

Harry Wharton & Co. in Another Tip-Top School Yarn!

The MAGNET^{2D}





Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address :
The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HOW would you like to possess a submarine of your own? Sounds great, doesn't it? I've just been reading of a cute American boy who has constructed

A ROY POWERED SUBMARINE

with which he and his chums have any amount of fun. He is lucky enough to live in a part of the States where there are numerous bathing pools with shelving sand bottoms—an ideal place for submerging! Actually his construction is more of a diving-bell than a submarine, and here is how it works:

He has made an air and water-tight upper portion, which resembles an overturned canoe with a conning tower on top of it. When this floats on the water, air is trapped underneath, and this boy and a chum swim underneath it. There is sufficient air in the contraption to last them for some time, and the conning tower is fitted with a periscope, and also a short tube with a valve outlet. There are struts inside the "submarine" which allow the boys to hang on to it, half in the water, and half in the air chamber. The power of the submarine is provided by the boys swimming with their legs.

When they wish to submerge, they pull a wire which lets a certain quantity of air escape. Their weight, combined with the loss of air, makes the submarine sink. But there is still sufficient air trapped inside it. By means of a simple lever, they can tilt the diving fins which are fitted to the sides of the submarine. Therefore, when they strike out with their legs, the water, acting on the fins, makes the "submarine" dive in a realistic manner. When they want to come up to the surface again, they tilt the fins the opposite way, strike out once more—and up they come!

Needless to say, both boys are perfect swimmers, as they have to be in order to handle this cute contrivance. But it's a novel idea, and any of you who are sufficiently interested should not find it very difficult to construct a similar craft.

Talking of submarines, here is a question which comes from Harry Trafford, of Keewick.

WHY DO SUBMARINES CARRY WHITE MICE?

Mice are more susceptible to poisonous gases than human beings are, and poison gas is often generated in submarines without the crew being aware of its presence. Therefore, a cage of white mice is kept in a prominent position, and the animals are watched constantly. As soon as they become sleepy and lethargic, it is a sure sign that the air has become dangerous for human beings, and the submarine is immediately brought to the surface. Canaries are also used for the same purpose, not only in submarines, but also in coal mines and the like, where the air tends to become foul at times.

WHAT is the best present anyone can give a boy? Well, I should say that a really good penknife is one of the most useful things a boy can possess. They have a saying at sea that a sailor without a knife is like a ship without a rudder, and I think that applies to the average boy, also. Just think of what you can do with a knife! Why, it's almost indispensable.

If you haven't got a good penknife, you ought to have one—especially as I have hundreds of them which I am just waiting to hand on to my readers! All you've got to do to get one, is to send along a really rib-ticking joke that will make your fellow-readers smile, and you'll get the knife by return.

Here is a joke that comes from George Bellchambers, of 4, Alpine Cottages, Haywards Heath, Sussex, who carries off one of this week's **MAGNET** penknives.

Lady of House: "You want work, do you? Well, what can you do, my lad?"

Small Boy: "You just give me an easy chair and a copy of the 'Magnet', lady, and I'll see that your kitchen fire doesn't go out!"

Can you beat that one? If so, let me hear from you!



Here is a query which comes from a Cheltenham reader. He asks

WHAT IS "ROGUE'S YARN"?

This has nothing whatever to do with those plausible stories told by confidence-trick gentlemen, but is a naval term for the coloured strands which are sometimes found in rope. All Government-owned rope, to ensure that it is not stolen, is marked by having a coloured strand in the heart of it. Rope belonging to Portsmouth dockyard, for instance, has a blue yarn in it, while Devonport and Chatham have red and yellow yarns respectively.

Other Government stores—including convicts' clothing—are marked with the broad arrow. This dates from the reign of William III, when the Earl of Romney was Master of Ordnance. To stop Government stores being stolen, he marked them all with his own crest—which was the broad arrow—and to this day the practice has been continued.

HAVE you ever seen a "magician" change what appears to be pure water into all kinds of coloured liquids? Harry Norton, of Dumfries, saw this done a little while ago, and writes to ask me how it was "wangled." It's just

A SIMPLE CHEMICAL EXPERIMENT

which any one of you can carry out. A row of glasses are set out on a table, and what appears to be pure water is poured into them from a glass jug. As the liquid goes into each glass, it assumes a different colour. Here is the way it is done:

To begin with, the water is not pure. It consists of about a pint of water, to which have been added three drops of potassium hydroxide solution, and twelve drops of a concentrated potassium ferrocyanide (yellow prussiate of potash) solution. These solutions still leave the liquid colourless.

The glasses into which it is poured have also been prepared in the following manner:

One drop of a chemical solution has been placed in each one, and spread around the bottom of the glass. The quantity is so small that it cannot be seen, and the glass may even be turned upside down to prove that it is empty. The colours which the liquid will turn, and the solutions required are given below:

Dark green: Ferrous sulphate.
Light Brown: Pyrogallol acid.
Milky White: Silver nitrate, or lead solution. (Only one solution should be used.)

Greenish White: Nickel nitrate.
Scarlet: Phenolphthalein.
Red Brown: Copper sulphate.
Light yellow: Mercuric nitrate.

Any boy who is interested in "stinks" will find this a most pleasing and baffling piece of "magic." Be very careful, however, to remove the glasses and clean them thoroughly as soon as the trick has been done.

THE next letter this week comes from "Boxen," of Rushden.

HE WANTS TO BE A CABIN BOY,

and asks how to go about it. As he is eighteen years of age, it will be best for him to write to the Shipping Federation, 52, Leadenhall Street, London, E.C.4, and

(Continued on page 28.)

Saturday is MAGNET Day.

Make sure of your copy EVERY WEEK by filling in the coupon below, chums, and handing it to your newsagent.

"MAGNET" ORDER FORM.

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THE VANISHED SOVEREIGNS!



Anybody seen Gosling's golden sovereigns? Up and down Greyfriars the question is asked, but only one person can supply the answer—and that is William George Bunter. But Bunter, for very good reasons of his own, prefers to keep silent on the subject.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Caught in the Act!

"H O!" "Oh!" William Gosling, the ancient porter of Greyfriars School, made the first remark. Billy Bunter, of the Remove, made the second.

Both were surprised. Gosling hadn't expected to see Billy Bunter sitting in the woodshed. Bunter hadn't expected to see Gosling step into the doorway.

The woodshed was hardly the place a fellow would select to sit in, on a fine and sunny spring afternoon, without a very special reason.

Billy Bunter had a special reason; in fact, two special reasons.

The fattest junior at Greyfriars was seated on Gosling's bench, leaning back on Gosling's stack of faggots, smoking a cigarette.

Beside him, on the bench, lay a box containing quite a large supply of cigarettes. Somebody had spent half-a-crown on that box of smokes. Probably it was not Bunter. Bunter's half-crowns were few and far between; and when he had any they always went the same way—to the tuckshop. Billy Bunter rather fancied himself as a doggie sort of card, who smoked cigarettes—but he was not the man to spend his own money on them.

So Billy Bunter had two good reasons for seeking the remote seclusion of the woodshed while he smoked. In the first place, any Greyfriars junior caught smoking was booked for "six" from an asphalt. In the second place, it was probable that the owner of those cigarettes was looking for them. For these two excellent reasons, the fat Owl of the Remove, like the eagles in the poem, found charms in the face of solitude.

Then Gosling happened.

"Ho!" repeated Gosling.

He stared at the fat junior on the bench with grim disapproval.

Then he wagged a gnarled forefinger at him.

"I'll report yer!" said Gosling.

Billy Bunter hastily jerked the cigarette from his mouth.

He was half-way through his first smoke, and he was—or at least was determined to believe that he was—enjoying himself no end. Had he been half-way through the third or fourth, he would have been un deceived. There had been sardines for tea in Toddy's study, and after tea—all the fellows being out of the House that fine day—Bunter had found a bag of doughnuts in Harry Wharton's study, and a dish of jam-tarts in Bob Cherry's study, and a pot of jam in Johnny Bull's study.

In matters of luck, findings were keepings with Billy Bunter. The doughnuts, the tarts, and the jam were packed away inside Bunter, and it was rather a full cargo. A few cigarettes would certainly have caused the cargo to shift.

Bunter, fortunately, had not reached that stage. He was in a happy state—having a smoke after tea like the doggie card he was—when the interruption came.

It was irritating for a doggie card to be interrupted like this. But it was more alarming than irritating. A report to his Form master, Mr Quelch, meant "six" of the best.

Gosling came into the shed.

He picked up the box of cigarettes, while Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles in dismay.

"Out of it!" said Gosling. "I'll report yer! Now, out of it!"

"I—I say, Gosling, I—I wasn't smoking, you know!" stammered Bunter.

"You didn't look as if you was!" said Gosling derisively. "Wot I says is this 'ere—I'll report yer!"

"I—I mean, you needn't mention this to Quelch! I say, Gosling, you—you can have those smokes, if you like."

"I'm taking them to Mr. Quelch, when I report yer!" said Gosling stolidly. "Now, hout of my woodshed, Master Bunter. 'Op it, see!"

Billy Bunter threw away the half-smoked cigarette.

He blinked at Gosling.

The crusty old school porter took rather a gloomy view of life. Except in vacation time, he lived, moved, and had his being amid a swarm of boys. And his fixed opinion was that all boys ought to be "drowned." Gosling liked quiet, and there was no doubt that that extreme method would have kept the Greyfriars fellows quiet.

Next to "drowning," Gosling's opinion was that thrashings were good for boys. So a gleam of satisfaction would shine through the grim gloom of his crusty countenance when he had a chance of reporting a fellow. Gosling never neglected such a chance. He was not the man to let his chances like the sunbeams pass him by. So there was no doubt that Bunter was booked.

It was an unpleasant prospect for Bunter.

Henry Samuel Quelch, the master of the Remove, had no use whatever for doggie cards in his Form.

Bunter's fat ears could already hear the swish of the cane.

"Look here, Gosling, keep this dark, old chap!" said Bunter persuasively.

"I got my dooty to do!" said Gosling calmly.

Gosling was a whale on duty, when it came to reporting a fellow. Other duties he sometimes forgot to perform. That one, never!

"I—I say, I forgot to tip you, old bean, when we broke up for Easter," said Bunter. "I—I meant to make it all right when we came back. Then I forgot again. I—I've just remembered it, Gosling."

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Bunter shoved a fat hand into his pocket.

Gosling paused.

Duty was duty, of course; especially such a pleasant and agreeable duty as reporting a fellow for "six." On the other hand, coin of the realm was coin of the realm!

Gosling liked coin of the realm.

"Well, Master Bunter—" said Gosling slowly.

Gosling could not be bribed. He would have scorned the suggestion. Still, a man might forget to report a fellow who had just remembered to hand over a tip.

It depended to a great extent on the size of the tip!

"I was going to give you half-a-crown, you know!" said Bunter, fumbling in his pocket—which contained a bunch of keys and a French penny, with a fragment of toffee sticking to them.

"Ho!" groaned Gosling.

"I mean five shillings!" said Bunter hastily.

"I'm sure you're very kind, Master Bunter," said Gosling, quite genially.

Billy Bunter breathed hard.

It was clear that five shillings would cause the necessary lapse of memory on Gosling's part, and that this incident would not reach Mr. Quelch's ears—after the transference of the five shillings.

The difficulty was that Bunter did not possess five shillings. All he possessed, in actual cash, was a French penny. He realized that it was useless to offer Gosling the French penny on account.

"That's all right, then," said Bunter.

"I—I'm sorry I forgot it, Gosling, and—glad I've remembered. Here you are, Gosling! Oh! Now I come to think of it, I've run out of tin—"

"Ho!" said Gosling.

"But it's all right—"

"Is it?" said Gosling. His tone implied doubt.

"Yes, I'm expecting a postal order," explained Bunter. "It's coming by the first post to-morrow. It will be for exactly five shillings."

"Ho!" said Gosling.

"I'll hand you the postal order immediately it comes, of course," said the fat Owl. "See?"

"Ho!" said Gosling.

Every fellow in the Remove, and most fellows out of the Remove, had heard of Billy Bunter's celebrated postal order, which, though long-expected, had never actually arrived. Probably Gosling had heard of it. At all events, the genial expression faded from his guileless face, as if wiped off with a duster.

"That will do!" said Gosling, with great severity. "I hope I'm not the man to take a bribe! No good you offering me bribes, Master Bunter. I got my duty to do. I'll report yer!"

"But—but I say—"

"What I say is this 'ere, I'm going to Mr. Quelch now to report yer!" said Gosling. "And I'll tell you this, sir, you oughter be ashamed of yourself, trying to bribe and corrupt a man what's pore, but honest! Now, you get out of my woodshed!"

"Oh orkies!" said Bunter.

Evidently there was nothing doing. A bird in hand, as it were, would have corrupted Gosling. But his sterling honesty was proof against the attraction of a bird in the bush—especially such a very doubtful bird in the bush as Billy Bunter's postal order.

Gosling, with the box of cigarettes in his horny hand, marched off towards the House. Billy Bunter blinked after him.

through his big spectacles, in wrath and dismay.

"Beast!" groaned Bunter.

The fat Owl was for it! There was no doubt of that! And from the bottom of his fat heart Billy Bunter wished that he had never found that box of cigarettes in Skinner's study!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter is Not Believed!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life?" roared Bob Cherry.

Smack!

"Yow-woop!"

It was a friendly smack on a fat shoulder, but it made Billy Bunter yelp. Bob Cherry was rather a hefty youth. A friendly smack from Bob was, in point of fact, rather more forcible than a hostile punch from some fellows.

"Wow! You silly ass!" gasped Bunter.

"Wharrer you hitting me for, you silly fathead? Wow!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

Bob was in exuberant spirits that fine spring day—a state that Bob was generally in, in spring, summer, autumn, or winter.

"Dear old fat bean, what's the jolly old row?" he asked. "You're looking as if you've lost a quid and found a threepenny bit. Hasn't your postal order come?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chorried the Co.

Bunter was looking solemn and serious, dismal and disconsolate; but it could hardly be due to a disappointment about his postal order. He had had plenty of time to get used to that.

"I say, you fellows, I'm for it!" said Bunter, blinking sadly at the Famous Five through his big spectacles. "I say, I'm in a scrape!"

"Is the scrapefulness terrific?" asked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sympathetically.

The Famous Five were prepared to be sympathetic. Feeling extremely merry and bright that sunny spring afternoon, and seeing that William George Bunter looked neither merry nor bright, they were ready to listen to his tale of woe.

"What's up, old fat man?" asked Harry Wharton.

"That brute Gosling's gone to report me to Quelch. He makes out that I was smoking in the woodshed," said Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, do you think Quelch will take Gosling's word against mine? It's rather rotten to take a low, common person's word against a gentleman's, isn't it?" He blinked anxiously at the Famous Five. "If—if you fellows think Quelch will take my word, I—I can deny the whole thing, you know. But—but if he wouldn't, you know, it's risky. He might make out that I was telling lies—a thing I'm really incapable of, as you fellows know—"

"Oh, my hat!" said Frank Nugent.

"You fat villain!" said Johnny Bull.

"If Gosling's caught you smoking in the woodshed, and reported you, you'd better tell Quelch the truth. He's a downy bird."

"Well, of course I should tell him the truth," said Bunter peevishly. "I hope I'm truthful."

"Oh orkies!" gasped Bob. "He hopes he's truthful!"

"The hopefulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "As the ridiculous"

poet remarks, hope springs internal in the ludicrous human breast."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was all Skinner's fault, really," explained Bunter. "It's all due to that beast Skinner being a smoky beast."

"Has Skinner been giving you cigarettes, you fat owl?" asked Harry Wharton, frowning. "I'll jolly well kick him if he has!"

"Well, he didn't exactly give them to me, but I found them in his study," explained Bunter. "I—I took them away, because—because—Remove man ain't allowed to have smokers in his study. I never really smoked any of them. I—I just put one in my mouth and lighted it, you know."

"You'd better explain that to Quelch!" said Bob Cherry gravely. "He's sure to see the difference between smoking a cigarette and putting one in your mouth and lighting it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I—I can't help thinking that Quelch will take Gosling's word, and doubt mine!" said Bunter sorrowfully. "It's pretty thick to take a common person's word and doubt the word of a Public School man! But that's Quelch, all over. He's no gentleman, really."

"Better explain that to him, too," suggested Bob. "It will put him into a good temper."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to chuckle at! I'm expecting to be called into Quelch's study any minute, and it means six. I say, you fellows, you ought to help a chap out, after all I've done for you. You know what I did for you in the Easter holidays, Wharton—"

"What on earth was that?" asked Harry.

"Well, I came and spent the vac. with you, turning down a lot of invitations from really decent people," said Bunter.

"Oh orkies!"

"I say, you fellows, I want you to back me up in this," urged Bunter. "I've done a lot for you, and, after all, there's such a thing as gratitude. Look here, you come with me to Quelch and—back up what I tell him."

"And what are you going to tell him?" asked Nugent.

"Anything you like so long as he will swallow it," said Bunter generously. "You fellows all say the same, and he's bound to believe it. I'll do the same for you another time, see?"

"You crowsy, fibrous fathead—" began Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull, there's no time to waste calling a fellow names!" said Bunter. "I may be called in any minute. Suppose we say that I wasn't in the woodshed at all? You fellows swear that I was on Little Side with you at the very time Gosling saw me in the woodshed."

"Quelch would believe it if we put it like that!" chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Might get Gosling into a row with Quelch, you know," said Bunter hopefully. "That would be a lesson to him about reporting a chap! Quelch would be awfully down on him for accusing a chap of smoking when it wasn't true!"

"But it is true!" yelled Johnny Bull. "I wish you'd keep to the point when every minute's precious," said Bunter peevishly. "You fellows are like Pontius Pilate, fiddling while Manchester was burning—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I say, you fellows, if you'll come with me to Quelch and swear—" "Don't know any words!" said Bob, shaking his head. "Besides, it's bad form, even if a fellow knew the words."

Read the Splendid School Stories

of Tom Merris & Co. in the

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"You silly ass, is this a time for your rotten jokes? I mean—"
 "Bunter!" Loder of the Sixth came along. "Go to your Form master's study at once!"

Loder passed on, and Bunter blinked dismally at the Famous Five.

"That means six!" he said dolorously. "Now, you fellows, will you come with me to Quelch, and—I say, you fellows, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you! I say, old chaps—Beasts!"

Billy Bunter blinked wrathfully at the backs of the Famous Five, as they departed. Apparently they were not going to bear witness that Bunter had been with them on the cricket ground when Gosling saw him in the woodshed.

The fat Owl rolled dismally into the House.

"Certainly, sir! 1-1 was on the cricket ground when Gosling saw me in the woodshed. 1-1 mean, when he didn't see me in the woodshed, of—of course! I haven't seen Gosling to-day, sir, not till this minute, and I never asked him to keep it dark."

"My eye!" repeated Gosling. "Wot I say is this 'ere—"

"You may go, Gosling," said Mr. Quelch. "The matter is quite clear! Bunter, you will bend over that chair!"

"Oh, really, sir!" Billy Bunter eyed the cane apprehensively. "1-1 hope you believe me, sir!"

"Believe you!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, you are an untruthful young rascal, and I certainly do not believe a word you say. Bend over that chair at once!"

"Oo lor!"

the House, looking as if he were trying to fold himself up like a pocket-knife.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! How many?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Six! Wow! I say, you fellows, that beast Quelch laid them on!" groaned Bunter. "Oh lor! Jawed me, too! Made out that I was untruthful. Ow! I knew he'd take Gosling's word instead of mine! That's the sort of justice we get here! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!"

Billy Bunter rolled away, wriggling and groaning. He had had a feeling that Quelch wouldn't believe him, and Quelch hadn't! Bunter felt that life was hardly worth living for a really decent chap in a school populated almost entirely by beasts!



Gosling's eyes opened wide with astonishment at the sight of William George Bunter seated comfortably in the woodshed, leaning back on a stack of faggots, smoking a cigarette. "Ho!" remarked the ancient school porter. "I'll 'ave to report yer for this!"

Gosling was in Mr. Quelch's study when Bunter arrived there. The box of cigarettes lay on the table. A cane also lay on the table, but Mr. Quelch picked it up as Bunter appeared.

"Bunter, Gosling has reported to me that he found you smoking in the woodshed," said Mr. Quelch, with his gimlet eyes boring into the unhappy Owl of the Remore. "Have you anything to say?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I wasn't there—"

"My eye!" said Gosling, staring.

