacked with theatrical properties, costumes, disguises; all sorts and conditions of stage stuff. And Wibley was the busiest man in the Remove, and the most exacting and irritable, as became an actor-manager. Until that play was produced, Wibley was going to give himself no rest—and nobody else any rest. All the fellows were keen to take parts; but nobody seemed very keen on putting hard work into the parts. Fellows learned their lines, and forgot them again; and they actually dodged

rehearsals in the Rag when more attractive affairs drew them away.

The cricket match with St. Jim's was just at hand, and Wibley fairly snorted at the idea of such a fixture taking the fellows' attention off the production of the play. It was not a common sort of play, either, but a masterpiece, written by Wibley himself. There is an old maxim that if you want a thing well done, you must do it yourself; and Wibley worked on that maxim. But there was no doubt that the Remove fellows thought more about the St. Jim's match than about Wibley's play—ever so much more—about fifty thousand times as much, in fact.

Which naturally was exasperating to Wibley, and led to heated words in the Remove passage.

Peter Todd came into No. 7 Study, Wibley following him in with a red and wrathful countenance.

"I tell you!" hooted Wibley, "that I've fixed the rehearsal for this afternoon in the Rag! You've simply got to come!"

"What about cricket?" said Wharton. Wibley stared at him.

"Oh! You're here! Another dashed slacker!"

"Slacker!" repeated the captain of the Remove indignantly. "Who's a slacker? We're just going down to games practice now—"

"You're not!" hooted Wibley. "You're coming to a rehearsal in the Rag! That howling chump Cherry has just dodged out—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That fathead Bull has disappeared somewhere—that bandersnatch Nugent has hooked it—Squiff can't be found." Wibley gasped with wrath. "What's the good of fixing up a rehearsal if fellows don't come to it?"

"Echo answers, what?" smiled the captain of the Remove. "I say, Toddy, I want you to come down specially to games practice; you'll be wanted to play St. Jim's, and—"

"Shut up about St. Jim's!" roared Wibley. "Blow St. Jim's! I tell you I want all you fellows at rehearsal this afternoon. How are we going to give 'Reckless Backstraw' if we don't rehearse? I've got my part—the book-maker's part—perfect—letter perfect, costume perfect—all O.K. You fellows are miles behind. Think the St. Jim's match is as important a matter as the play?"

"Eh? What? Yes, rather!"

"Then you're a silly goat!" howled Wibley. "Look here, are you coming down to the rehearsal, or are you not?"

"Can't be done, old bean! We shall have to give theatricals a bit of a rest till after we've beaten St. Jim's," explained Wharton.

"Blow St. Jim's!"

"I hear that Tom Merry and his lot are in great form—"

"Blow Tom Merry!"

"It comes off on Wednesday," said Wharton soothingly. "After that, we'll pile into the play, and make a tremendous success of it. After all, old chap, it's your part that will bring down the house—the people in front will be watching you, not us."

A soft answer turneth away wrath. William Wibley cooled down very considerably.

"Well, that's so, of course!" he said. "Of course," said the captain of the Remove, rather unfortunately closing one eye at Peter Todd as he spoke.

Wibley caught that wink, and his wrath revived at once.

"You silly chump!" he roared. "Look here—I'll jolly well cut you out of the

play! I'll cut Toddy out! I'll cut 'em all out!"

"And give a solo performance?" grinned Toddy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" hooted Wibley, and he retired from No. 7 Study, and slammed the door after him with a slam that echoed the length of the Remove passage.

"Poor old Wibi!" said Wharton, laughing. "He's a jolly good fellow, and he can act—but fancy a fellow thinking that a play matters as much as a cricket match! Bit potty in that direction, I suppose."

"More than a bit," said Peter. "Old Wibi's got the artistic temperament—he thinks the whole giddy universe is run specially for his stunts."

"Well, now you've turned up, come down to the cricket," said Harry, slipping from the table. "We've got to be in form for Wednesday. To tell the truth, Toddy, I haven't been quite satisfied with your batting lately. You don't mind my saying so?"

"Not at all," answered Peter Todd. "There's a whole lot you don't know about batting, old chap. Come on."

The two juniors left the study. Billy Bunter passed them on the Remove staircase, as they went down, the Owl of the Remove coming up.

"Catch the post, fatty?" asked Harry, with a smile.

"Yes, that's all right; just in time," said Bunter. "Chuggy will get it in the morning."

Peter Todd paused.

"Chuggy!" he repeated. "Who's Chuggy?"

"That's telling!" grinned Bunter. "I've seen that name somewhere," said Peter. "It ain't a common name. My hat!" Peter uttered a sudden ejaculation. "I saw the name in an advertisement, in that racing paper you had the other day—the one I stuffed down your back. I'm sure it was the same name."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You fat chump!" roared Peter. "Have you been writing to some racing man?"

"Certainly not! I—I've been writing to my—my uncle—" stammered Bunter. Since Billy Bunter had developed sporting proclivities, he had gathered more kicks than ha'pence, so to speak; sportsmen getting absolutely no encouragement whatever in the Greyfriars Remove. Peter, as Bunter's study-mate, felt that it was his duty, when Bunter wandered from the straight and narrow path, to kick him back into it, a duty that Peter performed with assiduity, without eliciting the slightest gratitude from Bunter.

"You've got an uncle named Chuggy?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Exactly! You—you see—his name's Charles, and we call him Chuggy for short," explained Bunter hastily.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Look here, Bunter—" began Peter; but Bunter, instead of "looking there," dodged past the two juniors and escaped into the Remove passage.

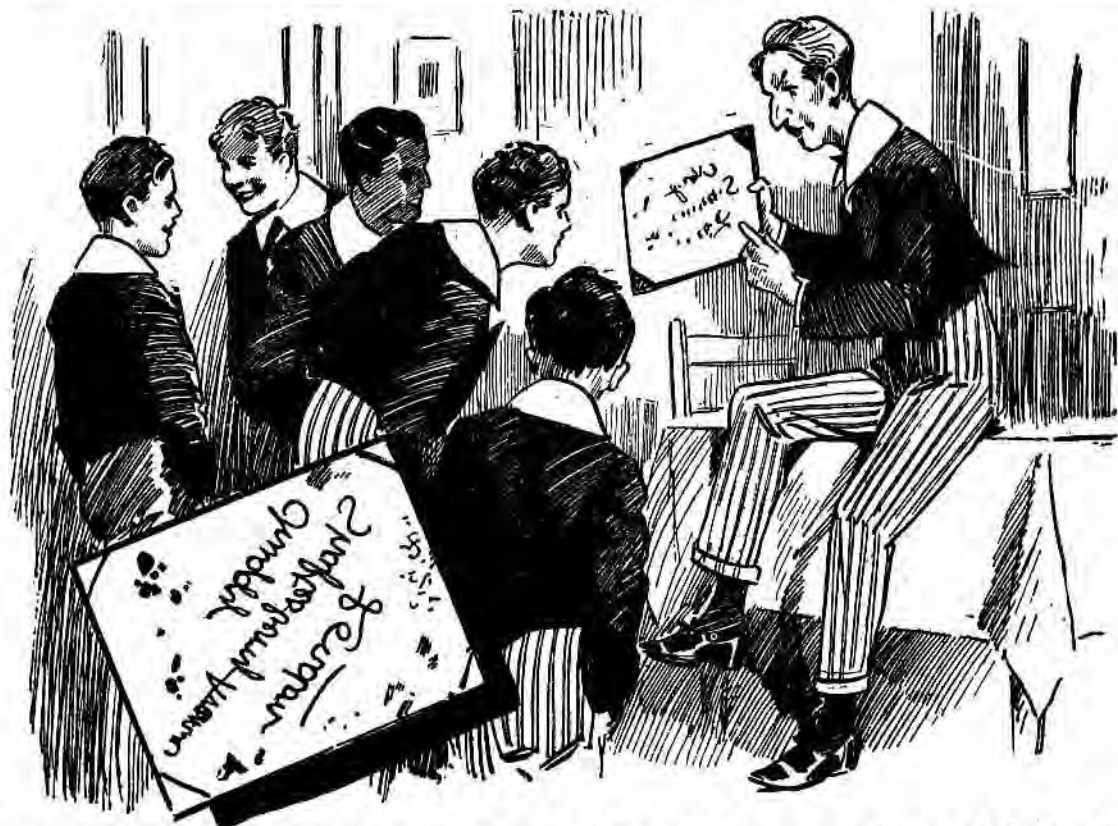
Peter turned, but Wharton caught him by the arm.

"Cricket!" he said tersely.

"That fat idiot is getting himself into trouble again," growled Peter. "He will get flogged, or bunked, if he keeps on. I can see that it's time to kick him again."

"Kick him afterwards," suggested Wharton. "Cricket now, old chap—you've got to improve your batting a bit if you're going to stand up to the St. Jim's howling. Come on."

And Peter Todd grunted, and came



"Come in here, you fellows, and look at this!" hooted Peter Todd, pointing to a blotting-pad he had just picked up from the study table. Interested to learn the cause of the excitement, Harry Wharton & Co. entered the study. "My only hat!" said Wharton recognising the impression of a blotted address in Bunter's well-known orthography. (See Chapter 3.)

on, and they joined the Remove cricketers on Little Side. The sportive Bunter had to wait till after games practice for Peter's attention—when he was sure to get it, and probably in a way that would make him feel that No. 7 Study in the Greyfriars Remove was no abode for a sportsman.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Asking for it!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. Harry Wharton & Co. had come in after games practice; and the Famous Five were chatting cheerily in the Remove passage, when Peter Todd looked out of Study No. 7, and glared up and down the passage with an excited glare. Peter had gone into his study quite good-temperedly; but evidently he had found something in that study to rouse his ire.

"Seen that fat chump?" he roared. "Bunter?" asked Wharton. "Yes; I'm going to slaughter him." "But what—"

"Come in here and look at this!" hooted Peter. "He's done it this time, the frabjous chump!" "But—"

"The burbling handersnatch!" "But what—"

"The frumptions idiot!" roared Peter. Quite interested to learn the cause of the excitement, Harry Wharton & Co. came into the study. Peter pointed to a blotting-pad that lay on the table. It was a nice, new, clean blotting-pad, so evidently it did not belong to Bunter;

but Bunter had used it for his letter-writing. Clearly marked on the white surface was the impression of the envelope Bunter had blotted there. Peter pointed at it.

"Look!" The chums of the Remove looked. What they saw was the backward impression of the blotted address on the envelope:

ygguhC
wenevA yrrebsetlahS
nodnoL

That was a little puzzling at the first glance; but read in reverse it ran as follows:

Chuggy,
Shaftesbury Ayvenew
London

The address was in the strikingly original orthography which was one of the many gifts of William George Bunter; but undoubtedly it was intended for Shaftesbury Avenue.

"My only hat!" said Wharton, staring at it.

"Who on earth is Chuggy?" asked Bob Cherry. "I've never heard that name before. Is it a name?"

"What does it matter, anyhow?" asked Frank Nugent. "Bunter can write to a man named Chuggy if he likes, I suppose."

"No business of ours," said Johnny Bull; "or yours, either, that I can see. Toddy. What's all the excitement about?"

"The excitiffulness seems to be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh. "What is the esteemed and absurd reason, Toddy?"

"Fatheads!" hooted Peter Todd.

"That man Chuggy is a turf accountant—"

"Phew!"

"Man who accepts bets on horses!"

"Great pip!"

"You seem to know all about it!" grinned Bob. "Quelchy would like to know what you know about Mr. Chuggy, Toddy."

"Ass! I've seen his advertisement!" snorted Peter. "Bunter had a sporting paper here the other day. I stuffed it down his neck, and thought it was done with. I saw a big advertisement of this chap sprawling all over the paper. He opens accounts with people who want to back horses on tick."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a laughing matter!" hooted Peter. "Bunter's done it this time. Look at this—and this—and this—"

Peter pointed to patches of writing on the blotter. Here and there words showed where Bunter had blotted the letter he had written to the sportive Chuggy. Such words as "akkount" and "creditt" came out quite clearly.

The juniors ceased to chuckle as they stared at those traces of Bunter's letter. It was obvious that the Owl of the Remove had written to Mr. Chuggy, with a view to opening a credit account with that sporting gentleman. It was to draw such applications, of course, that Mr. Chuggy advertised in the racing papers. Certainly, Mr. Chuggy was not likely to desire applications from schoolboys; in fact, for his own legal protection it was certain that he made it a rule never to deal with schoolboys. But a little circumstance like that had no doubt escaped the attention of the Owl of the Remove.

Bob Cherry gave a long whistle. "Bunter's going it!" he said. "But what's the trouble after all, Peter? That man Chuggy won't let Bunter open a betting account with him. He would want references and things; and unless he was potty he wouldn't have anything to do with a fellow writing from a school. Why, he could be fined for taking bets from a schoolboy. Bunter will get an answer telling him there's nothing doing."

"I know that, fathead! And Quelch will see the answer."

"Oh!"

"I suppose you don't need telling that our Form-master keeps an eye on Remove correspondence!" snapped Peter. "When he sees a letter arrive for Bunter from that chap, what will he do? It won't look like an ordinary letter from a relative, and Quelch will spot it at once. And what will happen when he knows that Bunter has written to a turf accountant in London to ask him to open an account for backing horses?"

"Great Scott!"

The juniors were serious enough now.

Any Greyfriars man who was discovered doing what Bunter had done could be absolutely certain of one thing—the sack from the school. In Bunter's case, possibly, the well-known usin' qualities of the fat junior might be considered in extenuation: it was barely possible that he would get off with a flogging and a severe warning. But the flogging would certainly be a severe one; and it was quite on the cards that Bunter might be expelled. The Head did not know him as the Remove fellows knew him; he had never plumbed the abyssal depths of Bunter's fatuousness. Certainly, any fellow who was supposed to be in possession of all his seven senses would be sacked, short and sharp, for such an offence.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

For some time now Bunter had been playing the giddy goat, as his Form-fellows described it. He had got the idea into his head that he could spot winners; and a fellow who knew how to spot winners had fortune at his feet. All that was needed was to get his money laid on those winners, and to rake in the huge profits as fast as they came along.

There was only one fly in the ointment; spotting winners was not an easy matter. Bookmakers live on people who set out to spot winners; and the fact that they live at all may be taken as a proof that more losers than winners are spotted.

But that was nothing to Bunter. His airy self-confidence was complete. Bunter believed that he could play cricket; he believed that he could play football. He believed that he was a good-looking, nice-mannered, fascinating sort of fellow. So it was not surprising that he believed that he could spot winners. Such a belief was quite in keeping with the state of Bunter's powerful intellect.

"Well, he's done it this time!" said Johnny Bull. "Quelch's practically certain to see the answer that comes for Bunter, and—"

"And all the fat will be in the fire!" said Nugent.

"The fatfulness will be terrifically fiery," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The ridiculous Bunter will be sack-lully bunked!"

"The fat chump!" said the captain of the Remove.

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"The letter's gone," said Peter. "No chance of stopping that. The man is sure to answer, if only to tell Bunter there's nothing doing. Of course, he won't take the fat fool on as a client—he couldn't if he wanted to; it's against the law. Bunter doesn't understand that. Jever hear of such a born idiot?"

"Never!"

"Hardly ever!"

"Well, let him get it in the neck," said Johnny Bull, with a grunt. "If a fellow follows the blackguard, the chopper is the best thing he can get."

"Oh, rats!" said Peter. "Bunter's only a fool! Any other fellow who did that ought to be sacked. Bunter only wants kicking."

"The kickfulness ought to be terrific, my esteemed Toddy!"

"We shall have to take that burbling chump in hand," said Harry Wharton. "We're not going to have other Forms sniggering over a Remove man being sacked for blagging. Besides, Bunter doesn't deserve it; he's only a born chump. Something's got to be done."

"After tea?" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Hem! Yes, after tea," agreed the captain of the Remove. The juniors had come in rather hungry after games practice. "After tea we'll have the howling ass on the carpet."

PLEASE NOTE!

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And there was an adjournment for tea, during which meal the chums of the Remove discussed ways and means of dealing with William George Bunter.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Troubles of a Sportsman!

BILLY BUNTER sat in the arm-chair of Study No. 7 later that evening, with a fat smile on his podgy countenance. That smile indicated that all was going well with Bunter—so far as the Owl of the Remove could see, at all events. It was nearly time for prep, but Bunter was not thinking of prep. Much more important matters occupied his fat mind. Bunter was dreaming dreams—dreams of wealth that put Golconda to the blush; of vast riches such as lay at the command of Prince Fortunatus when he came into possession of that wonderful purse that was inexhaustible; of treasures as unbounded as that of Midas when all that that lucky monarch touched turned to gold.

Such wealth lay at the beck of any man who could spot winners, and Bunter had pored over the "Tipster's Racing Guide," and "Sure Snips," and other valuable volumes, and had no doubt that he knew all about it.

The thing was, in fact, simple. You selected the horse that was going to win, you backed him, and he won—whereupon the bookie handed you six to one, or ten to one, or a hundred to one, as the case might be. There was no limit to the possible profits. Bookmakers, at such a rate, might go "broke" one after

another; but there were plenty of bookmakers—and Bunter was prepared to reduce them all to bankruptcy.

The field of wealth was bounded only by the possible exhaustion of the supply of bookmakers with money to pay out on winners—spotted by Bunter. When all the bookmakers in the kingdom had been reduced to the workhouse or to carrying sandwich-boards for a living, then no doubt Bunter would have to stop. Still, Bunter would be prepared to stop at that point—he was not greedy.

There was a lion in the path, so to speak—a difficulty in the way of skinning all the bookmaking fraternity down to their last brass button. The difficulty did not lie in spotting the winners—Bunter was sure he could do that. It lay in the fact that Bunter was at school, and not allowed—according to the rules of the school—to have anything whatever to do with bookmakers or races or spotting winners, or even losers.

Bunter snorted with indignation and contempt at the thought of such a restriction. Certainly he was not going to be kept out of a gold-mine by any such restriction. A fellow could hardly be expected, Bunter considered, to refrain from stooping to pick up a fortune when it lay at his feet.

But there was another difficulty, even greater. Backing horses required cash. Bookmakers, though facing absolute ruin at Bunter's ruthless hands—required a backer to put up hard cash when he backed his fancy. Hard cash was just the trouble—Bunter hadn't any. Really, as their ultimate ruin was so absolutely assured, the bookies might as well have handed their wealth over to Bunter without this preliminary. Still, they wouldn't! They might as well have done so; but there was no doubt at all that they wouldn't. Bunter, with fortune at his feet, was baffled—like so many other geniuses—by a miserable lack of ready cash!

And then, like light in the darkness, came that entrancing advertisement of Mr. Chuggy in the "Tipster's Times." Bunter could scarcely believe his eyes or his spectacles when he read Mr. Chuggy's advertisement. It really seemed too good to be true.

Mr. Chuggy was prepared to accept clients to make bets on credit. If you lost you paid your losses, of course—a detail that did not affect Bunter, who was going to win. If you won—no "if" about it in Bunter's case—Mr. Chuggy sent you a cheque for the amount you had won. It was as simple as A.B.C. With a credit system like this hard cash was superfluous; moreover, Bunter's first win would place him in possession of hard cash. That any consideration whatever would prevent Bunter from getting into touch with Mr. Chuggy, of course, was not to be thought of. Mr. Chuggy was the man he longed to do business with.

