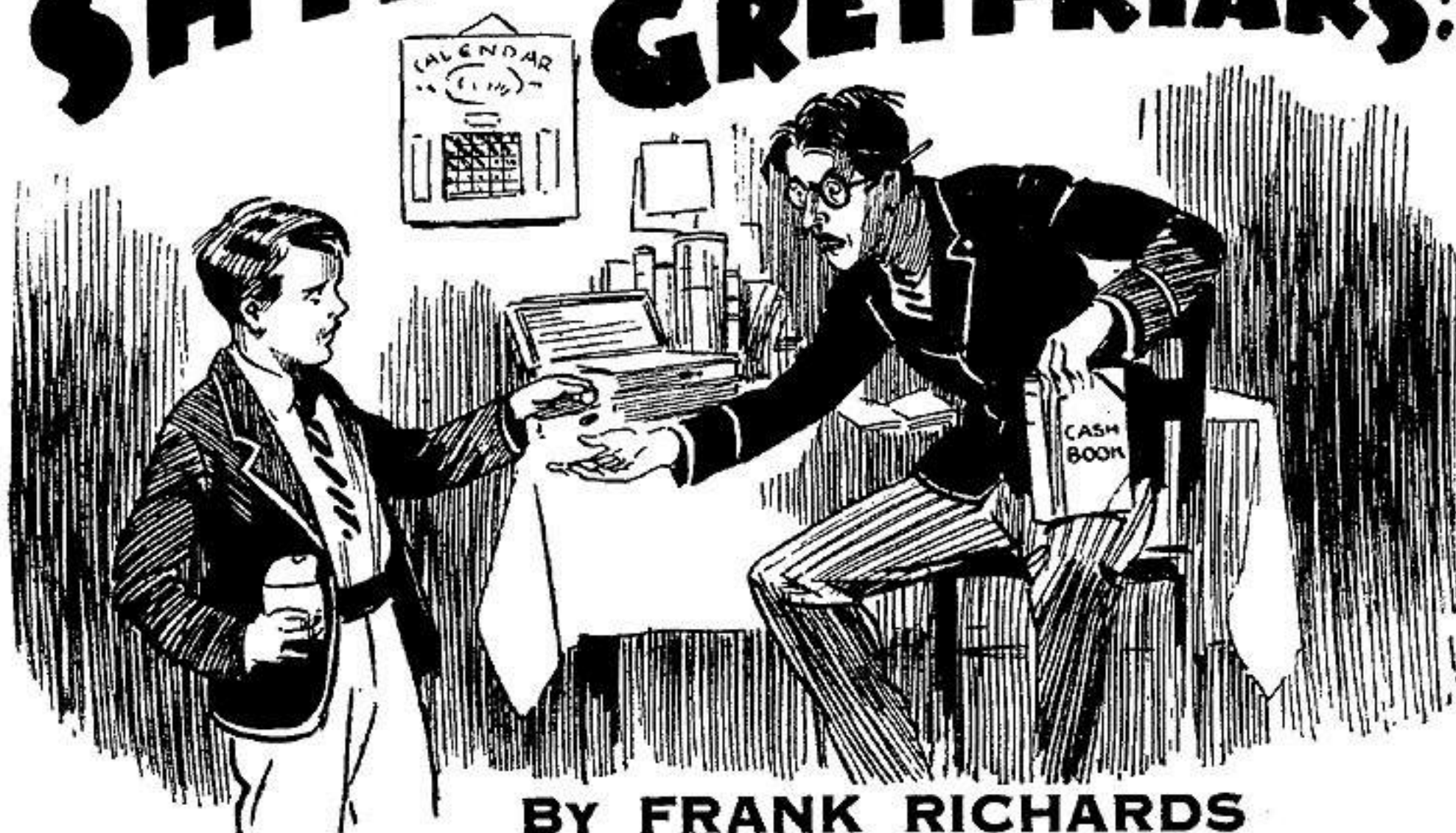


"The Shylock of Greyfriars!" This week's amazing long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co.

The MAGNET 2^D



THE SHYLOCK OF GREYFRIARS!



BY FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Catching Fish!

WHAT—
“Quite!”
“But I say, you fellows—”

“Shut up!”

Billy Bunter blinked at Harry Wharton & Co. in astonishment. Their occupation was undoubtedly peculiar.

Bunter had come out of his study and rolled down the Remove passage to the landing, intending to go down. But what he beheld on the Remove landing caused him to halt, and blink in great surprise through his big spectacles.

Bob Cherry was holding a tin pail tied with rope to the balustrade. That pail was half full of water. Harry Wharton was pouring a bottle of ink into it. Frank Nugent was pouring a bottle of gum. Johnny Bull was adding a bag of soot, apparently extracted from a study chimney. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was stirring the weird mixture with a cricket stump. Billy Bunter's eyes almost popped through his spectacles.

“But, I say—what—” he gasped.

“Will you be quiet, ass?” hissed Bob Cherry. “Shut up, and keep out of sight. If Coker hears you—”

“Coker of the Fifth?”

“We're getting ready for him! Shut up!”

“He, he, he!” cackled Bunter.

“Quiet!”

Harry Wharton glanced over the oak balustrade, over the curve of the staircase below. No one was in sight.

“Not coming yet!” he remarked. “Lots of time! But he may be up any minute. Keep your eyes open—we don't want to mop this over the wrong man!”

“My hat! No!” murmured Bob Cherry.

“The givefulness is more blessed than the receivefulness!” remarked Hurree

Jamset Ram Singh, in the wonderful English he had not learned at Greyfriars School.

“I say, you fellows—”

“Shut up, Bunter!”

“I'll help you,” said Bunter. “That beast Coker kicked me yesterday. He found me in his study, you know, and he made out that I was eating his cake, because it was nearly gone! As if I'd touch his cake, you know! It was a measly cake, too—hardly any plums in it. I say, I'll get Toddy's bottle of indelible marking-ink, what?”

“Oh, my hat! Buck up, then!” grinned Bob Cherry.

Bunter, grinning, rolled back hastily to Study No. 7 in the Remove. He reappeared with Peter Todd's bottle of marking-ink in his fat hand. It was added to the awful mixture in the tin pail.

“He, he, he!” gurgled Bunter. “If Coker gets that on his napper, he will be a long time getting it off again.”

“Quiet!”

All was ready now for Horace Coker of the Fifth Form. The Famous Five waited. Coker of the Fifth, who never could remember that it was not his mission in life to keep fags in order, was on the warpath. Coker had severely reprimanded Bob Cherry for whistling in the quad. Instead of listening meekly to that reprimand and profiting thereby, Bob had knocked Coker's hat off. Then he had executed a strategic retreat to the Remove studies. Coker had bawled up the stairs after him that he was going to get a cricket stump and follow. Coker seemed rather a long time getting his cricket stump—but the chums of the Remove had no doubt that he would come—Coker was a man of his word! And quite a surprise awaited Coker when he arrived.

“Bother the man,” murmured Bob. “He said he would come—I hope he isn't going to disappoint us!”

“Oh, he'll come!” said Nugent con-

fidently. “We shall hear his fairy footsteps in a minute or two!”

“He, he, he!” cachinnated Bunter. “Let him have the lot. Chuck the pail at him after the mixture! He kicked me, you know—jolly hard, too—making out that I was after his measly cake! Coker won't be able to make a row about it—he's got no business in the Remove studies. Just asking for it, coming up here! I say, you fellows—”

“Shut up, Bunter!”

“Mind you don't miss him,” said Bunter. “You're rather a clumsy ass, Cherry—perhaps you'd better let me do it!”

“Fathead!”

“Well, you don't want to miss him—and you know what a cack-handed duffer you are, old chap!”

“Kick him,” said Bob.

“Oh, really, Cherry! Look here, let me get hold of that pail,” said Bunter. “I'll take jolly good care that he gets it; right on the nut.”

“Keep clear, you fathead!”

“Yah!”

Billy Bunter gripped one side of the pail with his fat hands, and blinked over the balustrade through his big spectacles. Bunter was very anxious that Coker of the Fifth should not escape what was coming to him.

There was a sound on the lower staircase. It was the sound of a footstep. Wharton jerked Bunter back.

“Ow! Leggo—I say—”

“Keep out of sight, fathead!” snapped the captain of the Remove.

“I say, you fellows, I can hear him coming!” breathed Bunter. “He'll be round the corner of the stairs in a tick—ready—”

Footsteps were coming up. They were passing the curve of the staircase. Another moment, and the newcomer would be precisely below the balustrade to which the tin pail was tied.

“Quick!” breathed Bunter.

"Hold on, you fat idiot—make sure it's Coker—" hissed Bob.

"Oh, it's Coker all right!"

And without waiting for Bob to make sure that it was Coker, Billy Bunter gave the tin pail a shove, and tipped it over the balustrade.

Swoooosh! Splash!

"Gurrrrrrgggh!" came a gasp from below. The mixture had shot in a swamping flood over the ascending head.

"You idiot, Bunter—my hat—I hope it's Coker!" gasped Bob.

"You fat dummy—"

"Urrrrrgggh!" came a horrible gurgle from the stairs. "Wurrrgh! Great gophers—urrrgh! Wake snakes and walk chalks! Wurrrrrgh! Oh, Jerusalem crickets! I guess this gets my goat! Urrrrgh!"

"Fishy!" yelled Bob.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Fuf-fuf-Fishy!" stuttered Bunter.

It was Fisher T. Fish of the Remove, who was gasping and gurgling and guggling on the stairs. Evidently Bunter had been a little too hasty! Coker had not arrived yet! Fishy had!

The tin pail clanged against the banister rails. Harry Wharton & Co. stared over the balustrade in horror. Watery, inky, sooty, gummy, Fisher T. Fish clung to the banisters and gurgled wildly. Fishy was not to be recognised by the eye. He had disappeared under the mixture. He streamed with it from head to foot. Only his voice betrayed his identity. His transatlantic voice, coming through his long, sharp nose, was not to be mistaken.

"Aw! Great gophers! Ow! Urrrrrrrgggh!"

"I—I say, you fellows, you've done it now!" gasped Bunter.

"What?" howled Bob Cherry. "You fat freak, you've done it!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Kick him!"

"Yarooooooh!"

A burly figure came tramping up the lower stairs. Coker of the Fifth, with a cricket stump in his hand, stopped and stared blankly at the drenched and dripping Fishy. Then he stared up at the five startled and horrified faces looking down over the balustrade of the Remove landing. Coker burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all that fathead's fault," gasped Bob Cherry. "Gimme the pail—he can have that—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker.

He disappeared down the stairs. Perhaps he did not want the pail. He was heard yelling with laughter as he went.

Fisher T. Fish was yelling, too—though not with laughter. Harry Wharton & Co. ran down the Remove staircase. It was all Bunter's fault, of course; but they were really sorry for the accident. Undoubtedly it was hard luck on Fishy!

Fishy glared at them with inky, sooty eyes.

"Urrrrgh! You pesky jays, you did this! Urrrrgh! Look at me! Yurrrgh! I guess I'll make potato-scrappings of you! Wurrrgh! Look at me! Look at my clothes! Who's going to pay for them? I guess—Gurrrrrgh!"

"Accident, old chap—"

"Urrrrgh! Look at me!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

"You want a wash, old bony bean!" said Bob Cherry. "It was Bunter. We'll kick him for you if you like."

"Urrrrrrgh!"

Sympathetically—but with grinning faces—the Famous Five led Fishy away to a bath-room. They could not help grinning; Fishy's aspect was indubitably

comical. And there was no doubt that he needed a wash—he needed one badly. Then they looked for Bunter. Kicking Bunter seemed to be indicated as the next item on the programme. But William George Bunter had wisely made himself scarce in time.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Up to Wharton!

"W HARTON!"

"Hallo, you young sweep!"

Nugent minor of the Second Form put his cheeky face into Study No. 1 in the Remove, where the Famous Five were at tea.

"You're wanted!" said Dicky Nugent.

"Oh, my hat! Quelch—"

"No; Wingate."

"Well, better Wingate than Quelch," said Harry, as he rose from the table.

"I suppose he's heard about it. Did he say what he wanted, Nugent mi?"

"Yes," answered Dicky.

"Well, what was it?"

"You!" said Dicky, with a cheery grin.

"You cheeky young ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "What does he want Wharton for?"

"He didn't mention that, but he's looking rather fierce!" grinned the fag. "Better put some exercise books in your bags, Wharton! I say, I hear you men

According to his Form-master, Fisher T. Fish is at Greyfriars to "learn things." But according to Fisher T. Fish, he's at Greyfriars to "wake it up" and to squeeze all the money he can out of his unsuspecting Form-fellows! But Fishy's latest stunt for making money ends disastrously—and how!

have been mopping ink and things over somebody! Coker of the Fifth is telling everybody! He says you meant it for him, and got somebody else. Did you?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Just like you Remove duffers!" said Dicky. "Well, Wingate wants you, Wharton, and you'd better cut! Like his cheek to send a Second Form man up to tell you—but these Sixth Form blighters are cheeky! Take my tip and put some books in your bags!"

And Richard Nugent departed from the study rather hastily—in time to elude a Latin grammar hurled by his major.

"We'd better all go, as we were all in it," said Bob Cherry. "Bunter, too; it was really that fat idiot—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is! You're wanted, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, I hear that Wingate of the Sixth has sent for you, Wharton!" said Bunter anxiously. "It's about mopping that stuff over Fishy, of course. Trotter was grouching like anything about cleaning down the stairs after what you did—"

"You fat villain, you did it!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I saw Wingate looking at him when he was mopping up the mixture. I say, if you're

going to see Wingate, Wharton, mind you don't mention me!"

"What?"

"I'd rather not be mixed up in the affair," said Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Remove through his big spectacles. "I don't want six from Wingate, I can jolly well tell you! Don't drag me into it!"

"It was you did it!" shrieked Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Let's all go, and we'll take Bunter along by his ear," said Bob Cherry.

"Beast!"

Bunter vanished from the doorway.

"No; Wingate's only sent for me," said Harry, shaking his head. "I dare say it will be all right when I explain to him."

And the captain of the Remove left Study No. 1 and went down the stairs. He had no doubt that it was the affair of the mixture that the head prefect wanted to see him about, and he hoped that Wingate—who was a good-natured fellow—would listen to reason on that subject.

He tapped at Wingate's door in the Sixth and entered. The captain of Greyfriars did not look exactly fierce, as Nugent minor had declared, but he looked stern and serious, and he turned rather a grim look on Harry Wharton as the junior came in.

"You sent for me, Wingate?" said Harry meekly.

"Yes," grunted Wingate. "You're head boy and captain of your Form, Wharton. See?"

"Ye-e-es," murmured Wharton. He realised that, from the prefectorial point of view, mopping an inky mixture over a fellow's head was not exactly what ought to be expected of a head boy and a Form captain. "But the fact is, Wingate, it was an accident—"

"What?"

"Fishy got it by mistake—"

"Eh?"

"That ass Coker was barging into our quarters," explained Wharton; "we had it ready for him—"

"What the thump—"

"And a silly ass tipped it over without seeing that it wasn't Coker! Coker was really asking for it."

Wingate stared blankly at the captain of the Remove.

"Will you tell me what you're talking about?" he demanded.

"Eh? About the mixture—"

"What mixture?" hooted Wingate.

"What the dickens do you mean?"

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. "I—I—I thought—"

"What?"

"Oh, nothing! Wha-a-at did you send for me for, Wingate?" gasped Wharton. He realised that it was not, after all, the affair of the mixture that he was on the carpet.

Wingate glared at him suspiciously.

"I suppose you've been up to something!" he grunted. "I saw Trotter cleaning ink off the stairs. Well, never mind that; Quelch can whop you for that if he hears about it. Look here, Wharton, as head boy of the Remove and captain of the Form, you've got duties to perform."

"Oh, certainly!" said Harry. "If you mean about letting Bunter off games practice, he said he had a pain—"

"Next time he says he has a pain, give him another—with a cricket stump!" snapped Wingate.

"Oh, all right!"

"It's not that. Last term there was talk about some fellow in the Lower School lending money among the other fags."

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"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"I don't mean fellows making loans to one another; I mean lending money at interest, like a dashed Shylock!" growled Wingate. "It came out that it was young Fish, and he was whopped for it, and it was supposed that there was an end. Well, I've heard rumours."

"Oh!" repeated Wharton.

"There's nothing definite to go upon so far, but I've got a pretty good idea that something of the kind is going on again," said the captain of Greyfriars. "I don't want to take the matter up as a prefect and make a lot of talk. If the young rotter's in your Form you can handle him as head boy. See?"

"Oh, yes!"

"A head boy's duties don't consist entirely of playing cricket and—chucking ink over banisters," added Wingate.

Wharton coloured.

"I'll look into it, Wingate. I had no idea—"

"Well, the sooner you have an idea the better. If the matter comes up before the prefects it will go to the Head, and there will be floggings—and perhaps sackings—in your Form! If you keep your eyes open you can wash it out before it goes that length."

"Right-ho!" said Harry, making a mental resolve to kick Fisher T. Fish as soon as he saw that bony youth again. If there was moneylending going on among the fags, there was not much doubt in his mind of the guilty party. He knew Fisher T. Fish of old.

"Well, that's all," grunted Wingate. "You can cut!"

Harry Wharton cut. There was a thoughtful shade on his brow when he returned to Study No. 1 in the Remove.

"Licked?" asked Nugent.

"No; it wasn't a row. Wingate's got a suspicion that some rotten young Shylock has been lending money among the fags again," answered Wharton. "He's put it up to me as head boy."

"Fishy!" said all the Co. at once.

"The Fishfulness is terrific," added Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I suppose so! Fishy all over!" said Harry Wharton. "He's in your study, Johnny—have you happened to notice?"

Johnny Bull shook his head.

"Well, I suppose I shall have to look into it! A kicking will do him good!" said Harry. "After prep will do."

And the Famous Five finished their tea, and went down to the nets afterwards, dismissing the Shylock of Greyfriars from their minds for the time.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Account Rendered!

"THAT'S yourn!"

Fisher T. Fish made that remark. At prep, Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent came into Study No. 1, and they found the American junior waiting there for them. They had not seen Fishy since the mishap on the Remove staircase. Now he was newly swept and garnished. All traces of the horrid mixture had disappeared, save for a little gumminess in his tallow-coloured hair. His clothes looked newer than usual. Evidently he had changed into a better suit. The clothes he had been wearing when the mixture descended on him, obviously wanted a lot of cleaning before Fishy could wear them again.

The bony youth from New York had a paper in his hand, and as the chums of Study No. 1 came in, he threw it on the table, and addressed Wharton.

"Mine?" asked Harry, puzzled.

"Yep!"

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Wharton picked up the paper. He stared at it. He glared at it. It was written in Fishy's spidery hand, and it ran:

A/C FOR DAMAGE TO CLOTHES.

	£	s.	d.
One jacket, new - - - -	1	10	0
Waistcoat, cleaned - - -		7	6
Trousers, do. - - - - -		10	6
Necktie, new - - - - -		3	6
Collar, new - - - - -		2	0
Shirt, new - - - - -		12	6
Hanky, new - - - - -		1	6
Shoes, reduced in value -		15	6
	£4	3	0

Harry Wharton gazed at that mysterious document for a full minute in silence, as if it had taken his breath away. Frank Nugent, surprised, glanced at it over his shoulder—and then he also gazed transfixed.

Then the two of them gazed at Fisher T. Fish.

That bony youth, quite cool, stood picking his teeth with a pen-nib, one of the horrid manners and customs he had, while he waited for them to recover from the shock.

"Is this a joke?" asked Harry at last, finding his voice.

"Nope!"

"What is it, then?"

"Yourn, as I said! Your little bill!" "You bony, burbling, blithering idiot—"

"Aw! Come off!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'll go through it with you, if you like! It's reasonable, ain't it? You figure that a guy can buy a noo jacket under one pound ten?"

"You howling ass—"

"I'm letting you off easy!" exclaimed Fisher T. Fish indignantly. "I'm getting the waistcoat and trousers cleaned at Courtfield at the cleaner's, instead of sticking you for noo ones. Some galoots would—but I guess I'm a reasonable guy. I've sent them to the cleaners, and they're the prices. Call 'em dear?"

"You burbling bandersnatch—"

"Necktie, collar, shirt, hanky, all ruined," said Fishy. "You can have 'em, if you like! They're yourn, if you want 'em! Mebbe you're kicking about the shoes! You figure that shoes ain't depreciated in value when they got ink and gum sticking all over 'em! Still, I reckon I might meet you on that item, if that's what's biting you. What's your idea?"

The chums of Study No. 1 gazed at Fishy. It was true that his clothes had been damaged—severely damaged, by the mixture that had been mixed for Coker of the Fifth, but unfortunately landed on his transatlantic head. A loss had been incurred—that was indubitable. But it had assuredly never occurred to them that Fishy would bring in a bill for damages! Anyhow, he had brought it to the wrong study. Neither Wharton nor Nugent had mopped that mixture on Fishy.

"You benighted ass!" said the captain of the Remove. "It was an accident—and a fellow at school is supposed to take the rough with the smooth. That idiot Bunter sat on my Sunday topper the other day. Do you think I landed him with a bill for it?"

"Nope!" said Fishy, shaking his head. "I guess you're too soft, buddy! I'd have landed him fast enough, I calculate."

Wharton threw Fish's bill on the table.

"You take it, and go!" he remarked.

"I guess I'm here to collect the dust."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"If you're here till I give you four pounds three shillings, you're booked to stay in this study for the rest of your natural life," he said.

"Half each from you," suggested Fishy. "You were both in it! Or whack it out with your friends—I guess the whole gang had a hand in it! I've come to you as the king-pin—see? You paying?"

"I guess, reckon, and calculate not!" answered Wharton.

"You paying, Nugent?"

"I kinder guess nope!" grinned Nugent.

"I guess I'll hike along to see the other guys, then," remarked Fisher T. Fish, picking up the paper. "I surely ain't going to be done! Not this infant! No, sir! Not so's you'd notice it."