"Does this box of cigarettes belong to you, Bunter?"

"Certainly not, sir! I've never seen them before! They weren't in the woodshed at all. I never found them in a fellow's study, sir, and I shouldn't have taken them away if I had."

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, Gosling informs me that he saw you smoking in his woodshed. Do you deny his statement?"

In the lowest of spirits Billy Bunter bent over the chair. The cane swished and descended.

"Whack!"

"Ow!"

"Whack!"

"Wow!"

"Whack, whack, whack!"

"Yow-ow-woooooop!" roared Bunter.

"Whack!"

"Yarooooooh!"

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane.

"You may go, Bunter! You are a young rascal, Bunter! I shall keep an eye on you from this moment. In the event of any repetition of your surreptitious and disgraceful conduct, Bunter, your punishment will be much more severe."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Go!"

Billy Bunter went.

He wriggled his way dolorously out of

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Sticky!

"HARRY, old chap—"

"How-wow!"

"You ought listen to a fellow, you beast!" said Billy Bunter indignantly. "I want you to lend me—"

"Nothing doing!"

"To lend me—"

"Stony!"

"To lend me a hand—" roared Bunter.

"Oh," said Harry Wharton, "I can lend you a hand, if you like! Where will you have it?"

Billy Bunter jumped back as Wharton lifted his hand. He had asked for it, but apparently he did not want it anywhere.

"No larks, you silly ass!" exclaimed

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Bunter. "I mean, I want you to lend me a hand—to help me, you know. I'm going to make that old brute Gosling sit up, see?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

It was this day following Billy Bunter's adventure in the woodshed. Bunter had let the sun go down on his wrath. He had let the sun rise again upon it. Apparently his wrath was still unabated. The fat Owl was on the trail of vengeance.

Mr. Quelch had given him six with emphasis. Bunter still felt a few twinges. But that was not all. Mr. Quelch, having had his eyes opened to the fact that Billy Bunter was a doggyish card, was keeping those keen eyes on Bunter. He had dropped into Bunter's study and looked round it, evidently for smokes. He had found none, certainly; but after he had gone, Bunter's study-mate, Peter Todd, had kicked Bunter hard. Toddy declared that Bunter was getting the study a bad name, and he kicked him for the honour of the study. Unlike lightning, lickings and kickings struck in the same place, and it was painful.

Then there had been trouble with Skinner. Skinner had missed his smokes, and as soon as he heard that Bunter had been caved for smoking, he guessed at once what had become of him. Skinner called on Bunter with a fives bat, and the fives bat struck, like the licking and the kicking, in the same place.

Bunter was feeling very sore—in a double sense. It was all Gosling's fault—all due to his propensity for reporting a fellow. Bunter, after the licking, the kicking, and the batting, was feeling disinclined to sit down. But he was feeling very strongly inclined to make Gosling sit up!

Harry Wharton was going down to the gates, after class, when Bunter stopped him, with the request that he would like a hand. The fat Owl proceeded to explain.

"I want you to get the old fossil out of his lodge for a few minutes, you know. I've got a bottle of liquid glue here—"

"I've heard that Squiff has missed his bottle of glue," assented Wharton.

"This isn't Squiff's bottle of glue, old chap! I never found it in his cupboard. I haven't been in his study at all. I hardly know which is his study, in fact. I've quite forgotten that he's in No. 14 with Buld."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Well, I'm going to shove it into Gosling's slippers," explained Bunter. "Only, of course, I can't do it while he's there. I want you to get him out of his lodge. You tell him that Quelch wants to see him—"

"But Quelch doesn't want to see him."

"Keep to the point, old chap. If he goes to see Quelch, that will keep him away long enough. Think of him showing his hoots into the glue! He, he, he! Go and tell him Quelch wants him at once—"

"Have you ever heard of George Wharton?" asked Wharton.

"Eh? What about him, you ass?"

"He couldn't tell a lie," said Wharton.

"What rot! He was an American."

"And I'm in the same boat," explained Wharton. "I can't, either!"

And Harry Wharton walked on towards the gates.

"Beast!" howled Bunter.

Harry Wharton probably had no objection, in principle, to gluing Gosling's slippers. Gosling was altogether too fond of reporting fellows, and

he had an irritating way of shutting the gates on the very stroke of time, so that if a fellow was a second late, he was late. Gosling's grin, through the bars, on such occasions, was exasperating. But, like the celebrated Mr. Washington—or perhaps, to be more exact, unlike him—Wharton was a stickler for the truth, so he was of no use to Bunter.

The fat Owl had to look for another catnap. Skinner, really, was the fellow he wanted. Skinner had no objection whatever to telling "whoppers." But since the painful incident of the fives bat Bunter was avoiding Skinner. Skinner had not yet forgotten his lost smokes. Though lost to sight, they were to memory dear.

"I say, Bob, old fellow—" The fat Owl bore down on Bob Cherry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"I want you to lend me a hand—"

"Will a foot do?" asked Bob, drawing one back in readiness.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, Quelch wants Gosling at once in his study. Will you go and tell him?"

"Why can't you go, if Quelch has told you?" demanded Bob.

"I—I've got to go to the Head! I—I haven't a second to spare! Cut off and tell Gosling at once, will you, old chap?"

This was rather diplomatic of Bunter. Foreseeing that Bob might share Wharton's objection to telling untruths, he put it in the form of a message from Quelch.

Bob stared at him. Bob was an obliging fellow, and would willingly have taken any message for any fellow who was in a hurry. But as Bunter, for the last half-hour, had been looting about in the quad, in full view, it seemed improbable that he was in a hurry to go to the Head.

"Pulling my leg?" asked Bob.

"Not at all, old chap! Quelch wants Gosling in a hurry—an awful hurry. I'd go and tell him, but I've got to go and see Wingate—"

"As well as the Head?"

"I—I mean the Head! The Head's waiting for me in his study. You know, a fellow can't keep the Head waiting! Go and tell Gosling that Quelch wants him, old chap—say it's a message. Don't say I gave you the message. You needn't mention me."

"You fat clump!" said Bob. "I'm likely to send old Gosling into Quelch for nothing—I don't think! If you want to pull the old bean's leg, go and pull it yourself, you fat duffer!"

"It's a message, old chap!" argued Bunter. "I haven't made this up, you know, just to get Gosling out of his lodge."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

"I think you might take that message to Gosling when I'm in a fearful hurry to go and see Quelch—I mean Wingate—that is, the Head—"

"You'd better go and tell Gosling yourself, old fat bean!" chuckled Bob. "Well, I can't, you know. He might think it was me, when he found the glue—"

"Eh! What glue?"

"Oh! None—none at all," said Bunter hastily. "There isn't any glue! I—I wonder what made me say glue! I've not got a bottle of glue in my pocket, and I wasn't going to bung it into Gosling's slippers—nothing of the kind, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. I say, old fellow, Quelch is waiting for the Head all this time—I mean, Quelch is waiting for Gosling, and the



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Head's waiting for me. Cut off and tell Gosling—"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "I'm to give Gosling a spoof message, and he will think it was I put the glue in his slippers—"

"Exactly! I—I mean, nothing of the kind! You go to Gosling and say—woooooop!"

"Sit down, old fat bean!" said Bob. Bunter sat down! With Bob Cherry's powerful grasp on his fat shoulders he sat down, suddenly and hard. He rolled over and roared.

Crack!

There was a sudden sound of breakage.

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter. "The bottle—"

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter scrambled up frantically. Really, it was not safe for a fellow to roll about with a glass bottle in his pocket—especially when the glass bottle was full of liquid glue.

"Oh lor! Oh crumbs! Oh seissors!" gasped Bunter.

He dragged at the bottle in his pocket. It was in two halves; and the liquid glue came out in a stream.

Glue streamed over Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "Is that the bottle you told me you hadn't got in your pocket?"

"Owl! Beast! I'm sticky—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Owl! I'm sticky all over! My pocket's full of glue! Owl! My bags are all gluey! Owl! It's all over me—wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob. "You won't have any left for Gosling, old bean."

"Oh crickey!"

Evidently, there was no glue left for Gosling. The whole available supply was streaming over Billy Bunter. He was of the glue, gluey!

"Oh lor! Oh crumbs! Oh crickey! Oh dear! Wow! I'm sticky all over—oh seissors!" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter streaked away to the House. He was no longer thinking of vengeance on Gosling. He was thinking of a change of clothes and a wash. Bunter did not often think of a wash—it was not the sort of thing that attracted him, as a rule. But even Bunter was anxious for a wash now. Glue—clammy, sticky glue—was all over Bunter; over his hands, and his clothes, and everything that was his. For the first time on record, Billy Bunter was anxious for a wash. Sticky and spluttering, he rushed away, leaving Bob Cherry yelling.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Gosling's Gold!

"O LD on a minute, Master Wharton, sir!"

Harry Wharton held on.

William Gosling was adopting the doorway of his lodge with his ancient, gnarled person, when Wharton came in at the gates. Gosling, apparently, had something to say. Wharton had been down to the village, and as his eyes fell on Gosling, he wondered whether Billy Bunter had carried out that scheme of vengeance during his absence; and whether Squiff's bottle of liquid glue had been poured into the ancient porter's slippers. As a matter of fact, Bunter had been busy most of the time, cleaning off that glue from his own portly person.

"P'raps you'll step in a minute, sir!" said Gosling very civilly.

"Certainly, if you like," said Harry, wondering what the old porter wanted. Gosling was not always so civil as this.

Gosling backed out of the doorway, and Wharton stepped in. Gosling had a very comfortable and cosy room, where a fire burned, and a spacious armchair stood by the fire. Close by the armchair were Gosling's ancient slippers, ready for him to slip on in the evening when his tasks were done and he was able to take his ease. Wharton glanced at them—but he saw no sign of glue. Bunter, evidently, had not got by with it.

"P'raps you'll sit down, sir!" said Gosling hospitably.

Wharton sat down.

"I was going to ask you something, sir," said Gosling. "You being a level-headed young gentleman, sir."

"Fire away!" said Harry.

"Look 'ere, sir."

Gosling, with a horny hand, tapped a cigar-box that lay on his table. Wharton stared at it. He wondered, for one astonished moment, whether Gosling was going to offer him a cigar.

But Gosling, opening the wooden box, revealed that its contents were not in the nature of smokes. The box had once contained cigars; it was, in fact, a box that had once been filled with the big, black cigars favoured by Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth. Prout had smoked the cigars; and Gosling had acquired the box for other purposes. It contained a quantity of cotton-wool; and from the cotton-wool came, here and there, a yellow gleam. Wharton, staring, saw that it was the gleam of gold.

"Ten of 'em, sir!" said Gosling with satisfaction. "Ten blooming quids, sir."

"Oh!" said Harry. He realised that Gosling was showing him his little hoard.

"I've had 'em for years and years—donkey's years, Master Wharton," said Gosling. "In my young days there wasn't any of this 'ere paper money—it was quids then—real quids! I put these 'ere away, see? Like a lot of folks. But now—"

Gosling's wrinkled brow grew heavy with anxious thought. "Now they say that you can get up to thirty bob for a quid, sir, if it's a genuine gold quid! It tempts a bloke, don't it?"

"Ee," assented Wharton.

Evidently Gosling had been reading in his Sunday paper about the "gold rush." He was tempted to realise on those ten golden sovereigns that he had packed away donkey's years ago. At the same time, he was unwilling to part with them.

"They used to say it wasn't legal to sell a sovereign for more'n twenty shillings, sir," said Gosling. "Now they say it's legal. What do you think, sir?"

"It's quite legal now," said Harry, with a smile.

"Sure of that, sir?" asked Gosling.

William Gosling was a law-abiding old gentleman.

"Quite!" said Harry. "You can take a golden sovereign into any jeweller's, and he will pay you twenty-seven shillings, or more, for it."

"That sounds good!" said Gosling.

"Course, I don't 'old with this 'ere paper money—there wasn't any paper money in my young days."

"You've forgotten, old bean," said Wharton, "they had pound notes in the reign of George the Fourth."

Gosling gave the Remove fellow a fixed

look. Wharton's face was quite grave. How old Gosling was, nobody at Greyfriars knew. Cheeky fags sometimes asked Gosling if he remembered the Spanish Armada—indeed, he had been asked what he thought about it when the Normans came over. But Gosling, though old, was not really so old as all that. And he did not think that Wharton really believed that he had been flourishing in the reign of the Fourth George. Gosling had had a long innings, but he had not made his century.

"Look 'ere, you young rip!" said Gosling, losing his politeness all of a sudden.

"It's a fact," said Wharton innocently. "we've had it in history class with Quelch. There was paper money after the great French war—you remember the Battle of Waterloo—"

Gosling breathed hard. He did not remember the Battle of Waterloo.

It was in 1815, you remember!" added Wharton, his face as solemn as an owl's. "I suppose you were quite a young fellow then, Gosling."

"I don't remember, any blooming Battle of Waterloo, and well you know it," grunted Gosling crossly. "Look 'ere, Master Wharton, you're quite sure it ain't agin the law, like it used to be, to sell golden sovereigns over twenty shillings?"

"Quite sure," said Harry. "You can sell them for what they will fetch; or if you want to be really patriotic, you can pay them in to the post office at their face value. Then they go to increase the country's reserve of gold. You lose the profit in that case; but you take it out in patriotism. What you lose on the swings, you get back on the roundabouts, see?"

Crunt from Gosling.

No doubt he was a patriotic old gentleman, but not to the extent of seven-and-six the pound!

"If these 'ere quids was yours, would you take them to a jeweller?" asked Gosling.

"I think I'd take them to the tuck-shop—"

"Eh?"

"And stand a spread to the Remove. You can do that with them if you think it a good idea. I'll get all the Remove to come."

Snort from Gosling. Apparently he did not think it a good idea.

"You must 'ave your little joke," he said. "Well, if you're sure its legal to sell quids at twenty-seven-and-six, I think I'll take them down to the jeweller's. I fear that everybody's doing it. Thank you, Master Wharton!"

"Not at all!" said Harry politely; and he rose and left the porter's lodge.

Gosling remained gazing into the cigar-box. He was tempted to part with those quids at the enhanced price, and at the same time it was a wrench to think of parting with them. He closed the box at last, and pushed in the rivet that secured the lid. Then his eye fell on the clock, and he jumped. In his keen interest in the Gold Question he had, for once, forgotten the time for closing the gates. He was three minutes late, and late-comers, who might have been shut out and reported, would be queuing in and cutting across to the House, unreported. Leaving the cigar-box on the table, Gosling rushed out of the lodge.

He reached the gates just as three fellows came hurrying up the road, and reached them on the other side. The three were Coker, Potter, and Greene of the Fifth Form. Coker of the Fifth

had just time to jam in his foot as Gosling slammed the gate.

"Here, hold on, you old ass!" ejaculated Coker.

"You're late, sir!" said Gosling stolidly. "I'll have to take your names before I let you in."

"Shove, you men!" said Coker.

"Look 'ere," exclaimed Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere— Oh! Owl! Wooh!"

Three Fifth Form men pushing on the gate were too much for Gosling. He sat down as the gate swung back.

"Ow!" gasped Gosling. "I'll report for!"

"Report and be blowed!" said Coker. "The gate wasn't shut, you old sweep! You're a crusty old curmudgeon, Gosling!"

"Pushing a man over!" gasped Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere. I'll go straight to Mr. Prout and report yer!"

"Will you?" said Coker. "Well, then, if you're going to report to Prout—"

"I ham!" said Gosling, with emphasis.

"Then you can report at the same time that I hushed your hat over your cheeky head!" said Coker.

Crunch!

"Whoop!" roared Gosling. Coker of the Fifth, red and wrathful, marched off towards the House, followed by Potter and Greene. Gosling sat and gurgled, and extracted his ancient head from his ancient hat. Two or three late-comers, coming up at a run, dodged in at the open gate while Gosling was thus engaged.

Gosling staggered up. He stayed only to lock the gates, in case there should be any more late-comers. Then, in a state of towering wrath, he tramped away to the House to report to Coker's Form master.

And a fat junior, blinking at him through a pair of large spectacles, grinned as he watched him go. It was Bunter's chance at last!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Tit for Tat!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. Gosling had vanished, in the falling dusk, in the direction of the House.

His lodge was left deserted, the door wide open.

Billy Bunter had been watching for a chance.

Bunter had been busy for some time washing off glue. He was still rather sticky in places. He was as vengeful as ever; in fact, more so. His unaccustomed exertions with soap and water had soured his temper. For a quarter of an hour or more he had been keeping an eye on Gosling's lodge, hoping for a chance, and here was his chance!

The fat Owl rolled hastily into Gosling's lodge.

He had no more glue for Gosling's slippers. His supply of glue had been used up on himself. But there are more ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream. Billy Bunter blinked hurriedly round Gosling's cosy room, grabbed the inkstand from the table, and poured the ink into the seat of Gosling's roomy armchair. There was a well-worn hollow in the leather seat of the armchair where Gosling's ancient form had reposed evening after evening for more years than the oldest inhabitant of Greyfriars could remember. It held the ink nicely in a pool.

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Bunter chuckled.

Whoever sat in that armchair was going to meet with a surprise. This was really as good as glue in the slippers!

As he replaced the inkstand on the table, Billy Bunter's eyes fell on the cigar-box.

He blinked at it.

He picked it up.

"My hat! Cigars!" murmured Bunter.

He had never seen Gosling smoking cigars. Gosling favoured an old black pipe, as a rule. Apparently Gosling was "doing himself" rather expensively in the smoking line for once.

Bunter's first idea as he picked up the cigar-box was to drop it out of the window and let Gosling hunt for it till he found it. But second thoughts supervened.

Second thoughts are said to be the best. On this occasion they were far from being the best.

Bunter's fat fingers closed on the cigar-box.

Gosling had bagged his cigarettes. Why shouldn't he bag Gosling's cigars in exchange? Serve him right!

Ever since those cigarettes had been taken away Bunter had been—or fancied that he had been—dying for a smoke. Here were smokes in plenty!

Certainly, if Billy Bunter had smoked a cigar he would have had reason to repent. But it is experience that makes fools wise. Bunter did not think of the internal convulsions that might follow the smoking of a cigar. He thought of himself with a cigar in his mouth, puffing away like old Prout, and thoroughly enjoying himself. Exchange was no robbery! Bunter decided on the spot to bag that box of cigars.

Naturally, it did not occur to him that a cigar-box did not contain cigars. What should it contain if not cigars?

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

He slipped the cigar-box under his jacket and hurried out of Gosling's lodge. With a cheery grin on his fat face, and the cigar-box safely hidden under his jacket, he rolled away to the House.

"Back up, old fat bean!" called out Peter Todd as the Owl of the Remove rolled in. "Call-over in a minute or two."

Bunter did not heed. He hurried up the stairs to the Remove passage. Bunter felt that he was perfectly justified in bagging those cigars. What could be fairer than taking cigars in exchange for cigarettes? But he realised that this view, though well founded, might not be generally shared. It was only prudent to get his prize out of sight as soon as possible, and certainly he could not venture into Hall with a box of cigars under his jacket. Quelch had an eye on him these days, and if Quelch spotted him with cigars in his possession—Bunter shuddered at the thought.

The Remove passage was deserted—only a few minutes before calling-over. Bunter hastened to his study.

There he paused. Quelch had dropped into that study once to look for smokes—fortunately, without finding any. He might drop in again. Study No. 7 was evidently not a safe place for his plunder.

Bunter hurried on to Study No. 4. That was a safe place—as safe as he could desire. Study No. 4 belonged to Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing—two Remove fellows who had not yet come back to Greyfriars for the new term. So the study was unoccupied. Nobody was likely to look into Study

No. 4 until the Bunter and Redwing came back to school, and they were not expected back for some days yet.

The fat Owl rolled into Smithy's study. He opened the table drawer, shoved the box into it, and closed the drawer again.

That box of cigars was safe now—perfectly safe. Bunter rolled out of Study No. 4 with a fat grin of satisfaction on his podgy face. He hurried down the stairs, and was just in time to dodge into Hall for call-over.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Quech on the Trail!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry, "Jolly old Chingachook!"

Some of the fellows in the

Rag grinned.

It was after prep, and most of the Remove were gathered in the Rag, the apartment where that Form most did congregate.

