

GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER

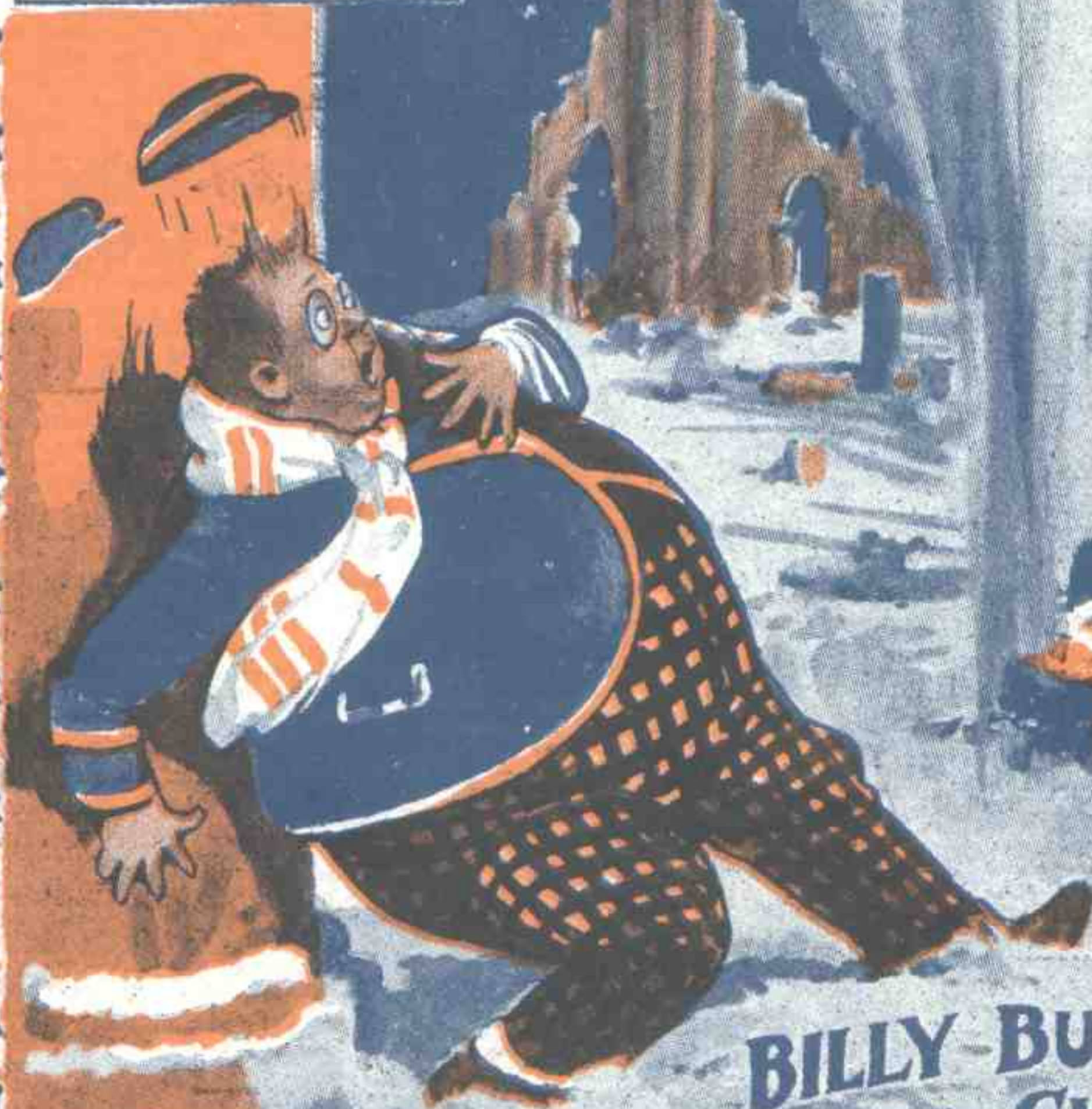
The MAGNET 2

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EVERY SATURDAY.

Week Ending December 16th, 1933

ANOTHER SHEET of
**SUPERB
COLOURED
PICTURES
FREE
INSIDE**



**BILLY BUNTER
SEES A GHOST!**



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Rescue!

HELP!" roared Billy Bunter. Bunter roared in vain. There were a dozen fellows in the Remove passage at Greyfriars. They all heard Bunter's roar, and they only chuckled. There was no help for the fat Owl of the Remove, sorely as he needed it!

Bang!

That "bang" was caused by Billy Bunter's bullet head tapping on the door of Study No. 13. His fat neck was in the grasp of Bob Cherry, and Bob's face was red and excited.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows, rescue!"

"Take that!" hooted Bob.

"Help!"

Bang!

Billy Bunter wriggled and roared. He was hurt. Bunter's head was hard; but the door of Bob Cherry's study was harder.

There were four other juniors in the study—Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. They looked on while Bob banged Bunter's head on the door. They were all looking wrathful.

Really, there was cause for wrath. When a fellow asked four friends to tea, and led them to his study to sit down to an unusually lavish spread, it was distinctly annoying to find a fat grub-raider in the study, and the last crumb vanishing down a fat throat!

Hungry after footer practice, the Famous Five had been rather looking forward to that spread. But while they had been busy at footer, Billy Bunter

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had also been busy. When they got there, the cupboard was bare, as in the case of the well-known Mrs. Hubbard. Hence the banging of Bunter's head on the study door, and the fearful yells that rang along the Remove passage.

Bang!

"Yaroooh! I say, you fellows, make him leggo!" roared Bunter. "I say, Wharton, old fellow—"

"Give him beans!" said Harry Wharton.

"I say, Nugent—"

"Bang the fat brigand!" said Frank Nugent.

"Inky, old chap—"

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

Bang!

"Whooop! Help! Fire! Rescue!" roared Bunter.

"You fat villain!" gasped Bob Cherry. "We're all as hungry as hunters, and not a crumb left—not a blessed crumb! And it's too late for tea in Hall! By gum, I'll—"

Bang!

"Ow! Wow! Beast!" raved Bunter. "Leggo! I never touched the stuff! It was the cat! I—I saw the cat—"

Bang!

"Oh crikey! I say, you fellows—Yarooop! Oh, my napper! Look here, you beast, I'll pay for the tuck!" yelled Bunter. "I'm expecting a postal order to-morrow morning—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang!

"Look out, you men!" called out Skinner from the passage. "Here comes Alonzo!"

Bunter gave a wild howl.

"I say, Alonzo! I say, Lonzy! Help, old chap!"

Alonzo Todd, the Duffer of Greyfriars,

had stepped out of Study No. 7, doubtless drawn by the terrific yelling of Billy Bunter.

He stared along the passage, and then came up quickly. The fellows in the Remove passage parted to give him room.

Once the feeblest fellow in the Form, Alonzo Todd had, by some mysterious and unknown means, developed amazing physical strength. The "treatment," whatever it was, had certainly not brightened up his intellect; he was as big a duffer as ever. But his strength was not to be argued with. No fellow in the Remove—no half-dozen fellows—could handle Alonzo Todd in his new Sandow-like state.

As Billy Bunter was Alonzo's study-mate in Study No. 7, no doubt he felt impelled to heed his roars for help, which fell on all other ears unheeded. And as he was the biggest duffer going, he naturally barged in without inquiring or understanding what was going on.

Alonzo saw the fat junior wriggling and roaring in Bob Cherry's grasp, and his bullet head tapping hard on the door, and that was enough for Alonzo.

"My dear Cherry, stop that at once!" he exclaimed, as he sprinted up.

Bob Cherry glared at him.

"Mind your own business, fathead!" he roared.

Alonzo strode forward.

The crowd of fellows in the passage watched him breathlessly. When "Strong Alonzo" got going, he was worth watching.

The strong man of Greyfriars grasped Bunter with one hand, Bob Cherry with the other.

He jerked them apart without an effort. Bunter was swung out into the

This FREE GIFT ISSUE contains ANOTHER SET of COLOURED PICTURES

Remove passage with one hand, Bob Cherry tossed back into Study No. 13 with the other. Bunter staggered against the wall, rubbing his head and gasping for breath. Bob Cherry crashed into his friends in the study, knocking them right and left as he crashed.

"Ow!" gasped Bob.

"Oh, my hat!" stuttered Nugent.

"My esteemed hat!" panted Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Alonzo gazed kindly into the study.

"My dear fellows—" he began.

He was interrupted. Harry Wharton & Co. came at him with a rush. Amazing as it was, even the Famous Five, in a body, could not handle Strong Alonzo. But they were ready to try.

"Oh, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo, as the rush swept him back into the passage. "My dear fellows— Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Mop him up!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Give him jip!" panted Nugent.

Alonzo was borne across the passage under the rush. But he rallied at once, and there was even a grin on his face as he tackled the five. How Alonzo, who had once been the weediest fellow at Greyfriars, did it was a mystery. But he did it.

Harry Wharton & Co., one after another, were hurled back into Study No. 13, sprawling breathlessly on the floor there.

"My dear fellows," said Alonzo, blinking in amiably at the sprawling heap in Bob Cherry's study. "Please do not continue this futile scuffle! I am very, very sorry to be driven to handling you like this!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter.

"Please let there be no further ragging, my dear fellows!" said Alonzo.

He paused for a reply. But the sprawling juniors in Study No. 13 were too breathless to speak. They could only gurgle. Alonzo turned away and walked back to Study No. 7. And Billy Bunter rolled after him hastily. For the present the Owl of the Remove preferred to remain under the shelter of the friendly wing of Strong Alonzo. And the dizzy and breathless crowd of fellows in Study No. 13 were left to sort themselves out at their leisure.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Batting for Bunter!

"YOU ass!"

"My dear Peter—" murmured Alonzo gently.

"You fathead!"

"But why, my dear Cousin Peter—"

"You blithering bandersnatch!" said Peter Todd, in measured tones. "You howling idiot! What have you been kicking up a shindy again for?"

Alonzo Todd gazed at his cousin, Peter Todd, in mild reproach. Shindies were not in Alonzo's line at all. He was the most peaceable fellow on earth. Ever since he had derived wonderful strength from the daily dose of the "Elixir" given him by Professor Sparkinson, Alonzo had never dreamed of using it in an overbearing or bullying manner. He was quite pained by Peter's suggestion that he had been kicking up a shindy.

"You appear, my dear Peter, to be labouring under a misapprehension—" began Alonzo.

"Cut it short!" shrieked Peter.

"I trust, my dear Peter, that I make my meaning clear," said Alonzo. "I felt that I had no alternative, but to intervene when Bunter was being used

with what I can only describe as unparalleled violence. Bunter is our study-mate, dear Peter, and though we cannot, of course, be proud of him—"

"Oh, really, you beast—"

"What do you think Bob was banging the fat villain's head for?" demanded Peter.

"I am sure I do not know, dear Peter! It did not occur to me to inquire." Alonzo started. "I trust, my dear Bunter, that you have given Cherry no just cause for offence?" he exclaimed hastily.

"Oh, really, Alonzo—"

"What had you been up to in Cherry's study?" roared Peter.

"Nothing!" answered Bunter promptly. "I never touched the tuck! I never heard Bob mention to the other fellows that there was to be a spread after the footer—I wasn't near them at the time, so I couldn't hear what he said. As for going to Bob's study and snaffling the tuck, I hope I'm incapable of such a thing. It was the cat!"

"The cat!" gasped Alonzo.

"Yes; I told that beast that it was the cat, and he didn't believe me!" said Bunter. "Pretty thick to doubt a fellow's word, I think!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"Suspicious lot of beasts, you know!" said Bunter indignantly. "They didn't

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**It isn't often that William George Bunter gets the chance to throw his weight about, for the fat and flabby Owl of the Remove hasn't the pluck of a bunny rabbit. But when ordinary Bunter suddenly becomes STRONG BUNTER with the muscles of a Samson, things happen!**

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give a fellow a chance to explain. They fancied I had had the spread, because they found me in the study, and it was gone, and I happened to have jam on my mouth, and—"

"Goodness gracious!"

"Besides, I left them the eggs!" said Bunter warmly.

"This is very, very distressing!" said Alonzo. "I fear, my dear Peter, that Bunter was receiving only a justly merited punishment when I intervened. It is very, very unfortunate!"

"You blithering chump!"

"I shall express my heart-felt regret to those fellows," said Alonzo mildly. "I am sure that they will, on calm reflection, be prepared to forgive an action founded wholly upon an unfortunate misapprehension. In the meantime, if you will kindly hand me the fives bat, Peter, I will administer to Bunter the chastisement he so richly deserves."

"Now you're talking!" said Peter.

He tossed the fives bat over to Alonzo. Alonzo missed the catch, of course; Alonzo had never been known to catch a catch! The fives bat clumped on his chin, and Alonzo gave a howl.

"Wow! My dear Peter—wow—"

Billy Bunter made a jump for the door. In these circumstances, the Owl of the Remove had no use for the sheltering wing of Alonzo! He reached the door.

Unfortunately for Bunter, Tom Dutton, the fourth member of the study, arrived for tea at that moment. He opened the study door from without as Bunter reached it from within.

Crash!

"Oooooop!" spluttered Bunter, as he staggered back, fairly into the arms of Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo grasped him.

Regardless of the fat Owl's terrific weight, Alonzo slung him across the armchair with one hand, taking the fives bat in the other.

Whack! Whack!

"Whoop! Leggo, you beast!" roared Bunter. "Why, you're a worse beast than that beast Cherry! Yarooooop!"

"My dear Bunter, I trust that you realise that I am administering this chastisement for your own ultimate benefit—"

"Beast!" yelled Bunter.

"You have placed me in a very painful position, and also you have abstracted another fellow's property, with what I can only describe as incorrigible unscrupulousness—"

"Leggo!"

"I trust, my dear Bunter, that that chastisement will impress on your mind that it will be more judicious, as well as more praiseworthy in every way, to keep your hands from picking and stealing."

"Beast!"

Alonzo laid down the bat. Bunter wriggled off the armchair, and gave Strong Alonzo a glare that nearly cracked his spectacles.

"Oh, you rotter!" he gasped. "I'll pay you out! You wait till I get hold of that stuff you take, that you got from that old idiot Sparkinson, at the Willows—"

"I fear, my dear Bunter, that I have not administered sufficient chastisement, as your remarks savour of an unscrupulous disregard for the rights of property—"

Bunter dodged round the armchair.

"Keep off, you beast! I was only j-j-joking! I don't know anything about the bottle that old ass gave you, and I've never found out that you keep it locked up in your desk! Gerraway!"

"Is that true, Lonzy?" asked Peter.

"Did you really get a bottle of some queer stuff from that old scientific johnny at the Willows?"

"I am afraid that I cannot answer that question, my dear Peter, as Professor Sparkinson desired me to keep the whole matter a secret!" said Alonzo.

"Oh, my hat!" said Peter.

"I shall now proceed to Bob Cherry's study, and express my regret for the very unfortunate misunderstanding that has arisen!" said Alonzo.

And Alonzo left Study No. 7, leaving his tea unfinished—a matter of duty being much more important to the Duffer of Greyfriars than such a consideration as tea. His tea, however, did not remain unfinished. Billy Bunter found some consolation in finishing it for him, while Alonzo was gone.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Eggs for Alonzo!

"H lor!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Oh! My nose!"

"Wow! My napper!"

"Oh scissors!"

Those exclamations and many more, were heard in Study No. 13

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in the Remove, as the hapless juniors there sorted themselves out.

All of them were breathless, all of them were damaged, and all of them were wrathful.

"The cheeky chump!" gasped Bob Cherry. "If that blithering, blithering fathead fancies that he can run the Remove—"

"He'll find out his mistake!" gasped the Bounder.

"Let's go after him and mop him up!" panted Johnny Bull.

"The mop-upfulness is the proper caper!"

"Well," said Harry Wharton, "it's really Bunter's fault! That howling ass Alonzo didn't know why you were banging his napper, Bob."

"Couldn't he have asked?" hooted Bob. "That blithering ass isn't going to be allowed to barge about like this! I don't care if he's as strong as a horse, or as strong as an elephant!"

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull. "Let's go and wreck his study, and bury him under the wreckage."

"Poor old Alonzo means well!" said Redwing, with a breathless laugh, "and considering how jolly strong he is, he's a good fellow! Think what a fellow like Bunter would be if he were as hefty as Alonzo!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "Strong Alonzo's a coughdrop; but Strong Bunter would be the giddy limit." Still gasping for breath, Bob Cherry looked into the study cupboard. "My hat! We're absolutely done—that fat villain has cleared off everything but the eggs! I suppose he left the eggs as they were raw! If we'd given him time he'd have scooped them, too!"

"And tea's over in Hall!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Come and tea with me!" said Vernon-Smith. "We've got rather a spread in No. 4! Bring your jolly old eggs along with you, and Reddy will poach them—he's a dab at poaching eggs."

"Willingly!" said Redwing, with a smile.

"But what about that dangerous lunatic Alonzo?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Oh, let him rip!" said Nugent.

"That's all very well—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes again!" roared Bob Cherry. "Great pip! Help yourselves to the eggs, you men!"

"Good egg!" chuckled the Bounder.

Bob had lifted the dish of eggs from the study cupboard, to be conveyed to Study No. 4, to add to the supplies there for a large party to tea. But, as the kind, simple face of Alonzo Todd dawned in the doorway, all the breathless juniors realised that there was a better use to which the eggs could be put. They gathered round the table, and grabbed eggs from the dish.

"My dear friends"—Alonzo Todd blinked in, with his kind and benignant smile—"I have made a disconcerting discovery, and I realise that I was somewhat hasty in intervening here."

"And we're going to show you how we like your goings on, old bean," said Smithy. "We're going to make you a present of these eggs!"

"That is very, very kind of you," said Alonzo, both surprised and pleased. "It shows a kind and forgiving spirit, which I should hardly have expected in one of your somewhat malicious and disagreeable nature, my dear Vernon-Smith! How very, very gratified my Uncle Benjamin would be, if he could hear you say—Yarooooop! Gurrerrrgggh!"

Alonzo said that quite unintentionally, as the Bounder hurled an egg.

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and it cracked over his mouth. Alonzo Todd staggered back, gurgling wildly.

Crack, crack! came two more eggs, breaking on his chin.

"Ooogh!" gasped Alonzo. "My dear fellows—Urrrrgggh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

Crack, crack, crack, crack! An egg cracked on Alonzo's nose, another on his forehead, another on either ear, as he staggered and spluttered in the doorway of Study No. 13.

"Yurrrrggh!" spluttered Alonzo.

"Oh, my goodness! My dear—yooogh!—fellows—woooogh!—I am smothered! Groooogh!"

Crack, crack, crack, crack! Eggs smashed right and left on the Strong Man of Greyfriars! They smothered him! They plastered him! The supply was exhausted all too soon! Bob wished now that he had laid in two or three dozen! But Alonzo had all there were available! By the time he had got them all, he was of the egg, eggy!

"Urrrggh!" gurgled Alonzo, dashing streaming yolk from his eyes and mouth and nose, and features generally.

"My dear—urrrggh!—this is very, very—ooooogh! Wooooogh! I am sticky—I am—Yurrrrrrggh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"I've got some ink here!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The eggs are all gone, but the ink—"

"Quick!" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Oh, goodness gracious!" gasped Alonzo.

He did not stay for the ink! The eggs seemed to be all that Alonzo wanted! He scrambled out of the doorway, and departed in haste. He was badly in want of a wash!

Considerably consoled by the egging of Alonzo, the juniors went along to the Bounder's study for tea. Fortunately, the loss of the eggs did not matter. In that lavish study there was always plenty.

Quite a cheery party sat down to tea with the Bounder.

Tea was going strong, when there was a tap at the door. It opened, and Alonzo Todd looked in. He had washed, and had a newly swept and garnished look—though there were still traces of egg about him.

As he looked in, the tea-party jumped to their feet as if all moved by the same spring. They had no doubt, of course, that Strong Alonzo had barged in to avenge the egging. And they gave him no time to get going.

"Barge the brute!" shouted Smithy.

"Up, Guards, and at 'em!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Bag him!"

"Collar him!"

"Scrag him!"

"My dear—" Alonzo Todd got no further. Under the rush of the seven juniors, he was hurled backwards into the passage, and he went down on his back with a terrific thump.

He was given no time for action! Once on his feet, Strong Alonzo could have handled the whole crowd! The Bounder snatched up an inkpot, and up-ended it over Alonzo as he sprawled on his back.

"My dear fellows—urrrrggh!" gurgled Alonzo, as the ink streamed into his open mouth. "Urrgh! My dear—Yurrrggghh—"

"Jump on him!" roared the Bounder. "Tread him out flat! We'll jolly well show him whether he can throw his weight about in the Remove!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Squash him!"

"My dear fellows—yurrrrggh!" spluttered Alonzo, as seven pairs of feet were planted on him, pinning down even Strong Alonzo. "My dear—Ooogh!"

"You cheeky rotter—"

"Ooogh! I assure you—Urrgh!"

"We've got you, you blithering ass!"