"Oh, get out!" said Harry.

Fisher T. Fish got out, and the chums of Study No. 1, after chuckling over that little bill, settled down to prep. But Fisher T. Fish was not thinking of prep. Fisher T. Fish "hiked" along to Study No. 13, where Bob Cherry, Mark Linley, Hurree Singh, and little Wun Lung had gathered for prep. Bob waved a hand at him as he put his bony face in at the door.

"Buzz off! Prep!" he said.

"I guess business comes first!" said Fisher T. Fish. "That's yourn."

He dropped his little bill on the study table.

The four juniors gazed at it. It seemed to have the same effect on them that it had had on Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent. They gazed at the bill, and then they gazed at Fisher T. Fish.

"I never knew you were a funny man before, Fishy!" said Bob.

"I guess that's not funny, bo! I'm waiting for the cash!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Wait in the passage, then! Take your rubbish with you."

He flicked the paper at Fishy, and it passed him, and floated into the Remove passage.

"Shut the door after you!" said Mark Linley, laughing.

Fisher T. Fish knitted his bony brows.

"That damage has got to be paid for!" he said. "You figure that I'm buying noo clothes myself?"

"Pass the Latin dic, Marky," said Bob.

"Here you are!"

Whiz!

Crash!

Bump!

It was Dr. Smith's Smaller Latin Dictionary that was used in the Remove. But it might have been Dr. Smith's Larger Latin Dictionary, judging by its effect on Fisher T. Fish.

It landed on his recently changed waistcoat, and swept him out of the doorway! He sat down in the passage with a heavy concussion.

"Whooooop!" roared Fishy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Great snakes! I guess—wow! I reckon—ooooop!—I—I—" spluttered Fisher T. Fish.

Bob Cherry rose, picked up the dictionary, and poised it over his head.

"Where will you have it next?" he inquired.

"Aw! Let up, you jay!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

He scrambled up, grabbed up the bill for damages, and fled. Evidently he was tired of Latin dictionaries.

Bob Cherry chuckled, slammed the door, and went back to prep. Fisher T. Fish, gasping for breath, went on to his own study, No. 14. Johnny Bull and Squiff were there at prep. Prep was interrupted by Fishy shoving his little bill under Johnny's astonished nose.

"That's yourn!" he said. Johnny Bull gazed at it. Sampson Quincey Ifley Field stared at it, and chuckled. Johnny did not chuckle. He glared.

"I guess I've seen the other guys," said Fisher T. Fish. "They say they ain't paying. That bill's got to be paid! You paying?"

"You worm!" said Johnny Bull. "You toad!"

"I guess you can shoot off your mouth all you want," said Fisher T. Fish, "s'long as you square, of course!"

"If you're going to stick anybody for the damage to your clobber, you can stick Bunter. He mopped the stuff over you!" growled Johnny.

Fisher T. Fish sniffed.

sat down again. "Don't jaw while a fellow's at prep!"

"I guess—" yelled Fishy.

"Shut up!" bawled Johnny, taking up a ruler.

Fishy eyed the ruler. He shut up. With a considerable amount of wriggling he extracted the little bill from the back of his neck. With the crumpled paper in his hand, and burning indignation in his face, he stamped out of the study, to call on Billy Bunter in Study No. 7—his last resource. Loder of the Sixth was coming up the passage.

"Fish!" rapped the prefect.

"Oh, great snakes!" groaned Fishy.

"Yep!"

"What are you doing out of your study in prep?"

"Yoooooop!"

Loder tucked his ashplant under his arm again and walked away, satisfied that Fish, at least, would not leave his study again during prep.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Billy and a Little Bill!

BILLY BUNTER granted discontentedly.

Bunter was alone in Study No. 7 in the Remove. His study-mates, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton, had finished prep and gone down to the Rag. Bunter was not finished yet. Bunter disliked work. He



Harry Wharton gazed at the mysterious document for a full minute, in silence, as if it had taken his breath away. Frank Nugent, surprised, glanced at it over his shoulder—and then he, also, gazed transfixed. "Is this a joke, Fishy?" asked Wharton, finding his voice at last. "Nope!" answered the American junior. "It's an account for damages to my clothes!"

"Lot of good sticking Bunter! That fat clam's got no money. You were all in it. I guess I got to be paid!"

Johnny Bull rose to his feet. Fishy eyed him hopefully. He hoped that Johnny was going to sort out four pounds, three shillings, for the settlement of that little bill.

But Johnny wasn't. He took the bill and crumpled it in his right hand. Then he grasped Fisher T. Fish by a bony neck with his left hand.

"Hyee—leggo!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Wharrer you at? What's this game? I guess—ow!—wow! You silly piecan! Whoooh!"

Heedless of Fishy's struggles, Johnny Bull pushed the little bill down the back of his neck.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Squiff.

"Aw! Wake snakes!" gasped Fishy.

"I guess—"

"Shut up!" said Johnny Bull, as he

"I—I—I guess—"

Loder had his ashplant under his arm. He slipped it down into his hand. Loder was the prefect in charge of the Lower Fourth prep that evening. And Loder's methods were drastic. He was giving the Remove a look-in, to make sure that all was quiet on the Lower Fourth front, so to speak, before he slipped away to a quiet corner for a cigarette and a novel and left his duties to take care of themselves.

"Get into your study!" he snapped.

Fisher T. Fish eyed him. He was good at guessing; and he guessed what was going to happen as soon as he turned his back on Loder.

"Sharp!" rapped Loder.

There was no help for it. Fishy turned and bounded back into the study. Quick as he was, Loder's ashplant was quicker.

Swipe!

had told Toddy that he had a jolly good mind to cut it, and tell Quelch what he thought of him, if the Remove beak made a fuss in the morning. But, on second thoughts—proverbially the best—Bunter decided that he had better have a squint at the beastly rot, at least. Telling Quelch, in the Form-room, what he thought of him, was one of those happy things a fellow might think of, but hardly put into practice.

Grunting discontentedly over his work, Bunter blinked round as the study door opened. He grinned at the sight of Fisher T. Fish. Bunter would have admitted that it was hard on a fellow to capture a horrid mixture on his napper which was intended for another fellow's napper. Still, it was funny. Moreover, Bunter did not like Fishy. Fishy was almost the only fellow

in the Remove who had never cashed a postal order for Billy Bunter.

"Ha, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "Did you get it all off, Fishy? He, he, he!" "I guess you're the galoot I want to see!" said Fisher T. Fish. "From what I hear, it was you bunged that stuff over my cabeza."

"Well, I meant it for Coker," explained Bunter. "Coker kicked me the other day—cheeky beast! You shouldn't have barged in and got what I meant for Coker."

"That's yourn!" said Fisher T. Fish, laying his rather crumpled bill of damages before Bunter on the table.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at Fishy's little bill. His little round eyes almost popped through his big, round spectacles as he blinked at it.

"Four pounds, three shillings!" said Fishy. "And if it ain't paid on the nail there'll be interest to pay on the debt. I ain't giving money away!"

"Catch me paying you anything!" gasped Bunter. "The fact is, I never had anything to do with it."

"Why, you pie-faced piecan, you've just said you were going to mop that stuff over Coker for kicking you—"

"That—that was only a figure of speech! It was Bob Cherry, really; he got the stuff to chuck over Coker, because Coker was coming after him with a cricket stump—"

In view of Fishy's little bill, Bunter was rather anxious now to disclaim all credit for the happenings on the Remove landing.

"I got it from all the guys that you tipped the stuff over me!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I've asked them to shell out, and they won't! It's up to you."

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Like me to take it to Quelch?" demanded Fishy.

Billy Bunter blinked at him.

Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, knew nothing, so far, of the affair of the mixture. Had Coker got it, as planned, it would have been all right! Coker of the Fifth was not the man to drag beads into a row. Moreover, Coker, as an invader of the Remove quarters, was the aggressor. Even Quelch, severe on discipline as he was, would have admitted that juniors had a right to kick if a Fifth Form man got after them with a cricket stump.

But Coker hadn't got it. Fishy had got it! That was a horse of quite a different colour.

There might, or might not be canings. There might, or might not be detentions. But a claim for compensation for ruined clothes was certain to be allowed by the judgment of the Form master.

Probably no fellow but Fishy would have made such a claim. As Harry Wharton had said, fellows generally took the rough with the smooth.

IMPORTANT NEWS!

Readers of the MAGNET who are about to visit the seaside for their holidays will be glad to learn that Messrs. Cadbury Bros., of Bournville, have contributed no fewer than **A QUARTER OF A MILLION BARS OF CHOCOLATE** for the consumption of readers buying their MAGNET from beach sellers, kiosks, and other such places at most of our popular seaside resorts. In addition to this, Cadbury Bros. are contributing pound boxes of their delicious assorted chocolates as prizes at our Concert Party, Cinema, and Gala Competitions. Be sure, then, and watch out for the MAGNET representatives when you are at the seaside this summer.

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But that made no difference. If a fellow's suit of clothes was ruined by fellows playing cricks with ghastly mixtures of ink and gum and soot, that fellow had a legal and moral right to be paid for the damage. Mr. Quelch was absolutely certain to allow the claim.

He would investigate the matter grimly, adjudge and apportion the blame, ascertain who had done the damage, and order that individual to pay for the same, under pain of having the bill sent home to his parents.

There was no doubt about that; and Billy Bunter was not grinning now. He was awfully serious. From the bottom of his fat heart he wished that he had not tipped that mixture so hurriedly over the balustrade. It did not seem funny now.

"I'm waiting!" remarked Fisher T. Fish, after a long pause, during which Billy Bunter blinked at him in dismay. "If you'd rather I took this to Quelch I guess you can get up on your hind legs and say so."

"Look here, Fishy, you can't go to Quelch!" gasped Bunter. "Don't you be a rotten sneak, you know."

"I guess that cuts no ice!" said Fishy. "I got to be paid. You don't figure that I'm going to lose money, do you?"

Evidently that seemed a sheer impossibility to Fishy.

"Well, I never did it!" said Bunter. "I wasn't there, as it happens! I was in my study at the time; and as for fetching Toddy's marking-ink to put in the pail, I never even thought of it. I mean to say, I wasn't in my study. I'd gone for a walk. You can ask any of the fellows who were there with me—"

"Waal, I swow!"

"Besides, I thought it was Coker coming up when I tipped the pail over," went on Bunter. "And I never tipped it over, either—it was Bob Cherry! Not that I know who did it, you know. I wasn't there!"

"You paying?" asked Fishy.

"No," roared Bunter.

"O. K. I guess I'm going down to Quelch."

Fisher T. Fish turned to the door. He was evidently in earnest. It was a matter of money, and such a matter drew out all the earnestness in Fishy's nature. If Fishy had lost his best friend, or his nearest relation, or his good name, he could have found some drop of comfort. But losing money hit him where he lived. That was the unkindest cut of all. That was the worst and most intolerable of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune! That was the limit—beyond the limit!

"I—I—I say, Fishy!" gasped Bunter, in great alarm. "I say, hold on! I say, it may be a whopping! I say—"

"I guess my time's of value, if yours ain't!"

"Look here, you beast!" gasped Bunter. "I—I don't want it to go to Quelch. He would make out that I did it, and he would send the bill to my father. There'd be a fearful row."

"I guess you should have thought of that before you mopped ink and gum over my clobber."

"Look here, you beast, I'll pay!" said Bunter desperately. "I'm not the fellow to haggle over a few pounds. I'll pay!"

"Four-pounds-three!" said Fisher T. Fish, extending a bony paw.

"I'm expecting a postal order—"

"What?" roared Fishy.

"From one of my titled relations—"

"You pie-faced clam—"

"And I'll settle when it comes," said Bunter.

"You—you—you—" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I'll give you postal order, you pesky mugwump! I guess I'm hitting Quelch's study, right now!"

"I—I—I say, Fishy—"

"Aw, can it!"

Fisher T. Fish marched away. The offer of Billy Bunter's celebrated postal order—when it came—evidently did not tempt him. He had drawn the Famous Five blank; and now he had drawn Bunter blank.

Fishy started down the passage with the fell intention of placing the matter in the hands of his Form master.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled hurriedly after Fishy.

"I say, Fishy—" he yelled.

Fisher T. Fish did not even turn his head. He was already disappearing down the Remove staircase.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled after Fishy. Twice he yelled to him on the staircase. Fishy did not look back. In alarm and horror, Bunter saw him disappear in the direction of Masters' Studies.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

And he rolled into the Rag, in a state of consternation. The fat was in the fire now!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Pay Up!

"W HARTON, Nugent, Cherry, Bull, Hurree Singh, Bunter!"

Walker of the Sixth recited those names in the doorway of the Rag.

"Go to your Form master's study at once, the lot of you!" added Walker; and he turned away and departed.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Well, that's that!" said Bob Cherry, with a whistle. "That unspeakable worm, Fishy—"

"The sneaking blighter, Fishy—" growled Johnny Bull.

"That terrific toad, Fishy—" said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Billy Bunter had informed the juniors, in the Rag, that Fishy had gone to Quelch. Then came Walker's announcement that they were wanted. Evidently Fisher Tarleton Fish had laid his wrongs and grievances at the feet of authority!

"After all, you fellows mucked up the chap's clobber," remarked Skinner agreeably. "It will very likely cost him half as much as he's asked you, to pay for the damage."

"The worm!" said Vernon-Smith. "Let's kick him all round the Rag, when he comes away from Quelch."

"Hear, hear!"

"It was that fathead Bunter—" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"All very well to put it on Bunter!" said Skinner. "I heard that the lot of you were in it."

"You can't very well stick it all on Bunter," argued Snoop. "Hardly cricket, what?"

Johnny Bull looked at Skinner and Snoop. Then he suddenly grabbed them by their collars. There was a loud concussion as their heads came together.

Bang!

"Yarooooop!" yelled Skinner and Snoop simultaneously.

"Have another?" roared Johnny Bull, glaring at them ferociously.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" Skinner and Snoop backed away, rubbing their heads.

They did not want another. One was more than enough.

"I say, you fellows, I don't think I'd better come," said Billy Bunter anxiously. "You can tell Quelch that I wasn't there—that will be all right."

"Oh, come on, you men!" said Harry Wharton, and the Famous Five left the Rag; and Bunter, in a very worried frame of mind, rolled after them.

They arrived at Mr. Quelch's study. The Remove master was writing at his table, Fisher T. Fish standing beside the table, waiting.

As the six juniors came in Mr. Quelch laid down his pen. His look was not unkindly as he glanced at the delinquents. Perhaps he had his own opinion of F. T. Fish and his claim for damages. Still, it was his duty to see justice done. If a fellow claimed compensation for a spoiled suit of clothes, the fellow might be unsporting and stingy; but he had a right to be compensated.

"Wharton——" began Mr. Quelch.

"It wasn't me, sir!" said Bunter, in a hurry.

"Silence, Bunter! Wharton, it appears that some thoughtless prank was played in the Remove this afternoon, and that Fish's clothes were spoiled by—by some mixture of gum, and ink, and—and other things."

"Yes, sir!" said Harry.

"Fish claims compensation for the loss," said Mr. Quelch. "He cannot, perhaps, reasonably be expected to incur the loss himself. I desire to know who was responsible. All of you juniors were there, I think."

"Yes, sir!" said Harry.

"I never touched the pail, sir!" said Bunter. "Besides, I thought it was Coker coming! The fact is, the pail slipped entirely by accident when I touched it—I mean, when I didn't touch it, sir! If Cherry had held it a little more carefully——"

"Shut up!" whispered Johnny Bull fiercely.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"If it was Bunter who was responsible——" said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh lor'! It—it wasn't, sir! I wasn't there!" gasped Bunter.

"You were not there?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, no, sir! I—I was—was miles away! I—I came in afterwards, and—and was quite surprised to hear what had happened."

"Be silent, Bunter! Now," said Mr. Quelch, "I have no doubt that it was that untruthful and stupid boy, Bunter, who actually caused the damage. If he was entirely responsible, I shall——"

"Oh lor'!"

"Well, we had the stuff there, sir," said Harry. "I suppose we're all equally responsible, sir."

"I should jolly well think so!" gasped Bunter. "Except me——"

"Silence, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, sir——"

"It's up to me, sir!" said Bob Cherry. "I got the tin pail, and—and these fellows only helped me. That ass Coker——"

"What?"

"I—I mean, Coker of the Fifth was after me, and I was going to give him a surprise!" stammered Bob. "The other fellows only backed me up."

"Rot!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"The rotfulness is terrific."

"It's up to all of us, sir," said Harry Wharton. "If Fish is to be paid, we shall whack it out—I—I mean, we shall all contribute equally——"

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch. "And now, I have Fish's statement here."

He tossed a paper on the table. "The amount is four pounds, three shillings. Do you dispute any of the items?"

Wharton's lip curled. He was not likely to haggle with a fellow like Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh, no, sir! I dare say it's all right." And the other fellows nodded.

"I guess——" began Fisher T. Fish.

"You need say nothing, Fish, as your claim is admitted by these boys!" rapped Mr. Quelch curtly. "The matter, then, is settled—you will make up the sum among you, and pay Fish. You may leave my study."

"I say, sir——"

"That will do, Bunter!"

"But, really, sir——"

"If you speak again, I shall cane you, Bunter!"

Bunter did not speak again. He

NOTTS READER WINS A POCKET-KNIFE!



"Hadn't you better go and tell your master?" said the motorist to the farmer's boy, who stood looking at the load of hay that had been upset in the lane. "He knows," replied the boy. "Knows? How can he know?" asked the motorist. "'Oos he's under the hay!" retorted the boy.

Send in your joke and win a splendid penknife like J. Moulton, of 3, Mozart Street, Radford, Nottingham, who submitted the above winning rib-tickler.

rolled out of the study after the Famous Five. Fisher T. Fish followed them, with a cheery grin on his face. His little bill was safe now. Fishy had not under-estimated the damages—in that little bill. Every one of the items might have been challenged. Why the juniors did not dispute those items was a mystery to Fishy. He had no objection to haggling himself. He would have haggled for a whole term over a halfpenny. He concluded that they were jays and ginks, and was very pleased to see a little profit ahead.

Harry Wharton & Co. went down the passage in silence. At the corner Fisher T. Fish stopped them, holding out a bony hand.

"I guess there's no time like the present," he remarked. "Pony up!"

"Twopence any good?" asked Nugent.

"Eh? Nope!"

"Well, that's my limit, at present."

"I've got threepence," remarked Bob Cherry.

"Mine's a tanner," said Johnny Bull.

"And mine's a bob," said Harry Wharton.

"And an esteemed half-crown is the present idiotic limit to my financial resourcefulness," observed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, I'm stony! I'm expecting a postal order——"

Fisher T. Fish breathed hard through his long, bony nose. Judgment had been given in his favour. That was all right, so far. But he had rather over-looked the fact that money was sometimes tight in the Lower School—in fact, often so. Schoolboys generally have a way of spending their money. Few fellows, as a rule, had much in hand when the next allowance was due.

"Now, see here!" said Fisher T. Fish emphatically. "You done the damage; you got to pay! I guess it's no good telling a man that you ain't got the dust. Get it! Borrow it! Write home for it! Anyhow, you got to pay!"

"It's all right, so far as I'm concerned," said Billy Bunter disdainfully. "When my postal order comes I'll——"

"Aw, can it! I reckon Mauleverer would lend you the money, if you asked him," said Fisher T. Fish. "He's the soft kind of guy that would."

"We're not borrowing money from Mauly!" snapped Bob.

"No fear!"

"Smithy, too, if you put it civilly. He might——"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Look here!" hooted Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I want my durocks—see? If you figure that you're going to double-cross me, you got another guess coming! I'll tell a man——"

"You'll be paid, you worm!" snapped Harry Wharton. "We've agreed to that! Now shut up, and give us a rest!"

"I guess——"

"Are you going to shut up?" bawled Johnny Bull.

"Not so's you notice it. I guess I want my money. I guess I—— Yarooop! Leggo! What's this stunt? Whooop!" roared Fisher T. Fish, as the exasperated juniors collared him, and bumped him on the passage floor. "Great gophers! I guess—— Wow! I'll say—— Yarooop!"

Fisher T. Fish roared. Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, and left him roaring.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Ways and Means!

THE following day there were some worried faces in the Greyfriars Remove.

Fisher T. Fish's was the most worried.

Cash down was what Fishy wanted. Accounts which were allowed to drift became more and more difficult to collect, as Fishy knew only too well. He had had a lot of experience in money matters. He suspected that he was going to be "done," if the debtors could possibly "do" him. No citizen of the United States could possibly view the prospect of being "done" with equanimity. Until they squared, those debtors were likely to hear from Fishy, from early morn till dewy eve.

It was not really a large sum. Whacked out among six fellows, it was only thirteen-and-tenpence each. But as the total resources of the Famous Five amounted at the moment to the sum of four-and-fivepence, that was not much help.

Even when the weekly allowances came in, they wouldn't make up the required sum. And allowances were not due yet; and Fisher T. Fish was not disposed to wait. It was true that Lord Mauleverer, as soon as he heard of the trouble, ambled along to offer a loan. But sponging on Mauly was not a resource that the Famous Five could think of. Billy Bunter, certainly, was willing to borrow thirteen-and-tenpence, or thirteen pounds-ten, for that matter. But the Famous Five declined Mauly's offer with grateful thanks. Loans that could not be settled within a reasonable period could not be accepted—that was rather too much like Bunter.

After dinner that day Fisher T. Fish came up to the Famous Five in the quad. His bony face was grim.

"What about it?" he inquired.

"Oh, give us a rest!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I guess I'll give you a rest till tea-time," said Fisher T. Fish darkly. "If I ain't paid by then, I'm going to Quelch."

"I say, you fellows, let's borrow it of Mauly!" said Billy Bunter.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I'll settle with Mauly, if you fellows like—"

"When, ass?"

"When my postal order comes."

"Oh, kick him!"

"Tea-time!" said Fisher T. Fish grimly; and he jerked away on his bony legs, his mind quite made up.

