

THRILLING HOLIDAY ADVENTURES OF HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN EGYPT!

The MAGNET^{2D}



JUST STARTING—A STIRRING STORY OF THE "GOOD OLD DAYS."

The Red Falcon!

Introducing HAL LOVETT and
JERRY McLEAN, two Knights
of the Road.



BY
Arthur Steffens.

HAVING OVERHEARD HIS RASCALLY FATHER AND MR. WHO, A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER, PLOTTING AGAINST HIM, HAL LOVETT RUNS AWAY FROM HOME. HE IS BEFRIENDED BY JERRY McLEAN, A ONE-TIME DANDY, TO WHOM HE UNFOLDS HIS STRANGE STORY. HAL AND JERRY ARE OUTSIDE THE DRURY LANE THEATRE THAT SAME NIGHT JUST AS THE PLAYGOERS ARE LEAVING, WHEN THEY ARE BOTH ARRESTED FOR CONSPIRING TO ROB THE EARL OF HUNTFORD—WHO IS NONE OTHER THAN MR. WHO—OF A DIAMOND STAR!

Up for Trial!

IT seemed to Hal Lovett that years had passed since the night of his arrest outside Drury Lane Theatre. It seemed ages since he had appeared before the Bow Street magistrate with McLean and they had been committed for trial at the quarter sessions.

Their confinement in Newgate Prison had steeped McLean in gloom, and nearly broken the boy's proud spirit. Hal loathed contact with the coarse and ribald prisoners. He hated the never-ending quarrelling and fighting, the hard drinking, and the thousand and one degrading brutalities that marked the gathering together of the prisoners in the common-rooms of the gaol.

If Jerry had not appealed to some rich friends, who bribed the governor to give them special privileges, Hal felt that he might have died.

But they were permitted to share a room to themselves in the governor's quarters, and they avoided contact with the rest of the wretched prisoners as much as possible.

Hal often discussed with McLean the events which had led up to their misfortune, and it never occurred to McLean to question the boy's story, though he was doubtful as to whether they would be able to prove their innocence.

"You'll never get judge or jury to believe that the Earl of Huntford came to Samuel Lovett's rag-shop in Wych Street and gave him a bag of gold to play that trick of the diamond star on you, boy," said Jerry, as they sat in their cell the night before the Old Bailey trial.

"But it's true!" said Hal passionately. "You remember I told you about it that night in the coffee-shop in Covent Garden."

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"Of course you did," rejoined Jerry McLean, shifting the position of his double irons so as to ease his cramped limbs, "and then, though we knew the trap was set, we foolishly went to the theatre and walked right into it."

"The Earl of Huntford was the beggar who called himself Mr. Who!" said Hal excitedly. "I recognised him at the theatre in spite of his fine clothes."

Jerry McLean nodded his tousled head.

"Ay," he said grimly, "they framed you, boy. Gad! I saw your rascally father snatch the diamond star from the earl's breast and plant it on you before the Runners seized you. That's why I tried to rescue you. But they refused to listen to our story at the police court, lad, and I don't suppose they'll give us a hearing at the Old Bailey to-morrow. We can only hope for the best and prepare ourselves for the worst."

"But why did my father do it?" asked Hal. "And why did the Earl of Huntford come to his rag-shop disguised as a beggar and pay him one hundred golden guineas to lay such a trap for me?"

McLean pulled Hal's shirt wide open so that his flesh was bared, and there, vividly tattooed in red on the white flesh, was a falcon jessed and belled and hooded—as real as life. Jerry's handsome face set as he studied the tattoo mark.

"Who knows but what this red falcon had a great deal to do with it?" he growled. "How came you by the mark, boy?"

"I don't quite know. I believe my father pricked it into the skin when I was very young, Jerry."

McLean stared at the boy in surprise. "You remember that, eh? Boy, that's devilish odd. Do you know why Samuel Lovett did it?"

"He said so that he should know me again should I ever get lost," answered Hal.

"It's a dashed queer thing for a father to do," mused Jerry McLean. "But worrying about it won't help us now. I can't see the earl's connection with it. But we know that your father is a thief and a fence, boy. There's something odd here, and if ever I get free I'm going to probe it."

"What sentence shall we get if they convict us to-morrow?" asked Hal Lovett, looking wistfully at McLean.

The man shrugged his broad shoulders.

"Transportation! If we escape the other thing, I guess!"

Hal shuddered, for he knew the alternative was—hanging. Drawing the shirt over his naked flesh, he leaned back against the stone wall with a shiver of dread, and looked around him in horror. Though money had been paid for it, the cell was damp and dark and horrid.

From the common-room, where men were drinking hard, rang echoing oaths and voices raised in ribald laughter.

A drunken man was screaming out a song. Hal could hear women shrieking in high-pitched voices. There came an echo of blows, the sound of ringing curses, and the gruff voice of a turnkey raised in threatening anger.

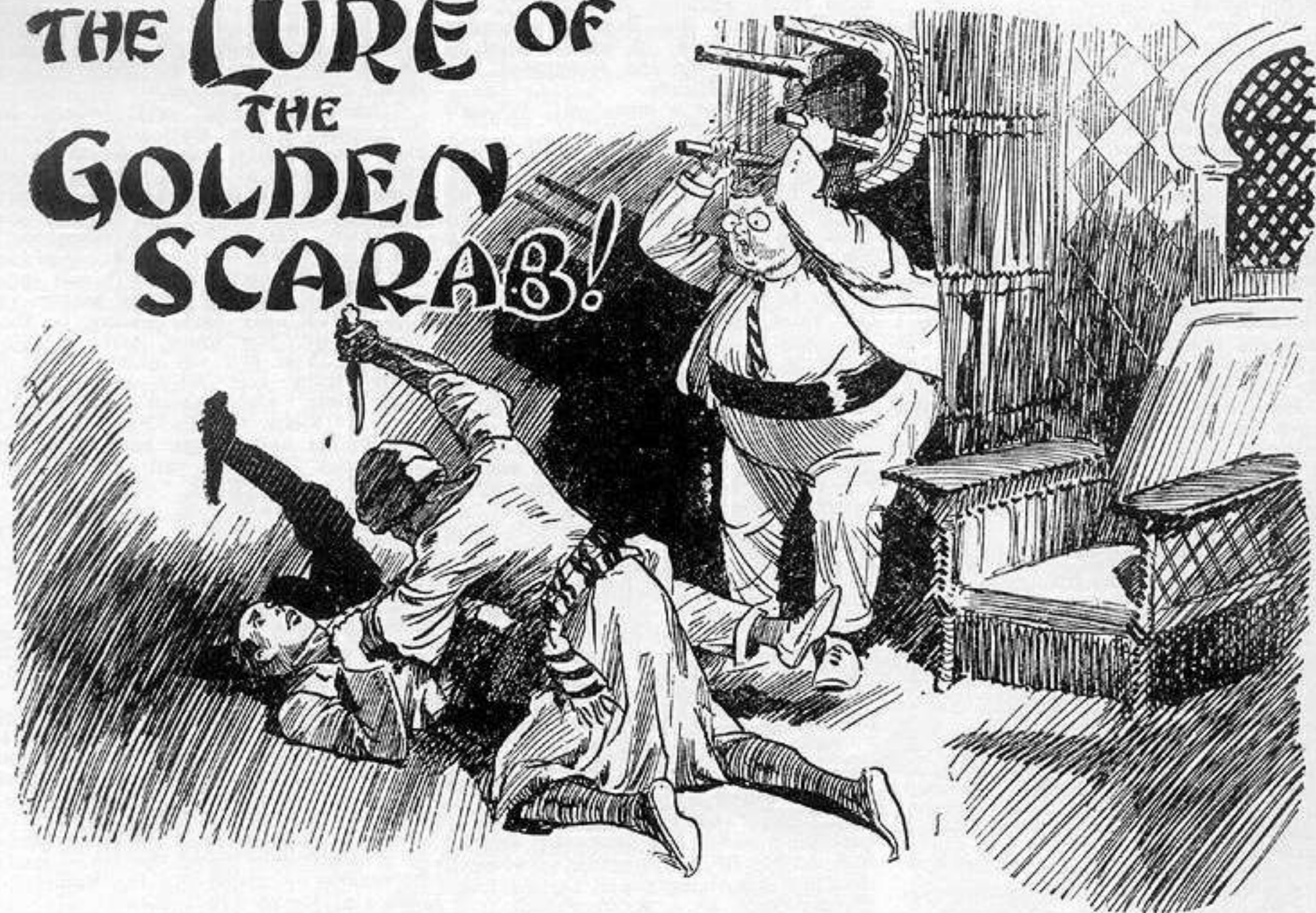
A cell door banged, a lock clicked, and rusty bolts were shot home. Somewhere close by, a man was moaning as if in agony, and on every hand rang the clank of chains.

The air was foul, stifling. Hal closed his eyes and felt sick and faint.

It was then that Jerry McLean's gentle hand sought his and pressed it.

(Continued on page 26.)

THE LURE OF THE GOLDEN SCARAB!



Featuring Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"BEAST!" murmured Billy Bunter. Bunter was annoyed. Billy Bunter was standing before an open wardrobe in Lord Mauleverer's room in the Cairo hotel.

He was just about to make a selection from the numerous—or rather, innumerable—garments belonging to the schoolboy earl of Greyfriars.

Naturally at such a moment Billy Bunter did not want to be interrupted. So the sound of a footstep at the door was quite annoying.

Mauly was the best-tempered fellow in the Greyfriars Remove. He was a long-suffering youth. Otherwise, certainly Billy Bunter would not have been a member of the Greyfriars party that had gone out to Egypt for the holidays. Still, even Mauly's good temper and patience had a limit. It was quite possible that if he found Bunter rooting over his things, he might kick him—quite likely that he might kick him hard.

Bunter did not want to be kicked. Kicking had often come his way, though not so often as he deserved. Still, he did not like it. Custom had not made it grateful or comforting.

So Billy Bunter turned from the wardrobe, and fixed his eyes and his big spectacles on the door with an apprehensive and annoyed blink.

He had really chosen his moment well. Harry Wharton & Co. were on the hotel balcony, discussing the excursion for the day, which was to be to the Pyramids and the Sphinx, with Hassan, the guide. Lord Mauleverer had been taking part in the discussion

to the extent of nodding his head at every suggestion. Bunter had taken it for granted that Mauly would not stir till the latest possible moment, and even then probably not till Bob Cherry tilted him out of his chair. The fat Owl of the Remove had supposed that he had ample time for making his selection among the belongings of the schoolboy earl. And he had barely started when that footstep was heard at the door of Mauly's room, which meant—he concluded—that Mauly was coming in. And only the day before, when Bunter had annexed Mauly's best

If all that he said about it be true, the quaint golden scarab in Lord Mauleverer's possession is the key to a fabulous treasure!

trousers, Mauly had solemnly promised him a kicking next time. This was next time—and the kicking was due.

"Beast!" breathed Bunter.

The doorhandle turned.

Billy Bunter backed behind a handsome screen of Cairo mushrabeyeh work that stood by the window.

He was out of sight when the door opened.

Behind the mushrabeyeh screen he grinned.

Whatever Mauly had come up for, he was not likely to look round behind the screen; and Billy Bunter sagely decided to wait till he was gone. Then that selection from his extensive wardrobe could be made without danger.

The door closed.

There was a soft footstep crossing the room.

Billy Bunter started.

He blinked through the openings of the mushrabeyeh, which was a kind of lattice, and his little round eyes widened behind his big round spectacles.

It was not Lord Mauleverer who had entered Mauly's room. His lordship was still taking his ease in the cane chair on the balcony, as Bunter had supposed. It was a native who had entered—a thick-set man with a dark Arab face, in a turban, with a white cotton galabyeh girdled at the waist. He stopped in the middle of the spacious room, looking round him with keen black hawkish eyes.

Bunter blinked through the mushrabeyeh, startled. The man looked like one of the native hotel servants to Bunter's eyes, at least. But what did he want in Lord Mauleverer's room? He had not come there to perform any duty, that was plain. He stood silent, with a strange stealthiness in his look and manner, scanning the room with searching eyes. And it dawned on the fat junior that he was not an hotel servant, but an hotel thief!

Bunter suppressed his breathing.

Evidently the dark-faced Arab supposed the room to be empty, but for himself. Like Bunter, he had selected his moment carefully, when the Greyfriars party were busy in their discussion with Hassan, the dragoman, on the balcony. Billy Bunter did not like that hard, dark face, with its cruel lines and hawkish eyes. He had no doubt that the man had a knife about him somewhere. He only hoped that the Arab, if he was looking for loot, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,280.

would not look behind the mushrabeyeh screen for it.

Only for a few moments the hawk-faced Arab stood there; then he moved swiftly towards the wardrobe Bunter had so recently left. Standing there, he examined the garments within, running his dark thievish fingers through all the pockets.

He was likely enough to find plunder; for Mauly was careless with his money. There might be Egyptian piastres or pounds, or English banknotes, in the pockets. Bunter, blinking through the latticed screen, saw him draw something from a pocket—it was a handful of piastres—and then, to Bunter's great surprise, put the money back again. It was not loot in the form of money that he was seeking.

He turned from the wardrobe and gave his attention to a suitcase. The suitcase was locked, and Bunter heard a faint click. Then it came open. Evidently the hawk-faced Arab was an expert thief. He had picked the lock of the suitcase.

Kneeling by it, he proceeded to search through the contents, lifting out silver-backed brushes and other things, but—as Bunter noted with increasing surprise—replacing everything that he moved as he had found it.

"Maafish!"

Bunter heard him mutter the Arabic word.

He locked the suitcase again and stood with a wrinkle of thought in his dark brow. Then he turned to the bed, on which a jacket had been carelessly thrown, and ran his fingers through the pockets.

Bunter, silent, watched.

But he guessed now what the man was after. It was not money or jewellery.

"The scarab!" flashed through Billy Bunter's fat mind.

He hardly dared to breathe.

It was the scarab—the sacred scarabæus of A-Menah—that the man was seeking—the scarab that had belonged to Mauly's father, and that the schoolboy earl had brought with him to Egypt. The strange scarab of gold that had a secret—known only to Kalizelos, the Greek dealer of Cairo! The Golden Beetle, which, according to legend, was an infallible guide to the great diamond known as the Eye of Osiris—told of in many an ancient Egyptian papyrus, but never seen since the reign of Rameses the Second, three thousand years ago!

Peril by sea and land had haunted the Greyfriars party through the desperate attempts of Kalizelos to obtain possession of the mysterious scarab. And Bunter realised now that this was one more attempt to seize on the scarab of A-Menah—that the hawk-faced Arab was one more emissary of the Greek of Cairo.

His fat heart thumped.

But there was no need for Bunter to intervene, even had he ventured to think of it. For he knew that the Golden Scarab was in Lord Mauleverer's pocket, and that the searcher could only draw blank.

The hawk-faced Arab seemed to realise it. He ceased his search at last and crossed to the window and looked down.

Billy Bunter cast a longing blink towards the door. But he dared not move—he dared make no sound. The Arab was only a couple of yards from him as he looked down from the window. It overlooked the long, wide balcony, and Bunter knew that the man was watching the Greyfriars party

below. They were all there—the Famous Five of the Remove, with Mauly, and Mauly's uncle, Sir Reginald Brooke, and the dragoman. A voice floated up from below. Bunter recognised the voice of Bob Cherry.

"Time we got a move on! Where's that fat frump Bunter?"

The hawk-faced Arab turned from the window and crossed to the door again. Billy Bunter, watching through the interstices of the mushrabeyeh, hoped from the bottom of his fat heart that the man was going. The Greyfriars juniors would be coming up to their rooms to get ready for the excursion; the thief could not remain without discovery.

But he did not go.

He stood back against the wall, behind the door, so that in opening it would conceal him.

Billy Bunter saw a dark hand slip under the loose cotton galabyeh, and his eyes bulged behind his spectacles as he caught a glimmer of steel.

But the Arab's hand came empty from the galabyeh again. He had only been making sure that the dagger was there, in readiness, if he wanted it.

Then he waited; silent, like a cat about to spring; his black eyes glittering as there were footsteps and voices in the corridor without. He was waiting for the schoolboy earl to enter—unsuspecting. Billy Bunter's eyes, almost bulging through his spectacles with terror, were fixed on him through the lattice of the mushrabeyeh, the fat Owl's heart thumping so hard that he feared that the Arab would hear it. Five minutes—ten minutes—that seemed like hours to the terrified Owl—and then the door-handle was turned from without.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Caught Napping!

"JOLLY!" said Bob Cherry.

Probably there were few sights in the wide world that Robert Cherry of the Greyfriars Remove would not have described as "jolly!"—his nature being merry and bright. But really it was rather jolly, looking from the hotel balcony at the varied, ever-shifting crowd—with Cairo all round, and tall graceful minarets piercing the deep, intensely blue sky, and the Nile and the desert in the distance.

Cairo was noisy, and Cairo was hot; but the Greyfriars fellows were having—and going to have—the time of their lives. Egypt was new and strange to their eyes—strange and delightful—and even the pertinacious sellers of unwanted and worthless antiquities, the persistent guides who were not to be denied, and the endless Bedouin beggars, did not worry them—they were all part of the novel Eastern scene. They were told that there was hardly anybody in Cairo; the crowd did not come till the winter. But it seemed to them that there were plenty of people about—in fact, the narrow streets swarmed, and almost every known language was incessantly heard—and the cries of water-sellers, sherbet-sellers, sweetmeat-sellers, were continual.

"The jolliffulness," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "is terrific!" Hurree Singh's dusky face wore a perpetual smile, in the bright sunshine, which was like that of his native land.

"Glad you came, Mauly?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Eh? Yaas," yawned Lord Mauleverer.

"Keen to climb the pyramids?" grinned Nugent.

Lord Mauleverer, stretched in the long cane chair, did not look as if he was

keen on exertion in any shape or form."

"Oh! Yaas!"

"We'll hoist you up, old bean," said Johnny Bull. "But we shall want a steam crane for Bunter."

"Gentlemen lords," said Hassan, the dragoman. "The start should be of early punctuality, otherwise there is enormous heat of a sun. Large car of luxurious appointment is waiting with readiness."

"Ready, Mauly?" asked Wharton.

"Yaas. But—" His lordship yawned portentously. "I'll tell you what, you men. I've got rather an idea! It's jolly here, sitting in this jolly chair, you know, and watchin' things! You can see quite a lot of Cairo from this jolly old balcony. Look here, what about you fellows bumpin' along to the Pyramids and the Sphinx and things, and tellin' me all about it when you come back? What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good idea, what?" asked his lazy lordship.

"Feeling that you'd like a rest?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yaas."

"You think it a ripping idea, to travel out to Egypt and see the sights from a chair on a balcony?"

"Yaas."

The juniors chuckled; but Hassan, the dragoman, looked quite shocked. Hassan, the son of Suleiman, had appointed himself dragoman, or guide, to the Greyfriars party with so much determination that he had got away with it. Hassan, no doubt, was thinking chiefly of "backsheesh"; but he was deeply in earnest in displaying the wonderful sights of Egypt to his clients. He was accustomed to eager tourists who wanted to see everything, and a little over; and Mauleverer was a new experience to him. He spread out both brown hands in gesticulating remonstrance.

"Oh! My lordly gentleman!" exclaimed Hassan. "You must see Pyramids of Ghizeh—you must see a sphinx! All the world comes to Egypt to climb pyramids and see a sphinx! Hassan will show you all things—Hassan knows everything! You shall be struck with admiring wonderfulness when you see glorious pyramids."

"I'll take your word for it, old bean," answered Mauleverer. "You men get off—tell the waiter to bring me a cool drink, and I'll have a jolly time waitin' for you, see?"

"Poor old Mauly feels as if he can't get out of that chair," said Bob Cherry sympathetically. "This is where he finds it useful to have a pal with him who's full of beans. I'll help you up, old chap."

Bob helped Mauly up—by the simple process of tilting the back of the chair and shooting his lordship out on the balcony in a heap.

Lord Mauleverer sprawled and roared.

"Whooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, if Mauly can't walk up to his room, we'll help him," said Bob. "I'll take one ear and you take the other, Franky."

Lord Mauleverer jumped up.

"Keep off, you silly ass! I'll go and get ready! I—I'm rather keen to see the jolly old pyramids, really."

"Come on, then," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

And the juniors went into the hotel to get ready for the trip. Sir Reginald Brooke had left the hotel, to make a call upon Mr. Hilmi Maroudi, the Egyptian gentleman whose acquaintance the Greyfriars party had made on

the steamer to Alexandria. The school-boys were left in the care of the dragoman for the trip to the Pyramids.

In earlier days, visitors to the Pyramids had to go on donkey-back or camel-back, or on Shanks' pony; but in more modern days, it was an easy trip. There was an electric tramway to Mena House, which stood close by the Pyramids; and there was a good road for arabeyehs and cars. Harry Wharton & Co. would have been satisfied, like most tourists, with the tramway; but Lord Mauleverer was running the show, and Mauly was a millionaire; and did things always in style.