"Ow! Wow! Urrgh! But I only came to tell you that I was very, very sorry!" gurgled Alonzo.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Eh?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"My dear fellows, I assure you that I came with no hostile intention!" gasped Alonzo. "I simply desired to say that I was very, very sorry that you received my expressions of regret in such a very disagreeable way, by flinging eggs at me, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Urrgh! I have had a great deal of trouble washing off the eggs and now I am all inky—"

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

"And I only came to say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently there had been a misunderstanding. The juniors got off Alonzo, and that inky youth staggered to his feet.

"If you had given me time to speak—" gasped Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, it is not a laughing matter—I am excessively inky—"

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

"You are, old bean!"

"The inkiness is terrific!"

"And I only came to say that I was very, very sorry—"

"Well, that's all right," chuckled Bob Cherry. "Now you've got the ink, you're very, very sorrier—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo trailed away up the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. went back into the Bounder's study, roaring, to finish their tea. Alonzo went for another wash—which he needed even more badly than before!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

No Go!

"SAY, you fellows!"

"Kick him!"

Billy Bunter backed away. It was the following morning, in break, and the fat Owl of the Remove rolled up to the Famous Five in the quad. Harry Wharton & Co. were discussing the approaching Christmas holidays as they strolled in the quad. But a more important matter was in Billy Bunter's fat mind.

"I say, you fellows, what's the row?" asked Bunter, blinking at the chums of the Remove through his big spectacles. "What are you getting your rag out for I'd like to know?"

Apparently Bunter had forgotten the grub-raid on Study No. 13 the previous day. Bunter had a very short memory for such trifles.

"The kickfulness is the proper caper!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Turn roundfully, my esteemed and idiotic Bunter."

"Oh, really, Inky! No larks, you know," said Bunter. "I'm going to put you fellows on to a good thing, out of pure friendship! After all, we've always been pals, haven't we?"

of something from that queer old Johnny at the Willows. You fellows remember seeing him, and how jolly strong he was, though he's seventy if he's a day! It's some queer scientific discovery that that old goat's made; and he's let Alonzo have some, because he chipped in when the Highcliffe chaps were catapulting the old donkey—"

"Well, what about it?" demanded Harry Wharton. "Cut it short, Bunter. You're getting as long-winded as Alonzo!"

"Well, I was after the stuff, you know, and I got a bottle of ink instead, by mistake, and it made me sick—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, do stop cackling!" roared

lock the door on the outside, see? Even Alonzo can't break down doors—"

"Great pip!"

"Then, when he's locked in safe, you get some tools out of your tool chest, Bob," continued Bunter.

"Do I?" gasped Bob.

"Yes, old fellow, and break open Alonzo's desk in Study No. 7. It doesn't matter how much you damage it, in the circumstances, you see, because once I've got at the stuff, I shall be as strong as Alonzo, and I'll put paid to him fast enough! So that's all right!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Harry Wharton.

"That's all right, is it!"

"Yes, old chap! Quite all right!"



"Use me to mop up the study, would you?" said Bunter. "Well, come on, I'm ready!" As the three juniors charged, the Owl of the Remove grabbed them in his strong hands and swept them off their feet. "Ow! Wow!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Whooop!" roared Peter Todd and Dutton simultaneously.

"First I've heard of it!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Buzz off, Bunter—or are you waiting to be kicked?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! Do listen to a chap!" urged Bunter. "Look here, I know all about that stuff Alonzo takes to make him so jolly strong! I was with him that day at the Willows, you know, and I saw him taking it—he had a little bottle, and he took a nip from it—I was going to lick him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And as it turned out, he licked me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Well, I've thought it over, you know—"

"What with?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Beast! I've thought it over, and I know jolly well that he got a bottle

Bunter. "That suspicious beast had left off keeping it in his pocket, and kept it locked up in his desk. I've looked over that desk a good many times, but he never leaves it open—"

"You prying worm—"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Well, I've got an idea!" said Bunter. "How would you fellows like to get hold of the stuff, and get as strong as Alonzo? Make the brute sit up then, what?"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Nugent.

"That's the idea!" said Bunter. "Only a fellow will have to be careful, of course! The brute is so jolly strong, you know—he can handle the lot of you, and me, too—even me—"

"Even you!" gasped Bob. "Oh crikey!"

"Yes, even me! Strategy's the thing," said Bunter. "And I'm the fellow for strategy! I've thought it out. You fellows ask Alonzo to tea this afternoon. Once he's in the study

Once I get hold of the bottle, it's all serene! I shall take the first dose—that's agreed!"

"Is it!" grinned Nugent.

"Yes! It works like magic—I've seen Alonzo at it, you know," explained Bunter. "Once I've taken it, I shall be as strong as Alonzo! And you fellows had better mind your p's and q's then, I can tell you."

"Oh! Had we?" gurgled Bob.

"I'm not thinking of making myself cock of the walk in the Remove and making all the other fellows too the line!" said Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As soon as I've had a dose from the bottle," said Bunter, "I shall, of course, hand it round! As for keeping it to myself, and kicking you fellows out of the study, the idea hasn't even occurred to my mind."

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"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, do stop cackling and be serious! You can see that it's the chance of a lifetime!" urged Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Let's have it clear! First of all, we're to tell Alonzo a string of lies and take him in and play a dirty trick on him. Then we're to burgle his study at the risk of being expelled from Greyfriars and sent to Borstal! And we're to do this, so that you can kick us out of the study, give Bob a hiding for banging your head, and thrash me till I put you up to play football! That's the programme?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. "It's a frightfully tempting offer!" said the captain of the Remove. "But we're not jumping at it."

"The jumpfulness is not terrific!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"If Alonzo's got any medical muck in his desk, he can keep it there!" went on Harry Wharton. "We're not burgling Alonzo's desk. But there's something that we can do for you, Bunter."

"What's that?" grunted the Owl of the Remove.

"Bump you for being such a young rascal!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Bob Cherry. "I say, you fellows— Oh lor'!" yelled Billy Bunter, as the Famous Five grasped him, and sat him down in the quad with a bump. "Oh jinniv! You beasts—I say, you fellows— Whoop! Oh erikay!"

"Have another?" asked Bob.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, leaving Bunter to roar. He was still roaring when the bell rang for third school.

Bunter rolled into the Remove-room with the rest of the Remove, with a frown on his fat brow.

Ever since he had learned that Alonzo had some mysterious mixture which gave him Samson-like strength, Bunter had been anxious to get hold of it. Now he had thought out a really good scheme—if the Famous Five would only have backed him up.

But they had made it clear—painfully clear, in fact—that Bunter had no backing to expect from them.

If Billy Bunter was going to become the strong man of Greyfriars, he had to think of some other way.

He was thinking of it in third school that morning, rather to the exclusion of lessons. It was, in Bunter's opinion, a more important matter than lessons. Unfortunately Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, did not agree with him there. Mr. Quelch, like many schoolmasters, had an idea that fellows came to school to learn things. His pointer rapped on Bunter's knuckles, and the fat junior gave his Form-master all his attention after that. And till third school was dismissed, dismissed from his fat mind was his great scheme of becoming the strong man of Greyfriars.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Catching Fish!

"BSQUATULATE!" barked Fisher T. Fish.
"I say, Fishy—"
"Git!"
"Yes; but I say, have you—"

"Vamoose the ranch!" roared Fisher T. Fish, reaching for the inkpot.

After class, Fisher Tarleton Fish was in his study, No. 14 in the Remove. Fishy was busy.

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The American junior was always busy, though what he found to be so busy about was rather a puzzle. Certainly he did not shine in class, and he was no good at games. But he had brought the rush and hurry of New York to Greyfriars with him. And he enjoyed hustling. At the present moment his occupation was one of the most congenial possible to Fishy. He was counting his money.

Deep in that entralling, entrancing occupation, Fishy naturally did not want to be interrupted—least of all by Bunter.

Bunter lately had done him out of twopence. Twopence was not a large sum, but it was money, and the loss of money gave Fishy a pain. It was even said that Bunter owed Fishy a shilling, from terms ago, though how even Bunter had succeeded in borrowing a shilling from Fisher T. Fish was a great problem.

Fishy grabbed up the inkpot. He was very sick with Bunter, and probably he would have shot the ink at the fat face blinking in at his study doorway, but for a consideration that occurred to him in time. Ink cost money.

"Beat it!" snapped Fishy. "I'm sure fed-up with you! You owe me one-and-twopence—git!"

"I've come to pay you," said Bunter, with dignity.

"Aw, can it!" said Fisher T. Fish.

A more credulous youth than Fishy would hardly have believed that William George Bunter really intended to pay anybody anything.

"Honest Injun!" asseverated Bunter.

"Got it in your rags?" sneered Fishy.

"Well, not exactly," admitted Bunter. "But I dare say you've heard me mention that I was expecting a postal order."

"Great jumping snakes!" roared Fisher T. Fish, in great exasperation. "Have you moved up here to spin that yarn to me, you pie-faced clam?"

"It's come!" yapped Bunter.

"Let's see the colour of it!" jeered Fishy.

"I'll explain how it is," said Bunter. "Alonzo's gone to Courtfield—"

"What the great horned toad has Alonzo got to do with it?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily.

"I mean—I—I wonder what made me mention Alonzo? Of course, he's got nothing to do with it. What I mean is, I put the postal order in my desk, meaning to cash it after class, and I've lost my key."

"Tell that to Mauleverer," suggested Fisher T. Fish. "He may swallow it. No use to me."

"I want you to lend me—"

"Now we're getting down to brass tacks!" snorted Fisher T. Fish. "Well, I ain't going to lend you anything but what's in this hyer inkpot."

"Your bunch of keys—"

"Oh!" said Fisher T. Fish, rather taken aback.

He had guessed, reckoned, and calculated that it was cash that Bunter wanted.

"To open my desk," concluded Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish eyed him.

The Remove merchant's study was rather like old Mr. Lazarus' second-hand shop at Courtfield. Fishy had all sorts and conditions of articles to sell. Among his other weird possessions was an immense bunch of old keys, which Fishy picked up second-hand for next to nothing. Any fellow who lost a key to a desk, a locker, or a door, could always try Fishy's bunch at the reasonable charge of one penny. And if he

found a key to fit he could buy it for threepence. Generally a suitable key was found, for Fishy's bunch was an enormous one. He never came across an old key anywhere without adding it to his bunch.

If Bunter only wanted to borrow Fishy's bunch of keys, Fishy was ready to do business. But he expected, of course, the usual consideration. Fishy was not the man even to lend a bunch of old keys for nothing. He would have considered such an action, not merely soft, but as letting down the greatest traditions of the United States.

"Waal, I guess you know the terms," said Fisher T. Fish, more amicably. "Hand over two cents, and the keys are yours to try."

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

"What?" howled Fisher T. Fish.

"I—I mean about getting that postal order out of my desk," amended Bunter hastily. "I—I haven't any money at the moment."

"I calculate I could have guessed that one," growled Fisher T. Fish. "Git, you fat jay! Absquatulate, you pie-faced geek! Vamoose!"

"Look here! You can lend me a bunch of old keys for nothing, Fishy."

"Guess again!"

"Well, look here, I'll sell you a book for—"

"I guess you sold me one of Alonzo's books last week, you fat clam, and I had to cough it up again, and lost two-pence on it!"

of one penny, the keys were not to be had. It was enough to make Bunter glare.

Fisher T. Fish turned to his calculations again, regardless of Bunter. He jotted down figures with a stump of pencil on a sheet of impot paper, and scanned them, and computed them

Christmas Greetings from Greyfriars.



HARRY WHARTON.

You'd think us Removites a rare lot of churls

*If we let this glad season depart
Without wishing readers, both fellows
and girls,*

All the best—from the depths of the heart!

*You've followed our fortunes throughout
the last year;*

More than ever before have we caught on.

*That in future we'll add even more to
your cheer,*

*Is the wish of your pal, Harry
Wharton.*

with the deep attention that such a subject deserved. He seemed to have forgotten Bunter's fat existence.

Perhaps he had; for when Fishy was thinking about money, he forgot time and space, and was lost in a happy dream.

Billy Bunter, unregarded in the doorway, blinked round the study through his big spectacles. He spotted the celebrated bunch of keys lying on the mantelpiece. But to grab them and bolt was a rather difficult matter. The bony Fishy was at least three times as swift in his movements as the fat and podgy Owl of the Remove. Bunter had simply no chance in a foot race. Had he had the desired dose of Alonzo's mysterious mixture, it would have been all right. He could have pitched Fishy across the study like a bag of school books. But that was not yet.

But necessity is the mother of invention. Bunter had to have those keys. Fishy's attention being deeply absorbed in his accounts, the fat junior slyly abstracted the door key from the inside of the lock, and slipped it into the outside of the door. Fishy did not even look up.

Then he stepped across the study to the mantelpiece. Fisher T. Fish looked up at that.

"Let them keys alone, you pie-faced jay!" he barked. "You figure that you can mosey into this study, and borrow things for nothing? Forget it! You finger them keys, and I'll sure make potato scrapings of you!"

"I'm not touching the keys, Fishy!"



BOB CHERRY.

*I've skated and been to the pictures,
And snowballed and had lots of sport;
I've listened to fatherly strictures
Concerning my poor school report.
Only one thing remains that I really
must do,
That's to wish a right glorious Christ-
mas to you!*



HURREE SINGH.

*My English was taught me with care-
fulness
By moonshoes, and though it brings
starefulness,
My language is deemed,
By pals most esteemed,
As fruit which refreshes with rare-
fulness.
When I wish, then, a funful vacation,
Lacking wantfully all tribulation,
Though you grinfully smile
At my ludicrous style,
My meaning needs no explanation!*

"I mean another of his books—that is to say, one of my own books—"

"Shut that door after you!"

"I—I—I say, Fishy—"

"Git!"

Billy Bunter glared at the American junior through his big spectacles.

Once more a deep scheme was working in Bunter's fat brain.

He had remembered Fishy's bunch of keys, and that seemed to solve the problem for him. Surely one of that vast assortment of varied keys would fit Alonzo's desk in Study No. 7. And Alonzo had walked down to Courtfield after class. He was gone to fetch a brand-new copy of his favourite work—"The Story of a Potato, From the Seed to the Saucepan"—the old copy having suffered severely in the wear and tear of life in the Greyfriars Remove. This was Bunter's chance—if he could get hold of Fishy's keys.

And for want of the miserable sum

*'Midst aristocratic relations I'm bred,
My dwelling's a vast marble hall;*

*But trifles like this never did turn my
head,*

I'm still a good pal to you all!

*And so it's a pleasure to tell you in
rhyme,*

*Though you happen to be far or near,
That I hope you'll partake of a "gorge"*

cous time

*For your Christmas vacation this
year!*



BILLY BUNTER.

*John Bull is my name, and my manners
are blunt;*

When I say a thing, then I mean it.

*I've never indulged in an underhand
stunt,*

*My method's ne'er such that I'd screen
it.*

*A fellow like me can invent nothing
clever.*

*How's this: "For your Christmas—the
merriest ever!"*



JOHNNY BULL.

If only I'd the leisure,

I'd travel sea and land;

To shake—'twould be a pleasure—

Each reader by the hand.

But since at home I'm moored fast,

And time won't let me call,

I'll use this space to broadcast

"A Merry Yule to All!"



FRANK NUGENT.

Clink, clink, clink! Jingle! Jangle!

"Not touching them at all—"

"Let 'em alone, you clam!" roared Fisher T. Fish, jumping up from the table.

Bunter grabbed the keys.

Fishy grabbed Bunter!

Crash!

"Thunder!" howled Fisher T. Fish, as the big bunch of keys crashed on his bony chest. "Wake snakes! Whoop!" He staggered backwards, and sat on the study carpet. "Great gophers! I guess—Ow! Ow! Wow!"

Bunter bounded for the door. He had knocked Fishy down—with his own bunch of keys! Only speed could save Bunter's life after that! He reached the door with a frantic bound, slammed it after him, and turned the key in the lock outside.

Even as he turned the doorkey, Fishy reached the door, grabbed it, and dragged. Only just in time the lock

clicked! Bunter was saved by a split second! Fishy, gabbling with fury, dragged at a locked door. Bunter, outside, chuckled breathlessly.

"By the great horned toad! Have you locked that pesky door?" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "Great snakes! I guess I'll make potato-scrappings of you! You've cinched my keys, you pie-faced gink! I guess I'll lynch you!"

"Ho, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

He was safe—saved by a second! He stood gasping in the passage, with the clinking bunch of keys in his fat hand. Within the study, Fisher T. Fish raved and roared. Bunter did not heed his raving and roaring! Fishy was safely locked in, and the fat Owl was secure from his bony transatlantic knuckles.

Certainly Fishy could not remain locked in for ever. When he got out he was sure to look for Bunter—and vengeance! But by that time, Billy Bunter hoped to be in possession of Alonzo's marvellous mixture—and be able to deal with Fish—or a whole shoal of Fishes!

Having recovered his breath, Billy Bunter rolled away down the passage. Fishy, raving and roaring in Study No. 14, was left to roar and rave!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Strategic!

"H!" gasped Bunter. "You here, Toddy!"

Peter Todd looked at him. Bunter, rolling into Study No. 7, found Peter there—which really was not surprising, as it was Toddy's study as well as Bunter's. But it was rather dismaying to the fat Owl. With Fishy's bunch of keys, he had no doubt that he would be able to open Alonzo's desk; but such a proceeding was obviously impracticable in the presence of Peter Todd.

"Well, why shouldn't I be here?" asked Peter. "What the thump do you want, Bunter? It's not tea time yet! Roll away, and don't interrupt a chap when he's getting on with his legal studies!"

Peter had a large law-book open on the table. Peter was a solicitor's son, and hopeful some day of following in his father's footsteps. He had brought several legal volumes to school with him for study in leisure moments; and perhaps he was able to make head or tail of them—perhaps!

"I say, never mind that rot, Peter!" said Bunter. "I say, they're punting a footer about in the quad—I heard Wharton calling you—"

"Don't jaw, if you're staying here," said Peter. "There's a chance to be quiet, now Lonzy's gone down to Court-field. Too bad for you to butt in and jaw!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Shut up!"

"Well, I'd better tell you that Quelch wants you," said Bunter. "He told me to tell you to come to his study at once!"

"Was that before he went out?" asked Peter, eyeing the fat Owl suspiciously.

"Oh! Has he gone out?" stammered Bunter. "I didn't know—I mean, yes, exactly, old fellow! He told me just as he was going out—I mean, just as he was coming in! I—I think he's waiting for you!"

"Let him wait!" said Peter. "What are you telling lies for now, Bunter? If you pulled my leg to the extent of sending me down to Quelch for nothing, I'd burst you all over the study!"

"I—I mean, it was the Head!" said

Bunter. "The Head told me to say—Wow! Owl! Beast!"

Bunter dodged an Algebra hurled by Peter Todd, but not quite quickly enough! It caught him on his fat chin.

Bunter disliked algebra intensely as a study! He disliked it still more in volume form, as a missile!

"Owl! Beast!" he roared. "You wait, you rotter, and I'll jolly well mop up the study with you!"

"No need to wait!" grinned Peter. "Get on with it now!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rubbed his fat chin, and Peter, grinning, resumed his legal studies.

The Owl of the Remove eyed him almost wolfishly. Peter, evidently, was settled there till tea-time; and Bunter simply had to get rid of him before Alonzo came back. And Alonzo was coming back to tea! Force—until Bunter had bagged that mixture—was impossible! The fat Owl had to draw upon his resources of strategy again.

"I say, Peter—" he began.

"Dry up!"

"That looks a jolly interesting book!" said Bunter.

"Does it?" grunted Peter. "Then appearances are deceptive!"

"I say, let's have a look at it, old chap!"

"Rot!"

"I'm frightfully interested in—in law, you know, and I'm sure you'll be a

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great lawyer some day, Peter," said Bunter, blinking at him. "Of course, you'll have to forget a lot of things you've learned here, if you're going to be a lawyer! A fellow who tells lies here may get kicked—it's not really the sort of place for training as a lawyer, so—"

"You silly ass!" Peter glared at him. "When I'm a lawyer, some day, do you think I'm going to tell crammers, you blithering owl?"

"Eh? Isn't that their line of business?" asked Bunter.

"No!" roared Peter.

"Oh! I thought it was! Suppose you're paid to defend a chap," said Bunter. "Would you tell the court you thought he was guilty, if you did?"

Peter did not answer that.

"Or suppose you were paid to prosecute him," said Bunter. "Would you let out that you believed him innocent?"

"For goodness' sake, don't keep on talking!" hooted Peter. "How's a chap to study while your chin-bone is going at sixty miles per hour?"

"Well, let's have a look at the book!" said Bunter; and he picked up the big volume from under Peter's nose.

The early winter dusk was falling. That gave Bunter an excuse for carrying the legal volume to the window. It was a fine winter's day, and the window was open.

"I say, what does it mean?" asked Bunter, blinking at the open page in the falling light. "Do they make it all mixed up like this on purpose, so that people won't be able to spot what their game is?"

"Don't drop it out of the window, fathead!" snorted Peter.

"Oh, it's safe enough, resting on the sill—Oh crikey! It's gone!" ejaculated Bunter, as the legal volume dropped into the quad. "Fancy the beastly thing falling out of my hands like that!"

"You fat frump!" roared Peter. "You dropped it on purpose."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"I'll kick you all the way to the quad to fetch it back—"

"I—I say, Peter, young Tubb's picked it up—he's cutting off with it!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

Peter Todd rushed from the study. His only thought was to save his precious volume, if it had fallen into the hands of a fag of the Third.