Harry Wharton & Co. were discussing the coming cricket matches, and also the fact that Vernon-Smith had not yet returned to school for the new term. As Smithy had been elected captain of the Remove, the Form games were in his hands; but he had not turned up yet. It was known that his chum, Tom Redwing, had been ill, and that Smithy had leave to stay with him till he was well enough to come back to Greyfriars. It was a matter of interest to all the Form, especially to the Famous Five, who were great men at games, and who were doubtful how matters would go under Smithy's captaincy. But they forgot Smithy and cricket as an angular figure stepped into the doorway of the Rag and a pair of gimlet eyes looked over the room.

It was Mr. Quelch, playfully referred to by Bob Cherry as "Chingachook."

Of late, Quelch had, in fact, rather resembled that celebrated Indian trail-hunter. He had been on the trail of Billy Bunter, keeping a very watchful eye on that fat and fatuous youth since the incident of the cigarettes in the woodshed.

Bunter was Mr. Quelch's most backward pupil, as well as his laziest. Quelch was used to that; he bore with Bunter as patiently as he could. But if Bunter was adding surreptitious smoking to obtuseness and laziness, Mr. Quelch had no patience to waste on him. Bunter could not help being dense, and perhaps he could not help being lazy; but he could help being a young rascal, and Quelch was prepared to help him to help it—with the assistance of his cane.

The gimlet eyes glinted over the crowded Rag. It did not pick out Bunter, however. Bunter was not there.

The Removeites smiled. They knew what Quelch was after; and they knew whom he was after. They wondered where Bunter was, and what he was up to. Wherever he was and whatever he was up to, he had to reckon with Henry Samuel Quelch.

"Wharton!" rapped the Remove master.

"Yes, sir!"

"Is Bunter here?"

"No, sir!"

"Where is he?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch, though his tone implied that it was not very well—not well at all, in fact.

He left the Rag, leaving the juniors grinning. If Bunter had bagged anybody's cigarettes again, and was smoking them, Bunter was evidently booked.



"Oh lor! Oh crumbs! Oh scissors!" gasped Bunter, as he withdrew the broken bottle of liquid glue from his pocket. "Ow! Beast! I'm sticky all over!" "Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "Is that the bottle you told me you hadn't got in your pocket?"

Mr. Quelch ascended the stairs and rustled into the Remove passage. He pushed open the door of Study No. 7 and looked in. The study was dark; no one was there.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips. Bunter had not gone down to the Rag after prep, and he was not in his study. Where was he? If he was smoking cigarettes in some secluded corner he was going to be rooted out.

The Remove master rustled along the passage. Most of the studios were dark and deserted. A gleam of light under the door of No. 4 caught his eye. He stopped.

Study No. 4 was—or should have been—unoccupied. Now, obviously, it was occupied. Who was in that deserted study—unless it was a young rascal indulging in surreptitious smoking? Mr. Quelch's grim brow grew grimmer.

"I say, you fellows!"

The door, as he now discerned, was ajar. From within came a well-known fat voice. Bunter was there, and he was not alone.

"Get out, you fat freak!"

That was Skinner's voice.

"Shut the door after you, barrel!"

It was the voice of Snoop.

"Take your face away!"

Stott's voice this time.

Mr. Quelch paused.

Four Removites were in that deserted study. Three of them—Skinner & Co.—were fellows on whom Mr. Quelch had always had a more or less suspicious eye. But Mr. Quelch did not want to appear an unduly suspicious and watchful Form master. The juniors might have gone into Vernon-Smith's deserted study for all sorts of reasons. He paused.

"Look here, you fellows, you get out of this study!" went on the fat voice

of Billy Bunter. "If you want to smoke, go and smoke in your own study."

"No fear!" chuckled Skinner. "Quelch came rooting up last evening and he might come rooting up again."

If he sniffed baccy in a man's study he might get suspicious.

"Safer here!" said Snoop. "What the thump do you want here, anyhow, Bunter? Nothing here for you."

"Yes; what are you butting in for?" asked Stott. "Do you think Smithy left anything over from last term, or what?"

"Get out, anyhow!" said Skinner. "You're not having any of these fags! You bagged my box of smokes yesterday, you funny freak!"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"What does the silly ass want?" demanded Snoop. "Look here, Bunter, what have you butted into this study for?"

"Well, I didn't know you were here," said Bunter. "I—I haven't come in for—for anything. But—"

"Well, if you don't want anything, take it and go!" said Snoop.

"Look here, you fellows, get out!" said Bunter. "Like your cheek to smoke in Smithy's study. I wasn't going to do anything of the kind myself."

"You jolly well were, if you could pinch another fellow's smokes," said Skinner. "Well, you're not having any."

"Keep your rotten cigarettes!" said Bunter scornfully. "I don't think much of cigarettes. I prefer cigars myself."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Not that I've got any cigars," added Bunter hastily.

"I know you haven't, you fat ass! Cigars cost money," said Skinner. "Get out and shut the door!" said Snoop. "There's a draught. Take your face away and bury it."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter glared at the smoky three. He had come along to the Bounder's study for a cigar after prep, and he had found Skinner & Co. in possession. He could not, of course, disinter the hidden cigar-box in the presence of those sportive youths. They would have demanded equal whacks in the prize, if Skinner had not bagged the whole box, in compensation for the loss of his box of cigarettes. What Bunter had considered fair on Gosling, Skinner might have considered fair on Bunter. Bunter was longing to open that cigar-box and try one of the cigars. But he had to wait till Skinner & Co. had finished their cigarettes and gone.

But Skinner & Co. were not fated to finish those cigarettes. The door of the study was pushed open from without.

"Shut that dashed door!" said Skinner. "It—Oh, my hat! Great pip—Quelch!"

"Quelch!" gasped Snoop.

Three cigarettes dropped suddenly to the floor. Three startled and terrified young rascals leaped up and stared in horror at the figure in the doorway. The dread form that drew Priam's curtains at dead of night did not inspire so much terror as Henry Samuel Quelch at that moment.

Billy Bunter blinked round, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

"Skinner! Snoop! Stott!" Mr. Quelch's voice was not loud, but deep.

"What does this mean?"

"Oh crickey!" groaned Skinner. "I—I say, sir—" spluttered Bunter. "I—I wasn't smoking, sir! I—I wouldn't—I didn't—I wasn't—"

"I am aware that you were not smoking, Bunter. You may leave the study." Billy Bunter, deeply thankful that THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 1,265,

Skinner & Co.'s presence had prevented him from disinterring the cigar-box from the table-drawer, rolled past his Form master and escaped.

Skinner & Co. would have been glad to follow his example. But there was no escape for them. Mr. Quelch's glinting eye held them, as the glittering eye of the Ancient Mariner held the Wedding Guest of old.

Mr. Quelch picked up a box of cigarettes from the table. For the second time Skinner was losing his supply of smokes. But that did not worry him so much as the expression on Mr. Quelch's face. There was worse to follow. As the Prince of Denmark observed, "Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind."

"Skinner! Snoop! Stott! Follow me!" said Mr. Quelch, in an awful voice.

The sportive three exchanged dismal looks and followed their Form master from the study. Mr. Quelch stopped to take the key from the door, insert it in the outside, and turn it. He slipped the key into his pocket. That study was to remain locked up till its owners came back to school. There were to be no more secret smoking-parties in that study.

The Remove master rustled away down the passage, Skinner & Co. following him in the lowest of spirits. Mr. Quelch had come up to the Remove quarters suspecting Bunter. He had made an unexpected capture. Bunter, from the door of Study No. 7 grinned after the hapless trio, as they trailed away after Quelch.

A few minutes later, sounds of woe were heard in Mr. Quelch's study. Skinner & Co. were suffering for their sins. When they emerged they looked as if they found life hardly worth living.

But Billy Bunter gave no thought to the sufferings of Skinner & Co. They were safe off the scene; and Quelch was not likely to come back. Billy Bunter rolled along to Study No. 4 again, and grinned as he turned the door-handle.

Then he ceased to grin.

The door was locked and the key gone.

"Beat!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at the door of Study No. 4 in dismay.

Quelch, no doubt, had been thinking of Skinner & Co. when he locked up the empty study. But it was upon the fat Owl that the blow fell.

The cigar-box was in the drawer of Smithy's table. Between Bunter and his prize was a thick oak door and a strong lock.

With a snort of disgust, the fat Owl turned away. There was no cigar for Bunter that evening. Unless some time, and somehow, he found a key to fit the lock, that cigar-box had to remain where it was till Smithy came back to Greyfriars.

Really, it was hard lines on a dogged card who was dying for a smoke! And Bunter did not even realize that he would have felt still more like dying if he had had the smoke!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Lost, Stolen, or Strayed!

"PINCHED!" said Gosling.

"Nonsense!" said the Head.

"Well, I says is this 'ere, sir—pinched!"

Gosling was in a state of excitement. The Head was annoyed, puzzled, and irritated.

Dr. Locke was busy in his study that

evening. He was preparing some Greek papers for the Sixth Form.

Interruption meant that he might not have those Greek papers ready for the Sixth in the morning.

This would not, perhaps, have been a blow to the Sixth. But it was an urgent matter in the eyes of their headmaster.

It was intensely annoying to Dr. Locke to be interrupted by a school porter in a state of excitement, and speaking a language which was incomprehensible to him.

"I fail to understand you, Gosling!" said Dr. Locke tartly. "You state that you had ten sovereigns in a box—a cigar-box—and that you left them on the table in your lodge while you went to make a report to Mr. Prout. You state that someone has entered your lodge and pinched these sovereigns. I fail to understand why anyone should do so. I fail to understand how, if anyone did so, any damage can have accrued."

"They're pinched!" gasped Gosling.

"Absurd!" said the Head. "But even so, what does it matter?"

"Wot!" gurgled Gosling.

"The metal of which a sovereign is manufactured," said Dr. Locke, "is of an extremely hard and substantial nature. Pinching a sovereign could not possibly damage it—unless, indeed, some instrument was used for that purpose, such as a pair of pliers. Is that what you mean?"

Gosling gazed at the headmaster of Greyfriars.

Dr. Locke was a living mine of wisdom and knowledge. The classical languages were child's play to him. It was known that he could read the most obscure passages in Sophocles as if they were written in English. It was even rumoured that he understood what Sophocles meant by them—if Sophocles meant anything.

But there were things the Head did not know, evidently. Latin and Greek were as familiar to him as his mother tongue. French, German, Spanish, Italian he took in his stride. But the language spoken in the lodge at the gates of Greyfriars School was unfamiliar to his ears.

"I—I—I mean wot I says, sir—pinched!" spluttered Gosling. "Them quids, sir—pinched!"

"If you mean that they are actually damaged, I must look into the matter," said the Head. "I can scarcely imagine that any Greyfriars boy would play such an absurd and unmeaning trick, as to pinch coins to the extent of damaging or defacing them, and certainly it could not be done without the use of some powerful instrument. It is, indeed, against the law to deface coins of the realm, and if that is the case, the matter is serious. Let me see these coins immediately!"

"Let you see them, sir!" gasped Gosling. "Ow can I let you see them, when they're pinched?"

"And why not?" demanded the Head testily. "If they have been pinched to the extent of defacing them, I can judge of the damage by looking at them. Where are they?"

"Ow should I know where they are, when they're pinched?" said Gosling helplessly. "Don't you ketch on, sir! They're pinched! Took away, sir!"

"Took away!" repeated the Head. With a sort of mental jump, he grasped it. "Oh, you mean taken away! Do you mean to tell me that your sovereigns have been taken away, Gosling?"

"Course I do, sir."

"I trust you are sober, Gosling," said the Head, eyeing the ancient porter

rather doubtfully. "You distinctly stated that these coins had been pinched—apparently with some instrument—"

"Oh, my eye!" said Gosling. "When I says pinched, sir, I means took away—nicked, sir!"

"Nicked!" repeated the Head.

"That's it, sir—they're nicked!" said Gosling, hoping that this made it quite clear, even to the limited intelligence of a schoolmaster.

"If they are indeed nicked the matter is serious," said Dr. Locke. "It is undoubtedly illegal to deface coins; and if they had been pinched in some instrument, to the extent of making actual nicks in the metal—"

"Oh crimes!" said Gosling, hopelessly.

"But I fail to see how you can know that these coins have been pinched, and nicked, if they have been taken away!" said the Head. "Your statements are contradictory, Gosling."

"Pinched! Nicked! Stole!" wailed Gosling. "Took away! Snaffled! Snooped! They've been stolen!"

Dr. Locke got it at last. The intellect that was equal to the obscure passages of Sophocles, was equal to the still more obscure passages of William Gosling.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head. "Are you stating that money has been abstracted from your lodge, Gosling?"

"Course I am, sir! Ten blooming quids—packed in cotton in a cigar-box what I got when Mr. Prout throwed it away—"

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head.

It was clear at last!

Had Gosling been able to put it in ancient, or even modern, Greek, the Head would have caught on sooner. Had he been able to put it in the English that was spoken in the Head's study or Masters' Common-room, Dr. Locke would not have misunderstood. But between Dr. Locke's, English, and Gosling's English, there was a great gulf fixed.

But the facts were borne in upon the headmaster's mind at last; he grasped the hidden meaning of those odd words, pinched and nicked. Gosling did not mean that some practical joker had pinched the coins in some instrument and made nicks in the metal. He meant that some dishonest person had stolen them!

"They're gone, sir!" added Gosling, to make it sun-clear, as it were.

"Gorn! Took away! Snooped! Gorn!"

"Impossible!" said the Head decisively. "You have made some mistake, Gosling—some ridiculous mistake! Who could possibly have entered the school and removed your sovereigns?"

"Nobody, sir," said Gosling. "The gates was locked, and nobody could 'ave come in. I locked the gates afore I went to Mr. Prout to report that there Coker. It was what the pertice calls an inside job, sir."

"Nonsense! Every servant employed at Greyfriars is above suspicion!" said the Head crossly. Then he started a little. "You do not imagine, Gosling, I presume, that any Greyfriars boy can have entered your lodge and removed these coins?"

As a matter of fact, this was exactly what Gosling did imagine. His opinion of Greyfriars boys was not so high as the Head's.

"Well, somebody's took them, sir!" he said. "And the young raskils—I mean, the young gentlemen, are always a-larking about a man's lodge—"

"Nonsense!" said the Head.

He gave a farewell glance at the

Greek papers, and rose to his feet. Those Greek papers had to wait.

"I will accompany you to your lodge, Gosling," he said. "I have not the slightest doubt that you have made some absurd mistake, and that your money is still there."

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Come!" said the Head sharply.

With a frowning brow, Dr. Locke left the house, and rustled away to the porter's lodge.

Gosling frowned still more gloomily as he followed.

The Head was intensely annoyed and disturbed. The mere suggestion that there might be a thief in the school was ridiculous, humiliating, painful, intolerable. The Head felt it keenly; but Gosling was feeling it still more keenly. They were his sovereigns. Gosling had not yet quite made up his dubious mind whether he would part with them or not. Now the question had been settled for him, and the parting was painful.

Arrived at the lodge, Gosling pointed out the exact spot where he had left the cigar-box. Certainly it was no longer there. Dr. Locke uttered a sound suspiciously resembling a snort.

"Look for the box!" he said. "Doubtless you have placed it in some corner—some receptacle—out of sight. I have no doubt—no doubt whatever—that you will find it in this room. Search at once. I will wait."

The Head sat down in Gosling's arm-chair to wait.

Gosling snorted.

He was quite certain that his treasure-box was no longer in the room. But the Head's word was law, and Gosling had to obey. He proceeded to search about the room, lifting things and replacing them, peering into cupboards and shelves and corners. The Head, sitting upright and stately in the arm-chair, watched him, frowning.

It was only after a time, and slowly, that Dr. Locke became aware of a feeling of dampness in that chair.

He stirred uneasily.

"Bless my soul!" he said at last. "This chair feels quite—quite damp! Gosling, I trust that this chair is not damp."

"Not that I knows on, sir!" said Gosling.

"It certainly seems damp—actually wet, in fact! I—I cannot help feeling that some—some fluid is soaking me!" exclaimed the Head. "If you have been so very careless, Gosling, as to spill water in this chair—"

"I ain't, sir!"

"It is certainly damp!" exclaimed the Head; and he rose. He whisked round to look at the seat of the chair, and as he whisked, drops of ink spurted from him far and wide.

Gosling ceased searching for the missing box. He stared blankly at the Head's back. Ink was running down the tail of the Head's gown, and forming a pool on the floor. Ink!

"My eye!" gasped Gosling.

Dr. Locke peered into the chair. He had soaked up most of the ink that Billy Bunter had so thoughtfully placed there for Gosling. But there was enough left to enlighten him.

"Ink!" ejaculated the Head. "There is ink in the chair! I—I—I have been sitting in—in—in ink! Bless my soul! Gosling, if you are sober, what is the meaning of this? How dare you—I repeat, how dare you—how dare you play such a—such a fantastic and foolish trick!"

"I—I—I—I didn't!" gurgled Gosling. "I never knowed there was blooming ink."

"You have been drinking, Gosling!"

Bless my soul! I am soaked with ink! My gown is drenched! My trousers—Bless my soul! Ink—ink is running down me, all over! I—I—I am completely soaked with ink. You have upset ink in your chair, and I—I have sat in it! You have allowed me to sit in it! Bless my soul! Gosling, you have been drinking! I shall discharge you, Gosling! Atrocious!"

The Head strode out of the lodge, leaving an inky trail behind him. Gosling gazed after him in horror. He even forgot for the moment the fact that the "quids" had been "pinched." Dr. Locke, in thunderous wrath, disappeared from Gosling's horrified eyes.

"My eye!" ejaculated Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere—my eye! Oh lor!"

The quids had been pinched. There seemed to be no doubt about that. But Gosling did not approach the Head on

SMILE, LADS!

At this amusing joke which has won for J. S. Edwards, of 7, Ruabon Road, Didsbury, Manchester,

A FINE POCKET-KNIFE!



Customer (fratally): "These sausages you sold me have meat at one end and bread at the other."
Butcher: "Yes, meum, it's very hard these days, you know, to make both ends 'meet'!"

You'd be delighted with one of these topping prizes. Send in your riddle for day—you may score a bullseye first time!

the subject again that evening. Anxious as he was about the quids, he felt that he had better give Dr. Locke time to recover from the ink.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Something "Up"!

"I SAY, you fellows! Something's up!" The Remove fellows did not need Billy Bunter to tell them that. Quite early in the morning all Greyfriars knew that something was "up."

Form masters had extremely grave faces. Prefects of the Sixth Form looked, as Skinner expressed it, like boiled owls.

Something had happened!

Nobody, so far, knew what. But in morning break the fellows asked one another what the diabolical it was.

Obviously it was something serious. Fellows remembered that the Head,

at early prayers, had looked fearfully solemn. Quelch had looked unusually grave in the Remove-room. Prout, master of the Fifth, looked portentous when he rolled out in break. Fellows heard him speaking to Capper, the master of the Fourth, and caught the word "theft."

That word, repeated up and down the quad, caused a thrill.

"Somebody's been pinching something," said Skinner. "Where's Bunter? What have you been pinching this time, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"What utter rot!" said Harry Wharton. "Don't make rotten jokes like that, Skinner! Nobody's been pinching anything!"

"The pinchfulness is not terrific," said Hurree Janiset Ram Singh, shaking his dusky head.

"I heard old Prout use the word 'theft,' he declared Haseldene. "He said it quite plain, speaking to Capper."

"Prout's an old ass!"

"But what's been pinched?" asked Skinner. "If it was grub we know who did it. Needn't look farther than Bunter."

"Beast!"

"They wouldn't make all this fuss over grub," said Peter Todd. "It's something jolly serious, you men! All the beaks know, and the prefects! We're going to have some jolly old excitement to-day!"

The Remove were already rather excited when they went back into their Form-room after break. They found Mr. Quelch there, looking graver than ever. Third lesson did not commence immediately. Quelch had something to say to his Form first.

"My boys," said the Remove master, when the juniors were all in their places, "I have to put a question to you, which, by the headmaster's instructions, is to be put to all the Forms."

Mr. Quelch paused. The Remove hung on his words, with an attention they seldom displayed when their Form master was imparting information unto them on school subjects.

"Did any boy belonging to this Form enter the porter's lodge last evening between lock-up and calling-over?" asked Mr. Quelch.

Billy Bunter gave a start.

Not for a moment, hitherto, had Bunter connected the suppressed excitement and the air of mystery in the school with his exploits in Gosling's lodge.