Hassan, the dragoman, rejoiced greatly in the possession of this munificent client. Backsheesh fairly rained on Hassan. If a car was wanted, Hassan engaged it—camels or donkeys or

Faringhees were sent into the world specially to be robbed by faithful followers of the Prophet. If Hassan had passed a whole day without cheating a foreigner, he would have mourned over a day wasted.

Harry Wharton & Co. were quite well aware that Hassan was a rogue; but they did not expect a Cairo guide to be anything else; and he was good-natured, good-tempered, obliging, attentive, and eternally smiling. Since he had found out that Lord Mauleverer was very rich, and that the juniors were friends of Mr. Maroudi, the wealthy Egyptian, Hassan had worn a smile that would not come off. Like all dragomans, he lived and moved and had his being in "backsheesh"; and backsheesh being plentiful, Hassan was as happy as a sandboy.

that one surprised stare. The hawk-eyed man was on him with the spring of a tiger.

Mauleverer went heavily to the floor on his back, the Arab over him. A brown hand gripped his throat and choked him into silence.

He stared up blankly at the dark, menacing face glaring down at him.

In the corridor he could hear the voices of his friends as they went to their rooms. But the closed door was between; they could not see him, and he could make no sound to draw their attention.

The dark face bent closer.

"Silence! Give me the scarab!" breathed the Arab. "Quick, unbeliever! Give me the scarab—the scarab of A-Menah—the golden beetle!"



"Come on, Mauly," said Bob Cherry, cheerily, "Hassan wants us to see the Pyramids. I'll help you to get out of that chair." Tilting the back of the chair, Bob shot his lordship out on the balcony in a heap. "Whoop!" Lord Mauleverer sprawled and roared.

anything else; and everything that Hassan touched meant a profit for Hassan—like Cassius of old, he had an itching palm. No tourist ever stepped in Egypt without being "done" by his dragoman; but Lord Mauleverer was proving a gold-mine to the son of Suleiman. Every day Hassan returned thanks to the Prophet for having delivered this wealthy Faringhee into his hands.

And Hassan was a very useful man. He was a prominent guide; he had good recommendations; he knew Egypt from the Delta to the Cataracts of the Nile; and while he cheated his clients to the uttermost possible extent, he thoughtfully intervened to prevent others from cheating them—except in cases when the others handed over "backsheesh" to Hassan. When he shared the loot, of course, Hassan let them go ahead. Hassan may have had a conscience, among his own people, but it was an article of his faith that

Leaving the faithful Hassan waiting at the steps of the balcony, the juniors went up to their rooms.

"Give you ten minutes, Mauly!" said Bob Cherry, as Mauleverer stopped at the door of his room. "If you go to sleep instead of getting ready, rely on me to come and wake you up."

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"Yaas, old bean," he said. "I'll be ready!" As a matter of taste, his lazy lordship would rather have looked at Egypt from a chair on the balcony; but he had made up his noble mind to the trip to the Pyramids. He did not want any more help from the energetic Bob.

He turned the handle of his door and went in, closing the door after him. Then he jumped.

The closing of the door revealed the figure that was standing behind it. For a second Lord Mauleverer stared blankly at the hawk-faced Arab.

But he had no time for more than

Lord Mauleverer could not speak. In the muscular grip of the thick-set, brawny Arab he could not struggle. He was helpless, at the mercy of the hawk-faced wretch. But though he read the threat of death in the gleaming eyes above him, his courage did not falter. He knew that he was in the hands of an emissary of Kalizelos, the Greek—the man who was now hunted by the Egyptian police, and who had disappeared from his shop in Cairo. Hunted as he was, with prison awaiting him if he was caught, Kalizelos had evidently not given up his quest of the Golden Scarab.

A look of contempt flashed over Mauleverer's face. Not to save his life—not to save a hundred lives—would he have yielded to the threat of the hawk-eyed ruffian.

He made a fierce effort to tear himself loose, but the grasp on him was

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like that of a steel vice. He was powerless.

"The scarab!" hissed the man in the turban. "The scarab!"

With his left hand gripping Mauleverer's throat, his knee planted on the schoolboy's chest, the Arab groped under his galabyeh. From the folds of the cotton garment a bright blade flashed out.

"The scarab—or I will take it from your dead body, dog of an unbeliever!" hissed the Arab.

And the dagger flashed before Mauleverer's eyes.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bravo, Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER shuddered.

Through the interstices of the mushrabeyeh screen that concealed him the Owl of the Remove blinked in horror at the scene. Terror seemed to chain him.

To reveal his presence while that hawk-faced, desperate-eyed wretch was in the room seemed impossible to Bunter.

But as the Arab flashed the dagger from his galabyeh and flung up his brown hand, with the flashing weapon in it, Billy Bunter moved.

That was too much even for Bunter. In Mauly's place Bunter certainly would have handed over the scarab, or anything else, with the dagger flashing before his eyes. But Mauleverer's face had set hard, and it was clear that he was not going to yield. Shuddering with terror, the Owl of the Remove pulled himself together somehow. The Arab's back was to him as he crouched over the prostrate Mauleverer, and

Billy Bunter stepped out from behind the screen—with terrified stealthiness.

An Oriental stool, with short, carved legs, was near at hand. The fat junior caught it up, and, taking his courage in both hands, as it were, jumped at the Arab.

The wretch heard some sound behind him, and turned his head—and as his head turned the heavy stool crashed on it.

It landed with a heavy thud.

The Arab gave a gasping howl and pitched over, the dagger flying from his hand.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh gad!" gurgled Mauleverer. The instant he was released the schoolboy earl bounded to his feet; though he was as much astonished as the Arab by Bunter's unlooked-for intervention.

The hawk-faced ruffian had sprawled helplessly over, his head spinning from the crash. But he was on his feet with the swiftness of a tiger.

His eyes flashed round for the dagger, and Bunter, in sheer terror, dropped the stool and jumped away. Lord Mauleverer jumped, too. But it was towards the Arab. And as he jumped he shouted:

"Help! Help!"

His shout rang far beyond the room. And the desperado, realising instantly that the game was up, bounded for the door. Already there were footsteps in the corridor.

The brown hand tore the door open, and the man rushed out before Lord Mauleverer could reach him.

"Oh gad!" gasped Mauly.

"Ow! Help! I say, you fellows, help!" yelled Billy Bunter. "Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! Help! Yaroooooh!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry

stared in at the open door. "What the jolly old thump—"

"Is he gone?" gasped Mauleverer.

"He—who? I saw an Arab running for the stairs. He's gone—"

"Ow! Help! Help!" yelled Bunter.

"Shut up, old bean!" said Lord Mauleverer placidly. "It's all right now; he's gone. Safe as houses, old fat man!"

"Oh dear! Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I wish I hadn't come to Egypt! Oh lor'!"

"But what—?" gasped Bob.

Lord Mauleverer picked up the dagger. Bob stared at it blankly. By that time the rest of the Co. were on the scene, as well as several hotel attendants.

"What's happened?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, staring at the dagger in the hand of the schoolboy earl.

"A jolly old darky after the scarab," drawled Lord Mauleverer. "Hidin' in my room, waitin' for me—and he snaffled me as I hopped in! If Bunter hadn't been here— By the way, what on earth were you doin' in my room, Bunter?"

"Oh dear! Oh crikey!"

There was a babble of excitement from the hotel attendants. They gathered that a thief had attacked Mauleverer in his room with the intention of robbing him, and hurried away to search for the man and report to the manager. There was little likelihood, however, of the hawk-faced Arab being found. He had had some time to get clear, and there was no doubt that he had already vanished into the teeming crowds of Cairo.

"No need to make a fuss, you men!" yawned Lord Mauleverer. "I'm gettin' rather used to Kalizelos' stunts by this time. Let them think it was just a common or garden hotel thief. They'll never get him, anyhow. He's done the jolly old vanishin' trick before this!"

"The scoundrel!" said Harry. "Mauly, old man, we were thinking that the danger was over, now that Kalizelos is being searched for by the police and has run from Cairo. But— After this, old man, you're not going to be left alone. And you're not carrying that scarab about any more, either. We'll ask the hotel manager to lock it up in his safe before we start for the Pyramids!"

"One of us will share your room after this, and keep an eye on you," said Bob Cherry.

"Leave that to me, you fellows!" Billy Bunter had recovered now. The danger being over, Bunter's courage had returned with a jump. "I'll look after my pal Mauly. I'll sleep in this room to-night, Mauly."

"You jolly well won't!" said his lordship emphatically. "I get enough of your jolly old snore in the Remove dorm at Greyfriars. Can't stand it on vac. Much obliged. But I really couldn't!"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"But what were you doin' here, anyhow?" asked Lord Mauleverer. "I'm jolly glad you were on the spot, old fat bean, but—"

"That's me all over," explained Bunter. "The right man in the right place, you know! I never came to this room to borrow your clobber, Mauly, and I never hid behind the screen because that beastly Arab butted in!"

"Oh gad!"

"The fact is that I was keeping guard over you," explained Bunter. "As I've told you often enough, I only came out to Egypt with you to protect you from danger. I never had the least idea of bagging a holiday on the cheap."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'd like to know where you would be if I hadn't been here!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "I've shaved Mauly's wife—I mean, saved his life! You fellows would have been scared stiff. Not me! Pluck's my long suit, as you know!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And after this, Mauly," added Bunter severely, "I hope you won't make a fuss if a fellow borrows a pair of trousers and a waistcoat or so, and a few socks and neckties and things. There's such a thing as gratitude. Not that I came here after your clobber, you know. I wasn't just going to sort over your things when that beast sneaked in—and I never got out of sight because I was afraid of him. And if you fellows can't do anything but cackle—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, Bunter did butt in, and I fancy that jolly old Arab has carried away a bump on his jolly old coconut!" chuckled Lord Mauleverer. "And you can jolly well borrow anythin' you like, Bunter! Leave me a shirt or two, won't you, old man, and a change of socks?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'll borrow a few things, old chap, as you're so pressing," said Billy Bunter amiably. "I'll do the same for you when you come to stay with me at Bunter Court, you know."

"Oh gad!"

finished; and, in the meantime, he was happy and sticky, and forgot even to grumble at the heat and the flies. And really there was plenty of heat, and lots and lots of flies. Likewise, there were a good many smells in Cairo, as in all Eastern cities, and not all of them were like unto attar-of-roses.

Hassan sat beside the Coptic chauffeur, grinning round at the Greyfriars fellows every few minutes, with a brown finger pointing out some object of interest, and his active tongue going almost continually.

Outside Cairo at last, and over the bridge on the Nile, the car ran on by a good modern road towards the Libyan Desert. It was strange enough to the juniors to know that a great and populous city like Cairo was so close to the desert—the real desert, where there was endless sand, and nothing grew save in the rare oases—the Libyan Desert, which extended right away westward, and was, in fact, the beginning of the great Sahara Desert, stretching across Africa.

The Pyramids were built on the edge of the desert, which was so clearly marked that one could almost stand with a foot in the desert, and the other foot in cultivated Egypt. For the land of Egypt, after all, was only the banks of the Nile, and, but for the Nile, would never have existed.

or something in their own silly language."

Hassan waved a brown finger.

"On edge of desert, gentlemen lords, are six groups of pyramids," he said, "wonderful works of ancient times—wonderful to excessive and exceeding extent. Oldest monumental works known to mankind, at which gazed with awe ancient persons of Greek and Roman origin, such as Herodotus and Julius Caesar. The Great Pyramid, or Pyramid of Cheops—"

"You mean Chops?" asked Bunter.

"Honourable lord, Cheops—"

"Chops!"

"Estimable foreign gentleman, Cheops—"

"Chops!"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Shan't! I suppose I know more about it than a blinking native!" said Bunter. "The old codger's name was Chops, called Coffee or something—"

"Cheops, honourable admired sar!" said Hassan. "The great king Cheops is called Khufa by native Egyptian—"

"You mean Coffee!"

"Shut up, Bunter!" roared Bob.

"Yah!"

"Great King Cheops, called Khufa in native tongue, built huge Pyramid," said Hassan. "Once covered with total entireness by polished stone, since taken for building mosques in Cairo under Arab rule. Age of Great Pyramid hugely tremendous."

"Supposed to have been put up about

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"I mean it, Mauly. When you stay at Bunter Court I shall place the whole of my extensive wardrobe at your service—all my suits of clothes—"

"Both of them?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

When the Greyfriars party joined Hassan, for the excursion to the Pyramids, anyone looking at Billy Bunter might have supposed that he was dressed in his best. But that would have been a slight error. He was dressed in Lord Mauleverer's best.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Pyramids!

CAIRO hummed and buzzed round the cheerful Greyfriars party as they drove away in the big car.

Lord Mauleverer sat contented and placid, apparently having forgotten the episode in his room, and the grasp of the hawk-faced Arab; at all events, having dismissed it from his noble mind. The other fellows could not dismiss it quite so easily, and they had resolved not to let his lordship out of their sight during the day.

Billy Bunter, it was certain, was not thinking about his lordship's peril, or the hunted Greek's desperate attempts to get hold of the scarab of A-Menah. Bunter was in possession of a huge chunk of Turkish Delight—which he slowly but steadily devoured as the car rolled on through the streets of Cairo—and Bunter's thoughts, naturally, were concentrated on his provender.

He was not likely to think of anything else till the Turkish Delight was

The hour was still early, and the juniors watched men and women at work in the fields—work which would cease as the heat of noon drew near. Men in blue cotton, women in black, labouring with the industry of the Egyptian fellaheen! They passed camels on the road, and donkeys, and shaggy black buffaloes, and innumerable beggars who held out grubby hands and squeaked "Backsheesh!" at the sight of white faces and pith helmets in the car. "Backsheesh," or "backshish," was the Arabic word with which they had grown most familiar.

Billy Bunter, having finished at last his cargo of Turkish Delight, bestowed a blink on the Pyramids rising over the desert in the distance.

"What are those pointed things sticking up there?" he asked.

"Oh, my hat! They're the jolly old Pyramids, fathead!" answered Bob Cherry. "The jolly old Pyramids of Ghizeh, which are the jolly oldest and tip-toppest of all the jolly old pyramids in jolly old Egypt."

"Oh!" Bunter gave those ancient works a rather disparaging blink. "Can't say I think much of them. What did they build them for?"

"To stick their tombs inside."

"Fatheaded idea, what?" said Bunter.

"Which one is Chops?"

"If you mean Cheops—"

"I don't mean Cheops," answered Bunter calmly. "I said Chops, and I mean Chops. You fellows don't know much about it. Chops was a king or something, though they call him Coffee

2,680 B.C.," remarked Nugent, who had been reading it up. "Nearly 5,000 years ago. A king of the fourth dynasty. It was about 2,000 years old when Herodotus visited it in 450 B.C., and wrote a description of it. And here it still is—much the same as when Cheops left it—"

"You mean Chops—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"What's that show?" asked Bunter, pointing to a large, rambling building at the tram terminus, which the car was now approaching. "Did Chops put that up, Hassan?"

Hassan blinked.

"That is Mena House Hotel, honourable sar, and is quite modern," he answered.

"Oh, good!" said Bunter, evidently more impressed by the hotel than the Pyramids. "A chap can get something to eat there."

"We'll leave Bunter to eat at Mena House, while we go up the jolly old Pyramid," said Bob.

"You jolly well won't!" said Bunter. "I shan't keep you more than an hour while I have a snack."

"I can see us sitting around for an hour while you're making another famine in Egypt!" grinned Bob.

"There are very few peoples, lordly sars," said Hassan. "In the season there are huge numbers of peoples, and Pyramids are crowded, but in hot weathers there are few peoples. Perhaps my noble lords have Pyramid of Cheops all to their admirable selves this hot day. Yes! But in lonely solitude of pyramid top with so few peoples,

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there is opportunity for solemn meditation. Many lordly gentlemen prefer solitude when viewing Pyramids, to meditate on past greatness and such things which are of interest to Faringhees, and for which there is no extra charge."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob. "If there's no extra charge, you men, we may as well put in some solemn meditation on past greatness and such things."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Looks a decent sort of place," said Bunter, as the juniors alighted from the big car. "I like this, you fellows."

"Oh, you like the jolly old Pyramids, after all?"

"Eh? Who's talking about pyramids? I mean the hotel! Looks as if you can get some decent grub here."

"You podgy cormorant, we've come here to explore pyramids, not to scoff tuck. It will be too hot presently."

"You'd like a rest, wouldn't you, Mauly?" asked Bunter.

"Eh? Yaas."

"Look here—" roared Bob.

"I think you fellows ought to be considerate to Mauly, as he's our host," said Bunter. "Here you are, Mauly! Sit down, old chap! I'll see that they bring you something to eat."

"Give the fat villain ten minutes," said Harry Wharton. "I think I could do with a sherbet, now I come to think of it."

The juniors drank sherbet, while Billy Bunter packed away cakes. He was still packing away cakes when the ten minutes had elapsed, and Harry Wharton & Co. got a move on. Lord Mauleverer glanced at the sloping hillside that led up to the Pyramids, sighed, and gave his comrades an appealing glance.

"I've got rather an idea, you men," he remarked.

"Cough it up!" grinned Bob.

"You get a splendid view of the Pyramids from here. Let's sit here and look at 'em."

"I've got a better idea than that, old bean. My idea is to pour this sherbet down the back of your neck if you don't get up on your hind legs in two ticks—"

"Owl! Keep off, you silly ass!" roared Mauleverer, and he was on his feet in a twinkling.

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Finished, Bunter?"

"No!"

"How long are you going to be?"

"About half an hour."

"Right-ho! We'll pick you up coming back."

"Beast!"

"This way, lords and noble gentlemen," said Hassan; and the juniors started, Hassan having taken the tickets while they were taking the sherbet.

Billy Bunter blinked after them wrathfully.

"I say, you fellows—" he yelled.

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

"I'm coming!" hooted Bunter.

"My dear man, don't trouble—"

"Yah!"

With a cake in either fat hand to eat on the way, Billy Bunter jumped up and followed the party. How any fellow gifted with all his seven senses could prefer pyramids to cakes was a mystery to William George Bunter. Still, he was not going to be left out. He was going to climb the Great Pyramid, if only to tell the fellows at Greyfriars next term that he had done it. He was not yet aware what climbing a pyramid was like. Had he been aware of it he might have stuck to Mena House and the cakes and sherbet.

"I say, you fellows," gasped Bunter,

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as he laboured up the sandy hill after the juniors—"I say, I'm thirsty! These cakes make a chap thirsty! Did you fellows think of bringing a flask, or anything?"

"The thoughtfulness was not terrific, my esteemed Bunter."

"Selfishness all round!" said Bunter bitterly. "It never occurred to you that I might be thirsty, I suppose? Hassan—Where's that dashed nigger?"

"Lordly gentleman—"

"Oh, here you are! Can't a fellow get something to drink in this beastly place?" demanded Bunter.

"Yes, sar! You trust Hassan. I will call a khamali—"

"You silly ass! What do you think I want a camel for?"

"Mashallah!" ejaculated Hassan. "Khamali, honourable sar, not being one camel, but carrier of water."

There was a "khamali" on the path up the hill—a dusky gentleman with a large earthen jar of water on his back, and a string of brass cups which he tinkled as he walked to draw custom. Hassan beckoned to him, and the water-carrier came up, tinkling more than ever as he salaamed to the Faringhees.

The juniors watched him with interest—he was one of the sights of Egypt, in fact—as he leaned forward to let the water run from the spout of the huge jar, over his shoulder, into a brass cup. Hassan having assured them that the khamali carried filtered water in his jar, which it was safe for even lordly and noble gentlemen like Hassan's clients to drink, the juniors took the brass cups and drank, and were refreshed. They had seen water-sellers of all sorts swarming in Cairo, and in such a climate it was a paying trade. Egypt is a thirsty land.

"Good!" said Bunter. "Now we'll sit down and rest. You'd like a rest, wouldn't you, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

Billy Bunter sat down on a large stone and Mauly followed his example. There was no doubt that Mauly was always ready for a rest.

"March!" said Bob Cherry.

"Shut up, Cherry!" said Bunter, mopping his perspiring brow with one of Lord Mauleverer's best cambric handkerchiefs. "Mauly's taking a rest. I'm bursting with energy myself—"

"You mean with grub!"

"No, I don't!" roared Bunter. "I'm full of energy; I could walk you fellows off your legs, and chance it. But Mauly's going to have a rest. I can be considerate to a chap, if you fellows can't."

The khamali was moving on down the hill, when Bob Cherry tapped him on the shoulder. The khamali's language was an unknown mystery to Bob, but the language of signs was easily understood. Bob held up a dozen piastres in one hand, with the other he tapped the spout of the water-jar and pointed to the back of Billy Bunter's fat neck.

The khamali stared for a moment; then, as he understood, he grinned, with a flash of white teeth. Having secured the piastres first and tucked them away in some recess of his dusty djubbah, he approached Bunter from behind and tilted the jar forward. Bunter, having no eyes in the back of his head, remained unaware of what was happening till a stream of water shot from the spout and landed on the back of his neck.

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter bounded to his feet as if worked by a spring.

"Oooooooch! Woooooch! What—I'm all wet! Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The khamali, grinning, went on down the hill. Billy Bunter dabbed at the back of his neck and roared.

"Coming on now, old fat man?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"You coming, Mauly? Or shall I call the khamali back for you?"