In class that afternoon Harry Wharton & Co. were thinking more about ways and means than about the instruction they were receiving from Mr. Quelch.

Only Bunter looked cheery.

The matter was settled for Bunter. He was going to borrow thirteen-and-tenpence from Lord Mauleverer. That would see Bunter clear—which was all that mattered, so far as Bunter could see.

The juniors realised that they could not let the matter go before Quelch again. They had agreed to pay; and they had to pay. If they did not their people had to find the money. Four members of the Co. would not have minded that very much, perhaps, but Bob Cherry, whose people were far from rich, strongly objected to extra accounts going home to his father. Bob was the most worried member of the Famous Co.

It had been his rather unhappy idea to mop that mixture over Coker of the Fifth. As he had said, the other fellows had only backed him up. He felt that he was rather responsible for the whole sum. At the very least he had to stand his own whack. The question was—how?

After class that day Harry Wharton sold a bike lamp in the Remove, and a penknife, and handed thirteen-and-tenpence to Fisher T. Fish. Frank Nugent disposed of some "Holiday Annuals," and a Latin dictionary. He also satisfied Fishy. That saw Study No. 1 clear. That, however, was little comfort to them, so long as their friends were still in the soup.

But the afternoon's post brought a pound note to Johnny Bull from home, and Johnny lost no time in paying Fishy. Hurrer Jamset Ram Singh disposed of a tiepin, and he also was relieved of the burden of debt. Bob Cherry was the only one left in the soup. But it was in vain that his friends offered him what was left over from their various little sums.

"Rot!" growled Bob. "If I was going to borrow money I couldn't pay, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,327.

I'd stick Mauly for it, as soon as you fellows. Think I'm Bunter?"

And that was that!

Bob had a problem on his mind that afternoon—a deep financial problem. He was thinking it over in the Remove passage when Billy Bunter rolled out of Lord Mauleverer's study, with a cheery grin on his fat face.

"Seen that cad Fishy?" asked Bunter.

Bob snorted. He knew what Bunter had been to Mauly's study for.

"No!" he grunted. "And don't want to!"

Bunter rolled on.

"Seen Fishy?" he asked, blinking into Study No. 1.

"I think he's in his study," answered Harry Wharton.

"Oh, all right!"

Bunter rolled towards the stairs—the opposite direction from Fishy's study. Now that he was supplied with the necessary cash to pay Fishy, the fat junior, for some reason best known to himself, was avoiding that bony and businesslike youth. He wanted to know where Fishy was, in order to keep clear of the spot.

Billy Bunter's way lay to the school shop.

Mrs. Mimble eyed him far from graciously when he came in. Billy Bunter would have been her very best customer, had the good dame run that establishment on lines of extended credit—very much extended. But on the present occasion Bunter was not there to make one more desperate attempt to scoff good things "on the nod." With quite a princely air Bunter slammed a ten-shilling note on the counter.

"Hallo! Been robbing a bank?" asked the Bounder, who was there with Redwing.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Smithy! You're not the only man in the Remove who gets remittances," he said. And Bunter proceeded to give generous orders. "Make it come to thirteen and tenpence, please," he said. "Mind, just that exactly."

"Yes, Master Bunter," said Mrs. Mimble, a little surprised.

It was rather an odd sum.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. Smithy understood.

"You fat duffer!" exclaimed Tom Redwing. "If somebody's lent you the cash to pay Fishy, you'd better pay him."

"Oh, really, Redwing—" Bunter was already gobbling tarts. "That will be all right. I don't see why Fishy can't wait till the morning."

"Are you going to stick Mauly again in the morning?" grinned Smithy.

"Oh, really, Smithy! I'm expecting a postal order in the morning."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I shall square that worm Fishy out of my postal order," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "As for the loan that Mauly's made me, I shall settle that out of my next postal order. Mauly won't mind waiting a couple of days."

"Or a couple of centuries?" asked Smithy.

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter enjoyed life for the next half-hour. In spite of the enormous wealth to be found at Bunter Court—according to Bunter—it was very seldom that he had so much as thirteen shillings to spend on tuck at one fell swoop.

While he sat at Mrs. Mimble's counter, and gobbled tart after tart, and doughnut after doughnut, and cake after cake, and washed them all down with

copious gingerpop, Billy Bunter felt that life was really worth the trouble of living. It was, as the poet has expressed it, one grand, sweet song!

It was a happy and sticky Bunter that rolled out of the tuckshop at last, breathing rather hard after his exertions.

A bony finger jammed in his fat ribs as he emerged.

"I guess I've been looking for you," said Fisher T. Fish. "I kinder reckon I want thirteen-and-tenpence from you, Bunter."

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Shell out, you fat clam!"

"You'll have to wait till the morning!" explained Bunter. "I've told you I'm expecting a postal order—"

"Wait till the cows come home!" said Fisher T. Fish derisively. "I guess I'll wait till prep. Then I'm going to Quelch."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the House with a rather worried look on his fat face! Even if Fishy waited till the morning, there was some doubt—Bunter realised it—whether that postal order would come! And Fishy would not wait till the morning!

Even Billy Bunter felt that he could not ask Mauly for the same sum over again, and it was only too probable that even the kind-hearted Mauly would kick if he did!

Bunter had had an enjoyable spread—a really enjoyable spread; but after the feast came the reckoning! He almost wished that he hadn't spent Mauly's money on that spread! Still, he couldn't quite wish that—it had been so very ripping! But he realised that something—or somebody—had to be done!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Makes a Discovery!

"BOB, old chap!"

"Oh, seat!" growled Bob Cherry.

"But, I say—"

"Buzz off!"

Bob Cherry was alone in his study after tea. He was worried. The question of ways and means troubled him more than the other fellows.

Bob had the smallest allowance of the Famous Five—and he was, perhaps, the most careless of the five in money matters. Any fellow could "touch" Bob for a loan when he was in funds—and all fellows did not remember to liquidate the debt afterwards. But if Bob would lend carelessly, he was not the fellow to borrow carelessly—which was quite a different matter!

His total wealth at the moment amounted to threepence, and he saw no means of increasing it. He hated the thought of the bill going home to his father, but there seemed no help for it. It was a deep worry.

In that disagreeable frame of mind he was in no mood to be bothered by Billy Bunter—who was, in truth, the cause of the whole trouble. He made a movement with his foot, as the fat Owl rolled in, and shut the door after him.

"I've come to advise you, old chap!" said Bunter, with dignity.

"Oh, rats!"

"We're both in the same boat, really," said Bunter. "Companions in misfortune, you know."

"Mauly's lent you the money to square," said Bob, staring at him.

"You're all right!"

"Well, you see, I was hungry—"

"What?"

"It went!" said Bunter.



"After all, you fellows mucked up Fish's clobber," said Skinner. "You can't very well stick it all on Bunter," argued Snoop. Bull suddenly grabbed Skinner and Snoop by their collars. Bang! There was a loud concussion as their heads came together. "Yaroooop!" yelled Skinner and Snoop simultaneously.

"You frabjous fathead!"

"It's rather uncivil to call a fellow names, Cherry, when he's trying to help you out of a scrape," said the Owl of the Remove. "Look here, we're both in the soup, and I know a way out."

"Has your postal order come?" asked Bob, with deep sarcasm.

"Well, no! There's been some delay in the post," admitted Bunter. "I can't quite understand it. It's from one of my titled relations, you know! But it hasn't come!"

"Buzz off, and don't worry!"

"But it's all right," said Bunter, blinking at him through his big spectacles. "We can borrow the money."

"You can," snapped Bob—"if Mauly's ass enough to be done twice over! I fancy he isn't. There's a limit, you fat owl!"

"I mean, when fellows are hard up, what do they do?" said Bunter. "They go to a moneylender."

"What?" yelled Bob.

"Don't tell all the House!" snapped Bunter. "These things have to be kept dark, of course! What about Fishy?"

"Fishy!" repeated Bob blankly.

"Fishy lends money to fellows like a Shylock, you know! He was whopped for it last term, but there's no stopping him," said Bunter. "I jolly well know that he's at it again! Young Tubb of the Third—"

"You fat chump! Borrow money from Fishy to pay Fishy himself! As if I'd touch the worm's putrid money!"

"Of course, you couldn't borrow from

Fishy as a friend. But you could borrow from him as a Shylock!" explained Bunter. "It's business with him. He charges interest on a loan, like a real moneylender, you know! You're under no obligation when you pay for the loan."

Bob stared at the fat Owl! Certainly that extraordinary resource had not occurred to his mind. But now that it was suggested, he considered it. From the talk in Study No. 1 the day before, he had no doubt that Fisher T. Fish was keeping up his old money-lending game. Fishy would lend money—for a consideration—to any fellow who could be trusted to pay. Bunter certainly was not such a fellow! But Bob was. And there was no favour or obligation incurred, if interest was paid.

Bob did not like the idea! But it seemed to be a case of any port in a storm! Given time, he could save up his allowance and get clear. The only alternative seemed to be to let the bill go to his father.

"Fishy won't trust me," went on Bunter. "Suspicious cad, you know! But he will trust you all right."

"I should think so!" growled Bob.

"Well, look here! You borrow the money of Fishy, and pay him," said Bunter. "At the same time, you can borrow it for me."

"Wha-a-t?"

"He will trust you! Well, you can trust me—you know me," said Bunter. "Knowing me so well, you can rely on me to square—see?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Twice thirteen-and-tenpence is one-pound-two—"

"You blithering owl, it's twenty-seven-and-eightpence!"

"Sure?" asked Bunter. "I'm rather good at arithmetic, you know, and you're rather a dud! I make it one-pound-two."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"I fancy Fishy would make it twenty-seven-and-eightpence," he answered. "That's what it comes to, fathead. But—"

"Well, you borrow that of Fishy, and give him an I O U, and pay for both of us," said Bunter brightly. "He will charge about ten per cent. interest; but I'll settle that out of my postal order—"

"Oh, chuck it!"

"In fact, I'll settle the whole thing when my postal order comes. The trouble is, I'm not sure when it's coming. There isn't another post to-day—"

"It wouldn't make a frightful lot of difference if there was," said Bob, laughing. "Chuck it, you fat duffer! I—I'll think this over."

"Strike the iron while it's hot," urged Bunter. "We don't want that worm to go to Quelch again. As I've given you the idea, I think it's up to you to see me clear, as well as yourself. What do you think?"

"All right. If I can fix it with Fishy," said Bob. "I shall have some money for the hols, and they're not far

off now; I can get clear of the brute then. I—I'll do it."

"Good!" gasped Bunter. "Look here, I'll go and see if Fishy is in his study now. He goes over his putrid accounts when the other fellows ain't in the study; and Bull and Squiff are both down at the cricket now. If he's there, I'll tell him to come to you."

Bob had not quite made up his mind. He was hesitating. But he who hesitates is lost! Bunter rolled out of the study, and went along to Study No. 14.

He turned the handle of the door; but it did not open. It was locked on the inside.

Bunter grunted. He was aware that when Fisher T. Fish went over his precious accounts, he was accustomed to lock the study door. Those accounts would have landed Fishy in serious trouble with the Head, if they had ever met the eye of authority. Fishy had to be careful in such matters.

"I say, Fishy!" Bunter thumped on the door.

"That you, you fat clam? If you've got the dust—"

"Bob Cherry wants to see you in his study. He's going to settle for both of us!" hooted Bunter.

"Oh, all right! I guess I'll be along in two shakes of a 'possum's tail."

Bunter heard Fisher T. Fish push back his chair, and there followed the sound of a book shutting. That, undoubtedly, was the business book, in which Fisher T. Fish kept account of all the little sums due to him up and down the lower school, and the interest that accumulated therefrom!

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his big spectacles.

Plenty of fellows knew, or guessed, that Fishy had that account-book, but where he kept it was a mystery. His study-mates had no knowledge of it; certainly either Johnny Bull or Squiff would have put it on the study fire if they had found it in the study. Billy Bunter was curious on the subject—as he was on all subjects that did not concern him. As he heard Fishy move from the table the fat, inquisitive Owl stooped and applied his eye to the keyhole.

Through the keyhole Bunter could see

across the study, and he had a view of Fisher T. Fish's bony form stooping, with a rather bulky volume in his bony hand.

Bunter grinned.

Unconscious of the watching eye at the keyhole, Fisher T. Fish turned back a corner of the study carpet.

There was a small section of board with nail-heads showing which looked as if it was as firm as the rest of the floor, but evidently it had been tampered with, for Fishy raised it from its place.

The account-book was slipped into the space below; Fishy replaced the loose board and the carpet.

Evidently Fishy had thought out that safe hiding-place for his business papers since the unfortunate occasion, last term, when such documents had been found in his study by a master.

Bunter suppressed a giggle.

He watched Fisher T. Fish replace the corner of the carpet over the loose board and come to the door. But when Fishy opened that door Billy Bunter was leaning on the wall on the other side of the passage. Fishy glanced at him and jerked along to Bob Cherry's study.

"He, he, he!" cackinnated Bunter.

Bob Cherry's door closed on Fisher T. Fish. Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 14 and then rolled in. His fat face was wreathed in grins. Hurriedly he lifted the corner of the carpet and the loose board, as he had watched Fishy do. He groped in the opening and hooked out a large account-book. A moment more and board and carpet were replaced, and Bunter rolled out of the study with Fishy's business book squeezed under his jacket. He gurgled with glee as he rolled into Study No. 7 with his prize. He opened the study cupboard and pitched Fisher T. Fish's book behind the lumber that occupied the lower portion.

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish had bothered Bunter very considerably lately. Fisher T. Fish was going to be bothered in his turn. Next time he went to the secret hiding-place for that business book he would find that it was missing. Bunter could imagine his feelings when he missed it.

And he chuckled as he imagined them! This was tit for tat—a Roland for an Oliver—and Billy Bunter exploded in a series of fat chuckles as he rolled away down the Remove passage.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"I'M your antelope!" That was Fisher T. Fish's prompt answer when Bob Cherry mooted the subject of a loan. Fishy looked quite cordial. He liked to get the names of borrowers on his books—to extend his business as an amateur moneylender. And a fellow like Bob was exactly the fellow he wanted. Fellows like Skinner or Snoop would have agreed to anything to raise a loan when they wanted one, but they were only too likely to tell Fishy to whistle for his interest when the time came to screw them. But a simple-hearted fellow like Bob, unwary and unsuspecting in money matters, and a fellow of his word, was just the man to suit the amateur Shylock.

The Shylock of Greyfriars laboured under the difficulty that his rascality had to be kept a strict secret. If Quelch or the Head discovered him lending money at interest it was a flogging for Fishy. So he was, to some extent, at the mercy of his "clients." In the big, wide world outside school moneylenders could screw their victims to almost any extent—indeed, they could invoke the law on their side. Which seemed to indicate that the big world outside school was not managed so efficiently as the little world inside school. Fishy, anyhow, had to keep it dark—or feel the Head's birch on his bony carcase—so he had to be rather particular with whom he dealt. Bob was just the man for him—if he could inveigle Bob into the meshes of his net.

"I guess," said Fishy cordially, "that I'm your antelope, Cherry! I'm your mutton—with the wool on! Yep! How much you want?"

"Twenty-seven-and-eightpence," said Bob.

Fisher T. Fish grinned. That was a rather odd sum for a borrower to want, but he guessed what it meant. It was twice thirteen-and-tenpence. Bob was going to pay two whacks in that debt for Fishy's clobber.

"Easy done!" said Fisher T. Fish. "You'll sign a little paper, old bean—just your I O U. Business, you know."

"Anything you like."

"I guess I'll draw it up in two shakes of a 'possum's tail! Interest at five per cent."

"Eh? Yes, that's all right," said Bob in astonishment. He had rather expected Fishy to say twenty-five per cent.

"That'll be eighteenpence a week so long as the loan runs," said Fisher T. Fish breezily. "Can't split it for odd amounts; I shall have to charge you the interest on thirty shillings."

"Oh, all right!" Bob did some mental arithmetic. "Hold on, though! Five per cent is a twentieth part, isn't it?"

"Sure!"

"Well, fathead, that's eighteenpence a year, not a week!" said Bob.

Fisher T. Fish stared at him.

"Forget it!" he said. "I ain't in business for my health! Interest on my loans is five per cent a week."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Take it, or leave it!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm letting you down lightly. Generally I charge ten per cent, but you being a friend—"

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"Cut that out!" said Bob gruffly. "Don't go off on your ear, buddy! Five per cent is the terms; take it, or leave it. Eighteenpence a week; and you can pay off the principal any time by giving a month's notice."

Bob Cherry sat and looked at the enterprising merchant of the Remove. He did some more mental arithmetic. Five per cent a week was something like two hundred and fifty per cent per annum. The ancient Shylock himself, evidently, had nothing on Fisher T. Fish.

Fisher opened a fountain-pen and took a leaf from his pocket-book. In his scraggy, scrawly hand he drew up the

paper for Bob to sign. Bob's face grew grimmer and grimmer.

"Hyer you are!" said Fish. "That's where you sign."

Bob drew a deep breath.

He was not satisfied in his conscience with this resource for raising the wind. It worried him considerably. He had rather thoughtlessly made up his mind to it. Now he unmade his mind again. To be swindled to this tune was altogether intolerable.

"You can shove your pen away!" he said curtly. "I'm not signing that paper. If I signed it I should have to

stand by it. I'm not fool enough to let you diddle me to that extent!"

"Diddle?" repeated Fisher T. Fish indignantly. "Did you say diddle? Don't you pesky jays in this mouldy old island begin to understand business? Think I'm lending money because I like parting with it? Guess again!"

Bob rose to his feet.

"Get out!" he said.

"Look hyer—"

"You make me sick!" said Bob in disgust. "Get out! I don't want to have to kick you! But get out—sharp!"

(Continued on next page.)



Strange things are always happening on the cricket field—incidents which cause a great deal of comment when

the match is over. "Umpire" is here to settle these arguments. Address your queries to him, c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and then watch out for his reply.

QUESTIONS sometimes arise as to whether, in cases in which the batsman is out, the bowler should be credited, in his analysis, with the wicket. A reader of East Lulworth, for instance, writes to ask me if the wicket is credited to the bowler when the batsman, playing at the ball, hits his wicket. The answer is yes. It is just as much a wicket to the bowler as if he had sent the middle stump flying through the air.

If you think this over for a moment you will see the logic of the answer.

It is presumed that when the batsman hits his wicket in playing at the ball, the bowler has sent down the sort of delivery which forced him to play so far back that the bat came in contact with the wicket.

Then there is the case, which is often argued, as to whether, if the ball, not having been played by the batsman, comes back off the wicket-keeper's pads and breaks the wicket while the batsman is still out of his ground, should the score-book record stumped or run out? The proper record is stumped, and, of course, in stumping affairs the bowler is given the credit of having taken the wicket.

HARD CASES!

RETURNING to the "hit wicket" business there are one or two curious features attached to this which may be mentioned. For instance, suppose the batsman is making a stroke, and as he makes it, his cap falls off his head and on to the wicket. He would quite properly be given out, on appeal, as the verdict in this case would be "hit wicket." Seems a bit strange, doesn't it? But the laws of the game are very definite on the point.

In respect of these "hit wicket" decisions the big point is that it all depends on whether the balls were knocked off while the batsman was in the act of making the stroke, and that, of course, is for the umpire to decide. If the batsman had actually completed the stroke, for instance, and in starting to run somehow knocked the wicket down, he would not be given out. I have known some very hard cases connected with this hitting of the wicket.

Last season, George Gunn, the Notts batsman, was struck on the head with the ball which he was attempting to hit. The blow knocked him back on to his wicket, and he was rightly given out as having hit the wicket, though it was not until he recovered consciousness in hospital that Gunn knew he was out at all.

A strange way of a batsman being out, bowled, was brought to my notice the other day. This particular player played the ball down almost at his feet, and as the wicket-keeper was standing well back, there was a call for a run. The batsman who had played the ball started off towards the other end, but in doing so, he trod on the ball, and so turned it back into his own wicket. I happen to know that the decision of the umpire—that the batsman was bowled—did not meet with general approval, so the details were sent to headquarters, where it was agreed that the decision was a good one.

Arising out of this was a case which seemed similar, but which was really different. Again the batsman hit the ball down just in front of him, and again there was a short run. On this occasion the batsman coming from the other end, kicked the ball into the wicket while he was still out of his ground. Some people thought he should have been given run out, but they were wrong. The batsman could not be given run out thus because no fielder had played the ball. This is on all fours with the incident which often happens. The batsman at one end drives the ball straight into the wicket at the other end while the batsman there is out of his crease. But the batsman is not out unless the ball has touched a fielder on the way. If it has just been tipped by the fingers of a fielder—say the bowler—then the batsman is run out.

THE ART OF SWERVING!

AND now, you cricket players, I want to give you a little lecture on the things which are, and are not done, at cricket. I often go to watch boys play and I have frequently noticed that, from sheer eagerness and anxiety to win, players are guilty of doing things which they really should not do. Take, for instance, the matter of appeals

for leg before wicket. I want to remind you that such appeals should be left to the players who are in a position to judge whether it is possible that the batsman might be out. And the players in such a position are the bowler and the wicket-keeper. I don't like to hear fellows a long way from the wicket, and nowhere behind the line of flight of the ball, appealing for leg before simply because the ball has happened to hit the batsman's legs. That will do for this week in the "sermon" line.

One of the curious things about first-class cricket—which you may or may not have noticed, is that there are very few fast bowlers who are left-handed. Edward Clark, who played for England against the West Indies in a Test match recently, is an exception. He is a fast left-hand bowler. Another fast left-hander is "Bill" Voce, the Notts man.

I don't know why it is that most of the fast bowlers of cricket should be right-handers, but it is obvious that there is a very real chance waiting for the fast bowlers of the left-hand variety.

I very much doubt whether Voce would have played for England if he had kept to the type of slow bowling which he adopted when he first got into cricket. There would have been greater competition for Voce among slow bowlers than among fast left-hand bowlers. Notts had plenty of bowlers of the slow type, and that was why Voce changed his style from slow to fast.