Gosling, no doubt, had missed his cigars; but a few cigars in a box could hardly have caused all this fuss. Gosling, no doubt, had sat in the ink; but nobody at Greyfriars cared whether Gosling sat in ink or not—except, of course, Gosling. Gosling, no doubt, cared considerably.

But as Mr. Quelch spoke, it rushed into Bunter's fat mind that it was that exchange—that fair and just exchange—of cigarettes for cigars, that was causing all these solemn, owl-like looks on the part of masters and prefects. And Bunter quaked. According to two or three fellows, old Prout had been heard to use the awful word "theft." It was all rot, of course; exchange was no robbery! Still, Bunter wished now that he hadn't annexed those cigars in exchange for the confiscated cigarettes. His action was absolutely justified—in his own poky mind, at least. But he realized that it might be misunderstood by intellectuals less gifted than his own. He sat and quaked.

But he did not speak. Nobody spoke. Mr. Quelch, pausing like Brutus for a

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reply, he had no better luck than Brutus. There was no reply.

Having waited a whole minute, doubtless to give the Ramovites time to recollect whether they had butted into the porter's lodge or not, Mr. Quelch re-asserted after the interval.

"Did any boy in this Form enter Gosling's lodge at all after class yesterday?" He was widening the net, as it were.

"Yes, sir," said Harry Wharton, "I did!" He stood up.

Mr. Quelch fixed his gimlet eyes on Wharton.

"Why did you enter Gosling's lodge, Wharton?"

"He asked me to do so, sir!"

"Gosling was there at the time?"

"Oh, yes, sir, all the time."

"I think you had better tell me, Wharton, why, as you say, the school porter asked you to enter his lodge."

"Certainly, sir. He was in doubt whether it was now legal to sell sovereigns over their face value, and I told him that it was."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch. "That is all?"

"That is all, sir."

"Very well, Wharton! You may sit down! Has any other boy in the Form anything to tell me?"

No other boy in the Form had! There was silence. Billy Bunter certainly could have told his Form master something, had he liked. But Billy Bunter was just then cultivating the manners and customs of an oyster.

"Very well!" said Mr. Quelch again.

With that, the mysterious subject was dropped, and third lesson began. But there was a subdued hum of excitement in the Form-room during third lesson.

Geography, though an important subject, failed to claim the interest of the juniors. They were wondering more than ever what was "up." They knew now that something, whatever it was, had happened in the porter's lodge.

That much was clear from Mr. Quelch's questions. But what it was was still a mystery—a mystery more interesting than geography.

No sooner were the Remove dismissed than most of the Form streamed away to the porter's lodge to ask Gosling what had happened. Billy Bunter did not join in the rush. Bunter did not need to ask Gosling what had happened—Bunter knew!

Fellows of other Forms, as well as the Remove, crowded round Gosling's lodge. It was quite a reception.

Gosling did not seem pleased by receiving the numerous and distinguished company. He seemed distrustful and grumpy than ever. Neither did the numerous questioners get any change out of Gosling. He refused to explain.

"I ain't got nothing to say!" said Gosling, twenty times at least. "The 'Ead' took the matter up, and told me to say nothing. That's all."

"But what's the matter?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Ask the 'Ead'!" suggested Gosling.

"I'm not on sufficiently pally terms with the Head to ask him, old bean. I'm asking you! Cough it up!"

"Wot I says in this 'ere, you clear off!" said Gosling.

"Somebody been pinching your bottle of gin, old chum?" asked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Slam! Gosling shut his door on the many eager inquirers. They cleared off—more curious and excited than ever.

Billy Bunter met the Famous Five as they came back to the House. He blinked at them rather anxiously.

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"I say, you fellows, did Gosling say he'd lost anything?"

"No; he's as mum as an oyster," answered Harry.

"Oh! He didn't mention cigars, or anything?" asked Bunter.

"Cigars!" Wharton stared at the fat Owl. "No! What do you mean? Old Gosling doesn't smoke cigars!"

"Of course not!" agreed Bunter.

"I've never seen a box of cigars in his lodge. Never in my life!"

"Well, I've seen a cigar-box there," said Harry. "But there weren't cigars in it."

Bunter blinked at him.

"What else would he have in it, you say?"

"Quids!" said Harry, laughing.

Bunter jumped.

"Wha-a-at?" he ejaculated.

"You heard me tell Quelch Gosling asked me into his lodge," said Harry.

"He showed me some sovereigns he kept in a cigar-box—he wasn't sure whether it was legal to sell them over their face value. He—What the thump's the matter with you, Bunter?"

The Co. started at Bunter.

The fat Owl's jaw had fallen, and he was gazing at them in horror.

His little, round eyes almost bulged through his big, round spectacles.

"Gig-gig-Gosling k-k-k-kept quids in a cigar-box!" burred Bunter faintly. "The silly ass! Wha-a-at did he keep them in a cigar-box for?"

"Why shouldn't he?" asked Wharton, in wonder. "He had to keep them in something, I suppose!"

"Oh crickey!"

"What's the matter, you fat Owl?"

Bunter seemed bereft of speech.

The awful truth had rushed into his fat mind. He knew what all the fuss was about now—the only fellow who knew!

It was not cigars he had bagged in Gosling's lodge. It was money! That idiot, that ass, that old fathead, Gosling, kept sovereigns in a cigar-box; and Bunter—supposing that a cigar-box contained cigars, as any fellow might have supposed—had bagged Gosling's sovereigns. And those sovereigns, still in the cigar-box, were locked up in Smith's vacant study—beyond Bunter's power to return them where they belonged!

And old Prout had been heard to use the word "theft." Billy Bunter goggled at the Famous Five in utter horror.

Perspiration oozed out on his podgy face. In his mind's eye, the fat Owl already saw himself called up before the Head, his fat ears already seemed to hear the awful words: "Bunter, you are expelled!" Billy Bunter's podgy brain fairly swam.

Harry Wharton dropped a hand on his fat shoulder. The varying expressions on Bunter's fat face surprised him and alarmed him a little.

"Bunter, you fat duffer, what's up?"

"Oh crickey!"

"Have you been up to something in Gosling's lodge, you awful ass?"

"Eh? No! Certainly not! I say, you fellows, don't you get making out that it was me!" gasped Bunter. "I never knew anything about it!"

"About what?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Nothing!"

"You never knew anything about nothing?" demanded Frank Nugent.

"Exactly! I say, you fellows, I—I don't believe anything's happened at all, really! Gosling drinks, you know. I fancy he imagined the whole thing!"

"What whole thing?" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, nothing!"

Billy Bunter rolled hastily away. Ifo had a secret to keep, and he was not good at keeping secrets. He realised that the less he said the better. The Famous Five stared at one another.

"What on earth's happened?" asked Bob.

"Whatever it is, that fat freak knows!" said Harry Wharton. "That's pretty clear!"

"The clearfulness is terrific!"

"But what?"

"Goodness knows!"

It was still a mystery when Greyfriars went in to dinner.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Who was it?

"SCANDALOUS!" said Prout.

Common-room agreed that it was scandalous.

"There is a rogue in our midst!" said Prout.

Common-room nodded assent.

"There are black sheep," said Prout, "in every flock! My own Form, I am thankful to say, are above suspicion. But—"

Mr. Prout glanced darkly round Common-room. Thankful as he was to say that his own Form were above suspicion, he could not be equally thankful to say that other masters' Forms were above suspicion also. Obviously, suspicion had to rest on somebody.

"A poor but honest man," said Prout, "has been robbed! I have said, and I repeat, that it is scandalous! There is a rascal in our midst! He must be found! He must be exposed! He must be rooted out! My dear Quelch, perhaps in your Form—"

Dear Quelch gave Prout a glare that the fabled basilisk might have envied.

"I fail to see, sir, why you should mention my Form!" he hooted.

"If there is a dishonest boy at Greyfriars, sir, he most certainly will not be found in my Form! I regard that as a sheer impossibility."

"This is not a matter for the display of personal feeling, Quelch! It is a matter that concerns us all! Perhaps in your Form, Hacker—"

"I shall be obliged," said the master of the Shell, in his most acid tones, "if you will refrain from referring to my Form in such a connection, Prout! I regard it as most offensive!"

"It is not my intention to be offensive, Hacker! Some Greyfriars boy has abstracted a box containing money from the porter's lodge! That is assured! He must be in some Form! Why not yours?"

"And why not yours?" bawled Mr. Hacker.

"Mine!" hooted Mr. Prout. His plump face became purple. "Do I hear you aught, Hacker?"

"Probably, unless your hearing is affected!" answered the master of the Shell.

Prout gurgled.

"This discussion," he said, "is degenerating into personalities. It had better cease!"

Prout stalked out of the Common-room.

But the discussion did not cease with the departure of Prout. It went on. All the beaks had to agree with Prout that there was a rascal in their midst, and that it was scandalous. Obviously, as Prout had said, the rascal must be in some Form! All the Form masters acknowledged that! But no Form master was willing to acknowledge that the rascal was to be found in his own particular Form. That, in the opinion of each Form master, was a ludicrous suggestion.



"Gosling, there appears to be some fluid soaking me!" exclaimed Dr. Locke. As he whisked out of the chair, blobs of ink spurted from him. "My eye!" gasped the school porter. "I never knewed there was blooming ink there, sir!"

Masters' Common-room was not the only room where discussion was going on. It was going on in every study at Greyfriars.

Seniors and juniors discussed this awful happening. Fags discussed it! Never had a topic been so thoroughly discussed.

For a whole day the school had been kept on tenterhooks—from early morn till dewy eve! Everybody knew that something had happened—but hardly anybody knew what had happened. Dr. Locke, naturally, had desired such a painful incident not to be talked about, if it could be avoided. Masters and prefects had been instructed to inquire, quietly, tactfully, strategically, as it were, without announcing what an awful thing had happened. If the delinquent, who had "pinched" the box of sovereigns from the porter's lodge, could be tracked down without a public sensation, turfed out of Greyfriars without the whole school rocking with excitement over it, so much the better. For a whole day masters and prefects had been given their heads, so to speak. And the result had been—nil!

No master, no prefect, had been able to discover any fellow who had sneaked into the porter's lodge the previous evening. Had such a fellow been discovered, all would have been plain sailing. The fellow could have been taken quietly to the Head; questioned, his guilt adjudged; and sent home with an explanatory letter to his sorrowful parents—and the painful episode would have been at an end.

But it was not to be,

After a whole day of amateur detective work on the part of masters and prefects, nothing had been discovered. Some fellow, it appeared certain, had butted surreptitiously into the porter's lodge, and bagged that box of quids, which Gosling had so carelessly left on the table while he reported Coker of the Fifth to his Form master. But nobody had seen him at it! Who the fellow was, was known only to the fellow himself! And he seemed very careful not to give himself away. With great reluctance, the Head allowed the facts to become known at last. And all Greyfriars thrilled at the awful news. A thief in the school! It was awful—quite unnerving, in fact! But it was frightfully exciting! Some of the fags really seemed to be enjoying it.

Who had done it?

That, as Hamlet remarked of old, was the question.

Gosling—no longer silent, since the matter had been made public—described the cigar-box; pointed out the spot on the table where he had left it; added that he hadn't been away from his lodge more'n ten minutes; and deduced from this that the young raskil had been on the watch. But which young raskil it was, Gosling had not the faintest idea. The same young raskil, he supposed, who had spilt the ink in his chair, in which no less a person than the headmaster had sat!

Prefects, discussing the matter in the Prefects'-room with the seriousness that became such important personages, considered it probable that whoever had

done it, had gone into the lodge to "lark" with Gosling, and then, seeing the box of gold, had yielded to temptation and pinched it.

"That's what it looks like!" said Wingate. "A thief wouldn't have played monkey-tricks with ink. The young scoundrel went there for a jape, and then—"

"Looks like it!" agreed Gwynne. "The old man's fault for leaving his silly quids on the table. But that doesn't excuse the thief."

"Might have opened the box thinking it had cigars in it," remarked Loder, "and then, seeing the gold—"

In the Fifth Form games-study, somewhat the same view was taken. Except by Coker of the Fifth. Coker, of course, had to be original.

"Sudden temptation, be blowed!" said Coker. "That's all rot! How could anybody feel any temptation to take what wasn't his? Rubbish! A thief's a thief! If that old fool's quids have been taken, there's a thief in this school! Well, there isn't."

"But the quids are gone!" said Potter.

Snort from Coker of the Fifth. "Gosling's dashed old ass!" he said. "He reported me to Prout last night and I got three hundred lines for barging him over with the gate. That's the sort of old sweep Gosling is! If I were the Head, I'd sack him for making out that there's a thief in the school! Disgraceful, I call it."

(Continued on page 16.)

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Greystriars Herald

No. 95.

LAUGH AND GROW FAT.

Edited by
HARRY
WHARTON,
F.G.R.

LATEST
EXTRA
GOOD
EDITION

April 30th, 1932.

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"BOOK OF THE MONTH" CLUB TRAFFIC PROBLEM SOLVED

HIGHBROWS v. LOWBROWS

"Have you joined the Book of the Month Club?" is the question at the moment at Greystriars, just now. The Book of the Month Club, which until recently was an obscure little circle of bookworms, has suddenly become the most popular organisation in the school.

This is the result of a publicity campaign started by Vernon-Smith. Smithy joined himself recently, and thought he would do the club a good turn by holding a number of public meetings and making "Free Gifts" and giving insurance benefits to new members. With these little subtleties, the Bonader managed to increase the membership from 12 to 100 in the course of a couple of hours!

The first meeting of the re-organised Book of the Month Club was held on Tuesday evening, for the purpose of deciding which was the best book published during the month.

Mark Linley, the chairman, in opening the meeting, said that it was very gratifying to him to see so many zealous students of literature present. He was sure that their monthly decisions on literary matters would be extended helpful to serious Greystriars readers. He had much pleasure in calling on Vernon-Smith. (Cheers.)

Vernon-Smith, in a neatly-expressed speech, gave his reasons for recommending as the best book of the month, a story called "Headless Horror." He stated that it was what he would call high-class literature.

Dick Russell, who followed, said that he was surprised at Vernon-Smith wasting the time of the club talking about such "rubbish." He himself thought the best book of the month was an intellectual novel called "Zozomey." This magnificent book, he said, ran to several thousand pages, and was translated from the original Russian story by Bunkovitch.

When the speakers were still flaming themselves, Nugent minor, of the Second, jumped up and said it was all rot. The best book of the month was "Torrents of Gore," by B. Ludden Thunder. (Laughter.)

It quickly became apparent that there was some diversity of views among members. The Book of the Monthers seemed to be divided into two camps—Highbrows and Lowbrows. While the Highbrows, led by Linley and Russell and Monty Nowland, urged the merits of ponderous translations running into thousands of pages, the Lowbrows staunchly supported the claims of pirate and Wild West stories and comic papers.

There seemed to be no common agreement, except that one or two favoured a yarn called "The Ropo." This suggestion, however, was eventually turned down as the proposers admitted that they had only slipped through it.

A somewhat acrimonious discussion on Good Taste in Literature developed. Russell and Newland said that they thought they had better taste in literature than anyone else. On the other hand, Bob Cherry said he thought he undoubtedly had even better taste—at the early age of three, he recalled, he ate the best part of a copy of Shakespeare while his nurse's back was turned! (Laughter.)

Ribald interruptions and heated replies from the speakers eventually led to a good deal of

cheering and booing, which was followed by a little playful sparring and kicking among the members. Arguments were later reinforced by nose-breaking and ear-pulling.

Snapping in earnest began at 8.45, and continued without abatement till bed-time—the meeting being then adjourned to another date.

We have said enough to show that the Book of the Month Club is the very thing for Greystriars intellectuals. We're awfully glad it's become so popular.

For reasons which are nitidly beyond us, the original members don't seem to share our enthusiasm. But, then, there's no satisfying some fellows, is there?

REMOVE ANGLER'S TRIUMPH RECORD CATCH IN FISHING CONTEST

Despite the opposition of Sir Hilton Popper, who owns the fishing rights on that part of the River Sark, the Junior Fishing Championship was held at Highcliffe Reach on Tuesday evening.

Lines were cast at five o'clock prompt, and the competitors almost along their hooks a minute later, when there was a false alarm of Sir Hilton Popper's approach!

Several fine specimens were soon landed, however. Tom Brown drew in a ten-pound whioopee, Dick Rake bagged a guzander, and Stott hooked a rod, pole, and perch.

Then, just when the judge was preparing to call "Time!" there was a



sudden splash, followed by a terrific commotion in the river. Peter Todd found that something was tugging furiously at the end of his line—evidently something of an outside in fish, for it was churning half the river into foam, and almost pulling the angler into the water!

Peter stuck grinning to his rod and hauled in his victim inch by inch, till its head became visible above the water.

The Traffic Committee which has been sitting to inquire into the problem of traffic hold-ups at Greystriars has just issued its report. We can only say that it's about time. The traffic problem has gone from bad to worse, lately. It's no uncommon thing for a fellow to find himself tramping on somebody's face during morning break in the tuckshop, while the only way of gaining access

to the school is at about eight in the evening—down the chimney! The committee's recommendations are original and very much to the point. With regard to the matter of the Form-rooms, when a fellow goes, for instance, to the lavatory, that fellow dived out of the windows instead of making a blind rush for the lavatory. This is an awfully good idea. The drop to the ground is most cases is not more than 20 feet, so the dive can be made easily without having anything more serious than a bruised neck.

The Tuckshop Problem is one in which the committee has succeeded. Their solution is for runners to keep running round and round the tuckshop. This is an awfully good idea. As the crowd grows larger, so the crowd grows out of the tuckshop and round the quad.

A couple of Sir Hilton's gamekeepers turned up eventually. In their curiosity, the competitors, instead of boiling—stayed to ask their opinion.

"Sorry to trouble you, gentlemen," Peter Todd called out; "but we're awfully anxious to identify this specimen. Can you help us?"

The gamekeepers came across and looked.

What they saw caused them both to keep a clear three feet into the air.

"Specimen?" bawled one of them. "That ain't no specimen!"

"Then, what is it?"

"It's Sir 'Hilton Popper!' was the surprising reply.

And a closer examination convinced the anglers that the "fish" Peter had landed was indeed Sir Hilton himself! The noble baronet had noticed the anglers at work on his preserves and, in his excitement, thrown an apple pie fit over the little footbridge where he was crossing. Peter Todd's hook had fortunately caught him by the front of his collar, and saved him from death by drowning!

In the peculiar circumstances, the anglers deemed it expedient to bring the fishing contest to a sudden end. All were able to escape before Sir Hilton recovered.

The First Prize has, of course, been awarded to Peter Todd.

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REVISED HISTORY OF GREYFRIARS

Tabloid Story of Great School. By H. COKER

Greyfriars is a very ancient school. This will be readily understood when I mention that it was founded in the rain of King Thingumybb. The founder was a self-begotten chap in his day. We will call him Whattname, as I've forgotten what his real name was.

In the early days, Greyfriars must have been quite a small place, as there were only unrepent pupils to begin with. Many egging historical incidents have happened to and around the old school. I forget what they were, so I won't trouble to go into details.

Hundreds of years after the founding of Greyfriars, an event of staggering importance happened.

I need hardly mention that the event in question was the arrival of the writer of this History, Horace James Coker.

When Coker arrived, he found an air of slowness pervading the school.

Wherever he went, he made his inspiring influence felt. He was a grate sportsman, a tremendous athlete, and above all, a wonderful organiser. Under the influence of his inspiring presence the school rapidly became a power in the land.

Now, let us dwell in detail on the far-reaching consequences of Coker's coming to Greyfriars.

(Thanks, old bean, but we'd much rather not!—Ed.)

BE BETTER MANNERED— —LIKE THEY WERE IN THE OLD DAYS

It occurred to us yesterday, while watching a number of juniors in the tuckshop, staring jaw-tarted down each others' necks, how little is left of the dignified "style" which was the pride and joy of old Public school men in the Good Old Days.

Imagine what the Old Brigade would have said about fellows who stuffed "tarts" down each others' necks! We asked one this morning. He said it was a matter of deep regret to him that fellows had degenerated to such an extent. He added that in his day, jam-tarts were used for the purpose of smacking on each others' faces.

The modern mode of addressing

THE BATTLE OF COURTFIELD RIOTOUS SCENES IN HIGH STREET

Last Wednesday afternoon, Pousonby & Co., the well-known gay dogs of Highcliffe, were strolling down the Courtfield High Street, when they spotted Frank Nugent of the Greyfriars Remove.