"I'm coming!" said Lord Mauleverer hastily.

"Look here, you beasts, I'm all wet!" shrieked Bunter.

"Oh, you'll dry in the sun, old fat man! Come on!"

"I'm going back to the hotel to get dry!" roared Bunter.

"Good egg! Stay there, won't you?"

"Lordly gentlemen, if there is excessive delay there will be exceeding and considerable large heat of sun on a pyramid," said Hassan.

The Greyfriars fellows followed Hassan—and Billy Bunter followed on, snorting with indignation. He was dry by the time the party reached the Pyramid of Cheops, but he was still indignantly snorting.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Climbs the Pyramid!

"O H crikey!"

That was Billy Bunter's first remark as he gazed, at close quarters, at the Pyramid of Cheops, up which the Greyfriars fellows were to climb.

Seen from a distance the pyramid did not look a difficult proposition; seen from close at hand it looked rather dismaying.

Once upon a time polished stone had covered the pyramid's outer surfaces, but long centuries had passed since that covering had been carried off for building mosques in Cairo. Rugged, irregular masses of the yellowish limestone, ascending in steps that were never less than three feet—and occasionally four or five—faced the juniors, and even Bob Cherry admitted that it was "some" climb, while Hurree Jamset Ram Singh justly remarked that the climbfulness would be terrific.

But it is not customary for a tourist to climb the Pyramids unaided. Three guides help the climber—one holding either hand, and the third shoving behind. Even so, most tourists have had enough by the time they reach the summit.

The perpendicular height of the Pyramid of Cheops is only 450 feet—little more than twice the height of the Monument in London. But the long slope of the sides makes the distance much greater, and the irregularity of the huge steps makes the ascent difficult to the most active climber.

Billy Bunter blinked at it in utter dismay.

"I say, you fellows, how the thump is a fellow to get up there?" ejaculated the Owl of the Remove. "Chops must have been a silly ass to put up that stack of rubbish over his silly old tomb. I say, you fellows will have to carry me up somehow."

"Oh, my hat!"

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

Getting up the steep pyramid themselves was likely to tax the climbing powers of the Famous Five. Carrying Billy Bunter up was a suggestion that made them yell.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter peevishly. "I'm joll"



The khamali approached Bunter from behind, and tilted the jar forward. Bunter, having no eyes in the back of his head, remained unaware of what was happening, till a stream of water landed on the back of his neck. "Yaroooh!" he yelled. "I'm all wet—oooooh!"

well going up! I'm not going to have you fellows saying at Greyfriars next term that you left me at the bottom. I'm going up! I fancy you could manage to carry me up if you all stick together and exert yourselves. Don't be slackers, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Better sit down and rest, old fat bean, while we go up!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "You'll never carry all those cakes to the top!"

"I'm going up!" snorted Bunter. "By gad, you know, it looks a bit thick—what?" yawned Lord Mauleverer. "Ought to be a lift, or somethin'—what? I rather think I'll sit down and watch you fellows at it!"

"Think again!" grinned Bob. "Gentlemen lords, ample muscular assistance to climb is ready and at hand," said Hassan. "You trust to Hassan! Hassan, he manage your business. It is easy as billy-oh, as you say in your noble language!"

Bedouin Arabs, eager for backsheesh, had gathered, accustomed to the peculiar task of hoisting tourists up the Pyramids. Hassan gave them their directions.

A brawny Bedouin grasped the right hand of Lord Mauleverer—another brawny Arab his left—and pulled. A third swarthy gentleman butted him in the back. Up went his lordship, gasping.

"Oh, good gad!" spluttered Mauleverer.

"You see, it is as easy as to wink," said Hassan cheerfully. "By means of to pull and to push, ascent is ridiculously simple and facilitated. Lordly noblemen, the Arabs are ready!"

"Pick out the stoutest lads for Bunter!" chuckled Bob.

"Here are three hugely muscular

persons as strong as Rameses the Second!" said Hassan.

"Go it, Bunter!" "Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

It was the only way up, and Bunter "went" it. Hassan had sagely picked out his strongest men to hoist Bunter. But strong men as they were, they found Billy Bunter a big order.

His hands were grasped by the two who had to pull. Behind him shoved the third man. Up went Bunter.

"Yaroooooooh! Hold me!" roared Bunter.

The three Arabs were strong. But the man behind had an almost agonised expression on his face as he shoved and hoisted. The hapless three had hoisted fat tourists in their time with success. But they had never had to deal with a member of the Bunter tribe before. William George Bunter was a new experience to them. Judging by their looks, they were not enjoying the new experience.

Lord Mauleverer was going up almost like a bird in advance. But the Famous Five stood and watched Bunter. They wondered whether the three Bedouins would stand the strain.

"Don't let me drop!" yelled Bunter, as the straining trio swayed. "I say, you fellows, help!"

"Those stout lads are going to earn their piastres!" said Bob.

"The earnestness will be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows," yelled Bunter, "I'm going to fall!"

"For goodness' sake don't!" yelled Bob. "If you drop on Egypt, you'll knock it right through to Australia!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Beast!" howled Bunter.

"With considerable exertion, lordly fat gentleman will reach top of pyramid!" said Hassan encouragingly.

"I say, you fellows—" "Mashallah!" groaned the Arab behind Bunter.

He shoved and shoved. The two upper Arabs dragged and dragged. Up went the fat Owl, spluttering.

"Look out!" yelled Bob.

"Oh, my hat!" The Famous Five rushed to help.

But it was too late. The Bedouins cracked under the strain, and Bunter came down again. He came with a bump fairly on the Arab behind him. That unfortunate follower of the Prophet was spread-eagled, and as he collapsed Bunter plumped on him. The wretched Arab broke Bunter's fall. Judging by his horrible gasps and gurgles, Bunter had broken him. The two men above, striving to hold on to Bunter, came down after him. They sprawled over Bunter as he sprawled on the third Arab, and fearful howls and yells rose from the heap.

"I say, you fellows—yaroooh—help!"

"Bismillah!"

"Yurrrrrrrgggh!"

"Wahyat-en-nabi!"

"Wallah! Wallahi!"

"Yarooooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hassan and a dozen Bedouins rushed to sort out the heap. Harry Wharton & Co. lent their aid.

Billy Bunter was dragged up, spluttering wildly. Two of the Arabs scrambled up, talking explosively in Arabic. But the third man, on whom Bunter had fallen, lay and groaned. His groans were faint and feeble. There was no breath left in him. Four or five of his dusky friends raised him at last, and he

leaned heavily on them, gurgling for breath.

"Oh crumbs!" spluttered Bunter. "Beasts! Where's my specs? I say, you fellows—ow, wow! I'm killed! I mean, nearly killed! Ow! Oooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You've nearly killed that jolly old Arab, anyhow!" said Bob Cherry. "Look at him!"

"Blow him! Bother him! Why didn't he hold me? Ow, wow! Gimme my specs, you beasts! Ow!"

"Hassan, old brown bean, you'd better get a dozen men to hoist Bunter up!" said Bob. "Three can't do it! Better have a dozen fore and a dozen aft—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a volley of Arabic from the Bedouins, which sounded to the juniors like the cracking of nuts. They all talked at once, and they all talked emphatically, and they gesticulated wildly. Hassan made soothing gestures.

"What's the row about, Hassan?" asked Harry Wharton at last.

"Noble lordly gentlemen, they demand double payment for helping the lordly fat Faringhee up pyramid—also that six men shall conduct the fat lord instead of three," said Hassan.

"That's fair!" said Harry. "Get on with it!"

Six strong men were picked out for the hefty task. Once more Billy Bunter's fat hands were grasped, and his fat elbows also, and two strong men shoved in the rear. Six stout Arabs were equal even to Billy Bunter's weight. Up he went.

Gasps and gurgles and howls floated down from him. The six Arabs seemed to be bumping him a little as they hoisted and dragged and pulled. But really that could not be helped.

After him went the Famous Five, each assisted by two or three Bedouins. Hassan followed on behind, looking like a gorgeous tropical butterfly on the pyramid in his red tarboosh, gold-braided jacket, bright blue trousers, and crimson sash.

"I say, you fellows," howled Bunter, "are we near the top yet?"

"Not half-way up yet, old bean!" called back Bob Cherry.

"Oh crikey!"

"Stick it out, old fat man!"

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "Tell these silly idiots not to keep on pinching me. Ow!"

"My dear old rhinoceros, if they let you fall now, you'll break Egypt into small pieces!" chuckled Bob. "Shall I tell them to hold on to your ears? Lots of room for the lot of them!"

"Yah!"

The Famous Five were soon ahead of Bunter. Lord Mauleverer was already at the summit of the pyramid, and they joined him there. The six Arabs were still struggling up with Bunter. Every step of the innumerable steps required a big effort, and there was no doubt that the six Bedouins were earning double pay. They were earning it hard by the sweat of their brows. When they staggered at last on the summit of the pyramid, and landed Bunter in a gasping heap, they looked as if they had had the time of their lives. Billy Bunter sat and gasped, and the six Bedouins stood round him, held out their brown hands, and said with one voice:

"Backsheesh!"

"Oooooogh!" was Bunter's reply.

"Backsheesh!" chorused the gasping half-dozen.

"Yah! Go away! Beasts! Oooooogh!"

"Backsheesh!"

"Hassan, old bean, give them some piastres!" yawned Lord Mauleverer.

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"If ever a jolly old Arab earned backsheesh, I fancy they have!"

"I say, you fellows—ooooogh! Blow these rotten pyramids! I wish I'd gone to Margate instead of coming to Egypt. Oooooogh! Those black beasts were pinching me all the way up! Oooooogh! Making out that I'm heavy, you know—Oooooogh! Oh crikey!"

"Jump up, old fat man," said Bob. "There's a splendid view from here!"

"Blow the view!" groaned Bunter.

And he sat and gasped and gurgled, regardless of the view from the summit of Cheops' Pyramid.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Man on the Pyramid!

"HERE is extensive and remarkable view, lordly gentlemen!" said Hassan, waving a brown hand. "All

Faringhee tourist gaze with delight on this large and highly interesting view, suggesting thoughts of solemn Nature, such as death and eternity and like matters, all of which included in charge of ten piastres for ascending pyramid."

Harry Wharton & Co. looked with keen interest at the vast prospect from the summit of the Great Pyramid.

Westward stretched the desert, endless sand and barren cliffs. Southward the Pyramids of Sakkara stood against the blue of the sky. North and east were the cultivated lands of the Nile, the Mokattam Mountains, and Cairo in the distance.

Tombs, and tombs, and more tombs, met their eyes. And they gazed at the Sphinx in its hollow—standing in the quarry from which the stone for the Great Pyramid had been taken, where it had been shaped by the orders of Khéphron, the successor of Cheops, five thousand years ago. Hassan's babble passed unheeded by their ears as they gazed.

It was strange enough to gaze upon the scene, on which had gazed Herodotus, the Father of History, five centuries before the Christian era began. Strange enough to gaze where Julius Cæsar and Mark Antony had gazed; to look on what had met the dark eyes of Cleopatra.

All human things had changed—the Pharaohs were gone, and the Ptolemics, the Caliphs and the Mamelukes—but the Nile still rolled its fertilising flood, the Pyramids still stood against the intense blue, the Sphinx still looked out over the silence and mystery of the desert!

The place was one for meditation, with a melancholy tinge, so far as the inanimate surroundings went. But the animate surroundings were far from being of a serious nature. Dusky natives of the country, blind and deaf to all considerations but backsheesh, gabbled like geese.

On the plain below, the juniors, looking towards the solemn Sphinx, spotted a couple of German tourists mounted on donkeys—both of them immensely fat, and the hapless donkeys almost tottering under them.

Both of them had red-covered guide-books in their hands, and large spectacles on their podgy red noses that flashed back the rays of the sun. The donkey-boys running behind, whacking with their sticks, howled and yelled, and their howls and yells could be heard by the group on the summit of the pyramid.

From nearer at hand came a nasal voice—that of an American tourist who had climbed after the juniors.

"I surely guess this cost something to erect!" the American gentleman was

saying. "I'd surely like to know how it would work out in dullars! I'll say it cost a whole heap of dullars! Yeah!"

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen," he said, "I think we'll leave the solemn meditations till we get back to the hotel! What?"

"The solemnity of an esteemed meditation in this ridiculous spot would not be terrific!" agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter, old fat bean, this is where you meditate on the passing of human greatness—"

"I'm thirsty," said Bunter plaintively—"and I'm getting hungry!"

"Think of jolly old Herodotus coming along on his donkey to look at this, two thousand five hundred years ago!"

"Blow Herodotus! It's beastly hot!" said Bunter.

"Think of jolly old Julius Cæsar trotting out here on a donkey—perhaps one of your remote ancestors—"

"You silly chump!" hooted Bunter.

"Yep!" went on the voice of the American gentleman. "I'll say it cost a heap of dullars! I'd surely like to know what it ran old Cheops into! It surely was an expensive stunt!"

Hassan's voice was running on:

"Visit to interior of pyramid is facilitated by modern staircases, after taking lunch at hotel at fixed price. Gentlemen lords having gazed upon unequalled view, with solemn meditation on brief period of human glory, will descend pyramid and take lunch—"

"I say, you fellows, that ducky's talking sense for once," said Billy Bunter. "I'm ready for lunch! I hope a fellow can get a decent lunch at the hotel. I say, how are we going to get down?"

"That's an easy one," said Bob cheerfully. "You just lie down on the edge, and we roll you down like a barrel."

"Beast!"

Harry Wharton & Co. strolled about the summit of the Great Pyramid, the space at the top being about twelve yards square. There were a few other tourists on the top, or coming up, each attended by many backsheesh-hunting Bedouins.

Billy Bunter sat and rested his weary, fat limbs, not deigning to bestow a single blink from his spectacles on the "unequalled view." He had other matters to think of—the serious fact that he was thirsty, and the scarcely less serious circumstance that he was getting hungry.

The Arabs who had helped the school-boys up loafed on the rugged steps, waiting to help them down again, chattering in Arabic. To them the wonderful monuments of the ancient inhabitants of Egypt were simply a means by which they extracted backsheesh from the foreigner.

Billy Bunter blinked at them morosely. He had had a rather rough journey, with the Arabs lugging him up, and he was not looking forward to the descent, with the Arabs lugging him down. He suspected the beasts of having pinched him on purpose while they were lugging him up. Perhaps they had!

A thick-set Arab appeared on the rugged steps, and Bunter blinked at him as he came in sight. The man had a fold of linen across the lower part of his face, apparently to keep off the dust of the desert; above it his black eyes, hawkish in their keenness, scanned the tourists moving about the summit of the pyramid.

He beckoned to Hassan, the

dragoman, who joined him, leaving his lordly gentlemen to themselves for a time—much to their relief.

The two began to speak in Arabic, in low voices.

They were quite near Bunter, and he could hear them plainly, but could not, of course, understand a word they said. But he blinked at them curiously.

The thick-set Arab seemed to be urging something on Hassan, and the dragoman was shaking his head and gesticulating.

It dawned on Bunter that the newcomer was not unfamiliar to his eyes.

All Arabs were much alike to Bunter; he would have found it difficult to tell one dark face from another. And this man had his face partly concealed.

But there was something in the hawkish glitter of the black eyes that Bunter seemed to remember. And in the eagerness of his talk with Hassan the man shifted the linen from his face, and then the fat Owl had, for a moment, a full view of him.

He started.

He knew the man now! It was the hawk-faced Arab who had been in Lord Mauleverer's room that morning, and who had attacked Mauly. Bunter was sure of it.

A shiver ran through his fat limbs, hot as it was on the pyramid. He forgot that he was tired, and picked himself up hastily, and rolled away to join the Famous Five and Mauleverer on the other side of the summit.

"I say, you fellows—" breathed Bunter.

"Chuck it, old fat man—we know you're hungry," said Bob. "Put on a new record."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"And we know you're thirsty!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Don't tell us over again, old fat bean!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"And we know you're tired," added Nugent. "And we know it's hot! And we know there are a lot of flies! Give us a rest."

"A rest from the esteemed jawfulness would be a boonful blessing," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "If you want Mauly to be robbed and kidnapped and murdered—"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"I say, you fellows, it's him!" breathed Bunter.

"Who's him, you fat image?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"See that nigger talking to Hassan over there—well, that's the darky that collared Mauly this morning in his room—"

"Oh, my hat!"

The juniors looked round quickly.

The talk between Hassan and the Arab with the covered face was going on with undiminished emphasis. They were too deep in their argument, whatever it was, to take any notice of the schoolboys.

"Is that the chap, Mauly?" asked Bob Cherry doubtfully. "Can't see much of his chivvy, with that dust-clout on it. You saw him this morning—"

"Blessed if I know!" confessed his lordship. "Might be the same johnny—he looks sort of familiar. Let's go and ask him."

"I say, you fellows, I'm jolly certain—"

"We'll make sure, anyhow," said Harry Wharton quietly. "If it's the man we'll collar him, and there's a police station opposite Mena House where he can be handed over. You'd

know the man if you had a good look at him, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

"Come and have a look, then!"

"Yaas," yawned Mauly.

The juniors hastily crossed the summit of the pyramid, towards the top of the steps where the dragoman stood in talk with the thick-set Arab. But the movement caught the Arab's attention at once. The hawkish eyes flashed at the schoolboys for a second with quick suspicion; and then the man turned to descend the steps, breaking off his talk with Hassan in the middle of a sentence.

"That looks—" muttered Bob.

"Hassan! Stop that man!" shouted Wharton. He broke into a run.

The dragoman stared round.

"My noble gentlemen—"

"Stop that man! Tell the guides to stop him!" exclaimed Wharton.

He had no doubt now, for the thick-set Arab with the hawkish eyes was making his way fast down the rugged

WIN A PENKNIFE

like T. Almond, of 21, Mosley Street, Blackburn, Lancs, who has scored a bull's-eye with the following amusing storyette.



"Say, conductor!" said the American sightseer, travelling on a London bus. "You just remember I want your St. Paul's Cathedral—and I want it slick! Get me?"

"That's all right," said the harassed conductor. "I ain't forgotten, I'm a-gettin' it wrapped up for you now!"

Now, what about an effort from you, chum?

steps, bounding from one to another at imminent risk of losing his footing and falling.

There was a babble of excitement from the Bedouins as they started to their feet.

Hassan, usually so swift and prompt to obey the orders of his lordly gentlemen, hesitated now; and Wharton, passing him, made a jump down the steps in pursuit of the fleeing Arab. Then the dragoman acted promptly enough—he reached out a quick brown hand, caught Wharton by the shoulder, and pulled him back.

"Let go!" roared Wharton, as he staggered back.

"Oh, my lordly noble gentleman, you will break and injure your admirable limbs by unconsidered hurry on steps of pyramid—" gasped Hassan. "Steps are not safe for running with enormous speed—"

"Let go, you fool!"

Wharton would have wrenched himself away, but Hassan held him fast. Either he was alarmed for the junior's safety, or he had some other motive for holding him back. He held the schoolboy in the grip of a vice.

"My noble gentleman," he gasped, "when you are ready to descend Bedouin guides are to help—Bismillah!" gasped Hassan, as Wharton gave him a fierce shove, and he sat down on the summit of Cheops' Pyramid, with a heavy bump and was forced to release his hold.

Harry Wharton rushed down the steps, his comrades after him. Lord Mauleverer and Billy Bunter watched them from the top, neither of them inclined for such wild exertions in the blazing sunshine. The Famous Five scrambled down half a dozen of the steep, rugged steps, and then came to a halt, panting. The bounding Arab was almost at the bottom, and had disappeared from their sight, and further pursuit was evidently hopeless. Bob Cherry mopped his streaming brow.

"Chuck it," he said. "Nothing doing—it's too jolly hot for a foot-race, old beans, and he's got too good a start. Chuck it."

There was nothing to do, but to "chuck it," and the Famous Five scrambled back, panting and breathless, to the summit of the pyramid.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Fed-up!

HARRY WHARTON fixed his eyes sternly on the face of Hassan, the dragoman. The flight of the hawk-faced Arab was as good as proof to the juniors; they were certain that he was the man who had attacked Lord Mauleverer in his room at the Cairo Hotel. It could hardly be doubted that he had feared recognition, and that that was the reason of his flight. Hassan was staring at his noble gentlemen with a look of astonishment which, if it was assumed, was very well done. But the juniors had their doubts of the faithful Hassan now.

"My noble lordly gentlemen!" exclaimed Hassan. "What is a matter? What is cause of anger? If you run fast in sun of Egypt there is enormous danger of sunstroke! Yes! You trust Hassan—"

"Who was that man?" demanded Wharton.

"The man to which I was speaking?" asked Hassan. "He is donkey-man of Cairo, my gentleman lord, of name Yussef, the son of Hamid. He is one very good donkey-man."

"You know him?" asked Harry.

"Hassan knows all things, and all peoples in Cairo, and in all the Nile as far as the Cataracts, noble sar! Know Yussef very well!"

"What did he want?"

All the juniors were eyeing the "faithful Hassan" very keenly. But the brown face of the dragoman expressed only wondering surprise. From his looks, at all events, Hassan appeared to be amazed by the outbreak of excitement and ignorant of its cause.