Bunter chuckled. His strategy had succeeded. Peter was gone; and Bunter had only to lock the study door to keep him out. He rolled across to the door. Before he reached it, Tom Dutton came in.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter in intense exasperation. It seemed as if trouble would never cease!

"What's Toddy rushed off like that for?" asked Dutton. "He nearly barged me over in the passage!"

Bunter had to be strategic again.

"Alonzo's been run over!" he answered.

"Dover?" repeated Dutton staring.

"What's he gone to Dover for?"

"Over!" yelled Bunter.

"Over! What over? Do you think they're playing cricket in December, you silly ass?" asked the deaf junior. "Oh! You mean that Peter's going over to Dover? Is that it?"

"Alonzo—run over!" shrieked Bunter. "They're bringing in the body now! Look!"

Bunter pointed down the passage towards the stairs. Tom Dutton stopped back and glanced in that direction. The next moment Bunter gave him a violent shove, and he spun across the passage, taken quite by surprise, and bumped on the opposite wall.

Slam!

Click!

The door of Study No. 7 was shut and locked at last! Billy Bunter gasped with relief. Tom Dutton, in the passage, made a jump at the door, crimson with wrath.

"Bunter, I'll jolly well punch your nose!" he roared, rattling the door-handle. "Open this door! What have you locked me out for? I'll spificate you!"

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

"Let me in, you fat frump!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"I don't call it a joke, barging a fellow over! I'll give you joke! Let me into the study!"

Billy Bunter did not trouble to answer again. With Fisher T. Fish's bunch of keys in his hand, he turned to Alonzo Todd's desk.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Strong Bunter!



LICK!

"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter. His little round eyes glistened behind his big round spectacles.

Fishy's bunch of keys had worked the oracle! There were at least fifty keys on the bunch! It was the eleventh that opened Alonzo's desk.

Bunter fairly gloated.

Almost the first article that met his eyes as he lifted the lid of the desk was a small phial, containing a sticky, crimson-coloured fluid.

(Continued on page 10.)

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BUNTER, THE BULLY!*(Continued from page 8.)*

This was "it."

Bunter knew that this was it! There could be no doubt about it. He had made a blunder once, annexing a bottle of marking-ink in mistake for that phial of mysterious mixture. The result had been unpleasant—indeed, sickening! This time there was no mistake. This was the bottle from which Strong Alonzo took regular doses, to keep up his marvellous strength! This was the wonderful discovery made by old Professor Sparkinson, which had turned a silver-haired old gentleman into an athlete! This was the goods!

Bunter grabbed it!

The fat Owl had no scruple whatever about annexing that phial. Indeed, he was very indignant that Alonzo had not shared such a valuable secret with such a pal as Bunter!

It was the contents of that phial that enabled Alonzo Todd to "bat" Bunter! It was going to enable Bunter to bat Alonzo, in his turn! One good turn deserved another—and so did a bad one, in Bunter's opinion!

"Oh crikey! That's it!" gasped Bunter. "Oh, good! Let 'em wait! I'll surprise 'em! Just let 'em wait! He, he, he!"

Bang! Thump! came at the study door. Peter Todd had returned, with his legal volume under his arm, and joined Tom Dutton there.

"What's this game?" roared Peter, in great wrath. "What's that potty Owl locked us out of the study for?"

"Let us in, you frabjous freak!" yelled Dutton. "I want my footer!"

"I guess I'll make potato-scrappings of him!" came a nasal howl. Somebody had turned the key in the outside of

Fishy's door and released him. The American junior was outside Study No. 7 now, beating a tattoo on the panels with his bony knuckles. "I guess I'll scrag him! Yep! Locking a guy in his own study, cinching a galoot's bunch of keys without paying for their hire! Wake snakes! I guess I'll beat him up some, and a few over!"

Bang! Thump! Kick! Bang!

Three enraged and exasperated fellows banged and thumped at the door of Study No. 7.

Bunter did not heed!

He was not likely to heed when Alonzo's bottle of marvellous mixture was in his fat hands!

His podgy fingers trembled with eagerness as he unscrewed the stopper. His eyes gleamed!

It was to be hoped that the crimson fluid of the phial would have the effect that Bunter expected! Otherwise fearful trouble awaited him once the study door was open!

But Bunter had no doubts. What this stuff had done for Alonzo it would do for any fellow!

The little phial was half full. Alonzo, as Bunter had discovered by active spying, took a sip every day from that phial. Obviously, the doses could only

be very small. Bunter decided on a single nip.

He lifted the bottle to his lips.

Bang! Thump! Bang!

"Open this door, you fat villain!" roared Peter Todd.

"Let us in, you flabby freak!" roared Dutton.

"I guess I'll spifficate him! You hear me yaup!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "I'm saying that I'll make potato-scrappings of him!"

Bunter grinned.

He allowed a large drop of the crimson fluid from the bottle to fall on his fat tongue, and slowly absorbed it.

He was prepared to wait for the effect! But he did not have to wait! The effect was almost instantaneous, and quite electrical!

It seemed to run through Bunter's fat veins like fire!

Professor Sparkinson undoubtedly had made a wonderful discovery! Whether it was monkey-gland stuff, or whatever it was, it was marvellous!

New and wonderful energy ran through the fat and flabby form of William George Bunter!

He felt an entirely new Bunter!

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped.

His eyes flashed behind his spectacles! It was the genuine stuff! It was doing for Bunter what it had done for Alonzo Todd! Strong Alonzo was not the only

could not help feeling that he was looking, as he felt, majestic!

"Don't make a row, you fellows!" said Bunter calmly.

"What?" roared Peter.

"You can come into the study! But be quiet! I don't like a row in the study! I shan't allow anything of the kind!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You can cut off, Fish!"

There was a rush! What Billy Bunter's majestic attitude meant and his calm defiance, the three Removites did not know. But they knew they were going to mop up the study with the cheeky Owl of the Remove. At least, they thought so; not yet knowing that they had to deal with Strong Bunter.

"Now, you fat freak—"

"Now, you cheeky slug—"

"Now, you pesky mugwump—"

Three pairs of hands were laid on Billy Bunter together! And then the unexpected happened!

Bunter ought to have been swept off his feet! He ought to have been bumped on the study floor!

But he wasn't! Instead of that, Bunter swept round a fat arm, and it had the effect of a flail! Three astounded juniors went spinning, and sprawled over one another on the floor of Study No. 7!

Bump, bump, bump!

Billy Bunter grinned down at them.

"Try again!" he suggested.

"Well, I'm blessed!" gasped Peter, sitting up dazedly. "What the jolly old dickens—"

"Ow! I guess I'm damaged a few!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"He, he, he!"

Peter Todd leaped up and charged. Tom Dutton charged after him. They were not fellows to be handled

by Bunter—if they could help it!

But they couldn't!

Billy Bunter grabbed them by their collars! In utter amazement they found that they could not resist the swing of his fat arms. They were swept off their feet, one in either fat hand. Then, with a cheery grin, Billy Bunter brought their heads together.

Crack!

"Whoop!" roared Peter and Dutton simultaneously.

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter calmly tossed them across Fisher T. Fish, who was still sprawling on the floor.

There was an agonised gurgle from Fishy, as they collapsed on him.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! Ow! Wow! What the—Woogh!"

"Urrrrgh! I guess—urrrrrgh!—I calculate—warrghh!"

"Better mind your p's and q's, you fellows—what?" grinned Bunter cheerily.

"You may as well bear in mind, Toddy, that I'm head of the study now."

"Oh, my aunt Selina! Oh! Ow!"

"I shan't stand any cheek in this study," said Bunter calmly. "You've had a lesson; let it be enough for you. If you want any more handling, you've only got to get up on your hind legs and say so. He, he, he!"



strong man at Greyfriars now! Strong Bunter had also to be reckoned with!

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Fine!"

He screwed up the stopper and slipped the phial into an inner pocket. Then he closed and locked Alonzo's desk.

Bang! Thump!

"I guess I'll slaughter him!"

"I'll burst him!"

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

There was not going to be any slaughtering, smashing, or bursting—now! Not for Strong Bunter!

"What's the fat brute up to?" gasped Peter Todd. "He's cackling! I'll give him cackle! Bunter, you benighted freak, open this door!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Open the door!" roared Peter.

"Just going to, old bean!" chuckled Bunter.

He stepped to the door, turned back the key, and threw it open. Three infuriated faces glared into the study.

Billy Bunter eyed them calmly.

Bunter had no fear now! There was nothing for Strong Bunter to be afraid of. He folded his podgy arms across his chest, and stood in a Napoleonic attitude, gazing at the three with lofty scorn.

Never had Billy Bunter been so fearless, so lofty, and so scornful! He

Billy Bunter, with his fat little nose in the air, rolled out of the study. Three fellows, dazed and dizzy and breathless, sat up on the carpet and gazed after him as he went.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Hard Pressed!

"**H** ALLO, hallo, hallo! Looks like a moving job!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"It's the jolly old professor!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were taking a walk across Courtfield Common that afternoon. There had been a fall of snow, and the common gleamed white on all sides of them.

Flakes were still falling, and the Famous Five were keeping an eye open for Ponsonby & Co. of Highcliff School. They had spotted some Highcliff caps in the distance, but those caps had vanished again. While not exactly keen on a row with their old enemies of Highcliff, the Famous Five would not have objected to giving Pon & Co. a good snow-balling by way of winding up the term with a little excitement. However, the Highcliffians were not to be seen; but a little, old gentleman, with locks of silver hair escaping under the brim of his hat, came in sight, tramping on a snowy footpath over the common, heading for the distant town.

The juniors could not help regarding Professor Sparkinson curiously.

They had seen him only once before, when, on a rainy evening, they had obtained shelter at the Willows, the old house on the edge of the common, which the professor had taken. But that single meeting had made a tremendous impression on their minds.

Nearer seventy than sixty, Professor Sparkinson looked venerable. But they had seen him climb trees with the agility of a monkey, and swing Billy Bunter about with one hand. Such strength in the old gentleman had astounded them. And they had another sample of it now, for the professor was carrying two large, packed suitcases, one in each hand, and evidently without an effort. Even a hefty railway porter would have taken those big suitcases one at a time, on his shoulder. The amazing old gentleman swung them as if they weighed no more than feathers.

"That's jolly old Sparkinson!" said Nugent. "According to what Bunter says, Alonzo got his strengthening stuff from him."

"Looks like it, too!" said Bob. "He's as strong as a horse, ancient as he looks. It's some jolly old scientific discovery. I shouldn't like to be carrying more than one of those bags at a time."

The professor glanced at the juniors through his horn-rimmed glasses, and, recognising them, gave them a nod and a smile. They saluted him politely as they came up to him on the path.

"Ah, you are the boys who came in out of the rain—what, what?" said the professor. "How is my young friend Alonzo Todd getting on?"

"Fine!" said Bob, with a grin. "He's started as a Sandow, and nobody knows where he parks the muscle."

The professor grinned.

"Going away for Christmas, sir?" asked Nugent.

"Eh? Yes. Probably for a good many Christmases," said the professor. "Here to-day and gone to-morrow—what, what? By the time you boys are eating your Christmas pudding, I shall be well on my way to Central Africa. I am glad to have seen you once more, to say—Urrrrggghh!"

The professor had probably been going to say "good-bye," but he broke off with a gasping gurgle as a snowball suddenly landed on his mouth. He staggered, spluttering, dropped the suitcases, and sat down in the snow.

"Ooooooh!" he remarked.

The Greyfriars fellows stared round. Close at hand was a belt of trees and leafless bushes banked with snow. As they glanced round, a volley of snowballs flew, and smashed all over their faces.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry, as he staggered, slipped in the snow, and sat down beside the professor.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Those Highcliff rotters!"

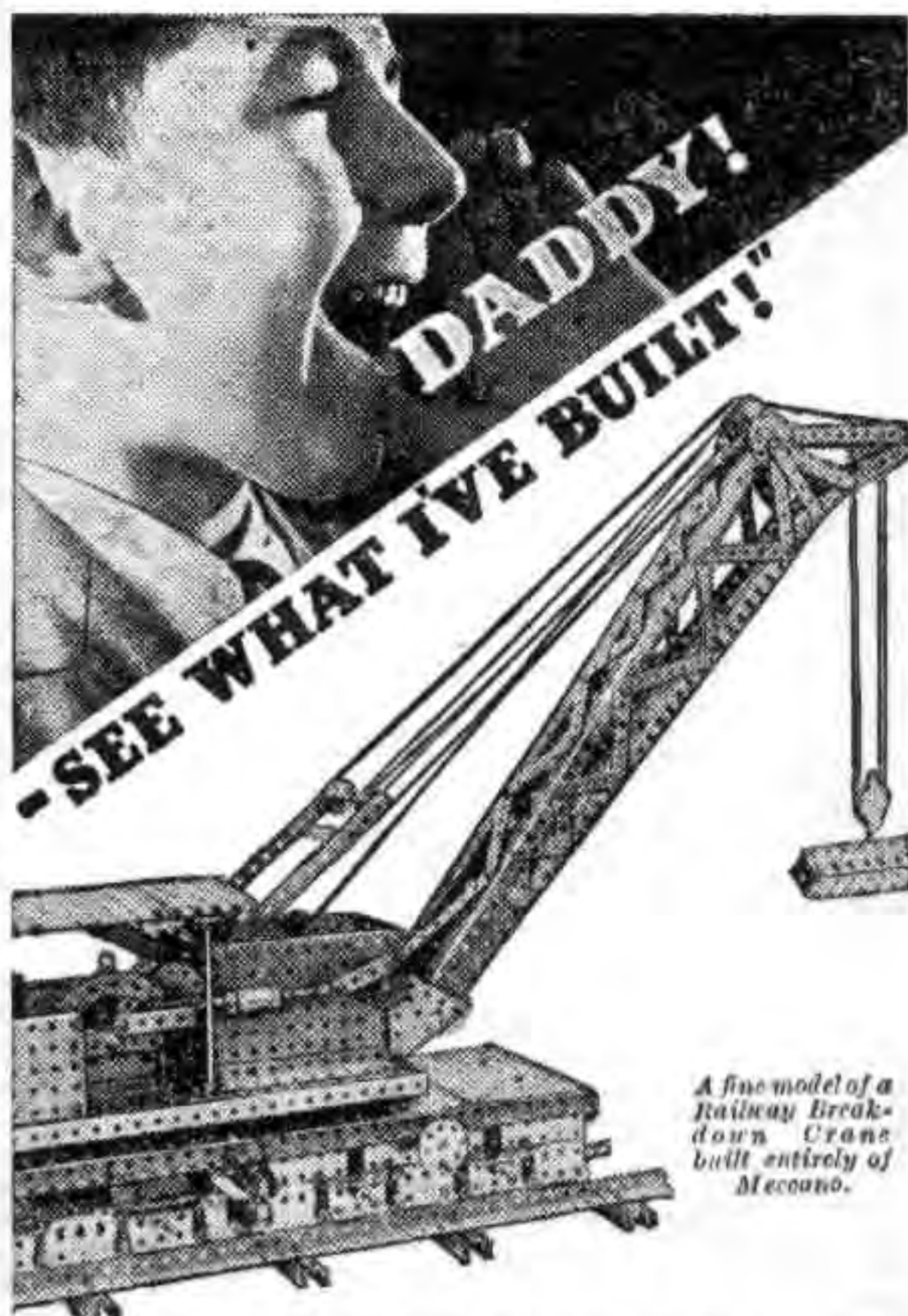
"Ooooooh!"

Whiz, whiz, whiz! came the showering snowballs. Hats and caps could now be seen among the thickets, which grew on a rather steep bank beside the path. Pon & Co., it was plain, had been watching the Greyfriars fellows from a distance, and had picked that favourable spot for ambushing them. And it was clear that they were in strong force.

"Upon my word!" Professor Sparkinson scrambled to his feet. "What young rascal— Oh dear! Who—what?"

"Go for 'em!" roared Johnny Bull.

(Continued on next page.)



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MECCANO

Whiz, whiz, whiz! came the snowballs. More than a dozen balls flew at once, showing that the enemy were of that number at least. The astute Ponsonby had gathered plenty of force before he tackled the Famous Five of Greyfriars.

Snowballs crashed and smashed on the chums of the Remove. A whizzing missile knocked off the professor's hat.

He jumped after it and grabbed it up. Another caught him in the neck as he did so.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from the thicket up the bank.

"Upon my word!" gasped the professor. "If I had not a train to catch I would go and give those young rascals what they deserve! But I must not lose my train!"

He jammed his hat on his silvery hair, picked up the two heavy suitcases, and strode on. Snowballs whizzed after him as he went.

Harry Wharton & Co. faced the enemy.

Pon & Co. were in a strong position at the top of the rugged, snowy bank, and the odds were on their side. But the Famous Five were not to be pelted with impunity.

"Come on!" shouted Harry.

And he led the charge up the bank. His comrades followed him fast.

It was, so to speak, magnificent, but it was not war. A terrific volley of snowballs swept down on the chums of the Remove, fairly bowling them over. It was followed by a charge of the enemy.

Harry Wharton & Co. were accustomed to getting the upper hand of the Highcliffians in their frequent rows. But this time the boot was on the other leg, as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh would have expressed it.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson came running down the bank, followed by Merton and Drury and Vavasour and Pelham, and then six or seven more of the nutty crowd of Highcliffe. The odds were overwhelming, or Pon & Co. certainly would not have ventured to close quarters.

"Mop up those Greyfriars cads!" yelled Ponsonby.

"Collar them!" yelled Monson.

The Famous Five came to a sudden halt. Down the slope came the crowd of Highcliffians, hurling snowballs as they came.

"Stand together!" panted Wharton.

"Shoulder to shoulder!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"The shoulderfulness is terrific!"

The Famous Five stood up to the rush. They stood up to it manfully and gamely. But it booted not, as a poet would say. More than a dozen fellows, charging down a slope, had to get the best of it. Harry Wharton & Co. went whirling and staggering, carried down the bank to the path, in the midst of the Highcliffians.

On the footpath they rallied. Shoulder to shoulder, with their hands up, they faced the enemy, and hit out hard and hit out often.

"Back up!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"That's for your nose, Pon!"

"Yarrah!"

"One for you, Gaddy—"

"Oh gad! Wow!"

"Give 'em socks!" roared Johnny Bull, landing his right in Drury's eye, and his left in Vavasour's neck.

Heavy as the odds were, the Highcliffians backed away after a few minutes. They seemed to be tired of close quarters.

"Don't scuffle with the Greyfriars cads!" panted Ponsonby. "Pelt 'em! Drive 'em home!"

"Absolutely!" gasped Vavasour.

And, keeping out of hitting range, the Highcliffe crowd gathered snow, and pelted hard and fast. The Famous Five followed suit, gathering snow and hurling snowballs. But the enemy's fire was much heavier, and a continual shower of missiles smashed all over the Greyfriars fellows.

It went against the grain to retreat, but there was no alternative. Slowly, with their faces to the enemy, and stopping every minute or two, to hurl snowballs, the Famous Five retreated in the direction of the Courtfield road, where there was a chance of picking up help.

On a half-holiday it was likely that there would be Greyfriars fellows about between the school and the town. And never had the chums of the Remove been so eager to see a Greyfriars cap.

Ponsonby & Co. followed them up, in a body, pelting hard and fast. Seldom, or never, had Pon & Co. driven the Famous Five before them, and they grinned with glee as they followed on.

By the time they reached the Courtfield road the chums of the Remove were feeling thoroughly battered. How

many snowballs they had stopped they could not have computed. On the road Harry Wharton cast an anxious glance up and down, towards Greyfriars, and then towards Courtfield. From the latter direction a Remove fellow came in sight. It was Alonzo Todd, returning from Courtfield with that valuable work, "The Story of a Potato," under his arm!

"Only that duffer!" grunted Wharton. Then he remembered. The Duffer of Greyfriars was "Strong Alonzo" now. He shouted to him at the top of his voice.

"Wake up, Alonzo! Back up! Rescue, Remove!"

Alonzo started and stared.

"Oh, my goodness!" he exclaimed.

Then he came on at a run. Alonzo had always had pluck. Now he had wonderful strength, also! He was the most valuable ally the hard-pressed Removites could have found at that moment.

"Stick together!" shouted Bob. "Here they come!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Startling!

PONSONBY & CO. were coming at a rush now.

"Barge the rotters into the ditch!" said Ponsonby.

"What-ho!" chuckled Monson.

"Absolutely!" said Vavasour.

There was a deep ditch beside the road. The rains had filled it almost to the brim. Over the top was a thin sheet of ice, cracked here and there.

The Highcliffians jumped the ditch and gathered in the road. They were not keen on close quarters with the Removites. But the idea of barging them into the ditch was irresistibly attractive.

Gathered in a bunch, they rushed the Famous Five down. If they saw Alonzo in the offing they did not heed him. They came at the group of Removites at a terrible charge; and the Famous Five, standing together and fighting hard, were driven back. On the very verge of the ditch they made a stand, hitting hard and hitting often, and loud yells from Pon & Co. told that the punches did damage. But the odds were too heavy now that Pon & Co. were putting their beef into it.