That Mr. Chuggy would not have been in business at all had his clients been able to spot winners, was an obvious consideration that did not occur to Bunter. That the mere fact that bookmakers continued to exist was a proof that they were on the safe side of the game was another obvious consideration that did not bother Bunter. His wonderful intellect had its own way of going to work, quite different from that of common mortals.

Bunter sprawled in the study arm-chair and dreamed dreams. Dreaming dreams was one of his little ways; for instance, Bunter Court and the boundless wealth and high connections of the Bunter clan were such stuff as dreams are made of. But this dream of fortune

smiling on him from the Turf was the most dazzling dream of all.

Of course, it had to be kept dark, Bunter was too busy in envisaging his coming wealth to think much about the shady side of his proceedings. He was willing to admit, as a matter of argument, that gambling was wrong, or, at least disreputable; but there were exceptions to every rule—in favour of Bunter. Besides, an absolute certainty like this could hardly be called gambling; it was more like a sober and sedate business transaction. Anyhow, if Bunter's fat conscience had a twinge or two on the subject, the twinges were not very severe.

Bunter was the happy possessor of a very accommodating conscience, and it would always stretch a little when required. Still, the thing had to be kept dark. Benighted headmasters and foolish Form masters did not understand such things—even the Remove men, instead of admiring Bunter's genius, would simply look on him as a disreputable young rascal—they might even kick him; Peter Todd, in fact, was sure to kick him, if he knew. Bunter realised that his racing transactions could not be kept too dark!

It was hard for a fellow with his finger on the pulse of fortune to hold his tongue about it. It was hard for Bunter to hold his tongue at any time on any subject. If there was anything Bunter liked almost as much as tuck, it was the sound of his own voice, a proof that Bunter hadn't a musical ear. If there was one thing he enjoyed, it was telling other fellows about his cleverness. It was hard lines for a fellow to have to hide his light under a bushel, to let his genius blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air. But the Owl of the Remove realised that he could not be too careful, and he resolved to keep Mr. Chuggy very dark indeed—in blissful ignorance of the fact that he had left the impression of Mr. Chuggy's name and address sprawling over Toddy's blotting-pad.

The sound of footsteps in the Remove passage disturbed Bunter from his dream of winners and wads of banknotes and currency notes in stacks. He gave an impatient grunt. That beast Toddy would be coming in to prep—prep had to be done. Bunter really had no time for prep; he had none too much time to study the form of geese as laid down in that mine of wealth, the "Sporting Tipster's Weekly Guide to Winners." He felt that it was a sin and a shame to waste his time on preparing Latin. But he felt also that it would be no good explaining that to Mr. Quelch in the Form-room in the morning. Prep had to be done.

Peter Todd came in; and he did not come alone. The Famous Five of the Remove followed him in, and Nugent,

the last to enter, closed the study door. Bunter blinked at that proceeding in some surprise. Apparently there was to be a meeting in Study No. 7 of the Remove.

"Here he is!" said Cherry, surveying the Owl of the Remove with a grin. "As large as life—or larger."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Now, you fat idiot—" began Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"For two or three weeks now," said Peter, glaring at him, "you've been talking out of the back of your neck, and playing the giddy ox and making a fool of yourself generally. You know that?"

"You cheeky beast!"

"You're going the right way to get sacked. Well, we're not going to let you be sacked. Got that?"

"Mind your own business!" roared Bunter wrathfully. "I suppose a fellow can do as he likes."

"Something wrong with your supposer, then. You being a born idiot and not responsible for your actions, it's up to me to see that you don't get yourself bunked. These chaps are going to help. See?"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Better begin by kicking him—"

Bunter jumped out of the armchair and dodged behind it. He did not, apparently, want the proceedings to be opened in that manner.

"Look here, you beasts!" hooted Bunter.

"We're taking this up to save you from being kicked out of the school, Bunter," said Harry Wharton mildly. "Rats! No bisney of yours!"

"Blessed if I see why he shouldn't be sacked!" said Johnny Bull. "It would improve Greyfriars immensely."

"The immensenessfulness would be terrific!"

"Beast!"

"Now, Bunter, you've written a letter to a turf accountant about opening a credit account with him," said Peter Todd sternly.

"I haven't!" said Bunter promptly.

An exact and meticulous regard for the truth never had appealed to Bunter. He was above petty considerations of that sort.

"Then who's Chuggy?" demanded Nugent.

"Nobody! Never heard the name!"

"Why, you fat villain—"

"I—I mean, it's my Uncle Charles. We call him Chuggy for short. I told you so."

"Does your uncle live in Shaftesbury Avenue, London?" hooted Bob.

"Certainly not! He lives at—at Bunter Castle."

"Oh, crumbs!"

Peter Todd picked up the blotting-pad, and shoved it under Bunter's fat, little nose.

"Blink at that, Owl!"

The Owl blinked at it. His fat face looked rather dismayed for a moment. He realised that that impression on the blotting-pad gave him away with all the completeness that could be desired.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he stammered.

"Well?" hooted Peter.

"That—that's my uncle's town address," explained Bunter. "His country house is Bunter Castle in—Yorkshire, and his town house is—in Shaftesbury Avenue. I've written to him about a—a postal-order I was expecting. Chuggy's simply a nickname—short for Christopher."

"For what?" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Christopher—my Uncle Christopher, you know."

"It was Charles a minute ago!" roared Bob.

Bunter started. Bunter knew quite well that a certain class of persons, according to the proverb, ought to have good memories. Still, what was a fellow to do? He had a bad memory, and there it was.

"I—I mean my Uncle Charles Christopher," he explained, at length. "We sometimes call him Charles, and sometimes Christopher."

"And sometimes Chuggy?" gasped Bob.

"Exactly!"

"And you address letters to him as Chuggy?"

"That's it," assented Bunter. He—he likes it, you know."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"I hope you're satisfied now," said Bunter scornfully. "I don't like this sort of questioning. I can tell you. It implies a doubt of my word. I dare say you don't mean it, but there it is. I'm not the sort of fellow to have his word doubted."

"Not!" gasped Bob.

"No!" roared Bunter.

"Talk about Ananias and George Washington!" said Bob. "They were simply fools to this chap!"

"Well," said Peter Todd grimly, "if you've written to your Uncle Charles Christopher Chuggy Bunter, all right! When his answer comes, and Quelch opens it, he won't mind you getting a letter from Charles Christopher Chuggy Bunter. If it were from a firm of turf accountants, it would be a flogging for you, and very likely the sack as well. Lucky for you it's only a letter from Uncle Chuggy that's coming."

Billy Bunter gave a gasp. His fat jaw dropped, and he stared at the chums of the Remove with his mouth open, like a fish out of water. That consideration—obvious as it was—had entirely escaped Bunter.

"Ow!" he gasped. "I—I say, you

(Continued on next page.)

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fellows, do you think Quelch will see the answer from Chuggy?"

"He's absolutely certain to."

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter. "I—I you, you fellows, I—I shall get a Head's flogging! Ow! I—I say, Wharton, you've got to help me out of this somehow! You helped me write the letter!"

"What?" roared Wharton.

"You know you did!" roared Bunter. "You were telling me how to spell the words."

"Why, you—you—you—"

"If I'm up before the Head, you can't expect me to take a flogging, Wharton, and keep dark your part in it."

"Mum-mum my part in it," repeated the captain of the Remove dazedly.

"Certainly! You helped me! Yarooop!"

Bump!

William George Bunter smote the floor of No. 1 Study, and smote it hard. And for some minutes No. 7 in the Remove was filled with sound—the heavy bumping of Bunter on the carpet, and the frantic yells of William George.

Bump! Bump! Bump!

"There!" gasped Wharton at last, when he was tired. Bunter was more than tired. "There, you fat villain!"

"Yoooooop!"

"Now get yourself flogged and sacked as soon as you like, you fat rotter! I'm done with you!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove wrathfully.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

The Famous Five left the study, leaving Bunter to roar. For several minutes Bunter under-studied the celebrated Bull of Bashan, while Peter Todd eyed him, debating in his mind whether Bunter had had enough, or whether a few licks from a cricket-stump would do him good.

"I—I say, Peter old chap," gasped Bunter, at last. "I say, you go after that beast—ow!—and lick him—wow!—and I'll stand you a fiveer out of my first win! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Peter Todd decided, without further debate, on the cricket-stump. William George Bunter fled for his life, with the stump whacking behind. Bunter had a lot of weight to carry; but he negotiated the Remove passage at a really remarkable speed, and Peter was left hopelessly in the rear. If Bunter had backed himself in that race he would undoubtedly, for once, have spotted the winner.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

THE following day there was a long face in the Greyfriars Remove.

It was the fat countenance of William George Bunter.

Dreams of boundless wealth were pleasant to dwell upon. Floggings from a headmaster were not. And it was a Head's flogging that Bunter had to think of now.

That letter to Chuggy, which was to have led to laying the foundation of Bunter's huge fortune, seemed likely to earn Bunter a Head's licking—merely that, and nothing more.

Bunter had not thought of it, till it was pointed out to him; but he thought of it now, and he realised that Chuggy's answer was practically certain to fall into his Form-master's hands.

What Mr. Quelch would think when he found a boy in his Form in communication with a firm of turf accountants was almost unimaginable. And what he would think did not matter so much as what he would do.

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Bunter could almost feel already the whacking of the cane. He could envisage the majestic wrath in Mr. Quelch's countenance. He could almost hear the Head's voice saying, "Take him up, Gosling!"

It was an appalling prospect.

That such difficulties should beset a fellow who had, practically, discovered a gold mine, was very hard. But there it was. If Bunter spotted winners the result might or might not, be dazzling. But if Mr. Quelch spotted Bunter the result was certain to be very painful.

Bunter had a lot of food for thought that day. By that time Chuggy had his letter. Chuggy's reply would be in the post that day. On the following morning it would be delivered at Greyfriars. Would it fall into Mr. Quelch's hands? Bunter, now that it was pointed out to him, realised that there was little doubt of it, if any. It was an unexpected obstacle. Any other fellow would have expected it, but not Bunter. So far from opening a "credit account" with Chuggy, all that Bunter would gain would be a flogging. It was rotten. It was sickening. But it was so.

In morning class Bunter looked worried. In the afternoon he looked dismal.

Harry Wharton & Co. seemed to have let the matter drop. Possibly they were fed-up with Bunter. Bunter was a fellow with whom it was easy to get fed-up. He had told the chums of the Remove to mind their own business. Now they seemed to be minding it, and even that was not satisfactory to Bunter. If trouble threatened the Owl of the Remove, his view was that all Greyfriars ought to rally round. When Bunter was up against it, it was time for the whole universe to sit up and take notice.

But the universe rolled on its accustomed way, just as if Bunter did not matter. The stars in their courses took absolutely no notice of William George Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove grew more and more worried. At tea-time in Study No. 7 he mentioned the matter to Peter Todd. Peter stared at him.

"Didn't you tell me to mind my own business?" he asked.

"Yes; but—"

"Well, I'm a good little boy, and always do as I am told," explained Peter.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Now shut up!"

Peter seemed to have washed his hands of the matter. After tea, Bunter met Bob Cherry in the Remove passage.

"I say, Cherry, what's going to be done?" he asked.

"Right as rain," answered Bob cheerfully. "We're going to beat them."

"Eh? What? Whom?"

"St. Jim's!"

"St. Jim's! Blow St. Jim's! I wasn't talking about a cricket match!" howled Bunter.

"I was!" answered Bob, and he walked on.

Bunter confided his woes to Skinner & Co. As Skinner & Co. rather dabbled in sporting matters, he expected sympathy at least from them. It is said that a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind. But a fellow-feeling did not make Harold Skinner wondrous kind; it did not make him kind at all. He yelled with laughter when he heard what was impending over Bunter, and told the fellows in the Rag, and they yelled also. Only the comic side of Bunter's sportiveness seemed visible to the Removites.

"I say, you fellows, you might advise

a chap what to do!" said Bunter plaintively.

"Certainly," said Skinner. "Put some exercise-books in your bags when you see Quelch about it. That's my advice."

"Beast!"

"We'll all stand round to see you sacked, Bunter!" said Snoop. "We'll give you a send-off!"

"Beast!"

"Look here, you pay me that shilling you owe me before you vamoose, you fat clam!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"Yah!"

There was no comfort for William George Bunter—not even any sympathy. It really seemed as if there would be a lot of dry eyes at Greyfriars when Bunter went, if he was sacked.

In search of sympathy and helpful advice, the fat sportsman dropped into study after study in the Remove that evening. In Study No. 4, Vernon-Smith roared with laughter, just as heartlessly as Skinner had done. Tom Redwing kindly told him that he might get off with a caning, and pointed out that a caning was just what he wanted for playing the ox. No doubt this was true, but it could not be called helpful.

In No. 6, Bunter found Wibley of the Remove, and there he received something like serious attention, at least. William Wibley and Morgan and Desmond had finished their prep, and the two latter had gone down; they were among the fellows who were chortling over Bunter's misfortunes in the Rag. Wibley was alone in the study, and the room was almost filled with theatrical properties that Wib had been sorting over.

Wibley was seated at the study table, with a pen in his hand, and a sheaf of paper before him, and a thoughtful, far-away look in his eyes. Wibley looked like that when he was in the throes of composition. He was making some alterations and improvements in the script of "Reckless Rackstraw; or, the Road to Ruin"—the thrilling play that was to be produced by the Remove Dramatic Society after the St. Jim's match was over and out of the way. The chief part in that play was that of a bookmaker who helped Reckless Rackstraw on the road to ruin; and that part was to be taken by Wibley himself, who was a past-master in the art of make-up, and was certain to look just as if he had stepped off the race-course at Doncaster when he was playing the part. As the actor-manager was taking that character, naturally most of the "fat" was given to that character; and Wharton, who was to play the hero, had a rather thin time in comparison. That was the advantage of an actor-manager writing the play himself.

Wibley was now busily engaged in cutting out several speeches that had been allotted to other characters, and filling in the vacancy with a little extra business for his own part.

This required deep thought, and Wibley sat like a fellow in a trance, thinking it out.

"I say, Wib," said Bunter—"I say, old fellow, I'm in an awful fix!"

Wibley gazed at him earnestly.

He did not speak, but his gaze was so earnest and attentive that Bunter was encouraged. Here was a fellow who would listen to him with sympathetic attention, at least.

He told his tale of woe, and Wibley did not interrupt him once, sitting with his steady, earnest gaze fixed on Bunter in silence.

"That's how it stands," concluded Bunter. "I say, what's a fellow to do?"



"Do you think I've come here to listen to you spouting rot?" cried Bunter. "What?" gasped Wibley. "Rot! Rubbish! Piffle! Tripe!" yelled Bunter. The Owl of the Remove would have said more, but for the fact that Wibley grabbed the inkpot and sent it whizzing in his direction. Fortunately, Bunter was in flight first. (See Chapter 5.)

Old Quelch's sure to bag that letter when it comes. He's sure to kick up a shindy about it. He's sure to take me to the Head. I say, Wib, what would you advise a fellow to do?"

Still Wibley did not speak.

His earnest gaze was fixed on Bunter, just as it had been fixed on the door before Bunter entered the study. It did not occur to Bunter that Wibley, deep in the throes of composition, had not heeded his entrance at all, and was not listening to him.

"I say, Wib—"

"Splendid!" ejaculated Wibley. Apparently he had discovered, at last, the phrase he was seeking.

Bunter stared.

"Eh? What?"

"Fine!" said Wibley, and he began to scribble hurriedly. Billy Bunter blinked at him in angry amazement.

"Look here, Wib—"

"Don't interrupt!"

"But I say—"

"Shut up!"

Wibley wrote rapidly, Bunter blinking at him. When Wib's busy pen ceased to scratch, he looked up with a smile. It was the smile of satisfied genius—such a smile as Shakespeare might have smiled when he had finished jotting down the soliloquy in "Hamlet." Only Wib had really more cause to smile with satisfaction; for, like other modern playwrights, he was aware that he could knock Shakespeare into a cocked hat when it came to writing a play.

"Listen to this!" said Wibley. "I'll read it out if you like—"

"I was telling you—"

"Eh? Were you telling me anything?" asked Wibley.

"Didn't you hear me?" roared Bunter.

"Not a word."

"Why, you—you—"

"Anyhow, it doesn't matter," said Wibley. "Listen to this! Don't talk; just listen."

Billy Bunter gave a glare that almost cracked his spectacles. All the time he had been telling his tale of woe, explaining the pressing nature of the present awful situation of affairs, Wibley had not been listening—had not heard him at all. His fixed, earnest gaze had only been caused by the deep, deep thoughts that were passing in his brain!

"You thurbling clump!" roared Bunter, in great wrath. "You howling ass! I was telling you—"

"For goodness' sake dry up, Bunter!" said Wibley crossly. "Do you want to hear me read out this passage or not?"

"Do you think I've come here to listen to you spouting that rot?" hooted Bunter.

Wibley jumped.

"That what?"

"Rot! Rubbish! Piffle! Tripe!" yelled Bunter.

Bunter would have said more, but Wibley had grasped the inkpot, and Bunter had just time to dodge into the passage before it flew.

Bunter flew, and the inkpot flew! But fortunately—for Bunter—he was in the first flight.

He did the Remove passage as if he were doing the school mile. A fellow who told Wibley that his compositions

were tripe might not be very far from the facts, but it behoved him to get as far as possible from William Wibley. Bunter had vanished by the time Wibley whipped out of the study with a poker in his hand, and homicide in his eye.

Bunter rolled dismally down to the Rag.

He was up against it, and there was no help—not even sympathy. Great expectations of boundless wealth had given place to dreary expectations of a head's flogging, and Bunter was feeling now like the raven's unhappy master, whom unmerciful disaster followed fast and followed faster.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Help!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

It was Bunter who spoke, or, rather, groaned.

Wharton and Nugent had finished prep, and were about to go down to the Rag, when the Owl of the Remove presented himself at Study No. 1.

Bunter's fat face was dolorous. But in No. 1, as in other studies, sympathy seemed to be at a discount. Frank Nugent grinned, and Harry Wharton grunted.

"I say, you fellows, you might help a chap out," groaned Bunter.

"Well, I'll do that," agreed Wharton.

"Turn round."

"Eh? What for?"

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"For me to help you out. I'll do it with my boot."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Waiting!" said the captain of the Remove.

"I say, don't be a beast, you know," said Bunter. "I'm up against it. I'm in a fearful hole. Now I come to think of it, I feel sure that Quelchly will get hold of that letter when it comes in the morning!"

"Sure to," said Nugent, with a nod.

"Well, that means a flogging for me."

"Just so. Serve you right!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Well, it can't be helped," said Harry. "Besides, didn't you tell us to mind our own business?"

"I—I take that back, old chap! Besides, this is your business, as you had a hand in it—"

"What?" bawled Wharton.

"You helped me to write that letter to Chuggy, you know. You can't deny it. I shall be bound to let the Head know that, if it all comes out. You can't expect me to take all the gruel and leave you out. I—I—I mean, you—you didn't help me write to Chuggy," amended Bunter hastily, as Wharton picked a cricket-stump from a corner of the study. "That—that's what I meant to say, you know. I—I think you ought to help me because—because you're such a nice chap."

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Such a splendid fellow!" said Bunter.

"You fat idiot!"

"Such a pal!" said Bunter.

"Fathead! Chuck it!"