Nugent was coming out of a shop, alone. Pon paused.

"Greyfriars cad!" he remarked cheerily.

"On his own, too!" yawned Vayassor. "Chances to settle a few old scores, I fancy!"

"The very thing I was thinkin'!"



used Pon. "Those tomatoes look pretty ripe—we'll help ourselves!"

They helped themselves to the tomatoes which were displayed outside the greengrocer's shop they were passing. A moment later, Nugent was surprised to receive four ripe and squishy specimens simultaneously on his face!

In another moment, Pon & Co. were even more surprised to receive four ripe and squishy oranges on their respective faces.

The explanation was that Nugent was not, as they had thought, on his own. Wharton and Cherry and Inky and Bull had followed him out of the shop just in time to witness the assault, and they quickly made use of some of the stock displayed outside of a fruiterer's on their side of the High Street.

Pon & Co., after gouging sticky oranges out of their eyes, grabbed more tomatoes and hurled them at the newcomers, scoring four bulls.

Several more Highcliffe fellows rolled up on the scene just then, and joined in. The Famous Five, undaunted, sent across a hot fusillade of oranges, apples, tomatoes, and potatoes.

Things might have gone badly for them, however, but for the arrival of reinforcements. Fortunately, Tom Brown and Haxelinde came along in the nick of time.

For the space of five minutes after that, unprecedented scenes were witnessed in Courtfield High Street. Traffic was held up, a crowd estimated at no less than a thousand gathered to look on, and the air became thick with flying fruit and vegetables!

We are pleased to report that before the police succeeded in stopping the engagement, the Friars achieved a magnificent victory and drove the enemy into the shelter of the greengrocer's, covered from head to foot in the juicy produce of the earth!

Wharton and his followers are all booked for swishing next Monday morning as a result of the episode; but they have the satisfaction of knowing that they covered themselves in glory, as well as the enemy in fruit!

The greengrocer's bills have been settled by public subscription at Greyfriars and Highcliffe. No permanent damage was caused at Courtfield as the Street-cleaning Department soon got to work and made everything in, shall we say, apple-pie order!

PITHY PERSONAL PARS

A Person with a Punch.—Coker's Aunt Judy. A white man through and through.—Tom Brown. Some say he ought to be boiled.—Fry. Straight as a die.—Johnny "Bull." Hold the line to our future.—Dr. Looko. A credit to the Old Country.—Newland. A gardener worth recommending.—Rake.



(Continued from page 13.)

"You think the quids walked away?" asked Price.

"Don't be a silly ass, Price! The quids aren't gone at all. Gosling's lost that box! That's all. It's somewhere about his lodge."

"They must have looked for it pretty thoroughly!" said Blundell, the captain of the Fifth.

"Let 'em look again!" said Coker. "I jolly well know I'd find it, if I looked! The quids ain't lost at all! They're there, all right! That's my opinion, for what it's worth."

The other Fifth Form men did not seem to think it worth much.

Horace Coker was the only fellow who held that opinion. To all the rest of Greyfriars, it was obvious that Gosling's golden quids had been pinched by some person unknown; and it was probable, or seemed probable, that that unknown person might already have dropped into a jeweller's and sold them for twenty-seven shillings and sixpence each. Paper money had the advantage over metallic money, that it was numbered and could be traced; sovereigns, of course, could not be traced. If the thief had already got rid of his plunder, and kept his secret carefully, he might never be found—a miserable thief might remain unknown at Greyfriars School—which was an awful thought—too awful to contemplate.

Some fellows advocated a general search of the fellows' pockets and the fellows' boxes. But that was an insult to the whole school, and the Head was not likely to think of it. Besides, it was useless; if the awful rascal was still in possession of his loot, he was not likely to keep it in his pockets or in his box; now that the whole school was ringing with the affair. There were a thousand nooks and crannies where that cigar-box might have been hidden, with its golden contents—up a chimney, or in a disused attic, or stuck into the ancient ivy that clambered over the grey old walls. Searching for it would be rather like searching for a needle in a haystack.

While nearly every other fellow in the school was talking about the matter, the Famous Five said little or nothing. But if they said less, they thought the more!

They could not help remembering the horror and dismay they had seen in the fat face of Billy Bunter when Wharton had mentioned the "quids" in the box. At that time, not knowing themselves what had happened, they had guessed that Bunter knew. But they had not, of course, supposed that it was anything so serious as this.

Could it have been Bunter, the Famous Five asked themselves. Bunter was a reckless grub-raider—nobody's cake was safe near Bunter. Cigarettes were not safe near him, as Skinner had discovered. But Bunter, with all his weird ideas on the subject of property, was not a thief! That was unthinkable.

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Bunter was incapable of theft—if he realised that it was theft. In the case of money, he could not fail to realise it. If a cake had been missing from Gosling's lodge, or a packet of cigarettes, or even a box of cigars, Harry Wharton & Co. would have known what to think. But money—they shook their heads at that! It was impossible—and they knew that it was impossible.

But who was it?

That was a mystery—and seemed likely to remain a mystery. The next day Greyfriars was still thrilling with it; but no discovery had been made. Coker of the Fifth still held obstinately to his original view that there had been no theft at all; and that Gosling was an old ass. Three hundred lines from Prout for barging Gosling over with the gate had convinced Coker that that was so. But Coker remained alone in his view; and all the rest of the school asked themselves—and one another—what was it?

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Keeping It Dark!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1.

The Famous Five were there, at tea. There was a cake on the table. Bunter's eyes, marvellous to relate, did not linger on the cake. He did not even seem to see the cake!

Bunter's fat face was thoughtful, serious, in fact, worried. Plainly he was thinking. But for once, he was not thinking about "grub."

Harry Wharton & Co. regarded him curiously.

They were rather exercised in their minds about Bunter.

In the endless discussions about the missing quids, Bunter's fat voice had not been heard. Generally, Bunter had plenty to say; the sound of his voice was music to Bunter's ears, if to nobody else's. But he had not joined in the talk about Gosling's golden quids. He had expressed no opinion; he avoided the subject. That was odd, to say the least; and the chums of the Remove could not help noticing it. Yet they had had to notice, at the same time, that Bunter was in his customary state of hard-up. There was no sign whatever of sudden wealth about Bunter. Certainly, had he been in funds, they would have drawn the inevitable conclusion immediately. But he was not in funds.

Ignoring the cake, Billy Bunter blinked at the five juniors in Study No. 1 through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, lend me a couple of bob, will you?" asked Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

Dark misgivings were in their minds. But Bunter's request helped to banish them. A fellow in possession of ten pounds—worth nearly fourteen pounds at the present price of gold—could hardly have been in want of a loan of two shillings!

"It's rather important, you fellows," urged Bunter. "I'm not the chap to borrow money as a rule, as you fellows know—"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"But I must have a few bob," said Bunter distressfully. "I've been disappointed about a postal order. I think I mentioned to you fellows that I was expecting a postal order."

"I think you did," agreed Nugent.

"The thoughtfulness is terrific!" concurred the Nabob of Bhaniapur.

"Well, it hasn't come," said Bunter.

"You needn't have mentioned that," remarked Bob Cherry. "We could have guessed that one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, this is serious! Lend me a few bob! I've got time to get down to Courtfield before lock-up. I'll borrow your new bike, Wharton."

"Thanks; I don't want my new bike turned into an old bike."

"Oh, really, Wharton! I've got to get down to old Lazarus' and get back before lock-up. It's important—friggly important!"

"What the thump—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"I'm not going to tell you anything. I mean, there's nothing to tell you. I'm not keeping any secret from you chaps, or anything of that sort," explained Bunter.

"Oh crickey!"

"I—I just want a couple of bob to— to buy something from old Lazarus at his second-hand shop. I saw them there yesterday."

"You saw what?"

"Oh, nothing! I might be able to manage on a bob, perhaps. He can't ask much for a bunch of old keys."

"What the merry thump do you want a bunch of old keys for?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Nothing. I—I don't, you know. I'm not going to buy a bunch of old keys. Why should I? Old keys are no use to me," said Bunter.

"Fishy keeps a bunch of old keys in his study," said Harry Wharton. "Try Fishy's bunch."

"I've tried it, but there isn't a key that will fit a study door on Fishy's bunch."

"You want a key to fit a study door?" ejaculated Wharton.

"Oh, no! Nothing of the kind!"

"Have you lost the key to Study No. 7 or what?"

"Exactly!" gasped Bunter. "Key of my study's lost, you see. Toddy lost it. You know what a careless ass he is. See?"

Harry Wharton looked fixedly at the Owl of the Remove. That Bunter was lying was clear, though why he was lying was not clear at all. Wharton rose, left the study, and went along to Study No. 7. He came back in a minute or less.

"The key of Study No. 7 is in the door," he said.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, it—it's rather mean to go and look, just as if you doubted a fellow's word!"

"Now, what does this mean, Bunter?" asked Harry quietly.

"There's only one door locked to this passage, and that's the door of Study No. 4—Smithy's study. Quelch locked it after catching some rotten wasters smoking there. Is that the door you want to unlock?"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Did you park a cake there, Bunter, before Quelch locked it up?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes," gasped Bunter, "that's it! A—a cake. I had a cake from Bunter Court, you know, and I—I put it in Smithy's study—to keep it safe, and—and then—"

"If that's the case," said Harry, "you can ask Quelch for the key. He would unlock the study to let you take out a cake you'd left there."

Bunter jumped.

"I—I can't ask Quelch. He might think—"

"Well, what might he think?"

"Oh, nothing! Nothing at all. The—"

the fact is, it isn't Smithy's study I want to unlock. It's not a study at all. It—it's a watchkey I want. I've lost the key of my watch."

"Your watch is keyless."

"Oh lor! I forgot! I—I mean, it's a clock key I want. That's what I really meant to say. Toddy's lost the key of the clock in our study—"

"Can it!" said Harry Wharton curly. He closed the door of Study No. 1. All the Famous Five were looking very serious now. Bunter was a practised fibber, but there was, so to speak, quantity, but not quality, in his fibbing. He would roll out whoppers without number; but the more he told the less they were believed. Practice is said to make perfect, but constant practice had not made Bunter's fibs convincing. It was quite clear to all the juniors that Billy Bunter had some powerful reason for wanting to get into the locked study in the Remove passage, and they thought they could guess the reason.

"Now, Bunter," said Harry quietly, "you'd better cough it up. What do you want to get into Smithy's study for?"

"N-n-nothing!" gasped Bunter. "What have you hidden there?"

"Nothing! I—I mean, a cake—just a cake."

"My only hat!" said Johnny Bull in a low voice. "It was Bunter! I'd never have believed it even of him. But it's plain now."

"The painfulness is terrific!"

"Bunter, you awful idiot!" exclaimed Nugent.

Billy Bunter blinked round at the accusing faces, his eyes distended behind his big spectacles.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I—I haven't hidden anything in Smithy's study! Look here—"

"You howling chump!" exclaimed Wharton. "Can't you see that it's perfectly plain what you've hidden there? For goodness' sake tell us the truth, and let's see if there's anything that can be done!"

"There's only one thing that can be done," said Johnny Bull. "Now that we know where Gosling's quids are, we've got to speak out."

"There was a yell from Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, I—I don't know anything about Gosling's beastly quids! Why, you rotters, do you think I'm a thief?"

"Aren't you?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"Bunter, you ass," exclaimed Harry Wharton, "you were fooling about Gosling's lodge that evening to play a silly trick on him. id you—"

"No!" yelled Bunter.

"Did you go into his lodge?"

"No! Nowhere near it."

"Did you take that cigar-box?"

"No!" howled Bunter. "I never saw it. It wasn't on the table, and I never saw it when I put the inkstand back. I never touched the inkstand. Besides, how was I to know that the old idiot kept sovereigns in a cigar-box? Not that I touched the box. It never even crossed my mind to bag his cigars because he bagged my cigarettes! I never had any cigarettes. As for hiding the box in Smithy's study, I never thought of such a thing! It's not in the table-drawer now. I know nothing about it—absolutely nothing! I—I hope you fellows can take my word!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"I came here to borrow a couple of bob," said Bunter indignantly, "and you fellows make out that I'm a thief! After all I've done for you, too! As if I'd touch the old ass's quids! I thought they were cigars! What was

a fellow to think? Not that I touched the box or went into the lodge at all. I was in the Rag at the time. Toddy can tell you that I wasn't out of the House. He saw me come in!"

"Oh crickey!"

"Now let a fellow get out of the study," said Bunter. "I'm fed-up with the lot of you! Let a fellow get out!"

Bunter rolled to the door.

Harry Wharton grasped him by his collar.

Bump!

Billy Bunter sat down.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

What's to be Done?

BILLY BUNTER sat and roared.

The Famous Five were all on their feet now. They had forgotten tea. The mystery of Gosling's quids was a mystery no longer to the Five. Their chief feeling was one of relief. Bunter, it was obvious, had pilfered the box from Gosling's lodge, but he had pilfered it not knowing that it contained money. From his incoherent burbling that fact emerged clearly. He stood in danger—dire danger—of being adjudged a thief and expelled from the school. But he was not a thief, he was only the incomparable idiot the Famous Five had always known him to be. That was a relief.

GREYFRIARS HEROES No. 26.

By The Greyfriars Rhymester.

His Highness the Maharajah Kumar Shri Ranjitsinhji, Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, is the full name of Hurree Singh's hero. But cricketers the world over still know him as plain "Ranji."

WHERE the turf grows green and level

In the shade of the poplar-trees,

And the whispering leaves hold revel

And dance with the summer breeze;

There comes from the neighbouring thicket

The soft, low croon of the doves;

Oh, this is the time of cricket,

And the time that Lanky loves.

This likeable Indian fellow

Is game for the jolliest fun

When the skies glow blue and yellow.

For he is a son of the sun.

He never feels hot or stifling

At noon on the warmest days;

He has no time for trifling—

"Cricket!" says he. "Let's play!"

And his hero's a cricketer giant—

Or was, in the days gone by—



"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry. "Yarook!" roared Bunter. He had sat rather hard on the floor of Study No. 1. "Yooop!"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Who—hoop!"

"Kick him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter scrambled to his feet. He blinked at the chums of the Remove with a devastating blink.

"Lemme gerroust of this study!" he roared. "I tell you I'm fed-up with you! I'm not going to tell you anything! Besides, there's nothing to tell. I know nothing about the matter—absolutely nothing! There's nothing in Smithy's study—and I didn't put it there! I was going to the study for a smoke when I found that beast Quelch had locked the door. I mean I never went to the study. I've never even noticed that the door was locked! Will you let a fellow out, Wharton, you rotter?"

"You howling ass!" hooted Wharton. "Now we know where Gosling's money is we can't leave it there. He's got to have it back."

"Think I was going to keep it!" howled Bunter. "Haven't I been trying to get into that beastly study ever since Quelch locked it up, to get that beastly box and chuck it into the old dummy's lodge?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

"It would be all right if Quelch

(Continued on next page.)



In his genius self-reliant,

With a calm, but hawk-like eye;

Fast bowling, breaks or spinners—

He knocked them far and wide;

And Sussex were usually winners

With Ranji on their side.

From Ceylon to the sacred Ganges,

From Delhi to Bangalore,

No name is as great as Ranji's,

And before he came to score

The centuries he collected

From every kind of ball,

No Indian was ever expected

To play the game at all.

But he soon changed the position

When he came here to provide

An astonishing exhibition

Of cut and drive and glide.

Fast bowling he demolished

And slows he hit in the stand;

His batting, correct and polished,

Was the finest in the land.

To K. S. Ranjitsinhji,

Our cricket caps we'll raise,

We never will be stung

In praising his displays;

From Mexico to China,

From Greece to Afghanistan,

There never has been a finer

Sport or gentleman.

hadn't looked up the study. It was all Quelch's fault. I never asked him to look it up, did I?"

"You priceless puffer!"

"Not that there's anything in the study," added Bunter, with renewed caution. "If there's a cigar-box in the table-drawer I don't know how it got there. My belief is that there isn't."

"Ain't he a prize-packet?" said Bob Cherry admiringly. "Why didn't they send him to a home for idiots?"

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"What on earth's going to be done?" asked Nugent blankly. "Bunter's number will be up when this gets out. But we can't keep it dark."

"The darkness is not the possibility. The ridiculous Gosling must have his esteemed and filthy lucre!"

"I say, you fellows, don't you say anything about this!" exclaimed Bunter in alarm. "Why, they'd make out that I pinched those quids! I tell you, I thought there were cigars in the box!"

"You thought you were pinching cigars!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"No, you beast! Gosling bagged my cigarettes, so I bagged his cigars. Exchange is no robbery, is it? You'll be making out next that I pinched the cigarettes, because Skinner said they were his!" exclaimed the fat Owl indignantly.

"Oh crumbs!"

The Famous Five looked at Bunter and at one another.

They understood it all now. Evidently Bunter, on learning that the cigar-box contained money, instead of smokes, as he had supposed, had thought only of returning it to the owner. That, unfortunately, had been impossible, owing to the locking up of Study No. 4. While all Greyfriars was discussing the "theft" of Gosling's "quids," those quids were lying in the table-drawer in No. 4—inaccessible, because Mr. Quelch had taken away the key of the study. It was quite a peculiar situation. Bunter had looked for a safe hiding-place for that cigar-box. He had found one that was only too safe!

"I say, you fellows, if I can get a key from old Lazarus—" said Bunter. "Lend me a few bob—and your bike to—"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"That's N.G.," he said. "It's a thousand to one against any of old Lazarus' secondhand keys fitting that lock."

"Oh for!"

"There's only one thing to be done," said Johnny Bull. "Bunter will have to go to Quelch and make a clean breast of it."

"Well from Bunter!"

"It's the only thing, I suppose," said Harry. "Go to Quelch at once, Bunter."

"Beast!"

"It's the only way now, fathead! Tell him plainly exactly what happened, and that the quids are in Smithy's study!"

"You rotter! You want to get me sacked, after all I've done for you!" howled Bunter. "Quelch would make out that I pinched the quids. He's doubted my word before. You fellows know that."

The juniors looked at one another again. Certainly, owing up to the Remove master was a risky proceeding. It was only too possible that Quelch might doubt Bunter's word. Indeed it would be rather miraculous if he didn't.

"Might think I bagged the quids, and then got scared, and thought I'd

give 'em back!" said Bunter. "Might think anything! Might make out that I pinched the cigars, just as that beast Bull said—"

"So you did!" shrieked Johnny Bull. "I didn't! There weren't any cigars in the box, as it turns out! It's quids in it, from what you say."

"You pinched the cigar-box, you fat freak."

"I took it in exchange for my cigarettes. I keep on telling you that exchange is no robbery—"

"You'd better tell Quelch that!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"Catch me telling Quelch! I'm not going to tell Quelch anything! I'm keeping jolly clear of Quelch, I can tell you."

"Look here, Bunter!" exclaimed Harry impatiently. "Gosling's money can't be left where it is, with the whole school in an uproar about it. If this comes out you'll be judged a thief, and expelled. Your only chance is to hand the money back before it comes out."

"Haven't I been trying to get it back, you ass? Think I can get into Smithy's study through the keyhole?"

"You must go to Quelch—"

"Beast!"

"Tell him the truth! He will wallop you for taking the cigar-box—"

"You—you idiot! Think I want to be walloped!" shrieked Bunter.

"Isn't it better than being sacked? That's what it will come to if you don't get that money back where it belongs!" roared Wharton.

"Bunter, you ass!" exclaimed Nugent. "Can't you see it's the only way? Nobody can get into No. 4 now Quelch has the key. Quelch will believe you if you tell the truth—"

"Beast!"

"Anyhow, it's your only chance!" urged Wharton. "We can't keep it dark now we know where the money is. You see that."

"I jolly well don't! I know I'm not going to Quelch! Look here, if you want Quelch to know all about it you can go to him—only don't mention me."

"What!"

"You can say you did it, for a jape on Gosling—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Only, don't mention my name—that's important."

"You frabjous ass!"

"Yah!"

"For goodness' sake, Bunter, have a little sense!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Your only chance is to hand the money over before anything is known. That means going to Quelch—"

"I'll watch it!" said Bunter.

"We can't keep this dark, you frabjous idiot—"

"Well, don't mention me, that's all," said Bunter. "If you like to say you did it—"

"Oh, kill him, somebody!"