"Barge them in!" yelled Ponsonby.

"Knock the cads over!" roared Monson.

And knocked over, and barged in, the famous five inevitably would have been, but for the arrival of Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo came up at a burst of speed! He smote the Highcliffians like a thunderbolt. A runaway lorry could hardly have surprised them more.

Alonzo hit out right and left.

"Oh gad!" yelled Ponsonby, as he went spinning, to crash on the thin sheet of ice on the ditch and plunge through.

Splash!

"Ooooooh!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Gadsby, as he went after Pon. There was another crash, and another splash.

"Go it, Alonzo!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

Alonzo was going it!

His arms swung round like flails, knocking the Highcliffians right and left. Alonzo knew as much about boxing as about Sanskrit! But he did not need to box! A swing of his arm sent a fellow spinning for yards!

Less than a minute after Alonzo's arrival, two of the Highcliffians were in the ditch, frantically trying to scramble out, six or seven were sprawling in the snow, and the rest were in full flight—tearing away up the road as if for their lives.

"Our win!" gasped Nugent.

"Alonzo's win!" chuckled Bob.

"Good old Lonzy! Good old Duffer!"

The fallen Highcliffians scrambled up. They were not thinking of renewing the combat. The moment they were on their feet they ran. They had had enough of Strong Alonzo!

"Give 'em beans!" shouted Johnny Bull. And the Famous Five gathered snowballs and pelted the enemy as they fled till they were out of range.



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Although the odds were in their favour, the Highcliffians backed away from the Famous Five. "Don't scuffle with the Greyfriars cads!" panted Ponsonby. "Pelt 'em! Drive 'em home!" "Absolutely!" gasped Vavasour. "All together, you chaps!" panted Wharton. "Let 'em have it!"

Ponsonby and Gadsby crawled out of the ditch. They looked dismal objects. Soaked to the skin, smothered with mud, their teeth chattering with cold, they gasped and groaned as they emerged.

"Have some more, Pon?" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ooogh! Oh gad! Leave us alone!" groaned Ponsonby. "Ow! Oooooch!" "Oh crikey!" groaned Gadsby.

Alonzo Todd gazed at them with kind concern.

"My dear fellows," he said gently, "I am very, very sorry that I had to knock you into the ditch. But you will, I am sure, realise, on calm reflection, that no alternative was presented to me, in the circumstances."

"Urrrrrgh!" "Grooooooh!"

"I fear," went on Alonzo kindly, "that you are in danger of catching cold, my dear fellows, and I recommend you to get into motion without undue delay. I should advise you to run all the way to Highcliffe, in order to restore your temperature and keep up the circulation—"

"They'll run all right!" said Johnny Bull. "I'm going to start them!"

"Yarooooh!" roared Ponsonby, as Johnny Bull started him, with a kick that landed with what a novelist would call a sickening thud.

Ponsonby started. He started with a bound, and he went on at top speed. "Now you, Gaddy—"

But Gadsby did not wait to be started. He bolted after Ponsonby. The two Highcliffians disappeared up the road, both going strong.

"Lucky you came along, Lonzy, old bean!" said Bob.

"I am indeed very, very glad that I arrived at so opportune a moment, my dear Cherry!" said Alonzo. "I fear that I have handled those exceedingly disagreeable fellows rather roughly, but, in the circumstances, I have no doubt that my action was justified, and that my Uncle Benjamin would approve."

"Doesn't your jaw ache?" asked Bob.

"Not at all, my dear Cherry! It is very odd, but my Cousin Peter asked me the very same question," said Alonzo innocently. "I assure you that my jaw does not ache at all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you desire it, my dear friends, I will see you safe back to Greyfriars," said Alonzo kindly. "Please walk with me!"

The Famous Five gave Alonzo a look. But they were under too great an obligation to the Duffer of Greyfriars to tell him what they thought of him. So they smiled cheerfully and walked back towards the school with Alonzo.

The winter dusk was falling as they reached the school gates. Light flakes of snow were also falling. Heedless of them, Peter Todd was waiting at the gates, watching the road anxiously.

"Oh, here you are, you blitherer!" he exclaimed, as Alonzo came up with the Famous Five.

"My dear Peter, why such a discourteous greeting?" asked Alonzo gently.

"What's biting you, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

Peter, unheeding that question, glared at Alonzo.

"You howling ass!"

"But, my dear Peter—"

"You dunderheaded dummy!"

"But what—"

"You—you—you burbling bandersnatch! You jabbering jabberwock! Have you been giving Bunter any of that stuff?" roared Peter Todd.

"Certainly not, my dear Peter!" answered Alonzo. "I do not admit that there is any stuff, as you call it, for, far as it must always be from me to prevaricate, I have engaged to keep the matter a secret, and, therefore, I am bound not to mention to you, or anyone else, that Professor Sparkinson gave me a bottle of his Wonderful Elixir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five.

"Has Bunter got hold of it?" yelled Peter.

"Not to my knowledge, my dear fellow."

"Then what's come over him?"

"I am totally unacquainted with what may have come over Bunter, my dear Peter. I trust that he is not ill."

"Ill! I jolly well wish he was!" snorted Peter. "He's as strong as a horse! He's as strong as an elephant! He's as strong as a rhinoceros! Did you leave the stuff in the study?"

"I always lock my desk, my dear Peter—"

"Oh crumbs! That's why he had Fishy's bunch of keys!" howled Peter.

"But what's happened?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Bunter's happened!" yelled Peter.

(Continued on page 16.)

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No. 63 (New Series).

THE NEW Greyfriars

EDITED BY H. W. H.

PHANTOM VIOLIN'S STRANGE SOLO!



By
Claude
Hoskins

peace with the world on the strength of a solid evening at the piano, followed by a solid supper of cold turkey and Christmas pudding.

I suppose it was midnight when I awoke to find myself confronted by the strangest sight any musician could possibly imagine. Floating across the room in the moonlight were a violin and a bow, neither of which was supported by any visible agency whatever. As I stared, to complete the wonder, the bow began to move up and down of its own accord and the violin started playing!

I sat up in bed and my hair stood

up on my head. Never in my life have I felt such a spasm of terror as seized me at that moment. I gazed at that phantom violin in sheer paralysed stupefaction!

How long it played, I cannot tell. All I know is that I eventually sank into unconsciousness and did not awake till morning. The tune the phantom violin had played was then as fresh in my mind as it had been at midnight, and I simply rushed downstairs to the piano, to try it over myself and commit it to paper.

Since that day, I've played it to countless listeners and the effect is always extraordinary. Some are so affected that they have to shut their ears; others turn quite green and rush out of the room; while those who remain invariably say that it's the most unearthly tune they've ever heard.

Nobody ever wants to hear it played a second time.

Taking it all round, it's pretty obvious to me that there's something very remarkable about the Midnight Melody I got from the Phantom Violin!

OUR SPOOKS

How many of our readers must have seen the ghostly apparitions of the Greyfriars? I don't suppose I'm unique in all throw a manly chorus round a cheery, crackling But it's a different proposition the night in the haunted old mansion! Br-r-r-r-r!

Anyway, whether you're help being interested in Christmas. Hence this special containing the ghostly experiences of our contributors.

That they'll make a Merry is the sincere wish of



Never, dear readers, shall stalked down the stately Court!

My bed-room clock reigned tower of Bunter Court had about midnite when I slipped diamond-studded dressing-snack.

As I descended the staircase, I heard a slight Unmistakably, I heard it sound of soft, slinky foot-

What was it? Was it the Bunter, haunting the scene deer reader, I reckoned in the evening, I'd been knew that wailing sound of a beastly Banshee!

Shaking, I went down the hall. Shuddering, I ran door. And then, in the close beside me and felt

There are times, dear nerve will fail. Mine failed the affrighted midnite air, As I lay there, writhing, body—a soft, furry thing

I suppose I must have lights were switched on and Bessie were lifting me on to

"What the thunder's up faultless diction of a true

"The Banshee!" I cried. You'll hardly believe it had seen it! The only thing cat, which happened to be they arrived on the scene.

A happy Christmas wish of the Greyfriars

RED EARL OF HAUNTED TURRET

Ghostly Guest at Ball

happened when the time came for masks to be thrown aside.

With five minutes to go, the Red Earl disappeared once again. But this time five keen-eyed Removites saw him go and followed him. Straight up the stairs and into the turret-room went the Red Earl.

Close on his heels came the Famous Five.

They burst into the haunted chamber.

The sight that met their eyes made them fairly gasp.

The "ghost" was standing by one of the narrow old open windows, examining something by the light of the moon. And it didn't need a second glance to convince the Removites that that "something" was a fine haul of jewellery, stolen from the bed-rooms of Mauleverer Towers during the "Red Earl's" frequent disappearances from the ball-room!

Wharton & Co. fell on him in a trice. The "ghost" was taken completely by surprise and bowled over without difficulty, and within a very short space of time he was being handed over to the police.

Readers who remember the discovery of a secret passage leading from the haunted turret to the grounds of Mauleverer Towers on a later occasion will not need to be told why the Red Earl went upstairs with his haul. But it was a rare puzzle to the Famous Five till at that later date they solved the mystery of the turret-room themselves!



and they couldn't help noticing also that although he walked about a lot, he spoke to nobody.

What more natural than that an impression should get about that he was not human at all, but the Red Earl himself, come back in ghostly form to the scene of his exciting earthly existence?

Unbeknown to Mauly, the Famous Five decided, as mid-night grew near, to keep a special eye on the Red Earl to see what



There's a haunted turret at Mauleverer Towers and the spirit of the Red Earl, who vanished there under mysterious circumstances centuries ago, is said to brood over it to this very day!

The legend of this distant ancestor of Mauleverer of the Greyfriars Remove was brought back very sharply to the minds of Mauly's guests at a Christmas party he held there two or three years ago.

About a couple of hours before the party began, the rumour went round the house that the ghost of the Red Earl had been seen by Dicky Nugent. The fag gave a vivid and detailed description of the supernatural visitor.

The Christmas Ball that evening was a masked fancy-dress affair which went with a real swing, and the probabilities are that the subject of the ghost of the Red Earl would have quickly been forgotten, but for one circumstance.

That circumstance was that someone had turned up to the ball in the guise of the Red Earl himself!

Who the visitor was, nobody knew. He mingled with the rest of the guests and walked about as though he felt thoroughly at home. But the peculiar thing about him was that at times he seemed to disappear from the scene altogether!

As the evening went on, Mauly's pals couldn't help feeling more and more intrigued by the Red Earl. His periodical disappearances continued to attract their attention,

Greyfriars Herald

Y HARRY WHARTON.

EXTRA
GOOD
EDITION

December 16th, 1933.

I SWAT SPOOKS

Spook-swatting is my speciality. Country houses and family seats visited. Ghosts laid and banshees banished. Distance no object. No more sleepless nights!—R. RAKE, Psychic Investigator, c/o "Greyfriars Herald."



SPECTRES SPECIAL!

I swear that the thought of a spook-proof? I can't—and I respect! Of course, we can't tell you're telling spook stories and everybody's about. You find yourself alone for a while, and you're rambling, spook-ridden or not, you can't tell. That's especially true at Christmas and Spectres Number, expect some of our best-known

Merry Christmas all the merrier for you
Your Editor,
HARRY WHARTON.

THE BANSHEE of BUNTER COURT

By
Billy Bunter

It was the night when the Banshee came and corridors of Bunter Court were dark and the clock in the old hall struck 14, so I knew it was late. I slipped on my sable-lined slippers and went downstairs for a

golden marble and allabaster statue. I stopped and listened. It was the grim, ghostly, ghastly of the Banshee.

At the central shaddo of some ancient long-forgotten past? No, it was something different. Earlier I read an Irish ghost story and I had felt that it was—the feendish cry

Shivering, I crossed the dark pantry and opened the door. Darkness, I heard the wailing. Something touch my leg!

For once, when even the strongest of us were with a howl that shook the floor, I fell in a heap on the floor. I felt the Presence pass across my face, of indescribable weirdness! When I came round, the and pater and mater and Sammy and I were

"Where is it?" asked pater, with the

side, barely. "Where is it?" I told you that not one of them thing they had seen was Tibby, our be prowling around the pantry when

as everybody, is the sincere
Greyfriars Herald staff.

Jevver bear of my little stunt for running Christmas ghosts at country houses? Say, that was a cinch. I guess I'd have been the Big Shot in the business by now if I hadn't gone to Eastwood House.

But Eastwood House did it for me, I'll tell the world!

In case you don't know it already, Eastwood House has been the parking-place of the D'Arcy family since way-back. I guess I nearly fell over myself when that St. Jim's guy with the glass eye gave me the job of fixing a ghost for his Christmas party!

In the dead of night I hit Eastwood House and proceeded to the disused wing, as per prearranged plan. The idea was that D'Arcy was to bring an exploring party around somewhere in the small hours and I, F. T. F., in ghostly glad rags, was to fade in and give the spook-snoopers something to write home about!

I guess I grinned a whole lot as I got ready, thinking of the easy dough I was making. But that grin didn't last long, I'll say.

For no sooner had I donned the spectral rig-out than I heard a kinder chain-rattling noise at the back of me and, facing round, found myself staring at a genuine ghost!

I guess you guys reckon ghosts are all guff and hokum. That's what I'd always thought, too—up till then. But I'll tell the world there wasn't much hokum about this particular ghost—no, sir.

Folks, that ghost had got everything! He was dressed like

You have to get used to surprises when you stay at Coker's house. Coker's always liable to mistake you for a burglar and chuck you down the stairs or in some other way make sure of your having a hundred-per-cent hectic holiday! With a "live wire" like Coker about, "shocks" are in the normal course of events!

Trained as we are to shocks, however, our training failed us last Christmas Eve. Coker had left us to our own devices for the afternoon while he escorted Aunt Judy on a visit to some relatives. After amusing ourselves making a libellous snow man of Coker on the lawn in front of the house, we trotted off to the pictures.

It was nearly midnight when we walked up the drive to the house again. We glanced simultaneously at the snow man—and simultaneously we came to a dead stop, our eyes almost popping out of their sockets. For the snow man was actually moving! Its arms were waving and its head was turning. And, as it saw us, it rose out of the snow and started lumbering over towards us!

SHOCK for SPOOK STAGER!



PHANTOM THAT FLOORED FISH

Christopher Columbus, he carried his own head in his hands, he'd got chains rattling about his feet and, to complete the bag of tricks, you could see right through him! He surely was a swell ghost!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

"Do you believe in spirits?" is a question often asked in the Second.

I eggSPECTRE negative reply is usually anticipated; but the Second aren't HEADLESS of the possibilities and WEIRDetermined to GHOSTeady in answering, rather than say "No" and find we SPOOK too soon!

I guess I didn't stop to argue. I just hit the trail for the open air, and the fact that the nearest exit was through the window didn't trouble yours truly. I went through that window like nothing you ever saw!

And that's all about the ghost at Eastwood House. Don't ask me what it was; I know my limitations, I guess.

I'm a plain Amurrican business man. Only saps believe in spooks and spectres, and an Amurrican business man ain't a sap, is he?

All the same, I'm out of that ghost-fixing line now. The business is yours, if you want it. You can have it all—and I ain't charging a Continental red cent for it!

SNOW MAN'S MIDNIGHT MOVE

By Potter and Greene

Cold as it was, perspiration streamed down our faces, and it was some time before we could pull



ourselves together. We're not ashamed to admit that we turned and ran for dear life. When a snow man you've

made yourself gets up and walks, conventional courage can take a back seat so far as we're concerned!

A yell of laughter brought our run to an end. Then it was that we realised that the "snow man" was Coker himself, rigged out in a white sheet to give him the appearance of a snowy figure!

Coker explained that he was so disgusted at our artistic effort that he had determined to give us a fright, just to teach us not to model him in snow again. If that was his aim, he certainly succeeded. But, somehow, we doubt whether he's capable of thinking out such a wheeze.

More probably, the fathead had donned a sheet to make himself inconspicuous and was watching the house to see whether Santa Claus really does go down the chimney.

We'd sooner believe that about Horace Coker!



(Continued from page 13.)

"He's knocked three of us right and left, and walked off grinning!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"The hatfulness is terrific!"

"Surely Bunter would not be so unscrupulous as to abstract the mixture surreptitiously from my desk?" exclaimed Alonzo "I must ascertain at once!"

He hurried away to the House. Peter Todd and the Famous Five followed him. They lost no time in getting to Study No. 7 in the Remove.

There Alonzo hastily unlocked his desk. He gazed at the empty space where Professor Sparkinson's phial had reposed.

"Oh, my goodness!" ejaculated Alonzo.

"Is it gone?" howled Peter.

"It certainly appears to be gone, my dear fellow! As it is no longer in the desk it appears to be indubitable that it is gone!"

"Fathead! Now all the fat's in the fire!"

"The fatfulness in the esteemed fire is terrific!"

"It is undoubtedly excessively disconcerting!" said Alonzo. "In these peculiar and distressing circumstances, my dear fellows, I think I should be justified in confiding to you that I had in my possession a bottle containing a certain fluid. I am bound not to mention that it was given me by Professor Sparkinson, as he desired to keep the matter a secret—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"But it was from a daily drop, from that phial, that I derived the strength that has made me the bestest fellow at Greyfriars. It is necessary for a daily drop to be taken, or—"

"Or you won't be Strong Alonzo any more?" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Exactly, my dear fellow! Unless I take the usual drop this evening, I shall get up to-morrow only as strong as I used to be, which, as you know, was not excessively strong—"

"About as strong as a bunny rabbit!" said Johnny Bull.

"And Bunter—" gasped Bob.

"Bunter's the strong man of Greyfriars now!" groaned Peter.

"Oh, my hat! Won't he spread!"

"The spreadfulness will be preposterous!"

"However," said Alonzo thoughtfully, "I have no doubt that, on explaining the matter to Professor Sparkinson, I shall be able to obtain a new supply of the mixture—"

"Guess again!" said Bob Cherry. "We met the jolly old professor this afternoon, and he told us he's off to Central Africa—"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"And may not be back for years—"

"Goodness gracious!"

"You'd better get that jolly old bottle of muck back from Bunter, if you want

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to go on playing Sandow!" chuckled Bob. "What about tea, you fellows?" The Famous Five went along to Study No. 1 to tea. A surprise awaited them when they arrived at that celebrated study.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Strong Bunter Going Strong!



GUESS—

"Hold your tongue, Fishy!"

"Look hyer—"

"Silence!" rapped Billy Bunter.

"You fat clam—" hissed Fisher T. Fish.

"That's enough! Get the fire going, and the kettle boiling! Have everything ready for tea! Don't waste time!"

"I guess—"

"Another word, and I'll give your silly head another crack on the table!" There was silence.

Harry Wharton & Co. halted in the Remove passage, in sheer amazement. That dialogue reached their ears as they came towards Study No. 1. As Study No. 1 belonged to Wharton and Nugent, Billy Bunter and Fisher T. Fish had no business there. Both, however, were there; but that was not so surprising as the remarks they made. The study door was open, and Harry Wharton & Co. stared in before entering.

Billy Bunter was seated in the study armchair, with his feet on another chair, his fat thumbs stuck in the armholes of his waistcoat, in the objectionable way he had.

Bunter's attitude was one of ease, if not of elegance.

There was a cheery grin on his fat face, indicating that the fat Owl of the Remove was satisfied with himself and things generally.

Fishy's expression was quite different! Fishy was fagging!

There was an expression on his bony face like that of a demon in a pantomime. His narrow eyes glittered; his thin lips were tight; his bony nose seemed to dilate with fury.

The tea-table was laid in the study. Fishy, apparently, had laid it, at Bunter's orders! Now he was getting the fire going preparatory to boiling the kettle for tea.

It was the first time on record that a Remove fellow had fagged another Remove fellow! But that, evidently, was what Bunter was doing!

Every now and then Fishy paused in his occupation, to rub his bony head. It seemed that that head had already been tapped on the table, to reduce Fishy to the state of obedience necessary in a fag. The Famous Five, staring in blankly at that peculiar scene, needed no further proof that Bunter was indeed in possession of Alonzo's "stuff," and that it had turned him into "Strong Bunter." Only that could account for the state of affairs.

"Well, my hat!" said Nugent.

"Fagging Fishy!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The cheeky fat worm!" growled Johnny Bull.

"But what's he playing this game in our study for?" said Harry Wharton. "We'll soon put the stopper on that! Come in!"

The captain of the Remove entered Study No. 1, followed by his friends. Billy Bunter, without rising, blinked at them from the armchair, and gave them an affable nod.

"Trot in, you fellows!" he said amicably. "You can come in!"

"We can come into our own study?" ejaculated Nugent.

"Yes, old chap."

"Do we need your permission for that?" inquired Nugent.

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Seen Toddy?" grinned Bunter. "I thought I heard you go up the passage with him. Hsan't he told you?"

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter.

"You fat frog—"

Bunter raised a fat hand.

"Chuck that, Wharton! I don't like it—"

"You frabjous, foozling frump—"

"Chuck it, I tell you! You may get hurt!" warned Bunter. "I'm a good-tempered chap, I hope! But there's a limit! I want it distinctly understood that I'm not taking any cheek from you, or any man in the Remove!"

"Look here, you guys—" began Fisher T. Fish.