Bunter chuckled it, blinking at the captain of the Remove. Flattery seemed to be of no use, though Bunter was prepared to hand it out, like pineapple, in chunks. He blinked pathetically at the two juniors.

"I say, you fellows, what's going to be done? I can't be flogged, you know, I say, can't that letter be stopped, somehow? You fellows stand by me and get me out of this fix, and I'll make it worth your while. I don't mind standing you a tenner each—a couple of tenners, if you like—out of my first winnings."

"Oh, great Christopher Columbus!"

"You see," said Bunter eagerly, "once I get this fixed up, I shall be rolling in money. I've been going into the matter, and I can spot winners. It simply needs a keen, powerful brain, a concentrated, first-class intellect, you know, and an extensive capacity for thought, deep study, and—and so on. Well, that's me all over!"

"That's you all over, is it?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes. Lots of people lose money backing horses—"

"I believe they do!" said Harry.

"I've heard of such things happening!" groaned Nugent.

"Lots and lots of people do," said Bunter. "You see, they haven't my intellect. I'm not a fellow to boast—"

"Ye gods!"

"But I'm bound to say," continued Bunter, "that very few fellows have an intellect like mine."

"And those few aren't at Greyfriars," remarked Wharton. "They're at Colney Hatch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter. "Is this a time for rotten jokes? Look here! I'm not going to be mean when I get large sums of money. Fellows who stand by me will come in for a good thing. The holidays ain't far off now, and I'm prepared to stand you fellows a topping holiday, regardless of expense. I'll take you to Monte Carlo,

if you like; or a trip round the world by special aeroplane—that could be done for a few hundred pounds. In a short time, hundreds of pounds will be no more to me than a few coppers. I'll stand you anything you like—"

"Out of your winnings by backing horses?" gasped Wharton.

"Yes, old chap."

"Oh crumbs!"

Wharton looked at the Owl of the Remove. A fellow who believed that he could make hundreds of pounds by backing horses, evidently required looking after. Indeed, it seemed doubtful whether it was not a case for a mental specialist.

"Look here, you fat chump!" said the captain of the Remove, at last. "You're too frabjous an idiot to understand what you're doing, and I suppose it's no good blaming you. Though why they sent you to Greyfriars instead of a home for idiots, beats me hollow. You'd better go to Quelchly and explain to him what a fool you are—"

"You silly ass!"

"If you explain to him that you think money can be made by backing horses, he may understand what you really need, and he may send for a doctor instead of thrashing you. See?"

"You—you—you—" spluttered Bunter. He had come to Study No. 1 for advice in this emergency, but he did not seem to be getting the advice he wanted.

"Well, that's the best tip I can give you," said Harry. "Take it or leave it."

"Look here, you ass! You fellows ought to help me!" urged Bunter. "That letter from Chuggy mustn't be delivered here. Quelchly's sure to get hold of it, and that means a flogging. Suppose—suppose you got it off Boggs, the postman, before it's delivered? Boggs might hand it over."

"Boggs isn't allowed to hand over letters to the fellows, ass! He has to deliver them here."

"He might for a tip, if you waylaid him in the morning," suggested Bunter. "Tip him a quid! It's worth it!"

"Got the quid?" asked Nugent, with sarcasm.

"Nunno! You fellows can stand the quid. At the present time I'm short of money. I've been disappointed about a postal-order. But in a week or two I shall be rolling—"

"Shut up!" roared Wharton. "If you talk that piffle again, you'll be rolling this evening—out of this study on your neck. Nobody's got a quid to tip Boggs—and, besides, he wouldn't. More likely to report us to Quelchly for trying to get letters off him."

"What about seizing him—"

"Eh?"

"Seizing him in the lane, collaring his sack, and—getting hold of the letter? You two fellows could handle old Boggs all right."

"And be taken before the Head to be sacked for doing it!"

"You could wear masks—"

"Masks!" yelled Wharton.

"Yes. Like they do on the films, you know."

"Oh crikey!"

Evidently Bunter did not mean to stick at trifles. At all events, he did not think it necessary for the other fellows to stick at trifles. But wearing masks, like the villains on the films at Courtfield Picture Palace, and "holding up" a postman, did not seem to appeal to Wharton and Nugent. With the selfishness to which Billy Bunter was sorrowfully accustomed, they declined promptly, emphatically, and impolitely,

"Well, what's going to be done?" demanded Bunter desperately. "I'm not going to be flogged."

"Looks as if you are!"

"Like Quelchly's cheek to mess about with my private correspondence. I've a jolly good mind to tell him so. Still, I suppose he wouldn't see it."

"Might not!" grinned Nugent.

"You fat chump!" said Harry Wharton. "I don't see what can be done! Look here, I'll speak to the fellows, and see what we can do—if we can do anything—but it's on condition that you give up playing the giddy ox. No more of your frabjous fooling, see?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Do you agree to that?" snapped Wharton. "If you don't you can buzz off, and shut up and take your chance."

"I—I—I'll agree to anything!" gasped Bunter. "Only keep Quelchly from seeing that letter from Chuggy!"

"Then we'll see what can be done, fathead! Clear off!"

Bunter rolled dismally away; and then a meeting of the Famous Five and Peter Todd was called, in Study No. 1, and the matter was discussed. The chums of the Remove agreed that anything that could be done, should be done, to save the fat and fatuous Owl from getting the chopper. But the difficulty was to discover what could possibly be done. And it was Bob Cherry who had a brain-wave.

"Wibley!" he exclaimed.

"Wibley! What about Wibley?"

"Wib's the man!"

"But how—"

Bob Cherry proceeded to explain—and his explanation made the juniors gasp. But after gasping they considered the wheeze, and then there was an adjournment to William Wibley's study.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Monsieur Wibley!

"BON jour, Monsieur Boggs!" "Mornin', sir!" said Mr. Boggs, halting in Friardale Lane.

"I fait beau, Monsieur Boggs! Vat you call a nice morning!"

"Wee, wee, mongseer!" answered Mr. Boggs, politely answering the French gentleman in his own language—or as near as Mr. Boggs could get.

Mr. Boggs was quite well acquainted with Monsieur Charpentier, the French master of Greyfriars.

Often and often he had passed that dapper little gentleman in the lane, and always Mossoo had a polite bow and a polite word of greeting.

Mr. Boggs rather liked Mossoo. Mr. Boggs was rather a short man himself; and, like most men of small stature, he liked to meet a man of still smaller stature. It gave him that pleasant feeling of being, after all, rather a big man.

Mossoo, though not large, was rather a striking figure. His little, pointed black beard, his twisted moustache, his dark complexion, his tight-fitting frock coat, and silk hat, his dainty little shoes, his exuberant tie, rather attracted the eye. Wibley of the Remove, who was great on impersonations, had impersonated Mossoo, in the Remove passage, to the very life, making himself up to resemble Mossoo so exactly that he looked like the French master's twin brother. All Mossoo's characteristics lent themselves to imitation—such an impersonation was simply "pie" to William Wibley.

Mr. Boggs, travelling along the lane

in the sunny morning, was not at all averse from stopping for a few minutes for a chat.

The little gentleman was leaning on the stile when the postman came along from Friardale, and Boggs halted and leaned on the stile also.

"Vous avez—you have some lettres for ze school zis morning, isn't it, Monsieur Boggs?"

"A good many, sir."

"C'est en! I zink you have in zat sack one lettair for one garcon named Buntair."

"Very likely, sir."

"I zink so, Monsieur Boggs. I have been requested to meet you before you shall arrive at ze school and take zat lettair. Monsieur Quelch, he would like to have zat lettair tres vite—vat you say, at vunce. You have no objection zat I take zat lettair Mr. Boggs?"

"Not at all, sir."

"C'est bien!"

Mr. Boggs was a little surprised, but there was no occasion for suspicion. Any Greyfriars master was entitled to take in letters for Greyfriars, and Mossoo was a Greyfriars master.

"Vous voyez—you see," went on the little gentleman. "Monsieur Quelch, he keep vun eye on lettres for ze garcons in his Form."

Mr. Boggs smiled.

"I know that, sir—and I dessay he needs to, sometimes. Why, sir, there's been moneylenders' circulars addressed to the school sometimes."

"Justement!" said the little gentleman. "And in zis case it appears zat some undesirable person, he has written vun lettair to ze boy Buntair, and zat lettair he must be supervisc. Zat, at least, is what I am told. Zat is why I am ask to meet you and take zat lettair."

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Boggs did not see why the Remove master could not wait till the letters were delivered at Greyfriars, and then select from the heap the letter that was addressed to Bunter by an undesirable person. But that was no business of his. A Greyfriars master was a Greyfriars master, and there was no room for doubt. Possibly Mr. Quelch was too busy that morning to supervise the correspondence as usual, and had asked Monsieur Charpentier to see to the matter. That would have been unusual, but not specially remarkable. Anyhow, there was no doubting the bona-fides of Monsieur Charpentier—and Mr. Boggs went cheerfully through his bag, selected a letter addressed to "W. G. Bunter" in type, and handed it over to the little gentleman.

"Merci bien, Monsieur Boggs! Zank you ver' moech!" said the little gentleman, slipping the letter carelessly into his pocket.

"Not at all, sir."

"Bon jour, monsieur!"

"Good-morning, sir!"

Mr. Boggs touched his hat, and the little gentleman raised his silk topper in the manner of exaggerated politeness for which Monsieur Charpentier was well known; and the Friardale postman went on his way.

Not till he was out of sight did the French gentleman move from the stile.

Then he walked a little distance down the lane, and turned into a path in Friardale Wood.

In a deep, shady thicket he stopped. His next proceedings were really remarkable for a middle-aged gentleman who was French master at a school.

He took off his silk hat, and then

his twisted moustache, and then his pointed black beard.

Then, in spite of his skilful make-up, his face began to resemble that of Wibley of the Remove, more than that of Monsieur Charpentier.

He further proceeded to divest himself of the tight frock coat and black trousers—revealing Ettons underneath.

He was still as tall as the French master; but not quite so wide.

Having removed all these appurtenances, he proceeded to a pool in the wood, where he washed his face with great care.

The make-up disappeared, and Wibley of the Remove stood revealed.

He grinned at his reflection in a little pocket-mirror.

"Easy as falling off a form!" he remarked to his reflection.

The garments he had worn as Mossoo were bundled together, and concealed in the thickets, to be recovered later.

In his own proper person, William Wibley walked back to Greyfriars. He arrived rather late for first class.

Mr. Quelch gave him a severe frown as he entered the Remove Form-room.

"Wibley!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!" said Wibley meekly.

"You are ten minutes late for class!"

"Sorry, sir—"

"You will take a hundred lines, Wibley."

"Yes, sir."

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

Wibley went to his place. As he passed Harry Wharton he bestowed a wink on the captain of the Remove.

"Got it?" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Yes, ass! Shurrup!"

"Silence!" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

There was silence; but a good many members of the Remove failed to give Mr. Quelch their undivided attention during first and second lesson. They

were waiting eagerly for morning break; while in another room Monsieur Charpentier was taking a French set, in blissful unconsciousness of the part he was supposed to have played that morning.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Chuggy is Not Taking Any!

"GOT it?"

William Wibley was surrounded, under the elms in the quad, by eager inquirers.

The Famous Five and Peter Todd and Billy Bunter all gathered round Wibley, who grinned complacently.

"Of course!" he answered.

"The of-coursefulness is not terrific," remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"It was not absurdly easy."

"Easy as falling off a form—to me!" said Wibley.

And the chums of the Remove grinned. A little swank was allowable to a fellow who had pulled off a very difficult feat; and as Wibley had done the trick, they were willing to concur in the excellent opinion Wibley had of his own remarkable cleverness.

"Boggy really took you for Mossoo!" said Bob.

Wibley sniffed.

"It's just pie making up as Mossoo! I could make up as the Head if I liked and take in all the school!"

"Hem!"

"Um!"

"Think I couldn't?" demanded Wibley warmly. "I can jolly well tell you—"

"Well, you can make up as Mossoo, that's a cert!" said Harry Wharton. "We've seen you do it in the Remove passage. But Mossoo's built on a small scale. I don't quite see how you'd make up as a man a foot taller than yourself."

"Lots of things you don't see,"
(Continued on next page.)

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answered Wibley. "That's only one of them. Lots of others!"

"Well, you pulled this off all right," said Wharton soothingly. "That was jolly clever, anyhow!"

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked Bunter.

"And Boggy never spotted you?" said Nugent.

"No, ass! If Mossos himself had seen me he would simply have supposed that he had a twin."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Shan't!" hooted Bunter. "I want that letter! If Wib's got that letter, I want it! It's mine!"

"That letter's going to be burned, and at once!" said Harry Wharton.

"Why, you beast—"

"We've hooked you out of this scrape—or, rather, we've got Wib to hook you out of it, on condition that you gave up playing the goat!" said the captain of the Remove sternly. "You promised that, Bunter."

"Did—did—did I?"

"Yes, you did, you fat frump!"

"That—that was only a figure of speech—"

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Hand out that letter, Wib, and we'll make an end of it, and if Bunter doesn't shut up, we'll make an end of him, too!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Shut up, fathead!"

William Wibley produced the letter. It was addressed to W. G. Bunter, at Greyfriars, in typing. Bunter made an eager grab at it, and gave a howl as Bob Cherry rapped his fat paw.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Hands off!" said Bob. "That letter's got to be got rid of!"

"You beast! It's my letter, ain't it?" hooted Bunter. "Can't you mind your own business, you cheeky rotters? Butting into a fellow's private affairs!"

"Why, you—you—you—"

"Just leave me and my affairs alone!" said Bunter indignantly. "Never saw such an inquisitive lot of rotters! I'm disgusted at you!"

"Doesn't he take the whole giddy bun?" said Bob Cherry. "Let's mind our own business, you men, and begin by taking this letter to Quelch's study."

"Good egg!"

"I—I say, you fellows," exclaimed Bunter, in dismay. "I—I didn't mean that, of course! I say, gimme that letter! I—I want to see what Chuggy's got to say! Lemme read the letter, anyhow!"

"Well, no harm in that!" said Peter Todd. "Let the fat idiot open the letter before we burn it! We'll all look at it and see if there's any harm in it."

"You're not going to butt into my private correspondence, Peter Todd—Yarooooooooh!"

Bunter sat down suddenly in the quad.

"That settles it!" said Harry Wharton, frowning. "We're a lot of asses to take any trouble about Bunter at all! We should all get licked if Quelch knew! That letter had better be dropped into the post again, and then it will come on to the school in the usual way, and it can be delivered without us interfering in Bunter's business."

"Done!" said Bob. "I'll cut down to Friardale on my bike and post it!"

Bunter scrambled up.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I mean, I—I want to read this letter out to you chaps! I really do! I—I'd take it as

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a favour if you—you'd read this letter with me!"

"Then shut up, you fat owl!"

The letter was handed to Bunter, and seven juniors stood in a circle round him to make sure that he did not bolt with it. It was fairly certain to the juniors that the letter contained nothing that would be of any use to the fat sportsman, but they were not taking any risks in the matter. If there was the remotest chance of Bunter getting into dealings with Mr. Chuggy, they were going to knock that chance on the head promptly and effectively.

Bunter's system of landing his scrapes on the shoulders of other fellows was neither grateful or comforting. Wibley had already landed a hundred lines, and it was certain that there would be lickings all round if it came to light how the juniors had intervened to save the fat Owl from discovery. They had saved Bunter, but they were fed completely up with the fat sportsman and his sportiveness. This matter was coming to a short and sharp end.

But the look on Bunter's fat face, as he read the letter from Mr. Chuggy, indicated that there was nothing to be alarmed about.

Bunter's fat jaw dropped. He blinked at the letter in dismay and disgust.

"Oh, crikey!" he ejaculated.

Peter Todd jerked the letter away and held it up for inspection. There was a general grin. Mr. Chuggy's letter was typed on a paper with a business heading, and it was short, if not sweet. It ran:

"W. G. Bunter, Greyfriars School, Kent.

"Dear Sir,—We are in receipt of your letter, and beg to inform you that we transact no business with schoolboys or minors. This is plainly stated in our advts., and we are surprised, therefore, that you should have communicated with us.—Yours truly,

CHUGGY & Co."

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

"The silly chump!" hooted Bunter. "Like his cheek. Besides, how does he know I'm a schoolboy? I never told him so in my letter. He might have taken it for a letter from a master here or the Head himself! I don't see how he knows."

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

"I say, you fellows—"

"Perhaps he guesses that a master wouldn't spell 'account' with two k's!" roared Bob Cherry.

"He might tumble to it that the Head wouldn't put a double d in credit!" shrieked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! Rats! You can keep that rotten letter!" said Bunter. "That's no good to me! I shall refuse to do any business with this man Chuggy!"

"Go hon!"

"After all, there's other ways," said Bunter morosely.

The letter from Mr. Chuggy was soon disposed of. Disappointing as it was to Bunter, it was still a proof of his having communicated with a firm of turf accountants, and had only to meet Mr. Quelch's eye, to earn the Owl of the Remove a flogging. Harry Wharton set a match to a corner of it, and it was soon reduced to ashes.

The juniors strolled away, leaving Billy Bunter with a clouded face.

He had been saved from a flogging, but that little trifle had already passed

from Bunter's mind. Gratitude for services rendered never had been one of Bunter's weaknesses. Being out of the scrape, he dismissed the scrape from his fat mind, and so far as he thought at all of what the juniors had done, he thought of them as a set of interfering beasts. But though the scrape worried him no longer, and though considerations of gratitude did not bother him in the least, he was deeply troubled. For it was now abundantly clear that his wonderful scheme of backing winners on credit was a frost.

Chuggy would have nothing to do with him—turf accountants were of no use to Bunter. If he was going to carry on as a sportsman, it would have to be on a basis of hard cash—and he would have to get in touch with a racing man somehow. Both presented difficulties—Bunter was short of cash, and getting into touch with a bookmaker was not easy. Cash, perhaps, could be borrowed—Bunter had wonderful skill as a borrower. But he could not roll down to Wapshot races and back gees there. Some go-between was needed. Those stacks of wealth, at his finger end as it were, were still out of reach.

What was the use of a fellow possessing the rare gift of spotting winners, if he couldn't get his money laid?

Bunter snorted with indignation.

Fortune was at his feet—and he couldn't stoop to pick it up. It was hard lines.

But Bunter was a stickler! He was not going to be beaten so easily as all this!

When the bell rang for third lesson, and the Removites were going in, the Owl of the Remove joined Wharton on his way to the Form-room.

"I say, old chap—" he began.

"Wall, fathead?"

"That man Chuggy has let me down," said Bunter sorrowfully. "I'm not going to have anything to do with him. I say, I want to get in touch with a bookmaker."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Bookmaker! Man who takes bets, you know! I say, old fellow, suppose you wanted to get in touch with a bookie, how would you set about it?"

Wharton gazed at the Owl of the Remove. Evidently, his lesson had done him no good, and his promise to "chuck" playing the goat weighed very lightly on his fat mind.

"So you're going to keep on that foolery?" exclaimed Wharton at last.

"Oh really, you know! I'm not likely to throw over the chance of making a huge fortune," snapped Bunter. "Look here, Wharton, you help me get in touch with a bookie, and I'll stand you a whack in the profits. I'll give you ten per cent of my winnings. It may come to hundreds of pounds before the end of the term. What do you say to that?"