"He want my noble gentlemen to hire him donkeys!" explained Hassan. "He offer me backsheesh, much backsheesh, if I hire him donkeys for my noble English lords."

"And you were going to hire them?" asked Harry quickly.

"Oh, no, my noble gentleman! Already I have hired donkeys for a ride to a Sphinx in an afternoon, after my

noble lords have rested, and to Yussef I say no, I do not want him donkeys! I say no many times, and Yussef he grow angry and offer more backsheesh, because him want very much to hire him donkeys to my lordly gentlemen. But him donkeys not good donkeys—not good enough for my estimable lords!" Hassan shook his head. "Much better donkeys are hired for my gentlemen."

Wharton scanned the dragoman keenly while he was speaking. But it seemed likely enough that Hassan was telling the truth.

It was very probable that Yussef, the hawk-faced Arab, would have been glad to get his donkeys hired by the Greyfriars party, for a chance of getting hold of Lord Mauleverer in the desert. It was natural for him to approach their dragoman on the subject—for all such business had to be done through the dragoman, whose palm had to be oiled. There was really no reason to suspect Hassan of knowing anything of the donkey-man's ulterior object.

"Is the man a friend of yours?" asked Johnny Bull.

Hassan made a lofty gesture of denial.

"Oh, sar!" he said, with dignified reproach. "I am Hassan, the son of Suleiman, the most best-known and personal-recommended dragoman in Egypt! Donkey-boys are not friends of such a dragoman as Hassan! No, sar! Bismillah! This man is known to me, like all donkey-boys in Alexandria, in Cairo, and in Luxor! Hassan knows all things and all peoples, sar, from the Delta to the Cataracts! That is Hassan's business, sar! But a donkey-boy is not a friend of Hassan, sar! Oh, no, sar!"

"I say, you fellows. I'm fearfully hungry—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Look here, I've been thirsty a long time, and now I'm getting fearfully hungry as well—"

"Shut up!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"Look here, Hassan," said Harry abruptly. "that man you call Yussef is a thief, and very likely a murderer, and—"

"Oh, sar!" ejaculated Hassan.

"He is the man who attacked Lord Mauleverer in the hotel this morning at Cairo, and the police are looking for him—"

"Wahyat-en-nabi!" gasped Hassan.

"Is this possible, my noble lord? I have speak to a man who raise a hand against my noble lord—"

Hassan stared down the rugged slope of the pyramid.

"He has gone," he said. "He run very fast, and why should he run, except that he fear? My noble gentleman is right—he is one villain—for if he is not afraid, why should he run? Now I understand, sar."

Hassan waved both brown hands in his excitement.

"That son of ten thousand pigs!" he exclaimed. "Noble sar, let us descend a pyramid—by Mena House there is police station, and policemen will find that grandfather of five hundred hogs! I, Hassan, will go to policemen, and tell them where to look for Yussef in Cairo, sar! Yes, sar! Now I know why he want to hire him donkeys to my noble lords—why he offer Hassan much backsheesh! Oh, sar, if I have known that he is enemy of my lordly gentlemen, I speak not with him—I strike him with my stick—I bash him, as you say in your noble language!"

"Let's go," said Harry.

Hassan called the Bedouins for the descent of the pyramid. For the

moment a suspicion had crossed the minds of the juniors that the faithful Hassan might be in league with the hawk-faced Arab. But the dragoman's explanation was plausible enough, and they dismissed the idea.

The juniors began the descent of the pyramid.

Three of the Bedouins helped each of the party—except Bunter, who gave plenty of work to six.

Getting down the pyramid was almost as hard work as getting up. There was an unending accompaniment of grunts, and gasps, and groans from Billy Bunter. But they reached the foot of the ragged steps at last, and started down the sandy hill towards the Mena House Hotel.

"I say, you fellows"—Billy Bunter turned an indignant and accusing blink on the Famous Five—"I'm fed-up with pyramids! You silly idiots can climb all the beastly pyramids you like, but I'm jolly well not going to climb any more putrid pyramids—see? If you go up any more rotten pyramids, you can jolly well leave me behind!"

"Gentlemen and chaps," said Bob Cherry, "we'd better spend a lot of time climbing pyramids! Seems sort of attractive, doesn't it?"

"Yah!" snorted Bunter.

The heat of the day was coming on as the juniors arrived at Mena House, and they were glad to get into the shade. Harry Wharton went across to the police station opposite the hotel, with Hassan, to be present while the dragoman explained the affair of Yussef, the son of Hamid, to the native inspector. He understood little of what was said; but Hassan's excited volleys of Arabic and earnest gesticulations seemed to leave no doubt of his good faith in the matter. Then the captain of the Greyfriars Remove joined his friends at lunch.

Billy Bunter had recovered his cheerfulness by that time. He packed away one lunch after another with great enjoyment. After which Bunter retired to a shady tree for a siesta; and, the midday rest being a necessity in the Egyptian climate, the other fellows followed his example.

Not till late in the afternoon did Hassan announce that the donkeys were ready for the ride to the Sphinx.

The Famous Five and Lord Mauleverer were ready, too, but Billy Bunter was not ready.

He sat up and blinked at the juniors when they called him.

"If you think I'm going to stir in this fearful heat—" he began.

"The other donkeys are waiting!" said Bob.

"Yah! Call me again in two hours—"

"Oh, all right! We shall be back by then."

"What I mean is, you can wait a couple of hours, and then I'll come," explained Bunter. "If you go now, you go without me! Mind, I mean that! I'm here to look after you and protect you, and all that, but I refuse to stir in this fearful heat! I refuse distinctly! If you go before two hours from now, you go without me, and take your chance! I wash my hands of the matter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" hooted Bunter. "But I tell you I shall wash my hands—"

"Wash your neck at the same time," suggested Bob; "it can do with it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

"Look here, Bunter, you'd better come!" said Harry. "You want to see the Sphinx—"

"Blow the Sphinx!"

Bunter closed his eyes again behind his big spectacles. The Sphinx did not appeal to him so much as a prolonged nap in the shade.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked over to where the donkeys were waiting with the donkey-boys, leaving Bunter to nap. And the keenest eye could not have detected any sign of grief at the loss of Billy Bunter's fascinating company.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Desert!

WHACK, whack, whack!

The sticks of the donkey-boys whacked and cracked on the backs of the trotting donkeys. Each donkey had its own special donkey-boy, in charge of mount and rider, running beside the animal, objurgating in Arabic and whacking it with a stick.

It was in vain that the juniors told the dusky donkey-boys to "chuck" it. They either did not or did not want to understand. It was their way to whack the donkeys, and they whacked them.

But it was hardly more than a half-mile from Mena House to the Sphinx, so the ride did not take long.

The Famous Five would just as soon have walked the short distance; but Lord Mauleverer undoubtedly preferred to make the trip sitting down, and, still more undoubtedly, Hassan, the dragoman, had to be allowed to hire donkeys and pocket backsheesh for the same from the donkey-owner.

Hassan had declared that the donkeys were the best donkeys that were obtainable in all Egypt, only the very best of all things being suitable for his noble gentlemen. But, as a matter of fact, the Famous Five were provided with rather poor animals, only Lord Mauleverer getting a good one.

But Mauly's mount was a large powerful white donkey, strong and sturdy, and evidently capable of speed. Hassan had specially selected him for his lordship, with his donkey-boy, Mohammed, who was rather a tough-looking Arab, with part of an ear missing, from a knife-slash in some affray. Had Lord Mauleverer "let out" his donkey he would have left the other fellows far behind. But Mohammed kept the white donkey at the same pace as the others, and they arrived at the Sphinx together.

They dismounted near that ancient monument, and the donkey-boys were left in charge of the donkeys while the juniors explored the Sphinx.

Although in the hot weather there were few "peoples," as Hassan said, a dozen or more tourists were round about the Sphinx. The American gentleman who had been on top of the Pyramid of Cheops was there, and the chums of Greyfriars caught his voice:

"I guess it must cost something to keep this clear of sand. I'll say they have to do a lot of sweeping! I sure wonder if a guy could find out what it costs!"

"Wunderbar!" a stout German was saying. "Ach! Wunderbar! Kolossal!"

"Backsheesh!" came several native voices. "Backsheesh!"

"Ma foi, mais ja'i soif!" came a French voice.

There was a snapping of cameras.

"Here, lordly gentlemen," Hassan's sing-song voice started—"here is great and wonderful Sphinx, which is huge lion sitting down, with head of a man, royal head-dress on same head. This place is quarry where stones for Great



"With considerable exertion, lordly fat gentleman will reach top of pyramids!" said Hassan, encouragingly. One of the Arabs shoved Bunter from behind, while two more dragged from above. "Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry, suddenly, as the Bedouins cracked under the strain. "He's falling!"

Pyramid taken by Cheops. Huge stone remained, and was made into Sphinx on the spot, by order of Khephron, honourable successor of Cheops. Travelers in all ages had admired and wondered. Photographs have been taken in all languages! Yes! Covered many times by sand of desert and hidden from honourable eyes of noble travellers, sar! Now it is kept clear of desert sand that noble travellers may see! Yes! Hassan tell you all things.

"I suppose a dragoman must be allowed to run on!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "Next time I come to Egypt I shall go to Cooks, and ask for a dumb dragoman!"

"Mutilations of magnificent Sphinx done by Arabs in time of Caliphs," chanted Hassan. "In year 1380 much damage was done! Yes! Later, Mamelukes used Sphinx as target for firing! All round there are chips from the old block, as you say in your noble language! Many chips have been stuck on again to the old block! Yes! Here, in front of Sphinx, it is customary for noble gentlemen to stand and gaze on majestic monument, and spend some minutes in solemn reflections."

Solemn reflections might very well have been induced by the strange old monument, that with stony eyes had gazed out on the desert for years unnumbered.

But the human surroundings were anything but solemn.

A stout German tourist had clambered on the Sphinx, where his equally stout better half was snapping him with a Kodak.

Dust of the desert had got into the German gentleman's nose, and he was blowing it with a big red handkerchief,

and a series of loud reports like pistol-shots. There was no doubt that the German gentleman detracted considerably from the majesty of the Sphinx.

"Height of wonderful Sphinx is sixty feet, feet English," went on Hassan. "Length of same two hundred and forty feet, also English! Gigantic monument of huge size, truly enormous! Nose of Sphinx five feet, English, and mouth of same seven feet."

"Beats Bunter!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My noble gentlemen, here you do not smile!" exclaimed Hassan. "Here you meditate with considerable solemnity, all being included in total charge of twenty piastres."

"It was rather a mistake of the Mamelukes to do their shooting practice at the Sphinx," murmured Lord Mauleverer. "They ought to have done it at the dragomans!"

"Now we return to donkeys, and view temples and tombs, also of which some are covered with sand of desert," said Hassan. "My lords shall see everything; for I, Hassan, know all things. Yes, sar! Hassan is your dragoman; you trust Hassan!"

The juniors returned to the donkeys and remounted. Once more the sticks of the donkey-boys whacked and cracked. They looked at pyramids, and rock-tombs and temples; and they were rather curious to see the spot where tombs were covered by the drifting sand of the Libyan Desert, and the donkeys were turned in that direction. Cultivated land was left behind them as they rode into the desert. Even at a short distance the din of tourists and

guides was left behind, and the silence of the desert fell upon them.

At a sign from Hassan, the donkey-boys urged on the animals, and the party proceeded at a swift trot.

Each donkey-boy seemed to be doing his best, with the result that Lord Mauleverer, being the best mounted in the party, soon got ahead of the others. Mohammed whacked and whacked, and had to go all out to keep pace with the swift white donkey.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Old Mauly's leaving us behind!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "We mustn't get separated here. Hassan, tell that fellow Mohammed to slow down."

Hassan shouted in Arabic after the driver of the white donkey.

But Mohammed seemed deaf.

He continued to whack Lord Mauleverer's donkey, and his lordship drew farther and farther ahead of the rest of the party.

"Son of five hundred pigs!" exclaimed Hassan. "He does not hear! By the beard of the Prophet, never again will I hire that donkey-boy!"

"Call him back at once!" exclaimed Wharton sharply.

Hassan put his brown hands to his mouth to make a trumpet, and roared in Arabic.

Still Mohammed did not heed.

Lord Mauleverer glanced back; evidently he heard the shouting. Bob Cherry yelled to him:

"Hold on, Mauly! Wait for us, old bean!"

Bob's powerful voice carried the distance, and Mauly waved his hand in response. The juniors saw him lean towards Mohammed to speak. They urged on their donkeys to overtake him.

(Continued on page 16.)

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THE LURE OF THE GOLDEN SCARAB



(Continued from page 13.)

But if Mauly was telling Mohammed to stop, as no doubt he was, the donkey-driver heeded him no more than he had heeded Hassan. Instead of stopping, Mohammed grasped the donkey's reins, and led him at a gallop round a fold in the sand, which hid donkey and rider and donkey-boy from the eyes of the juniors behind.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Nugent.

"Son of pigs!" exclaimed Hassan. "What does he do? He is the most stupid donkey-boy in all Egypt!"

Wharton compressed his lips.

"Get after him, you fellows!" he said. "We mustn't let Mauly get out of our sight!"

The Famous Five drove on their donkeys as fast as the animals could go. They rounded the ridge of sand where Mauleverer had disappeared, expecting to see him again.

But they did not see him.

Ridge on ridge, fold on fold, of sand met their eyes, stretching away towards a low range of barren, sun-scorched cliffs. Somewhere behind the ridges of sand Lord Mauleverer had disappeared, with the white donkey and his driver.

Hardly a couple of miles from the Pyramids and the Sphinx, where tourists were staring and snapshotting, and bedouins and dragomans babbling and gabbling, the schoolboy earl of Greyfriars had vanished into the desert, and the silent waste of sand had swallowed him from the sight of his friends.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Trapped!

"K-KALIZELOS!"

Lord Mauleverer fairly gasped.

The action of Mohammed, the donkey-boy, in seizing the donkey's bridle and leading him onward instead of stopping, had taken Mauly by surprise. He rapped out a sharp order to the donkey-boy, but Mohammed did not heed; he ran at full speed beside the galloping white donkey, and they were going so fast now that Mauly had to take care not to be tossed out of the saddle. A fall on the rough sand would have been extremely painful.

Lord Mauleverer, looking back, saw only a high ridge of sand, which hid his friends from his sight, and though he was not alarmed, he was determined to stop till they came up, and he strove to drag in the donkey. From a hollow of the sand, a sort of gully that sank between sand-drifted rocks, a man leaped suddenly and caught at his arm.

In sheer amazement, Lord Mauleverer recognised the jetty-eyed, olive-skinned Kalizelos—the Greek of Cairo, who had travelled to far-off England in quest of the scarab of A-Menah, and who had followed the Greyfriars party back to Egypt, seeking it still.

As Mauleverer stared at him, and stuttered his name, Kalizelos dragged at

his arm, and wrenched him from the saddle.

Mohammed, the donkey-boy, did not stop.

The white donkey galloped on, Mohammed running swiftly at his side, and they vanished among the sand dunes almost in a moment.

That Mohammed had led him into a trap was plain enough; but now that he had delivered the goods, as it were, Kalizelos had no further need of him, and donkey-boy and donkey vanished together.

Lord Mauleverer sprawled on the ground, the Greek bending over him, the hoof-beats of the donkey dying away in the distance.

There was a mocking grin on the handsome, olive face of the Greek, and triumph glittered in his jet-black eyes.

"Yussef!" he called sharply.

A thick-set Arab emerged from the gully. Lord Mauleverer, as he struggled with the Greek, recognised him. It was the man who had attacked him in the hotel at Cairo, the man who had been in talk with Hassan, the dragoman, on the summit of the Great Pyramid.

Kalizelos rapped out a sharp order in Arabic. The muscular Yussef grasped Mauleverer, and Kalizelos, lending his aid, the schoolboy was dragged down into the gully.

The hoof-beats of Mohammed's donkey had died out; but from another direction hoof-beats could be heard. Harry Wharton & Co., though still out of sight beyond the sand-ridge, were drawing nearer.

Yussef had drawn a dingy linen clout over Mauleverer's mouth to gag him, and in silence the two rascals lifted the schoolboy and carried him farther down the gully.

They did not go far, however. They stopped where several squared masses of old yellow limestone—evidently part of an ancient building buried in the sand—cropped up. Kalizelos and Yussef crouched among the old blocks of stone, holding Mauleverer down between them.

Clatter, clatter, clatter! sounded the donkeys' hoofs on the hard sand, clattering past the end of the sunken gully at a distance of not more than twenty yards.

Lord Mauleverer listened, his heart beating painfully.

He was powerless to struggle or cry out, but surely his friends would find him, and the Famous Five, with the assistance of the muscular Hassan, would be more than a match for these two scoundrels who had kidnapped him.

But the grin of Yussef's face, the sneer on that of Kalizelos, were not reassuring.

Clatter, clatter, clatter! The sound grew louder—and then fainter, fainter, and fainter!

Mauleverer could have groaned.

His friends had ridden on past the end of the gully. He had been out of their sight when he was seized, and they did not dream that he was dismounted, and held in lawless hands, so close to them. The tracks of Mohammed and his donkey led onward into the desert, winding among the sand-dunes, and the Greyfriars fellows were naturally following. Even if they guessed yet that something had happened to Mauleverer, that the donkey-boy was treacherous, it was the track of the donkey that they would follow in search of him.

They were not likely to overtake it. Lord Mauleverer remembered, with a pang of dismay, that he had been the best-mounted in the party—the white donkey of Mohammed had been worth twice any of the others. Mohammed could lead the pursuers a dance as long as he liked.

Not till the clattering hoof-beats had died away did Kalizelos and Yussef rise

and drag Mauleverer to his feet. The rag was removed from his mouth, allowing him to speak; but he did not think of shouting. His friends were beyond hearing now.

"At last, my lord!" grinned the Greek. "You are in my hands at last!"

"Yaas," said Lord Mauleverer. "Looks like it, old bean." Mauleverer was well aware that he was in the deadliest danger, but he was quite cool.

"The scarab, my lord!" Kalizelos held out his hand. "The scarab—and you may rejoin your friends as soon as you please."

Lord Mauleverer smiled.

"You've rather beaten yourself, you rascal!" he remarked.

"What do you mean?" snarled the Greek, his black eyes glittering at the schoolboy earl. "I warn you not to trifle with me!"

"I mean exactly what I say," drawled Lord Mauleverer. "I had the scarab in my pocket this mornin' when that black-jowled pal of yours tackled me in the hotel. I should have brought it out with me if that hadn't happened. But, you see, my friends made me leave it indoors for safety—and I'm jolly glad they did now! They fancied I wasn't safe carryin' it—and it looks as if they were right, what?"

Kalizelos spoke to Yussef in Arabic, and the hawk-faced Arab proceeded to search Lord Mauleverer. Mauly submitted quietly; there was no help for it in the hands of the two rascals. Yussef's thievish brown fingers did their work swiftly and thoroughly; but the result was only to prove that the Golden Scarab was not on the prisoner.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

No Surrender!

KONSTANTINOS KALIZELOS gritted his teeth.

"You left the scarab in Cairo?" he asked.

"Yaas."

"With your guardian, the old man Brooke?"

"No!"

"The truth!" hissed Kalizelos.

Lord Mauleverer's lip curled.

"My dear man," he said contemptuously, "I shall tell you the truth or nothin'. You surely don't take me for a lyin' rascal like yourself, Mr. Kalizelos?"

"Take care!" muttered the Greek, clenching his hands. "If you have parted with the scarab you have left it with your guardian—"

"Not in the least, old bean! You've been so jolly active after that jolly old scarab, you see," explained Mauleverer.

"My uncle's an old man, and I wasn't going to land him in danger from you and your gang. He's advised me several times to let him have charge of the scarab, but I wasn't lettin' him in for anythin' of the sort."

"Then where have you left it? In whose hands?"

"Find out," answered Lord Mauleverer coolly.

"It is usual to hand valuables over to the hotel manager, to be locked in the safe," said Kalizelos. "Is that what you have done?"

That, as a matter of fact, was exactly what Lord Mauleverer had done, though he would hardly have taken the trouble had not Harry Wharton insisted, and walked him off to the manager's room for the purpose.

But he had no intention of telling Kalizelos so.

"I've told you to find out," he answered.

"Will you answer me?"

"No, I won't," said Lord Mauleverer coolly. "The Golden Scarab of A-Menah belongs to me, and belonged to my father before me. Accordin' to your account, it's a clue to a treasure—worth a quarter of a million pounds. I'm not a stingy chap, I hope; but I'm not makin' you presents to that tune, Mr. Kalizelos. You're never goin' to get your hands on that scarab."

"We shall see!" muttered the Greek. "You are in my hands now, Lord Mauleverer! I have failed many times—at Mauleverer Towers in your own country, at Naples, in Alexandria, and in Cairo. Here in the Libyan Desert I have succeeded! Your life for the scarab!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Your guardian, Sir Reginald Brooke, may make a different answer," sneered the Greek. "He will receive a letter from you, my lord, asking him to hand over the Golden Scarab to my messenger, as a ransom for your life and liberty. What will the old man Brooke do in answer to such a letter?"