Bunter's fat hand was waved at Fishy.

"Silence!" he rapped.

Fisher T. Fish gave him a wolfish look.

"Will you get out of this study, Bunter?" inquired the captain of the Remove.

"No!" answered Bunter coolly.

"You're waiting to be put!"

Bunter laughed.

"Don't be funny!" he said. "The lot of you couldn't put me out! You can try if you like: but you may be damaged!"

"Well, my hat!" said Bob.

"But let's be friends," said Bunter airily. "I've come here to tea, if you fellows like the idea."

"We don't!"

"The don'tfulness is terrific."

"Oh, think it over," said Bunter, in the same airy way. "I'm willing to be friends, and you may find it pay. You'll be sorry if I get annoyed with you: I can tell you that much! I'm going to stand the tea. I'm not the fellow to sponge on anybody I hope."

"Oh, Christopher Columbus!"

"Only I've been disappointed about a postal order," went on Bunter. "In the circumstances, one of you can lend me—say, a quid, or club together. I want to stand you a decent tea. See? I'll settle out of my postal order to-morrow morning. That all right?"

"If you've finished, there's the door!" said Harry Wharton.

"Nugent can cut down to the tuck-shop, and get the things," pursued Bunter. "Don't forget jam, Nugent—I like jam! A jar of raspberry, and a jar of strawberry, for me! If you fellows want any, tell Nugent. May as well get going, Franky—I'm rather hungry."

"Say, you boobs—" hissed Fisher T. Fish.

"Don't jaw, Fishy!" said Bunter. "I've told you more than once not to jaw! Fishy's fagging for us, you fellows! I shan't ask you to fag for me, Wharton—"

"Oh!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "You won't!"

"No, old fellow! Of course, you'd

CORRECTION.

In last week's issue of the MAGNET the Erector address was incorrectly given in the coupon as 169, Kingsway, W.C.2. The correct address is 109, Kingway, W.C.2.

have to if I told you! But I'm prepared to be pally. If I'm treated as a pal! Fishy's fagging! Fishy will do anything I tell him—won't you, Fishy? He, he, he!"

"You pie-faced gink—"

"What the thump are you up to here, Fishy?" demanded Wharton.

"How's a guy to help himself when that gink is as strong as a dozen horses?" yapped Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I've tackled him, and come out at the little end of the horn! Try it yourself."

"I'll try it fast enough, if he plays the goat in this study! To begin with, you get out, and sharp."

"I guess I'd be glad to git, but—" Fisher T. Fish cast an apprehensive look at Strong Bunter. Evidently the new-found strength of the Owl of the Remove had reduced Fishy to a state of abject submission. It was not likely to have that effect on the Famous Five.

"Well, hook it!" snapped Wharton.

"You're not to go, Fishy!" said Billy Bunter calmly. "You're to stay here and fag."

"I—I guess—" Fisher T. Fish hesitated.

Evidently he was eager to go. Equally evidently he was afraid to go, against Bunter's orders!

Harry Wharton settled the matter for him.

He took the transatlantic junior by a bony shoulder and spun him out into the passage.

Fishy spun there like a humming-top and sat down with a bump.

"Ow!" he hooted. "Wow! Great snakes! Yooooop!"

"Now out, you measly worm!" growled Johnny Bull.

Bunter jumped up from the armchair, his little round eyes blazing behind his big round spectacles.

"Come back, Fishy!" he roared.

There was a pattering of feet in the Remove passage. Fisher T. Fish was gone!

"And now, you fat freak—" said Harry Wharton.

"Silence!" roared Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Hold your tongue! Don't be cheeky! You've turned out my fag!" said Bunter. "Well, I'll make you fag instead! See?"

"You—you—you'll make me fag instead!" stuttered the captain of the Remove.

"Yes! Get that kettle filled at once! Nugent, go and get the grub for tea! You other fellows can get out! I don't want you. And—Yarooooh!"

Harry Wharton made a jump at the Owl of the Remove. He grasped him, to hurl him through the doorway.

Bump!

It was not Bunter who bumped.

It was Wharton!

One shove from Billy Bunter sent him spinning right across the study, and he crashed on the wall, and bumped on the floor.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Heavy Hand!

"OOOOH!" gasped Wharton. "Oh crumbs!" stuttered Bob Cherry.



Billy Bunter grinned.

The fat Owl, with his rotund figure, his podgy face, and his big spectacles, looked the same Bunter as of old. Evidently, however, he was not the same Bunter.

He was quite a new Bunter! That marvellous scientific discovery of Professor Sparkinson's had done the trick! What it had done for Alonzo Todd, it had now done for Billy Bunter!

It was amazing—unbelievable—but there it was! The purloined "stuff" had made Bunter as strong as Strong Alonzo; and that was that! And Bunter was not the fellow to use his new-found powers with a kind and considerate regard for others, like the good Alonzo! Far from it! With power in his fat hands, Billy Bunter's one idea was to throw his weight about! Now he had started!

Harry Wharton lay gasping. The other four fellows gazed at Bunter. He grinned at them cheerfully.

"That's enough for Wharton, I fancy!" he remarked. "You fellows want some of the same? You've only got to say so! He, he, he!"

Wharton sat up dizzily, gurgling for breath.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen!" said Bob Cherry. "This is a case for all hands on deck! Collar that fat, frumpious freak and boot him out."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Oh, come on," said Bunter carelessly. "Come on, the lot of you! I may as well give you a lesson! It may do you good."

They came on fast enough! They came on with a rush! Wonderful to relate, Billy Bunter stood up to the rush of four fellows, any one of whom could have knocked him into a cocked hat with two fingers, in ordinary

(Continued on next page.)

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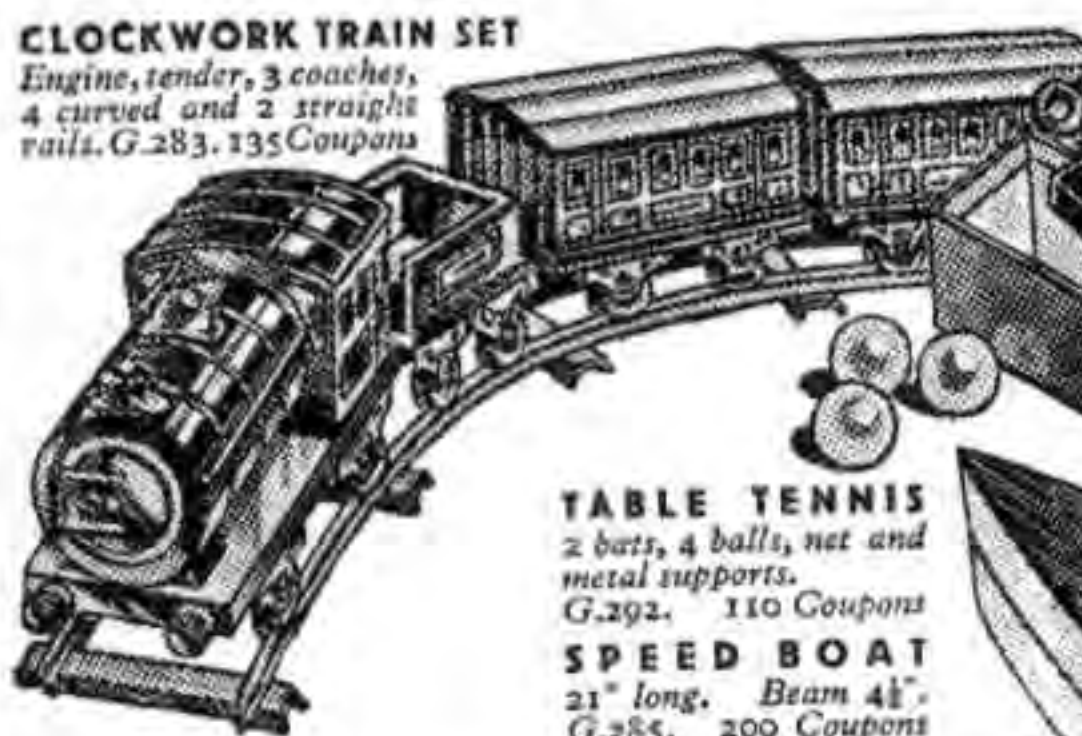
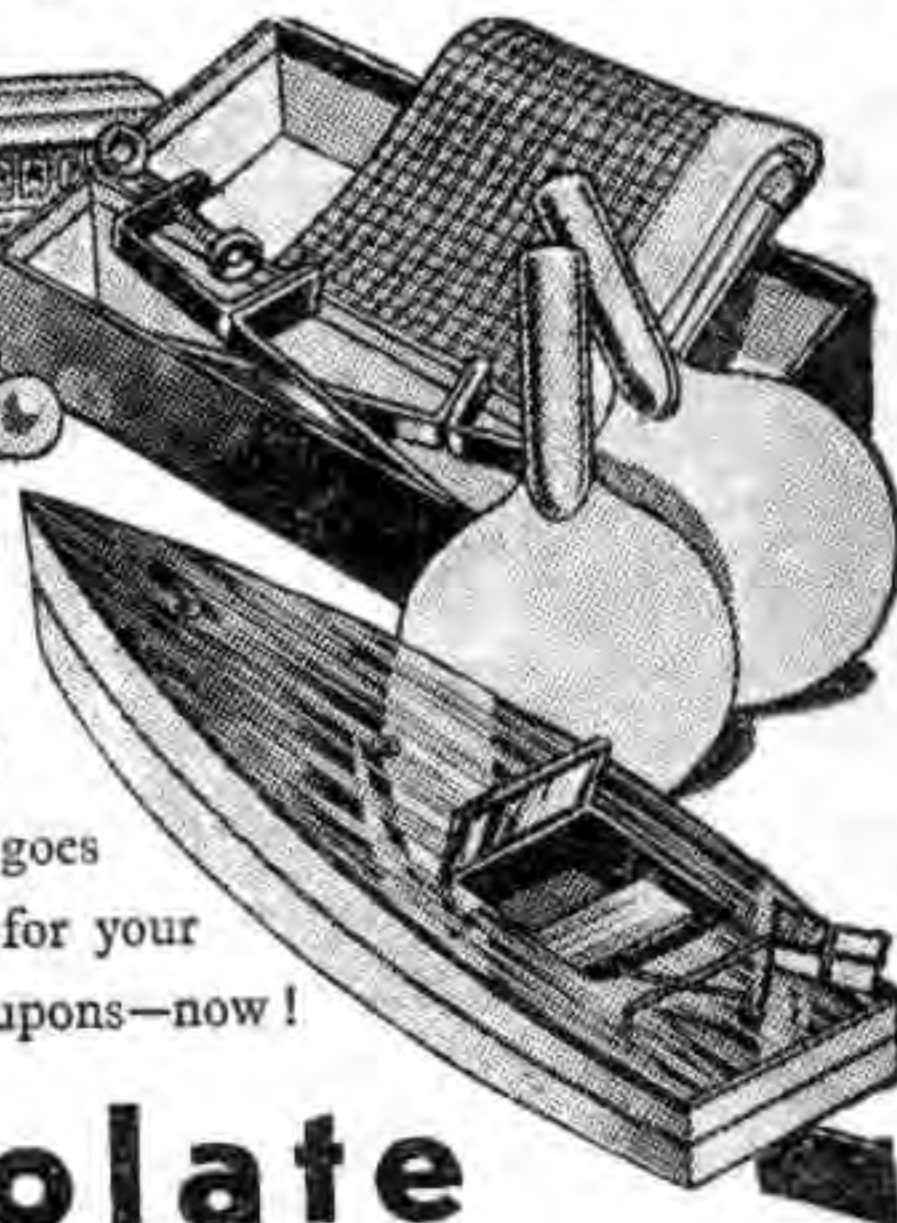


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circumstances. But the circumstances now were not ordinary—they were extraordinary!

Bunter did not give an inch!

He grinned as he swept round his fat arms, rather like the sails of a windmill. But there was terrific vim in that swing of Bunter's fat arms. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull spun over to the right, Frank Nugent and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh spun over to the left.

They crashed!

Five fellows sprawled on the floor of Study No. 1—and Billy Bunter grinned down at them.

"Have some more!" he chortled.

"Oh crikey!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ow! Wow! Ow!"

"He, he, he!" echinnated Bunter.

Vernon-Smith stared in at the doorway with an astonished face.

"I say, what's this game?" he exclaimed. "What are you fellows letting that fat frump pitch you about for?"

"Ugh! Urrrh! Oh crikey! Ooooh!"

"He, he, he! They jolly well can't help it!" chortled Bunter. "You couldn't, either, Smithy! He, he, he! I'd pick you up in one hand and chuck you across the study! He, he, he!"

"Would you?" said the Bounder. "I'll give you a chance."

And he strode across the study at Bunter, and grasped him by a fat ear. The next moment, hardly knowing what had hit him, the Bounder was sprawling over the Famous Five.

"He, he, he!"

"Oh gad! What—how— Oh, my hat!" gasped Smithy.

The Famous Five were struggling to their feet. Bunter blinked at them with a mocking grin.

"Are you fellows going to toe the line?" he asked.

"Wait till I gerrup!" gasped Bob Cherry. "I'll jolly well show you."

"The showfulness will be—ooooough—terrific!" panted the Nabob of Bhani-pur.

"C-c-collar the fat freak!" stuttered Johnny Bull.

They scrambled up! Billy Bunter charged at them, as they gained their feet. Over they went again, knocked right and left.

"He, he, he!" squeaked Bunter in great delight.

He rolled to the door. Six or seven fellows had gathered there, staring in amazement into the study. Bolsover major was in the doorway, and Bunter coolly pushed him aside. Bunter had had many a kick from the bully of the Remove, and now it was time for Bunter to get his own back. Bolsover staggered from the push, and glared at Bunter.

"You fat frump, who are you shoving?" he roared. "Do you think you can barge me about?"

"Yes, if I jolly well like!" grinned

Bunter. "Shut up, Bolsover! I don't want any impudence from you."

"Any whatter?" gasped Bolsover major.

"Impudence! Shut up!"

"Why, I'll bang your head along the wall from one end of the passage to the other!" roared the enraged Bolsover.

He grasped at Bunter! Bunter grasped back! Bolsover major went whirling off his feet and crashed on the floor.

"Stand clear, you fellows," said Bunter. "I'm going to kick that beast back to his study!"

"Oh, my only hat!" gasped Skinner.

The juniors stood clear! Bunter started to kick! It was sheer joy to the fat junior to return some of the many kicks Bolsover major had given him. The bully of the Remove rolled over, roaring.

He leaped to his feet, his face crimson with rage, and charged at Bunter like a bull! Strong Bunter tapped him on the chest! Bolsover flew!

Crash!

Bunter restarted kicking! This time the bully of the Remove scrambled away to his study! Bunter followed him up the passage to Study No. 10, kicking all the way in the midst of a buzz of amazement from a crowd of Remove fellows. A hefty kick rolled Bolsover into Study No. 10, landing him at the feet of his study mate, Napoleon Dupont, the French junior.

Napoleon's eyes almost started from his head at the amazing sight.

"Mon Dieu!" he gasped. "Vat is zat? Vat is zis? Vat shall zis mean?"

"Urrrrrrgggh!" gurgled Bolsover major.

"He, he, he!"

"You keek my shum!" exclaimed Dupont. "Je ne comprends pas—but you keek not my shum! I punch you on zo nose!"

The French junior jumped at Bunter! A second later he was sprawling across Bolsover, without knowing how he got there.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Mon Dieu! Wow!"

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter rolled away victorious. In the passage he tapped Harold Skinner on the arm.

"I haven't had my tea yet, old chap," said Bunter.

Skinner eyed him.

"Like me to come to tea in your study, old fellow?" asked Bunter, agreeably.

Skinner breathed hard.

"Do, old fellow!" he gasped.

And Bunter did.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

More Strategy!

BILLY BUNTER was the cynosure of all eyes in the Rag after tea.

Strong Alonzo had hitherto captured the limelight. Billy Bunter was capturing it now.

Fellows eyed him on all sides with peculiar expressions as he rolled into the Rag, with his fat chin held well up and self-satisfied importance written all over him.

Bunter grinned serenely. He liked this!

For the first time in his fat career Billy Bunter was able to throw his weight about as much as he liked. And he liked it a lot!

Harry Wharton & Co. elaborately took no notice of him. They were ready to

tackle him again, if necessary. But they realised that it was not good enough if it could be helped.

The Bounder eyed him wolfishly. But the Bounder kept his distance. He did not want to be tossed across the Rag by Strong Bunter. Bolsover major gave him a deadly glare. But he did not think of renewing the combat.

Bunter rolled across to the fire.

Skinner was seated in an armchair there. Bunter blinked at him.

"I'd like that chair, Skinner," he remarked.

"Certainly, old chap!" said Skinner.

He rose at once and gave Bunter the chair. The Owl of the Remove sat down, with a cheery grin.

"Fishy!" he yapped.

"Yep!"

"Bring me that footstool."

Fisher T. Fish hesitated for an instant. But it was only for an instant! Then he brought the footstool for Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove rested his feet on it. He grinned round at the staring Removites.

"You cheeky fat rotter—" began Peter Todd.

"Shut up, Toddy! I've thrashed you once!" said Bunter. "If I have to handle you again you'll know it!"

Peter Todd seemed on the point of choking. But he said no more. Alonzo Todd came over to Bunter.

"My dear Bunter—" he said.

Billy Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. Alonzo was the only fellow in the Remove with whom Bunter did not want trouble—yet! Without Professor Sparkinson's wonderful elixir, as Bunter had no doubt, the Duffer of Greyfriars would soon lose his amazing strength. When that happened Bunter was ready for trouble—but not before.

"I am unable to entertain any doubt, my dear Bunter, that you have abstracted a bottle belonging to me from the desk in my study," said Alonzo. "I must insist upon your returning it immediately."

"What bottle?" asked Bunter.

"A small bottle containing a crimson fluid—"

"Never heard of it!"

"My dear Bunter—"

"If you think I've been taking any medical muck, you're quite mistaken," said Bunter calmly. "I don't need it, like you do, Lonzy! I'm not a weedy specimen like you, I hope! I was always athletic."

"If you do not immediately return that bottle, Bunter, I shall take it from you, very, very much as I regret to be driven to use violence," said Alonzo.

"Think I've got it in my pocket?" jeered Bunter. "No jolly fear!"

"Then where are its present whereabouts?"

"That's telling!"

"Please tell me at once, my dear Bunter," said Alonzo gently.

"I don't know anything about it, you see!" explained Bunter. "I've never seen it, and never touched it. I never borrowed Fishy's bunch of keys this afternoon, and never opened your desk in the study. I hope I'm not the sort of fellow to root over another fellow's desk."

"I fear, Bunter, that in view of your contradictory statements I can place no reliance on your word," said Alonzo, shaking his head.

"Oh, really, Alonzo—"

"Mop him up, Alonzo, you blithering duffer!" growled Peter Todd. "You're the only fellow that can do it!"

"You shut up, Toddy!" snapped Bunter.

"I shall act upon your suggestion, my

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In the midst of a buzz of amazement from a crowd of Remove fellows, Bunter followed Bolsover major up the passage to Study No. 10, kicking all the way. "Urrrrrrgh!" gurgled the burly Removite. It was sheer joy to Bunter to return some of the many kicks Bolsover major had given him.

dear Peter!" said Alonzo. "I am sure that, in the circumstances, my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my taking somewhat drastic measures."

"Look here—" Bunter jumped up. Alonzo grasped him.

The Removites looked on with intense interest. There were two strong men in the Remove now, and a tussle between them was likely to be interesting. Every fellow wished Alonzo luck. Strong Alonzo had not been exactly popular; but Strong Bunter was the limit.

But there was no tussle. Billy Bunter jerked himself away from Alonzo and dodged round the armchair! This was more like the old Bunter!

"I—I say, old chap—" he gasped.

"Go for him, Lonzy!" roared Peter.

"Bag him, you gink!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

Alonzo pursued Bunter round the chair. The fat junior made a break for the door. Alonzo, of course, stumbled over the footstool, and measured his length on the floor.

"Oh, my goodness!" he gasped. "Stop him!"

Five or six fellows grasped at Bunter as he streaked for the door. But if Strong Bunter could not tackle Strong Alonzo, he could tackle anybody else. He swept them aside with a swing of his arm.

Then he tore open the door of the Rag and rushed out.

"After him, Lonzy!" yelled Peter.

Alonzo rushed in pursuit. Temple, Dabney & Co., of the Fourth, were coming into the Rag. Alonzo met them in full career.

"Oh gad!" yelled Temple. "What—"

The Fourth Formers went spinning. Alonzo spun over them. There was a mix-up in the doorway.

By the time Alonzo had sorted himself out Billy Bunter had vanished. Alonzo reached the door of Study No. 7

in the Remove—too late! That door was locked on the inside.

"My dear Bunter—" gasped Alonzo, through the keyhole.

"Yah!" gasped Bunter, from the inside of the door.

"Please let me in—"

"Go and eat coke!"

Alonzo did not go and eat coke, but he had to remain outside the study. The door was still locked when the Remove came up to prep. Peter Todd rattled the door handle.

"Are you there, Bunter?" he hooted.

"No! I mean, rats!"

"Let us in, fathead! Prep!"

"Yah!"