"Beast! Leave me out of it," said Bunter. "You're not going to get me sacked. I can tell you! After all I've done for you fellows! Talk about a serpent's ingratitude being sharper than the tooth of a child! I think you fellows might take a pal's word when I tell you that I know nothing whatever about the matter—"

"What?" yelled the Famous Five.

"Nothing whatever!" said Bunter. "I call this beastly suspicious, making out that I know anything about Gosling's quids. I don't really believe he ever had any quids, or kept them in a cigar-box at all. If they're gone it looks to me as if you know something about it, Wharton."

"I?" shrieked Wharton.

"Well, you admit that Gosling showed them to you, and you were there," said Bunter. "Mind, I'm not saying you boned them—"

"You—you—you're not saying I boned them?" stuttered Wharton.

"No. I'm not suspicious, like you chaps. Still, it looks rather black; you must admit that."

Harry Wharton gazed at the fat Owl. Then he jumped at him. There was a loud bang as Bunter's bullet head smote the study table.

"Bang!"

"Yaroooooooh!"

"Bang!"

"Yooop! Help! I say, you fellows—yarooooooop!"

"There, you fat villain!" gasped Wharton. "And there—"

"Bang!"

"Oh crickey! Whooooooop!"

"Let's take him to Quelch!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Get hold of his ears, and yank him along to Quelch!"

Billy Bunter tore away from Wharton, and bounded for the door. He tore the door open and darted out. The door slammed behind him, and Bunter's flying footsteps died away down the passage.

The Famous Five stared at one another.

Bunter was gone! But he was not gone to Quelch! It was absolutely certain that he was not gone to Quelch!

"Well, my only hat!" said Bob.

"What the thump's going to be done?"

There was no immediate answer to that question. Something had to be done, that was certain—now that the juniors knew the facts. But what, was a problem that the Famous Five had to solve.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. had thoughtful faces that evening. They had plenty of food for thought.

Nothing, so far, had been said outside their own select circle. Billy Bunter, it was certain, had said nothing. But the matter could not remain where it was.

It was useless to urge Bunter to go to Mr. Quelch and own up. Wild horses would not have dragged the fat Owl to his Form master's study.

Ever since he had learned that there was money in the box he had abstracted from Gosling's lodge, the Owl of the Remove had been in a state of quaking terror.

The awful shadow of the "sack" loomed over his bullet head. It scared him almost out of his fat wits.

It was futile to point out to the fat Owl that telling the truth was the safest plan. Bunter was not likely to trust himself to such a very unaccustomed resource as that.

But something had to be done! The Famous Five could not keep secret what they knew. At the same time they could not give Bunter away.

Had he really been "pinched" the sovereigns, of course, they would have had no alternative. But he had only noted like the born idiot he was—which made a great difference. Had he gone to Mr. Quelch and owned up, there was a doubt whether Mr. Quelch would have believed him innocent of theft. But there was no doubt at all that Quelch would believe him guilty if he learned the facts from any source but Bunter. What, in fact, was he to believe if he learned that Bunter had hidden away the money, and kept it a secret?



Quietly, steadily, with his teeth set, forcing himself not to think of the yawning space below, Wharton worked his way along the rustling ivy towards the sill of the window of Study No. 4. Nugent watched him anxiously!

The chums of the Remove, in these circumstances, agreed that they could not go to Quelch themselves. And Bunter would not go. Yet they could not leave the missing money where it was. It had to go back to the owner. The Famous Five were on the horns of a dilemma, and there seemed no way out.

Wharton's brow was wrinkled over his prep in Study No. 1 that evening. He was trying to think out the problem.

He pushed his books away at last, his prep half done. Frank Nugent looked up.

"Got it?" he asked, with a faint smile.

"I think so," said Harry.

He went to the window and opened it. Darkness lay on the old quadrangle of Greyfriars. From the row of windows belonging to the Remove studies lights glimmered out into the spring dusk—excepting from the window of Study No. 4 which was dark. Wharton glanced along towards the dark window of the Bounder's study. In the wind from the sea the thick ivy on the ancient walls rustled.

Nugent, puzzled, joined him at the window.

"What are you thinking of, Harry?" he asked, rather uneasily.

"We've got to see that fat fool through!" said Wharton. "We know he isn't a thief, but he has put himself into such a position that he will be sacked like a shot if this comes out. We've got to get that money out of Smithy's study, and give it to Bunter to put back where he bagged it."

"No good trying to get the key from Quelch—"

"None at all. There's the window." Frank Nugent started.

"You ass! You're not thinking—"

"The ivy's jolly strong," said Harry.

"You remember that the Bounder climbed down from his study window once. It's risky, I know—but a fellow could do it."

Nugent stared at him, agape.

"You jolly well shan't try it on," he exclaimed hotly. "It's a good fifty feet from the ground—if you fell—"

"I shan't fall!"

"In the dark, too—you ass—"

"It couldn't be done by daylight with fellows staring up from the quad," said Wharton, with a smile. "It's after dark, or not at all!"

"You—you—you fathead! Blow Bunter, and blow Goshing! You're jolly well not going to do anything of the sort."

"I can do it, old bean," said Harry. "It only wants nerve—and I've got some nerve! I know the window's left open at the top an inch or two for ventilation. Once I get on the sill it will be easy."

Nugent looked from the window into the gulf of darkness below, and shivered. Wharton was cool and quiet. He had thought it out, and made up his mind. The ivy was old and strong, and would have borne twice his weight. As he had said, it only wanted nerve—but there was no doubt that it wanted a nerve of iron to swing out over the gulf of darkness, and trust himself to the ivy.

"Smithy did it once, Franky," he said.

"Smithy's a reckless fool!"

"I know! But—"

"Harry! You can't—you shan't—it's potty—"

"Turn out the light, old bean—there may be a beak wandering in the quad!"

said Harry. "If I'm seen it means a fearful row!"

Frank Nugent said no more. He knew it was useless to argue with his chum when his mind was made up. After all, the reckless Bounder had done it once, and what Smithy could do Wharton could do. But Frank's face was pale and uneasy as he turned out the light.

Wharton lost no time.

Swiftly, actively, he clambered out of the study window. Strong, thick tendrils of ancient ivy gave him good hold.

Nugent, with his heart in his mouth, leaped from the window, watching him. Wharton was a dim shadow, to his eyes, in the darkness and the clinging rustling ivy.

Quietly, steadily, with his teeth set, forcing himself not to think of the yawning space below, Harry Wharton worked his way along. He felt, and tested, every hold before he trusted his weight to it. There was hand-hold and foot-hold, but they had to be groped for, and tested; and progress was slow.

It was slow, but it was steady. Breathing hard, but as cool as ice, the active junior worked his way along in the rustling ivy, and reached the broad stone sill of the window of Study No. 4.

There was ample room for him to kneel on the sill when he reached it, and he was glad to rest there for a few minutes: the strain on his arms had been severe.

The cessation of the rustling told Nugent that his chum had reached the window-sill, and he breathed more freely.

For two or three minutes Wharton remained motionless there, recovering from the strain. Then cautiously and

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carefully, he grasped the sash of the window, and pushed it up.

A minute more and he was in the study.

He did not venture to get a light. But he did not need one. He knew where to look for the cigar-box.

He drew out the table drawer, and groped in it. His fingers felt the cigar-box, and he took it out. It was closed, fastened with the rivet as Bunter had left it. Wharton thrust it inside his waistcoat for safety, and shut the table drawer.

Then he returned to the window.

His task was done, and he had to get back to his own study. Dimly, he could see Frank Nugent's head projected from the window of Study No. 1.

Kneeling once more on the sill, he closed the sash. Then he was swinging along on the ivy again.

Nugent watched him, with a face like chalk. The ivy rustled and murmured as Wharton worked his way along.

"Harry!" breathed Nugent.

"All serene, old thing."

Nugent's grasp helped him in at the window of Study No. 1. Wharton stood breathing hard and deep. Strong as he was the strain had told on him.

"You've got it!" whispered Frank.

"I've got it!"

"Thank goodness! But—but we can't keep it in the study. What the thump are you going to do with it, now you've got it!"

"I've got along to the box-room, and stick it in an empty box for to-night. Bunter can take it in the morning, and chuck it into Gosling's lodge."

Nugent closed the window and turned on the light. Harry Wharton left the study and hurried along to the box-room at the end of the passage. He was back in a few minutes.

"All serene!" he said.

"You were an ass to risk it!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Well, it's all right now. We've saved that fat idiot's bacon. Let's get on with prep."

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

"BUNTER!"

"Oh lor!"

Really, Bunter jumped.

Really, it was enough to make him jump.

Prep was not yet over in the Remove studies. Billy Bunter had the passage to himself; until Mr. Quelch arrived on the scene. Billy Bunter was bending before the keyhole of Study No. 4. Into that keyhole he had inserted a key.

It was about the twentieth key Bunter had tried on that lock. The previous nineteen had not fitted. Neither did this twentieth.

Up and down and round about the House, Bunter had been looking for keys, in the hope of unlocking Smithy's study. All sorts and conditions of keys had he tried, one after another. But it booted not! Now he was wriggling and twisting another key in the lock, with the same result—or want of result! Like the casket of the wizard Michael Scott, that study was not to be opened by any unauthorized hand.

Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes on Bunter, with a glare. Bunter ought to have been at prep. He ought not to have been attempting to open the door of a study looked up by Mr. Quelch's own august hand.

Mr. Quelch rapped out Bunter's name. The Magnet Library.—No. 1,263.

like a bullet, and the fat junior jumped almost clear of the floor.

His spine round and blinked at his Form master in despair. He had not expected to see Quelch. Evidently, however, Quelch was still keeping a gimlet eye on the surreptitious smoker of the woodshed.

"Bunter! Why are you not at preparation?"

"I—I—I—I finished rather soon, sir!"

Bunter did not add that he had finished so soon because he had left his prep undone. It was no use telling Quelch that.

"You were attempting to open that study, Bunter! Why were you attempting to open that study?"

Billy Bunter opened his lips, to deny that he had been attempting to open the study. But as the hapless key was sticking out of the lock, even Bunter realised that that would not wash.

"I—I—I—I—!" he stammered.

"I can only conclude, Bunter, that you have a surreptitious motive for desiring to enter that study. I can only conclude, Bunter, that there is something within that room that you desire to obtain. I can only conclude, Bunter, that it was your intention to pursue the pernicious, the unhealthy, the disgraceful practice of secret smoking, for which I have already had occasion to punish you."

"Oh crikey! Oh, no, sir! I—I haven't got any smokes in that study, sir!" gasped Bunter.

It was a natural assumption on the part of Mr. Quelch. Indeed, it would have been difficult for him to imagine any other reason why the fat Owl was trying to burgle Smithy's study. He had no doubt that, when he had locked up the study, he had unconsciously looked up Bunter's surreptitious supply of cigarettes. Obviously, it was a matter for Mr. Quelch to look into.

"Take that key from the lock, Bunter."

The fat Owl took the key from the lock.

"Todd!" Peter Todd was looking out of Study No. 7, wondering what was "up." "Todd, go down to my study, and bring me the key you will find in the top left-hand drawer of my desk."

"Yes, sir," said Peter.

He went down the Remove staircase. Mr. Quelch waited for his return, with his eyes fixed grimly on the quaking Owl.

Billy Bunter fairly shuddered.

Quelch had sent Todd for the study key. He was going to look into the study. He would not find the suspected smokes there! But he would find—Bunter's fat brain swam at the thought of what he would find.

He would search for smokes—and he would find a cigar-box, containing not smokes, but Gosling's golden quids! The money, supposed by all Greyfriars to be stolen, was in the study that Mr. Quelch had found Bunter trying to enter with a borrowed key! What would he think?

Bunter groined aloud. The game was up. Harry Wharton & Co. had advised him to own up while there was yet time, before a discovery was made. He might have been believed then. But it was too late now!

Several more fellows looked out of the study doorways. Curious glances were cast at Bunter and his Form master. More and more of the Remove looked out. They were getting quite an audience.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Quelch has spotted it somehow, Inky! He's on the trail!"

"The spotfulness seems to be terrific," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The gamefulness is up for the idiotic Bunter."

Peter Todd came back with the key at last. Mr. Quelch took it from him, inserted it in the lock of Study No. 4, and opened the door.

"Follow me, Bunter!"

"Oh lor!"

Mr. Quelch turned on the light in the study. He glanced round.

Billy Bunter watched him with haggard eyes through his big spectacles. Fellows gathered in the passage, and watched through the doorway. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent came along from Study No. 1, and they exchanged a startled glance. It was not half an hour since Wharton had left the locked study by the window. He was glad that he had not postponed that stunt.

"Bunter! Tell me at once what it was you were intending to look for in this study!" said the Remove master.

"Nothing," gasped Bunter.

"Boy! Do you mean to tell me that you were seeking to enter this study for no motive whatever?"

"Yes, sir! Exactly!" gasped Bunter.

"How dare you tell me such untruths, Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh dear! I—I swear there ain't any smokes in the study, sir!" groaned Bunter. "I—I assure you, sir, there ain't any cigars—"

"Cigars!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "Is it possible, Bunter, that you are so foolish, so crass, so incredibly absurd, as to smoke cigars?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I wouldn't! I—I've just told you there ain't any cigars here, sir!" groaned Bunter. "There—there ain't anything, sir! If—if there's anything in the table-drawer, sir, I never put it there!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Johnny Bull, in the passage.

"I—I didn't even know there was a drawer in the table, sir, and—and I never hid anything in it!" groaned Bunter. "I—I don't know anything about it, sir! My—my mind's a perfect blank, sir."

Mr. Quelch gave him a look, stepped to the table, and pulled open the drawer. Bunter almost fell down.

He waited, in awful and horrid apprehension, for the exclamation he expected from his Form master. Unless he was blind, Quelch could not fail to see the cigar-box. He would find the box—and the sovereigns in it—and then—then—Bunter almost fainted.

It was only a few moments before Mr. Quelch spoke. But it seemed an age to the hapless Owl.

"Bunter!"

"It—it wasn't me, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I never put it there, sir!"

"What do you mean, Bunter? There is nothing in this drawer."

Billy Bunter blinked at him. Was Quelch blind? The study had been looked over since Quelch had turned the key on the hidden lock. The cigar-box was there—it had to be there! Bunter could not believe his fat ears. He fairly goggled at Mr. Quelch.

"What did you suppose to be here, Bunter?"

Bunter gasped. It was amazing that Quelch did not see it there; but if it was not there, Bunter was not going to tell him.

"Nothing, sir!"

"Your words implied, Bunter, that you had something hidden in this table-drawer!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I told you there wasn't anything, and I—I never put it there, sir!"

Mr. Quelch gave him a glare, and glared into the table-drawer again. Nothing so large as a pinhead would have escaped his gimlet eyes. But there was nothing to be seen. The drawer was empty.

He shut it with a bang. Bunter gasped with relief.

He still supposed that the cigar-box was there. It must be there, though Quelch, by some miraculous chance, had failed to spot it. With deep thankfulness, Bunter saw the drawer shut.

Mr. Quelch, surprised, suspicious, and annoyed, proceeded to search about the study. It was clear that Bunter had hidden something there, and believed it to be still there, and the Form master supposed, of course, that it was smokes. But he failed to find smokes, or anything else. He was completely puzzled, and growing angrier every moment. He ceased the fruitless search at last, and fixed his eyes on Bunter again.

"Bunter, for the last time, will you tell me what you have concealed in this study, and where it is?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!"

"Have you any cigarettes here?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"Why, then, were you attempting to enter the study?"

"I—I wasn't—"

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean, it—it was only—only my fan, sir—"

"Upon my word!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the passage.

"Silence!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Go back to your studies at once! Bunter, it

is obvious that you have concealed cigarettes in this room, though I cannot at present find them. I shall have the room thoroughly searched to-morrow. I shall censure you for attempting to deceive me, if cigarettes are found in this room!"

"Oh lor!"

Mr. Quelch locked up the study again, and whisked away, frowning. Billy Bunter blinked after him dismally. He had had a narrow escape—a miraculous escape—by the skin of his teeth, as it were! How Quelch had failed to spot the cigar-box in the table-drawer he could not imagine; but the "thorough search" of the study on the morrow was sure to reveal it! Billy Bunter quaked as he thought of the morrow and what it would bring.

The juniors went back to their studies. Billy Bunter rolled along to Study No. 1 after Wharton and Nugent.

"I—I say, you fellows," he groaned, "the game's up now! I say, they'll find it to-morrow! D-d-d-do you think Quelch will think I put it there?"

"You frabjous ass," said Harry Wharton. "If it had been there now, Quelch would have spotted it!"

"But—but it must be there!" gasped Bunter. "I put it in the table-drawer, and the room's been locked up ever since! I—I say, you fellows, I—I can't help thinking that—that Quelch will think I know something about it when they find it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Look here—"

"You howling ass, it's not there now!" said Harry. "I got in by the

window half an hour ago and got it away—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"It's in the box-room now, and to-morrow morning we'll get Gosling away from his lodge somehow, and you can take it and chuck it in—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter again.

"And that will be the end of it—instead of the end of you!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, I'm jolly glad you got it away! They'd have thought I knew something about it if Quelch had found it there! I never get justice, as you know. You'd hardly believe that Quelch went on searching the study after I'd told him there wasn't anything there! Doubting a fellow's word, you know! I—I never thought of getting in at the window—"

"You couldn't have done it, you fat ass!"

"I suppose I could, if you could, Wharton! And I think you might have done it before—"

"What?"

"I really think that! Leaving a chap on tenterhooks all this time!" said Bunter. "I must say, I think you might have thought of it earlier. But you always were selfish!"

"Who-a-a-at?"

"Selfishness all round!" said Bunter bitterly. "Blessed if I don't think I may grow selfish myself some day, associating with such fellows. I hope not. But, really, you know, I must say—Yarrococoo!"

"Bump!"

Bunter hardly knew how he got out into the passage. But he knew that he got there! He landed with a terrific

(Continued on next page.)

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THE VANISHED SOVEREIGNS!

(Continued from previous page.)

concession. The door slammed on William George Bunter, and he stayed only to yell "Beast!" through the key-hole before he departed.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The "Hat Trick!"

"U TTER rot!" said Coker of the Fifth.

"You see—" murmured Potter.

"Utter rot!"

"But—" said Greene.

"Utter rot!"

Potter and Greene gave it up.

Harry Wharton & Co., sauntering in the quad that sunny spring morning, glanced quite curiously at Coker of the Fifth. They smiled as they walked on, leaving Horace Coker laying down the law in his usual emphatic way.

It was odd—it was weird—it was absolutely amazing; but Coker of the Fifth, reputed to be the biggest ass at Greyfriars, was right! Coker of the Fifth was the only fellow who held that Gosling's quids had not been "pinched" at all. All the school believed that they had been pinched—except Coker! And they hadn't!

It was true that Coker's belief was founded chiefly on the circumstance that Prout had given him three hundred lines for baring Gosling over with the Gate!

Still, Coker was right! There was not, as Coker declared, a thief in the school! By whatever mysterious mental processes Coker had arrived at that conclusion, it was, nevertheless, the correct conclusion.

"Fancy old Coker getting it right!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes that fat idiot!"

Billy Bunter rolled out of the House. He blinked round through his big spectacles, spotted the Famous Five, and bore down on them. There was a bulge under Bunter's jacket.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Got it!" asked Harry Wharton.

Bunter tapped the bulge in his jacket. "Yes, rather! I say, you fellows, you got that beast Gosling away, you know. If he saw me taking the cigar-box back, he might suspect that I knew something about it."

"Go on!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"The mightfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows, don't waste time cackling! We've got to get it done in break!" said Bunter peevishly.

"We've got it cut and dried," said Bob cheerily. "Keep near the old bean's lodge, and dodge in as soon as the coast's clear."

"Back up, then!" said Bunter.

"You're wasting time, you know."

The Famous Five gave Bunter a look. But they forbore to slaughter him. There was no time to lose in slaughtering Bunter.

Bob Cherry left his friends and strolled along to the porter's lodge. William Gosling, in the doorway of the lodge, was looking out upon the bright spring morning with a jaundiced eye.

Nothing had been heard of the missing "quids." Gosling had almost given up hope of ever hearing anything of them. Ten golden quids had gone from his gaze like ten beautiful dreams! It

was enough to make the crusty old gentleman view the universe with a jaundiced eye. Even Bob Cherry's ruddy, cheery countenance did not seem to cheer him up. In fact, he scowled at Bob Cherry.