There was another reason for this Voce change of style. He discovered that he had what is called a natural swerve—that is the ability to make the ball swing in the air. I have often been asked by young bowlers about this art of swerving; how it is done, and so on.

I very much doubt whether, generally speaking, real swerve bowling can be taught. There are some bowlers—like Maurice Tate—whose arm and body action is such that the ball swerves in the air.

As you may like to experiment with swerve bowling, however, a hint or two may help.

First of all grip the ball in such a way that the seam is "looking" at the batsman; that is with the thumb under the seam at the bottom and the first and second fingers on each side of it at the top. Voce tells me that he finds the ball swerving better if he doesn't grip it too tightly prior to the moment of delivery. Try it. And remember, of course, that it is easier to make a new ball swerve than an old one. The seam on the new ball, plus the polish, add to the air resistance. Sounds a bit scientific, doesn't it? But swerve bowling is a science, linked up with a new ball, the atmosphere, and other things.

"UMPIRE."

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Fisher T. Fish put his fountain-pen away. Evidently it was not going to be needed. His cold eyes glinted at Bob.

"Have it your own way," he said. "I guess you've wasted my time. But have it your own way. Before I go I'll trouble you for thirteen-and-tenpence."

Bob breathed hard. Having rejected the assistance of the amateur Shylock of Greyfriars, he was back in his problem.

"I'll manage it to-morrow," he said. "I can sell my cricket bat if nothing else turns up. Now, get out!"

"I guess I want my money now."

"Are you going?"

"I guess I'm going to Quelch—"

Bob's patience was exhausted. He threw open the study door, took Fisher T. Fish by his scraggy shoulders, and pitched him headlong into the passage. There was a bump and a yell as Fisher T. Fish landed there.

"Now cut!" roared Bob, his eyes blazing, from the doorway. "Get going, you worm, or I'll come out and kick you!"

"Aw! You pesky piecan! You—you pie-faced jay!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "By the great horned toad—Yaroooooh! Let up! Keep off! I guess I'm going!"

And Fishy went—quickly.

Bob Cherry sat down in his study again with a gloomy and worried brow. It was not so easy for him to "raise the wind" as for many other fellows. But he had to pay Fishy, and he resolved to part with his cricket bat. It was a wrench, but it could not be helped. Other articles of which he might have disposed were not likely to raise the required sum. He was still thinking it out dismally, when Billy Bunter blinked into the study. He had forgotten Bunter. Now he was reminded of him again.

"All right—what?" asked Bunter cheerily. "Fixed it with Fishy?"

"No."

Bunter's fat face fell.

"But—but you said—"

"The rotter piled it on too thick," said Bob. "It was a rotten idea, anyhow—and it can't be done."

"Oh crikey! What are you going to do, then?"

"Sell my bat!" granted Bob.

"Who'll give you twenty-seven-and-eightpence for your bat?"

Bob Cherry started.

"Nobody," he growled. "But it's a guinea bat, and I can get thirteen and tenpence for it."

"And what about me?" roared Bunter.

"Nothing about you, you fat idiot! If I could have borrowed the money of Fishy I'd have paid your bill. Now I can't!"

"Look here—"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Bob. "I'm fed-up with you! Buzz off!"

"Letting a fellow down!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Look here, you can borrow it of Fishy. If he charges too much, you needn't pay him. Tell him you'll go to the Head and give him away. See? Then he'll have to knuckle under."

"You fat villain!" yelled Bob. "If I make a promise I shall have to keep it! Shut up, and bunk!"

"That's all very well," said Bunter. "But where do I come in?"

"You don't come in—you go out!" growled Bob; and a foot applied to the tightest trousers at Greyfriars helped Bunter out.

Bunter departed yelling. His problem, like Bob's, was still unsolved. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,327.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Big Idea!

BILLY BUNTER grinned.

It was the following morning, and the Remove were in class, with Mr. Quelch.

Latin grammar was the order of the day, and there was certainly nothing in Latin grammar to make a fellow grin.

Yet Bunter grinned.

He grinned from one fat ear to the other.

Bunter had been thinking—not, it was certain, of Latin grammar! Now Bunter had the Big Idea!

Billy Bunter's fat brain did not get a great deal of exercise, as a rule. Thinking was not much in his line. But circumstances alter cases. Bunter had been fairly driven to extraordinary mental exertions by the persecution of Fisher T. Fish.

Fishy, burning with indignation, had kept his word, and gone to Quelch. Quelch had called Bob Cherry and Bunter before him and stated that unless they paid Fisher T. Fish he would pay the amounts himself, and the bill would, in due course, reach their parents. To which both replied that Fish would be paid that day. Bob was going to sell his bat, and Bunter was expecting a postal order. So that was that!

In third school, Bunter, regardless of Quelch and Latin grammar, thought it out. His expected postal order had not come. He had looked for letters in break—but had looked in vain. Bunter, as earnestly as Bob, did not want the bill to go to his father, though not for the same reasons. Bob hated to worry his father for money, Major Cherry not being blessed with too much of it. Bunter, on the other hand, did not mind worrying Mr. Bunter; but he knew that Mr. Bunter would deduct the amount from his allowance. That made the matter serious!

Billy Bunter was feeling quite like a hero in a novel who was in the hands of the moneylenders! Never before had Bunter worried about paying an account. He would not have worried now, had his creditor been anybody but Fisher T. Fish. As it was, he had to worry! And it was in the stress of that worry that Bunter's fat brain evolved the Big Idea.

Whereat Bunter grinned.

When the Remove were dismissed, after third school, Billy Bunter, still grinning, repaired to the Remove passage. He disinterred Fishy's account-book from the lumber in the study cupboard, opened it, and blinked into it. Pages and pages were covered with writing and figures in Fishy's scrawly hand. It was a complete record of Fishy's dealings in the moneylending line, extending over the whole of the summer term.

Bunter chuckled.

"If the Head saw this—" he murmured.

He chuckled again.

If that precious volume met the eyes of Dr. Locke it meant a flogging for Fisher T. Fish. It might mean the sack! At the very least, it meant a Head's flogging!

Bunter, in taking that volume from its hiding-place, had only intended to pull Fishy's leg and worry him with the loss of the book. But since then new ideas—big ideas—had permeated Bunter's fat brain. It was really Fishy's fault. Bunter, certainly, would never have done any thinking if he had not

been driven to it; and it was Fishy who had driven him. At long last it had dawned on Bunter that with that business-book in his possession, he had the Shylock of Greyfriars in the hollow of his fat hand.

He was not afraid of Fishy now! It was Fishy's turn to be afraid of William George Bunter!

The Fat Owl blinked cautiously out of the study. Nobody was in sight. He rolled out, with the book under his jacket, and panted up the box-room stair at the end of the passage. Now that he had found a use for Fishy's business-book, he had to find a safe hiding-place for it.

In the Remove box-room there was a grate, and a chimney, never used. Billy Bunter thrust the book up the chimney. It was safe there.

Grinning, he descended the stair again.

Fishy, when he missed that precious volume, certainly would not think of looking up the box-room chimney for it! Very likely he would look in Bunter's study—but he was welcome, now, to look there as much as he liked!

Bunter's fat face was quite bright as he rolled out into the quad. He blinked round through his big spectacles for Fisher T. Fish.

That bony and businesslike youth was sauntering there, with a frown on his brow. Two sums of thirteen-and-tenpence were still due to him. It was money "out" and not drawing interest! Naturally, it worried Fishy! He gave Bunter a glare as he rolled up.

"You fat clam!" was his greeting. "You told Quelch that you'd pay to-day. You'd better!"

"I'm not likely to remain in debt to a fellow like you, Fishy!" answered Bunter, with haughty disdain. "As soon as my postal order comes—"

"Aw! Can it!"

"Most likely it will come to-morrow, or the next day," pursued Bunter. "I want you to wait till it comes."

"I guess I'll watch it!"

"Of course," said Bunter calmly. "I'm not the fellow to give a fellow away! Nothing sneaking about me, I hope! Still, if the Head happened to see that book of yours—"

Fisher T. Fish jumped.

"What book?" he demanded.

"The one you keep under the floor in Study No. 14!" grinned Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish gazed at him. For a moment he was rooted to the ground. Bunter grinned cheerily.

"You—you—you fat clam!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "You been spying in my study! I—I guess—"

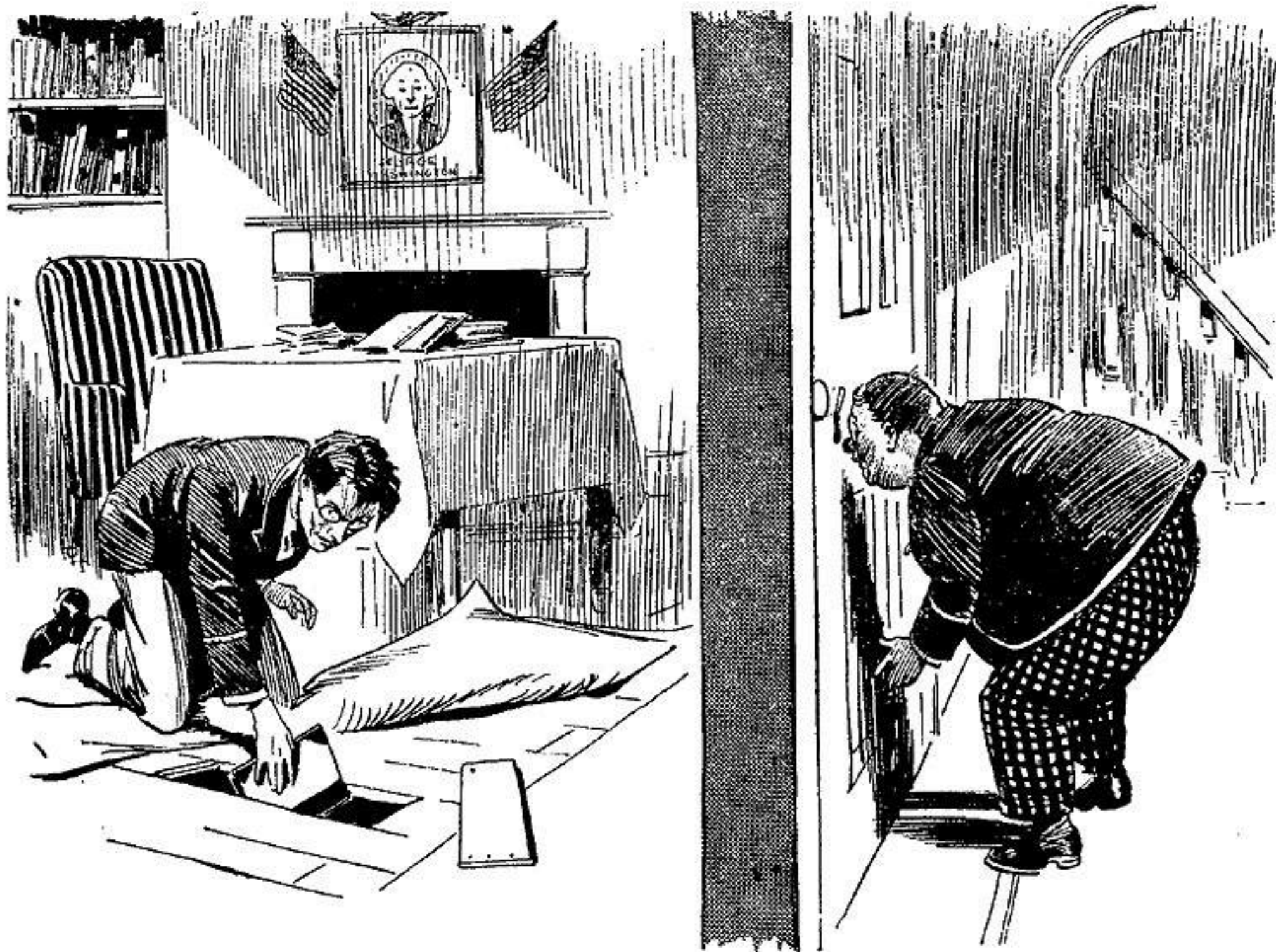
"Oh, really, Fishy—"

Fisher T. Fish shot away like an arrow for the House. Bunter, evidently, had spied and discovered the secret hiding-place of the business-book. Fishy's first and urgent thought was to get it away from that hiding-place and conceal it somewhere else. He vanished into the House at a rapid run.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

He rolled over to the Famous Five. They were engaged in an argument. Bob being determined to sell his bat and get shut of Fishy, four members of the Co. had the brilliant idea of clubbing together to buy it, and then lending it to Bob! Bob, however, seemed to think that this was only a way of lending him the money—as indeed it was! Five fellows were arguing when Bunter rolled up, grinning from ear to ear.

"I say, you fellows—" he squeaked. "Oh, roll off, Bunter!"



Unconscious of Bunter's watching eye at the keyhole, Fisher T. Fish turned back a corner of the study carpet. Then he raised a small section of floorboard and slipped a bulky volume into the space below. The fat junior suppressed a giggle as he watched!

"I say, you just watch for Fishy!" said Bunter. "He will be coming out of the House in a minute or two—he, he, he!—and his face will be worth seeing, believe me!"

"Anything up with that toad?" asked Harry.

"He, he, he!"

"By the way, I haven't done anything yet about what Wingate told me," said the captain of the Remove. "I shall have to look into it! But Fishy's such an eel; it won't be easy to pin him down."

Bob Cherry coloured a little. He undoubtedly could have stated from his own knowledge that Fishy was still in the moneylending line! In the circumstances, however, he felt bound to keep silent.

"Here he comes!" said Johnny Bull. "I say, what's the matter with Fishy? He looks as if he's seen a ghost!"

"He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked curiously at Fisher T. Fish as he came out of the House. His bony face was quite pale with rage and alarm! He stared round for Bunter, spotted him, and came racing across to the group of juniors.

Unheeding the Famous Five and their astonished faces, he grasped Bunter's fat neck with a bony hand.

"Where is it?" he gasped. "You pie-faced, pesky clam; where's my book?"

"Yaroooh!"

"Gimme my book!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "By the great horned toad, I'll make potato-scrappings of you if you don't cough up that book instant!"

"Groooogh! I say, you fellows, he's chook-chook-choking me!" gurgled

Bunter. "I say, make him leggo. Urrrrgh!"

"Where's that book?" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "You've pinched it from my study, you pie-faced piecan! Cough it up!"

"Gruggggh!"

"What the thump—" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Let Bunter alone, you fathead!"

"I guess I'll scrag him—"

"Urrrrgggh!"

"You jolly well won't!" said Bob Cherry; and he grasped Fisher T. Fish by the shoulders and sat him down in the quad with a heavy bump.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Fearful For Fishy!

"U R R R R R G G H!" gurgled Billy Bunter.

He gasped and spluttered for breath. Bunter was short of breath at the best of times; and Fishy had shaken out the little he had.

"Oooogh! I say, you fellows—woooogh!" gasped Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish sat, almost as breathless as Bunter. Bob had sat him down with a heavy hand. What was the matter with Fishy, the Famous Five could not guess. Plainly he was deeply disturbed. Something had happened—apparently a disaster.

The transatlantic junior scrambled up at last. He seemed inclined to spring at Bunter like a tiger; but Bob's sturdy form interposed. Fishy was headed off.

"Draw it mild, Fishy," said Harry Wharton. "If Bunter's done anything—"

"I guess he's got my book!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Borrowed a book, do you mean? A school book?" asked Harry, puzzled. It was probable enough that Bunter had borrowed a book, or anything else, without asking leave. But that hardly seemed a reason for all this excitement. Billy Bunter could not eat a book—so it was recoverable. If he had borrowed anything eatable, the matter would have been more serious. In that case, an X-ray apparatus would have been required to trace the missing goods.

"A—a—a—a book!" gasped Fishy.

Excited and enraged as he was, Fishy realised that he could not be too explicit about that book. As head boy of the Remove, it was Wharton's duty to deal drastically with that very book if it came to his knowledge.

"You fat burglar—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Have you been borrowing Fishy's books?"

"He, he, he!" Bunter, recovering his breath a little, expended some of it in a fat giggle. "He, he, he!"

"He hasn't borrowed it—I guess he's pinched it!" howled Fisher T. Fish. "I'll tell a man!"

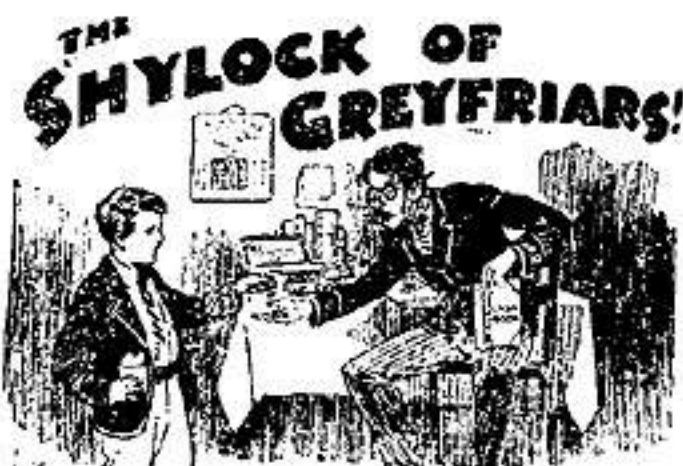
"Oh, don't be an ass!" snapped Wharton. "Bunter wouldn't pinch your school books, even if they were worth pinching!"

"Tain't a school book!"

"Oh!" Wharton paused. He remembered an occasion, quite recently, when Bunter had "borrowed" his "Holiday Annual," with the intention of raising the wind on it. "Bunter, you bloated

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(Continued from page 13.)

brigand, have you been bagging some book of Fishy's to sell?"

"He, he, he!"

"What is the fat owl cackling at?" asked Johnny Bull, staring at Bunter.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

"You piecan! You pesky, pie-faced polecat!" howled Fisher T. Fish. Ain't I telling you I want that posky book? Will you lemme gerrat that moon-faced mugwump, Bob Cherry?"

"No fear!" answered Bob, cheerfully. "If Bunter's got anything of yours, we'll make him shell out fast enough."

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "Fishy says I've got his book! Well, I'm ready to go to Quelch! Come on, Fishy—let's go to Quelch together—you can tell him I've got your book!"

Fisher T. Fish gasped. Not for his life would he have dared to go to his Form master about that precious book. He could picture the expression on Mr. Quelch's face when he heard about it!

"Well, that's fair enough," said Harry. "And you're rather fond of going to Quelch, Fishy. Hike along to his study with Bunter."

"I—I—I guess I ain't bothering Quelch!" stammered Fisher T. Fish. "That podgy piecan has snaffled a book from my study. I guess I want it back—and I want it now!"

"He, he, he!"

"Will you cough up that book?" yelled Fisher T. Fish frantically. Some of the Remove fellows were gathering round now; and Fishy was getting more publicity than he wanted.

"No, I won't!" answered Bunter coolly.

"Have you got a book of Fishy's, then?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh! No! Nothing of the kind! I haven't seen his book. As for watching a fellow through the keyhole of his study, you fellows know that I'm incapable of it, I hope!" said Bunter with dignity. "I never knew Fishy hid that book under a loose board in Study No. 14—"

"What?" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"Is there a loose board in my study?"

"He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton's face grew grim. He was beginning to catch on. He had not forgotten what Wingate of the Sixth had told him, though, so far, the worry of Fishy's debt had rather put it out of his thoughts. But if Fisher T. Fish kept a book hidden under a loose board in his study, it was pretty plain what sort of book it was.

"I think I see!" said the captain of the Remove quietly. "Last term Quelch found a book of accounts in your study, Fishy, and burned it, and whopped you. You've started another, and—"

"I—I guess—"

"And Bunter's found out where you kept it, you worm," said Johnny Bull. "If I'd known it was there, I'd have put it on the fire."

"I—I guess—" stammered Fisher T. Fish. He was beginning to wish that he had not allowed his natural wrath and anxiety to carry him away to such

an extent. It would have been more judicious to tackle Bunter in private on the subject. Fishy realised that rather too late.

"If you've got a book with money-lending muck in it, belonging to Fishy, Bunter, you'll hand it over to me," said Harry. "Wingate has put it up to me to see if anything of that kind is going on in the Remove."

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" gasped Fisher T. Fish in dismay.

"Not much doubt about it," said Frank Nugent.

"The doubtfulness is not terrific."

"Now, Bunter—"

"The fact is, I don't know anything about it, you fellows," said Bunter. "I never spotted Fishy hiding the book under the study floor—I'm not the fellow to look through a keyhole, I hope! As for taking it away, I never even thought of it. Besides, it was only a joke on Fishy! I suppose you don't think that a fellow would want to pinch a book of accounts, do you? I thought it would make him sit up when he missed it, see? Not that I touched it," added Bunter, with great caution. "I've never even seen it, and I don't really know whether Fishy keeps an account book at all!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter warmly. "I suppose you fellows can take my word?"

"Oh scissors!"

"If Fishy thinks I've got anything of his, let him go to Quelch about it," said Bunter. "I'm ready to go to Quelch, if Fishy is! He, he, he!"

"Have you got it about you?" asked Harry, scanning the fat figure of the Owl of the Remove for a bulging pocket.

"Of course not; it's too big to go in a pocket!" answered Bunter.

"He knows how big it is, though he's never seen it!" remarked Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh! I—I—I mean—" stammered Bunter.

"What have you done with it, Bunter?"

"I haven't done anything with it, Wharton! I've told you I know nothing about Fishy's book. Look here, I'm not going to have Fishy saying that I've taken a book from his study! I'm going to Quelch! Fishy can jolly well repeat his words before our Form master!" said Bunter.

And Billy Bunter rolled off towards the House.

"Oh, great snakes!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

He cut after Bunter.

Evidently Fisher T. Fish did not want Bunter to place the matter before the Remove master!

The juniors stared after them. There was a general chortle. Bunter, with great dignity, rolled towards the House. Fishy overtook him in a moment—but he was no longer thinking of catching Bunter by his fat neck, or making potato-scrappings of him! Fishy was in a state of quaking terror. He grabbed Bunter's fat arm with a bony hand persuasively.