Wharton did not say anything to that. It seemed to him a time for action, not for words. He grasped the Owl of the Remove by the collar, and jammed his head against one of the old stone buttresses of the House. Bunter's head was hard, but the buttress was harder. There was a fiendish yell from William George.

"Whoooooooop!"

Then Wharton went into the Form-room. In third lesson, Billy Bunter rubbed his head, and gave the captain of the Remove infuriated blinks. For the present, he gave up thinking out his pressing problem. He gave the inside of his head a rest while he rubbed the outside.



Not doubting the bona-fides of Monsieur Charpentier, Mr. Boggs went cheerfully through his bag, selected a letter addressed to W. G. Bunter, and handed it over to the little gentleman. "Merci bien, Monsieur Boggs! Zank you ver' mooch!" said the pseudo French master, raising his topper politely. (See Chapter 7.)

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The St. Jim's Match!

ST. JIM'S came along on Wednesday. On that great day, the heroes of the Remove were thinking of cricket, and of nothing else. Cricket was the order of the day. Even William Wibley gave "Reckless Rackstram or the Road to Ruin," a temporary rest, and deigned to take some little interest in the summer game.

Even Billy Bunter rolled down to Little Side to watch the game, though Bunter was not thinking wholly of cricket. Bunter was as sportive as ever, so far as his limitations allowed. He was not yet in touch with a bookmaker. He was not yet in possession of hard cash. One or two little loans that he had raised in the Remove had gone the way of most of Bunter's financial resources—to the tuckshop; temptation in that direction having proved too strong for the Owl to resist. But a cricket match with a visiting team, offered the fat sportsman a little scope. There might be some sportsman among the St. Jim's fellows willing to back his team to win. If so, Bunter was ready to take him on. That idea, however, the fat Owl kept strictly to himself. He objected to being kicked off Little Side, which would indubitably have been his fate, had the Removites suspected what was in his mind.

Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, were in great form. Some of his men, such as Talbot of the Shell, and D'Arcy of the Fourth, were at their best. The Remove eleven were also in good form, though they missed Da Costa, one of the very best, who had left Greyfriars. It was a great game, and well worth watching by the crowd that gathered round the field. St. Jim's went in to

bat first, and knocked up seventy. Greyfriars scored sixty-nine in their first innings. When St. Jim's batted a second time, they made it an even hundred, and looked very merry and bright when they finished. Greyfriars had a hard row to hoe to beat that total.

"Whippin'!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's, who was lounging gracefully before the pavilion, when the last wicket went down. "They will find that wathah hard to beat, Blake."

"You bet!" agreed Jack Blake. "I rather think we shall pull it off this time," remarked Tom Merry cheerily.

"Yaas, wathah!"

The last batsmen were coming off; Talbot of the Shell not out at the finish. Arthur Augustus gave a sudden gasp as he felt a knuckle-jammed into his ribs.

"Ow! What—?" He turned his eyes upon a fat youth who blinked at him through a large pair of spectacles. "Glad to see you, Gussy, old chap."

"Eh?"

"You remember me, what, old fellow?"

D'Arcy gazed at him thoughtfully.

"Have I seen you befoah somehow, deah boy?" he asked innocently.

"Oh, really, D'Arcy—"

"I wemembah now—your name is Gwuntah," said Arthur Augustus. "Either Gwuntah or Shuntah, I weally forget."

"Bunter, old chap," said the Owl of the Remove.

"Bai Jove! Yaas, now I think of it, it is Buntah," agreed the swell of St. Jim's. "How do you do, Gwuntah—I mean, Buntah?"

Without waiting for an answer, Arthur Augustus turned back to the

group of St. Jim's men. But Bunter caught him by the sleeve.

"I say, I haven't had a chance to speak to you, old fellow," he said. "Just step this way a minute, will you?"

"Weally, Buntah—"

"It's rather important," urged Bunter.

"Vewy well, deah boy."

Apparently, the swell of St. Jim's did not yearn for the society of William George Bunter. But he good naturedly walked a little aside with the Owl of the Remove, to hear what he had to say. Bunter blinked round very cautiously, much to D'Arcy's surprise.

"You're a rather sportin' fellow, D'Arcy," he remarked.

"I twust so, deah boy."

"You fancy your team's going to win?"

"Yaas, I wathah think it looks like it, Buntah."

"Like to back your fancy?"

"Eh?"

"I'm backing Greyfriars," explained Bunter. "I'll give you two to one, in quids."

"Bai Jove!"

"Dash it all, three to one if you like," said Bunter recklessly. "I'm a sportsman! How about it?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed fixedly at the fat junior. He was so astonished that his breath was almost taken away.

"Fivers, if you like," said Bunter enticingly. "You think your lot are going to win. I don't say they ain't; but if you back St. Jim's, I'll back Greyfriars. Anything you like! Three to one in fivers. What?"

A more suspicious fellow than Arthur Augustus D'Arcy might have questioned

(Continued on page 16.)

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ON THE DOWNWARD PATH!

Being a true narrativ of events at St. Sam's, over which famous alcoholic establishment Dr. Birchmull presides. (Orther's note.)

Such a letter was sent to make any

bedmaster feel fed-up.

In Dr. Birchmull's case, as a matter of fact, the reasons for feeling fed-up were particularly strong. For, unknown to the school, he had himself on one or two occasions, paid surreptitious visits to the Jolly Sailor in the dead of night. So it was a giddy conscience as much as anything else that made him turn yellow.

"Of course he may not be referring to me—but on the other hand, he may!" reflected the Head, gloomily stroking his beard. "I'm not the only one that goes to the Jolly Sailor if it comes to that. I've heard dark rumors about Bounder of the Sixth at times. Still, whether he

means it for me or not, Sir Frederick in on the track, and something must be did!"

Rising to his feet Dr. Birchmull snatched sleepily on the table with his mallet, to obtain silence.

Immediately a death-like silence reigned in the Hall, broken only by the forthright muttering of the hungry school, as they finished the last crumb.

"Boys!" yelled the Head, surveying his feeding flock with a glare. "As you are all aware, there is a low tavern in Maggleton known as the Jolly Sailor. That tavern, needless to remark, is out of bounds. In spite of that fact, however, I have reason to believe that someone of from St. Sam's is making a practice of visiting the vile place in the dead of night."

A murmur of interest ran round the crowded tables.

"I am therefore giving you this warning," went on the Head. "If I catch anybody going to the Jolly Sailor after this, I'll make him rue it till his dying day!"

The faces of some of the black sleep blanched.

"Mark my words, whoever the culprit may be, I'll have him till he howls for mercy!" said Dr. Birchmull, fiercely.

Let the chap that's thinking of playing the giddy ox at that abominable place think carefully before he goes. That's all, I think! Now you can buzz off—or, as the vulgar would put it, dismiss!

Ferely buzzing with agitation, masters and juniors buzzed off.

"Well, that's that!" remarked Jack Jolly, as he joined his chums, Merry and Bright, outside the Hall. "Wonder who's been on the tiles?"

Bounder of the Sixth looked pretty white about the gills when the Head was talking, grunted Bright. "Shouldn't wonder if he's the giddy culprit."

But Merry shook his head.

"P'raps you're right," he murmured, thoughtfully. "But I've got my own suspicions as to the eye-identity of the

DCY
NUGENT

rudely his handsome tile broke into a grin.

"The very idea!" he ejaculated.

"We'll save him!" gasped Bright.

"Well, what's that?" asked Jack Jolly.

"We'll save old Lickham! It's up to us as leaders of the Form to save our Form-master!"

"And how the dickens are we going to do that?" asked Merry.

"We'll wait for him to-night, and see if he breaks bounds again. If he does, we'll just have a quiet talk to him—point out to him the error of his ways, and ask him seriously to return to the straight and narrow path," said Jack Jolly, enthusiastically.

"What do you say, you chaps?"

"What ho!" grinned Merry and Bright.

There and then the chums of the Fourth laid their plans for leading Mr. Lickham back to the fold!

LANE II.

The first stroke of midnight rang out from the old clock tower at St. Sam's. Eleven other strokes followed.

It was a sinister kind of note, and round the turret and battlements of St. Sam's the wind moaned sadly. Low, sinister-looking clouds hung about over the ancient quad. It was a note to daunt the stoutest heart.

Nevertheless, somebody was prepared to venture out. Down the ivied walls of the school House a figure clad in skilastic cap and gown was descending. It was Mr. Lickham, master of the Fourth, going out on the run-down.

Hand under hand, foot under foot he descended. It was an eighty-foot descent.

from Mr. Lickham's bedroom to the quad but the master of the Fourth performed the difficult feat easily.

In an amazingly short space of time the master of the Fourth had reached the quad, and set off down the gravel path leading to the gates.

Before he had taken half a dozen steps, however, three cheery juniors sprang out from behind a bush and surrounded him. "Yarooooo!" yelled Mr. Lickham, thinking for a moment that he was attacked by ghosts.

"It's all right, sir!" cried Jack Jolly, reassuringly. "It's only us—Jolly, Merry and Bright, you know!"

"Ow! Thank heaven!" gasped Mr. Lickham. "But what the thump are you boys doing out here at this time o' night?"

"That's just the question we were about to put to you, sir!" answered Jack Jolly calmly. "You aren't by any chance going blagging at the Jolly Sailor, are you, sir?"

Mr. Lickham started violently.

"Grate pip! How did you guess?" he cried hoarsely. "Jolly! Whatever you do, don't blow the gaff to Dr. Birchmull!"

"Have no fear, sir; your secret is safe in our hands," said Jack Jolly. "We're not in the habit of snaking. I assure you!"

"No fear!" cooed Merry and Bright. "Then what's your giddy idea in leading me up in the dead of the night like this?" demanded Mr. Lickham.

"We want to give you a little advice, sir, that's all," answered Jack Jolly. "We can't see our own Form-master playing the giddy ox and going to the low-wow without making an effort to save him!"

"Grate pip!" said Mr. Lickham, gazing at the fascinated at Jack Jolly.

"Now why don't you chuck up being a gay dog and try to be a man instead?" asked Jack Jolly eloquently. "You'll find in the end that cricket is just as enjoyable as billiards, and billiards much better than cigarettes."

"Hear, hear!" gasped Merry and Bright, almost staggered by the eloquence of their leader.

Mr. Lickham regained his power of speech at last.

"You—you cheeky young welp!" he cried furiously. "I've never heard of such a thing in my life! From a junior in my own Form! It's the giddy himmie! Buzz off to your dormitory, all three of you! I am sorely tempted to give you each a thousand lines, but as you're keeping mum about me I'll let you off this time."

Jack Jolly gave a hopeless shrug.

"And you are still going to the Jolly Sailor?" he asked.

Mr. Lickham chuckled sardonically. "What ho!" he answered. "In spite of your eggshell sermon, Jolly, I still intend to be a merry blade, and a gay dog. Good-nite, boys!"

"Good-nite, sir!" returned Jack Jolly & Co. morrillity.

Mr. Lickham hopped off, and was soon swallowed up in the darkness, while the chums of the Fourth returned to their dormitory in the lowest of spirits.

.....

"Six for game!"

The egotism was intense round the snakes-and-ladders board in the Jolly Sailor. A big crowd of party-faced, simnick-looking men watched every throw

of the dice. The air was thick with the smoke of their cigarettes and the sound of the popping of champagne corks was almost continuous. It was a wild, hectic scene. At the table itself the two players played for stakes of a size rarely equaled even in this notorious center of gambling. One of the men was an evil-looking fellow with glittering eyes, and a black mustache, named Kaplin Snooker. The other, said to relate, was the master of the Fourth at St. Sam's, Mr. Lickham.

For several hours they had played one desperate game after another, with the result that Mr. Lickham had lost his life's savings of 3s. 4d. Now they were playing a last wild game for a shilling-a-side. Six squares to go! Mr. Lickham's hand trembled as he took up the dice. If he failed he hadn't a shilling left to pay. With a dramatic gesture he threw the fateful little cubes. To Mr. Lickham they seemed to hit the table with a sickening thud.

"Two!" yelled the umpire.

Mr. Lickham groaned aloud. His score of two had taken him on to a snake's head, which led right down to the bottom of the board again.

Kaplin Snooker then threw the dice with a confident expression on his simnick dial, and there was an immediate roar of applause. He had scored six!

The game was his!

"Now then, Lickham, what about that bob?" he asked in an unpleasant voice.

"I—I—" Mr. Lickham choked. "I haven't got a bob!" he blurted out wretchedly.

"Oh! So that's how it is, is it?" cried Kaplin Snooker, bearing his teeth in a cruel grin. "Then in that case I'll ask you to write me out an I O U, sir! I'll come to St. Sam's to-morrow morning and collect the cash for it!"

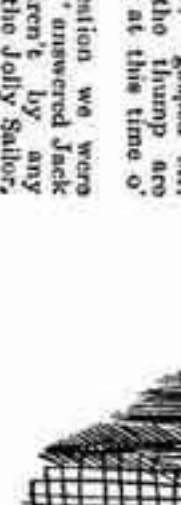
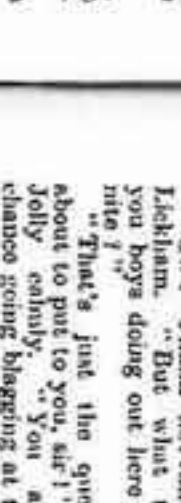
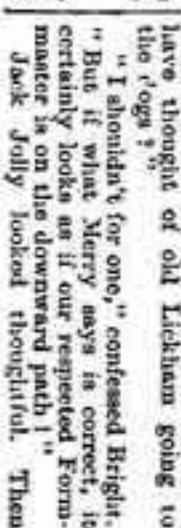
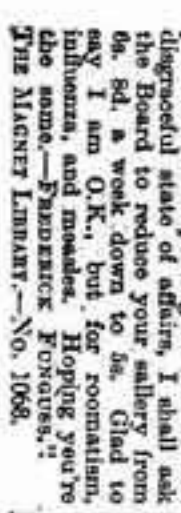
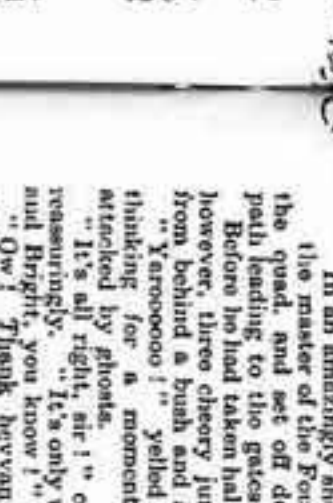
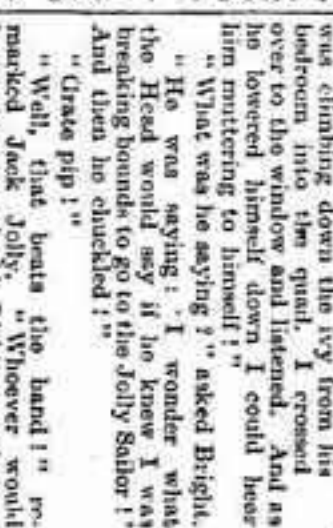
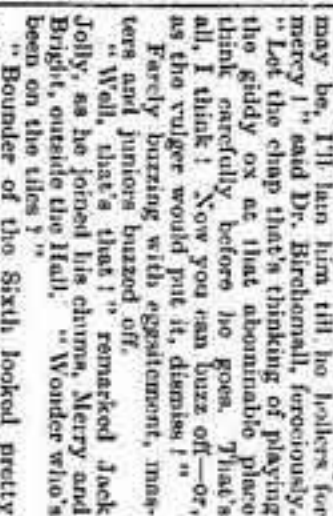
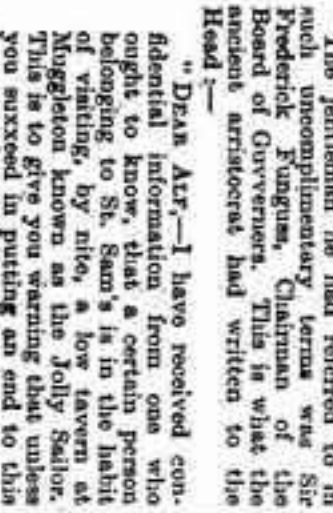
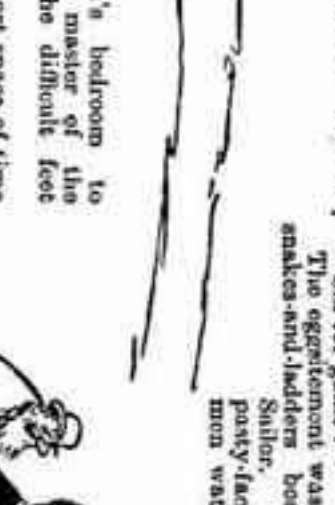
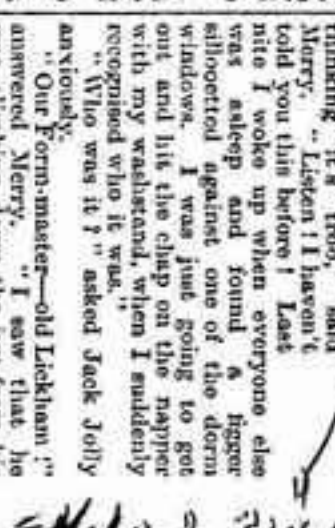
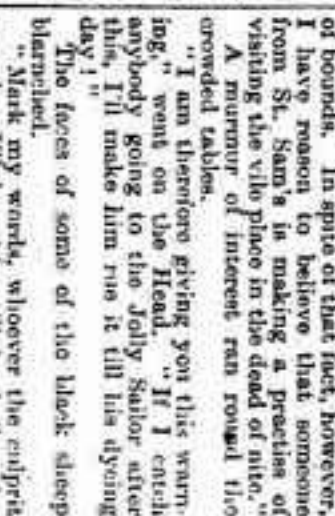
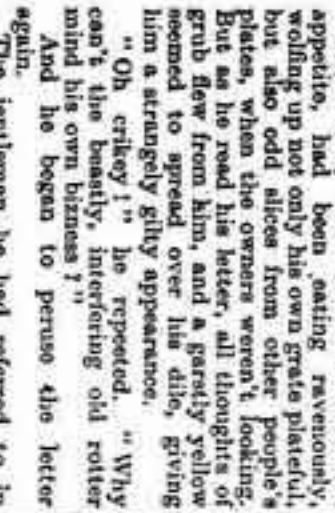
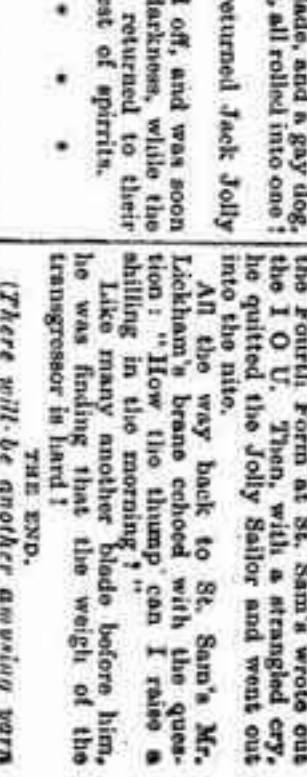
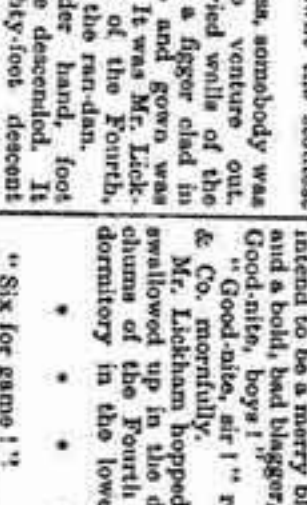
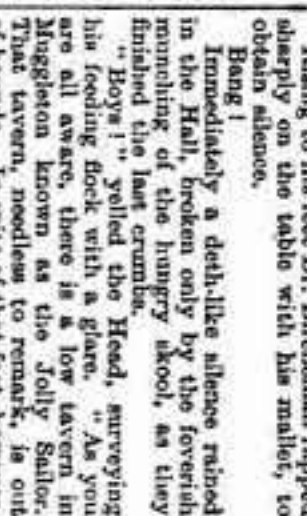
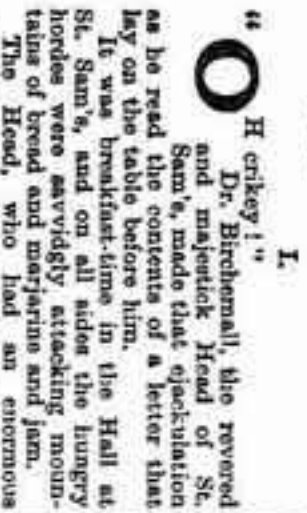
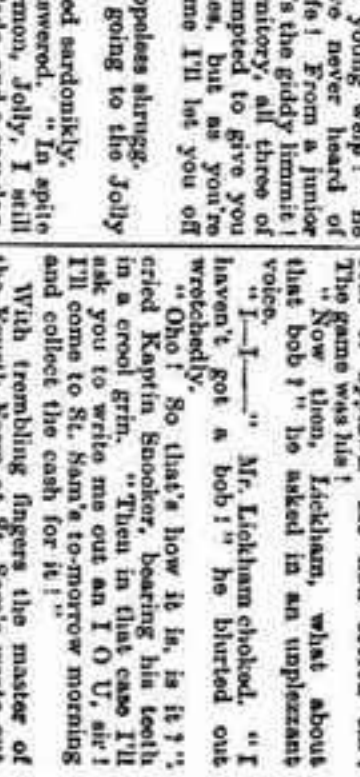
With trembling fingers the master of the Fourth wrote at St. Sam's wrote out the I O U. Then, with a strangled cry, he quitted the Jolly Sailor and went out into the night.