"Top of the morning, old bean!" said Bob. "Enjoying life, what?"

"Huh!" said Gosling.

"Like a little exercise this fine morning?" inquired Bob.

"Huh!"

The next moment Gosling gave a yell. Bob Cherry reached out, jerked off his ancient hat, and jumped back.

"Why, you—you young rip! Wot I says is this 'ere, you give me my 'at!" yelled Gosling.

"Race you for it!" said Bob.

"My eye! I—I'll—"

Gosling jumped at Bob. Bob jumped back actively, waving the hat. Gosling made an infuriated rush. Bob Cherry scudded away.

After him rushed Gosling, crimson with wrath.

"Give me that 'at!" bellowed Gosling.

"He, ha, ha!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere," shrieked Gosling. "I'll report yer! Don't you damage that 'at!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from the crowd of fellows in the quad.

Bob Cherry had put the hat on his own head. It was a large size in hats for Bob, and it descended to his ears. Thus adorned, Bob cut away across the quad, and Gosling, spluttering with wrath and filled with anxiety for the safety of his ancient hat, tore frantically after him.

Yells of laughter followed the wild chase.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put it on, Bob!"

"Go it, Gosling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry and Gosling faded into the distance, both going strong. Billy Bunter, grinning, dodged into the deserted lodge.

There were no eyes on Bunter. All eyes were following Gosling and Bob Cherry. Unnoticed, the fat Owl slipped into Gosling's lodge. He was there only a couple of minutes. He went in with a bulge under his jacket. He came out without a bulge under his jacket. At long, long last that cigar-box, with its golden contents, had got home to roost.

No one had noticed Bunter enter the porter's lodge, no one noticed him emerge. And the fat Owl lost no time in getting out of the vicinity.

"Go it, Gosling!" came a roar from the quad.

"Back up, Bob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you give a man his 'at?' shrieked Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere, you young rip: Will you give a man his 'at?"

Mr. Quelch stepped out of the House. No doubt the roars of merriment in the quad had drawn his attention.

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated the Remove master at the sight of Bob Cherry enveloped in the ancient hat, like a candle under an extinguisher, dodging the infuriated Gosling round the fountain.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gimme that 'at!"

"Look out! 'Ware beaks!" yelled Skinner.

"Gosling," hooted Mr. Quelch, as he rushed on the spot, "what—what—Who—who is that, Cherry?"

"Ob, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

"Cherry, what—what—"

"Wot I says is this 'ere: Give a man

his 'at!" howled Gosling. "Larking with a man's 'at! Give a man his 'at!"

"Is that Gosling's hat, Cherry?" demanded Mr. Quelch. His lips twitched as he gazed at Bob, whose aspect, in Gosling's hat, would have struck the most casual eye.

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bob. He took off the hat. "I—I borrowed it, sir. I—I'm sure Gosling doesn't mind. Gosling's rather fond of a joke."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gosling did not look as if he was fond of a joke. He looked as if he could have found entertainment in strewing Robert Cherry over the quad in small portions.

"You absurd boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Give Gosling his hat at once! You will take a hundred lines, Cherry!"

"Yes, sir," said Bob meekly.

He handed the ancient hat to Gosling. Mr. Quelch went back into the House, and did not smile till he reached his study. Gosling did not smile at all. He stalked back to his lodge, more than ever convinced that all boys ought to be, as he had long believed, "drowned." Certainly it did not occur to Gosling to suspect that Bob had had any ulterior motive in getting him away from his lodge by the hat trick.

"It was worth a hundred lines," remarked Bob Cherry, after Gosling had gone. "That is, if the fat ass has worked the oracle."

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled up, grinning. "I say, it's all right! Right as rain!"

"Thank goodness!" said Harry Wharton. "Gosling will find his precious box now. He will look rather an ass. Everybody will think that it was never lost at all. But that rather serves him right for leaving a box of quids lying about. It will be a lesson to him to be more careful."

"I say, you fellows—ho, he, ho—Gosling won't find it in a hurry!" chuckled Bunter. "He, he, he!"

"What?"

The Famous Five stared at Bunter.

Billy Bunter chuckled.

"The old ass can jolly well hunt for it!" he said. "He, he, he! He's given me a lot of trouble, blow him! Rather a joke on him for his blessed box of quids to be lying about his lodge without his knowing it, what? He, he, he!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You benighted ass!" yelled Wharton. "Haven't you put it where Gosling can find it?"

"He, he, he! No jolly fear!"

"Great Christopher Columbus!"

The juniors gazed at the grinning Owl in consternation. They had taken it for granted that Bunter would have sense enough to leave the cigar-box where Gosling would not be long in finding it. Evidently they had taken too much for granted.

"You—you—you burbling bandersnatch!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Where have you put it, then?"

"He, he, he! I chuckled it into that jar he keeps on his mantelpiece—the one with wax flowers in. I put the flowers back. He, he, he!"

"You frightful ass! He may never find it there!"

"He, he, he!"

"Until it's found everybody will go on thinking it's pinched!"

"That's all right. They can't make out that I had anything to do with it now," said Bunter cheerfully, "so it's all right. I say, you fellows, fancy old Gosling with his jolly old box fairly under his nose all the time and not knowing it's there! He, he, he!"

Bunter rather roared.



"Wot I says is this 'ere, young Cherry, give a man his 'at!" howled Gosling. "Larkin' with a man's 'at! Give a man 'is 'at!" "You absurd boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, appearing on the scene suddenly. "Give Gosling his hat at once, Cherry!" Bob's chums smiled.

Harry Wharton & Co. did not laugh. They looked at Bunter as if they could have eaten him.

"You—you frajious owl!" gasped Wharton. "If it's not found—and it can't be found where you've put it—Oh, you owl! You—you image! Slaughter him!"

"I say, you fellows—Yarooooh!" Like one man the Famous Five jumped at Bunter.

The affair of the missing quids was not, as they had supposed, at an end. Billy Bunter's remarkable sense of humour had prevented that. Bunter's view was that he had had a lot of trouble over that beastly box, and now Gosling could have some. Bunter thought it quite funny.

It did not seem funny to the Famous Five. There was nothing more they could do, except kick Bunter.

So they kicked him. They kicked him hard, and they kicked him often. Billy Bunter roared—not with laughter this time. He fled, roaring.

Harry Wharton & Co. went into third school, wondering what on earth was going to be the outcome of the affair now. William Gosling, from the doorway of his lodge, unconscious of the fact that his precious "quids" were within a few feet of him, continued to survey the universe with a jaundiced eye.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Coker Works the Oracle!

"**T**HAT tears it!" said Coker of the Fifth.

Coker of the Fifth, after class, was laying down the law in the games-study.

A rumour had spread through the school after class—a startling rumour—an unnerving rumour.

Somebody had heard that Gosling had said that he was going to call in a policeman from Courtfield.

Whether Gosling really had said so, and whether he intended to make his wild words good, was uncertain. But the rumour was enough to thrill Greyfriars from end to end.

"Intolerable!" said Prout, in Common-room, when he heard.

"Thick, and no mistake!" said Wingate of the Sixth, in the prefects'-room.

"A bobby!" said Tubb of the Third to the other fags. "A bobby rooting over the school looking for a pincher. What larks!"

Harry Wharton & Co. heard it with dismay.

They had done all they could, and the matter ought to have been at an end. It wasn't at an end. The unbelievable fatuousness of the fat Owl had kept the pot a-boiling, as it were.

"If only a fellow could dodge into the lodge and knock that blessed jar off the mantelpiece!" suggested Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five walked down to Gosling's lodge, thinking that perhaps Bob Cherry's "hat trick" might be repeated. Gosling gave them a stare and, in a way that could not be considered polite, slammed his door fairly in their faces.

Evidently, there was nothing doing.

"Look here, we can't let this go on!" said Johnny Bull. "We can't have a bobby here—when we know! We've got to let on!"

Wharton shook his head.

"We can't give that howling idiot away. After all this fearful fuss the

Head would skin him first, and rack him next."

"Well, what's to be done, then?"

"Nothing—except kick Bunter."

They walked back to the House, and looked for Bunter, and duly kicked him. There was nothing else to be done.

What was going to happen next they did not know. But Coker of the Fifth knew what was going to happen next. Coker was going to happen!

Coker, in the games-study, declared that that "tore it." Coker had been simmering with indignation for days. Now it boiled over.

"A bobby at Greyfriars!" said Coker. "Think of it! Rooting through the school for quids that have never been pinched at all! You men know that's what I've said all along—that that old ass' quids never were pinched."

"Yes; don't say it again," said Blundell.

"That old ass has shoved his silly box somewhere and forgotten where," said Coker. "I've said so all the time."

"You have," agreed Potter. "It's the sort of thing you would say, Coker. Give us a rest, old bean!"

"Making out there's a thief in the school!" hooted Coker. "Calling in a bobby! My hat! It's the limit! I'm not having it."

"What are you going to do about it, then?" grunted Blundell.

Snort, from Coker.

"I've told Gosling what I think—twice! Each time he's answered me uncivilly. He makes out that that box has been pinched from his lodge, though I've told him quite plainly that he's a silly old fool, and that he's mistaid it

somewhere. Well, that box is going to be found!"

"Where?" asked Greene.

"Where Gosling left it when he lost it," said Coker firmly. "If Gosling won't search for it and find it I will—and that's that!"

"Oh, my hat! But—"

"You men can come and help, if you like," said Coker. "I'm going down to Gosling's lodge now."
"You ass!" roared Blundell. "If you butt into Gosling's lodge he will complain to the Head!"

"Let him!" said Coker.

Coker of the Fifth marched out of the games-study, his mind made up. The Fifth Form men stared after him blankly. A few minutes later, from the window, they had a view of Horace Coker, stalking away to the porter's lodge.

"Ha—he—he's going!" gasped Potter. Some of the Fifth followed Coker. Other fellows, catching from them what was on, followed, too. It was a new excitement for Greyfriars. Most of the fellows were laughing. It was like that ass, Coker—that priceless chump, Coker—to take a view contrary to that of the whole school. Coker was nothing, if not original. But for Coker to carry on to the extent of searching the porter's lodge, whether Gosling liked it or not, was really the limit—the giddy limit—the outside edge! Fellows could hardly believe that even Coker would do it! They followed on eagerly to see.

Coker arrived first at the porter's lodge. He banged on the door and Gosling opened it.

Gosling stared sourly at Coker of the Fifth.

"Wot—?" he began.

Coker interrupted him.

"Look here, Gosling, you old ass! I've told you that your silly box never was pinched at all. You've stuck it somewhere and forgotten where—"

"Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"I want you," said Coker firmly, "to search this blessed place from end to end. I'll help."

"You mind your own business Mister Coker," said Gosling sourly. "Them quids has been pinched. I left that box on my table. When I come back it was

gorn. Now, you go away quiet, or I'll report yer!"

Gosling closed his door. But it did not quite close. A large size in feet was in the way.

"Are you going to search for that box?" demanded Coker.

"No!" said Gosling. "I ain't!"

"Then I am!" said Coker.

"If you don't take that there fool away, Mr. Coker, and let a man shut his door!"

Crash!

The door flew open, under the propulsion of the hefty Coker, and Gosling staggered back.

Horace Coker strode in.

"My eye!" gasped Gosling. "My eye! I'll report yer! Busting into a man's 'ouse! My eye! I'll go to the 'ead!"

"You can go to Jericho, if you like!" answered Coker. "I'm going to search this place from end to end till I find that box!"

"It ain't 'ere!" shrieked Gosling. "It's been pinched—nicked—took—"

"Rot!"

"Let them things alone!" roared Gosling. "Coker began on his sitting-room. 'Don't you move that furniture! Don't you mess about with a man's things! Don't you poke into that there cupboard—'"

"Rats!"

Gosling gazed at Coker of the Fifth as if he could hardly believe his ancient eyes. Indeed, he hardly could.

"Will you gerout?" he roared. "My eye! I'll put you out if you don't get out. You ear me?"

"Shut up!" said Coker.

Gosling made a grab at Coker. The burly Fifth-Former gave him a push and Gosling sat down.

"Oh, my eye!" gasped Gosling.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from without.

A dozen fellows were on the spot now, and more were coming. The news was spreading through Greyfriars that Coker of the Fifth was taking this matter into his own masterly hands.

"Coker, you ass, come out!" shouted Potter.

"Come in and help!" retorted Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha! Go it, Coker!" yelled Skinner.

Gosling staggered up.

"Wot I says is this 'ere—I'm going to the 'ead!" he stammered. "I'll bring your 'eadmaster to 'andle you, Mister Coker."

Gosling staggered from his lodge. He started for the House at a run. He had gone for the headmaster; but Coker carried on regardless.

"Buck up, Coker!" yelled Skinner. "The Head will be here in a minute."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fellows come in and help!" shouted Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Nobody heeded that call. Nobody, excepting Coker, wanted to be found "shipping" Gosling's lodge when the Head arrived on the scene. Yells of laughter answered Coker.

From the direction of the House five Remove fellows came at a run. The news had reached Harry Wharton & Co.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's going on?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Coker!" gasped Skinner. "Coker thinks that Gosling's quids are on the spot—and he's searching for them! Gosling's gone for the Head. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here comes the Head!" shrieked Tubb of the Third.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Potter. "Poor old Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dr. Locke's stately figure appeared in the office. With him came Gosling, gesticulating wildly. The stately Head was moving with more than his usual speed. His face wore a portentous frown.

Potter shrieked into the lodge:

"Come out, Coker! It's the Head, and—"

"I'm looking for that box of quids, you ass!"

"The Head—"

"Shut up, Potter!"

Harry Wharton pushed Potter of the Fifth aside and put his head in at the window. Gosling's tidy room looked rather untidy now. Coker had rather a heavy hand. He was pitching things right and left.

"Coker!" gasped Wharton. "Look in that jar on the mantelpiece."

"Eh?"

"It—it might be there, you know."

"The mightfulness is terrific."

"Rot!" said Coker. "Don't you cheeky fags butt in! Still, I'll look."

Coker up-ended the jar. The wax flowers dropped out. After them dropped a cigar-box. Coker gave a whoop of triumph.

"Here's the Head!"

The crowd cleared back as the majestic Head arrived. Dr. Locke strode into the lodge. His frown was simply terrifying.

"Coker!" he thundered.

"Busting into a man's 'ouse!" spluttered Gosling. "Busting a man's 'ouse! Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Coker! How dare you? How—"

"It's all right, sir!" said Coker. "I was convinced, sir, that that old ass—I mean, that Gosling was making some silly mistake, sir, and that his box of quids wasn't pinched, sir! There's no thief in this school—"

"Coker! You have dared to—to—to search this lodge without permission—"

"I've found it, sir!"

"Eh?"

"I've found it!"

"What?"

"Look!"

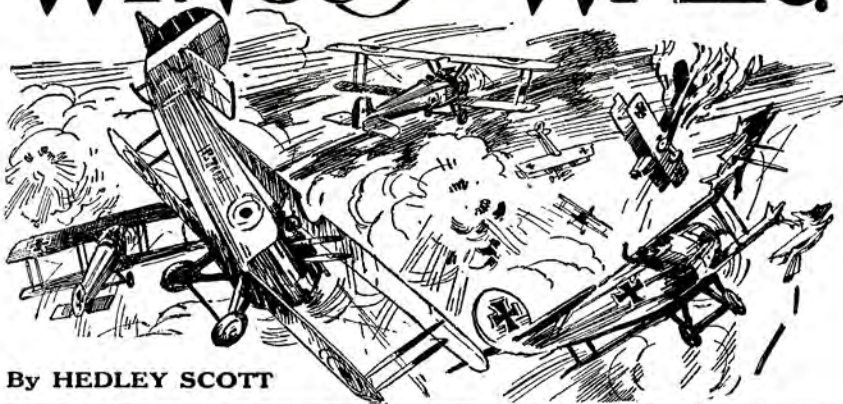
(Continued on page 28.)



Lean, lanky, and trail he looks as weak as a kitten! That would be your first impression of Sammy Strong. But that's where you'd make a mistake. Looks are deceptive, and in the case of Sammy Strong they're wrong, altogether. For Sammy is a pocket Hercules. Alderman Parker Pismall is fifteen stones of unpleasantness, but Sammy lifts him as if he were a baby. Which causes Parker to become even more unpleasant, and makes him vow to get his own back on Sammy. Make a pal of Sammy, boys. Laugh at his hilarious antics, and gasp at his amazing feats of strength. You'll meet him in the rollicking new series of stories, entitled: "Simple Sammy Strong!"—which starts in this week's bumper, six-story issue of

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WINGS OF WAR!



By HEDLEY SCOTT

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

IN CONSEQUENCE OF PLANS HAVING LEAKED OUT TO THE ENEMY THROUGH AN UNKNOWN SOURCE, FERRERS LOCKE—FORMERLY A SECRET SERVICE AGENT, BUT NOW MAJOR LOCKE, D.S.O.—IS APPOINTED TO TAKE OVER THE COMMAND OF 256 SQUADRON, R.F.C., A BRISTOL FIGHTING SQUADRON OF GREAT REPUTE STATIONED "SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE." LOCKE'S SUSPICIONS ARE AROUSED BY THE STRANGE CONDUCT OF SERGEANT WILKINS, WHO IS, IN REALITY, "B ONE"—ONE OF THE SMARTEST SPIES IN THE SERVICE OF GERMANY. LATER, WHEN TWENTY PLANES FROM 256 SET OUT ON A SECRET RAID, THEY ARE TRAPPED BY AN OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF ENEMY PLANES THAT HAVE BEEN LYING IN WAIT FOR THEM. ONLY TEN SUCCEED IN LIMPING HOME TO THE AERODROME, WHILE THE BOMBS WHICH 256 HAVE DROPPED, THE LOADING OF WHICH WILKINS HAD SUPERINTENDED, HAVE ALL PROVED TO BE HARMLESS. (Now read on.)

A Strange War Tribute!

"**A** CH! A good day's work!" Her von Schrasberg, Kommandant of Douai, rubbed his fleshy hands together and a score of wrinkles—intended for a smile—for the benefit of the staff officers grouped around him.

The under-officers knew the signs well, and respectfully laughed by way of reply.

"R. Ore is a worthy servant of the Fatherland," went on the kommandant. "He shall be recommended to the All-Highest for the Iron Cross of the Second Order."

The staff officers murmured their approval.

Before the fleshy kommandant was a full report of the raid made by the Englander squadron known as 256. Ten machines belonging to that squadron had crashed or otherwise been destroyed over German territory. And in the fierce engagement only five planes of the Imperial Air Service had failed to "return home."

It was a decided victory for the Fatherland.

Sixty bombs had been released over the important town of Douai by the Englander squadron, but the damage they had done was practically negligible. The kommandant laughed hugely as he thought of the "doctored" bombs, of the trouble and cost in human life that had been taken to drop them over the town of which he was virtually the ruler, and the cleverness of R. Ore now serving in the British Forces as Sergeant Wilkins.

For some considerable time the crack British squadron had had things all their

own way. Orders from the All-Highest himself had been issued that a stop must be put to the activities of Squadron 256, and at once. Now, with the information at his command, the kommandant would be able to report that at least half of the troublesome squadron had been accounted for.

The kommandant pressed a bell on his desk, and in a moment the door opened to admit an orderly.

"You will tell the Hauptman Marx to present himself here in ten minutes!" barked the kommandant.

"Ja, mein herr!"

In less than the stated ten minutes a captain of the Imperial Air Service presented himself in the kommandant's office. He slammed a salute at his chief and stood stiffly to attention.

"Listen to your instruction, Herr Hauptman," began the kommandant, in a throaty voice. "Half and hour before dawn to-morrow you will take off and fly direct to the aerodrome which shelters the Englander flying squadron called 256—"

"Ja, Herr Kommandant."

"You will fly low over the aerodrome, and you will drop in its midst a wreath which, even at this moment, is being made for the occasion."

Again the flying officer intimated that he understood what was required of him. It was a common enough practice for the victor, whatever his nationality, to drop a wreath on the aerodrome of a vanquished foe, and such mighty men of the air as the celebrated Squadron 256 had more than earned that strange war tribute. For a moment a boyish enthusiasm took the place of the hard lines in the young flying man's face.

The kommandant noted it, and smiled sourly to himself.