"Let up, you fat clam! I mean, hold on, old chap!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I guess there ain't any need to go to Quelch."

"Let go my arm, please!" said Bunter loftily.

"I—I guess—"

Bunter came to a halt, and fixed his big spectacles disdainfully on Fishy's excited, scared face. He looked Fishy up and down with the greatest contempt. As a matter of fact, he had not the slightest

intention of going to Mr. Quelch. He was no more anxious than Fishy to draw the Remove master into the matter.

"Now, look here, Fishy," he said. "You've accused me of taking a book from your study! If you stick to it, you've got to come to Quelch and repeat it to him. Are you coming?"

"Nope!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

"Then shut up and leave a fellow alone!" said Bunter.

"Look here—"

"That's enough," said Bunter, with a wave of a fat hand. "Cut off! I'm fed-up with you! The fact is, you're not the sort of fellow I care to be seen speaking to. Keep your distance."

"You—you—pie-faced clam!" gasped Fishy, his fury breaking out again. "If you don't cough up that book, I'll burst you all over the quad."

"That does it!" said Bunter. "I'm going to Quelch!"

He rolled on to the House! Fisher T. Fish rushed after him. He controlled his wrath—he had to! It was only too clear to Fishy that Bunter had the whip-hand—had him in a cleft stick, as it were.

"I—I—I say, Bunter, d-d-don't go to Quelch!" said Fishy in a gasping voice. "It—it's all O.K.—I guess I ain't going to raise Cain—it's all right—leave Quelch out of it—"

"Shut up, then, and leave a fellow alone!" said Bunter victoriously.

And Fisher T. Fish—choking down feelings that were really too deep for words—shut up, and left Bunter alone.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Close Quarters!

PETER TODD stared. Coming into his study, Study No. 7 in the Remove, for his bat, Toddy was greeted by a strange and unexpected sight.

The study was in considerable disorder.

It looked as if a hurried search had been made in it, or else as if it had been struck by a whirlwind! Nearly everything was out of its place.

Various old lumber that was kept in the lower half of the study cupboard had been shifted out. And from that cupboard a pair of bony legs extended. Some fellow was rooting through the cupboard for something.

Toddy stared at those bony legs! He knew that they belonged to Fisher T. Fish. It was the American junior who had struck Study No. 7 like a cyclone. That afternoon was a half-holiday; and Fisher T. Fish was evidently improving the shining hour by searching Bunter's study for his missing book. As it happened to be Toddy's study, too, Peter was not pleased.

As he stepped in, he heard a gasping voice from the depths of the cupboard.

"Tain't here! Jerusalem crickets! Where has that pie-faced clam planted my book? I guess I've rooted through the hull shebang, and there ain't hide nor hair of it in the study! Oh, great snakes!"

Peter Todd grinned.

Fishy, having cleared out most of the lumber, was rooting into the dusky recesses—in vain! He had already rooted over the rest of the study. If Bunter had his book, it was clear that Bunter had not parked it in Study No. 7. Whether Bunter had hidden Fishy's rascally account-book or not, Peter did not care two straws. But he did care whether Fishy upset his study from end

to end. That fact he proceeded to make clear unto Fishy.

Stooping behind the American junior, Peter grasped those bony legs and lifted them; and there was a startled gasp from the other half of Fishy in the cupboard.

"Aw! What the Jehosaphat—Oh, great gophers!"

Peter Todd hurled those bony legs into the cupboard. All of Fishy was now inside. Peter slammed the cupboard door. Then he turned the key.

There was a wild yell from the cupboard!

"Here, I say! What's this stunt? You let me out of this! You hear me yaup, you piccan?"

Unheeding the voice of the charmer, Peter Todd picked up his bat and left the study. Fishy was welcome to root through that cupboard as long as he liked—probably longer! Toddy went down to play cricket, and cheerfully left him to it.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

A set of bony knuckles beat a tattoo on the inner side of the cupboard door. But there was no one to hear. The studies were deserted on a fine half-holiday in July. Unless some fellow happened to come up for something, Fishy was booked till tea-time.

Thump! Thump! Bang! Crash!

"You pesky piccan, will you lenume out of this?"

Bang! Bang! Thump!

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" grunted Fisher T. Fish.

He realised that Toddy had gone and left him to it. He sat in the rather narrow space and gasped and panted. He could not stand up; the cupboard shelf was only three feet from the floor, and it extended over the whole interior. Above that, the cupboard was used as a larder. Below, it was used for odds and ends of lumber. It was a little dusty, and it was very warm. It was rather stuffy! Fishy was in no danger of suffocating—there was plenty of air for him. But it was not nice air!

He sat and panted.

It was more than an hour yet before any fellow was likely to come up to tea. Fishy groaned at the prospect. He perspired in the close confines of the lower half of the cupboard. July was a warm month—and the day was warm even for July! Fishy began to feel as if he was in a dusty oven. He jammed his feet desperately on the cupboard door, hoping to burst it open. But it was in vain! The door stood the strain quite easily.

"Oh, wako snakes and walk chalks!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

He had been fearfully worried about that account-book! In Bunter's hands, there was no telling what might happen to it! Bunter might show it round among the fellows—he might leave it where a prefect might come across it—anything might happen! But Fisher T. Fish forgot even his anxiety about the business-book now. He was almost melting!

If only a fellow would come up! Then, like balm in Gilead, he remembered that Tom Dutton had been given lines that morning, and ordered to take them to Quelch by tea-time. Dutton belonged to Study No. 7! If he came up to do his lines—

Fishy listened eagerly for a footstep. He was tired of banging on the cupboard door. At long last, there was a sound in the study—someone came in from the Remove passage. Fishy hoped that it was Tom Dutton; from Toddy or Bunter he had nothing to hope. He heard a chair dragged to the table.

(Continued on next page.)

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HERE.

"Say, is that you, Dutton?" called out Fishy.

There was no answer.

"Aw! I guess I forgot that piecan was as deaf as a post!" groaned Fisher T. Fish. "Say!" He yelled. "Here, Dutton!"

Fishy put his beef into it; but his voice came muffled from the locked cupboard. Certainly, any fellow but Tom Dutton would have heard it. But Dutton had the misfortune to be deaf—though, in the present circumstances, it was rather Fishy's misfortune than Dutton's!

Tom, seated at the study table, was hurrying through his lines for Quelch. The yelling from the locked cupboard passed him by, like the idle wind which he regarded not.

"Aw, wake snakes!" groaned Fisher T. Fish. He thumped on the door. Even Dutton ought to hear that, Fishy guessed and calculated.

The deaf Removite looked up. He heard a sound; but naturally he did not guess that a Remove fellow was locked inside the study cupboard. He supposed that it was some noise in the passage, and went on with his lines.

Thump! Thump! Bang!

Dutton sat with his back to the cupboard. He did not look in that direction. He glanced with some irritation at the door.

"Dash it all, I wish the fellows wouldn't kick up that row in the passage while a chap's doing lines!" muttered Dutton aloud.

"Oh, great pancakes!" groaned Fisher T. Fish, as he heard those words from the deaf junior. "Oh, Christopher Columbus!"

Bang! Bang! Crash! Fishy banged and crashed his boots on the inner side of the cupboard door.

He heard Dutton rise from the table. He gasped with relief. But Tom did not come to the cupboard. He went to the study door and glared into the passage.

"Look here! Stop that row there!" shouted Dutton.

Then he stared. There was nobody in the passage. Quite puzzled, Tom turned back into the study.

Thump! Bang! Kick! Crash!

In utter amazement Dutton realised, at long last, that the uproar came from the study cupboard.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

Fisher T. Fish could almost have cried with relief when he heard footsteps crossing to the cupboard. The key was turned back, and the door opened. Dutton peered in and jumped almost clear of the floor at the sight of a crimson face streaming with perspiration.

"Ow! Let a fellow out!" groaned Fishy.

He crawled, gasping, from his prison.

Dutton stared at him as if transfixed.

"Look here! What are you up to in that cupboard?" he demanded. "If you've taken up grub-raiding like Bunter—"

"You dog-goned gink!" gasped Fishy. "I was looking for my book. That fat clam's taken my book—"

"Take my hook?" repeated Dutton. "I'm likely to take my hook out of my own study—I don't think! Look here! What are you up to?"

"You deaf galoot, I said book, not hook!"

"Did you say hook or cook?"

"Book!" shrieked Fishy.

"Look? I'm looking! And you're jolly well not going till you've explained what you're up to here!" snapped Dutton. "How did you lock yourself in, I'd like to know?"

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"I didn't!" yelled Fishy. "It was Todd—"

"Who's odd?"

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!"

"Do you mean because I'm deaf?" demanded Dutton indignantly. "You cheeky rotter! I'd rather be deaf, and chance it, than a stingy, minging, sneaking bag of bones! Odd!"

"I didn't say odd!" shrieked Fishy. "I said Todd!"

"That's a whopper!" said Dutton. "Todd never said I was odd, because I'm deaf. What's odd about it, I'd like to know? Not that I'm what you'd call deaf. I can hear all right if fellows speak plainly, just as I'm hearing you now."

"Oh, wake snakes! Look here! Let a guy pass—"

"Oh, I'm an ass, as well, am I?" roared Dutton. "Odd, and an ass! Well, if you think you can call a fellow names like that, I'll jolly well—"

Without stating what he would do, Tom Dutton proceeded to do it. Fishy made a desperate attempt to dodge round him, and reach the study doorway. But he had no chance. The indignant Dutton came at him with left and right.

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets! Gorr-away! Oh crikey! Oh snakes! Whoop!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Ow! My nose! Wow! My eye! Oh thunder!"

Tom Dutton was deaf; but he was a good man with his hands. Fishy had simply no chance. He was knocked right and left; and when he got to the doorway at last, it was in a sprawling, spluttering heap. He did not linger there. He scrambled out, and ran for it.

Dutton, with a snort, went back to his lines. Fisher T. Fish limped wearily into his own study, sank in the armchair, and nursed his nose with one hand, and his eye with the other. For a long, long time Fisher T. Fish felt too used-up even to think about his missing account book.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

An Extra Charge!

"O H, what a little bit of luck!" Bob Cherry's face, which had been unusually clouded of late, looked as bright as the blazing sunshine that July afternoon.

There was a letter in Bob's hand, and from that letter he had drawn a pound note.

It was like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years!

"Gratters, old bean!" said Harry Wharton.

"The gratterfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Jolly luck—what?" grinned Bob.

"I fancied I should have a tip or two for the hols, and this one has come early and avoided the crush. Now I can square that rotter Fishy without selling my bat. Anybody seen Fishy?"

"I say, your fellows!" Billy Bunter joined the Famous Five on their way up to the Remove passage. "I say, hold on! I say, Cherry, old chap, you're not going to waste that pound note on Fishy, are you?"

"Thirteen and ten out of it," answered Bob. "And, look here, you fat ass, we'd better club together and see you through, too. Fishy will haunt you like a bony spectre till you settle."

Bunter held out a fat hand promptly. "Right-ho!" he said. "Hand it over!"

"We'll find Fishy, and see you pay up," said Bob, laughing. "Maully lent

it to you once, and you blew it in the tuckshop."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Let's go and find Fishy, and get it over before tea," said Bob. "You fellows can lend Bunter what you wanted to lend me. You'll never see it again, of course."

"But look here! Don't you waste the money on Fishy!" urged Bunter. "The fact is, Fishy isn't keen on being paid now."

"What?" gasped the Famous Five.

"What I mean is, I've got him," explained Bunter, with a fat grin. "If he asks me for money again, I'm going to show his account book to Quelch. I'll tell him he's not to ask you, either, Bob—see? I can jolly well tell you that I've got him scared to death. He, he, he!"

"Why, you—you—you fat villain!" gasped Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry! If that's the way you talk to a chap who's trying to do you a good turn—"

"You're jolly nearly as big a rogue as Fishy! Kick him!"

"Yaroo!"

Billy Bunter dodged down the staircase again. Why Bob received his kind offer in this way, Bunter did not know. But he knew the weight of Bob Cherry's foot—and he did not want any more.

"Seen Fishy, Toddy?" called out Bob, sighting Peter on the landing.

"Not lately," answered Toddy. "But you may find him in my study. I left him there." And Toddy chuckled.

"Oh, all right!"

The Famous Five went along to Study No. 7, and looked in. Tom Dutton had just finished his lines, and was rising from the table. Nobody else was to be seen in the study.

"Fish been here?" asked Bob.

"Sorry; no," answered Dutton. "A plate, if you like."

"Eh—what? Who wants a plate?"

"Bunter broke the dish the other day," explained Dutton. "I'd lend it to you like a shot if there was one. But—"

"Oh, my hat, Fish!" roared Bob. "Not dish! Fish!"

"Fish! Only sardines," said Dutton. "We're going to have them for tea, when I've taken these lines down to Quelch."

"Fishy—Fisher Tarleton Fish!" yelled Bob. "Fishy of the Remove! American Fish! Bony Fish!"

"Oh, Fish! He was hiding in the study cupboard," said Dutton. "I don't know how he locked himself in it—"

"Ha, ha! I fancy Toddy does!" grinned Bob. "Is he there now?"

"I don't know how," answered Dutton. "He called me names when I let him out, and I jolly well whopped him. I think he went to his study."

"Come on!" said Bob; and the five proceeded up the passage to Study No. 14.

A sound of gasping and grunting greeted them as they arrived. Fisher T. Fish was there. It was a dismal Fish that blinked at the chums of the Remove from the armchair.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!" said Bob. "Look happy, Fishy! Jump up and do a song and dance, old bony bean! You're going to be paid!"

Fisher T. Fish brightened up a little. He was feeling very sore; but money was a balm for all injuries. He rose to his feet.

Bob handed over the pound note he had so opportunely received from a thoughtful and affectionate uncle.

"Six and twopence change," he said.



Having cleared out most of the lumber from the cupboard in Study No. 7, Fishy was busy rooting into the dusky recesses when Peter Todd appeared upon the scene. Stooping behind the American junior, Peter grasped his bony legs. There was a startled gasp from the other half of Fishy in the cupboard. "Aw! What the Jehosaphat—Oh, great gophers!"

"This hyer account has been hanging about a long time," said Fisher T. Fish. "I shall have to charge you a leetle in the way of interest. A guy can't afford to let money lie idle."

"That reminds me," said the captain of the Remove. "Wingate's heard something about money-lending going on among the fags, and he's put it up to me to root out the rascal. I fancy I shan't have to look farther than this study."

"Here's your 6s. 2d.," said Fisher T. Fish hastily. "I guess I ain't charging you—"

Bob slipped the change into his pocket.

"You're not going to charge?" he asked. "Well, I am."

"You?" ejaculated Fisher T. Fish.

"Yes; like this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Co., as Bob Cherry charged—as if he were on the football field.

Crash! Bump!

There was a wild yell from Fisher T. Fish, as he received the charge. He landed on the study floor in a heap.

"Aw! You pesky jay!" shrieked Fishy. "You mad mugwump! You—you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have another?" asked Bob cheerily. "Jump up and have another, old bony bean! You're keen on extra charges, and—"

"Yow-ow-ow! Beat it!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, without getting up. "Mizzle! Absquatulate, you pie-faced jay! Vamoose the ranch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left the study, leaving Fisher T. Fish sitting up and gasping. Extra charges were quite in Fishy's line; but that extra charge did

not seem to have pleased him at all. It was some time before Fishy recovered his breath after that extra charge!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Paid!

"BUNTER!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "It wasn't me."

Mr. Quelch stared at him. "What? What was not you, Bunter?"

"Oh! Anything, sir! I—I mean, nothing!" stammered Bunter. "I haven't been near Coker's study!"

"Coker's study!" repeated the Remove master.

"Yes, sir! I mean, no, sir! Besides, it was days ago! And—and I never went—"

"Bunter," said Mr. Quelch severely, "I was about to ask you if you have paid the amount due to Fishy!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Yes, sir! That is, I'm just going to, sir! I—I'm looking for Fish now, sir!"

"Very well, Bunter! Let there be no more delay in the matter, or I shall pay the amount, and send the bill to your father in due course."

"Oh lor!" murmured Billy Bunter, as his Form master rustled away.

In the peculiar circumstances—with Fisher T. Fish's business-book safe in Bunter's keeping—Fishy was not likely to dun Bunter for that account. He had, in fact, let the matter drop for the present. Bunter had let it drop, too, satisfied to leave it at that.

But apparently it was not to be left at that. Mr. Quelch, having taken the matter in hand, that little account had to be settled. It was clear that the

Remove master was going to assure himself that it had been settled.

A sly twinkle appeared in Billy Bunter's little, round eyes, behind his big, round spectacles. He rolled away in search of Fisher T. Fish. He found that bony youth in his study in the Remove. Fishy, with a deep wrinkle in his brow, was trying to think out where Bunter might possibly have hidden that account-book. It was not in Bunter's study—he knew that now. But where was it?

His eyes glinted at the fat figure as it appeared in the doorway. Billy Bunter eyed him warily. Fishy's hand closed almost convulsively on the inkstand.

"I've just been speaking to Quelch," said Bunter.

Fishy released the inkstand.

"You—you—you jay! You—you've let him see that book—"

"Not yet!" said Bunter, grinning. "I haven't decided what to do with that book yet, Fishy! Besides, I haven't got it! Look here! I want a loan."

"I'll watch it!" growled Fishy.

"I want you to lend me thirteen-and-tenpence," explained Bunter airily. "You can charge any interest you like! I'm not the fellow to haggle. Not a fellow of your sort."

"And when d'you pay?" jeered Fishy.

"When my postal order comes," explained Bunter. "I should hardly care to remain under any obligation to a fellow like you, Fishy. Will you lend me thirteen-and-tenpence?"

"Nope!"

"Oh, all right! Please yourself, of course," said Bunter. "The Head may happen to find that book of yours—"

Fisher T. Fish gasped.

"The fact is," continued Bunter calmly, "I've been thinking it over. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,327."

Fishy, and I'm afraid my conscience won't let me keep it dark. It's a bit too disgraceful, you know. Not Greyfriars style at all! I hear that Wingate has heard something, and he's told Wharton to root it out. Well, Wharton's my form captain, and head boy, too. I can hardly stand out against him. In fact, he's told me to hand over the book to him, if I've got it. I don't know whether he would take it to Wingate, or Quelch, or the Head! But I don't see how I can refuse to hand it over."

Fisher T. Fish looked at the conscientious Bunter as if he could have bitten him!

"Of course, one good turn deserves another," went on Bunter breezily. "I despise you and your dirty money-lending—of course, you know that! You're a beastly Shylock, and I'd hardly touch you with a barge-pole! Still, if you made me a loan, I should go as easy with you as possible—as easy as my conscience will let me, I mean. A fellow of your sort wouldn't understand a fellow having a conscience, I dare say."

Again Fisher T. Fish grasped the ink-stand. He would have given anything, except money, to hurl it at Bunter's head. But he dared not! Not so long as the hiding-place of that precious book was Bunter's secret.

Slowly, without a word, Fisher T. Fish sorted out a ten-shilling note, a half-crown, a shilling, and four pennies. They dropped into Bunter's fat palm.

"Thanks!" said Bunter airily. "Now come down the passage with me, Fishy."

"Get out!" hissed Fisher T. Fish.

"Come along the passage," said Bunter. "I'm going to pay you, and I want to do it before witnesses. You're the kind of fellow to make out afterwards that I hadn't paid you, because it was your own money. You're dishonourable."

Fisher T. Fish rose, and accompanied Bunter down the passage. A number of Remove fellows were grouped on the landing after tea. They glanced at Billy Bunter's fat, grinning face, and the furious countenance of Fisher T. Fish behind him.

"I say, you fellows—he, he, he! Quelch has been jawing me about Fishy's rotten bill," said Bunter. "I've decided to pay him! It's rather beneath a fellow's dignity to haggle with a chap like Fishy."

"Who's lending Bunter thirteen-and-tenpence?" asked the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Smithy! Look here!" Billy Bunter exhibited a ten-shilling note, a half-crown, a shilling, and fourpence.

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Has your postal order come?"

"Wonders will never cease!" grinned Nugent.

"A day worthy to be marked with a white stone!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows! Look here! You're witnesses that I've paid Fishy, if Quelch wants to know!" The fat Owl blinked round at Fisher T. Fish. "Here's your money, Fishy! Count it! Don't make out afterwards that it wasn't right! I don't mind saying plainly that I don't trust you."

Fisher T. Fish's skinny hand closed on the thirteen-and-tenpence. It was something to get it back. Though, in taking it, he washed out Bunter's debt. A dozen Remove fellows were witnesses, now, that that debt had been paid, though they were far from guessing why Bunter wanted witnesses.

"You—you—you—" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh, cut!" said Bunter scornfully.

"I'm fed-up with you! You're a mean rotter, Fishy! In fact, a reptile! Cut!"

Words could not have expressed Fishy's feelings. In silence he tramped back to his study. Billy Bunter blinked at the astonished Removites.

"That's that!" he remarked. "You fellows make out that I never settle up. Well, you've seen that I've paid Fishy, with your own eyes!"

"But can we believe our eyes?" asked the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The seefulness is the believfulness," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the surprisefulness is terrific!"

"Yah!" retorted Bunter, and he rolled away, and lost no time in reporting to Mr. Quelch that he had paid Fisher T. Fish's account.

After call-over that evening, Mr. Quelch—perhaps not wholly relying on Bunter's assurance—mentioned the matter to Fish. Fishy had no choice but to confirm Bunter's statement. Bunter had paid him, before a dozen fellows. There was no getting out of that. Mr. Quelch was satisfied, and dismissed the matter from his mind.

Fishy could not dismiss it so easily. He was thirteen-and-tenpence to the bad! That was awful—but that was not all! His account-book was still hidden away, only Bunter knew where. Suppose—it was a terrifying supposition—suppose Bunter tried to extract another loan from him? That had not occurred to Bunter, so far. It might occur to him later, when he realised more clearly the power that was in his fat hands. The thought of it made Fisher T. Fish turn cold all over.