"You blithering idiot—"

"I'll let you in if Alonzo will make it pax," said Bunter.

"I shall certainly do nothing of the kind, Bunter, until you have returned the bottle you surreptitiously extracted from my desk!" exclaimed Alonzo Todd, indignantly.

"Then you can stay out!" jeered Bunter. "Go and do your prep somewhere else! You're not coming in here! Yah!"

And after hammering at the door in vain for some minutes, Peter and Alonzo and Tom Dutton went along to other studies for prep.

"It's all right!" said Peter. "You'll catch him in the dorm, Lonzy! And if you don't get that bottle of muck back from him I'll bat you!"

Alonzo smirked.

"But, as I have on several occasions pointed out to you, my dear Peter, it is quite beyond your powers to bat me!" he remarked.

"It won't be to-morrow, if you don't get that stuff back!" grinned Peter.

"Oh, my goodness!"

There was keen excitement in the Remove at half-past nine, bed-time for that Form! Until that time, the door of Study No. 7 remained locked.

Bunter was taking no chances! But at bed-time the fat Owl had to emerge, and join the rest of the Form to go to the dormitory.

Wingate, of the Sixth, who had put the lights out for the Remove that night, could not help observing the suppressed excitement among the juniors. He gave them a suspicious look, suspecting a "rag."

All the fellows were eyeing Bunter! After lights out, his time was coming! Bunter, however, did not seem very uneasy.

The juniors turned in, and Wingate put out the lights, and went. There was no move for ten minutes or so; it was necessary to give the prefect time to get clear. Then Peter Todd turned out of bed, and lighted a candle.

"Up with you, Lonzy!" he rapped.

"Certainly, my dear Peter!" Alonzo Todd turned out, and came across to Bunter's bed. "Now, my dear Bunter, I insist—"

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, at the top of his voice. "Help! Fire! Yoop! Whoooooop!"

"My dear Bunter," said Alonzo, in surprise, "there is no occasion to utter those exceedingly discordant yells. I have not touched you yet. But it is certainly my intention—"

"Yooop! Help!" roared Bunter.

"Bag him, you fathead!" howled Peter. "Can't you see that he's trying to bring Wingate back here? Collar the fat scoundrel!"

"Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Buck up, Alonzo!"

Alonzo bucked up! He grabbed Bunter, and dragged him headlong from his bed.

There was a terrific bump, as the fat junior landed on the floor of the dormitory! Still louder rang Bunter's fearful roar:

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"Yarooooop! Whoop! Help! I say, you fellows— Whoooooop!"

There was the sound of a footstep in the passage outside.

Possibly Wingate, already suspicious, had lingered within hearing. Anyhow, he could hardly have been out of hearing of Bunter's frantic bellow.

The door opened, and the captain of Greyfriars strode in. He stared wrathfully at the scene in the candle-light.

"What's this?" roared Wingate.

"Ow! Help! Wow!" roared Bunter. "I say, Wingate— Yaroooooh! Whoop!"

"What are you ragging Bunter for?" demanded Wingate. "Get back to bed at once, you young rascal! Take two hundred lines!"

"My dear Wingate—"

"Do you want six?" snapped the prefect.

"Oh, my goodness! Certainly not! But—"

"Get back to bed!"

Strong Alonzo could have handled Wingate! But Alonzo had too much respect for authority to think of doing anything of the kind. He went back obediently to bed.

Wingate gave the staring Removites a glare.

"I shall keep an eye on this dormitory!" he snapped. "Any more disturbance, and I shall ask Quelch to come up here! Now go to sleep, you young rascals!"

He took the candle, marched out of the dormitory, and shut the door.

There was no more disturbance! Billy Bunter's strategy had been successful. Another roar from Bunter would have brought Mr. Quelch to the dormitory!

Strong Alonzo could not tackle Bunter that night! On the morrow it would be too late! And that was a prospect that, to Billy Bunter at least, was a very happy one.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter, the Bully!



LANG, clang!

Bob Cherry, as usual, was first out of bed in the Remove dormitory, when the rising-bell rang in the dim December morning. He got out with a bound—other fellows following his example more slowly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob.

"Want helping out, Mauly?"

"Oh dear! No, thanks!" said Lord Mauleverer hastily, and he turned out before the exuberant Bob could give him any aid.

"Want any help, Bunter?"

Snore!

The Owl of the Remove was still asleep—at all events, he was still snoring—when some of the fellows were ready to go down. Washing never kept Billy Bunter long—and he generally barged into Hall for early prayers with his collar undone, and frantically fastening a brace.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Aren't you turning out, old fat bean?"

Snore!

Bob Cherry grinned cheerfully, dipped a sponge in water, and walked over to Bunter's bed. Bob was too good-natured to let a fellow oversleep himself; also, he had little mercy on slackers.

The wet sponge squeezed over Bunter's fat face, and he opened his eyes wide, and his mouth still wider, with a terrific roar.

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"Yoooooop! Urrrrgh! Beast!"

"Turn out, old fat man—"

"Ooogh! You cheeky rotter!" roared Bunter, sitting up in bed, and dabbing at his wet face. "I've a jolly good mind to whop you!"

"Fathead! You'll be late for prayers!" said Bob.

"Yah! Take that!" hooted Bunter, and he hurled his pillow at Bob Cherry. The missile came with terrific vim, and Bob, swept off his feet, sat down on the dormitory floor with a heavy bump.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob. He had rather forgotten that the fat Owl was Strong Bunter. He remembered it now.

Billy Bunter turned out of bed, frowning. Alonzo Todd gave him a reproachful glance.

"My dear Bunter!" he said gently. "Is that not somewhat ungrateful, indeed brutal, considering that Cherry was performing an act of kindness in calling you from over-prolonged slumber—"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Bunter.

He groped for his spectacles, jammed them on his fat little nose, and blinked at Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo looked the same as usual. But whether he was Feeble Alonzo, or Strong Alonzo, he always looked the

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same! Bunter was wondering whether he was still Strong Alonzo!

Certainly he had not taken his daily drop of the wonderful elixir the previous evening, as usual. From what Bunter had learned, by spying and prying, that weird compound discovered by Professor Sparkinson needed to be taken in regular doses, the effect of which lasted little more than twenty-four hours. If that was really the case, he had no more to fear from Alonzo.

Bunter picked up his pillow.

Taking aim at Alonzo Todd, he hurled it.

Bunter was being strategic again! If Alonzo was no longer strong, he would discover it by that means. If he was as strong as ever, Bunter was going to pass off the hurling of the pillow as a little joke!

The whizzing pillow smote Alonzo on the side of the head. It sent him spinning! There was a crash as he landed on the floor.

"Oh, goodness gracious!" gasped Alonzo.

Bunter blinked at him eagerly through his big spectacles.

Strong Alonzo would hardly have gone down like that! And Strong Alonzo would have bounced up like a ball!

But Alonzo did not bounce up! He lay gasping for breath—quite in the

style of the old, familiar Alonzo, before he made the acquaintance of Professor Sparkinson!

Bunter grinned with triumph.

It was all right now! Strong Alonzo was no longer strong—and Billy Bunter, in his turn, was the strong man of Greyfriars!

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

"Get up, Alonzo, you ass!" said Peter Todd, staring at his sprawling cousin.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Oh, my goodness! Oooooh!" gasped Alonzo. "I—I am quite out of breath! I—I feel quite dizzy! Oooooh!"

"He, he, he!"

Peter, with a wondering expression on his face, gave his weedy cousin a helping hand to his feet.

It dawned on him what had happened. Alonzo had said that unless he renewed the regular dose of the "stuff," his strength would depart from him, like Samson's, shorn of his hair! Evidently that had come to pass! Alonzo was strong no more!

Billy Bunter rolled up, and grasped the pillow again. As Alonzo gained his feet, Bunter swiped with the pillow.

"Oooooogh!" gasped Alonzo, and he went spinning once more.

"You fat rotter!" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"Lonzy batted me the other day!" grinned Bunter. "One good turn deserves another! He, he, he! You're going to have a pillowing for that batting, Lonzy!"

"Oh dear!" Alonzo sat up breathlessly. "But, my dear B-b-bunter, I batted you for your unscrupulous conduct, and you must surely admit that the chastisement was well merited, and— Yarooooop!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe, swipe!

Bunter swiped right and left, and Alonzo rolled on the floor and squealed breathlessly.

Peter rushed to his aid. One swipe of the pillow, in Bunter's fat hands, sent him spinning backwards, and he crashed on a bed. Tom Button jumped at Bunter, bolster in hand, but a swipe caught him under the chin, and he spun headlong.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "Anybody else want any? He, he, he!"

"You cheeky fat fool!" said Harry Wharton.

"What's that?" roared Bunter truculently.

"Cheeky fat fool!"

"So you want some, do you?" grinned Bunter. "Well, I'm the fellow to oblige. I'll give you all you want, and some over. He, he, he!"

And the Owl of the Remove rushed at Wharton. Like one man the Co. jumped to the aid of their chief.

Bunter heeded not.

Under the amazed eyes of all the Remove he hurled himself at the Famous Five, swiping with the pillow.

They staggered right and left under those hefty swipes. It was in vain that they tried to get at Bunter. He knocked them spinning without an effort. Obviously, Professor Sparkinson's mixture was wonderful stuff. It had turned the fat and flabby Owl into almost a giant of strength.

The Famous Five sprawled gasping round Bunter.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "Now get out of the dorm! Get going! I'm going to wallop you till you bunk! He, he, he!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

The chums of the Remove scrambled up, and hurled themselves at Bunter. But it booted not. The swiping pillow flung them backwards, and it swiped, and swiped, and swiped again till they

were fairly driven out of the dormitory in a panting and gurgling bunch.

Billy Bunter grinned at them from the doorway.

"Now cut off!" he said scornfully. "No more cheek from you lot, or you'll get it worse! Clear off while you're safe! He, he, he!"

Bunter turned back into the dormitory. Vernon-Smith was giving him a black look. He did not speak; but that look was enough for Bunter. He rolled up to the Bouncer with a bullying expression on his fat face that was worthy of Bolsover major at his worst.

"Don't scowl at me!" said Bunter; and he swiped Smithy, sending him spinning to the door with a yell.

"You fat fool!" roared Redwing.

Swipe! Redwing spun after the Bouncer. Billy Bunter glared round through his big spectacles.

"Any more coming on?" he roared.

There was no answer.

"For two pins," said Bunter victoriously, "I'd wade in and thrash the lot of you! The whole dashed Form, by Jove! Look out, that's all!"

He threw down the pillow, and proceeded to dress. He had left himself no time for washing; but that did not bother Bunter.

"Fishy!" rapped Bunter, sitting on the edge of his bed.

"Come and put my boots on for me—sharp!"

"Aw, wake snakes!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I guess—"

"Do you want me to come over to you?"

"Aw, nope!" said Fishy, in a great hurry. "I calculate I don't mind putting on your boots for you, old chap."

And Fishy did.

"Mauly!" rapped Bunter.

"Yaas!" drawled Lord Mauleverer.

"I want a clean collar!"

"You generally do, old bean!"

"No cheek, Mauly! Bring me one of your collars!"

His lordship gave the fat Owl a look, and walked out of the dormitory. Bunter glared.

"Skinner, get me a clean collar!"

Skinner drew a deep breath. Without a word he sorted out a clean collar for Bunter.

"I've lost my stud!" snapped Bunter. "Find me a stud, Snoop!"

Snoop found him a stud.

"You haven't laced my boots properly, Fish! Come here! Now turn round!"

"I—I guess—"

Bunter grasped Fishy by the collar and spun him round. Fishy yelled as a boot landed on his trousers. He flew.

"Let that be a lesson to you," said Bunter. "When a fellow fags for me, I expect him to do his job—see!"

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

Billy Bunter was last down from the dormitory that morning. There was a happy grin on his fat face when he came down.

Bunter was enjoying life. This sort of thing, from Billy Bunter's point of view, made life worth living. Bunter, the fibber, Bunter, the frowster, Bunter, the grub-raider, the Remove were used to. Now they had to get used to Bunter, the bully. That was likely to be the worst of all the Bunters—if it lasted.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Enjoys Life!

BILLY BUNTER wore a cheery grin in class that morning.

Other fellows in the Remove did not look so cheery.

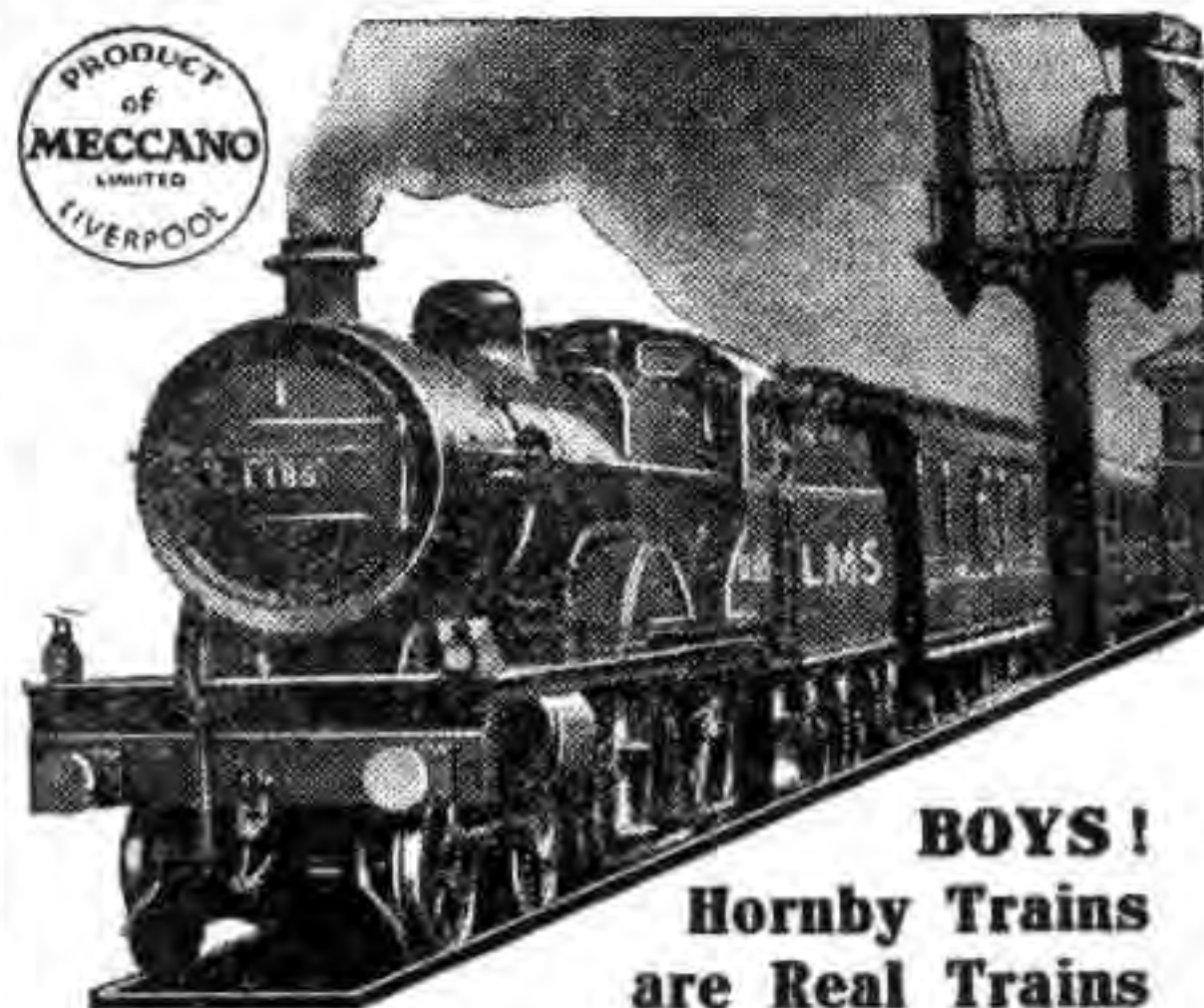
Some of them eyed Bunter uneasily, some of them wolfishly. Skinner & Co. were remarkably civil to Bunter. Skinner carried his books for him to the Form-room. Snoop presented him with a packet of toffee. Fisher T. Fish gave him the most agreeable grin of which his bony countenance was capable. These fellows considered it judicious to "butter" Strong Bunter. Most of the fellows were feeling more disposed to scrag him than to butter him.

Alonzo looked very, very disconsolate.

Alonzo, like Lucifer, Son of the Morning, had fallen from his high estate, and great was the fall thereof. He had been, for a time, the strong man of Greyfriars. Now he was simply the Duffer of Greyfriars again—merely that and nothing more. Fellows had had to pay him some regard when he could have pitched them about just as he liked. Now, like Caesar of old, he lay low, and none so poor to do him reverence. It was weeks since Alonzo had been barged in the passage, or had his hat knocked off in the quad. Now he renewed both those experiences. Alonzo now was nothing and nobody.

"Billy Bunter was the goods."

(Continued on next page.)



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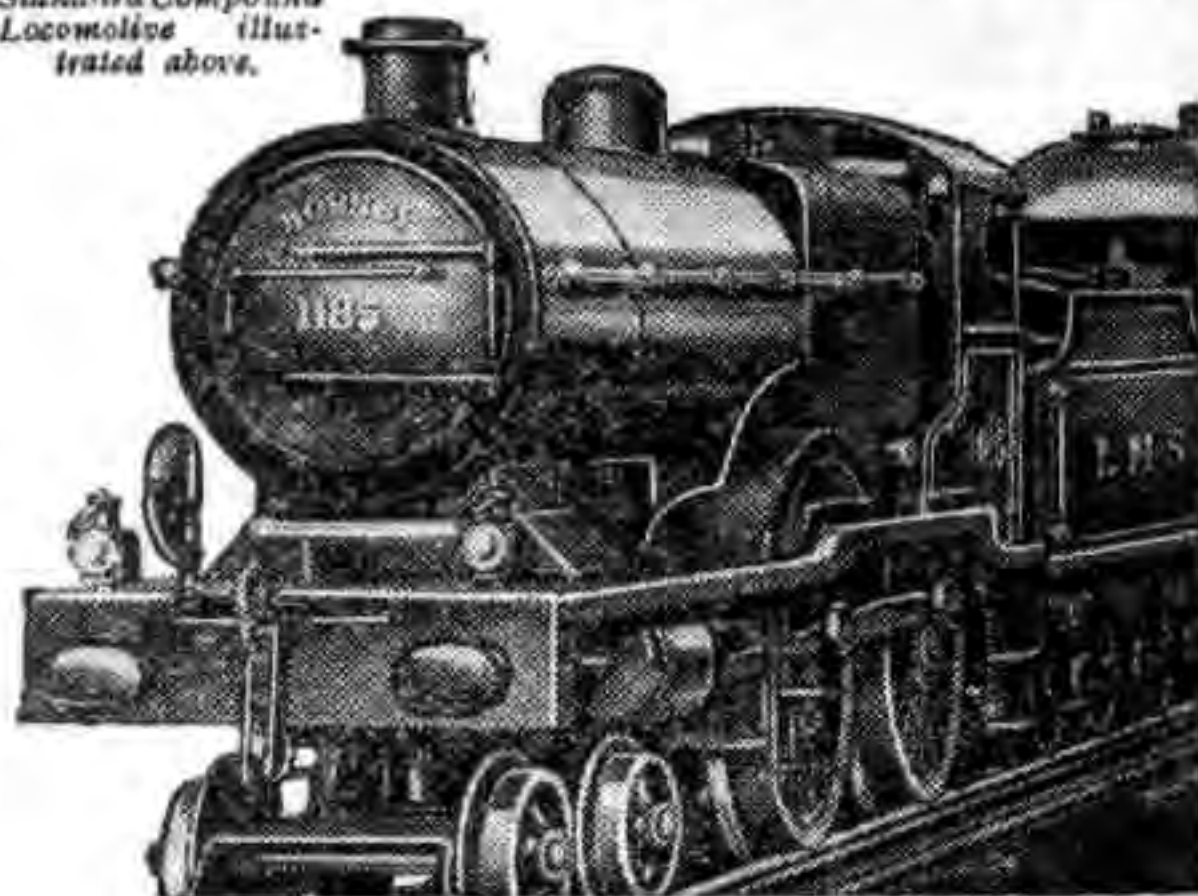
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In morning break Bunter rolled out of the Form-room, with his fat, little nose high in the air.

In the passage he smacked Alonzo's head, and, receiving a glare from Peter, smacked Peter's head, also.

Then he rolled grinning into the quad.

The Remove fellows looked at him. Bunter the Bully was something new—interesting as a study, perhaps, but far from pleasing.

"Ain't he a bute?" said Bob Cherry, watching the fat Owl as he rolled importantly in the quad. "Ain't he a jewel?"

"The fat rotter!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Fancy that fat fozler beginning as a bully!" said Frank Nugent. "Of course, he's more a fool than anything else."

"We've got to stop him!" said Harry Wharton, frowning. "A Form ragging will bring him to his senses—if he's got any."

"The ragfulness will have to be terrific," remarked Harroo Jamset Ram Singh. "But perhapsfully it may be possible to snaffle the esteemed muck he snaffled from the idiotic Alonzo."