All the way back to St. Sam's Mr. Lickham's brain echoed with the question: "How the thump can I raise a shilling in the morning?"

Like many another blade before him, he was finding that the weight of the transgressor in hand!

THE END.

(There will be another awning yarn of Jack Jolly & Co. in next week's Master, entitled: "IN THE TOWERS!" As it shows Dicky Nugent in tip-top form, you can prepare yourselves for a real good, hearty laugh, eh?)





(Continued from page 13.)

where Bunter was going to get those fivers from to settle if he lost. But that thought did not occur to Gussy's innocent mind. The matter certainly would have presented some difficulty, as Bunter's financial resources, at the moment, were limited to a threepenny-piece—which was still in his possession because it was a bad one. But Bunter, as a matter of fact, gave that detail no more thought than D'Arcy did. He was going to win. So what was the use of thinking about what would happen if he lost? That was the way in which Bunter's powerful intellect worked.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy at last. "I presume that you are jokin', Buntah, though weally I fail to see the point of the joke."

"Not a bit of it, old chap! I mean business! Look here, four to one, if you like! What? Is it a go?"

"You are not weally sewious, Buntah!"

"Yes, you ass—I mean, yes, old chap."

"You are weally such a disreputable wottah as to bet money on a d'wicket match?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Eh?"

"You are weally such a howwid toad as all that?" inquired D'Arcy.

"Look here—"

"Wats!"

"Just listen—"

"I wufuse to heah anothah word fwom you, Buntah! I wegard you as a wottah and a wank outsidah."

And Arthur Augustus turned his back on the fat junior and walked back to the pavilion.

"Beast!" hooted Bunter, in great annoyance.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, staring at Bunter as he caught that polite remark. "Is that the way you talk to visitors, you fat frump? Why, I'll—"

Bunter departed.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

No Takers!

HARRY WHARTON and Vernon-Smith opened the second innings for Greyfriars. The innings started well, and the runs came, and Tom Merry & Co. were kept busy in the field. Billy Bunter blinked at the cricket with a morose, fat countenance. The St. Jim's men were all engaged now, and Bunter was unable to seek a member of the eleven of more sportive tastes than Arthur Augustus—if there were any. But the Remove sportsman did not despair.

Six or seven St. Jim's men had come over with the team, and they were grouped before the pavilion watching the game. Bunter turned his attention to them. If there was a sportsman among them Bunter hoped yet to lay

the foundation of his fortune by a bet on that match. This would place him in possession of the ready cash he needed for his Turf operations later; the cash without which it was useless to possess that wonderful gift of spotting winners.

But there were a crowd of Greyfriars fellows standing with the St. Jim's followers, and Bunter was only well aware of what would happen if they spotted him. He gave it up and watched the cricket for some time morosely, and then he sighted Skinner & Co. coming along to see the finish of the game. And Bunter rolled away to join Skinner & Co. Skinner was a sportsman, in Bunter's peculiar sense of that word—not at all particular in such matters like that stuffed dummy, D'Arcy.

"I say, Skinner, old chap, which side are you backing?" asked Bunter.

"Looks like a win for St. Jim's," answered Skinner. "They're miles ahead, and I don't think much of our batting." Harold Skinner never did think much of anything, if he could help it.

"What about backing your fancy?" asked Bunter.

Skinner grinned.

"You fat chump!"

"Oh, really, Skinner! Look here, I'll lay two to one Greyfriars."

"Quids?" grinned Skinner.

"Yes, rather."

"Cough up the quids."

"I—I left my money in my study—"

"You shouldn't leave all that money in your study," said Skinner gravely.

"It's a temptation to burglars!"

"I suppose my IOU's all right?" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner.

Harold Skinner seemed to find something entertaining in the suggestion that Bunter's IOU was all right!

"Look here, you beast—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well bowled, Talbot!" came a shout from the St. Jim's men at the pavilion, as Harry Wharton's wicket went down.

"Looks like a win for us, I don't think!" jeered Skinner. "His Lofty Magnificence is out." He chuckled. "If you had any tin, Bunter, I'd be jolly glad to book that bet. Sorry I've no use for wastepaper."

"Beast!"

Bob Cherry joined the Bounder at the wickets. Matters did not seem to be going very brightly for Greyfriars at present, and when Bob's wicket fell to a tricky ball from Fatty Wynn of St. Jim's, Bunter began to feel rather relieved that he had not succeeded in booking bets on Greyfriars. Johnny Bull was next man in, and after a few more overs the Bounder was out, neatly caught by Tom Merry. The Bounder was a bad loser, and he frowned as he came off. Smithy had expected to do much better.

"Rather a procession, what?" yawned Skinner.

"All over bar abouting," agreed Bolsover major.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Ten to one on St. Jim's!" said Bunter recklessly.

"Ten to one in what?" asked Skinner.

"IOU's?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There goes Inky!" sniggered Snoop, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who had taken Smithy's place, went down to Fatty Wynn's bowling.

"What a game!" yawned Skinner.

The Greyfriars men were looking serious now. The innings began to look like a procession, as Skinner had described it. When Arthur Augustus D'Arcy caught Squiff out, Bunter was

still more pleased that he had not succeeded in backing Greyfriars, but wildly eager to back St. Jim's. He caught Harold Skinner by the sleeve.

"I say, old chap, be a sport!" urged Bunter. "I'll give you fifteen to one on St. Jim's."

"Fifteen postal-orders?" asked Skinner humorously. "You must be expecting as many as that by this time."

"Beast!"

The innings went on, and after a few runs had been taken, another wicket went down. Fatty Wynn was bowling for St. Jim's in his greatest style, and the home batsmen found him hard to play. The St. Jim's fellows looked bucked, the match looked like ending earlier than they had expected, and with a wider margin of victory than they had looked for.

"I say, Bolsover, you're more sporting than Skinner," said Billy Bunter.

"Take fifteen to one, old chap! I'm expecting a postal-order to-morrow—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cricket's an uncertain game," remarked Skinner. "Greyfriars may pull it off; you never can tell."

"Back your opinion, then," urged Bunter. "Sixteen to one!"

"Don't I wish Bunter had some money!" sighed Skinner. "I'd jump at that!"

"I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"From one of my titled relations—"

"Can it, old fat bean! Hallo, Toddy's standing the bowling all right," said Skinner. "He's not much to look at, but he's some use."

Peter Todd and Tom Brown were at the wickets now. Peter was in great form, and he seemed able to put paid to Fatty Wynn's bowling. No game is so uncertain as cricket. The "procession" had stopped, and the St. Jim's men were given a good allowance of leather-hunting. Toddy knocked up thirty runs on his own, amid thundering cheers from the onlookers. Peter was going strong, and looked like being not out at the finish.

"Still offering sixteen to one on St. Jim's, Bunter?" chuckled Skinner.

"Eh! Nunno!" Billy Bunter had changed his mind again. "I'll give you two to one on Greyfriars, Skinner." Crash went Peter Todd's wicket to a deadly ball from Fatty Wynn. "I—I mean two to one on St. Jim's."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Had William George Bunter booked all the bets he had offered on one side or the other it would have required a mathematician to work out exactly how he stood at the end of the game.

With last man in, the Greyfriars second innings stood at 100, so vigorous had been the recovery of the Remove cricketers. Fatty Wynn was bowling again, with Tom Brown getting it, and the New Zealand junior stood like a rock, with Hazeldene at the other end. Twice the ball went down, and was knocked away; at the third Tom Brown hit out, and the leather flew, and the batsmen flew, and a roar from Greyfriars announced that the scores had tied. The batsmen were running again, when Tom Merry sent the ball in straight as a die for the batsman's wicket. And Tom Brown ran as he had never run before.

Crack!

The wicket flew to pieces. But the bat was on the crease, and the umpire shook his head.

"Not out?"

"Greyfriars wins! Hurrah!"

With a wicket in hand, Greyfriars had won that hotly-contested match. There

was a roar of cheering. Skinner chuckled.

"Let's see—did I book that bet, Bunter?"

"Eh? Which one?" The fat sportsman was a little mixed. "No—yes—"

"Sixteen to one on St. Jim's!" chuckled Skinner.

"No!" said Bunter emphatically. "You didn't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a celebration in the Rag after the match, at which the St. Jim's visitors were entertained by the victors. Billy Bunter rolled in and selected a seat beside Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Arthur Augustus looked at him and moved away to another place. Apparently he did not desire the propinquity of the fat sportsman. The fat junior grabbed him by the arm.

"I say, Gussy, old chap—"

"Pway welease my arm, Buntah! And pway do not call me Gussy."

"Oh, really, D'Arcy?"

"Wats!"

D'Arcy jerked his arm away.

"Look here, you cheeky ass—"

"I wegard you as a toad, Buntah! That is to say," added Arthur Augustus hastily, "if I were not a visitah heah I should wegard you as a toad!"

And Arthur Augustus went along the table. Billy Bunter snorted. Then he squeaked, as a finger and thumb took hold of his fat ear.

"Ow! Leggo, Bob Cherry, you beast—"

"What do you mean by rowing with a visitor, you fat chump?" demanded Bob wrathfully. "Haven't you any manners, you fat bouncer? What's D'Arcy got his back up for?"

"How should I know?" grunted Bunter. "You needn't ask him, Bob Cherry. He might make out that I'd offered to bet on the match—"

"What?" roared Bob.

"He wasn't sportsman enough to take it on. Not that I did anything of the sort, you know," added Bunter cautiously. "Here, I say, leggo! Yaroooh! Wharrer you at? Yoooop!"

"What's the row there, Bob?" called out Harry Wharton.

"Nothing—only helping Bunter out!" said Bob cheerily. "This way, Bunter! Here's the door!"

Outside the door of the Rag, and out of view of the visitors, Bob helped Bunter still more emphatically. His foot had some active service for a few minutes, and the sportsman of the Remove fled for his life. And the celebration in the Rag proceeded, and finished, without the assistance of William George Bunter.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Means Business!

BOB CHERRY sat up in bed and blinked round in the shadows of the Remove dormitory.

Something had awakened him. Something, or somebody, was moving in the dark dormitory. Bob, as he sat in bed, could hear stealthy movements. He peered to and fro in the shadows. "Ow!"

It was a sudden, breathless ejaculation, and sounded as if the fellow groping about in the dark had barked his shin on something.

"Bunter!" ejaculated Bob.

"Oh!" came a gasping voice.

Bob peered towards the voice, and dimly made out a fat figure in the gloom. He stared at it in wonder. The hour was late—it was past eleven o'clock. Billy Bunter was about the last fellow in the Remove to turn out of bed before

rising-bell if he could help it. But it was Bunter who was up and doing at that late hour.

"You fat ass, what's this game?" demanded Bob.

"Tain't me!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I mean I—I'm not going out."

"Going out!" repeated Bob blankly.

"Going out—after lights-out! Are you off your rocker?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Bob Cherry slipped out of bed and groped for a box of matches. The sound of voices had awakened two or three other fellows. Bob struck a match, and the flickering light revealed William George Bunter, fully dressed, stealing on tiptoe towards the dormitory door.

"Where are you going?" hooted Bob.

"I—I— Mind your own business!"

"Stop, you fat idiot!"

Bunter did not stop. He made a jump for the door; and Bob made a jump for Bunter.

Bob's movements were the more rapid, and he colared Bunter, with the fat junior's hand on the door-handle.

"Y o w - o w ! Leggo!" howled Bunter.

"What the thump —" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Beast! Leggo!"

"Hold him!" exclaimed Peter Todd, turning out of bed.

"I've got him!" chuckled Bob.

"Bunter isn't going to break bounds to-night—at least, his car isn't! If he goes he will go without his car."

"Ow! Beast! Leggo!"

Bunter, apparently, did not want to go and leave his ear in Bob's possession. Bob had a vice-like grip on the ear, and did not mean to part with it. Bunter stayed with the car. He really had no choice in the matter. A parting would have been too painful.

Peter lighted a candle-end. By that time all the Remove were awake and sitting up in bed, and half a dozen fellows had turned out. Still with a grip on Bunter's fat ear, Bob led him back into the light of the candle, and the fact was revealed to all eyes that Bunter was a completely dressed, even to his shoes. Evidently the fat junior had been planning to break bounds, though—being Bunter—he had been unable to do so without giving the alarm.

"So you were going out of bounds—after lights-out, Bunter?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Mind your own business!" hooted Bunter.

"The rorty dog again!" chuckled Skinner. "Bunter's going to paint the town red!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, do shut up! You'll have a prefect up here at this rate!" said Bunter. "I'm not going out, you know. I—I'm just going to walk up and down the corridor a bit, because I can't sleep, you know."

"You can generally sleep," said Wharton. "It's one of the things you do really well. What were you going out for?"

"Find out! Besides, I wasn't going out! And a fellow can do as he likes, I suppose!" said Bunter defiantly. "Smithy goes down to the Cross Keys sometimes. Don't you, Smithy?"

(Continued on next page.)

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Vernon-Smith made no answer to that question. If the Boulder ever haunted that disreputable resort, he did not intend to say so. But a dozen fellows spoke at once.

"The Cross Keys!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Pub-haunting!" grinned Skinner. "This is rather a new departure for Bunter! Great pip!"

"The great pipfulness is terrific!" ejaculated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The preposterous Bunter must be off his absurd rocker!"

"You fat idiot!" said Peter Todd in measured tones. "You—you—you—Well, there ain't a word! You're going to begin pub-haunting after lights-out—after you nearly got a flogging over that letter to Chuggy."

"Chuggy let me down!" said Bunter. "I've got to get in touch with a bookmaker, you see! I mean—"

"Ye gods!" said Bob Cherry, gazing at the fat Owl in wonder.

The abysmal fatuousness of William George Bunter was really past fathom-ing.

"In t-t-t-touch with a bookmaker!" babbled Peter. "Oh, my hat! Oh, my only Aunt Sempronis!"

"Chap can't butt in there in the day-time," said Bunter. "Too jolly risky! That man Spratt at the Cross Keys will take on bets; Hazel used to bet with him—"

"You fat dummy!" hooted Hazel-dene.

"Besides, I wasn't going there," added Bunter, rather late. "I—I was just going to stroll along the passage, and—"

"Bolster!" said Harry Wharton. "Six! Shove him across his bed!"

"Yaroooo!"

Bunter yelled in anticipation. Three or four Removites collared him, and there was a bump as he landed face down on his bed. Then Peter Todd grasped a bolster.

Swipe! Swipe! Swipe!

"Yooop! Help! Yarooooop!" roared Bunter.

Swipe! Swipe! Swipe!

Peter Todd put his beef into it. Billy Bunter wriggled and roared and yelled. The dormitory, so silent a few minutes before, echoed with sound.

"Cave!" called out Squiff suddenly.

Peter dropped the bolster, and bolted into bed. Like rabbits dodging into their burrows, the other fellows followed his example. The candle was blown out; heads laid on pillows. Bunter squirmed on his bed and roared.

"You fat chump!" breathed Peter.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Quelch's coming!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter bundled into bed, dressed as he was; there was no time to get off his clothes. He dragged sheets and blankets round him, and up round his neck to hide his collar. He was only in time. The dormitory door opened, and the light of a lamp gleamed in. Behind the lamp the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch gleamed into the dormitory.

All was still and silent. Mr. Quelch stared into the room, evidently puzzled. He had heard a noise; he was assured that he had heard a noise. He was sure—or almost sure—that that noise had proceeded from the Remove dormitory. Yet never had that dormitory been more calm and peaceful than it was at the present moment.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch. "Are all you boys asleep?"

Apparently they were. At all events, there was no answer; only a sound of steady breathing and a snore or two.

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For several moments Mr. Quelch stood there, holding the lamp and looking in. Then he closed the door quietly and retired. His footsteps died away again down the dormitory passage.

There was a gasp from Bunter.

"I—I say, you fellows, is he gone? Look here, you make any more row and you'll get a licking all round—see? I'm jolly well going to do as I like! I'm jolly well—"

"Go it!" said Peter. "I fancy Quelch hasn't gone much farther than the end of the passage—"

"Eh?"

"He will be glad to see you! Get going!"

There was a chuckle in the dormitory.

Billy Bunter did not get going. It was only likely that Mr. Quelch, who was well known to be a downy bird, was keeping a wary eye and ear open. Bunter decided to wait till the beasts were all asleep and Quelch gone to bed. He took a little nap while he waited. That did it! When Bunter opened his eyes after that nap, the summer sun was shining into the high windows of the Remove dormitory and the rising-bell was clanging out over Greyfriars.

—

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Barker, the Bookie I

WILLIAM WIBLEY put his head in at Study No. 1 after tea and glared at six juniors in that celebrated apartment.

There was a discussion going on in Study No. 1, and it was not upon the subject of the epoch-making play the Remove Dramatic Society were going to produce at the end of the term. It was upon the infinitely less important subject of Billy Bunter.

Wibley glared. Now that the St. Jim's match was out of the way, Wibley expected general attention to be fixed on the stunts of the R.D.S., of which he was the great chief.

"You fellows awfully busy?" he asked sarcastically.

"Well, we're holding a pow-wow," said Harry Wharton. "We've got to do something about Bunter—"

"Blow Bunter!"