That evening Fisher T. Fish was a busy man. He grudged the time he had to spend at prep. Every available moment he spent in searching in all sorts of likely and unlikely places for the missing account-book. But he did not think of looking in the box-room chimney! And really it was not much use looking anywhere else.

Fisher T. Fish hardly slept, in the Remove dormitory that night! And when his weary eyes closed, and he sank into slumber at last, it was only to dream that the account-book had turned up, and that the Head was flourishing his birch.

The way of the transgressor was hard!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Reformer!

"The noble nature of his friend,
Won him to virtue in the end."

BILLY BUNTER repeated those lines, in a thoughtful sort of way. Harry Wharton & Co. looked round at the fat Owl.

It was in break the following morning, and Bunter, sitting on the stone balustrade of the steps, seemed to be in an unusually meditative mood.

The Famous Five were talking cricket—their thoughts, just now, being chiefly concentrated on the Rookwood match, which was shortly due. But they gave their attention to Bunter, as he spouted poetry. Poetry was not much in Bunter's line. As he had it sometimes in class, it was a form of work, so Bunter naturally loathed it.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry. "What's that? Did you make that up, Bunter?"

"Eh! No!" said Bunter.

"Sounds as if you might have! Has Quelch given it to you to learn, or what?"

ST JIM'S IN THE SOUP!



No more cricket at St. Jim's! No more eggs and bacon for breakfast! No more canings! What a show! Dr. Crankley, the new headmaster, has certainly got some strange ideas, and he puts 'em into practice as soon as he arrives. Tom Merry & Co. think he's a dear old soul and they put up with a lot—but when he bans cricket that's more than they can stand and the sparks begin to fly! Get yourself a copy of this splendid story right now and read all about these amazing happenings at St. Jim's!

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"I've been thinking about that poem," said Bunter.

"What with?"

"Beast! I say, you fellows, we had it in class once—I forget what it was, and what ass wrote it, but I remember those lines. 'There's a lot in that,' said Bunter. 'Haven't you fellows noticed how a chap full of faults may be reformed and improved and made into a really decent fellow by the example of a really decent chap?'"

The Co. gazed at Bunter. Thoughts like these were very uncommon in Bunter's fat brain. The fat Owl was in a very unusual mood.

"For instance, look at you, Wharton!" said Bunter, blinking at him.

"Well, what about me?" asked Harry.

"You remember what a cheeky, ill-tempered, swanky sort of blighter you were when you first came here—"

"Eh?"

"I took you up—"

"What?"

"You were ungrateful, I know that; but I stuck to you. Look how you've improved. A fellow would hardly know you as the same chap."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Co., quite entertained by the expression on Harry Wharton's face. Wharton, seemingly at a loss for words, gazed at the Owl of the Remove.

"What's happened once might happen again!" said Bunter. "Everybody's got some good in him. Even an out-and-out rotter, like Fishy, for instance, might be made into a decent chap, if he had a friend to stand by him, point out his faults, set him a noble example, and all that. The noble nature of his friend might win him to virtue in the end, you know, just like What's-his-name says in the poem. What?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I can't say I like the chap," went on Bunter. "Still, I rather think it's up to me. If anybody could do it, I could—what?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Fancy Fishy being decent, you know," said Bunter. "He's a stingy beast! Well, suppose he left off being stingy—think of that! If a fellow could cure him of that, by his noble example, you know—"

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

Evidently, unusual thoughts, great thoughts, were stirring in Bunter's fat intellect. What had brought them there the chums of the Remove could not guess. Bunter, it appeared, was thinking of reforming Fishy! It was "some" task—if he was going to teach Fishy not to be stingy, not to be mean, and not to think by night and day of his money! Possibly it was true that the noble nature of a friend might win over even Fishy to better things. But nobody had ever suspected before that Billy Bunter had the necessary noble nature! Bunter, however, seemed satisfied on that point.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter. "One of these days Fishy will get sacked, with his money-lending and swindling, and getting money off fellows with his trickery. Suppose the example of a noble, high-minded, honourable fellow turned him into a decent chap?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you can cackle," said Bunter. "But I'm jolly well going to try it on! You know what Wharton was like in his first term—"

"You silly owl!"

"I don't mean that he was a rotter anything like Fishy, of course. But he was rather a beast. You remember that, Harry old chap?"

"You blithering idiot!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Perhaps you don't see it so clearly as other fellows," admitted Bunter. "Nugent will remember, though. You remember you scrapped with Wharton his first day here. Franky—Yaroooh! Wharrer you up to, you silly beast?"

The question was really superfluous. Bunter knew what Frank Nugent was up to. Frank was tapping his bullet head on the stone balustrade.

"Owl! Leggo!" roared Bunter.

"Beast!"

He rubbed his damaged head.

"I say, you fellows—"

The Famous Five walked away. They seemed to have had enough of the bright and entertaining conversation of William George Bunter.

"I say, Toddy!" Peter Todd, coming out of the House, grinned at the sight of Bunter rubbing his head. "I say, old chap, that beast Nugent banged my head—"

"Nothing in it to damage!" said Peter consolingly.

"Oh, really, Toddy! I say, he says he could lick you, Peter—"

"Does he really?"

"Yes, and if I were you I'd go after him and jolly well kick him!"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"Well, I won't go after Nugent and kick him!" he said. "I'll stay here and kick you, instead!"

"Why, you beast—yaroooh—leave off—whooooo!"

Billy Bunter rolled away in haste.

When the bell rang for third school, and the Removites came back to the Form-room, Billy Bunter joined Fisher T. Fish coming up to the door. He gave him a friendly and amiable grin.

Fishy gave him a black scowl in response.

Fishy had spent "break" in another vain hunt for that account-book. His feelings towards Billy Bunter were almost homicidal. Fishy longed and yearned to take him by his fat neck and bang his head on the wall. So he had no particular use for Bunter's friendly grins.

"You're not looking very bright, old chap," said Bunter.

"You pesky fat clam!" was Fishy's reply. "Where's that book?"

"Never mind that!" said Bunter. "I say, Fishy, don't walk away when a fellow's talking to you. I've got something to say, Fishy—Quelch won't be along for a minute or two. The fact is, I'm going to take you up, Fishy."

"Wha-a-a-t?" ejaculated Fishy.

"I mean it!" said Bunter, blinking at him very seriously. "I'm going to be a pal to you!"

"You pie-faced piecan!" was Fishy's ungrateful reply.

Fishy was not popular in his Form; but he did not seem in the least gratified by the prospect of being "taken up" by Billy Bunter.

"Oh, really, Fishy! I tell you, I mean it! Of course, I shan't have a lot of time to give you. Fellows who are run after, like me, have to ration their friends, if you know what I mean. Still, I'm going to be a pal to you. What I think is that my influence will do you good."

"Great snakes!"

"A noble nature—"

"What-at?"

"May win you to virtue in the end," said Bunter. "I'm going to try it on, anyhow. You weren't here when Wharton came, Fishy; but I dare say you've heard fellows speaking of what my friendship did for him—made a gentleman of him, in fact! Of course,

I don't expect to be able to make a gentleman of you—"

"Eh?"

"Can't expect too much," said Bunter. "But if I make you a fairly decent chap, I shall be satisfied."

Fisher T. Fish clenched his bony hands convulsively. Never had Billy Bunter been nearer to having his fat little nose pushed through his bullet head.

"You know," continued the happy Bunter, "what a rotter you are, Fishy! Mean and stingy and cheese-paring and parsimonious, and all that! Well, I'm going to put a stop to it. You're going to spend money."

"Spend money!" gurgled Fishy.

"Yes! It will do you good. Money was made to spend, you know; not to stack away! You'll get to like it in the long run. I'm going to see that you do it. The fact is, Fishy, such a rotter as you are at present is out of place here. If I can't make you decent, I shall consider it my duty to get you bunked out of the school!"

Fisher T. Fish gasped. He caught on. That horrid account-book, safe in Bunter's keeping, was to be held over his head, like a sword of Damocles. Billy Bunter was going to reform him—under penalty of having that deadly evidence of his misdoings placed before the Head! Whether that would mean the sack, or only a flogging, Fishy could not be sure. But he was sure that he did not want either!

"My advice to you," continued Bunter, "is to play up! There must be a grain of decency in you somewhere! I'm going to bring it out! Stinginess is your chief fault. You know that, of course. Well, spending money is the way to cure that! I'm going to see that you do it. I'm going to—Whoop!"

Self-control failed Fishy all of a sudden. He hurled himself at Billy Bunter. He hit out right and left.

"Oh crikey! Keep off! Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as a bony fist landed on his fat nose, and then another on his fat chin. "Wow! Beast! I—I—Yoop!"

There was a rustle in the passage.

"Fish! Bunter! What—" It was Quelch, coming along to let his Form into the Form-room.

"Aw!" gasped Fishy, remembering. "Oh! Great snakes! I—I say, Bunter—"

"Whoop!" roared Bunter. "I'll jolly well tell Quelch now! Yow-ow-ow! I'll jolly well—Yaroooh! I'll—"

"Fish, you will take a hundred lines! Bunter, cease that ridiculous noise!"

Mr. Quelch rustled on. Bunter, spluttering, rolled after him, but a fat arm was caught in a bony hand.

"I—I say, Bunter, I—I guess—Look here, come along to the tuckshop after class!" gasped Fishy. "I—I—I guess I'll stand you a—a—a tart!"

"I'm going to hand over that book when—"

"I—I say, I—I guess I'll make it a dozen tarts!" whispered Fisher T. Fish desperately.

Billy Bunter relented.

"Well, you cheeky rotter, if you really want me to be a pal to you—"

"You—you—I mean, yep! Sure!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

"Well, I'll give you a chance," said Bunter.

And Fisher T. Fish breathed again, as he followed the fat junior into the Form-room. Bunter's noble friendship certainly had no great attraction for him, but it was a respite, and it gave him a chance of yet discovering that miserable account-book. And once that wretched book was safe in his hands

again, Fisher T. Fish promised himself the solace of kicking Billy Bunter from one end of Greyfriars to the other.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Good for Fishy!

BOB CHERRY stared.

It was a surprising sight. After class that morning, Bob wandered into the school shop for ginger-beer. Billy Bunter was there—sitting on a high stool at the counter, and going strong. Fisher T. Fish stood by his side. Bunter's face was happy—in fact, beaming. Fisher T. Fish looked in the lowest spirits. The contrast between their respective countenances was really striking. Happiness and misery were side by side.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob. "Don't say your postal order has really come, Bunt!"

Bunter blinked round at him.

"I say, old chap, these tarts are good," he said. "Have some."

"Been robbing a bank, or what?" asked Bob.

"He, he he!"

"I guess I ain't standing Cherry anything!" hissed Fisher T. Fish. "Look here, you keep off the grass, Bob Cherry—see?"

"Do you think I'd let you stand me anything?" snapped Bob. "Go and eat coke! One ginger-pop, please, Mrs. Mimble!"

"Oh, really, Fishy! If you're going to be mean—" said Bunter.

"Is he ever anything else?" asked Bob.

"Well, if he wants me to be his pal he will jolly well have to chuck it!" said Bunter. "I'm not palling with a fellow who's mean and stingy! You can't expect it, Fishy!"

Fisher T. Fish suppressed his feelings. "If our friendship is to continue," went on Bunter, with dignity, "you've got to chuck all that, Fishy! I make that a condition."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob Cherry blankly.

Apparently Bunter was carrying out his plan, and trying the effect of his noble nature in reforming Fishy! Why Fishy was standing it was a mystery. He did not seem to be enjoying it. Bob finished his ginger-pop, and went to tell his friends the strange news.

"That will be five shillings," said Mrs. Mimble, with a very curious look at Billy Bunter and his new friend.

Fisher T. Fish shuddered. His bony hand went into his trouser pocket. He would almost as soon have lost five teeth!

But he had not heard the worst!

"I'm not finished yet," said Bunter calmly.

"You—you'll spoil your dinner, Bunter!" groaned Fishy.

"Eh! Dinner's not for an hour yet," said Bunter. "That's all right! I'll have some of those doughnuts!"

"Look hyer—"

"I don't want any mean, stingy, sordid arguing, Fishy!" said Billy Bunter firmly. "I've told you the terms on which I'm willing to take you up and make a friend of you. You've got to cut out the stinginess—cut it right out! It's for your own good, you know. That's why I'm doing it, of course."

"You pie-faced clam—"

"That's enough," said Bunter. "That does it! I'll go! I've got to get something for the Head—"

"D-d-don't go, old chap!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Stick where you are! I—I don't mind! Oh, wake snakes!"

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"Well, don't let's have any stingy arguing, then," said Bunter. "Look here, you're not eating anything yourself! Tuck in!"

"I—I guess I'm not hungry—"

"Rot!" said Bunter decidedly. "Tuck in! Try the jam tarts! Why shouldn't you have some, when you're paying for the lot?"

Fisher T. Fish groaned.

"And look here," went on Bunter, with his mouth full. "If I ask a friend to join in, no more of your stingy objections. Don't you speak again to any friend of mine as you did to Cherry! Let that happen again, and I chuck you! Mind, I mean that!"

Skinner and Snoop and Stott came into the tuckshop. They, like Bob, stared at the strange contrast of happiness and wretchedness. Billy Bunter waved a fat hand to them.

"Have some of this, you fellows! These tarts are ripping!"

Billy Bunter was a generous fellow when another fellow was footing the bill.

"Who's paying?" grinned Skinner.

"My friend Fishy."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I've taken Fishy up, you see," explained Bunter, blinking at the astonished three. "Fishy wants me to pal with him. Don't you, Fishy?"

"I—I—I— Yep!" gasped Fishy.

"Well, I've made it a condition that if I pal with Fishy he chucks up his rotten, stingy ways!" said Bunter.

"I can see him doing it!" chuckled Snoop.

"He's doing it," said Bunter calmly.

"He's set out to spend money, and he likes spending it, don't you, Fishy?"

"Oh! Yep!" gurgled Fishy.

"It's doing him good already," said Bunter. "Fishy's enjoying himself, ain't you, Fishy?"

"Oh, you piecan! I—I mean, sure!" groaned Fishy.

"He's really a generous chap," went on Bunter. "If he did himself justice, I mean! He's willing for you three fellows to tuck in at his expense, ain't you, Fishy?"

Fisher T. Fish seemed on the verge of apoplexy! He tried to think out whether, after all, it would mean the sack if the Head learned of his rascality. A flogging, if it was a flogging, could hardly be worse than this! But he dared not risk it! Last term the Head had given him a very serious warning. This time it might be the "chopper."

"Ain't you, Fishy?" repeated Bunter, blinking at him.

Fishy could not speak. He contrived to nod.

"Look here, pulling our leg, or what?" asked the mystified Skinner.

He could not understand Fisher T. Fish standing anybody anything.

"Speak up, Fishy!" said Bunter encouragingly. "Don't be bashful, old man! You needn't mind the fellows knowing how you've changed since I made a friend of you. They'll like you all the better."

"Well, if Fishy means it—" said Snoop, in wonder.

"Don't you, Fishy?" asked Bunter, with a threatening blink.

"Yep!" gasped Fishy. "Sure! I'm paying! Oh crikey!"

That was enough for Skinner & Co. Willingly enough they joined Billy Bunter in disposing of the good things. Fisher T. Fish wiped the perspiration from his brow. He had read, in history books, of hapless people who had been put to the torture. Now he knew what they had felt like!

Bolsover major came into the tuckshop with his friend Dupont. They stared at the scene of festivity.

Wibley and Kipps and Elliott came in, and they also stared. Bunter waved a fat paw to them.

"Join up, you fellows!" he called out. "Fishy's treat!"

"Fishy's treat!" gasped Bolsover major.

"Pas possible!" ejaculated Napoleon Dupont. "Pour cela, non!"

"Honest Injun!" grinned Bunter. "Fishy means it. Don't you, Fishy? I say, you fellows, Fishy is turning over a new leaf. He's entirely giving up being mean and stingy, and the more money he spends the better he likes it. The fact is, he wants to make up for lost time. Don't you, Fishy?"

"Oh, great snakes! Yep!" groaned Fishy.

"Well, if I didn't see this I wouldn't have believed it," said Bolsover major. "I always thought it gave Fishy a pain to spend money. But if he's turning over a jolly old new leaf, I'm the man to back him up!"

"Same here!" said Wibley cordially.

Fisher T. Fish watched the feast with haggard eyes. Mrs. Mimble was keeping an account of the expenditure with the stump of a pencil, on a sheet of wrapping-paper. It was quite a rush of custom in the school shop. Several more Remove fellows came in, and were heartily invited by Bunter to join up. Nobody was unwilling; and it was certain that Fisher T. Fish was rising in the estimation of his Form. Stinginess is an extremely unpopular fault; and it had always been Fishy's distinguishing characteristic. If Fishy was giving up stinginess there was no doubt that the Greyfriars Remove would think much better of him.

And it looked as if he was! Even Lord Mauleverer, or the wealthy Bounder, seldom let the cash flow to this tune!

It is said that the leopard cannot change his spots. But it really seemed as if Fishy had changed his nature—at a bound! From the extreme of parsimony he seemed to have jumped to the other extreme of reckless extravagance!

In spite of Bunter's generous urgings, Fishy did not eat anything himself. So far, at least, he could keep the margin down!

But he trembled with apprehension as he watched Mrs. Mimble jotting down innumerable items. It seemed to Fishy as if that "treat" would never end!

But it ended at last!

Billy Bunter, happy and sticky, rolled off his stool. Even Billy Bunter could not eat any more.

"Thanks, Fishy!" he said airily. "Jolly decent of you! I say, you fellows, I think this is jolly decent of Fishy, don't you?"

"Yes, rather!" said Bolsover major heartily.

"Jolly decent!" said Kipps.

Fisher T. Fish was left to deal with Mrs. Mimble. He rather startled that good dame by giving utterance to a deep, hair-raising groan when she announced that the total came to two pounds ten shillings and sixpence. It was like a nightmare—an awful nightmare! Fishy's face was pale and perspiring as he paid. He tottered out of the tuckshop. A good slice of his moneylending profits, that term, had gone—at one fell swoop! Life seemed to have lost all its savour for Fisher T. Fish.

Billy Bunter was convinced that this was for Fishy's good. Perhaps it was. But he did not look as if it was doing him good. He looked broken-hearted!



"Come on, you fellows!" said Bunter, as Skinner & Co. entered the tuckshop. "Fish's standing treat, aren't you, Fishy?" "Yep!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Sure! I'm paying! Oh crikey!" That was enough for Skinner & Co. Willingly enough they joined Billy Bunter in disposing of the good things, while the American junior watched with haggard face.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON laughed. "It's funny!" he said. "Frightfully funny!" agreed Nugent. "But—"

"But it won't do!"

"No," said the captain of the Remove, shaking his head. "It jolly well won't! We'd better speak to that fat villain!"

It was after class, and there were strange rumours in the Remove. It was said that Fisher T. Fish was going to stand a spread in the Rag—to the whole Form! Billy Bunter had specially asked fellow after fellow not to think of teasing in the study, but to turn up at that great festival instead. He wanted the whole Form to come. His friend Fishy was, he said, keen on it; and Fishy was the founder of the feast!

A spread for the whole Remove was likely to reach a staggering figure, and Fisher T. Fish was the least likely man at Greyfriars to think of such wild and reckless expenditure—or any expenditure at all, if he could help it. That Fishy could have changed so completely, and so suddenly, was really incredible. And the Famous Five, thinking it over, jumped at the explanation, and wondered that they had not jumped at it earlier. And though they laughed at the idea of Fisher T. Fish being reformed in this extraordinary way by the terror of the "sack" being held over his head, they agreed that it would not do. So they went to look for Bunter!

They found that fat and fatuous reformer in the Rag! Apparently, he

was planning arrangements for that extensive spread.

He blinked cheerily at the Famous Five as they came in.

"I say, you fellows, you're coming?" he asked. "It's going to be good, I can tell you! Fishy won't get through under a tanner, I fancy. He, he, he! I'm giving the orders myself—Fishy's leaving that to me. You can rely on it that the stuff will be good, and that there will be lots of it. Out and come again—what? He, he, he!"

"And what is Fishy doing this for?" asked Harry Wharton, eyeing the grinning fat Owl curiously.

"I'm reforming him," explained Bunter. "I told you fellows I would! The example of a noble nature—"

"Oh crikey!"

"Like that chap in the poem, you know—the noble nature of his friend won him to virtue in the end," said Bunter. "Fishy's quite changing! Nothing stingy about him now. I can tell you, my friendship will be the saving of that chap! I've heard a lot of fellows saying to-day that he doesn't seem the utter worm they always thought him."

"Look here, you fat villain, you've got Fishy's swindling account-book somewhere, and you're holding it over his head," said Harry. "You're frightening him into this."

"Oh, really, Wharton! I might be putting a little pressure on—but that's for his own sake. I'm doing this entirely for Fishy's sake. I hope you don't think I care about the grub!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Haven't given it a thought," said

Bunter. "It's not much I eat, as you know. A jam tart or two, perhaps. Perhaps a doughnut. Nothing much! 'Tain't as if I had an appetite like yours."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't you fellows worry about Fishy," said Bunter. "He's enjoying this. He knows it's for his good! If he doesn't care for my friendship he can say so, I suppose. So long as I treat him as a friend he's got to play up, and chuck stinginess entirely. I've put that to him quite plain."

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter. That fat youth was, perhaps, unconscious that he was thinking briefly of the loaves and fishes! He had satisfied his podgy conscience that he was benefiting Fishy by this reform movement! In fact, so far as Bunter could see, it was a benefit to everybody. Fishy was being cured of his horrid stinginess, Mrs. Mimble was doing a good trade, the Remove fellows were getting an unusual allowance of good things; it was beneficial all round. Perhaps holding a threat over a fellow's head was not quite playing the game; but then, Fishy never played the game himself, so what could he expect? Bunter's fat conscience was quite easy. It was rather an elastic conscience, it is true, and could stretch considerably when required!