"Where does the fat fool keep it?"

cut in the Bouncer. "He doesn't carry it about him."

"How do you know, Smithy?"

"Because I went through his pockets in the dormitory last night," answered the Bouncer, with a sour grin. "That's how."

"He wouldn't carry it in his pockets, of course," said Bob. "It might be snooped in the dorm, or fellows might bag him and grab it. He's got it hidden somewhere, of course. That rather puts the lid on. He's not likely to let out where he's parked it."

"Bother that old ass, Sparkinson!" said Harry. "I wish he'd kept his jolly old scientific discoveries to himself. I suppose he meant to do that fathead, Alonzo, a good turn. But the result is—"

"Bunter, the bully!" grinned Bob.

"Look at him now!" said Nugent.

Bunter had joined Fisher T. Fish in the quad, and slipped a fat arm through a bony one. Fishy, perhaps, was pleased to receive such friendly treatment from the strong man of the Remove. But he looked uneasy; and he had cause for uneasiness.

"Coming to the tuckshop, Fishy?" said Bunter affably.

"Nope!" stammered Fishy.

"Oh, do!" urged Bunter. "My treat, you know."

With Bunter's grip on his bony arm, Fishy had no choice about walking to the tuckshop. He went in fear and trembling. He knew what a "treat" by Bunter meant. He felt in his bones that he was expected to spend money. He was right.

"Now, what will you have, Fishy?" said Bunter hospitably, as they stood at Mrs. Mumble's counter. "Anything you like. I'm paying."

"I—I guess I don't want anything!" groaned Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh, go it!" urged Bunter. "Speaking for myself, I always get hungry in break." Bunter ran his hands through his pockets. "Oh, my hat! I forgot my postal order hasn't come!"

Fishy did not need telling that.

"But it's all right between pals," said Bunter. "You pay this time, Fishy, and I'll pay next—what? I say, where are you going?"

"Oh, I—I guess I wasn't going!" gasped Fisher T. Fish, stopping in a sliding movement towards the door.

Bunter frowned. For the first time in his fat career, Bunter's frown struck terror.

"If you're not going to be pally, Fishy—"

"Aw! Yep! Sure!" gasped Fishy.

"Well, then, let's have a snack together, old chap!"

Bunter's snack lasted till the bell rang for third school. Fisher T. Fish had to pay seven-and-sixpence! His face was pale as he left the tuckshop with Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove rolled away cheerily to the House. He blinked round for Lord Mauleverer, and joined that noble youth on his way to the Form-room. He favoured Mauly with a fat and friendly grin.

"Don't be afraid, Mauly," he said encouragingly, as Mauleverer made a movement to sheer off.

"Don't be an ass!" answered Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

Bunter slipped an arm through Mauleverer's. Lord Mauleverer promptly jerked his arm away. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his sleeve.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Got something on your sleeve, Mauly?" he asked.

"A fat slug barged against it!" answered Mauleverer.

"Why, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "I—I mean, don't be so stuffy, old chap! We're pals, you know, ain't we?"

"Not at all!"

"What I mean is, I've been thinking about the Christmas holidays," said Bunter. "I've got a lot of invitations, as usual. That chap D'Arcy at St. Jim's has written me a rather urgent letter. I'll show it to you. Oh, I think I must have left it in the study! Anyhow, I'm not going to him for Christmas, Mauly."

"Probably not!" agreed Mauly.

"Wharton and his crowd want me, but I'm not standing them!" went on Bunter. "Smithy's rather keen, too, but—well, I can't stand that lot! The fact is, Mauly, if you'd really like me to, I'll come home with you."

"I shouldn't!"

"I mean it," said Bunter. "I'm going to turn down all my other invitations, Mauly, on your account."

"Better turn 'em up," suggested Mauly.

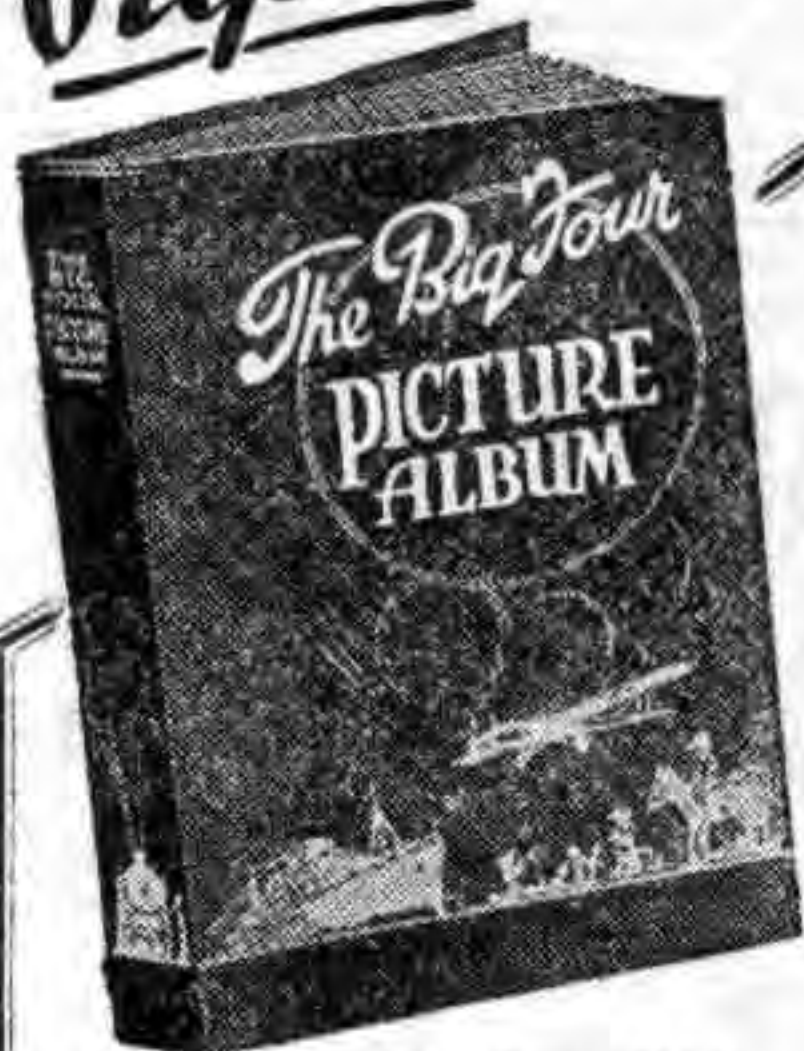
"If you mean that you don't want me, Mauly—"

"Exactly!"

The agreeable smile left Bunter's fat face. It was replaced by an expression

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rather like Bolsover major's in his most truculent mood, and rather like that of Loder of the Sixth when his bullying propensities had the upper hand.

"We'd better have this plain, Mauleverer!" said Bunter in a bullying tone. "Are we pals or not?"

"Not!" said Mauleverer.

"Well, if we're not pals, I'm not standing any cheek from a silly, stuck-up nincompoop of a tailor's dummy!" said Bunter. "Take that!"

Smack!

"Oh, great gad!" yelled Lord Mauleverer, as he took it.

He staggered from that hefty smack. The next moment he jumped at Billy Bunter. A second smack met him, with

terrific beef behind it, and Lord Mauleverer measured his length in the quad.

Billy Bunter blinked down at him contemptuously.

"If you want any more, you worm, you——"

"Oh gad!" gasped Mauleverer.

"Remind me after class!" grinned Bunter. "I'll give you all you want, and then some! He, he, he!"

Bunter rolled on. It was a full minute before the hapless Mauleverer picked himself up and limped after him. Billy Bunter joined the crowd of juniors gathering at the door of the Remove-room. Most of them had maps under their arms, which reminded Bunter

that maps were required for third lesson with Quelch.

"I've forgotten my map!" said Bunter. "Cut up to my study and fetch it, Wharton!"

Wharton did not seem to hear.

"Deaf!" hooted Bunter. "Cut up to my study and fetch my map, Wharton!"

Some of the Removeites grinned. Bunter the Bully was going strong! He had got to the length of giving orders to the captain of the Form!

Wharton still gave no heed. But he had to give heed, when a fat hand clawed his shoulder and jerked him round.

(Continued on next page.)

THE PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER'S CHRISTMAS!



Send your Soccer queries to "Linesman," c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. It's his job and his pleasure to answer knotty problems from readers.

THREE MATCHES IN FOUR DAYS!

"AS you seem to know a lot about the first-class football clubs, I wonder if you would like to turn prophet and tell us which teams you think will win the various championships, and which will finish at the bottom of the big Leagues?" That is the gist of a letter which I have just opened from a MAGNET reader.

It is very nice of him to be complimentary about my football knowledge, but I am afraid I have not sufficient confidence in myself as a prophet to jump as far into "deep water" as my friend suggests I should. The trouble is that if I give my opinions as to the teams likely to finish on top of the big Leagues you will remember my prophecy at the end of the season—and then write to tell me how wrong I was.

But I am going to be very bold in replying to my friend.

If he will look at the League tables after the Christmas games have been played, note the clubs which are then in the leading places, and those which are in the lowly places, he will get a very good idea of the teams likely to finish on top or at the bottom.

The placings after the Christmas holiday games usually approximate, very closely, to the placings at the end of the season. So I should take the teams at the top of the Leagues after Christmas and say they will finish as champions, and put down the teams at the bottom to be relegated.

My way of proving this would not be a bad way of prophesying. I have just tried it in respect of last season. Immediately after the Christmas programmes of last season had been finished the clubs with the best records in the four sections of the English League were Arsenal, Stoke City, Hull City, and Brentford. And each one of those four clubs finished on top in their respective divisions. Almost the same story has to be told of the lowly clubs. Take, for instance, the Second Division table

after Christmas a year ago. Charlton and Chesterfield were in the last two places, and they finished in the last two places—both relegated.

I don't like to prophesy before Christmas, because the Yuletide games are so important. Most of the clubs have three matches to play in the course of four days, and the results of those matches may materially affect the future prospects of the clubs concerned.

PLUM PUDDING PROHIBITED!

CHRISTMAS is the big testing time for the football clubs. The three games in four days test the stamina of the players. As injuries come in those games, the test of the strength of the reserves is usually made around Christmas-time.

I am going to be a bit sorry for some of these footballers during the festive season, aren't you? Not for them the usual joys which are associated with "Father Christmas." I know footballers who have been for many years in the game who have never spent any part of the Christmas holiday season by their own fireside.

What chance have the players of Portsmouth, to give an example, of spending an "at home" this coming Christmas-time? They have a match on their own ground on Saturday, the twenty-third. On Christmas Day they are playing another match at Liverpool, which is about three hundred miles away. Between Christmas Day and Boxing Day the players will have to do that three hundred mile journey again, for they are due to play the return match against Liverpool at Portsmouth. It looks to me as though some special trains will have to be ordered to enable the players of these teams to do the journey from north to south. I expect the players will travel together, and get as much Christmas fun into the journey as they possibly can.

They will, of course, have to be careful about their Christmas "eats."

Plum pudding and mince pies are not the best sort of food on which to play football!

I remember Hughie Gallacher, the Chelsea centre-forward, telling me a typical Christmas-time story. He was just on the point of entering a ground where he was due to play a match on Christmas Day, when he saw a young lad with a half-eaten mince pie in one hand, and a whole one in the other. The lad had the Christmas spirit in him.

"Here you are, Mr. Gallacher," he said. "Have this mince pie. It will put some power into your kick." Gallacher, telling the story, says he was strongly tempted to accept this "Father Christmas" gift, for he is very fond of mince pies.

"But I had to turn away," he added ruefully, "because I knew very well that the boy was wrong when he said that a mince pie, eaten just then, would add power to my kicking."

THE GOALIE'S LOT!

IF we get real Christmas weather I shall be most sorry for the goalkeepers. They, it is said, have the greatest difficulty in keeping themselves warm. Watch them walking backwards and forwards under the bar, like caged lions, to keep their blood circulating freely. I know goalkeepers who wear three jerseys, and two pairs of gloves on a very cold day.

Even then they do not always succeed in keeping themselves warm. Not long ago the goalkeeper of Blackburn Rovers—Jock Crawford—stopped a very hot shot on a very cold day. He did not know that anything was wrong with his hands, except that they were cold, and he kept on to the finish of the match. After the game was over he undressed as rapidly as possible, and jumped into a hot bath.

The minute he put his hands into the water he cried out in pain. And it was only then discovered that in stopping that hard drive he had broken a finger. At the time he stopped the ball with his hands his fingers were so numbed with cold that he had no idea he had sustained a serious injury.

Because the games coming on top of each other at Christmas-time leave so little margin for recovery from injuries, many young players will get their first chance in the first teams of the clubs with which they are associated. I often get letters asking me how a young player can make the most of his chance when it comes. There is one reply which I always give by way of a start. Don't try to do too much. Just play a natural game, as far as possible, and don't be too anxious to impress either colleagues or watchers with your ability. Better do a little bit well than fail trying to do too much.

"LINESMAN."

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"Now, look here, you cheeky cad—" booted Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Whoop!" he added, in a prolonged howl, as Wharton's fist tapped on his fat little nose.

He staggered back.

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

"Ow! Wow! Oh lor!" gasped Bunter. "Why, I—I—I'll—I'll smash you—I'll—"

Bunter jumped at the captain of the Remove.

"What is all this?" Mr. Quelch came rustling up the passage. "Bunter, what—what—"

"Oh! I—I wasn't going to punch Wharton, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Go into the Form-room at once!" rapped the Remove master.

Mr. Quelch opened the door, and the Removees went in to their places. Billy Bunter gave the captain of the Remove a threatening blink, hinting of trouble to come later. It really looked as if the fat and fatuous Owl was going to give the Remove a high old time in the last day or two that remained before the break-up for the Christmas holidays.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bamboozling Bunter!

"WE'VE got to bag it!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.

"The gotfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But where does the fat brute park it?" asked Harry.

"The wherefulness," remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur, "is also terrific."

"Not in the House, I think," said Nugent. "Toddy has been rooting after it all day. So have some other fellows! Out of the House somewhere."

"But where?"

"Goodness knows!"

The December dusk had fallen on Greyfriars School. Light flakes of snow were falling in the quad and drifting against the window-panes.

Christmas was close at hand, and the Christmas holidays would probably have been the topic in Study No. 1 at tea, but for the egregious proceedings of the ineffable Bunter!

Bunter had to be dealt with! That was clear! If he remained in possession of Alonzo's bottle of Professor Sparkinson's marvellous elixir, life was hardly worth living in the Greyfriars Remove.

True, the school was to break up soon for Christmas; but even a few days of Bunter, the Bully, could not be envisaged without dismay. And suppose he came back next term in the same state, monarch of all he surveyed! Obviously, something had to be done!

"Perhapsfully," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh with a thoughtful wrinkle in his dusky brow, "the esteemed and idiotic Bunter may let it out."

"Not likely!" said Harry Wharton.

"The pull-fulness of his absurd leg is not a matter of terrific difficulty! I have thought of a wheezy good idea," said the nabob. "The absurd and execrable Bunter is coming here to tea—"

"We'll smash him if he does!" growled Johnny Bull.

"The smashfulness may be a boot on the other leg, my esteemed Johnny! But listen for his esteemed and ridiculous footsteps—and when he comes I

will begin to converse talkfully, and you fellows play up—"

"For Bunter to hear, do you mean?" asked Harry.

"Exactly!"

"But what—"

"The proof of the pudding is in the cracked pitcher going longest to the well!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us try it onfully. I can hear a sound like a prize pig that has escaped from an esteemed sty, and that means that the estimable Bunter is coming."

There was a grunt in the passage, indicating that the Owl of the Remove had just come up the stairs. Footsteps approached the door of Study No. 1, which was ajar.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh winked at his friends, and went on speaking:

"Perhapsfully the bottle I saw was the one that the esteemed Bunter snaffled from the ridiculous Alonzo! A small bottle, half-full of a red fluid—"

The footsteps stopped outside the door.

The juniors grinned.

Evidently the approaching Owl had overheard the nabob's words, and had stopped to hear more.

"Why didn't you bag the bottle, Inky?" asked Bob, playing up to the game. "It's the stuff all right, if you saw it—"

"We knew he'd hidden it somewhere!" said Harry Wharton.

"For goodness' sake don't let Bunter know you've spotted it!" said Nugent. "He would cut off and hide it somewhere else at once!"

"Not a word to Bunter!" said Johnny Bull.

There was a suppressed gasp outside the study. Close to the half-open door, Billy Bunter was drinking in every word.

"Not a syllable!" said Bob. "We've got to bag that bottle before he takes his next dose from it."

"That is terrifically easy," said Hurree Singh. "I will revisit the spot where I found it hidden, and—"

"Better lose no time! You should have bagged it at once, fathead! But get off now and bag it—"

"I will proceed immediately after tea—"

There was a suppressed grunt in the passage, and a sound of retreating footsteps.

The Famous Five chuckled softly.

Bob Cherry stepped quietly to the door and glanced out. He was in time to see Billy Bunter's fat figure disappearing down the Remove staircase.

"He's gone!" breathed Bob.

"Gone to shift that jolly old bottle—because he fancies that Inky's spotted where he's hidden it!" breathed Nugent. "We've only got to follow him—"

"Come on!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left their tea unfinished. Tea did not matter now.

They went down the Remove passage and sighted Bunter in the lower passage. The House was closed at dark, and a fellow had to ask leave to go out. If the mysterious bottle was concealed outside the House, as the juniors believed, Bunter had to break House bounds to get it. He headed in the direction of the Form-rooms.

From the corner of the Form-room passage the juniors watched him disappear into the Remove-room, now dark and deserted.

He closed the door after him.

Ten seconds later Harry Wharton opened the door silently, and the Famous Five peered in.

A fat figure was silhouetted against

the window. A grunt was heard as Bunter raised the sash.

There was no doubt that the Owl of the Remove was going out of the House; and no doubt that he was going to get hold of that priceless bottle, which he supposed that Hurree Singh had spotted in its hiding-place.

A cold wind, and several flakes of snow blew in, as Bunter got the Form-room window open.

He stood blinking out into the cold and snow and gloom, through his big spectacles, apparently not keen on the task in hand.

"Beasts!" The juniors at the door heard a grunting mumble. "Rotters! Jolly lucky I heard that black beast talking—they'd have snaffled it, the rotters! Unscrupulous cads—bagging a fellow's bottle when he's not looking! Not the sort of thing I'd do!"

Bunter had apparently forgotten how he had come into possession of Alonzo Todd's priceless phial.

"Filthy cold!" went on the fat junior. "And colder still in the beastly Cloisters! Grooooooh!"

Evidently Bunter did not fancy a tramp through the darkness and falling snow to the lonely, windy Cloisters.

That, undoubtedly, was a safe spot to hide his plunder. But it was not a pleasant spot to visit after dark.

According to Greyfriars tradition, the ancient Abbot of Greyfriars haunted the dark old Cloisters at Christmas-tide.

Bunter, of course, did not believe in ghosts. Still, he did not like peering alone, in the dark, to the gloomy and dismal spot where the ghost was supposed to walk.

"Beasts!" repeated Bunter. "I'll jolly well whop 'em all round for giving me this job! I'll spifficate 'em! Cheeky rotters! But I've got to get hold of it before they snoop it, the beasts! Groooooh! It's o-o-cold!"

The fat junior still hesitated. But he made up his mind at last. Slowly, and grunting angrily, the Owl of the Remove began to clamber out of the window.

"After him!" whispered Johnny Bull.

"Hold on!" breathed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Fathead! Better get after him at once—"

"We can't tackle him!" said Bob, in a whisper. "He's too jolly hefty for us—just at present. I can see that Inky's got a wheeze! Cough it up, old black bean!"

"I have a wheezy good idea, my esteemed and ridiculous friends," murmured the nabob. "The estimable and execrable Bunter is too terrifically strong for us at the present moment. But—"

"But what?" growled Johnny Bull.

"But the esteemed ghost of Greyfriars would frighten him out of his execrable wits—"

"You silly ass! There isn't any ghost!"

"Quitefully so, my esteemed and fat-headed Johnny; but there are sheets that can be wrapped over an esteemed head—and the idiotic Bunter is a terrific funk—"

There was a suppressed chuckle.

"Inky, old man, you're a jolly old genius!" breathed Bob Cherry. "Wait while I cut up to the dorm."

The juniors waited in the Form-room. Bunter had dropped from the window, and they could glimpse his dim form in the gloom, rolling away slowly in the direction of the Cloisters. Very quickly Bob Cherry rejoined his chums, with a bundle under his arm.

"All serene!" he whispered. "Now



"I say, give a fellow a hand," said Bunter. "I'm coming with you for Christmas, Wharton. Help a chap in!" The Famous Five, grinning, leaned over and grasped Bunter. But they did not heave him into the brake! They let him go suddenly, and Bunter sat in the snow and roared. "Yaroooh!" "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Removites, as the vehicle rolled away.

come on! You can leave the ghost bizney to me—you jolly old English would give you away, Inky."

"My esteemed Bob—"

"Come on!"

The juniors dropped from the window.

Billy Bunter had disappeared in the deep December gloom. But if they had doubted the direction he had taken, his tracks remained in the new-fallen snow for a guide. It was clear that he was heading for the Cloisters.