"You see, we can't let the silly ass be sacked from the school just because he happens to be a howling idiot!" said Peter Todd.

"Well, it wouldn't do for chaps to be sacked because they're born asses and howling idiots!" agreed Wibley. "I don't want to be the only Remove man left at Greyfriars!"

"Eh?"

"You cheeky ass!"

"They ought to have sent Bunter to a home for idiots!" remarked Nugent.

"I understand that they did!" retorted Wibley. "He was in this study once, wasn't he, before he changed to Toddy's?"

Wibley was evidently in a mood of severe sarcasm.

"Oh, draw it mild, old chap!" said Bob Cherry, laughing. "What's biting you, anyway?"

"What about our play?" hooted Wibley. "First it was cricket, and now it's Bunter. Look here, I've got everything O.K. now for my part—the part of Barker, the bookmaker. I'm going to try on the toga and make up. I thought possibly you fellows might like to see the effect!"

Wibley spoke with deep sarcasm. Seeing Wibley made up in his part was, of course, no end of a treat and an honour. The chums of the Remove

smiled. They were accustomed to the little weaknesses natural to an actor-manager.

"Right-ho, old bean!" said Wharton. "You go and make up, and we'll come along and see the sights. No end of a pleasure!"

"The pleasuredfulness will be terrific!" "Looking forward to it no end!" said Bob Cherry gravely. "Wouldn't miss it for worlds—in fact, for whole solar systems!"

"Get on with it, Wib!" encouraged Nugent. "Don't keep us waiting too long! We're frightfully eager to see how you shape as a bookie!"

"We are on the esteemed tender-hooks!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yearning to see it!" said Johnny Bull.

William Wibley snorted. All this would have been very gratifying if the chums of the Remove had been perfectly serious. But there was some slight lack of seriousness about them.

"Well, come along in ten minutes to my study," said Wibley. "You can go on chinwagging till then. I know you fellows would fade away and perish if you couldn't wag your chins!"

And Wibley retired from the study, slamming the door emphatically. There was a general grin in Study No. 1.

"But about Bunter—" said Peter Todd.

"I'm getting rather fed up with Bunter!" said Johnny Bull. "It's possible to have too much Bunter!"

"The Bunterfulness can be too terrific!" assented Hurree Singh.

"We've got to stop the howling ass somehow, though!" said Wharton. "His trying to break bounds last night is the finish! Kicking him isn't any good! We've kicked him, and he still keeps on!"

Peter Todd looked worried.

"I'm not going to have a fellow in my study sacked!" he said. "Besides, Bunter can't help being a fool. Stands to reason that a fellow wouldn't be such a fool if he could help it. If he isn't stopped he will root out some black-guard sooner or later—like that man Spratt, at the Cross Keys, that Hazel was in tow with once; and if the man thinks he's got any money, he will take the fat idiot in hand. That means bunking if it comes out; and, of course, it will come out. It's up to us to see that Bunter doesn't land himself like that! We're his keepers!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I agree. But what can we do? Though you bray a fool in a mortar, yet will not his folly depart from him, you know. That applies to Bunter."

"Something's got to be done! If he gets in touch with a bookmaker, as the fat chump calls it, he's done for! But—"

There was deep discussion. All the chums of the Remove agreed that a fellow so utterly asinine as William George Bunter ought to be saved from himself. But how it was to be done was another matter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "Ten minutes is up! Wib will be tearing his hair if we don't go along! We told him we'd go and see him rigged out in his part."

"Well, he mustn't tear the hair he wears as Barker, the bookie. It belongs to the Remove Dramatic Society!" remarked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on," said Wharton. "Bunter can wait. We must stroke Wib down the right way. The dear old man's rather toughy."

And, dismissing the topic of Bunter

for the time, the juniors left No. 1, and proceeded along the passage to No. 6 in the Remove. Bob Cherry hurled open the door of that study, and the juniors crowded in—prepared to turn on the required enthusiasm when they beheld William Wibley in his make-up.

Wibley was not to be seen in the study. There was one occupant of No. 6—a short, stout man, with a red face and a moustache, thick brows, red nose, and a cigar in his mouth. He was dressed in a rather loud pattern in checks, and a pair of race-glasses were slung over his shoulder. His bowler-hat was set rakishly on one side of a well-oiled head. The little, stout, red-faced man looked as if he had just stepped off a racecourse, and the juniors gazed at him in wonder.

That a bookmaker could be within the building was impossible; but that this was William Wibley in his make-up for the play, seemed equally impossible. He did not bear the remotest resemblance to Wib. He looked fifty years old, and he looked a bookmaker to the very life. When Wapshot races were on, gentlemen of that fraternity were not uncommon in the neighbourhood, and the juniors had seen a good many of them—at a distance. And this red-faced man with the cigar, the rakish bowler-hat, and the race-glasses, looked the part to the life.

They gazed at him.

"Back your fancy, gentlemen!" said the red-faced man, in a deep voice. "Two to one Bully Boy, three to one Flowerdew!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Is—is—is that really you, Wib?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"No! Name of Barker, sir. Member of Tattersall's. Well-known on the principal racecourses of the United Kingdom."

"Well, my hat!"

The juniors stared at Wibley. It was Wibley; but he was absolutely unrecognisable.

"Ripping!" said Wharton, with a laugh. "If I make up like that when I play my part, I shall be satisfied."

"You won't!" said Wibley, in his natural voice. "It takes some doing, you know. You couldn't do it in a month of Sundays. You'll be only so-so in the part of Reckless Backstraw. But I rather fancy I shall knock them as Barker, the bookie, what?"

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

The Famous Five were all enthusiastic. Peter Todd did not speak. He was staring at Barker, the bookie, with a very thoughtful expression. Wibley looked at him.

"Well, what do you think, Toddy?" he demanded.

"I think I've got it," said Peter.

"Eh! Got what?"

"Bunter."

"Blover, Bunter!" roared Wibley, exasperated. "Give Bunter a rest! Wib's talking about Bunter!"

"I am, old bean! Bunter wants to get in touch with a bookie—"

"Shut up about Bunter!"

"But, don't you see? You're the bookie!"

"What?"

Peter Todd grinned joyously.

"You're the bookie that Bunter's going to get in touch with. We're going to pull his fat leg and feed him up about bookies. See?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Wibley.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Bob. "That's the wheeze! That's the idea! Wib can do it on his head! Bunter can get in touch with Wib—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"



"Dash it all!" said Bunter recklessly. "I'll bet you three to one in quids St. Jim's don't win. I'm a sportsman! How about it?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed fixedly at the fat Removite. "Bai Jove!" he ejaculated. "I pwesume that you are jokin', Buntah, though weally, I fall to see the point of the joke."

(See Chapter 9.)

"And Wib can frighten him out of his silly wits, and scare him off bookies for the rest of his life!" said Peter. "You've got to do it, Wib! It will be good practice for your part in the play, anyhow."

Wibley grinned.

"I'm on!" he said.

Wibley was always "on" in anything that gave him the limelight, and showed off his weird gifts in the make-up line.

And there was a discussion, punctuated by many chuckles and chortles, in Wibley's study. In those very moments Billy Bunter was in the next study deeply debating in his fat mind of how to get in touch with a bookmaker—in order to rake in unlimited wealth by the simple system of spotting winners.

So far, that problem beat Bunter.

But while the Owl of the Remove was wrestling with that problem in No. 7, the problem was being solved for him in No. 6.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Finds a Bookie!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

"But I say—"

"Rats!"

"If you fellows think I want to come to your rotten picnic, you're mistaken!" said Billy Bunter.

"Bow-wow!"

"But I suppose I can walk where I like on a half-holiday?"

"Br-r-r!"

It was Saturday afternoon. Billy Bunter—who heard everything that did not concern him, and saw everything that was no business of his—had been aware all day that something was on. The word "picnic" had been mentioned in his hearing several times. Friardale Wood had been alluded to. Less than that would have been required to put Bunter on the alert. Even spotting winners, and getting into touch with a bookie, took second place in Bunter's fat mind when a spread was on the tapis. And so, when the Famous Five walked out of gates that afternoon, one of them carrying a large package, they were not surprised to see Billy Bunter roll out after them. In fact, they would have been surprised not to see him.

They sauntered down Friardale Lane, and Bunter joined them when they reached the opening of the footpath through the wood. The Owl of the Remove blinked at the package under Bob Cherry's arm. That, of course, contained the tuck for the picnic. Bunter had no doubt about that.

Harry Wharton & Co. entered the footpath, and walked on cheerily through the wood. Bunter rolled after them. As he had said, he had a right

to walk anywhere he liked on a half-holiday.

"I say, you fellows, is it to be at the old priory?" he asked.

"That's telling," grinned Bob.

"Will Marjorie and Clara be there?"

"Bow-wow!"

"I say, you fellows, don't be mean beasts, you know," urged Bunter.

"Oh, come along if you like!" said Harry Wharton. "But it's not going to be a picnic."

Bunter blinked at the big package and grinned.

"I'll come, old chap," he said. And he came.

Some distance along the shady footpath was a fallen log, and on that log a red-faced man, dressed in loud checks, was seated as the juniors came by. They glanced at him, and he glanced at them. And Billy Bunter fixed his eyes—and his spectacles—on the stranger, with deep interest. The man looked about fifty years old, and his clothes, his race-glasses slung over his shoulder, his whole get-up and manner, betrayed the racing man. Bunter eyed him with intense interest. Obviously—to Bunter—this stout gentleman was one of the bookmakers who came along to the vicinity for the Wapshot races.

"Afternoon, young gent," said the red-faced man affably, as the juniors came up. "Nice day."

"Oh, quite!" said Wharton; and he passed on with his friends—as nice boys might be expected to do when they were addressed by a man who was evidently a racing man.

But Bunter lingered.

Here was a chance, at last, of getting in touch with a bookie. The man was obviously willing to make acquaintance with the schoolboys. On the other hand, there was the picnic. Bunter wanted to back winners; but he wanted also to be on the spread. He was torn two ways. Like Desdemona, he perceived here a divided duty.

Just at that moment, as if to relieve the Owl of the Remove from his doubts, Bob Cherry dropped the parcel.

It burst open, and the contents rolled on the footpath.

Bunter jumped.

The contents of the parcel were not tuck. They were not anything like tuck. An old coat and a pair of boots met Bunter's astonished blink.

"What—what's that?" he ejaculated.

Bob Cherry gathered up the fallen articles.

"Only some things we're taking to old Purkiss, at Pegg," he answered innocently. "What about it?"

"Isn't there going to be a picnic?" hooted Bunter.

"I told you there wasn't," remarked Wharton.

"Beast!"

Bob Cherry re-packed the parcel. Apparently the chums of the Remove were bound on a charitable errand, taking the old coat and the boots to Mr. Purkiss, a cottager at Pegg, who had a large family and a small income, and was glad to receive such contributions. It was quite a praiseworthy errand, but it had no interest whatever for Bunter.

"Come on, Bunter!" said Nugent cheerily.

"Rats!"

"Aren't you coming?" asked Johnny Bull.

"No," hooted Bunter.

"But—"

"Oh, clear off!" said Bunter.

Now that there obviously was not going to be any picnic Bunter had no further use for the Famous Five, and he was anxious to see the last of them. He

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wanted to make the acquaintance of the red-faced gentleman seated on the log, while he had the chance.

"You'd better come, Bunter," said Wharton, in a low voice. "You don't want to get talking to a racing man—"

"Mind your own business!" snapped Bunter.

"You'll get into trouble—"

"Blessed if I can see why you fellows are always butting into my affairs," said Bunter scornfully. "For goodness' sake mind your own business, and hook it!"

"Oh, come on!" said Johnny Bull. "Let the fat idiot play the giddy goat if he likes. Come on! We're wasting time."

And the Famous Five went on their way and a turn of the footpath hid them from Bunter's sight. Out of the Owl's view they exchanged a cheery grin.

"Jevver see such a silly ass?" asked Bob. "Walking right into it with his silly eyes wide open."

And the juniors chuckled and walked on to Pegg, leaving William George

the racing man went on, with confidential affability. "He's rather late; mayn't be able to get 'ere, p'raps. You ain't seen him, I s'pose? Young gentleman about your age, sir."

"No," gasped Bunter.

His little round eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. This was the man he wanted—a bookie who was doing business with a young gentleman of about Bunter's own age!

"Well, a schoolboy ain't always his own master," said the bookmaker tolerantly. "If he can't come to-day I may see 'im to-morrow. You see, I've got some money to pay that young gent. Still, it will keep."

Bunter gasped.

"I—I say—"

"Yes, sir?"

"You—you—you're a bookmaker, aren't you?" gasped Bunter.

"Well, what did you think I was?" smiled the red-faced man. "Name of Bagshot, sir; well known at Wapshot, sir. I always come to Wapshot for the fixtures there. You interested in 'orses, sir?"

"Yes, rather!" gasped Bunter. "I back a gee occasionally, you know! In fact, I—I'm rather a dab at it."

The bookmaker coughed, possibly to conceal some emotion.

"You're a sporting young gent, what?" he remarked.

"What-ho!" said Bunter. "I rather go it, at times, you know. I'm a bit of a dog when I get going, I can tell you!"

"Oh! Ah! I—I see! Well, sir, if you want a reliable man to do business with you can't do better than old Joe Bagshot, sir. Pay on the nail is my motto, sir. Always open to do business with a gentleman, sir. Any fancy for Wednesday, at Wapshot, sir?"

"You bet!" said Bunter.

The fat sportsman was beaming now. He had already selected winners for Wapshot on Wednesday. This, to Bunter, was easy. He had his winners all right. All he needed was a bookie with whom to back the winners. And here was the bookie! Fortune was smiling on the sportsman of the Remove.

The red-faced man drew a little book from his pocket. That, apparently, was the "book" he was making on the Wapshot races.

Bunter trembled with eagerness.

"There's one thing, though, sir," said Mr. Bagshot gravely. "I can't take ready money from you, sir. You see, sir, this 'ere ain't a place within the meaning of the Act."

Bunter beamed.

It would have been difficult for Mr. Bagshot to take ready money from Bunter, apart from the illegality of the transaction, as Bunter's ready money was still limited to a bad threepenny-piece.

"I—I see," gasped Bunter. "Of—of course!"

"You name your fancy, sir," said Mr. Bagshot. "Settlement every Friday is my rule. You get your winnings on Friday, or you pay up your losses, as the case may be. That's a reglar rule, sir. Suit you?"

"Yes, rather!"

Nothing could have suited Bunter better.

It suited him exactly to bet on the "nod," and receive his winnings on Friday, or any other day. As for his losses, that did not matter at all; there weren't going to be any losses. It was because he knew how to spot winners that Bunter was taking up this particular line of business.

"Well, sir, give it a name," said Mr. Bagshot. "Glad to 'ave met you, sir!"

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Bunter to his own devices—and Wibley's.

Bunter breathed more freely when the footsteps died away in the wood. This was the chance he had been looking for, and he had greatly feared that the chums of the Remove would butt in and yank him away by force to prevent him from making the valuable acquaintance of the racing man. That he had been led by his fat nose to that spot precisely to make the acquaintance of that racing man was not likely to occur to Bunter.

He turned back towards the red-faced man, who sat on the log under the trees.

"Ot day, sir!" said the red-faced man affably. "Sit down, sir! Lots of room for two."

Bunter sat down on the log. His fat heart was beating fast. Here was the bookie with whom he wanted to get into touch; but it was still doubtful whether this bookie would consent to have dealings with a schoolboy. Most bookmakers would do nothing of the kind, as Bunter was aware. There was, however, had Bunter known it, no doubt in this case. This particular bookie was only too anxious to do business with the fat sportsman.

"Waiting 'ere for a young gent, sir,"

Always glad to do business. There's four races on Wednesday afternoon, sir, as I dessey you know. Got any fancies for them?"

Bunter extracted a grubby sheet of paper from his pocket. He had this out and dried; his winners were already selected. And this was an easier method of getting "on" than seeking Mr. Spratt at the Cross Keys after lights out at Greyfriars.

Business was soon done. Bunter had selected Pink Eye for the two o'clock, Pocket-Knife for the two-thirty, King Arthur for the three o'clock, and Snigger for the three-thirty. These were the horses that were going to win, if Bunter knew how to spot winners. Mr. Bagshot was even more accommodating than Bunter had dared to hope. He gave Bunter odds of three to one against each of his selections, and when Bunter requested that the bets might be booked in fivers Mr. Bagshot raised no objection at all. So, when the business was concluded, Bunter stood to win sixty pounds if his selections won, and to lose twenty pounds if they lost. The fat sportsman could scarcely believe in his good luck. Sixty pounds was a dazzling sum—and it was only a beginning! Six hundred would come next; and then six thousand, if Bunter knew how to spot winners.

"You're a sporting young gent, you are!" said Mr. Bagshot admiringly, as he rose from the log. "You do go it, sir! Well, I s'pose I must be getting along, sir. See you again in this 'ere spot next Friday, sir, to settle up. That suit you?"

"Make it a bit later," said Bunter. "We have classes on Friday afternoon. I could get here at six."

"Six on Friday, sir. Done!"

And Bunter parted with his bookmaker.

Billy Bunter seemed to be walking on air as he rolled back to the school. His fat face was irradiated with beatific grins that afternoon at Greyfriars.

He was not aware that Mr. Bagshot—after divesting himself of his sportive exterior, with the help of five grinning Removites, in the wood—also returned to Greyfriars. Bunter never dreamed how closely he was in touch with his bookmaker.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Great Expectations!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were considerably entertained by the manners and customs of William George Bunter during the next few days.

Bunter, judging by appearances, was having the time of his life.

His fat face beamed.

Often and often Bunter had been known to grouse. Generally he found something to grumble at.

Now he appeared quite satisfied by the way in which the universe was being run.

From his looks, it appeared that he found Greyfriars the best of possible places, in the best of possible worlds.

Great expectations were dazzling Bunter like the mirage of water in the desert dazzling the thirsty traveller.

It had not occurred to Bunter yet that it was a mirage that was entrancing him. That was to come.

In the meantime, Bunter was greatly bucked.

Any other fellow who set out to solve the difficult problem of spotting winners might have been troubled by doubts. He might have been haunted by the

BILLY BUNTER'S BOLT!

Few fellows in the Remove would dare to break detention under the very eyes of their Form-master. Yet Bunter does, he being fool enough to step in, so to speak, where angels fear to tread. What's more, Bunter gets away with it. How his initial bolt for freedom involves him in one of the strangest adventures of his life is graphically told in next week's splendid school story. Note the title:

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bare possibility that he had backed the wrong horse.

Not so Bunter. His self-confidence was sublime.

All that was needed to enable a fellow to spot winners, or indeed to perform any other difficult task, was a powerful intellect, an acute and ready understanding, the unflinching intuition that is born of genius.

He had all these—at all events, he believed he had. Bunter had no doubts. He had spotted the winners, he had backed the winners, and on Friday, at six o'clock, he was going to pocket the plunder. It was as simple as arithmetic—simpler, in fact, for Bunter did not find the simplest arithmetic simple. His powerful intellect did not work powerfully in that direction.

Yet a few days, and Bunter would be rolling in money—the outcome of his cleverness—and would be feeling like the ancient classical gentleman, ready to strike the stars with his sublime head.