"I rather fancy he would hand over the scarab, dear man, if I wrote an' asked him to. But I'm not goin' to write."

"You think not?" sneered Kalizelos.

"I'm quite sure not," yawned Mauleverer.

"We shall see, my lord! To-morrow your answer will be changed, I think."

"I hope I shall be seein' the last of you before to-morrow," said Lord Mauleverer. "You've got me here; but my friends will be searchin' for me, and they'll guess pretty soon what has happened. They'll start every jolly old Arab within a mile of the Pyramids huntin' for me—and every jolly old Arab in the desert, for that matter. You know your own jolly old country, Mr. Kalizelos, and so you know that every Arab in Egypt will jump on his hind legs and hunt for me at the word 'backsheesh.'" Mauleverer grinned. "You've got me here, but you can't get me away!"

"That is true," said Kalizelos. "If I carried you away into the desert, Lord Mauleverer, you would not remain long in my hands. The offer of a reward would set hundreds—nay, thousands—of greedy Arabs searching for you. But it is not my intention to carry you away into the desert. My plans have been laid, as you will see."

The Greek spoke again in Arabic. Yussef stepped to one of the blocks of limestone, and, to Mauleverer's astonishment, grasped it in his brawny hands. The muscular Arab exerted his strength, and the limestone block rolled aside, revealing a narrow, oblong opening in the pile of masonry behind.

It was the entrance to an ancient tomb, half buried in the sand.

Kalizelos pointed to the opening.

"Enter, my lord!" he said mockingly. "If you are curious about the antiquities of this strange land, you may spend your time exploring this tomb, where mummies still remain that have lain hidden from all knowledge for 3,000 years. But perhaps your lordship will not care to explore in the dark—and I regret that I can leave you no light! Do not fancy that you may be found here, my lord; this lost tomb is known only to me and to my friends."

"Oh gad!" murmured Mauleverer.

"All the backsheesh in Egypt will not cause you to be found here," grinned Kalizelos. "And Yussef will remain, with orders to drive his dagger to your heart if there should be a chance of rescue. But that, as you will see for yourself, is not likely."

Lord Mauleverer was silent, gazing at the gloomy portal of the half-buried tomb.

"Perhaps your lordship would prefer to write?" sneered Kalizelos.

"Never!"

"In twenty-four hours, I think, your lordship will give a different answer," said Kalizelos. "I can wait—and we shall see! Now enter!"

Mauleverer clenched his hands hard. He knew now that there was no hope of rescue by his friends. In that lost tomb, unknown even to the guides who plied their trade at the Pyramids, he could never be found. The cunning Greek's plans had been carefully laid, and the schoolboy earl was trapped.

But it was futile to struggle. In the grasp of the Greek and the Arab, Mauleverer—fiercely resisting, but overpowered—went staggering through the narrow door of the tomb.

Only a square apartment cut in the solid rock met his eyes as he stared round him in the glimmer of sunlight that came in at the narrow door.

There were signs of occupation, however. A bed of rugs lay in a corner, and there was a lamp; utensils of various sorts, and canned food and fruit. It was evident that the lost tomb was

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used at times as a retreat and a den by some thief of the desert. Mauly had heard that dwellings in old tombs were not unknown in Egypt. On the farther side of the rock-room steps led downward into utter darkness.

"That is your way, my lord," said Kalizelos, pointing to the steps.

Mauleverer repressed a shudder.

All signs of burial of the dead had been removed from the rock-room in which he stood. But he had no doubt that below, all was left as in ancient days—sarcophagi and mummies.

"Descend!" grinned Kalizelos.

"Unless your lordship will write—"

"Go and eat coke!"

Lord Mauleverer descended the dark steps without waiting to be handled again. At the foot he stood in darkness.

Above he heard a muttering in Arabic, then a thud as the great block of limestone at the door of the tomb was closed.

The sound struck him like a knell.

Even if he could have reached it to make the attempt, he knew that he could not have moved that huge block. Yussef, who had twice his strength, had had to exert every ounce of it. Mauleverer could not have stirred it an inch.

Not that he could have made the attempt, with the Arab on guard. In the upper chamber of the tomb remained Yussef. There was the camp of the hawk-faced Arab. He had light, food, drink—all he needed—and no

doubt he was well paid for his services by the Greek. Mauleverer heard him moving about, and presently caught the scent of tobacco as the Arab lighted his Turkish pipe and smoked.

To ascend the steps and enter into a conflict with an armed and powerful ruffian was futile. Mauleverer's courage did not falter, but his face was grave and a little pale as he peered about him in the darkness of the lower tomb and groped in the gloom.

His hand came into contact with cold stone; he felt over the top of an ancient sarcophagus, from which the stone lid was gone. His hand touched something else, and he knew that it was a mummified body resting where it had rested for uncounted centuries. He jerked his hand away, shuddering.

"Good gad!" murmured Mauleverer.

He sat down at last on the lowest step. Escape was impossible; rescue seemed scarcely possible; there was no hope.

The Golden Scarab, which was said—and believed by Kalizelos—to be the clue to the treasure of Osiris, had led him to his death among the long-forgotten dead! Only the surrender of the scarab of A-Menah to the plotting Greek could save him! What would be his answer to the cunning Greek after a night and a day in that dim recess of shadows and death? Lord Mauleverer set his teeth as he asked himself that question. Konstantinos Kalizelos could do his worst, but he would never surrender.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Missing!

HILMI MAROUDI, the rich Egyptian of Cairo, smiled. Snore!

The sound was not musical.

And Billy Bunter, as he sprawled in the low chair in the shade of the tree, with his fat little legs stretched out, his eyes shut, and his mouth open, could not have been considered an object of beauty.

But Hilmi Maroudi smiled; while Sir Reginald Brooke gave a slight grunt. The plump Egyptian gentleman, and the stiff old English baronet, stood looking at Billy Bunter. Under the shade of the tree near Mena House, in sight of the towering Pyramids, Billy Bunter was enjoying his sojourn in Egypt in his own way.

Sunset glowed on the Pyramids and the Sphinx—the glorious sunset of Egypt. The radiance of gold in the sky was like the glow of burnished metal. It was quite lost on William George Bunter, who probably would not have wasted a blink on it had he been awake.

And he was fast asleep. He had wakened for tea—and he had disposed of a tea that made the waiters open their eyes. After which, as the other fellows had not yet returned, Bunter went to sleep again. Bunter could do with a great deal of sleep. He could do with more than usual, in the hot climate of Egypt. Fellows who wanted to root about mouldy old temples and tombs, could root about mouldy old temples and tombs—Billy Bunter preferred a long, cane chair, and a nap in the shade. Unconscious of the passage of time, Bunter snored on cheerily, and the two men, brown and white, stood looking at him, one smiling, the other grunting.

"This, I think, is our little fat friend," said Hilmi Maroudi.

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"It is Bunter!" grunted Sir Reginald. "But he seems to be alone here—where are the others?"

There was a slight shade of anxiety on the old baronet's brow.

It had been arranged for the party at the Pyramids to return to Cairo before sunset. Hassan, the dragoman, had been specially instructed, and hitherto Hassan had been absolutely exemplary in carrying out his instructions. But the party had not returned.

Sir Reginald had spent a very pleasant day at the house of Maroudi in Cairo, while his youthful charges were seeing the sights of Egypt in the care of the faithful Hassan. He had visited the rich Egyptian's collection of antiquities, and discussed with him farming in the Fayyum—in which fertile district the old baronet had an estate adjoining Maroudi's. The Egyptian gentleman had driven back with him to his hotel to dine with him and the Greyfriars party. And there they found that Hassan and the juniors had not come back.

Maroudi, whom the juniors had met on the boat coming out to Alexandria, was a plump and good-natured gentleman, and he had taken a liking to the choery party of schoolboys—especially Harry Wharton, whom he had saved from being washed overboard in the squall on the Mediterranean. His servant Ali had attempted to purloin the Golden Scarab, and endangered Wharton's life; for which reason, Mr. Maroudi seemed to consider that it was up to him to do everything in his power for the Greyfriars fellows. They had met him several times in Cairo, and found him very agreeable, and he was tolerant even of Billy Bunter, though that fat and fatuous youth hardly concealed the fact that he looked on the wealthy Egyptian gentleman as a "nigger"—merely that, and nothing more. Bunter, no doubt, would have been indignant had he known that the nigger found him very amusing.

As the juniors had not returned to Cairo, Mr. Maroudi proposed driving

out to the Pyramids to pick them up; and on the way Sir Reginald had looked out rather anxiously for the juniors' car.

But it had not been seen; and on arriving at Mena House, they found that the car was still parked there, and that Hassan and the juniors were still absent on an excursion.

They learned, however, that one member of the party was in the garden, and went to look for him. Now they had found him. From quite a distance Billy Bunter's hefty snore guided them to the spot.

"I suppose they left Bunter here—he is a very lazy boy," said Sir Reginald. "But, where are they?"

"Perhaps Bunter can tell us," suggested Mr. Maroudi.

"I am feeling a little uneasy," said Sir Reginald. "The boys, of course, are safe with the dragoman—he was well recommended. But—"

"You are thinking of the Greek, Kalizelos?"

"Well, yes," said Sir Reginald. "The rascal has fled from Cairo to escape arrest, and I have no doubt that he is at a safe distance, and there is nothing now to fear from him. Nevertheless—"

The old gentleman broke off with a worried look. Since Kalizelos had disappeared from Cairo, he had concluded that the rascally Greek was done with. But he was feeling uneasy now.

Snore!

Bunter was going strong.

"The fact is, the hotel manager informed me that some hotel thief entered my nephew's room this morning while I was absent," said Sir Reginald. "It may be a trivial matter, but—in view of the fact that the boys have not returned—"

He stooped over Bunter, grasped him by a fat shoulder, and shook him.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

Shake.

"Urrrggh! Lemme alone! 'Tain't rising-bell, you rotter!" mumbled Bunter. "I'm not getting up yet, and you can tell Quelch so, blow him!"

Shake! Shake!

Billy Bunter's little round eyes opened at last, behind his big round spectacles. He blinked peevishly.

"Can't you let a fellow sleep?" he growled.

"Bunter!" rapped Sir Reginald. "Wake up at once!"

"Oh! It's you?" grunted Bunter. He blinked at Mauly's uncle, and then at Mr. Maroudi. "Have they come back? It must be time for dinner—I'm getting hungry." Bunter removed his spectacles, rubbed his sleepy eyes, and replaced the spectacles on his fat little nose, and grunted again. He had not awakened in a good temper. Two or three lunches, with two or three teas added, "peevish" the fat junior a little. "Just like the rotters—clearing off, and leaving a fellow on his own! After all I've done for them—"

"Where are my nephew and his friends, Bunter?"

"How should I know?" grunted Bunter. "They refused to wait for me—I told them I should keep them only a couple of hours, but they refused to wait! Blow 'em! I've no doubt they've run into some trouble, like they always do when I'm not looking after them. I dare say that beast Yussef has got after them. Serve them right!"

"Yussef! Who is Yussef?" snapped Sir Reginald.

"That Arab beast who got after Mauly this morning in the hotel,"

grunted Bunter. "The beast who wanted to pinch that rotten, silly scarab."

Mr. Hilmi Maroudi's face became very grave. Sir Reginald started.

"Tell me at once what happened to my nephew this morning, Bunter!" he snapped. "I have heard that a thief entered his room; that is all."

Bunter grunted it out.

"Then—there is no doubt that it was another attempt to steal the scarab," exclaimed Sir Reginald, when the fat Owl had finished. "Have you seen the man since, Bunter?"

"I spotted him," said Bunter. "The other fellows never noticed him, of course—they never see anything. I spotted him talking to Hassan, and told them—but they let him get away! Just like them!"

"He was talking to Hassan, the dragoman?" asked Mr. Maroudi.

"Yes; in that idiotic, jaw-cracking language they speak in this country," grunted Bunter. "Hassan said he was named Yussef, and was a donkey-man—and wanted us to hire his donkeys! But he cleared off jolly fast when I spotted him and gave the fellows the tip."

Sir Reginald compressed his lips.

"If some rascal employed by Kalizelos is in this vicinity, the boys may be in danger!" he said. "Do you know where they went, Bunter?"

"They went to the Sphinx, and to see some putrid tombs, or something," answered Bunter. "They said they'd be back in a couple of hours." He blinked at his watch. "That was more than four hours ago! Lot they care about leaving a chap on his own all this time—fat lot!"

"Yet, there could scarcely be danger, among so many tourists and guides, and other natives," said Sir Reginald slowly. "And I gave Hassan the most careful instructions not to take the boys into any lonely place."

Mr. Maroudi looked at him. He seemed about to speak, but checked himself.

"I say, are you going back to Cairo?" asked Bunter.



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Kalizelos suddenly leaped out from a hollow in the sand, dragged at Mauleverer's arm, and wrenched him from the saddle. The next moment the hoofbeats of the donkey were dying away in the distance!

"We can scarcely go without my nephew and his friends, Bunter."

"But we shall be late for dinner at the hotel."

"That matters very little."

"Eh?" Bunter blinked at him. "But I'm hungry! Didn't you hear me say that I'm hungry?"

"Nonsense!"

"They can follow, I suppose?" said Bunter, with a grunt. "If they've lost themselves, what can they expect—going off without me? If that beast Yussef is after them, they've jolly well asked for it. I think——"

Sir Reginald did not appear to be interested in what Bunter thought. He made the fat junior a gesture to be silent. With a troubled brow he stood looking past the Pyramids towards the desert. The sunset was deepening to dark—tourists, guides, backsheesh-hunting Arabs, were coming in, but the Greyfriars fellows were not to be seen among them. A silver glimmer of the moon crept up over the Nile.

Leaving Bunter grunting, and wondering when on earth he was going to get any dinner, Sir Reginald and Mr. Maroudi walked down the road towards the Pyramids. That was the way the Greyfriars juniors would come when they came, and if they came. They passed the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx, glimmering strangely in the moonlight. Sir Reginald, with knitted brows, was thinking of Hassan the dragoman's carelessness, in having allowed his charges to wander from the beaten track. Mr. Hilmi Maroudi was also thinking of Hassan—but not of his carelessness. He was thinking of the circumstance that Yussef, the agent of Kalizelos, had been in talk with the dragoman on the Great Pyramid, as he had learned from Billy Bunter. And there were thoughts in the Egyptian's

mind that he did not communicate to his companion.

Clatter! Clatter! Clatter!

It was a thudding of donkeys' hoofs on the road from the desert, and a bunch of riders came dimly in sight in the moonlight.

Sir Reginald uttered an exclamation of relief.

"They are coming!"

Hilmi Maroudi did not speak.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Lost!

"MAULY!"

"Mauleverer, old man!"

"Maul!"

Harry Wharton & Co. shouted, and shouted again, and their voices rang and echoed among the sand dunes.

For an hour or more the Famous Five had ridden as fast as the donkeys could go on the track of Mohammed and the white donkey.

The sticks of the donkey-boys whacked and whacked, and cracked and cracked, and the juniors uttered no word of remonstrance now—they were too anxious to come up with their lost comrade.

Hassan, the dragoman, with the golden tassel of his red tarboosh dancing, kept pace with the donkeys.

For many miles it was easy to see which way the white donkey had gone. But not once did the juniors catch sight of it.

Round about them lay many hard, rocky tracts, where the footprints of donkey and donkey-boy might easily have been lost. But Mohammed and the white donkey seemed specially to have kept where the sand was soft, and left an unmistakable trail.

It was a trail that there was not the slightest difficulty in following—even at a gallop twice as fast as that of which the Cairo donkeys were capable.

It did not occur to the juniors that Mohammed had intentionally picked the soft sand to leave that trail and lead them farther and farther away from the comrade they sought.

What had happened was a mystery to them—they had seen nothing of Mauleverer or the donkey-boy or of the donkey since the three had vanished from sight beyond a ridge of sand—and they knew that there was no chance of overtaking the powerful white donkey on their own inferior mounts unless its rider chose.

But it was impossible to imagine that Mauleverer was deliberately leading them a dance. They remembered how Mohammed had grasped the rein and led the donkey out of their sight. And the suspicion was strong in their minds that Mohammed, the donkey-boy, was leading Mauleverer away into the desert for his own reasons—from which it did not take long to reach the conclusion that the brown-faced rascal was in the pay of Kalizelos. It was rather perplexing that Mauleverer went quietly, and they wondered whether a blow from the donkey-boy's stick had stunned him and put it out of his power to resist. But they did not suspect that Mauleverer was no longer on the white donkey, and that every stride of their steeds took them farther and farther away from him.

It was at a distance of four miles from the lost tombs that the trail failed at last. Not once had they sighted Mohammed—he had kept out of sight among the dunes all the time, till he reached the low range of hills in the west. There, still unseen, he was lost to all knowledge; on the hard rock

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there was no sign to be picked up. And the juniors came to a halt in dismay, and shouted and shouted again the name of Mauleverer till the rocks rang and echoed round them.

But only the echoes replied.

The weary donkeys were glad enough to halt, and the donkey-boys also. Both lay down to rest when the juniors dismounted to attempt to pick up some sign of their missing comrade.

But there was no sign to be picked up.

The hard rocks left no trace.

Mohammed and the white donkey had disappeared into the rocky, sandy hills, and the juniors had no doubt that Lord Mauleverer had disappeared with them. The Greek had laid his plans cunningly.

There would be search for the missing schoolboy—search in which hundreds, if not thousands of Arabs would join, tempted by the offer of liberal back-sheesh. But the search would begin in the rocky hills, four miles from the lost tombs, where Mauleverer was a hidden prisoner. Thus far the juniors had followed the trail of Mauleverer's mount, and there the search would begin and go farther and farther. Who was to dream that all the time the missing boy was hidden in a tomb within sight of the summit of the Pyramid of Cheops? Certainly Harry Wharton & Co. did not dream of guessing it—they had seen only Mohammed, the donkey-boy with Mauleverer, and had no doubt that he had led his prisoner away into the desert hills.

"Mauly!"

Bob Cherry gave a last ringing shout, that rolled back in a thousand echoes from the hollows of the hills.

But it was clear now that Mauleverer was not within hearing, or that if he was within hearing he could not speak.

Round the juniors were a thousand rocky nooks and recesses in which the missing boy and his kidnapper might have been hidden.

Harry Wharton set his teeth.

"We've lost him!" he muttered. "There's one comfort—we made him leave the scarab behind—the scoundrels haven't got hold of that. But—but poor old Mauly—"

"Oh, my lordly gentlemen!" murmured Hassan, beating his breast. "What shall I say? What shall I do? The lordly one is lost, and the magnificent gentleman Brooke will say it is the fault of Hassan! Woe is me!"

"You're not to blame, Hassan," said Bob Cherry kindly. "I suppose you couldn't be expected to guess that that villain of a donkey-boy was put up to this."

"The blamefulness of the esteemed Hassan is not terrific," agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Hassan beat his breast and almost wept.

"If my honourable lords forgive me, can I forgive myself?" he wailed. "I Hassan, the son of Suleiman, have lost a noble lord who was in my charge? I am a dog, and the son of a dog, and the grandfather of pigs! I am ruined—for who will trust Hassan again? Woe is upon me!"

And the faithful Hassan bowed his head, tore off his tarboosh, and sprinkled dust upon his greasy hair.

The donkey-boys watched him stolidly. The juniors, even in their deep anxiety for Mauleverer, could not help feeling sorry for the dragoman. They could not see that Hassan was to blame. He had engaged donkeys and donkey-boys for the ride, as was his dragoman duty, Mohammed with the rest. The rest had done their service faithfully enough;

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only Mohammed had been a traitor—and no dragoman could be expected to guess that one of the donkey-boys had been bribed to treachery.

"Buck up, old bean!" said Nugent comfortingly. "We don't blame you—and Sir Reginald Brooke won't! You couldn't help it."

"Woe is me!" wailed Hassan dolorously. "I am covered with shame as with a garment! I am a ruined dragoman."

"The question is to find Mauly," said Wharton. "We've lost him—and we can do no more here. You've no idea where Mohammed would be making for, Hassan?"

"Yes, lord!" answered Hassan. "He go into the desert, many, many miles—only far away in the desert will he be safe—far, far away in the Libyan Desert, my noble lord!"

"It was unlucky that Mauly was the best mounted in the party," said Johnny Bull. "But for that—"

"Can't be helped now," said Harry. "I suppose Hassan's right, and the scoundrel will make for the desert with poor old Mauly. I dare say Kalizelos is waiting for him there, miles away."

Hassan started a little at the mention of the Greek's name.

"There's no doubt that Kalizelos is at the bottom of it," said Nugent. "He must have bribed the donkey-boy—"

"No doubt about that!"

Harry Wharton stared round almost desperately at the sand and the rocks. The sun was low now, and darkness was at hand. Further search for Mauleverer was obviously hopeless; but it was bitter to turn back and leave him in the hands of his enemies. Yet clearly the only thing to be done was to get back to Mena House, and to report the kidnapping to the Egyptian police officer on duty at the Pyramids. That was the first step; and then to hurry back to Cairo and inform Sir Reginald Brooke. Bitter as it was to turn back, it was useless to lose more time.