"It won't do, Bunter!" said Wharton. "You can't threaten a fellow into doing things, as you'd understand if you weren't as big a fool as Fishy is a rogue. It's not cricket!"

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"I'd rather you fellows minded your own business," said Bunter. "I don't want you to come barging in between me and my friend."

"Is Fishy doing all this out of friendship?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Entirely! You see, he's so bucked at being taken up by a fellow like me."

"Cut it out, fathead!" said the captain of the Remove. "Where's that book of Fishy's?"

"Never even heard of it."

"Where have you hidden it, you podgy George Washington?"

"I don't even know what book you're talking about. If Fishy thinks I've got a book of his he can go to Quelch, as I've told him. Quelch would like to see it. He; he, he!"

"Now, look here, Bunter," said Wharton, seriously. "You don't know that you're acting like a young rotter, but I'm telling you, and you can take my word for it. See?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Fishy's a worm, but you're not going to blackmail him—and that's really what it amounts to. He deserves it all, and more; but it won't do. You've got to shell out that book."

"The book's got nothing to do with it," explained Bunter. "This is a matter of friendship, pure friendship. You fellows wouldn't understand, perhaps, but the influence of a noble nature—"

"The nobleness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, if it's a case of friendship, and the influence of a noble nature, you can get on with it," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "But you can do it after handing over that book."

"We shall want some more chairs," said Bunter, apparently desirous of changing the subject. "Will you fellows get some chairs?"

"About that book—"

"I'm talking about chairs, not books! I think you fellows might make yourselves useful, when I'm asking you to the spread of the term. Mind, the invitations depend entirely on me. My friend Fishy is taking my advice about everything. But for me he wouldn't be standing this splendid spread at all."

"I fancy not!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Now, where's that book? When we've burned it you can still try the effect of a noble nature on Fishy. I hardly think it will make him spend money, though."

"Hardly!" chuckled Nugent.

"I don't know anything about Fishy's book! I don't believe he had a book! I wish you fellows would stick to the point! If you're going to fetch those chairs—"

"I don't think the chairs will be wanted after we've burned Fishy's accounts. Where's that book?"

"I say, you fellows— Here, leggo!" roared Bunter, as the Famous Five collared him. "I'll leave you out of the spread! I'll— Yarooooop!"

Tap, tap, tap!

Billy Bunter's bullet-head tapped on the table; loud yells rang through the Rag.

"Sorry, old fat bean," said Harry, "but you've got to cough up that swindling book! We're going to stop Fishy welshing—and we're not going to let you begin. Where's that book?"

"Yarooooop! Leggo!"

Tap, tap, tap!

"Yow! Ow! Whoop! I haven't seen any book!" shrieked Bunter. "I never took it out from under the—yow, ow, ow!—floor in Fishy's study, and I never—wow!—hid it anywhere! And I can jolly well say— Yarooooop!"

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Tap, tap, tap!

"Oh crikey! Oh crumbs! Whoop! Stop it!" shrieked Bunter. "I'll tell you where the rotten book is if you like! Yow, ow, ow! I was going to tell you all along. Whoop! I hid it in the box-room chimney! Yooo-hooop!"

"Right-ho!" said the captain of the Remove. "Come on, you men, we've got to see Fishy now!"

The Famous Five left the Rag. Billy Bunter glared after them with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles. It had been going to be such a great and glorious and gorgeous spread—and now there was not going to be a spread at all! Bunter realised that. Without the terror of that wretched account-book reaching the Head, Fishy was not likely to be much influenced by Bunter's friendship—and his noble nature! Bunter's career as a reformer was suddenly cut short.

"Beasts!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled dismally out of the Rag. Instead of that unlimited spread, Bunter was reduced to his usual necessity of butting into some fellow's study at tea-time, at the risk of being booted out! It was really hard on a reforming fellow with a noble nature!

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Finishing with Fishy!

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

Fisher T. Fish did not look as if he was enjoying life; he looked as if he was going to be hanged.

The Famous Five found him in his study. His long face looked longer than ever; his sly eyes were almost haggard. Evidently the prospect of that spread in the Rag did not buck Fishy as it had bucked Bunter. It was a vision of calamity to him; indeed, he was debating in his horrified mind whether it would not be better to be sacked than to foot such a bill.

The chums of the Remove grinned at his dismal face.

"Buck up, Fishy!" said Harry Wharton. "We've got rather good news for you. Bunter's told us where he's hidden that book of yours."

Fisher T. Fish jumped up.

"Where?" he gasped.

"In the box-room chimney."

"Great snakes!"

Fisher T. Fish made one bound out of the study; his bony legs fairly flashed along the passage.

"After him!" gasped Wharton.

The Famous Five rushed in pursuit. Up the box-room stairs tore Fisher T. Fish; after him flew the Famous Five.

He dashed into the box-room, and would have slammed the door after him, but a boot interposed in time. The chums of the Remove followed him in.

"I guess you jays ain't wanted hyer!" snapped Fishy.

"Guess again!" said Harry Wharton. "You're going to get hold of that swindling account-book of yours and hand it over to me as head boy. Wingate's put it up to me, and I'm seeing it through. Bunter's not going to be allowed to stick you; but you're not going to be allowed to carry on the Shylock business. See?"

"I guess—"

"Chuck it! This isn't a guessing competition. The book's in the chimney. Get it out!"

Fisher T. Fish paused. He was eager to get hold of his precious business book again, but he was not eager to hand it over to the head boy of the Remove.

"Now, look hyer," said Fisher T. Fish. "I got a lot of accounts in that book; I can't remember 'em all. I shall be fairly done if anything happens to that book. I guess—"

"That's all right!" said Harry. "You're going to chuck up the whole game. You're lucky to have to deal with me, instead of Wingate; a prefect would take you to the Head, and that would most likely be the sack. Are you getting that book out?"

"I—I reckon—"

Bob Cherry went to the grate, reached up the chimney, and hooked down the book. It was opened, and column after column of Fishy's scraggy figuring was revealed. Judging by the extent of the entries in the account-book, Fishy had been doing quite an extensive business in the Lower School. Harry Wharton's brow darkened as he looked at it, and he gave Fisher T. Fish a grim glance.

"You miserable worm!" he said. "Blessed if I don't feel half inclined to take that book to the Head! You ought to be kicked out of Greyfriars!"

"You dog-goned jay, it's business!" groaned Fisher T. Fish. "Don't you piecans in this mouldy old island understand anything about business?"

Harry Wharton proceeded to tear the pages out of the business book. Frank Nugent took out a box of matches.

Fisher T. Fish watched them. This was better, certainly, than having the book left in Bunter's possession. The path of reform is never easy; and the path of Fishy's reform, under Bunter's influence, had been a particularly thorny one! Still, it was awful. The accounts of a term were entered in that book; and a number of I.O.U.'s were pinned in the pages. Even Fishy's calculating brain could hardly remember the multifarious details of his extensive business, if that book was burned! He made a desperate jump at the captain of the Remove, to snatch the book and flee.

Johnny Bull grasped him by the back of the neck.

Bump!

Fishy's bony form smote the floor of the box-room.

"Aw! Wake snakes!" howled Fisher T. Fish. "Let up, you galoot! I'm telling you, I'll sure make potato-scrappings of you! Oh, great gophers! I'll say this is the bee's knee!"

"Sit on him!" said Harry.

"What-ho!" grinned Johnny.

And he sat on Fisher T. Fish, pinning him down, while the captain of the Remove dealt with the business-book. Every leaf was torn out of it, and piled in the box-room grate. Nugent set a match to the heap, the papers blazed up, and the covers were placed on top of the funeral-pyre. With haggard eyes Fisher T. Fish watched his accounts going up in smoke!

"Aw! You pesky piecans!" he groaned. "You pie-faced ginks! You dog-goned geeks! Oh, this sure is fierce! I'll say this is the elephant's side-whiskers."

"That's that!" remarked Harry Wharton, when the little conflagration had burned out. "Now, this is your property, Fishy, and you're going to have it. Shove it down his neck."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Now that the account-book was reduced to ashes, Fisher T. Fish did not want it. That made no difference, however. He had to have it.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh took a double handful of the ashes, which were duly crammed down the back of Fisher T. Fish's bony neck. The hapless Shylock of Greyfriars wriggled and writhed and squirmed as he got them.

(Continued on page 28.)

ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!

By JOHN BREARLEY !



WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Simon Allison, once part-owner of the great Allison Motor Works, invents a powerful supercharger that promises to revolutionise the small car industry. Spurred on by his new partner, a thug named Valetti, Len Allison, the old man's nephew—"boss" of the works and a "big noise" as an amateur in the Avonshire County Cricket XI—enlists the services of a hunchback to raid his uncle's workshop and steal the plans. The raid is carried out and old Simon is badly battered. The "plans" the hunchback takes away, however, are fakes. Realising he will now have to support his crippled father, young Bill Allison, a crack left-handed bowler, leaves Mike Doyle, a mechanic, in charge of the workshop, and joins the county club as a pro.

(Now read on.)

Dropped Catches !

THE young recruit's ordeal started, too, in the very first over. As second slip to a real fast bowler, Bill was soon in action.

Len, to whom the past week had been a sheer torment, had some long-pent-up steam to work off; and, as was always the case, he proceeded to vent it by plugging 'em down at his fastest and wildest.

In swift succession three vicious bumpers pitched short, kicked dangerously, and whizzed head-high past Jack Lee, who wisely laid his bat on his shoulder and kept it there. But the fourth, faster than ever and a shade straighter, he was forced to play. Mistiming it slightly, he nicked it.

There was a sharp click—and Bill, standing well back, had a glimpse of a blurred red streak flashing in his direction.

Hardly conscious of the movement, the tall, lithe youngster flung himself sideways, shot out his arm, and knew even as he dived, that he could not make the catch. Then a stab of pain stung his right hand as the ball crushed his finger-tips against the turf. The next he knew he was sprawling full length, with the pill trickling slowly along the ground towards Ted Forbes.

Missed it!

Scarlet in the face, wishing fervently that the ground would open and swallow him, the lad scrambled up. A catch—his first—and he had muffed it before the eyes of three thousand spectators!

Knowing without looking that Len was scowling like a thundercloud, Bill glanced miserably at Jerry Tempest. To his utter surprise the county captain wore an approving smile. So also did the rest of the team, except Len. And, more amazing still, the onlookers were clapping him to the echo!

Bill blinked and went redder. Then, above the applause, he heard the quiet, comforting voice of Ted Forbes beside him.

"Jolly well fielded, longshanks! You certainly covered some ground that time!"

"Eh?" Bill blinked again. Yes, now he looked round, he did seem to be some yards from his original position. "I'm awfully sorry!" he mumbled. "I tried hard to bring off the catch, but just couldn't get my hand under the ball in time!"

Forbes chewed a blade of grass.

"Catch, my foot! Wally Hammond himself couldn't have snatched that one," he drawled, to Bill's intense relief. "If you hadn't tried for it like some long-legged Jack-in-the-box, no one would have known it was even a chance. You're four runs to the good already, my son. Keep it up!"

"Phew-w!"

Thus heartened, Bill managed to shake off some of his confusion, and for the first time grinned with something like his old cheeriness.

At the finish of Len's over, however, a vastly different reception awaited him when he changed ends and took his place in the slips beside his cousin.

Only too anxious to upset the young novice, Len raked him with an ill-tempered glare, while Frank Lee took guard, and Fraser, a medium-paced trundler, prepared to bowl.

"What was the matter with you down there—sleeping, or something?" Len snapped out. "This is first-class cricket you've wangled into now, not school tosh. That catch was a dolly!"

Bill straightened himself quickly and eyed his cousin up and down. A word of reproof from Jerry Tempest, of any other member of the eleven, might well have rattled the lad sadly, but Len's childish outburst merely brought out all the stubbornness in his nature.

"Oh, yeah?" he retorted coolly. "That's funny. Forbes said it wasn't a catch at all!"

Len, flushing darkly at the calm defiance, half-turned and snarled.

"You—you cheeky pup! How dare you answer me back like that?" he rasped. "Remember you're just a professional—and a new one, at that, so keep your place, unless you want me to report you. While we're playing cricket you'd better forget I'm your cousin. Understand?"

Bill, thoroughly roused, rolled his eyes in mock grief.

"Forget it? Goodness knows I try hard enough, old bird!" he replied sweetly. "But, you know, it's just like having an aching tooth—you can't forget it."

"Why, you—you—"

Forgetting where he was for the minute, Len edged closer, fists clenched, dark eyes blazing. It was lucky for both cousins that at that moment Frazer started to bowl.

"All right, my buck! I'll see about you later!"

With a last menacing scowl Len crouched in his place again, while Bill, keyed up rather than depressed by the little breeze, followed his example.

Frank Lee, a livelier batsman than his more patient brother, took five off Frazer's first over, and the game began to settle down.

Thus, for the next forty-five minutes, all was quiet on the Avonshire front.

Steadily the Somerset brothers pushed the score along, playing Len's good balls with care, punching the loose ones mercilessly. Bill earned another round of applause for fielding a crisp cut, but that was all that came his way. Then, however, all at once, the moment he had been longing for, yet dreading, arrived.

With the score at thirty-five for none, Jerry Tempest took Len off and flipped the ball to his youngest bowler.

At once the Avonshire ground hummed like a giant bee-hive.

To a man the spectators sat up expectantly, giving the young recruit a hearty ovation, partly for encouragement, and to show their sympathy.

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for old Simon Allison and his boy. And loudest of all rose the cheers of a crowd of Grammarians, who had assembled in force to watch Bill in his first game.

"Now, Bill! Sock it to 'em, Bill! Up, Schoo-ool!"

"Good old Madman!"

Under cover of the din, Jerry Tempest seized the chance to say a few quiet words to his new bowler.

"I haven't put you on before, laddie, because I wanted you to settle down out here first," nodded the shrewd veteran. "Now, just keep your head and bowl like you did against us last week. You can take it from me, that form was quite good enough for first-class cricket, so take things easy, and don't worry. You've got your chance now, and you're going to do well!"

In spite of his confident manner, however, the grizzled County captain studied Bill keenly, and a little pang of uneasiness ran through him at sight of the boy's pale face and stiff lips. Yet he need not have worried himself, for Bill was all there, now that he had the ball in his hand.

Outwardly, he looked tense and drawn, as was to be expected. But inwardly, he was as cool as ice. It was astonishing, in a way, and rather wonderful. But Bill hadn't the time to examine his feelings.

As Jerry Tempest said, here was his chance—the opportunity to make his place in the County XI. secure, and, by doing so, carry on the fight for his father and the Allison invention! All Bill knew, at that critical moment, was that he was as fit as a fiddle and ready to bowl for his life.

Experienced eyes brightened as they watched the lad prepare for action.

Leisurely and methodically, Bill set his field, as in a School match. Three men in close, to form a leg-trap, Len on his own, at short-slip, mid-off and cover-point deep, and the rest of the fieldsmen placed in a wide circle, out in the country. Amid interested silence he rolled his sleeves tighter, made his mark four steps behind the crease, turned, and looked at the umpire.

Then, as the official nodded "Play," the youngest pro in England skipped forward to bowl his first ball in County cricket to Frank Lee.

Lightly, rapidly, Bill danced to the crease, his feet pattering on the springy turf. Wrist well arched, ball well covered, he swung his left arm over, a clean, high swing that sent the ball curling deceptively through the air.

Perfect length? No, just a fraction short. Quickly the sturdy Somerset man stepped across his wicket, swung up his bat to force the ball wide of mid-off. But then, in a split second, as his blade started to flash downwards, Bill's guile took effect.

Instead of coming straight on, the ball swung out like lightning, pitched, and nipped sharply off the turf. Lee's bat swung through, but, deceived by the sudden swerve, he only nicked the turning ball. Next instant the pill spun away, knee-high, into the slips, where Len Allison crouched, waiting.

"Hold it!"

There came an explosive gasp from somewhere as Len plunged forward, brown hands cupped. It looked an easy catch all the way; the crowd got ready to cheer Bill's swift, successful effort. But then—

At the last moment something went wrong.

All at once Len seemed to stumble awkwardly. His hands fluttered, he fell

on one knee, and made a blind snatch at the spinning ball. A moment later: "O-o-oh!"

A long groan of disappointment rolled from the crowd as the fieldsmen pitched forward on both knees, while that ball—that "dolly" catch—bumped from his arm to the ground!

Avonshire's New Star!

"DROPPED it!" In dismal chorus three thousand voices greeted that tragedy, for tragedy it certainly was! By dropping that simple catch, Len Allison had prevented his cousin from joining the very select band of cricketers who have taken a wicket with their first ball in county cricket.

"Oh, bad luck, young 'un!"

That, too, was a spontaneous exclamation from every Avonshire man in the field, and the glances thrown in Len's direction were grim. Frank Lee, of Somerset, whistled thoughtfully; Jerry Tempest, the county skipper, gave a little "tut" of vexation. Len, his handsome face dark with temper, scrambled up off his knees, and made a savage grab at the ball.

As everyone knows, it is cricket etiquette to apologise to a bowler when one has dropped a catch. Len Allison, however, would willingly have perished at the stake sooner than have made the courteous gesture.

Nor was his peace of mind improved by the barracking of Bill's Grammar-school pals among the crowd. Those plain-spoken youths, who were as fond of Len as they were of five hundred lines of Virgil, vented their disgust freely.

"Yah, butterfingers!"

"Go home and get a bag!"

Shooting a furious glare in their direction, Len slammed the ball back to Bill, who caught it easily. Strangely enough, at that moment, the young recruit to the first-class ranks looked the least upset of anyone.

Nothing of the natural disappointment he felt showed on his cheerful, freckled face. Neither would he allow himself to believe, as obviously the rest of the team did, that Len had dropped that sitter purposely—a petty revenge for the difficult chance Bill had missed off his bowling. "Better luck next time," was the youngster's sensible motto, and, with a serene grin, he turned back to his bowling mark.

The mutter of disgruntled voices died away as he danced up to deliver his second ball. And Frank Lee watched his every movement closely.

This new Avonshire bowler was hot stuff, that was clear. So, once bitten, twice shy, the Somerset batsman treated the next three balls with greatest respect.

To the fifth of Bill's over—a shortish in-swing—he stepped back, however, and forced the ball prettily past mid-on. But, alas! the last ball proved fatal, as Bill intended it should. Instead of swinging, this one dipped, then fizzed straight through, and—

"H'zatt!" came Bill's strangled yelp, as the ball hit the batsman squarely on the pads.

Next moment the umpire's finger stabbed the air, and the first Somerset wicket had fallen to the newcomer's guile.

Thirty-seven for one! The onlookers exploded.

"Good old Bill!"

"Well bowled, Allison!"

The thunderclap of applause that greeted Bill's feat this time showed how warmly the crowd had sympathised with him over his former bad luck.

Spectators, old and young, sat up eagerly, telling each other that Avonshire had found a real trundler at last. Jerry Tempest clapped Bill heartily on the shoulder as the field changed over, while Forbes and Conway wore extra-wide beams when the new recruit joined the two veterans in the slips.

"Stuff to give 'em, Billyum!" chuckled Ted. "Pity Len dropped him the first time, though. He doesn't usually miss 'em!" he added, with a meaning wink, and squinted across to where Len was making his sulky way to mid-off. "Gosh, isn't he daddy's ray of sunshine? If he scowls much harder he'll give himself a headache!"

Bill wisely refused to join in any discussion on his cousin, however, even among friends. Quite enough unpleasantness existed between him and Len off the field. To change the subject, therefore, he smiled his loftiest smile.

"Poof! What's a dropped catch more or less? If I don't get a wicket one way, I get it another!" he boasted; whereupon the other players forgot Len, and chatted the boy genially, while they waited for Young, of Somerset, to appear.

"My hat, you're a modest little violet, aren't you?" chaffed Conway. "Still, at that, I reckon you're right! Anyway, keep it up, Bill—keep it up!"

Bill kept it up.

Never one to be rattled for long, the cheery youngster was full of beans by the time Fraser had finished his over from the other end.

His quick success against Frank Lee had given him just that extra bit of self-confidence he needed to produce his true form. "Nerves," the spectators, Len's smouldering hostility, ceased to bother him. Iron determination lurked behind his pleasant grin. He had something to fight for, and he fought—hard.

He did not lack encouragement, either from his team-mates or the crowd. As Dick Hayes, the stumper, had said, nine of the Avonshire team, at least, were his good pals already, and long before the lunch interval came, the new star had made himself a firm favourite with Avonshire's supporters. Right royally they clapped the smiling "kid," as skilfully, ruthlessly, he proceeded to peg Somerset down to grim defence.

Also, in addition to capturing all hearts, Bill captured another important wicket in his last over before lunch. For, misjudging a cleverly flighted off-break, Young cocked the ball up sharply on the leg side—where Bill had three men posted close in.

Away sped the leather, hard and low. Bill drew a hissing breath of anxiety. But then, flinging himself full length, Jim Frazer shot out both arms, and rolled clean over on the turf, jerking his left hand—with the ball—high into the air!

A joyful roar rewarded both the splendid catch and the equally brilliant piece of bowling.

"Two for 51—and not so dusty—eh?" was the general verdict of the spectators when the players came off the field for the interval. "Looks as though the county's found a bowler at last!"

That the players themselves were also pleased with their new comrade was clear. In fact, painfully clear; for, during the interval, Forbes, Hayes, and other blithe spirits "baptised" Bill in the dressing-room so joyously that the breathless youngster had to change his soaked shirt and towel himself down afterwards.

It was all done in the best of good-fellowship, however, and not even the poisonous side glance he received from Len a few minutes later could spoil Bill's appetite for lunch.

Then, at two sharp, out into the field again.

By this time the Saturday afternoon spectators had rolled up in force, and the ground was packed with enthusiasts, eager to watch the county's latest "discovery" in action. But, for a while, anyway, they had to stifle their impatience. That veteran captain, Jerry Tempest, was far too shrewd to overbowl a promising newcomer. He was keeping Bill up his sleeve for later.