"You have no objections to paying such a tribute to a fallen foe, Herr Hauptman?" he remarked. "Zo! My choice of a bearer is well placed."

"Herr Kommandant," replied the young German flying officer. "I feel deeply honoured. Three times have I met the gallant Squadron 256; three times have I lived to remember their chivalry. I—"

His eloquence came to an abrupt end as he noted the sudden lines of fury that worked in the bloated face of the kommandant.

"Enough! You will drop the wreath and return to report to me as speedily as your plane can carry you. Dismiss!"

The Hauptman Marx flashed a salute, clicked his heels, and retired.

When he had gone the kommandant turned to his staff.

"There is too much sentiment with these war-birds!" he growled. "They fight almost like brothers. Perhaps, mein friends, it was as well I did not acquaint him of the full purport of that wreath!"

His smile returned. For the next ten minutes he was busy instructing his code writer to inscribe a message on a small piece of paper. By the time it was finished a wreath of fresh flowers, fashioned in the shape of an aeroplane, had been delivered in his office.

"Isn't that a fine piece of work?" laughed the kommandant harshly. "Now, Staffel, in your best English write the following!":

He dictated a message of condolence that was to accompany the wreath, folded it, and placed it with his own hands in a small black-edged envelope. Then just as carefully he folded the coded message into a size no larger

than an inch square, and fastens it securely between the petals of a blood-red tulip.

"The needle and thread—"

There was no need for the kommandant to give the order, for directly the message had been fastened in its place an under-officer advanced with a needle and thread and sewed the petals neatly together, thus completely sealing from view any trace of the coded message. That the blood-red tulip was an artificial flower could hardly be noticed. Certainly, by the time the petals had been stitched together and the flower pushed back among its natural fellows it would have deceived the most practised eye.

"Good!" ejaculated the kommandant. "It will deceive the pig Englishers, but it will not deceive our friend R. One. See to it, Staffel, that you deliver this wreath personally to the Hauptman Marx!"

Older Lieutenant Staffel saluted, gathered up the wreath, and his staff car was soon threading its way to the Douai Aerodrome, on route for Captain Marx's quarters. The ober lieutenant was inclined to be sentimental himself where airmen were concerned, and he looked upon the kommandant's cleverness as so much unsportsmanlike trickery. But war is war he repeatedly told himself. No doubt the kommandant's action was for the ultimate good of the Fatherland. All the same, Ober Lieutenant Staffel did not feel too happy when he fulfilled his mission and gave the wreath into the safe keeping of the pilot who was to fly it across to the English squadron.

"I'm going to emulate the early bird, Ron," yawned Jim Daniels, "and catch the worm. Which, being interpreted, means that I'm going to turn out now and try to catch a sausage for breakfast—"

"Which, still further interpreted, means," said Ron Glynn, sitting up in his camp-bed, "that a silly idiot named Daniels can't sleep, so he's going up before the usual early morning reconnaissance to try to bag a Hun."

Jim Daniels stepped out of bed, shivered, and yawned again.

"You're right, Ron," he said. "I'm blessed if I can sleep!"

"Thinking of yesterday's show?" asked Ron. "Ditto! I don't think I'll ever forget it, old scout."

"Nor me!" said Jim, scrambling into his breeches. "I shall never forget old Wallace's face as he went down—smiling as usual—"

"So was Oakley," said Ron quietly. "He didn't stand a dog's chance of coming out of a certain crash alive. But he waved to me as he went down, and grinned."

"It was a tough show," remarked Jim. "And Jerry the Hun has got to pay for it! Little me has decided to do a bit of straffing on my own, without orders. Coming!"

The Early Bird!

BUT Ron Glynn was already out of bed.

His eyes dwelt affectionately on the sleeping form of Bruce Thorburn. Then he gazed at the other sleepers—all of them new arrivals of the previous evening—and wondered, as was

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the way of the Flying Service, how many of them would be sleeping in those same beds by the time the day was out. But a douche of cold water did much to dispel his melancholy musings, and with Jim at his heels, he softly closed the door of the hut, and started for the hangars.

The first rays of dawn were streaking the sky, and the chilly morning air made the two chums shiver, but by the time they arrived at the hangar their blood was aglow and the colour of youth and health gleamed in their faces.

It was against all orders to take a "bus" out without leave, but neither Jim nor Ron paid much attention to that. Someone else did, however, and that was Sergeant Wilkins. Almost before Jim had pulled open the sliding doors of the hangar the sergeant came panting up to them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cooed Jim. "Why, if it isn't Sergeant Wilkins catching an early worm too!"

"Or catching a cold," said Ron, noting the sergeant's scanty attire.

"Good-morning, gentlemen!" panted the sergeant, in a voice which seemed to demand an explanation of their own presence there at that early hour. "Er—er—good-morning!"

"And good-morning once again!" chirruped Ron.

"Mind your big feet, sergeant," said Jim playfully, laying hold of a strut, and starting to drag his machine out on to the tarmac. "Or, better still, lend a hand."

"But, sir," began the sergeant, "this is against orders. No gentlemen are allowed to take a plane out without leave!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Major Locke would be down on me, gentlemen, if he knew that I had allowed you to take this plane up."

"Fathead!" grunted Jim. "The major won't know that you saw us unless you are fool enough to tell him!"

"Exactly," grinned Ron. "Turn your eyes and your face the other way. In short, hop it too sweet for your bed and pull the jolly old clothes over your eyes. What you don't see you can't know about, what?"

This apparently did not satisfy the sergeant. He protested, he pleaded—he almost threatened.

"It will be my duty to report this, gentlemen!" he said harshly at last.

"Report, and be blowed!" growled Jim. "You're mighty keen all of a sudden. What's got you out of bed, anyway? Expecting a visitor?"

He noticed the start the sergeant gave, but paid no attention to it then.

"Er—er—" began Wilkins—"I couldn't sleep, and—"

"Neither could we, old three stripes," chuckled Ron. "So we're going to do a bit of sausage hunting to get an appetite for brekker. Swither on, Jim!"

By this time the plane had been wheeled out on to the tarmac, and Jim had climbed into the pilot's seat. In response to his chum's order, he switched on the ignition, and Ron pulled lustily at the propeller. The morning was cold, the engine was cold, but Ron was almost perspiring by the time he had "swung" the propeller successfully. And all the while Sergeant Wilkins was voicing his protests. The gist of them, however, was lost in spasmodic roars as Jim nursed that cold engine with gentle

bursts of throttle until he had it running smoothly.

"Jump in, Ron!" Ron grimaced. He had a pilot's natural aversion to "sitting in the back seat" and letting someone else pilot a machine, but it was that or nothing. Pulling another contortion for the benefit of the furious Sergeant Wilkins, he clambered into the observer's seat and swung the scarf mounting of the Lewis gun. During this movement the muzzle fixed in a straight line with the ample figure of Sergeant Wilkins, at which he swore many things that were swept up and carried away in the roar of the engine.

Shaking his fist at the two grinning youngsters, the sergeant turned on his heel and tramped back to his hut. And his language, could it have been heard, would have given any British hearer a shock, for it was couched in German, and meant in effect:

"Donner und blitzen! Pig dogs! Interfering s—me! Oh, but the day will come when I and the Fatherland shall be avenged!"

The Lone Hun!

THE Hauptman Marx was whistling to himself.

Above him stretched the infinite blue of the sky; below, spread like a blanket, and about as inanimate, stretched the trenches of the Germans and those of the enemy. Coming up from the east were the crimson heralds of dawn, a comforting, pleasant sight to the somewhat artistic soul of the youthful captain. For the nonce Marx had forgotten that he was at war. The sky was peaceful, the ground, ten thousand feet below him, nestling in a thin grey mist, seemed void of life.

Wary troops on both sides were snatching a few moments' rest before the grim business of war started afresh.

The Hauptman was singing a famous old drinking song, but he broke off in the middle of it as his eyes chanced to rest on the wreath hanging on a hook in his cockpit. His young face sobered. He remembered his mission. Out of all the Douai Squadron he had been selected to pay this tribute to the fallen heroes of 255 Squadron. He hoped that if he had to give his life in the service of his Fatherland, a similar tribute would be paid him.

He was but twenty, was the Hauptman Marx; but already, as his rank proclaimed, he was a flying man of some importance. Ten English pilots had fallen before the wizardry and deadliness of his attacks. Yet he was a fair fighter, content to down his foe and not to pursue him with the relentless that some of his brother officers practised, to shoot him down when already he was helpless. In short the Hauptman concerned himself most with disabling enemy planes rather than the killing of their occupants.

But no thought of war was in his mind as he plugged his way over the line and headed his machine for that section of the map in which 255 Squadron had their headquarters. Not a sign of the enemy had he seen at that early hour. No stray shell from any watchful anti-aircraft battery had disturbed him. Only the cold of the biting morning air made him realise that he was a long, long way away from his camp-bed in Douai Aerodrome.

He banged his hands together to restore their warmth, what time the control-stick was held loosely between his knees. Once again he started to whistle, but the commencement of the refrain of the old drinking song he had learned at his university was suddenly peppered with the staccato reports of a machine-gun.

Ratatatatatatat!

A long, deadly hail of lead swept from a position somewhere behind him and spattered through the centre section of the top wing. By a foot, no more, it missed the Hauptman Marx's youthful head.

Away went his peaceful thoughts. War-war!

Ratatatatatatat!

Another burst winged at him as he threw his Halberstadt scout into a dizzy turn, levelled up, and dived in the reverse direction.

Ratatatatatatat!

This time it was the German gun that barked across the morning air. The captain had caught sight of his attacker — a Bristol two-seater scout!

"He's a wily sausage-eater!" bawled Jim through the telephone that connected with his chum in the back seat. "Nearly got him napping, though."

"We'll get the blighter!" roared Ron, swinging his gun and aching to get loose — a burst of bullets. "Put your nose down—ugh!"

Jim put the nose down—so suddenly that his chum was nearly thrown off his balance. Then up came the nose of the plane again, and over she went in a perfect loop.

This manoeuvre brought Jim right out on the tail of the enemy plane again, and as the camouflaged fuselage of the Halberstadt showed within his gun-sights he released another hail of lead.

"Got him!" he roared jubilantly. The nose of the German tilted up sharply, then dropped just as sharply, and in a second the Halberstadt was careering earthwards in a spiral spin.

Down, close behind it, roared the Bristol.

"Look out!" roared Ron suddenly. "Beefie the sausage-eater is playing 'possum'!"

Ron was right. It was an old trick, much practised by flying men, to sham being hit and falling down out of control, then, at the critical moment, when the pursuing pilot was congratulating himself on having added to his score of foes, to squirm out of that helpless nose-dive, wheel sharply for position, and pump lead into the unsuspecting pursuer as fast as the gun-trigger could be thumbed.

Ratatatat! Ratatatat! Ratatatat! A regular hail of bullets came from the "helpless" Halberstadt as the Hauptman Marx pulled suddenly out of the spiral nose-dive, banked sharply in a climbing turn, and swooped down directly behind the Bristol.

A steady burst of bullets from Ron's Lewis gun in the back seat saved the two Brits, for the Halberstadt shifted its course a fraction, and the pinging lead did nothing worse than pierce the starboard wing like a sieve and chip a generous amount of splinters from the rear struts.

"Near thing!" bawled Ron. "This Hun knows his job. Keep your wits about you, Jim!"

The German pilot was telling himself much the same thing about his two foes. Ratatatatatat!

A burst of lead shivered the dashboard in front of him and pierced the small auxiliary benzine tank the next moment. The German smiled grimly. A good

thing the main tank had not suffered the same fate. His reply was to riddle the fuselage of the Britol with a lightning movement which all but accounted for his opponents.

'Round and round the two planes chased each other, Ron getting in a few rounds of ammunition whenever his position was favourable. Twice he had come within an ace of bagging this wily, persistent foe; twice the German's luck and his skill combined had saved him.

Each machine now bore ample signs of that desperate encounter. The fabric was bubbling up from the wings and fuselage of both machines in curious mounds, somewhat reminiscent of the bumps in a nutmeg-grater.

Ratatatatatatat!

Ratatatatatatat!

The two guns of the Bristol made a merry music with that of the single fixed

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gun of the Halberstadt, and the men in the trenches below, hearing that familiar sound, gazed heavenwards, entertained and thrilled by that long-drawn-out battle. The Germans hoped fervently that their son of the Fatherland would settle the hash of the hated Englander; the British Tommies yelled encouragement—which, of course, could not be heard by their country's champions—and hoped that Jerry would get more than he bargained for.

Diving, looping, spinning—employing every known artifice of the fighting scout, Jim, with set teeth and grim jaw, vowed that he would get his "Hun before breakfast." But the German was a foeman worthy of his steel. He survived those smashing onslaughts, although a thin trickle of blood was spurting from his shoulder where two of the Englander bullets had gone home, and answered guile with guile. Only once had he been caught napping, as his crimson-stained flying-jacket showed.

Jim and Ron, so far, had come through that strenuous, prolonged fight unscathed. True, their machine looked like a sieve, but all vulnerable parts had escaped, and they comforted themselves with the thought that a miss was as good as a mile.

Ratatatatatatat!

Again the German's gun barked

shrilly. While its note was echoing across the sky Jim threw the nose of the Bristol down so suddenly that Ron lost his balance and threw up his hands.

Into a spinning nose-dive went the Bristol, with engine roaring at full throttle.

The Hauptman Marx grunted with triumph. He had got his victim at last. The action of the observer when he threw up his hands bespoke the fact of a direct hit. He would make quite sure.

So down followed the Halberstadt warily.

"What the thump's wrong?" bawled Ron from the bottom of the cockpit. "Possum!" came back Jim's chuckling voice. "Stay out of sight for a moment."

Jim was trying the German's 'possum trick on the Hauptman Marx. But the German was not to be caught napping like that. It has been said that he was content only to disable his foe—to kill him outright took no place in the fighting make-up of the youthful captain. Thus his descent after the spinning Bristol was discretion itself.

From the tail of his eye Jim saw that the trick had failed, so he ended it and pulled the Bristol out of the dive.

Ratatatatatatat!

Describing a sharp right-angle turn he zoomed up almost on his tail, his front gun spitting defiance at the glimpse it got of the Halberstadt's fuselage passing directly above it.

The German shrugged his shoulders. He had counted his chickens too early. Well, there was nothing for it but to fight on.

Rataraaaaa!

He manoeuvred for position again, feeling a trifle weak now from loss of blood, and blazed away with his gun. In answer came a shattering burst from the Bristol, which passed round him like a shower, but left him untouched. Then the unexpected happened. The engine of the Halberstadt coughed suddenly, spluttered in desperation, and as suddenly stopped functioning altogether.

"Himml!" gasped the Hauptman Marx. "The tank is empty!"

He spoke, truly. In the excitement of that long, sustained fight he had forgotten that the journey over the lines from Douai had consumed an ample portion of his precious benzine, and that the running fight of over half an hour's duration had consumed a still more ample portion of it. Furthermore, he was not aware that a chance bullet had pierced the main petrol tank, and thus provided a further leakage of the precious spirit.

No wonder his youthful face showed despair. A fighting plane without a pennyworth of spirit to feed the engine was as good as a howitzer without any live shells. A frantic inspection of the spirit gauge confirmed his fears; another glance at the auxiliary tank showed there was no help to expect from that.

Up above him Ron and Jim guessed his plight. They saw the propeller flicker almost to a "ticking over" speed, and decided unanimously that their valiant foe should not lose his life through that stroke of ill-luck. If the "blighter" would do as he was told, Jim reflected, he could land on 256 drome and be taken prisoner.

(Will the lone German "do as he is told," or will he still make a fight for liberty? See next week's chapters, which teem with thrills and surprises.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1263

THE VANISHED SOVEREIGNS!

(Continued from page 24.)

Coker of the Fifth held up the cigar-box triumphantly. The Head stared at it blankly. Gosling gave a gurgle.

"It was in that jar on the mantel-piece, sir," said Coker. "I knew the old ass had shoved it somewhere and forgotten where. That's where it was."

"Bless my soul! Gosling, is—is it that—the box—that—that you supposed to be abstracted?"

Gosling, stuttering with astonishment, took the box from Coker. He opened the lid. His horny fingers sorted out ten golden sovereigns packed in cotton-wool. He gasped.

Doorway and window were crammed with excited faces. There was a buzz of amazed voices.

"Is that the box, Gosling?" The Head's voice was stern.

"My eye! Yes, sir!" gurgled Gosling. "Is it intact?"

"It ain't tacked, sir," said Gosling. Gosling understood the Head's English, no better than the Head understood Gosling's. "It was fastened with a rivet, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bless my soul! I mean, are the contents intact—are the contents there? Is anything missing?"

"No, sir; the quids are all right."

"Bless my soul!"

There was a pause.

"Gosling," said the Head at last, "I am very displeased with you. You have caused prolonged and disagreeable excitement—for nothing. There has been no theft. Your money is here, in your own lodge, safe—"

"I left it on the table—"

"It is obvious, Gosling, that you must have left it where it was found. You have been very careless, Gosling."

"Wot I says is this ere—"

"Say no more, Gosling."

Dr. Locke turned to Coker of the Fifth. All eyes were on the great Horace.

"Coker, it was my intention to punish you for having taken the law into your own hands in this extraordinary way. But this unexpected discovery merits my thanks. You have performed a great service, Coker, and you have shown uncommon intelligence. I thank you, Coker!"

"Yes, sir, I expected you to," said Coker innocently. "You see, knowing

that I was right, and everybody else wrong—"

The Head did not stay for more. He swept out of the lodge. Coker of the Fifth walked out. Gosling was left with his precious cigar-box in his horny hands—greatly amazed, but gloating.

The Greyfriars fellows looked at Coker. The Famous Five grinned. Coker, with his uncommon intelligence, had worked the oracle. The other fellows, not knowing what the Famous Five knew, could only be amazed. Coker had said that the missing quids were in Gosling's lodge all the time, and they had been found there. Coker had been right. It was Coker first, and the rest nowhere!

"Well, my only hat!" said Potter. "My only summer bonnet! Coker was right, you men! And yet there was an ass who once said that the age of miracles was past!"

"I told you," said Coker, "that I was right, and that you were a lot of fools, didn't I?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Coker!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

* * * * *

It was the end of the affair at last.

The missing quids were no longer missing, though Gosling, perhaps feeling that riches might again take unto themselves wings and fly away, lost no time in disposing of them.

Coker, of course, swanked. He had been right, and everybody else wrong; and Coker was not the man to let them forget it. They grew quite tired of the subject in the genus-study.

And as Harry Wharton & Co. kept their own counsel, Coker remained in that state of satisfaction. "The dark shadow of a suspected theft was lifted; so the Head and the beaks and the fellows were all satisfied. Coker was satisfied. The Famous Five were satisfied to leave him satisfied. And Gosling, having received 2/6 each for his golden quids, was satisfied, too, which was really a happy state of satisfaction all round."

THE END.

(Look out for next week's *MAGNET* and another ripping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "THE BOUNDER'S LUCK!" The best plan, of course, is to fill in the order form on page 2 of this issue, and your next week will then receive a copy of the *MAGNET* for you every week.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

(Continued from page 2.)

ask them for particulars of their scheme for training boys as stewards and cook's assistants. There are several associations which help boys to get jobs in the Mercantile Marine. A boy who has lost one or both parents, for instance, should get into touch with the Shaftesbury Homes, 104, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.1. This society owns the Arcthusa training ship, where boys are trained for the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine. The training ship Warspite also offers help to boys who wish to go to sea. The address of the offices of this ship is: Clarke's Place, London, E.C.2.

THERE is just room now for two REPLIES IN BRIEF,

and then I shall have to deal with next week's programme.

Harry Green (Kensington).—Sorry, but you have stumped me! I really couldn't tell you the best and cheapest way to get your hair wavy. But why waste it, if it isn't naturally that way inclined? Take my tip—you can't improve upon Nature!

E. Jenkins (Abergavenny).—An express engine carries roughly eighteen tons of water in its tender. This is about four thousand gallons.

YOU can take it from me, clumps, there's some "good stuff" in store for you next week. First and foremost, of course, is another ripping story of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled:

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If it's thrilling you want, you'll find plenty of them in the next long instalment of our magnificent flying yarn, "Wings of War!"

There'll be the "Greyfriars Herald," as usual, together with our other smaller features, and I shall be in the chair waiting to have another little chat with you.

Cheerio, for the time being, clumps.

YOUR EDITOR.

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