"Let's get back!" said Harry at last. "The sooner the search begins, the better—and we're losing time."

With heavy hearts the juniors returned to the donkeys and mounted. The donkey-boys dragged themselves to their feet, and the sticks whacked and cracked again.

It was a weary ride back to the Pyramids. The moon came up over the desert, sailing bright and clear over the Nile. In other circumstances, a moonlight ride in the desert, with the Pyramids looming ghost-like in the silvery glimmer, would have been enjoyable. But the chums of the Remove were thinking now only of their missing comrade. They pictured him, bound to Mohammed's donkey, carried farther and farther into the trackless desert, and that mental picture was a torment. If it was a comfort to know that the villain who had kidnapped him had not been able to lay hands on the Golden Scarab, it was very little comfort. They would have given all the treasures in ancient Egypt, thrice told, for the sight of Mauleverer safe and sound.

Bitter as their anxiety was, the juniors were silent as they rode. But Hassan was not silent. His lamentations and self-reproaches were incessant. He repeated again and again that the noble lord was far, far away, in the untrodden desert, far away in the trackless sands. It did not occur to the juniors that the faithful Hassan might have any reason for impressing that belief on their minds. There was dust on Hassan's head, and deep grief and sorrow in his brown face, and his

lamentations made an incessant accompaniment to the thudding of the donkeys' hoofs.

The Sphinx came in sight—towering, shadowy, eerily majestic in the moonlight. Bob Cherry gave a sudden shout at the sight of two figures on the road.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What—"

"Mauly's uncle—and who's that with him—Mr. Maroudi! Hold on!"

The donkeys clattered to a halt.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Knocking on the Tomb!

LORD MAULEVERER rose to his feet wearily.

Darkness and silence encircled him—the darkness and silence of the tomb.

For hours—how many hours he could not guess—he had moved about his stony prison; groping, seeking in the darkness. There was little chance that there was another outlet, beside the one guarded by Yussef, the Arab; but anything was better than inaction, and Mauleverer groped and searched in the thick darkness till his limbs were weary.

Stone walls met his hands when he groped; stone walls on all sides. If he found an opening it proved to be only a recess, a niche in the rock-wall where a sarcophagus lay; and more than once his shivering fingers touched a mummy, or the fragment of a mummy, in the clinging gloom. If there had been another outlet it was blocked up now; and he gave it up at last, and sat down on the steps to rest, weary in body and mind. Whether it was still day or night he could not tell; but it seemed to him that a long, long time had passed.

In the rock-chamber at the head of the stone stair there was a glimmer of lamplight; hardly a ray of which penetrated to Lord Mauleverer's prison. But, as he sat silent and weary, there came to his ears a sound from above—the unmistakable sound of someone snoring. And it dawned on him that Yussef was sleeping.

He stood by the stone steps, listening.

At length, without a sound, treading on tiptoe, he mounted the steps and looked into the upper rock-room of the tomb.

The lamp burned there, and the air was heavy and stuffy. Yussef lay on the rugs, his hawk-eyes closed in sleep. Mauleverer's heart beat.

His glance passed Yussef to the narrow portal of the tomb; blocked by the great mass of squared limestone.

He could not move that huge block; he remembered how the muscular Arab had been forced to exert his strength to move it. Whether the watcher slumbered or awakened, Mauleverer was a prisoner in the lost tomb. But hopeless as the attempt seemed, he resolved to make it. Softly he stepped from the stone stair into the upper room, giving the sleeping Arab as wide a berth as he could.

He reached the portal; and a glance back at Yussef showed the hawk-faced Arab still asleep.

Mauleverer put his shoulder to the block, and braced himself to exert all his strength.

It did not stir.

With set teeth and straining muscles he drove at it. But it was in vain. His muscles were strained almost to cracking, the perspiration poured down him in streams. But the massive stone did not move.

It came back into his mind how, when Kalizelos had shut him in the sarcophagus in the Catacombs of Alexandria,

he had striven to lift the stone lid—in vain! His prison was not so narrow now—but it was as secure! Then, his comrades had found and saved him—now, they could not find him; they could not save him. Unless he could save himself, he was doomed! And again and again he strove.

Lord Mauleverer was considered a slacker at Greyfriars; a fellow almost too lazy to live! No one would have thought him a slacker now, as he strained his muscles at the stone.

But it was in vain; and he desisted at last and stood leaning on the stone he had failed to move—hot, aching, his head almost spinning. He stood and leaned, and breathed in gulps.

His eyes turned on the Arab again. Yussef was still sleeping—the wretch could sleep, knowing that there was no escape for the prisoner. The schoolboy's eyes wandered round the rock-chamber in the glimmering light of the lamp. An iron-shod staff, of some heavy Eastern wood, stood in a corner, and the schoolboy earl, with a new idea working in his mind, stepped to it quickly and grasped it. If he could use the long, heavy staff as a lever, there was a chance yet.

He gave Yussef a last look—the Arab had not stirred. Then he bent to his task at the portal. Carefully, and as silently as he could, he prodded at the base of the rock with the pointed end of the staff. And at last he found a spot where, under the block of limestone, was not rock but sand.

His eyes gleamed with hope and his heart beat as he drove the staff under the great rock. Then he threw his weight on the end.

"By gad!" breathed Mauleverer, as he felt the great block shift.

What he could not have done with his hands he was affecting by leverage. The task was hard and heavy; but he felt the great stone move. If he had the strength to topple it over—There was a grinding sound as the limestone block lifted at its inner edge.

"Bismillah!"

Lord Mauleverer could have groaned as he heard that exclamation behind him. The sound of the stirring rock, slight as it was, had awakened the Arab.

He turned his head as he heard Yussef spring up from the rugs. The hawk-faced ruffian came across the rock-chamber at him with the spring of a tiger.

Mauleverer tore the iron-shod staff out from under the stone and swept it in the air with both hands.

"Stand back, you scoundrel!" he panted.

"Wahyat-en-nabi!" snarled Yussef, and he came on, springing.

There was a yell from the Arab as Mauleverer struck, and the heavy staff crashed on his dingy turban. Yussef reeled back yelling. But before Mauleverer could recover the staff to strike again, the Arab was upon him and grasping him, and he went down heavily on the floor of the tomb.

He struggled fiercely.

"Dog of an unbeliever!" snarled the Arab. He realised that the prisoner would have escaped, had he not awakened, and his black eyes blazed with rage. Holding the struggling schoolboy down, he caught up a rope and bound his wrists together with cruel and ruthless tightness. Then Mauleverer's ankles were bound; and the

Arab rose to his feet and stood staring down at him, muttering curses in Arabic as he rubbed his bruised head.

"Dog of a kafir!" hissed Yussef. "You will not escape now."

He grasped the schoolboy earl and rolled him roughly towards the steps. With a brutal shove, he sent him rolling down, bound as he was. Mauleverer bumped from step to step till he reached the lower tomb.

There, dazed by his fall, panting for breath, he lay helpless in his bonds. The Arab stared down after him, and a cruel laugh echoed down the gloomy stair.

"Lie there, dog of an unbeliever!" snarled the Arab.

And Mauleverer heard him throw himself on the rugs again.

Mauleverer suppressed a groan.

The game was up now, and there was despair in his heart. The ropes knotted cruelly on wrists and ankles cut into his flesh; he could hardly stir a limb. He could only lie where he had fallen, helpless; in darkness and despair. How long he lay in the dead silence he never knew; but suddenly, through the brooding silence, there came a sound.

Knock!

Mauleverer started.

Knock, knock!

The knocking came from the blocked doorway of the tomb above. He heard the Arab scramble to his feet, with a startled exclamation in his own tongue.

"Bismillah!"

Knock, knock, knock!

Surely it could not be Kalizelos returning yet! Still more surely it could

(Continued on next page.)



WRIGLEY'S under canvas

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E.M.32

not be help and rescue! But as Mauleverer lay in the darkness and listened, the sound brought a throb of hope to his heart.

Knock, knock, knock!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hilmi Maroudi Takes a Hand!

"HERBERT!" exclaimed Sir Reginald Brooke.

In the moonlight that glimmered on the Sphinx and the ghostly Pyramids, the old baronet peered eagerly at the donkey-riders as they clattered to a halt.

It was the Greyfriars party, returning from the desert, and for the moment Mauly's uncle did not observe that there were only five of them.

But Herbert Mauleverer's voice did not answer him.

"Herbert! What—Wharton, where is Mauleverer?" exclaimed Sir Reginald. "Hassan, where is my nephew?"

"O lordly sar!" wailed Hassan. "A donkey-boy—the son of a thousand pigs—has led the noble and magnificent one into the desert, and now he is far away in the Libyan sands—"

"Good heavens!"

Hilmi Maroudi stood silent. His eyes were on the dragoman, who was beating his breast. He did not speak, but with his keen Egyptian eyes he watched, and his thoughts were busy.

"Wharton, tell me—"

"We've searched for him—hunted for him, sir!" panted Wharton. "That's why we're late—"

"My nephew is missing?"

"Yes. In the desert—"

"You should not have gone into the desert! You—"

"We followed Mauleverer there, sir," said Bob Cherry. "We couldn't leave him to it."

"What do you mean? Do you mean that my nephew deliberately rode into the desert, or what?" exclaimed Sir Reginald.

"He got ahead of us," explained Wharton. "We were going to some tombs on the edge of the desert, and Mauly got ahead, and—"

"Why?" snapped the baronet.

"He had a good donkey, sir, and we had rather poor ones; and I'm afraid the donkey-boy must have been bribed by that scoundrel Kalizelos. He drove him on ahead quite suddenly, and refused to stop when we shouted, and—Mauly being well mounted, we couldn't catch up with him—"

"Then where are they now?"

"In the desert, sir! We followed the track of the donkey at least four miles—as far as the hills—and lost it there."

Sir Reginald Brooke groaned. He had feared a mischance when the juniors failed to return; but at the sight of the riders on the road to the Sphinx he had been relieved. Now he learned that matters were even worse than he had feared. The five juniors returning without Mauleverer. The sands of the desert had swallowed his nephew.

"Kalizelos!" he muttered. "That scoundrel—You have seen nothing of him?"

"Nothing, sir! But it's pretty clear—"

"I fear so! I fear so! If the donkey-boy deliberately led him away into the desert, he can have had only one reason."

Sir Reginald clenched his hands hard. He stared past the juniors, at the moonlit road winding past temples and

pyramids, to the Libyan Desert. In that endless, tractless waste his nephew was lost, and his heart was heavy with the fear that he would never see him again in life. But it was no time for grief; it was the time for action.

"You had better ride on to Mena House," he said. "I will go to the Pyramids Police Station at once, and then—"

"One word, my good friend," broke in the quiet, soft voice of Hilmi Maroudi. "Perhaps I may be able to help."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed Harry Wharton, with a break in his voice, "if you could help us get Mauleverer back, sir—"

"The noble gentleman, he is lost in a desert!" wailed Hassan. "I throw dust on unworthy head! I am unworthy to look my noble gentlemen in the face! I, Hassan, the son of Suleiman, have lost my noble lord!"

The plump Egyptian gentleman gave him a searching glance. Then he turned to the juniors again.

"Surely, Mr. Maroudi, the first step is to notify the police," said Sir

would have overtaken the young lord when Mohammed carried him off."

"That's so," said Bob. "You may be sure we rode as hard as we could. But these donkeys had no chance against Mohammed's."

Hassan, the dragoman, was still beating his breast and lamenting. But his dark eyes were fixed on Hilmi Maroudi now, with a strange gleam in their depths. Something in the Egyptian's face or in his words had startled the faithful Hassan.

Maroudi stood for some moments in reflection. The juniors waited, wondering what he was thinking of; hoping against hope that Maroudi, a native of the country, had some plan in his head for dealing with the situation which had not occurred to them.

Sir Reginald Brooke watched him, with suppressed impatience. The baronet was eager to get to action; to lose not a single moment in starting a general search. "Backsheesh" would set hundreds of Arabs scouring the desert, and the juniors could lead them to the place where the trail had been lost, to begin with. It seemed to the old baronet that there was nothing else to be done.

"My dear sir!" he said at length.

"My good friend," said Maroudi, "I understand your impatience. But I beg you to give me a few moments. I am not wasting time. It is in my mind that the young lord may not be so far away as you believe." His eyes, fixed on Hassan, did not lose the dragoman's start, and he smiled grimly. "I think, my dear sir, that the young lord may be found—I think that your dragoman may be able to find him. With your permission, sir, I will speak to Hassan, and point out to him some thoughts that have entered my mind. Will you allow me?"

Sir Reginald made a gesture of assent, and the juniors could only look on in wonder. Hassan, so far as they could see, was as helpless as themselves in the matter.

Maroudi made an imperious sign to the dragoman, and stepped aside, out of hearing of the staring donkey-boys. Hassan followed him, slowly and reluctantly, a strange expression on his brown face.

When Maroudi spoke to the dragoman, he spoke in Arabic, of which the juniors would have understood nothing, and Mauleverer's uncle little, if they had heard. But his quiet voice was out of their hearing, and out of hearing of the donkey-boys. Certainly the Greyfriars fellows would have been astonished had they known what the Egyptian gentleman was saying to their faithful Hassan.

"False dog, and son of unclean pariah dogs!" said Hilmi Maroudi, his dark eyes glinting at the dragoman. "What has Kalizelos paid you to betray the young lord into his hands?"

"By the beard of the Prophet," said Hassan huskily, in the same tongue. "By the holy trousers of Mahomet, I swear—"

"Silence, kafir!" interrupted Maroudi. "Have you no fear of Allah, that you swear falsely in the name of the Prophet? Dog of a dragoman, you know me, Hilmi Maroudi! When I tell you that you shall die under blows of the kourbash in my palace in Cairo, do you believe that I will make my words good?"

Hassan bowed his head.

"I am your slave!" he said. "But I swear—"

"Listen, kafir!" said Maroudi quietly. "You have served the English lords for backsheesh faithfully until this day. This day Yussef, the son of Hamid,

POCKET WALLET FOR A DONCASTER CHUM!

For the snappy Greyfriars limerick set out below, T. Stocks, of 20, Cooper Street, Doncaster, has been awarded one of this week's MAGNET pocket wallets.

Said Bunter: "I'm getting much thinner.

I've not had a doughnut since dinner.

I'm sure I shall perish
For want of more relish."

"And won't that be jolly!" cried Skinner.

Have you sent in your effort yet, chum? If not, set to work NOW and win one of these useful prizes!

Reginald, "and then to set every Arab in Cairo on the trail. Even in the desert that villain may be run down!"

"We can guide them to the place where we lost the trail," said Nugent. "The sand may have covered the trail by this time; but we can find the place again. Hassan can, anyhow!"

"Truly, my lord!" said the dragoman. "You trust Hassan! He is your dragoman!"

"Then that is what must be done immediately," said Sir Reginald; but he looked inquiringly at Hilmi Maroudi.

The Egyptian's dark face was grave and thoughtful.

"My good friend, you have a proverb in your language that the more haste is the less speed!" said Maroudi quietly.

"Let us learn first precisely what has happened. My little friend." He addressed Harry Wharton. "It appears that the young lord left you, because he was better mounted than any of the others."

"That was it," said Harry. "Mohammed's donkey was a big, strong, swift animal, worth twice as much as ours in a run."

"The villain picked him out, of course, intending to get away with poor old Mauly all the time!" said Bob.

"No doubt," said Maroudi, with a faint smile. "But he did not pick out the others, and it was very singular and unfortunate that all the other donkeys were so inferior. But for that you



As Yussef stretched out a brown hand to take the paper, Hassan's right hand flew up, taking the ruffian completely off his guard. The next second the stick crashed on the head of Yussef, and he fell senseless at the feet of the dragoman. "Oh gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

talked with you on the Pyramid of Cheops. Do not tell me that he talked of the hire of donkeys. Am I a simple Faringhee to believe you? Dog of a dragoman, he brought you word from Kalizelos, the Greek, and the offer of backsheesh, much backsheesh, to betray the young lord into his hands!"

"Lord of life and death, I swear—" groaned the dragoman.

"Give me ear, son of pariah dogs that howl in the ruins! Grandfather of unclean animals, listen! The proof is this—the young lord was placed on a powerful donkey to outpace all the others! Why, O lying kafir, did you see so carefully that his friends should not be able to overtake him when Mohammed led him into the desert? It was you, dragoman, who selected the beasts—and you selected them well for your purpose, O treacherous and unbelieving follower of the Prophet! Give me ear, Hassan, the son of Suleiman. Will the law and the judges protect you from my vengeance?"

"Lord of life and death," groaned the dragoman, "did this wretched Hassan know that your greatness concerned himself about unbelieving Faringhees? Is not the slaying of an unbeliever a good deed in the eyes of the Prophet? Have not the Ulemas said so, O master?"

"These young lords are my friends," said Hilmi Maroudi. "I am concerned for them to such a length that any man who lifts a hand against them shall feel my vengeance, even to death. If the young lord is slain, you shall die under the kourbash, and my ears shall listen to your crying during days of torment, O son of Suleiman."

"He is not slain!" interrupted Hassan eagerly. "O master, he is safe, but a captive! It is for some strange scarab—some miserable relic, that the Greek has

taken him. He is to be ransomed by that which Kalizelos seeks!"

"That also is known to me," said Maroudi. "But he will not be ransomed, dragoman—he will be set free, and given back to his friends, and on your head be it! Give me ear, son of dogs! Here I will wait, in the shadow of the Sphinx, till you shall return with the young lord! Bring him safely to me, and you shall have twice what the Greek offered, whatever the sum—fail to bring him and you shall die by torture under the kourbash!"

Hassan's eyes snapped.

"Lord, the Greek, whom may the dogs devour for displeasing your greatness, offered the sum of five hundred Egyptian pounds, which, in piastres, is an immense fortune."

"Twice five hundred Egyptian pounds shall be yours, son of Suleiman, when the young lord is safe with his friends!"

"On my head be it!" said the dragoman. "But yet one thing I will ask, O master of death and life! Let not these foolish Faringhees know what is known to your greatness, or I am a ruined dragoman."

Maroudi made a gesture of contempt.

"Listen, kafir!" he said. "You shall serve my friends as a dragoman, while they remain in my country, and you shall serve them faithfully! The eye of Maroudi will be upon you! Take from them all the backsheesh they will give, for it is your trade; but serve them faithfully, and protect them from dangers. Be this on your head, son of Suleiman. Fail in your trust, and you shall surely die!"

"I will be faithful to the Faringhees, lord, now that I know what is your will," said the dragoman submissively. "What am I but as the dust under your feet, O great Maroudi?"

"You shall be rewarded," said

Maroudi; "but keep it in your memory that eyes will watch you, and that if you are false, you die under the kourbash. Now we have talked enough. Begone."

"On my head be it!" said Hassan.

Maroudi walked to the group with the donkeys, the dragoman following him, almost cringing.

"My good friends," said Maroudi gravely, "I have talked with Hassan, and put new thoughts into his mind, and it is Hassan's belief that he can find the young lord. Let him take a donkey and go."

"But—" said Sir Reginald, perplexed.

"Oh, sar, you trust Hassan!" exclaimed the dragoman. "Hassan knows all things! It has entered my thoughts that there is a hidden tomb, where it is my strong belief that the noble young lord has been taken, and this place is well known to me. Give me time, lordly gentlemen, to search the place of which I speak."

"If you advise this, Mr. Maroudi—"

"I advise it, my good friend," said Hilmi Maroudi, "and if you will wait on this spot, be it on my head that Hassan will return with the young lord."

Hassan had already picked out the best of the five donkeys. He mounted, waved the donkey-boy back, and disappeared at a trot into the dimness of the moonlight. Harry Wharton & Co. stared after him, and then looked at Maroudi, lost in wonder. So far as they could gather, the Egyptian had made some suggestion, which gave the dragoman hope of finding their lost comrade. Sir Reginald fidgeted. He was as perplexed as the schoolboys, and his anxiety was deep.

"My friend," said Maroudi gravely,

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"I have said, on my head be it! Let us wait, and you shall be satisfied."

"If—if you feel sure——"

"I am sure!"

"Then we will wait," said Sir Reginald.

And they sat down to rest on the stone platform before the Sphinx, and waited. The hoof-beats of Hassan's donkey died away towards the desert, and there was silence.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rescue!

KNOCK, knock, knock!
Lord Mauleverer, lying bound in the darkness of the lost tomb, lifted his head, listening with painful intentness.

Knock, knock!

Who was knocking at the stone that blocked the door of the tomb? It could not mean help and rescue—it could not! If the searchers were already at work they would be following the track of Mohammed's donkey into the desert, as the cunning Greek had planned.

Yet there was hope in Mauleverer's heart as he listened; his heart beat fast. He could hear the movements and muttering voice of Yussef, and though he could not understand the Arabic, the tones told him that Yussef was surprised and perturbed by that sudden summons at the door of the hidden tomb.

The man grunted angrily, and Mauleverer heard him move to the blocked portal; but he did not call out. Apparently he was listening. Yussef evidently had expected no one. It could not be Kalizelos.

But there was a sound at last of the stone moving at the portal of the tomb, whether moved from without, or from within, Mauleverer did not know. He could hear the grinding sound as it stirred.