During these days Bunter had a few little troubles. He was, for instance, unusually careless in class, and Mr. Quelch did not take it kindly. Mr. Quelch, of course, did not know that he possessed in his Form a fellow who had the rare gift of spotting winners; and who was about to roll in plunder as a consequence. Probably he would not have been placated had he known it. So he was very sharp with Bunter, who, of course, could not explain to Quelch why he had no attention to put into such frivolous matters as Form work.

But these little troubles did not, after all, matter very much. Bunter, in fact, was already thinking of leaving Greyfriars at the end of the term.

His father could scarcely raise any reasonable objection when Bunter pointed out to him that he could make more money spotting winners than the

elder Bunter could make on the Stock Exchange.

Mr. Bunter made his money among bulls and bears and stags, but horses were not in his line. Still, he was bound to agree with that ancient Roman emperor who declared that the smell of all money is sweet. A fellow who could pick up sixty pounds a day by backing horses was wasting his time at school. Bunter senior would be bound to see that. Bunter had only to prove that he could do it.

He would see his bookmaker again on Friday and draw the sixty pounds. He was not aware that he saw his bookmaker every day in the Remove. In the Remove his bookmaker had a very different aspect from that of the red-faced man in Friardale Wood.

On Wednesday Bunter was strongly tempted to go over to Wapshot and see his horses win.

He might be sacked if he was found out to have gone to the races. But what did that matter, after all, to a fellow with his finger on the pulse of fortune? However, Bunter refrained; chiefly because—in spite of his immense expectations—he lacked the cash for the railway fare to Wapshot.

Besides, he would get the news in the evening paper. He could get an evening paper from Courtfield. Lots of fellows would be going into Courtfield on Wednesday, a half-holiday, and one of them would bring the early edition of the "Evening News" back with him for Bunter. Lock-up was late enough in the summer days to allow of that. Bunter was rather keen to see the evening paper on Wednesday. He had no doubts. Still, there was nothing like making assurance doubly sure. He was keen to see his selected geegees topping the lists.

"I say, you fellows!"

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Bunter rounded up the Famous Five, who were going over to Highcliffe on their bikes to tea with Courtenay and the Caterpillar.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You're looking chippy, old fat bean!" said Bob Cherry. "Enjoying life—what?"

"Well, I'm feeling rather bucked," confessed Bunter. "I'm not going to tell you fellows—"

"Oh, do!" implored Bob.

"But I'm expecting a large sum of money this week," said Bunter. "Never mind how! I'm expecting it."

"Blessed are those who never expect!" remarked Johnny Bull. "They never get disappointed."

"Well, this happens to be a cert," said Bunter disdainfully. "Some fellows have the brains to spot winners. Some haven't. But I say, you fellows, if you're going over to Courtfield, will you bring me back an evening paper?"

"Certainly!"

"Thanks, old chap! Here's the penny! Oh, dear! I've left my money in my study! You can lend me the penny, Wharton."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Right-ho! Anything special in the paper this evening?"

"Oh, no," said Bunter carelessly. "I just want to see how Kent's getting on in the two-thirty—I mean, the county cricket."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You'll bring me that paper?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"Rely on it, old bean."

And Bunter rolled away satisfied, while the Famous Five pedalled away to Highcliffe.

The afternoon passed pleasantly enough to Bunter. He loafed about with happy thoughts of the joy he would experience when he read the names of his winners in the evening paper. He tried his luck in the school shop; but Mrs. Mumble declined to take heed of mysterious hints of vast wealth shortly to be in Bunter's possession, and Bunter rolled out again. He could not spend his winnings at the tuckshop until he received them. Still, he had the happy prospect of being the most welcome customer in the school shop shortly. Mrs. Mumble would be very different when Bunter rolled in reeking with currency notes. Great expectations and happy anticipations filled Bunter's fat mind till near lock-up, when he rolled

out of the school gates to meet Harry Wharton & Co. as they came home.

Five cheery cyclists came in sight, and Bunter hailed them.

"I say, you fellows!"

There was a jamming of brakes, and the Famous Five dismounted. Wharton produced the evening paper, which he had bought at the station as he came back through Courtfield.

"Here, you are, old fat bean."

Bunter grabbed the paper.

He turned to the back page, and scanned the racing results with eager eyes. The juniors stood watching him. A puzzled look came over Bunter's face.

"How's Kent?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Eh?"

"What's the score?"

"Oh, don't be an ass! I say, you fellows, what does it mean when they put a nought after the name of a horse in a list of results?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'm not quite so well up in racing as you are, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, "but I fancy it means that the horse was nowhere."

"Eh?"

"It means that the horse didn't win and wasn't placed, ass."

"Oh!"

Bunter's fat jaw dropped. He blinked at the paper as if he could not believe his eyes or his spectacles.

"I—I can't make this out," he gasped. "Here's the two o'clock—Pink Eye was going to win the two o'clock. That was a cert—a dead cert! I worked the whole thing out! But these silly chumps have printed—Snooker's Pride, High Jinks, and Fancy Free, 1, 2, 3, and Pink Eye comes a long way further down with a nought after it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Think, it's a misprint, you fellows?" asked Bunter, hopefully.

"Not likely," chuckled Bob Cherry.

"The misprintfulness is probably not terrific, my esteemed absurd Bunter."

"Then—then Pink Eye's lost!"

"Go hon!"

Bunter proceeded further with his investigations. For the two-thirty, the result given was equally astonishing: Pocket-Knife also appeared with a nought after his name. For the three o'clock, King Arthur should have headed the list, instead of which, King Arthur appeared in a list headed "also ran." Almost dazed by these incredible happenings, Bunter blinked at the result of the three-thirty race. It was in the stop-press column that he found it.

WAPSHOT! 3.30. Hookey-wooky, Pulled Peter, Nobbled Nick—nine ran. There was no mention of Snigger, doubtless he was also among the also rans.

"Oh!" said Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him. Bunter's fat countenance, which had been beaming for days and days, beamed no more.

The glory had departed from the house of Israel, as it were!

Bunter gasped.

"They—they've lost!" He managed to articulate the words. "I—I say, you fellows, I—I can't get on to this! I spotted the winners, but—they—they ain't won!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put much on 'em?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, dear! Five pounds each!" moaned Bunter.

"Then you owe somebody twenty pounds!"

"Yarook!"

Billy Bunter tottered in at the gates.

He was no longer looking forward to meeting Mr. Bagshot on Friday. It was quite useless to meet Mr. Bagshot and offer him a bad threepenny-piece in settlement. If Mr. Bagshot kept that appointment, he was likely to wait long for the fat sportsman of the Remove.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Awful for Bunter!

"MAN to see you, Bunter."

"What?"

"Man to see you, old chap! Looks rather a sporting cove," said Bob Cherry. "I shouldn't let Quelch see him, if I were you."

Bunter gazed at Bob Cherry in horror. It was Saturday afternoon.

That afternoon being a half-holiday, most of the Greyfriars fellows were in cheery spirits. Not so William George Bunter! Bunter's spirits were down to zero.

He had not kept the appointment on Friday. Whether Mr. Bagshot had kept it or not Bunter did not know. He did not care for that matter so long as Mr. Bagshot left him severely alone. He did not want to see Mr. Bagshot. Very much indeed he did not want to see Mr. Bagshot. Had he heard that Mr. Bagshot had been swallowed up in an earthquake, Bunter would have heard the news with equanimity. But Bunter realised, with dread, that a book-maker to whom he owed twenty pounds was not likely to leave him severely alone.

Every day since Wednesday, Bunter had lived in terror of seeing a red-faced man with a rakish bowler hat arrive at Greyfriars to inquire after him. Bunter did not want to back any more winners. It had been driven home to his fat mind, at last, that backing winners was an exceedingly uncertain method of making money. His great expectations were gone—gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream. If only Mr. Bagshot was gone, too, all was well! But Bunter could not hope that he was. Every hour since Wednesday he had feared that something would happen. Now it looked as if something had.

"Anything the matter, old fat man?" asked Bob. "I say, you'd better see that man pretty soon and get shut of him. If Quelch sees him, he will want to know who he is."

"Wha-a-at sort of man is he?" gasped Bunter. Red faced—

"That's it."

"What name?"

"He told me to say Bagshot."

"Ow! Where is he?"

"In your study. Toddy's keeping him there out of sight! There will be a row if he's seen, I fancy."

"Oh, dear!"

"Your bookmaker, I suppose, Bunter?" asked Bob blandly.

"Oh! Wow! I—I say, old chap, take him a message," groaned Bunter.

"Tell him I—I'm dead, and—and buried."

"He mightn't believe that, as he can see you now from the study window," answered Bob. "It would sound a bit improbable, wouldn't it?"

"Ow! Wha-a-at does he want?"

"You, old bean! He says you didn't keep an appointment yesterday, and so he's going to see you here. Better get in."

"I—I say, I—I'll cut off, and—and—"

"If he comes out into the quad after you, Bunter, it may lead to a lot of

Things You Want to Know

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"Cave!" Billy Bunter bundled into bed, dressed as he was, and dragged sheets and blankets round him, and up round his neck to hide his collar. He was only just in time, for the next moment the dormitory door opened, and Mr. Quelch, his eyes gleaming in the light of a lamp, looked into the dormitory. (See Chapter 11.)



inquiry," suggested Bob. "Don't you think so?"

"Oh dear!"

The possibility of being stalked through the quadrangle by a red-faced man in a rakish hat made Bunter shudder. Bunter did not want to be sacked—not being prepared, as matters had turned out, to take up spotting winners as a regular business. Evidently, the best thing he could do was to keep Mr. Bagshot dark, and get rid of him quietly, if he could, unseen by the powers. Really, it was lucky that Mr. Bagshot had not been seen yet; apparently he had reached the Remove passage unobserved. Bunter tottered into the House, and Bob Cherry followed him in.

He tottered up to the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. met him there, with grave faces.

"He's in your study, Bunter," said Wharton. "Toddy's keeping him quiet, for the present. Have you got the money for him?"

"Ow! No."

"Then goodness knows what will happen."

"I—I say, you fellows, back me up!" groaned Bunter. "I—I say, stand by me, you know! Oh lor!"

"Nothing doing. Last time we butted in, you promised to give up playing the giddy goat! This is what has come of it!" said the captain of the Remove, sternly.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I—I'll promise again, if you'll get me out of this!" groaned Bunter.

The door of Study No. 7 opened, and Peter Todd looked out.

"Have you found Bunter? Oh, there you are, Bunter! Here's a man to see you—he says he won't wait any longer—"

"I've waited long enough," said a

deep voice from Study No. 7. "If that there young bilk don't show up, I'm going to the 'eadmaster."

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

The fat sportsman of the Remove tottered into Study No. 7. He blinked in horror at the short, stout man in checks who sprawled in the study armchair.

"Oh, 'ere you are!" said Mr. Bagshot. "I've called to see you, young man. Twenty pun you owe me, fair and square."

"Ow!"

"Settle on the nail is my motto, same as I told you," said Mr. Bagshot. "'And over the dibs."

"I—I—I can't!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

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

"My heye!"

"I—I'll settle the next term—"

"Ho! I like that! Where's the 'eadmaster of this 'ere school?" demanded Mr. Bagshot, staring round at the juniors in the doorway. "This 'ere young rogue is a blooming bilk! I'll show him up! Where's the blinking 'eadmaster."

There was a wail of terror from the sportsman of the Remove.

"I—I—I say, you fellows! Keep him quiet! Lend me some money! Oh dear! Oh lor! I—I won't ever do it again! Honour bright! I—I thought I could spot the winners, you know! Ow!"

"Where's the 'eadmaster?" snorted Mr. Bagshot. "Pay up or show up! Now, then, which is the way to the blinking 'eadmaster."

"Ow! Help!"

"Well, you've done it now, Bunter," remarked Peter Todd.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"He has done it, and no bloomin' error," said the red-faced man. "I

come 'ere for my money! Pay up! What?"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Well, I'm going to your 'eadmaster," said Mr. Bagshot.

"Yaroo!"

"Hem! Come along with me, Mr. Bagshot, and perhaps we can arrange this," said Harry Wharton. "You wait here, Bunter."

"Ow!"

"I'm a reasonable cove," said Mr. Bagshot. "Anything fair I'll agree to! I ain't a hard man. Anything reasonable—"

"Come this way, then."

"I'm arter you, sir."

Mr. Bagshot followed the juniors, and Peter Todd followed Mr. Bagshot. The study door closed, and Billy Bunter was alone. He collapsed into the armchair that Mr. Bagshot had vacated, and lay there palpitating with awful funk. Never had a sportive sportsman and a rorty dog been in such a deflated state.

The door closed, Mr. Bagshot did not go far; only as far as Study No. 6, where he went in, and Harry Wharton & Co. followed him. In the study there was a breathless chortle. Mr. Bagshot proceeded to remove his remarkable clothes, and wash off his make-up, and to disappear from view—and from existence altogether; Wibley of the Remove metamorphosis was completed. Harry Wharton & Co. returned to Study No. 7, looking as grave as they could.

Billy Bunter blinked at them as they entered, with an agonised blink.

"I say, you fellows! Is he gone?"

"He's gone."

"The goncfulness is terrific."

Bunter gasped with relief.

"J-d-d-did anybody see him go?"

"Only us," said Bob.

(Continued on page 28.)
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The LORD of LOST ISLAND



Featuring **FERRERS LOCKE, DETECTIVE**, and his Boy Assistant, **JACK DRAKE**.

Introduction on next page.

Chalmers Acts!

RED PETE swung round on Ferrers Locke.

"Is this correct?" he demanded harshly. "Did you mutiny?"

"Ay!" replied the detective gruffly. "And brought th' ship here wi' a happy and contented crew!"

Red Pete stared at him for a moment in angry puzzlement.

"This is a mighty serious thing!" he said. "And I'm not saying anything here. You will come ashore with me. You also, Schuller. This is a case for the boss to deal with."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"I'm agreeable," he replied.

Schuller stepped forward and confronted Red Pete.

"Yuh ain't aimin' to leave this hyar vessel in th' han's of these dogs, are yuh?" he demanded.

Red Pete surveyed him coolly.

"If we hang their leader and they up-anchor and try to run, we'll blow them out of the water before they get fifty yards! Apart from that I reckon they've got sense enough to know"—and he glanced towards Jack and the Swede—"that they'll never negotiate that channel outside! They've mutinied, and now they're trapped like rats!"

Mollified, Schuller grinned.

"That's right, Pete!" he said. "Wal, I'm ready to go ashore!"

Ferrers Locke went ashore with Schuller and Red Pete in the stern sheets of the boat. The men on the Seagull raised a cheer for their leader as he left the ship. They didn't quite understand why he should deliver himself into the enemy's hands, as it were; but they could appreciate the courage which such a course demanded.

Ferrers Locke was working methodically. It would have been easy to have refused to leave the ship, and to have adopted the policy of forcing Chalmers to come in person to inquire into the mutiny. But such a course would have certainly made Chalmers extremely hostile, and Ferrers Locke had an idea in his mind that Chalmers, if tactfully handled, would see eye to eye with the

mutineers. He had not forgotten Chalmers' remark to Schuller in the latter's cabin on the Seagull.

Reaching the shore, Red Pete led the way inland, along a winding, twisting path, till he reached an encampment of stone and galvanised iron huts.

Men were lounging about—hard-bitten looking fellows—and they stared at Ferrers Locke curiously. Many of them nodded to Schuller, and growled a greeting. Red Pete strode to a long, low hut, and, entering, led the way along a corridor till he halted in front of a closed door. He knocked, and in response to a curt "Come in!" ushered Schuller and Ferrers Locke into a large, sparsely furnished room.

Chalmers was seated at a plain deal table, poring over a chart. By his side was a tall, fair man, clad in a smart Navy-blue uniform. They looked up as Red Pete strode into the room at the heels of Ferrers Locke and Schuller.

"There's been trouble!" Red Pete rapped out the words without any preamble. "There's been a mutiny aboard the Seagull, and this fellow here is the ringleader!"

He indicated Ferrers Locke, then stepped back, his hands in the pockets of his reefer jacket. He had said his say. The rest was up to Chalmers.

The latter stared at the detective, then shifted his gaze to Schuller.

"Well?" he demanded harshly.

Schuller plunged at once into an elaborate account of the mutiny. He did not mention, however, the fact that he was brutally thrashing Jack Drake when the trouble commenced. He spoke of the demand for the saloon stores, and dwelt feelingly with many a lurid oath on the high ideas which seemed to be turning the brains of fo'c'sle scum.

Chalmers cut him short abruptly after hearing the main facts.

"Were you maltreated by the mutineers?" he demanded.

"Sure I was!"

"In what way?"

"I was clapped in irons, an' I was given hogswash to eat!"

"Hogswash? You mean you were given rotten food?"

"Sure!"

Chalmers smiled mirthlessly, then leant forward across the table and rapped:

"Where did it come from?"

"From—" began Schuller, then broke off abruptly.

"Yes," said Chalmers quietly; "I can finish your sentence for you. It came from the stores you had shipped for the men."

He turned to Ferrers Locke.

"Tell me the primary cause of this mutiny," he said.

"Reckon there ain't much to tell, sir," replied the detective. "Th' grub was rotten—so rotten that you couldn't ha' fed it to a dawg. Us spoke Schuller fair, an' asked him to give us grub what we could eat. The men was behind me to a man. Schuller pulled a gun on me, an' I slogged him, for I had no mind to be shot down. Us saw how it was then, so us took th' ship an' brought it on here."

"Why did you come on here?" asked Chalmers curiously. "I may hang you for this mutiny!"

"In Valparaiso us was offered good pay in exchange for hard work. Us signed no articles, but us expected a square deal. And, by hokee, us would ha' been down wi' scurvy, ay, every man of us if we'd eat them vittels what was shipped. When you comed aboard you spoke me fair an' square, an' I told my mates that you would give us a square deal. So that's why us come on here. We ain't hurt your ship none, an' we ain't hurt your officers. Th' men is happy, an' willin' to work for you; but, blame my eyes, they wouldna' ha' been had Schuller had his way wi' us!"

Chalmers nodded.

"And you are the ringleader?" he asked quietly.

"Ay, sir!"

"And what would you say if I tell you that I shall hang you?"

Ferrers Locke grinned and fumbled with his dirty cap.

"Wal," he replied easily, "if you said that, an' meant it, I reckon my mates would pay you for it some blamed day. Us ain't fingerin' on nuthin' else but a square deal from you!"

Chalmers leapt to his feet, crashing his fat on to the table.

"And you shall have a square deal!" he cried. "I want my men with me heart and soul! Schuller"—he wheeled on the skipper of the Seagull—"I gave you nearly one thousand dollars with which to purchase stores for the men. Where is the receipt?"

Schuller hesitated. "I reckon I ain't got one!" he answered defiantly.

Chalmers thrust forward his head, his face working with passion.

"No, you haven't got one, you dog! You couldn't keep faith with any man. You've shipped some filth which you've bought for a few dollars, and you've pocketed what you've made out of the transaction. Well, you're through! Understand that! This man has given me a plain, honest statement, and I tell you here and now I'm glad, very glad, that he had the pluck to act like he did. It's men like him whom I want with me, not dirty, sneaking, thieving rats like you! Get out!"

Schuller faced him with blazing eyes. "Yuh're backing this dog's play?" he cried. "Is that it? Yuh're through wi' me, are yuh? By cripes, then—"

His hand flashed to his pocket. In the same instant Chalmers' hand whipped upwards.