Thus, for the next hour, the cricket, as far as the crowd was concerned, proved a trifle dull.

Len, Frazer, and Jones, a fast-medium right-hander, kept the attack going between them, while Jack Lee and C. C. Case, rendered cautious by the loss of two good wickets, batted very sedately. Runs came slowly, the spectators grew restless, and all Bill had to do was to cool his heels in the long-field.

Not only the county supporters, but he, too, breathed a sigh of relief when, at 96 for three, Jerry Tempest called on him to bowl again.

"A-a-ah!"

The long, low murmur of satisfaction that filled the ground immediately the lad took the ball and began to set his field was a tonic in itself.

Score-cards flickered whitely, drowsy onlookers hunched forward in their seats, the sun glinted on levelled field-glasses. Bill's deeds in the morning had given the throng a zest for thrills. Like Oliver Twist, they wanted more.

They got them, too.

Three overs previously, Len had yorked Case's off-stump out of the ground, so that now Bill had to face Jack Lee and H. D. Burrough. Followed by a startled shout of applause, his second ball, swerving and breaking back viciously from leg, crashed in among the Somerset amateur's stumps.

And from that point on, seven thousand delighted supporters of Avonshire worked themselves up into a fever of enthusiasm while they watched a great young bowler come into his own.

Bill v. Somerset!

THAT afternoon was one that Bill was to remember for the rest of his life.

Although he did not know it, wise Jerry Tempest's object in banishing him to the long field had been twofold. The long spell of idleness had rested him thoroughly—and more. It had made him as impatient for fresh action as a thoroughbred colt. If he had been full of pep in the morning, the tall, eager lad was sheer dynamite now.

And Somerset got the full benefit thereof.

Once again, the crowd, Len, home troubles, everything was forgotten. All Bill's energies were concentrated on beating the batsmen opposed to him, and all he knew was that his long, left arm felt like a supple whip, while the ball did whatever his steel-sprung wrist and fingers commanded.

Unleashing every trick and trap he had ever mastered, the "heady" youngster tore into the West Countrymen in a way that fairly set the Avonshire County ground alight.

So fiercely intent on his task was he that, for once, Bill lost his usual merry smile; but never his length or stinging accuracy. None of the Somerset batsmen were allowed to settle down. He was the attacker, pure and simple; searching out each opponent's particular weakness with the instinct of a born bowler—and playing on it mercilessly.

"Oh, well bowled! Well bowled, Allison!"

"Got 'em again! Stick it, Bill!"

In the grand stands men who were quiet, sober citizens all the week, stamped and clapped, shouted themselves hoarse as in one destructive over.

Bill beat and bowled Watson and Bennett. The Avonshire players, already enjoying the first taste of victory for two seasons, beamed, and backed him up with some of the best fielding ever seen on the ground. Not a chance was
(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

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

THERE'S some letters on my desk awaiting answers, so I think the best thing I can do is to wade right in and attend to them. My little chat has often been crowded out in the past few weeks, so I must apologise if I have kept anyone waiting. Of course, you know that the MAGNET goes to press some considerable time in advance, so that I write these chats of mine long before you read them. That is why you have sometimes to wait for your replies. But remember, chums, if you are in a hurry for an answer, all you have to do is to send a stamped addressed envelope with your query, and it will be answered by post. O.K.? Right! Then let's get on with the first query.

WHERE WAS ROBIN HOOD BURIED?

There's a puzzler for you! Claude Stirling, of Huthwaite, Notts, wants to know. Sorry, Claude, but there are so many conflicting stories told about Robin Hood that it is difficult to get at the real truth. In fact some people say that he never existed, but this is widely disputed.

There are two theories as to whom the original Robin Hood was. One says that he was an Anglo-Norman noble who lived in the twelfth century and was named Robert Fitz Odo. The other theory is that he was Robert, Earl of Huntingdon. Whoever he was, it is certain that bands of outlaws roamed the neighbourhood of Sherwood Forest—and other places—and called themselves "Robin's Men." Whether all of them belonged to his famous band is not certain. So many ancient ballad writers told various stories of "Robin Hood" that they have confused the whole business and made it difficult for anyone to discover who he actually was, when he lived, and where he was buried. Scott's "Ivanhoe" will tell you a lot about him, but that story, of course, is fiction!

DO you remember me telling you about

THE INDIAN ROPE TRICK

a little while ago? From S. J. Allbridge, an Oldbury reader, I have received a number of most interesting cuttings regarding this trick, in which, as you know, a rope is made to stand straight up in the air without visible support. A boy then climbs up the rope and vanishes in mid air. In these cuttings an Englishman actually claims to know how this trick is done, and to be able to do it. He states, however, that it would be necessary for an audience to sit for about an hour, in order that they should be properly hypnotised. I don't think any ordinary audience would be inclined to sit that length of time, so I am afraid the Indian rope trick looks as though it will never be performed in this country. I believe this is the first time any white man has actually claimed to be able to perform the trick—and the principal magicians in this country agree with me in that! I should

certainly like to see the Indian rope trick done, but, like the Scotsman, "I h'ae ma doots!"

Do you know the answer to this one?

WHAT IS A FILM STAR?

A reader who signs himself "Anticipation," and hails from Belfast, asks me this question, and wants to know the difference between a "star" and a "featured player." Well, the general rule is that the name of a "star" is placed before the title of the film and the names of "featured players" follow the title. For instance, if you read an announcement such as this:

Harry Wharton

in

"Rivals of Greyfriars,"

with

Billy Bunter and

Bob Cherry,

it would mean that Harry Wharton was the "star," while the others were "featured players."

Incidentally, "G.C.," of Hackney, asks me if we can't have the Greyfriars characters appearing on the films. I agree with him that such a film would prove a great attraction, but I am afraid I can't oblige him. Besides, just think how difficult it would be to cast young actors in such difficult roles! I don't think it could be done.

By the way, will those readers who intend to take advantage of our unique offer of the "Modern Encyclopedia"—a wonderful volume of useful information worth a guinea, and offered to MAGNET readers for 2s. 10d. and four coupons—please note that another special coupon appears on page 28 of this issue. Last week's MAGNET, in which appeared full particulars of this great offer, can still be obtained from our Back Number Dept., Bear Alley, Farringdon Street, London E.C.4, price 3d. per copy post free.

NOW let me see what there is in store for you next week. The long complete yarn of the chums of Greyfriars is entitled:

"BUNTER, THE VENTRILOQUIST!"

By Frank Richards.

As usual, you'll find this popular author right on the top of his form, and once you begin this yarn you won't want to put it down until you've read every line of it. Don't miss it, chums! It's a first-class yarn of the type that Frank Richards knows how to write so well.

There will be another splendid instalment of our most popular cricket serial, "Allison of Avonshire!" and, of course, a rib-tickling "Greyfriars Herald" supplement. The shorter features will appear as usual, and I'll do my best to answer a number of queries, which pressure of space has forced me to hold over this week.

Cheerio until next week, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

missed, not a run given away. Even Len, tamed by the bleak, grey eye of Jerry Tempest, put his back into the work.

"You diddle 'em longshanks; we'll catch 'em out!" observed Ted Forbes pithily.

And Bill continued to do his deadly best.

He did not have matters all his own way, however. The wicket was good, the light was good, and so was Somerset's fighting spirit. With a wealth of slashing amateur bats in their ranks, the Cider County men hit back hard and stubbornly, as usual.

Some of the professionals tried to stonewall Bill off his length; the amateurs tried to knock him off.

Twice in succession Guy Earle, the smiter, plunked him clean into the grand stand. The third time the curly haired giant hit out, however, the ball "hung" nastily at the last moment. Failing to get hold of it properly, Earle sliced it, hard and high to mid-wicket. When it dropped, Bill, springing like a hare, was underneath, with hands that would have held a cannon-ball just then.

And so that great spell of bowling went on.

Jack Lee completed a patient and gallant fifty; then, like his brother, fell a victim to the young destroyer's curly outswinger. A sizzling off-break nipped past Wellard's flashing bat; Robertson-Glasgow was caught in the slips. Jack White and Luckes alone saved Somerset from being all out before tea.

Quiet, imperturbable as always, the "Farmer" came in to play one of his sturdiest knocks, and the Somerset keeper supported him grandly. Both refused to be tempted; both met Bill's well-mixed-up onslaught of swingers and spinners with the broadest of broad bats.

The crowd became curiously hushed, absorbed in the long, relentless duel between two old stagers, and the brilliant new star.

But at last it seemed as though Bill's triumphant progress was checked.

"All right, my son; Frazer will take over now! You've earned your rest!" smiled Jerry Tempest eventually.

(Bill Allison's some bowler, isn't he, chums? Don't miss the continuation of this thrilling match in next week's chapters of this powerful sporting story.)

THE SHYLOCK OF GREYFRIARS!

(Continued from page 24.)

"Aw! Will you let up?" shrieked Fishy. "You pesky piecans, will you let up on a guy? Oh, great snakes!"

"Bring him along!" said the captain of the Remove.

Fisher T. Fish was helped out of the box-room and down the stairs into the Remove passage. There were a good many fellows in the passage, and they stared at the crowd coming down from the box-room.

"What are you fellows up to?" asked the Bouncer.

"Catching Fish!" answered Bob Cherry.

"Will you let up?" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Leggo my neck, you piecan! Leggo my yeabs, blow you!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen," said the captain of the Remove, "I had the tip from Wingate, a few days ago, that there was money-lending going on in the Lower School. He put it up to me to find out the rotter, and stop him. We've found him out—here he is!"

"He didn't want a lot of finding out!" remarked Smithy.

"Well, he's found out; and now he's got to stop his knavish tricks! If the Head got on to it he might be sacked—and we don't want an expulsion in the Remove! Fishy has got to learn to be decent! It's no good talking to him—but even Fishy can understand kicking!"

"Leggo my yeabs!"

"Call all the fellows," went on Wharton. "Every man in the Remove has got to kick Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good egg!"

"The kickfulness will be terrific!"

Fellows came out of the studies. Most of the Remove gathered in the passage. Every fellow was ready to do his bit. Fisher T. Fish, wriggling and squirming, was walked along to the end farthest from his study. There he was faced round, wriggling in Wharton's grasp.

"Now, Fishy—"

"Let up, you galoot!" yelled Fishy.

"You're going to run for your study!"

Every fellow here is going to kick you as you go! I'll start you! You men ready?"

"Yes, rather!"

"The readyfulness is terrific."

"Give a fellow room!"

"Go it!"

"Start!" said the captain of the Remove, and he released Fisher T. Fish, and started him with a hefty application of his boot.

Fisher T. Fish ran for it. He ran for his study, as if for his life! Seldom had Fishy been seen to put on such speed. He fairly flew!

Round him and behind him the Removeites closed in—kicking! In the crush, some of the kicks landed at the wrong addresses. But most of them landed on Fisher T. Fish. If a Soccer ball could feel, it would probably feel just like Fisher T. Fish as he raced desperately up the Remove passage.

It seemed to the Shylock of Greyfriars that there was an ache in every inch of his bony limbs by the time he reached Study No. 14! Swiftly as he ran, it seemed to him that he never would reach that haven of refuge. But he reached it at last, and bolted in, like a bony rabbit into a burrow. A roar of laughter followed him in.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have some more, Fishy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish had just energy enough left to slam his door. Then he collapsed into the armchair and gasped and gasped and groaned and groaned. He was left to gasp and groan; and he was still groaning and gasping when the Remove came up to prep.

Harry Wharton was able to report to Wingate, without mentioning names, that the Shylock of Greyfriars had been spotted, and satisfactorily dealt with. So that was that!

Fishy was not feeling satisfied. That could not be helped. But even Fishy had one consolation. He had lost Billy Bunter's friendship!

THE END.

("BUNTER, THE VENTRILOQUIST" is the title of next week's ripping long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. Laugh! You'll absolutely scream when you read it! See that you order your copy in good time!)

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WASTE PAPER

One Ton of Waste Paper for Sale. I simply must get rid of the pressing holiday invitations I've received this week!—W. G. BLUNDILL, Study No. 7, Remove.

EVASION DETECTION

Fellows wishing to avoid Bunter when leaving for the vac. should come to us and be effectively detected. Recognition impossible. Why take unnecessary risks?—WILHELM & CO., Make-up Artists, Study No. 6, Remove.

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

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July 22nd, 1933.

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AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of Potter and Greene

By George Blundell

Potter and Greene are to Coker what Bestwell was to Dr. Johnson, or Watson to Sherlock Holmes. But don't for goodness sake imagine that Coker is anything like Johnson or Holmes, or that Potter and Greene resemble Bestwell and Watson!

Coker without Potter and Greene wouldn't be Coker. He relies on them to supply that modern of human friendliness without which he might become an embittered man. And Potter and Greene duly supply it.

Their motives in doing so are sometimes looked on with a certain amount of suspicion. Coker is well supplied with S. D., and Coker's study is a land flowing with milk and honey. So it's rather natural that envious tongues should wag and dark hints be made that Potter and Greene are just a couple of gold-diggers.

My own opinion is that the suggestion is a gross libel on two perfectly well-meaning fellows. That they should accept Coker's liberal hospitality is quite understandable. Any man who happens to share a study with a plutocrat can take the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table without the slightest pang of conscience! But the idea that Potter and Greene know how to Coker on account of his money is dead wrong. They don't!

The fact is that Coker's harmless ass who suffers from a mistaken idea that he's a born leader of men. Potter and Greene know jolly well that it's all rot; but if they disputed it, life in the study would be one long series of battles, so they give him his head instead—just for the sake of peace and quietness.

Who can blame them for it?

Both of them are fair, average, all-round sportsmen, miles ahead of the redoubtable "leader" on the playing fields. Yet they heretically allow Coker to remain under the delusion that it's he who is miles ahead of them. Nobody, of course, barring Coker, is deceived, so there's no harm done and everybody's happy!

My idea is that for keeping Coker comfortably tame and preventing him becoming too much of a public nuisance, Potter and Greene deserve a hearty vote of thanks—

(Well done, Blundell, old bean! You've thrown new light on Potter and Greene, and we shall hereafter look on them as really deserving cases. Next week, Potter and Greene will tell us what they think of you!—Ed.)

GREYFRIARS GRILLS IN HEAT WAVE

Incredible Incidents

Greyfriars has had more than its share of the recent heat wave. Though situated on high ground, the old School lies in a somewhat sheltered position and when the weather really does get hot, as has happened in the last week, we jolly well feel it to the full!

On Monday, we were staying in the heat. On Tuesday, we were absolutely baked up. Wednesday we were found broiling. Thursday grilling, and on Friday we were simply sized!

To give you some idea of the degree of heat experienced, we may mention that a block of ice which Manly carried up to his study from the tinshop was so hot by the time he arrived there that he used it to make a nice, boiling hot cup of tea.

Another surprising incident happened when Tom Brown went fishing on the banks of the Sark. After landing a brace of gudgeons and a stickleback, Brown went off to get a bottle of



ginger-pop. When he returned, it was to find the fish, which he had left lying on the grass, cooked to a turn. Incidentally, a potato, dropped by a passing green-grocer's boy on the towpath, had become nicely baked, so Tom was able to have fish and chips without leaving the riverside.

Bunter was simply baked in perspiration. This must be the first battle he has had for several years. It was so hot that when Quelch tried to give us a freezing glare in class it became a melting smile before he knew where he was!

It was so hot that the Head started instructing the Sixth in the Danti language in case we all had to emigrate to Africa to get a breather.

It was so hot that it reminded Hurree Singh of a night in his native State in India—one of the coldest nights, of course!

It was really awfully hot.

Greyfriars Queries Answered

"CURIOUS."—"What is Billy Bunter's weight?" Next time a circus comes round we'll borrow a pair of elephant scales and let you know.

"CONSERVATIVE READER."—"Does Coker ever slide down the banisters?" Tut-tut! You must have a very strange idea of the dignity of Fifth-Formers if you imagine that Coker ever does that. As a matter of fact, he almost invariably goes down the Remove stairs on his neck!

"GORMANDIZER."—"What is the grub like at Greyfriars?" Just imagine the best feed ever served in the best hotel in the country. Well, our grub is about as bad as that ought to be good!

"SYMPATHETIC."—"Is Hosking short-sighted?" If he's not short-sighted, there's something radically wrong with his eyes, anyway. When Coker shed one of his motor-wheels yesterday,



Hosking tried to pick it up and pocket it, thinking it was a half-crown!

"ADONIS."—"Would you call Loder good-looking?" As a child, he won the booby prize in a beauty competition, but now that he's grown up, he has to wear a mask to prevent dogs attacking him at sight. On reflection! No, he's not!

A "CURRENT" SUGGESTION

E. nfold, our pet poet, has been using the school electric supply for the purpose of re-energising accumulators. But they've found him out now and presented him with a bill for £1 2s. 6d.

To celebrate the occasion we suggest he writes a new version of "The Charge of the Light Brigade"!

'Lonzy's Little Letters

Dear Editor,—At the contemporaneous juncture, when the environment is incon- trovertibly torpid from the prevalent phenomenonally intensified solar activity, it is incumbent on contemplative juveniles to remember the beneficent psychological efficacy in individualistic personal therian metrical or andoriferous diminution of mental quiescence.

I remain—undisturbed by the isalubrious meteorological conditions,

Yours truly, ALONZO TODD.

(Which simply means, "During the heat wave, if you want to keep cool, keep quiet." But how the thump a man can keep quiet after reading 'Lonzy's letter beats us. Two of our sub-editors who tried to do it, dissolved into grease-spots half way through!—Ed.)



REVOLUTION IN HOLIDAY IDEAS

Amazing Aftermath to Head's Lecture

The Head's recent lecture on "The Gravity of the World Situation," has simply revolutionised the holiday ideas of many of the fellows. What caused it was the worthy old Beak's references to the selfishness of abandoning ourselves to reckless enjoyment and the wisdom of spending some of the vac in studying politico-economic problems (we hope we've got it right, but don't blame us if we haven't!) so that when we're old fogies we can help to put the world to rights again!

The Beak was so jolly serious about it that his audience left the lecture hall quite determined to take a more serious view of life, even during the vac. A "Greyfriars Herald" Special Representative who afterwards made inquiries about the school, found that holiday plans in general showed an astonishing change from those of previous years. Here are some of the answers he received:

G. WINGATE (Sixth).—"I shall spend most of my holiday studying Classical Political Economy."

F. NORTH (Sixth).—"My holiday will be passed in a nice stuffy museum, studying Entomology."

D. BLAND (Fifth).—"I intend to pore over the Lives of Great Conchologists."

J. HOBBSON (Sixth).—"About ten hours a day at Trigonometry—that'll be my hol!"

C. R. TEMPLE (Upper Fourth).—"My vacation will be devoted to an investigation of Industrial Psychology."

H. WHARTON (Remove).—"I hope to become thoroughly acquainted with the Calculus and Mathematical Philosophy before the new term begins."

It strikes us that this particular vac is going to be a thumping serious business for most of the fellows. Amazing, isn't it?

STOP PRESS.—On further consideration, they've all changed their minds. Wingate and North are going yachting. Bland is planning a tour of the Highlands. Hobbson's booking up at Margate. Temple's trotting over to Le Touquet, and Wharton's doing a pleasure cruise.

Apparently the politico-economic stunt is giving place to sand-castles, boating, bathing, and pierrots, after all!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

There has been a good deal of speculation on the subject of the amazing spectacle witnessed in the quad last week, when an ice-cream barrow, drawn by a donkey, tore through the gates at breakneck speed, carrying a human being suspended upside down in the ice-cream vendor's legs waving in the air.

We are privileged to be able to tell the complete truth about this unusual incident.

It began about a quarter of a mile down Friarfield Lane. The Famous Five had stopped an ice-cream vendor with the idea of buying five ice-wafers where-with to counteract the over-powering influence of the heat wave.

But before the genial vendor could serve them there was an interruption. Cedric Hilton, of the Fifth, strolled up and called loudly for a sixpenny carton. In doing so, he pulled Wharton aside by the ear, barged Nugent and Hurree Singh out of the way, and jolted away Cherry and Bull by the scruff of the neck.

"Serve me quickly!" Hilton added, after giving his order.

"I'm in a hurry!"

The Famous Five looked at each other. They didn't speak. They couldn't! But, fortunately, though Hilton's colossal nerve had deprived them of their vocal powers, it hadn't

deprived them of their power of action! As if actuated by a common impulse, they suddenly closed in on Hilton.

To his utter dismay, the elegant Cedric found himself suddenly whirled off his feet and lifted into the air. He heard someone say: "It's all right; we're going to give him a ride!" Then he felt his head and shoulders descended into a dark well of almost incredible coldness.

The next thing Hilton knew was that he was being carried along in the ice-cream chariot at a speed that would have made his hair stand on end had it not been submerged in ice-cream!

Now you know all about it. We might add, in closing, that after the intelligent moka had drawn the barrow three times round the quad, it galloped out of the gates again and rejoined its master down the lane.

The ice-cream vendor, informed Hilton, when he had extricated him, that the damage was seventeen-and-six. For some reason we don't quite understand, Hilton seemed to object to paying this, so the Famous Five had a whip-round and paid it for him.

But thick when the Remove have to pay a Fifth-Form's debts, isn't it? Still, Wharton & Co. chuckled him into a ditch afterwards. Taking everything into consideration, they consider they had their money's worth!



Going for a flight at the Court-field Aerodrome, Coker insisted on making a parachute descent. He was lucky to land safely in Farmer Brown's duck pond—but Coker didn't think so!



Johnny Bull is the champion weight-lifter of the Remove. Standing behind Billy Bunter, he lifted the 1st junior clear of the floor! This was before dinner, however!



During the heat wave, Sammy Bunter went to sleep in a deck-chair and got com- pletely baked.

This is quite a change for Sammy. Previously he was only half-baked!



DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM



OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS

I take this opportunity of wishing all you young gentlemen a happy holiday—also of reminding you that I should like outstanding accounts settled before Breaking-up Day!—(Signed) JESSIE ALMABLE, Tuckshop Dame.