With an effort, the bound schoolboy dragged himself up the steps. His wrists were fastened together, and his ankles; but he could manage to crawl on his elbows and knees, and slowly, painfully, he crawled up the steps, and lifted his head far enough to look into the upper rock chamber of the tomb.

Yussef was standing with his back to him, at the portal, from which the great limestone block was rolling aside. The lamp was still burning, and in its glimmer he caught the gleam of a bared knife in the hawk-faced Arab's hand. Evidently Yussef was not expecting a friend, and was ready for a foe.

The great stone shifted, and a glimmer of bright moonlight came in at the portal. Framed in the opening, with the night behind him and the lamplight on his face, was Hassan, the dragoman.

Mauleverer stared at him across the rock chamber, amazed. Glad as he would have been to see Harry Wharton & Co., he was almost as glad to see the faithful Hassan. The dragoman had found him—found out where he was kept a prisoner—that was all that he could suppose—and had come to save him. The schoolboy earl's eyes danced. He panted out a shout to the dragoman, fearful of seeing Yussef leap with his knife.

"Look out, Hassan!"

But, to Mauleverer's surprise, though doubtless not to Hassan's, Yussef did not lift the knife.

As soon as he recognised Hassan he slipped the weapon back under his dingy djubbah.

Mauleverer could not see his face; but had he seen it he would have read there only astonishment, not hostility.

Yussef was the first of the two Arabs

to speak; but as he spoke in his own tongue what he said had no meaning for the bound schoolboy.

"Wahyat rasak! It is you, Hassan! Why are you here?" grunted Yussef, in Arabic. "It is not time yet by many hours for the Greek to come, and you put me in fear by knocking! Bismillah, but it came into my thoughts that all was discovered."

"Yet you might have known that it was Hassan, for this secret place is known only to three, and was it not I who told the secret to the Greek?" said the dragoman, in the same language.

Looking past Yussef, he saw the face of Lord Mauleverer, peering from the dark stair.

He salaamed.

"Lordly gentleman, Hassan is here!" he said. "You trust Hassan! Hassan is your dragoman."

"By gad, I'm jolly glad to see you, old bean!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Look out for that scoundrel's knife!"

Yussef, his hawkish face amazed, and growing suspicious, stared from one to the other.

"What means this, son of Suleiman?" he asked, still speaking in Arabic.

"The meaning, O my friend, is that there is a change in the plan," answered Hassan. "He who has paid us fears that this tomb may be discovered, and he has sent me to take the Faringhee away into the desert, and for this purpose I have brought a donkey."

Yussef wrinkled his brows.

"Son of jackals," he answered savagely. "the Faringhee stays here, in my care, by my master's order. You speak with a false tongue."

"By the beard of the Prophet——"

"Enough!" growled the hawk-faced Arab. "I obey only the orders of the Greek. The Faringhee remains."

Hassan, the dragoman, breathed hard and deep, and his grasp closed hard on the heavy stick he carried in his hand. He had had little expectation that the ruffian would allow him to take the prisoner away. But Hassan, the son of Suleiman, was ready for other measures, if trickery failed.

"O doubting one," said Hassan, still in Arabic, satisfied that Mauleverer could not understand a word that was said. "I have a writing from the Greek that I will show thee in proof of what I say."

"Show me the writing," said Yussef. "Then I will believe."

Hassan groped under his gold-braided tunic with his left hand, and drew out a folded paper, which he extended to the hawk-faced Arab. Lord Mauleverer watched them in sheer amazement.

Yussef stretched out his brown hand to take the paper, half-convinced. And as he did so Hassan's right hand flew up, taking the ruffian completely off his guard, and the stick crashed on the head of Yussef, with a crash that rang far in the silence of the night.

One gasping groan came from the hawk-faced Arab, as he pitched over and fell senseless at the feet of the dragoman.

"Oh gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

Hassan looked down at the fallen man. His face, which the junior had always seen good-natured and amiable, was changed now; it blazed with ferocity.

The heavy stick whirled up again, in the hand of the man who was no longer the smiling dragoman of Cairo, but a savage and ruthless Arab, as savage as any bedouin of the desert. Crash came

the stick on the head of the fallen man a second time. Hassan's hand flew up for a third blow, and Lord Mauleverer shouted to him:

"Stop!"

Hassan paused. He lowered the stick and salaamed to the schoolboy earl, the cheery grin returning to his face.

"To hear is to obey, my noble gentleman!" he said. "Yet is it wise to make sure of this son of pigs!"

"You've jolly well stunned him!" said Lord Mauleverer. "He won't come to in a hurry, Hassan! You don't want to crack his skull."

Hassan bent over the senseless Arab. There was no doubt that Yussef was stunned; the first blow had been enough. It was likely to be a long time before the son of Hamid came to his senses again.

"My noble gentleman is right," said Hassan, grinning. "The son of a dog is as senseless as the stone upon which he lies! Let him lie!"

"Get me loose, old bean," said Lord Mauleverer, and swiftly Hassan produced a knife and cut the ropes that bound the schoolboy earl, and with eager hands helped him to his feet.

Lord Mauleverer stood a little unsteadily, leaning on the arm of the dragoman.

"My noble gentleman, the dogs have dared to place bonds on your magnificent limbs!" exclaimed Hassan indignantly.

"Yaas, and jolly tight, too!" said Mauleverer. "How the thump did you find me, Hassan? By gad, you're some dragoman, old bean!"

Hassan salaamed.

"My lordly gentleman, Hassan knows all things. Hassan is your faithful dragoman!" he said. "Lordly and noble one, I have a donkey waiting, and your admirable friends await you at a Sphinx! Will it please your magnificent lordship to come with your faithful Hassan?"

"Will it?" grinned Mauleverer. "Yaas, old bean, I rather think it will! Never so jolly pleased in my life!"

Yussef, the son of Hamid, lay stretched senseless as Lord Mauleverer followed the dragoman from the tomb. Outside, Hassan rolled the limestone block into its place, shutting the tomb.

Then he helped Lord Mauleverer to mount the donkey. Mauleverer's face was bright as he sat in the red saddle. Hassan's stick cracked on the donkey, and the animal started at a trot. Under the brilliant moon, with the cool night wind from the desert fanning him, Lord Mauleverer rode, almost like a fellow in a dream.

He had given up hope of rescue, hope of life—and now he was free and riding back to rejoin his friends. Hassan, trotting at his side, cracked his stick on the donkey, grinning.

Lord Mauleverer gave a chirrup of delight as the majestic Sphinx came in sight in the moonlight. From the shadows round that ancient monument there came a shout:

"Mauly!"

"Thank Heaven—Mauly!"

"Herbert, my boy!"

And, with a rush, the Greyfriars fellows were round Mauleverer and dragging him from the donkey.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

All Serene!

HILMI MAROUDI looked on, smiling. The plump Egyptian gentleman's dark face was full of satisfaction. The chums of the Remove were almost wild with

delight as they surrounded Mauleverer, shaking his hands, thumping him on the back, and digging him in his breathless ribs. Somehow, they had had faith in Maroudi; they had trusted to his assurance. Yet it seemed almost like a miracle to them to see Lord Mauleverer ride up to the Sphinx, safe and sound. Hassan, the dragoman, had found him, and brought him back. But they knew that it was somehow due to Maroudi, though they did not know how.

"Mauly, old bean—"

"My esteemed and ridiculous Mauly."

"Oh, isn't this jolly!"

"Yaas!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "No end jolly, old things. But don't punch a fellow so hard—what? You men, you don't know how frightfully it bucks a fellow to see you all again. Nunky—"

"My dear, dear boy, said Sir Reginald, "I could scarcely believe Mr. Maroudi when he assured me that Hassan would find you!"

"Mr. Maroudi here! How do you do, sir?" Lord Mauleverer bowed politely to the Egyptian gentleman, who smiled and nodded. "I can't imagine how Hassan nosed me out. I tell you he's some dragoman! I was parked in a jolly old tomb—half-buried in sand—along with mummies and things! I own up to you fellows that I hate mummies at close quarters. All right in museums and places—but not nice at a fellow's elbow, especially in the dark! But it's all right now—right as rain!"

"We owe it to Mr. Maroudi," said Harry Wharton, with a grateful glance at the Egyptian gentleman. "I can't guess how—but he put Hassan up to finding you. Isn't that so, Hassan?"

"My noble and lordly gentleman, this is true," said Hassan. "The great Maroudi, with his wise words, put it in my mind!"

"Then I owe my liberty to you, sir," said Lord Mauleverer. "I'm not a great hand at talkin', Mr. Maroudi. But when I tell you that I was tied up like a turkey and chucked into a tomb, you'll know how I feel about it!"

"God bless you, Mr. Maroudi!" said

Sir Reginald, in a deeply moved voice.

"You have been a friend in need!"

"It was the will of Allah that I should serve you," said the Egyptian gravely. "To me this is a happy day. Let us return to Mena House, my friends!"

With happy faces, the Greyfriars fellows started for Mena House. When they came to the hotel by the Pyramids, Hilmi Maroudi stopped to speak to Hassan, in Arabic.

"Son of a dog, to-morrow you will come to my house in Cairo for your reward, of which you will say nothing to your masters. From this day you will serve them faithfully, and guard them from the Greek. And if you fail, think of the kourbash!"

"What am I but dust under your feet, O great Maroudi?" answered the dragoman. "To hear is to obey!"

"Upon your head be it!" said Maroudi.

"I say, you fellows—" came a fat squeak, as the juniors came up the road to the hotel.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that jolly old Bunter?" exclaimed Mauleverer. And in the exuberance of his spirits he greeted the Owl of the Remove with a terrific smack on a fat shoulder.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

"By gad, I'm glad to see even Bunter again!" chuckled Lord Mauleverer. "Fancy a fellow bein' glad to see you, Bunter, old fat bean—what?"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

Billy Bunter blinked at the juniors. The hour was late, and Billy Bunter was frightfully hungry. He could see that the chums of the Remove seemed highly pleased and satisfied about something. So far as Billy Bunter could see, there was no cause for satisfaction. It was true that he had had several teas, but he was hours late for dinner. In the inner Bunter there was an aching void.

"I say, you fellows, I've been waiting for you!" he groaned. "I thought you'd never get back!"

"Mauly was bagged by an Arab!"

"Silly ass! Might have expected something of the sort when you went

out without me," said Bunter. "But never mind Mauly. What about dinner?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" roared Bunter, in great indignation. "I can tell you that I'm frightfully hungry—famished, in fact. Keeping a fellow waiting for his grub—"

"Mauly's had a jolly narrow escape!"

"Yes, yes. But what about dinner?" asked Bunter anxiously. "I say, we shall be frightfully late back at Cairo! I can't hold out till then—I really can't, you know. You fellows got any toffee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you stop cackling when a fellow's hungry!" roared Bunter. "Look here! Where's old Brooke? Why can't he order the car? Lot he cares whether a fellow's perishing of hunger—about as much as you fellows do! Where's that old codger?"

"Bunter!"

"Oh! Ah! I—I—I wasn't calling you an old codger, sir! I—I—I—"

"As the hour is so late, my boys, we will stop at Mena House for supper and drive back to Cairo afterwards," said Sir Reginald, with a glare at Bunter.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Good! Fine! I say, you fellows, come in! What are you hanging about for? For goodness' sake, get a move on! I've had nothing since tea but some Turkish Delight and a few cakes and some oranges and biscuits and a bunch or two of figs! Buck up!"

It was a cheery supper-party at the hotel by the Pyramids. Cheeriest of all was the fat face of Billy Bunter as he packed away the foodstuffs at a rate unequalled by the rest of the fellows put together. And after supper a happy party rolled back to Cairo in the car, under the bright moon of Egypt, merry and bright after their peril at the Pyramids.

THE END.

(Look out for another feast of thrills in "BILLY BUNTER'S BARGAIN!" the next yarn in this ripping holiday adventure series. You'll enjoy it no end, chums!)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

ALTHOUGH I've got very little space at my disposal this week, chums, I can't leave out this amusing joke, for which George Thomas, of "The Bungalow, Redbrook, near Mon, will receive one of our useful pocket-knives.

RHEUMATIC!

Traveller (to night-watchman): "Yours is a 'romantic' sort of job, isn't it?"

Night-watchman: "It is that, guv'nor; I gets it in me knee-joints, so that I can 'ardly 'obble 'ome!"

Finished laughing? Good!

The first letter on my desk this week comes from Harry Walsh, of Stoke Newington, who informs me, most emphatically, that the MAGNET ranks as the finest boys' paper on the market. You've sure said a bibful, chum! I feel sure my many thousands of readers heartily endorse Harry's statement. My correspondent, however, has one "grouse,"

if it may be termed as such. He declares he doesn't like the stories of St. Sam's displacing the "Greyfriars Herald" supplement, and states that there are a good many "Magnetites" who think the same as himself. Doubtless there are a few of my chums who would prefer to see the old "Greyfriars Herald" occupying the pages now being devoted to Dicky Nugent's "shockers," but I must say in all fairness, that the "complaints" I have received in this direction could be counted on the fingers of one hand. As I like to please my readers when possible, however, I am going to put it to the vote. Your opinions on this matter are wanted, please.

The next letter comes from Stan Wiley, of Huddersfield, whose praises regarding the MAGNET are, indeed, highly flattering. He writes how he wishes the Old Paper could be published three times a week, and then goes on to say: "I would never tire of reading stories of Harry Wharton & Co., at Greyfriars." I wonder if my chum is aware of the fact that a 65,000 words-story of these popular chums appears in the "Schoolboys' Own Library" every month? The issue now on sale contains one of Frank Richards' greatest yarns.

Fancy yourself as a "poet"? Yes. Then try your hand at writing a Greyfriars Limerick. A first-class prize

will come your way if your effort catches the judge's eye. One of this week's splendid pocket wallets goes to: "A Loyal Reader," of 26, Reeves Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, who submitted the following winning effort:—

Said Skinner to Snoop: "For a lark, We will roll Bunter into the Sark!" But Wharton & Co.

Intruded, and so
What happened is better kept dark.

I'VE just got space to put you wise as to next week's programme. Topping the bill is:—

"BILLY BUNTER'S BARGAIN!"

By Frank Richards.

This is the next yarn in our grand holiday series, with Billy Bunter, the fat and fatuous Owl, in the limelight again. "Birchemall's Bennyfit" is the title of Dicky Nugent's "ticklish tail," and you'll laugh both loud and long when you read it. What do you think of our new serial. "The Red Falcon"? Isn't it just great? Look out, then for further chapters of this grand story of the "good old days" next week.

Till then, cheerio.

YOUR EDITOR.



(Continued
from
page 2)

"Courage, boy," he whispered. "This foul den won't hold us for ever."

The mental torture and physical weariness went on every day. At last the Sessions opened, and, with other prisoners, Hal and Jerry were led along dark stone corridors and through doors which opened silently on well-oiled hinges, and ushered out into the bail dock of Newgate, where they found a sweep of blue sky above them.

The dock was walled in on two sides. On the third it led into the trial court, where the judge and jury sat and the public were admitted. The fourth side was enclosed by high, closed gates topped with unclimbable spikes. Beyond these gates, in the Old Bailey, sentries were stationed to prevent any of the prisoners from getting away.

The first day Hal and Jerry were taken into the yard nothing happened, and in the afternoon they were hustled back into the gaol again.

On the second day, however, after a long wait, they were taken into the court and ushered into the railed and spiked dock to stand their trial.

The Sentence!

HAL stared around with eager eyes taking in the rows of tightly packed spectators, the counsel and others in the well of the court, the judge on the bench, with the Sword of Justice behind him and the Royal Arms of his Most Gracious Majesty King George III. above his head.

Over in a corner Hal saw his father sitting. Samuel Lovett saw him, but turned his shifty eyes away as their glances met. And whilst Hal was searching the court he saw the Earl of Huntford, wearing a plum-coloured suit, stride gracefully to a seat among the bewigged barristers and drop languidly on to it.

The earl looked straight at the dock, eyed the prisoners scornfully, and then, taking a pinch of snuff out of a bejewelled box, made some remark to the man sitting next to him and laughed.

"That man's as dangerous as a rattlesnake, boy," said McLean, who had been watching the earl closely. "But if ever I get the chance, I'll make him do something else than smile!"

Hal nodded quickly, and glanced at the bail dock, into which the sunshine was streaming, and then beyond the high wall, into the street of Old Bailey, lined with sombre houses.

A sharp pluck at his sleeve and an order from one of the warders who sat in the dock with him bade him "pay attention to his Lordship."

Hal Lovett stood with shoulders squared whilst the charge against him was read aloud in the legal jargon that made it sound worse. Then followed the charge against McLean for conspiring with Hal to rob the Earl of Huntford, and "that he did, in an attempt to resist arrest and to rescue his fellow-prisoner, murderously assault the police."

McLean had borrowed from an old friend some money, with which he had secured the services of a counsel, but he knew and Hal knew, as they listened to the earl giving evidence and to Samuel Lovett heaping lie upon lie, that they stood very little chance of acquittal.

Samuel Lovett's lying evidence dovetailed so perfectly with that of the earl that the jury began to shift impatiently and to whisper to one another, as if they had already agreed upon their verdict.

The judge's questions and Lovett's replies as the trial neared its end decided the issue.

"The prisoner, Harry Lovett, is your son. He is charged with a very serious crime. Why is it that you have not been able to control the boy?" asked the judge.

"Never could do anything with him, me lord," answered Samuel Lovett, leaning on the ledge of the witness-box. "He's bin a sore trial to me ever since he was able to walk. I've thrashed the skin off him trying to show him the error of 'is ways, but it only made him worse."

"Did you know he was a thief?" asked the judge.

"He wuz always thieving, your lordship," answered Samuel Lovett, sucking at his teeth as was his habit. "He's thoroughly bad!"

"But you were with him, it seems, when the diamond star was snatched from the Earl of Huntford's breast?"

"I was there, me lord, because I went after the boy. We'd had a disagreement in the afternoon, and I was afraid Hal would stay out all night. I've a tender 'eart, I 'ave. I wanted to bring the boy 'ome, in spite of everything."

"Then you did not go with the prisoner to Drury Lane Theatre?"

"Never dreamt of doin' it, sir!" Lovett answered, piling lie upon lie. "I followed him there. It just 'appened by chance that I saw him with the other prisoner—Mr. McLean."

"H'm! What do you know about the prisoner—McLean?"

"Nothing that's any good, sir. I reckon he's partly responsible for leading my boy astray."

"May your soul frizzle in everlasting fire, you lying hypocrite!" came in McLean's clear, ringing tones from the dock, and the court echoed to the thrill of a new sensation.

"If the prisoner breaks silence again," said the Recorder, bending storn eyes upon the offender, who lolled nonchalantly in a corner of the dock, "have him removed!"

There was silence for a while, after which the Recorder continued:

"We have heard the evidence of the Earl of Huntford and various onlookers, now give me your version of the robbery, Mr. Lovett, in your own words."

Samuel Lovett, who had been in the witness-box for two hours, mopped the sweat from his forehead, and, after inwardly cursing cross-examining counsel and judge alike, said suavely:

"Your lordship, I told my boy to come home, but he wouldn't. This man McLean encouraged him in defying me. The audience had turned out, and, in the hustle and bustle, I saw the Earl of Huntford come out under the theatre porch. The moment my son saw the diamond star glittering on his lordship's breast he ran forward and snatched it. I was just behind him, and was able to seize him and hold him

until the Runners arrived. They found the star in his pocket."

The jury almost rose in their eagerness to terminate the trial.

But there were counsel to be heard and the summing-up to be made.

McLean crossed his arms and smiled as he listened intently to his counsel pleading on his behalf and Hal's.

"Let the jury try to conceive the devilish situation. This young boy, charged with a crime that may cost him his life, had seen the Earl of Huntford enter Samuel Lovett's shop that afternoon. The earl was clad in rags, but his sound shoes, dirtied for the occasion, and a flashing diamond on his right hand, had betrayed him. The boy, Harry Lovett had seen the supposed beggar hand his father a purse of gold, and had heard the two plot something for that night at Drury Lane Theatre that concerned a diamond something—it might have been a star.

"From the moment the boy Lovett had left his father's house, after a bitter quarrel between them, intending, as he says, never to return, he had spent his time in the company of Jerry McLean. They had not gone to Drury Lane Theatre until the audience were leaving after the play, and there they had seen Samuel Lovett waiting. It was Samuel Lovett who tore the diamond star from the Earl of Huntford's breast and put it in his son's pocket. McLean had seen it, and was so enraged that he had tried to rescue the boy from the hands of the Bow Street Runners."

"And that," said McLean, from the dock, "is the solemn truth, as I hope for mercy!"

"Silence!" stormed the judge. "Restrain that man!"

His summing-up was like the knell of doom.

"Who could believe the mad story told by the prisoners? The jury had heard the clear-cut and unbiassed evidence of the Earl of Huntford, and they would know how to appreciate the evidence of the father, Samuel Lovett, who declared that his son had shown criminal tendencies almost from birth. If the wildly improbable tale concocted by the prisoners in their defence was untrue, then the jury could form their own conclusions as to the characters of the prisoners.