Two shots rang out simultaneously, and a cloud of blue smoke drifted upwards. Schuller swayed on his feet, the gun dropped from his nerveless hand, and he crashed forward and lay in a still, crumpled heap on the floor.

Black Michael!

THAT same afternoon, when the men had disembarked from the Seagull, Chalmers, himself, addressed them. By his side stood the uniformed man with whom he had been conversing over the chart before the death of Schuller.

"Men," he said abruptly, "are there any amongst you who have never heard of Black Michael?"

A growl of negation and wonderment came from the men, and they stared at him with a quickened interest.

"Black Michael, some years ago," went on Chalmers, "was a man feared the length of every seaboard of South America. He was a pirate who amassed a huge fortune in the looting of coasting steamers!"

He paused a moment, eyeing them speculatively, then added quietly:

"I am Black Michael, and I sail the seas once more!"

There was nothing melodramatic in the statement, but it thrilled every one of his hearers, and, be it said, not one man there doubted the truth of the words.

"I want you to understand," he went on quickly, "that my first consideration is for the men who serve me. No man can sail the seas on such a quest as I if his crews are discontented and the seeds of unrest are implanted amongst them. I have heard from Schuller the story of the mutiny, and I have heard also the story from the lips of your chosen leader. Schuller is dead, killed by my hand, and I ask you—are you satisfied with the justice of Black Michael?"

A thunderous cheer rent the air. Ah, here was a leader after their own hearts. A man who had no favourites.

Ferrers Locke, standing by Jack's side, glanced quizzically at the boy. They understood, those two, the shrewdness of Chalmers' move. Schuller was but one man, and, in Chalmers' scheme of things, a doubtful quantity. By slaying him, Chalmers had made a gesture

which had swayed his band of new recruits enthusiastically in his favour.

"Then work with me, men!" cried Chalmers in a ringing voice. "Give to my service your stout hearts and good right arms and you will some day return to your home ports wealthy beyond your wildest dreams. Where to-day is the great British liner, the *Sacred*? Where is the *Bismark*, the fastest ship of the Nord-Hamburg line? Where is the *L'Île de France*, the greatest triumph of the dockyards of France? Ay, where are they and their sister ships? Fathoms deep they lie, rotting somewhere in the Southern Pacific, and their hulls are mine—three million pounds of it! Do not your mouths water and your palms itch to have the spending of your share, men?"

Again came a ringing cheer, and, glancing at the men, Ferrers Locke was conscious of a subtle change in them. The words of Chalmers had roused the lust for good red gold. Cheeks were flushed and eyes were aflame.

"You have come to me," went on Chalmers, "and more and more will come till I have a band which will sweep the seas! Black Michael's wolves! Ah, and we will bury our fangs in many a fat prize, and every man shall have his share!"

A roar of acclamation burst from his hearers. Waiting till it had died down, he cried:

"You chose as your leader, this man, Hank Peters!" He indicated Ferrers Locke. "Then if you still wish him to be your leader I appoint him here and now to fill the place of Schuller. The nigger will hang at sunset from yonder cliff, and the Swede, Johansen, whom you elected first officer, will take over the nigger's duties. Are you satisfied?"

"Ay, ay!" roared the men, and cheered to the echo.

"Then you will now disperse to your quarters. You will be taught various duties. The majority of you I shall require for my submarines! That, however, will be explained to you later. This man," he motioned towards the uniformed man who stood by his side, "is Von Mauser, who is in supreme command of my submarines! You will find him a gallant leader and a good comrade. And to whet your appetites, my wolves, we sail at dawn to-morrow to attack the *Silvestre* of the Anglo-Pacific line, a vessel of over thirty thousand tons burden!"

INTRODUCTION.

Ferrers Locke, the famous Baker Street detective, is called in to investigate the disappearance of several large vessels lost with all hands under mysterious circumstances in the South Pacific. Suspecting a man known as Professor Chalmers, who answers in every way to the description of Black Michael, a pirate who has been terrorising the western seaboard of South America, Ferrers Locke, accompanied by Jack Drake, his clever boy assistant, sets sail for Buenos Aires. Shortly after reaching their destination an attempt is made on the life of the Baker Street detective by an agent of "Prisco Sam, proprietor of Black Michael's old band, who, to save his own life, tells Ferrers Locke all he knows. Cleverly disguising themselves, the London sleuth and Jack Drake escape an acquaintance with "Prisco Sam, through whom they succeed in getting aboard the Seagull, a freighter bound for Lost Island. By a clever piece of strategy Ferrers Locke engineers a mutiny aboard the Seagull, with the result that the crew seize the ship, clap the rascally skipper, Schuller, and his negro mate in irons, and unanimously elect Ferrers Locke to work the ship to Lost Island. Arriving there, they are met by Red Pete, second in command on the island, to whom Schuller explains the situation and calls for the hanging of Ferrers Locke as ringleader of the mutiny.

(Now read on.)

A Fateful Decision!

WHERE is Federkiel? He should have returned before this!"

Chalmers paused in his restless pacing and bent his head in a listening attitude. Ferrers Locke, Red Pete, and Von Mauser, seated at the table in the same room as the detective had been taken to that morning, waited patiently.

"It is eleven o'clock," went on Chalmers, glancing at his watch. "I hope nothing has happened, Von Mauser!"

Von Mauser smiled.

"I think not, sir!" he replied. "Federkiel is too good a pilot to have crashed, and his engines are in perfect condition!"

"Might I ask, sir, if it ain't no offence," grunted Ferrers Locke, "who this Mr. Federkiel is?"

"He is my seaplane pilot," replied Chalmers. "When not engaged as scout for my submarines he does a reconnaissance covering a radius of one hundred miles and more from this island. Should any warships be heading this way we would have due warning from Federkiel!"

Ferrers Locke nodded and relapsed into silence. The *Silvestre* was to be attacked on the morrow, and he and Von Mauser had been called to Chalmers' room for a council of war. Having been appointed to Schuller's post, the Baker Street detective had been granted Schuller's privileges.

Ferrers Locke was a consummate judge of human nature. He had played his cards with an eye to the future when he engineered the mutiny on board the *Seagull*. He had noted the strained relations between Schuller and Chalmers, and had staked everything on Chalmers siding with the men against the unpopular skipper. It was only natural that Chalmers should have done so, for, had he sided with Schuller, then he would have had a sullen, discontented set of men to deal with.

"Listen!"

A sharp word from Chalmers broke in on his thoughts. Far away, somewhere out in the night sky, there sounded a faint drone. It grew rapidly in volume till there came plainly to the listeners' ears the pulsating beat of high-powered aero engines.

With an audible sigh of relief, Chalmers relaxed, and, crossing to the table, sat down.

"It is he!" he said. "I confess I was very anxious!"

The engines roared thunderingly overhead, then died away as the pilot throttled down.

"He is landing, and will be here shortly," said Chalmers. "Kindly give me your attention, gentlemen, please."

He spread out a chart on the table, and Ferrers Locke saw that it was of the Southern Pacific, with the main steamship routes heavily lined in red.

"At sunset to-morrow the *Silvestre* will be here," went on Chalmers, indicating a point with his pencil. "She is bound from Sydney to Liverpool, via the Panama. My agent is aboard her, and will attend to the wireless operator when we open our attack. By leaving here at dawn and travelling at forty-five knots on the surface, we should encounter the *Silvestre* at the spot I have indicated about sunset."

"You say we, mister," interrupted

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"Yuh're through wi' me, are yuh?" cried Schuller, with blazing eyes. "By cripes, then——" His hand flashed to his pocket. At the same time Chalmers' hand whipped upwards and two shots rang out. Schuller swayed on his feet, the gun dropped from his nerveless hand, and he crashed forward. (See page 25.)

Ferrers Locke. "If it ain't no offence, could I ask just who you means by 'we'?"

Chalmers smiled.

"I have six submarines!" he replied. "One you saw in the harbour this morning. The others are lying moored in a large cave which acts as a sort of dock and repair shop combined. The six submarines will move forward to the attack. Of late I have not ignored the possibility that some of those liners may be accompanied by an escort. Always I must be prepared to fight.

There came a quick step in the passage outside, and someone knocked sharply on the door. The next moment a man in a leather flying coat, worn over a high-necked, grey uniform, entered the room. He carried a flying-helmet and goggles in his hand. His features were clean-cut and bronzed, his eyes a steely blue. There was about him that indefinable something which tells of breeding.

"You are back, then, Federkiel?" said Chalmers, a hint of anxiety in his voice. "Anything to report?"

Federkiel saluted smartly, with a military precision which intrigued Ferrers Locke.

"Nothing, sir!" he replied crisply. "Except that the Chilean Navy are carrying out manoeuvres in these waters. At seven o'clock this evening I sighted four light cruisers one hundred and fifty miles north-west of this island!"

"Which way were they steaming?"

"Southwards, sir!"

"And did they hold that course?" asked Chalmers sharply.

"As far as I could ascertain, sir. When darkness fell I lost them as they were steaming without lights!"

Chalmers half rose to his feet, his hands gripping the table till the knuckles showed white beneath the skin. "What knots were they doing?" he asked thickly.

"Twenty-five to thirty, sir."

Chalmers was silent for a moment. His companions watched him curiously.

"Then, provided they hold to their course, they should be due west of this island at approximately twelve-thirty—that is in less than an hour," he said slowly.

"That is correct, sir."

Chalmers stood immobile. Then suddenly he threw back his head and laughed aloud.

"I'll do it!" he cried. "I'll let the world know that Black Michael is afloat once more!"

"What do you mean?"

Red Pete was on his feet, his bearded face thrust forward, his eyes agleam.

"I mean the greatest, grimmest jest of the century, my friend!" cried Chalmers. "I'll blow them sky-high as some day I shall serve the navies of the world!"

Von Mauser leapt to his feet, his face pale.

"Sir!" he cried. "It is madness—madness!"

The Arrest!

CHALMERS swung his head and surveyed Von Mauser with cold, glittering eyes.

"I say I will do it, Von Mauser!" he said icily. "Is that enough for you, or dare you presume to question further?"

Von Mauser drew himself rigidly erect.

"I am sorry, sir!" he said quietly. In a flash Chalmers' mood changed, and he patted his lieutenant on the shoulder.

"Yes, yes," he said. "I understand. Von Mauser! You and I must not quarrel."

He wheeled on Red Pete.

"Order submarines number seven and eight to prepare to proceed to sea at once!" he said sharply. "They will carry gun crews and torpedo crews, as usual."

"Ay, ay, sir!" grunted Red Pete, and dashed from the room.

"You, Federkiel," went on Chalmers quickly, "will turn in now and be ready to leave here at dawn when we move forward to attack the Silvestre."

"Very good, sir," replied Federkiel; and, saluting smartly, turned on his heel and left the room.

"You, Von Mauser, will take command of submarine number seven!" continued Chalmers rapidly. "I, myself, will take command of the other. We will travel on the surface when once clear of the island and will bear due west. If those cursed Chilean warships are about we will pick them up by searchlight. There must be no mistake, you understand. There must not be one survivor. If any boats are launched we will rake them with machine-gun fire. Get to your submarine!"

"Very good, sir!"

Von Mauser saluted and withdrew. Chalmers turned to Ferrers Locke.

"As for you, Peters," he said crisply. "I will take you with me. You will learn something of the method of warfare which I employ!"

"I have learned all that is necessary!" drawled Ferrers Locke coldly.

(Continued on page 28.)

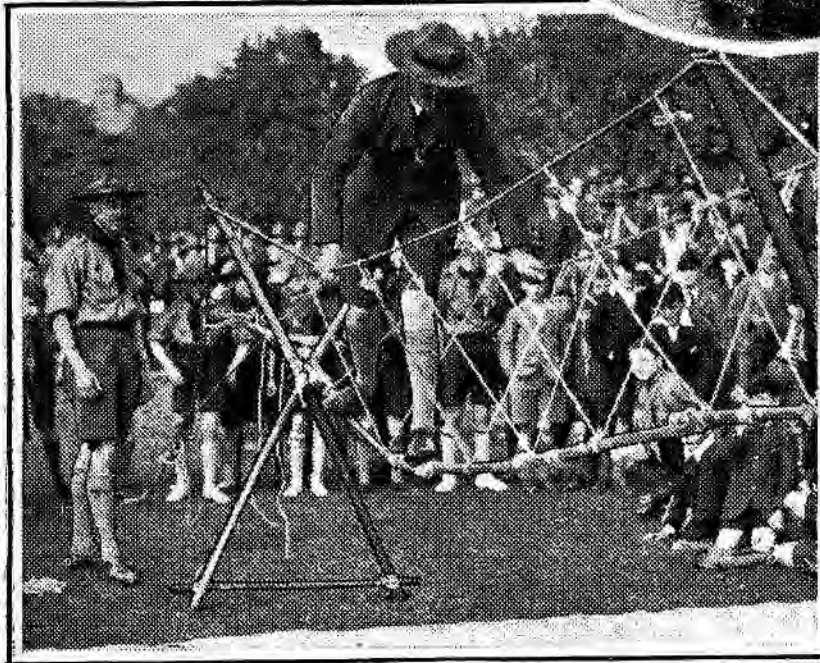


JACK'S THE BOY FOR WORK!

Even Jack has to have his boots repaired some time or another, although, for the most part, he does his daily round barefooted. And the ship's cobbler has to work under extreme difficulties when the ship is tossing and rolling in a heavy sea. Yet he doesn't mind; he's learnt through experience how to hit the right nail on the head, instead of his thumb, when the sea is rough. Photo on left shows a sailor handing in a pair of boots for repair to the ship's cobbler on board H.M.S. Marlborough.

WHAT IS IT?

What would you take this to be? A rough—very rough—specimen of sculpturing? A badly-done plasticine model? A wood carving? No. It's none of these. It's the natural formation of a rock! Truly, Nature has some peculiar moods, and there can be no denying that the similarity between a human face containing a pipe in its mouth and this rock is startling. This rock, which is called "The Smoker," is to be found at Napa, California, and is the favourite landmark of many tourists.



"BE PREPARED!"

No doubt, if you were walking along the frail-looking "bridge" shown in the photograph on the left, you would "be prepared" to come a cropper. But Lord Hampton, who is seen here testing the "bridge," felt no qualms at all. He knew it had been built by Scouts, and when Scouts build a thing—well, that thing is O.K. This incident took place during the rally held by the Hull and East Riding County Boy Scouts Association on the Hymers College Grounds, Hull.

THE LORD OF LOST ISLAND!

(Continued from page 26.)

His hand whipped up, and he covered Chalmers with his automatic.

"Professor Chalmers," he said grimly, "I arrest you for piracy on the high seas!"

Chalmers stared at Ferrers Locke like a man hypnotised. The colour drained from his face, leaving it ghastly in its pallor.

"Who—who are you?"

He almost whispered the words, and with the tip of his tongue he moistened his bloodless lips.

"I am Ferrers Locke, of Baker Street, London," replied the detective sternly.

"Ferrers Locke?" Chalmers repeated the words incredulously, then went on in a voice which shook. "But—but I thought you were dead!"

"Yes, I know. Pardon me!"

Click!

With amazing rapidity and dexterity, the Baker Street detective had stepped forward and snapped shut a pair of handcuffs on Chalmers' wrists.

The touch of the cold steel on his wrists seemed to galvanise the pirate chief from out his stupefaction.

"Curse you!" he shouted, and struggled madly to free his wrists. "Curse you! You'll never leave this island alive!"

"Silence!"

The butt of Ferrers Locke's revolver jammed into the nape of his neck was enough to reduce Chalmers to instant silence.

"Listen!" went on the Baker Street detective tensely. "I am going to release your right wrist. You are going to pen a short letter at my dictation. Please understand that at the first false move I shall not scruple to shoot you dead!"

He bent forward. The next moment there was a click, and the steel cuff on Chalmers' right wrist swung open.

"Now pick up that pen!" ordered Ferrers Locke. "Hurry!"

With shaking fingers, Chalmers picked up a pen which lay before him.

"Now write as follows, and do not attempt to disguise your handwriting!"

commanded the detective. "I am well acquainted with it!"

For three minutes Chalmers wrote laboriously at Ferrers Locke's dictation. During that time more than once the sleuth's eyes strayed anxiously towards the door, and he listened with straining ears for approaching footsteps.

Only he knew how desperate was the gamble on which he was staking his life against the capture of the pirate chief. But he had seen his opportunity, and had taken it. There could be no going back now. The die was cast, and he stood before Chalmers unmasked.

He rapidly scanned the note the man had written.

"Dear Federkiel,—I have found it necessary to change my plans. Go at once to your seaplane. Fill up your petrol tank and keep your engine running. No matter what happens, do not leave the machine till further orders. I repeat, under no circumstances whatsoever must you leave your machine. Be ready for an instant take-off."

"BLACK MICHAEL."

Picking the note up, Ferrers Locke slipped it into his pocket. He locked the handcuffs on Chalmers' wrists again, and, standing behind the man, slipped his gun into his pocket.

"Remember, one word from you—"

he warned gratingly. The words covered the faint "plop" as he uncorked a small phial and allowed a few drops of the contents to trickle on to a handkerchief.

"What are you going to—"

A-a-hah! Chalmers' words ended in a choking gurgle as Ferrers Locke clapped the chloroform-soaked handkerchief over his mouth.

He struggled, clawing with his manacled hands at that firm hand which held the suffocating wad so grimly. Then his struggles became weaker—

weaker. He collapsed limply at last in the detective's arms, and, laying him on the floor, Ferrers Locke switched out the light, plunging the room into darkness.

(Only too well does Ferrers Locke know that he is staking his life against the capture of Black Michael. But come what may, the Baker Street detective is determined not to turn from his purpose. Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's instalment of this powerful serial. It's brimful of thrills!)

BILLY BUNTER'S BOOKMAKER!

(Continued from page 23.)

"Oh! Good! I—I say, you fellows, is—is—is he coming back? I say, keep him away, somehow! Oh, dear! I say—"

"We've squared the matter," said the captain of the Remove. "Never mind how—we've cleared him off and he won't come back again. But if you play the giddy ox any more—"

Bunter groaned.

"No fear! I'm fed up," he mumbled. "I—I say, you fellows, I—I believe they wangle those races, you know—my winners never won, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. The rotten racing ought to be stopped, by law," groaned Bunter. "Such things oughtn't to be allowed! Catch me touching it again! Oh, dear!"

"You don't want to get in touch with a bookie now?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ow! No!"

Bunter shuddered.

"Here endeth the second lesson,"

chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Bunter was left to himself—the most disillusioned sportsman that ever spotted losers; a sadder, if not wiser Bunter.

Bunter's bookmaker was not seen at Greyfriars again—until the date came round for the performance of "Reckless Rackstraw, or, the Road to Ruin."

Then he was seen.

Bunter, in the audience, beheld that bookmaker on the Remove stage, with bulging eyes. There he was—red face, rakish hat, check clothes, race-glasses, and all. And then Bunter comprehended. Bunter glared at him with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles, and, to the surprise of the rest of the audience, shook a fat fist at him. Still, as the fat Owl had lived in dread of hearing further from Mr. Bagsbot, it was rather a relief, after all, to learn that Wilkey of the Remove was Bunter's bookmaker.

THE END.

(Next week's ripping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars is entitled: "Billy Bunter's Luck!" This is the first of a magnificent new series of holiday stories, so be sure to order your copy of the MAGNET well in advance.)



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