"The man McLean was known as a gambler and a bankrupt. A man who had once moved in high social circles, he had sunk to the level of the gutter. It was known that he was on the brink of starvation that night when he went to Drury Lane with the boy Lovett. What could be more probable in the circumstances than that they were lured by the flaming brilliance of the diamond star to snatch it from Lord Huntford's breast?"

"They had heard the Earl of Huntford say that he had never in his life assumed the guise of a beggar. Whatever inducement could he have had to visit Samuel Lovett, who was an entire stranger? If the jury believed the story put up by the prisoners for their defence, then they must find them not guilty, but if, on the other hand, they looked upon that story as a string of lies, concocted with a view to hoodwinking the jury, then it would be their duty, nay double their duty, to find them—guilty."

The jury were absent from the court for exactly twenty minutes. When they filed back, looking immensely relieved and pleased and deliberately avoiding glancing at the dock, Hal and

Jerry McLean, who had just been brought back to hear the verdict, knew that the case had gone against them. A deep voice droned out the question: "Gentlemen of the jury, have you considered your verdict?"

"We have."

"Then do you find the prisoners guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty!"

Hal straightened himself up and clutched the spikes of the dock-rail. McLean's hand sought his and pressed it firmly.

Jerry's handsome face was wreathed in smiles.

"Courage, lad," he said in his usual cheery way.

The judge turned his cold, stern eyes upon them. His voice droned on in a monotonous chanting condemnation before he pronounced sentence, and here and there Hal caught a few words.

"It is to be hoped that in the time to come, you, Hal Lovett, will repent your evil doing. Seldom have I seen one so young convicted of such a crime. In spite of the stern, but just discipline administered by your father, you chose to leave your home and plunge into crime. And you, McLean, bankrupt and wastrel, can only be regarded as the ringleader who lured this wayward boy to destruction."

The droning voice quickened, grew colder, harder as, his sermon over, the judge sat back and drummed tapering fingers on the arm of his chair of justice.

"Much as it grieves me to send so young a boy to prison, I sentence you, Hal Lovett, to serve upon the hulks for a term of seven years—and you, McLean, for whose conduct I can find no words bad enough, will be transferred from Newgate Prison to the hulks, there to await shipment to Australia at the earliest opportunity. I sentence you to transportation for life!"

McLean started as if he had been struck. Every vestige of colour drained out of his cheeks to presently return in a warming flood.

For a moment he stood rigid, and the next he had thrown off the clutching hands of the warders and was leaning over the spiked rail of the dock, his rich voice ringing through the Old Bailey Court House like a trumpet.

"And what sentence shall I mete out to you, you miserable old sinner, if ever I manage to escape and meet you again? I may be a bankrupt, and a fool because I have run through more than one fortune, but it was my own money I spent. I have given away fortunes, but I've never robbed a man of a bronze farthing." McLean fought off the warders and held his ground, the dock shaking as strong arms strove to drag him clear. "Every word Hal Lovett said was true. Samuel Lovett stole the diamond star. The kid had it planted on him. I saw it, and that's why I fought the Runners—that's why—that's why—I ask for justice!"

"Take that man away," said the judge sternly.

A blow on the side of the head half-stunned McLean, whose hands relaxed their grip of the spiked rail. Strong arms dragged him away, though he fought furiously as they pulled him down into the well of the court.

The spectators, swaying in their excitement to see, added their shouts to the general uproar.

The Earl of Huntford, raising a gold-mounted glass to his eye, looked up at Hal Lovett as he neared the dock.

It was too much for the boy who had been framed. He tried to lean over the spiked rail.

"You were Mr. Who," shouted the boy in a frenzy. "It was you who played the beggar in my father's house. Why did you do it? Why?"

Four hands like steel grips seized the boy by the arms and tried to wrench him away.

"Come on out of this, you," snapped one of the warders who held him.

Hal began to struggle fiercely, and, as he did so, his shirt opened wide revealing the whole of his naked chest.

Through the crystal glass he held, the earl gazed upon the tattooed red falcon, jessed and belled and hooded, and the upturned smiling curve of his lips thinned into a hard, cruel, straight line.

"For the lying evidence your counsel made against me in court this afternoon, you gallows brat, I would have you hanged; but since the judge has been merciful I must see what I can do to ensure that you receive one hundred lashes with the cat."

Every word was uttered distinctly so that Hal heard even above the general uproar.

Then the warders tore him bodily away and cast him down the stairs of the dock. Below they shook him violently and struck him a blow on the side of the head which stunned him.

When Hal came to his senses again, he was lying in a cell with Jerry McLean beside him, and they were both handcuffed and set in double irons.

Hal looked up at Jerry McLean, whose face was bloodless and whose eyes glittered as if he had the ague. He forced a smile.

"And this is what they call justice, boy," said Jerry, with a sigh. "Me innocent, and you innocent. You for the hulks, and me to transportation for life!"

The Convict Hulk!

HAL LOVETT had lived all his young life in Wych Street, and had managed to retain some illusions and ideals in spite of the brutality of his father, Samuel Lovett, who had now betrayed him.

For years he had wandered barefooted about the neighbourhood of Covent Garden and Clare Market, and had seen almost every side of life, boy though he was.

In his boyish way he had, until the trial waned, believed that justice must prevail, and McLean and himself be given their liberty.

In Newgate that night, after his conviction, he threw himself down in his heavy irons beside McLean, and moved restlessly and miserably on the wretched mattress until a turnkey opened the door of their cell and told them roughly to "get up."

They were served with a miserable breakfast, and then marched to a vaulted room where their irons were removed. Fetters and handcuffs and strange and weird instruments of torture hung upon the walls. Hal was glad when they were taken from the place and led out into the prison yard where four other wretched convicts stood in line.

Here Jerry McLean and Hal Lovett were chained up with these four other convicts, the chain being run through a bracelet on each man's right arm.

A file of soldiers was drawn up in front of the convicts, and the governor of Newgate, having checked the names of the prisoners, handed them and their papers into the custody of the officer in charge of the detachment of guards.

Then out of the yard they marched, through gloomy passages whose walls

In spite of the bracelet and imprisoning chain, McLean let fly with the boot. The missile struck Samuel Lovett full in the face and sent him reeling backwards. "That's something to remember me by!" cried McLean.



were decorated with fetters and handcuffs and firearms of all sizes and dates.

To a thick, iron-studded door they were led, and through it to another half-door, beyond which was the street. The half-door was topped with pointed spikes, between which were set others, double-curved and half the length. Above the spikes was set an iron grid, like a ladder set horizontally, and at the left there hung a bell-pull.

The Old Bailey was enveloped in mist, and a slouching beggar, who dived down Sea Coal Lane, was the only person in sight when the escort of soldiers, with arms shouldered and long bayonets gleaming, marched the chain-gang down the hill to the steps at Blackfriars.

Here a big and cumbersome wherry was waiting, in charge of an officer from the convict hulk Ethalion.

A few loafers were hanging about, and the river showed up cold and grey in the veil of mist that hung over it.

The prisoners were handed over, and the papers delivered. Then the convicts were told roughly to get aboard.

They moved down to where the water lapped the thick coating of mud which lay upon the hidden stones.

It was as they were plashing through the water to the curses and jeers of the men in the wherry that Hal saw Samuel Lovett waiting just above the reach of the tide.

His feet were on sound gravel bottom. He had chosen a place where there was no mud. The sight of him infuriated the boy. This man was supposed to be his father; but he told himself, and not for the first time, that this man Lovett was not his father. It just could not be.

Hal touched the arm of McLean in front of him.

"Look, Jerry!" he cried.

And Jerry McLean saw

Samuel Lovett had his coat tightly buttoned, and his hat drawn down over his eyes. His hands were set deep in his pockets, and his eyes glinted evilly, triumphantly, as he watched the chain-gang moving briskly to the waiting wherry.

"A good riddance to you, you gallows brat!" he called, as Hal went by. "I've kept and clothed and fed you, only for you to disgrace me! May you rot on the hulks, say I!"

Most certainly this inhuman brute could not be his father. Hal stopped,

and the forward march of the convicts was checked.

"You ought to be where the boy is, you traitor!" cried McLean. "What compact had you with the earl? One of these days I'll be free, and then I'll find out!"

Samuel Lovett laughed derisively.

"You'll never be free!" he cried. "If you don't die during the voyage over in the convict ship, they'll lash the life out of you in Australia! You'll rot and die out there, Jerry McLean!"

His elation and his laugh maddened McLean who looked about him for a missile. In the mud to the right of him Jerry saw an old boot, washed up by the tide. It was covered thick with mud.

McLean reached down for it, and, in spite of the bracelet and the imprisoning chain, flung it full in the face of Samuel Lovett and sent him reeling.

"That's something to remember me by, at any rate!" cried McLean, as he went on with the chain gang and climbed into the wherry.

Samuel Lovett picked himself up, smothered from head to heels with a grey splotch of Thames mud. It dripped from his fingers as he shook his hands, and from his mouth as he cursed McLean.

Above, a sharp command rang out, and then, to tramping feet, the file of guards strode away.

A blow from a staff nearly felled McLean as he got into the boat, but he grinned at Hal Lovett as he dropped into the stern sheets with the rest of the gang.

"You'll get a hundred lashes," said the officer from the hulk Ethalion, as he glowered at McLean, "if you repeat that sort of thing!"

"And it would be worth it!" McLean replied impudently, as the boat swung out into a swift-running tide and moved down-river, hauled by three pairs of lusty arms.

They swept under London Bridge in a grey of fog, and passed through the Pool just as the sun shone and the mist began to rise.

As the Pool widened out, McLean bent to whisper in Hal's ear.

"Listen, pal," he said, "we shall be put to work in the dockyards or the Arsenal, at Woolwich, but there will be plenty of leisure aboard the Ethalion. We are allowed lights below deck after

we are battened down, hal. There are from twelve to twenty men in each yard, and we sleep in hammocks, a lot of us together. We shan't wear irons unless we've done something bad."

"How can that help us?" asked the boy eagerly.

"A lot—when you've got brains, lad. Besides, I've got some pals aboard the Ethalion who know the ropes. I've been there before!"

Hal Lovett's blue eyes widened in dismay. He had held a great admiration for Jerry McLean ever since they had met by accident in the streets behind the Strand. Hal knew Jerry, as a gentleman who had squandered more than one fortune, but he had never believed him to be a criminal.

"Have you been sentenced before, then, and escaped?" he asked.

McLean laughed softly.

"No, boy," he answered. "The only time I ever broke the law was when I tried to rescue you from the Bow Street Runners, and they gave me fourteen years for that. Fourteen years! Transportation for life! But I'm not in Australia yet!" Then his voice, which had hardened, grew soft again. "No, boy, I went on board the Ethalion as a visitor. I've a pal there, and if things pan out right we'll soon be free."

Just then McLean saw the officer in command of the boat looking hard at him, and he stopped speaking.

Half an hour later the convict hulks at Woolwich loomed up right ahead of them. They were anchored close in to the shore. There were four of them, three convict ships, and one hospital ship. Only one of them carried junks. Hal and Jerry McLean could see gangways running zigzag down their sides. Two had a boom rigged out. A flag fluttered lazily from the stern of the nearest hulk. From amidships forward she carried a penthouse arrangement, which covered in her spar deck and fore-castle deck. Her poop deck was enclosed by a high rail.

And as the burly watermen rowed the wherry nearer, Hal Lovett read the name of the ship sprayd in tarnished paint over the stern of her—"Ethalion."

They had reached their destination! (Hal and Jerry are booked for a rough time by the look of things! Boys, you'll be thrilled more than ever when you read next week's gripping chapters.)

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THE BOGUS HERO!

By DICKY NUGENT

CRASH! "What's that?" asked Jack Jolly of the Fourth at St. Sam's, poking his head out of his tent.

"Don't be alarmed, old chap!" called out Frank Fearless, from the depths of his blanket. "It's just the day breaking, I fancy!"

Fearless was right; dawn had just broken over the tent in which the hikers of St. Sam's had spent the previous night. Now, the woods around them were waking to life. Precipitous yawning, weeping willows rubbed their eyes, springs sprang up, and the wind began to whistle. Natcher's day had begun.

"I say, you chaps," cried Merry, who had been severely stung by nettles the night before, "I've got a rash!"

"That's nothing!" said Bright, with a grin. "I've got a rash! Let's get a fire going, and cook the breaker!"

"Good wheeze!"

Several days of hiking had given Jack Jolly & Co. tremendous appetites, and they fell to the task of preparing breakfast with a right good will. Before you could say "Jack Robinson," the fire was sizzling, the kettle crackling, and the bacon singing—or, at least, that's what Jack Jolly imagined.

The hikers of St. Sam's waded into breakfast.

"Wonder how the poor old Head's getting on?" said Frank Fearless, between mouthfuls of bacon.

"When we last saw him, he was going up to bed in the Hawtorn Inn," grinned Merry, between mouthfuls of bread-and-butter.

"Hoap the porridge didn't arrest him when they raided the inn!" chuckled Jack Jolly, between mouthfuls of coffee.

"One thing's certain—he'll never find us now!" laughed Bright, between mouthfuls of dry biscuit. "If you ask my opinion, he's given up the chase as hopeless and gone back to St. Sam's!"

"Good-morning, boys!" broke in a refined, cultured voice at that moment. "Nice weather we're having lately, aren't we? Provided the rain keeps off, it ought to remain dry. I should imagine!"

Jack Jolly & Co. started to their feet in amazement.

"The Head!" they exclaimed. It was Dr. Birchmell himself! The Head was standing before them with a somewhat simical smile on his skollery faze.

"Unexpected pleasure for you—what?" he said. "I seem to have come along at just the right time, too; breakfast is just what I need at the moment. Don't cook me too much, boys; just a dozen rashers of bacon, half a dozen eggs, a few pounds of sossidges, and anything you happen to have in the way of vegetables!"

Jack Jolly gasped.

"You're not asking much, sir, I must admit, considering what a wacking grate breakfast you usually eat. But, unfortunately, we can't even mannidge the little you require. We're just catting the last crumbs ourselves, sir!"

"Oh crumbs!" exclaimed Dr. Birchmell, in dismay. "I suppose that's what I might have expected from you greedy young beggars! Well, since you greedy young rascals have licked the platter clean, so to speak, I'm going to set a trap or two and see if I can't bag a nice fat rabbit!"

"But you can't do that, sir!" exclaimed Jack Jolly. "This land all belongs to Lord Broadacres, and any one caught catching rabbits is liable to fearful penalties for poaching!"

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"Rats!" retorted the Head, fetching out from his poacher's pocket the nets and traps he always carried for emergencies of this kind. "When a man's hungry, all the Lord Broadacres in the country can't stop him begging a rabbit for his breakfast. Here goes, anyway!"

He stalked off majestically across the clearing and dived into the undergrowth.

An instant later, he emitted a yell of pain and rage.

"Yarooooo! Help! Murder! Parlice!"

"What's the matter, sir?" asked Jack Jolly, in surprize.

"Matter!" yelled the Head furiously. "I'm caught in a man-trap set for poachers—that's what's the matter!"

II.

BEFORE Jack Jolly & Co. had recovered from their first shock of surprize, they heard the sound of tramping feet and deep voices from the woods.

"Poacher ahead!" cried a horse voice. "Caught in a man-trap, I fancy!"

"We'll give the second relief!" cried another. "We'll flay him alive before we hand him over to the porlice!"

"Yaroooo!" roared the Head, at the sound of those dreadful threats. "Jolly, Fearless! Help me! Reskew, St. Sam's!"

Jack Jolly & Co. hezitated, not knowing quite what to do. And even as they hezitated, two grate hulking gamekeepers burst through the bushes, grinning all over their diales.

"Gosh!" they cried together. While one held Dr. Birchmell by his beard, the other released him from the man-trap.

"Name?" snapped one of the gamekeepers, when this little operation had been completed.

"Oh crickey!" gasped the Head. "If you must know, it's Alfred Birchmell."

The gamekeepers laughed harshly. "Well, Alfred Birchmell, our mother's! Search 'em all! Go through his pockets, Bill!"

Bill went through the head's pockets. Among the varied assortment of buttons, conkers, pieces of toffy, and lengths of string he found quite a complete poacher's outfit.

"My eye!" he remarked, when he had finished. "Lord Broadacres will be pleased about this, and no mistake! His lordship happens to be the local magistrate, Alfred Birchmell, so you'll be sure of getting a good long stretch."

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

"I'll see if I can't arrange a life sentence for the beggar!" said Lord Broadacres; for that was evidently the evidentiary of the newcomer. "Take him up to the castle, and fling him into one of my privit dungeons!"

"Certainly, your lordship!"

The two gamekeepers turned on Dr. Birchmell. But the Head was ready for them by this time. What he had heard was quite sufficient to inspire him to fight to the last gasp for his freedom.

Springing into sudden activity, he turned a summersault, balanced for an instant on the palms of his hands, and lashed out with his feet. One foot caught Gunn full in the faze, and the other landed with fearful force on Shooter's left ear.

"Woopoo!"

Two aggerised yells rang out as Gunn and Shooter collapsed, and though both

in chokey, not to mention a jennous taste of the catennineles!"

"Oh, grate pip!" gasped the Head. "But I assure you, my good men, I'm not a poacher. As a matter of fact, I had just taken those traps and nets from those boys over there. I was in the middle of lecturing them on the evils of poaching, when by some strange mischance I got caught in this blessed man-trap. That's the truth, isn't it, boys?"

Jack Jolly & Co. were so breathless with indignation at that peculiar version of the "truth" that they couldn't reply at once. Before they had recovered their breath, another gentleman came upon the scene—an aristocratic jantleman, who wore a monocle in his eye.

"Bai Jove! What's all the bally fuss about? Don't you know? Eh—what?" he drawled, in a languid, cultured voice. "Gunn! Shooter! Tell me what it's all about immediately!"

"Good-morning, your lordship!" cried Gunn and Shooter, grovelling before their lord and master. "If it pleases you, your lordship, we've caught a poacher!"

"Bai Jove! Good bizny—what!"

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT.

All six raced through the woods at

gamekeepers were game keepers, they weren't game enuff to rise again. They just sat there yelling, while Dr. Birchmell took advantage of their indisposition to land once more on his soles, and take to his heels.

With a cry of "Bai Jove! What a bally nerve, don't you know—what?" Lord Broadacres fixed his monocle more firmly in his eye, and leaped after the fugitive with swift, spasmodic movements somewhat reminiscent of the kangaroo.

The St. Sam's hikers came to the conclusion that the chase was a unuek sporting event not to be missed. Laffing fit to bust, they followed on the heels of the Head and his noble persever.

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through the water in the direction of the struggling figger. An instant after that he was reskewing the half-drowned aristocrat for all he was worth. An instant after that he was climbing up the bank with his yewman burden to the plawdits of his chums. An instant after that he was applying artificial perspiration to Lord Broadacres. And an instant after that, Lord Broadacres was sitting up, fixing his streaming monocle into his eye.

"Bai Jove!" he exclaimed. "What bally hero reskewed me, I wonder?"

III.

BEFORE Jack Jolly had time to answer that question, someone pushed him ruffly out of the way, and answered it for him.

"Me, your lordship!" said that "someone," who, needless to say, was Dr. Birchmell. "At the risk of my very life, I plunged recklessly into the depths of the boiling waters and brought you in the teeth of the storm safely back to terra firma! Just you see how wet I got in the process!"

Jack Jolly & Co., gaping at the Head, saw that he was farly streaming with water. They realised then what had happened; the old villain had actually walked nee-deep into the stream and shooshed himself with water so as to deesee the earl when Jack Jolly had reskewed him!

"M-m-my hat!" stuttered Jack Jolly. But Lord Broadacres was not listening to Jack Jolly. He was gazing through his monocle at Dr. Birchmell.

"Bai Jove!" he said. "I must say you look more like a Nero than an hero; but, if what you say is correct, I owe you a debt of gratitude, don't you know. Thanks, awfully!"

"Don't menah!" said the Head smirking.

"But—" gasped Jack Jolly. Lord Broadacres rose to his feet, and patted the Head on the back.

"I'm awfully sorry now about the other affair, don't you know my brave fellow!" he remarked. "Fortunately Fate has given me an opportunity of reskewing your trew worth, and I should like to show you how I appreciate it. Will you honner me by being my guest at the Castle for as long as you care to stay?"

The Head's faze became one huge grin as he listened to those humneyed words. "You've sure said it, Lord Broadacres," he cried. "Let's away!"

"Hurrah!" yelled Jack Jolly, when the two had vanished.

"What are you cheering about?" asked Frank Fearless, in surprize. Jack Jolly grinned.

"Don't you see, fathead?" he cried. "Now that the Head's a guest of a pter of the rein, he'll stick to him like giew. And, that being the case, we can finish our walking toor without the slightest fear of meeting the old buffer again. Hurrah!"

And the Co. returned to break up their camp in high spirits, convinced now that they would see no more of Dr. Alfred Birchmell till they assembled at St. Sam's for the new term!

THE END.

(Boys, you'll find another screamingly funny yarn of Jack Jolly & Co. in next week's MAGNET, entitled: "RINCH-MATTIS BERNYFFY!" You'll laugh until your sides fairly burst, when you read it, believe me.—ED.)

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