They hurried on, and glimpsed again a fat figure rolling through the gloom. Giving it a wide berth, the Famous Five cut on at a run, and reached the dismal, windy shades of the ancient Cloisters well ahead of Bunter.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Ghost of Greyfriars!

"OOOOOH! It's c-c-cold!" shivered Bunter.

He blinked round him uneasily, in the deep shadows, as he rolled under the ancient stone arches of the Cloisters.

It was the most secluded spot at Greyfriars; secluded by day, and utterly deserted and lonely by night.

The wind from the sea wailed among the old stone pillars, drifting flakes of snow. Ancient ivy rustled and murmured. It was not only the cold that made Billy Bunter shiver. Loneliness and darkness, and the story of the ghost of the Cloisters, added their effect.

Only the fixed belief that his hidden prize was at stake would have made the fat Owl of the Remove venture into such a spot alone after dark in the black winter night. But the belief that, in a short time the fellows in Study No. 1 would be after it, spurred Bunter on.

He plugged on, slowly but deter-

minedly. He reached a spot where thick, old ivy hung in massy clusters by the old stone wall. He fumbled for a matchbox and struck a match.

Then his fat hand groped at the ivy. Groan!

As Bunter's fat hand was groping through the ivy, that deep and horrible groan sounded just behind him.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter.

He jumped and turned. The shaded match in his left hand touched the skin, and he gave a howl.

He dropped the match, which went out at once. Bunter was left in darkness, save for the faint, pale glimmer of winter starlight that penetrated into the Cloisters.

Groan!

"Wha-a-a-t's that?" gasped Bunter, through his chattering teeth.

Groan!

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter stood transfixed!

His little round eyes almost popped through his big round spectacles as he gazed at a white figure, hardly six paces from him.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

Draped in white, from head to foot, the figure halted.

An arm, draped in white, was slowly raised, pointing to the fat Owl! Bunter backed away a step and bumped against the ivy.

"Mortal! Beware!" came a deep, sepulchral voice from the spectro of Greyfriars. "Who art thou that darrest intrude in these haunted shades?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Beware!"

The figure advanced, the ghostly arm still outstretched! Bunter gave a squeak of utter terror.

In another moment or two the spectral fingers would have touched him! Squeaking with terror, the fat Owl jumped away.

"Ow! Keep off!" shrieked Bunter.

"Beware!"

"Ow! Help! Yaroooh! Oh crikey!"

Urrrrgh!" spluttered Bunter, and he fairly flew.

Crash!

"Yooop!" roared Bunter as he collided with one of the old stone pillars in the dark and staggered back from the shock. "Ow! My nose! Urrrrgh!"

"Ow! Oh crikey!" Bunter dabbed his fat little nose, from which came a spurt of red. "Urrrrgh! Ooooooh!"

He dodged round the pillar and bounded on.

Groping blindly in the darkness, the fat Owl hardly knew how he escaped from the Cloisters.

But he was in the quad at last, and running for the House. He had forgotten the hidden bottle now—forgotten everything but his terror for the ghost. Gasping and gurgling, the fat Owl flew through the falling flakes, and did not stop till he was clambering in at the Form-room window again. In fearful terror of spectral fingers reaching after him in the darkness, he clambered frantically in and rolled into the Form-room with a bump.

Without even thinking of closing the window, the fat Owl scrambled up, barged across the Form-room, and fled into the corridor. The passage was dimly lit, and Bunter scudded along it, panting for breath. He came round the corner like a charging rhinoceros—and there was a sudden and terrific crash.

"What—what—what—" stuttered Mr. Quelch, as he reeled from the shock.

"What—what—who—"

"Urrrrgh!" spluttered Bunter. "Oh lor! Oooooh!"

"Bunter! How dare you rush about the passages? How dare you rush into your Form-master's room?"

"Urrrrgh! The gig-gig-gig-gig—"

"What?"

"The gig-gig-ghost!" gasped Bunter.

(Continued on page 28.)

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HOW THE STORY STARTED.

GERRY LAMBERT and BILLY MURCHIE, two young airmen, set out on a flight to the Cape. They are flying over the African jungle when they are forced down by an army of apes reared to crush civilisation by a renegade called Stein. By the orders of Big Ling, a giant ape-man, the two pilots are imprisoned—together with a white girl named Lola—in an underground cave. The three escape and seek sanctuary in the high trees. Billy and Lola are recaptured, however, and taken aboard the leading barge of Big Ling's flying armada, which lands near the Belgian Flying Service headquarters. Stein arrives by plane a moment later, and Big Ling gives the signal for the apes to march.

(Now read on.)

Stein Makes an Offer!

BILLY looked from Stein to Big Ling, then to the gorillas, who had risen and were straining forward. Every eye was on the group of trees beyond the plain. And then Billy saw.

From the forest belt the animal kingdoms came pouring forth. Their roaring filled the air, and they broke into the open as if unseen gates had been lifted to set them free.

Stein, who was now minus his monocle and whose features still showed the bruises he had received in the struggle with Captain Bergen, cast a glance at Billy, and then spoke in an undertone to Big Ling, who answered him in the same way. Then he turned to the smaller ape-man.

"Manbe," he said sharply, "it is your duty to see that this boy and girl do not escape, especially the boy. If you fail, you die!"

The Mongolian face of the smaller giant did not show the slightest sign of having heard the stern order, but his lips moved:

"They will not escape."

He took a step nearer to Billy and stood erect and grim.

Not a word was spoken for some time, for all eyes were on the beasts that came bounding across the plain. And as that awful procession continued, the sun dropped behind the horizon and night descended.

Then from the direction of the outpost of civilisation the beams of a searchlight shot up into the heavens, and there came the rattle of guns.

Stein gave a signal to Big Ling. The latter uttered a command, and the apes, in rough military formation, sped away into the darkness, leaving Stein, Billy, the girl, and Manbe.

Stein rolled a cigarette, lit it leisurely and puffed with evident satisfaction. The faint sounds of battle came to the group through the darkness.

"I dare say," he said to Billy, in a

sort of challenging tone, "you are surprised to see me. I have been looking for your friend. He did not show up, so I presume he met his fate under the hoofs of Big Ling's allies. I suppose you know where Big Ling has gone?"

Billy did not answer, although he feared for Stein's next words. They came with a smirk of triumph.

"You have seen, Murchie, the beginning of the world war. The animals are Big Ling's shock troops here. They will trample the Belgian station to fragments. We shall take their ammunition, petrol, stores, and wireless apparatus. We shall break down their houses, seize all their big planes, like the battle-plane I brought here. It was Captain Bergen's plane—knocked about a bit, but still serviceable."

He bent forward and laid his hand on Billy's shoulder.

"Are you ambitious? Do you wish to be famous, wealthy, a ruler of men and nations? I can offer you a chance under Big Ling. What do you say?"

Billy drew in his breath sharply. He would have liked to answer this tempter as he ought to be answered, but he remembered that to make an enemy of Stein would be to defeat his hopes of wrecking Stein's terrible scheme.

"What chance are you offering?" he asked, and his voice trembled with excitement.

Stein thought for a moment, then began to talk softly, persuasively.

"We'll need such as you later. Do not judge our armies by these beasts of Africa alone. Already there are apes on the way to our rendezvous in Europe. We have over a score of armies led by ape-men like Ling and the guard at your side. These semi-gorillas have been trained for years. They are as intelligent as human beings. I have called this one beside you Manbe. He understands every word we are saying. Is that not so, Manbe?"

"Every word," answered Manbe. "I speak as good as Ling. When Ling rules the world I shall be a prince."

"To-night," went on Stein, turning to Billy again, "Ling and his apes are blotting out this military post. To-night every such post, every town across Africa is being blotted out in the same way. We are cutting a track across the Continent. Then we go on to blot out white men until we strike at the heart of Europe. Can you guess what that heart is?"

"You mean England?" asked Billy.

"I mean London. Listen to me, boy. If you help us as you can help us there is no limit to the wealth that will be yours. You will be a ruler under Ling—"

"What do you want me to do?"

"Lead an expedition against London. You know where bombs can best be dropped."

Billy caught his breath suddenly. The audacity of the idea appalled him.

"But," he said, as though humouring Stein, "these barges would be blown to pieces by the Air Force before they ever reached London!"

Stein smiled confidently.

"The attack on London will not be

made by these clumsy vehicles," he answered. "By to-night's work we shall have a fleet of battle-planes. Each plane will be in charge of one of the half-men under Ling. Even they will be used only for landing our forces at certain spots in Europe. We shall have ammunition depots. We shall have Zeppelins. A Zeppelin will make the first attack on London."

Seeing Billy's surprise, he enlarged on the scheme which he had been perfecting in the depths of the jungle. He told of the gathering together of the gorillas and apes of the world. He told of how these giant half-men had for weeks been collecting their forces. Some were already on their way to the Mediterranean, some were gathered at great concentration camps on the fringe of forests where they were to be transported rapidly. They were to be taken, under cover of night, to places in Europe where they would remain until required.

In the mountains of Switzerland, deep in the Black Forest, in the Pyrenees, on the wastes of the Near East, amid the hills of Wales, and in the moors of Scotland, in hulks that would be towed up the Thames to the Tower, along the valleys of England, apes would be let loose to terrorise the people. But the great attack would take place at a time yet to be decided upon at a council of the giant ape-men.

"Until we are clear of Africa we shall travel by night," went on Stein. "We shall attack by night as we go, spreading death and devastation. We shall take Gibraltar and hold it. The few monkeys kept there by the British Army shall have companions. The Rock is riddled with caverns and tunnels where foes may be defied. From Gibraltar to London is but a step by air. We shall take hostages and keep them; our prisoners will be kings, rulers, governors."

He pressed the boy's shoulder gleefully.

"There are many things you would do to help. In every plane we capture there is the usual wireless apparatus. I shall give you messages to send out—messages that will lead the receiving stations to wrong conclusions, besides messages that will be received by our own giants. Is it not worth while to join us for the reward you will receive?"

"I'll think it over," muttered Billy.

Stein's face changed suddenly.

"If you do not obey me," he said harshly, "the apes will tear you limb from limb."

He turned away, for in the distance there was heard the riot of the returning army, and a glare had now lit up the sky where the Belgian outpost had been stationed. Big Ling was marching back at the head of his apes, and when he arrived his face was lit up with the joy of killing. He carried a torch in his hand, and swung his club as a policeman might swing his baton.

"It is done," he announced. "They are all dead. We have aeroplanes in plenty. We have ammunition. It is time to start again, Stein. From now on I command. I have tasted victory."

The ferocity of the monster was the ferocity of the beast. He turned and made a gesture; and Billy saw pushing their way through the slobbering, grinning gorillas a party of creatures the appearance of whom was enough to strike terror to any heart.

There were about a dozen of them, all giants of from twice the size of an ordinary man to a few whose height

must have been fifteen feet. Muscled and broad in proportion, they were fashioned just as Ling himself—men above the waist, gorillas below. The ruddy light of the torch carried by Ling fell on their swarthy faces. Some were pure Mongol in feature, some were more of the North American Indian type; all standing motionless.

"The first of the captains," muttered Stein. "Well, what now, Ling?"

"Onward!"

The next hour showed that Ling had really taken command and that he was able to organise. Everything was done swiftly, methodically, as in a trained army. Nearly a dozen big planes had been captured, and, to the amazement of Billy, Ling showed that he understood the mechanism of the machines. It was apparent that Stein had taught him everything from the planes that had been wrecked by the liana nets in the southern jungle; and not only Ling knew how to handle a plane, but most of the giant apes, too.

Billy and the girl were pushed into one of the fighting planes, and Stein took control. Manbe followed, and after him came a crew of gorillas.

The take-off was a bit rocky, but it was done without mishap. Once they were in the air, Billy, glancing back, saw that the floating boats were in the air, too, having been raised while the planes were being tuned up. A rope had been thrown from the plane and had been caught and tied to the foremost boat, so that a line of craft was strung out like barges behind a river tugboat. The rude sails were being used as covers to protect the occupants of these trailers from the force of the wind.

The flight continued all night, and when dawn broke it showed, a thousand feet below, a large lake glittering in the sun. Around the lake a forest grew thick and heavy. The plane landed on a stretch of flat ground, and hardly had the landing been made when other planes dropped down. From one of them Big Ling stepped, armed with a revolver and a rifle, while the other giants were likewise armed.

A camp was made, the apes were sent into the forest to forage for themselves, and the giants and Stein sat in a circle around a fire that had been built up. Manbe sat beside Billy and the girl.

Ling cast his eyes on Billy.

"Do you know where we are, boy?" he asked.

"Yes. This is Lake Chad. We are on the borders of the Sudan."

"To-morrow we shall be in Europe," said Ling, seizing an enormous club. "Have you decided on the offer Stein made you?"

"He will obey, Big Ling," said Lola, before Billy could answer.

Her hand closed over that of Billy, and a smile curled the ape-man's lips.

"And you, too, Lola—you will obey! But the boy—from him we want information for the raid on London. If he refuses—"

Ling's yellow teeth clicked warningly, and he turned to the others.

"Three hours' sleep, and then—the Lake Chad settlements will be scattered. Stein, you have your departure to think of."

Without another word Ling lay down and closed his eyes. The crew of gorillas did likewise. Billy did not sleep at first, for he was racking his brain how to defeat this wild nightmare of slaughter. At length, however, weariness overcame him, and he dozed.

He was awakened by Manbe's hand on his shoulder. The giant signalled

for him to rise, and motioned him towards the largest plane. Stein was no longer to be seen, but Lola was placed in the plane in which Ling lay full length beside the apes who formed the passengers. Manbe signed to Billy to take the pilot's place.

"The pilot's cabin is too small for me," said Ling, with a grin. "but you will be pilot. I will lie here and direct you. If you do not obey I'll shoot you."

He lifted a revolver to emphasise his intention.

"Where am I to fly to?" demanded Billy.

"Gibraltar!"

The young pilot's eyes gleamed as a sudden thought entered his mind that he might be able to send out a warning to the world. As pilot, he would have the wireless instrument under his control. Could he manage to send out a message without Ling observing him?

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**TRY THIS SNAPPY CROSS-TALK AT YOUR CHRISTMAS PARTY!**



## PUT AND TAKE

Our Cross-Talk Coons.



"**H**ALLO, Mistah Take! What am yo' workin' at now?"

"I'se a joiner, sah!"

"A joiner?"

"Yessah! When I sees gen'lemen gwine in to have a feed, I join dem!"

"Why was yo' in such a hurry dis morning?"

"I was gwine to de chemist, sah, to get some stuff for a black eye!"

"But yo' eye wasn't black—no mo' dan usual!"

"No, sah! De chemist gave me de black eye when I told him I couldn't pay for de stuff!"

"Den why did yo' go to de chemist?"

"To get de stuff for de black eye, I tell yo'!"

"But if yo' hadn't gone to de chemist yo' wouldn't hab had de black eye!"

"No, sah! Dat's true! I didn't t'ink ob dat!"

"Niggah, yo' am so foolish dat yo' t'inks yo' am somebody else! What am de time?"

"Dunno, sah! I'se fo'gotten my watch!"

"Isn't dat a watch in yo' pocket I can see?"

"Yessah! Dat's de one I'se fo'gotten!"

"But yo' ain't fo'got it! Dere it is!"

"Dat's so, sah! I didn't t'ink ob dat!"

"Niggah, if yo' held yo' brain up to de light, de shadow ob it wouldn't cover a flea! Why did yo' say yo' had fo'got de watch?"

"I fo'got dat I hadn't fo'got it, sah! Dat's why!"

"Make yo'self more explicate, Black Man!"

"Yessah! What I mean is dat I fo'got I remembered to fo'get to remember to fo'get de watch!"

"Dat makes it clear, ob course! Hab yo' seen Sambo Johnson lately?"

"No, sah! He's in prison!"

"What, again? What for dis time?"

"Two years!"

"Sho'! But why?"

"For stealin' a bit ob ropè, sah!"

"Two years for stealin' a bit ob rope! Nebber heard ob such a t'ing! Where was dis rope?"

"It was tied to a horse, sah!"

"Niggah, if yo' had to lib on yo'

As the plane rose Billy saw that while he had been asleep another raid had been carried out. Smoke arose from the other side of the lake, and the ruins of a white settlement could be seen. Once more the fleet went northward, led by Billy's plane.

The Sahara came under them, yellow and brown wastes of sand. All day the flight continued over the Tuareg country. Then in the distance a streak of blue appeared and white clusters among the brown land.

"We are near Algiers," said Billy, turning to Ling. "The French station is signalling us. What shall I reply?"

"Tell them we are Belgian troops on air manoeuvres."

*(Look out for further thrilling chapters of this popular adventure story in next week's FREE GIFT NUMBER of the MAGNET!)*

wits, yo' would hab died ten years befo' yo' were born!"

"Well, sah, give me a cigar, will yo'?"

"A eigar! Sho', I t'ought yo' didn't smoke!"

"Dat's right! I got to start now! Doctor's orders!"

"De doctor said yo' got to start smokin'!"

"No, sah! He said I'd got to stop smokin'!"

"Den why de cigar, Foolish?"

"Well, I can't stop smokin' till I start it, can I?"

"Baboy mine, niggah, yo grows mo' foolish! What did de doctor attend yo' for?"

"T'ree-and-six!"

"Sho'! But what had yo' got?"

"T'ree-and-six!"

"What was de matter wid yo', Iggnorance?"

"A pain! De doctor said I got it t'rough makin' jokes!"

"I don't wonder at it, sah! But I nebber heard ob a pain like dat befo'."

"Are yo' sho' dat's what he said?"

"Yessah! He said de trouble was in de jestin'!"

"Indigestion, yo' foolish black fellah! Not in de jestin'! Did he give yo' some medicine?"

"Yessah! Dat made me worse dan ebber!"

"How was dat?"

"I couldn't stand de cold baths t'ree times a day!"

"What's dat? Yo' had t'ree cold baths a day?"

"Yessah! To take de medicine in!"

"Who said yo' had to take de medicine in a cold bath?"

"It was on de bottle, sah! 'To be taken t'ree times a day in cold water!'"

"Niggah, yo' is de limit! What on earth did yo' t'ink dat de cold bath was for?"

"To make me tremble, sah!"

"And why did yo' want to tremble, Foolish?"

"Because I had to tremble before takin' de medicine!"

"Who said dat, yo' mos' absurd black man?"

"It was on de bottle, sah! 'Shake well before takin'!' But it didn't seem to do me much good!"

# BUNTER, THE BULLY!

(Continued from page 25.)

"The gur-gur-gur-ghost! Oh lor! The gog-gog-ghost!"

Mr. Quelch gave him a glare.

"How dare you talk such nonsense, Bunter? I repeat, how dare you? Follow me to my study at once!"

"Oh lor!"

In Mr. Quelch's study Bunter lost his terror of the ghost! Six hefty whacks from Mr. Quelch's cane sufficed to drive away the terrors of the supernatural. Indeed, Bunter, as he wriggled away from the study after that "six," felt, for the moment, that Quelch was even worse than the ghost of Greyfriars.

"A, ha, ha!"

There was a sound of merry chuckling in the dark old Cloisters after the flight of Billy Bunter!

Four fellows surrounded the white, ghostly figure, and all of them were chortling—including the ghost of Greyfriars! The ghost, in fact, was almost doubled up with merriment.

"He's gone!" grinned Frank Nugent. "I fancy he won't stop—he's on a non-stop run!"

Harry Wharton turned on the light of a torch. Bob Cherry unwound the sheet from his head, disclosing a grinning face.

"Worked like a charm!" said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "Buck up, though! It's jolly cold here. We know where to look now."

"We do—we do!" grinned Bob.

With the electric torch in his left hand Wharton groped in the ivy with his right, at the spot where Bunter had stood striking the matches.

He dragged away a mass of ancient ivy, and disclosed a cavity in the old

stone wall underneath. The light glimmered on a little phial, half-full of a crimson fluid, exactly as it had been described by Alonzo. Evidently this was the bottle of Professor Sparkinson's elixir!

"Here it is!"

"Good!"

Johnny Bull reached into the cavity and grasped the little bottle.

Smash!

It landed on the old stone flags and broke into a hundred fragments. The contents ran out in a little pool.

"That's that!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "Now we'd better get back!"

The Famous Five returned to the House. It was rather fortunate for them that Bunter had not lingered to close the Form-room window. They clambered in, fastened the window, and returned to their unfinished tea in Study No. 1, in a very cheery mood.

Billy Bunter, the next morning, was the first man up in the Greyfriars Remove, wonderful to relate!

But Bunter had his reasons.

In the daylight even Bunter was not afraid of ghosts in haunted Cloisters. Indeed, once quite safe away from the ghost, Bunter doubted whether it was a ghost at all. Bunter was first out of the House that morning, and he rolled away in the wintry dawn to the old Cloisters. He hoped, but he doubted.

He rolled into the Cloisters, and reached the spot. He dragged aside the ivy and blinked at the little cavity in the wall. It was empty!

"Beasts!" hissed Bunter.

Then he observed at his feet fragments of smashed glass and a crimson stain on the old stone flags.

He blinked at it.

"Beasts!" repeated Bunter.

Those relics told him what had become of Alonzo's phial of wonderful

"stuff." It was no longer in existence.

Slowly and sadly the fat junior trailed back to the House.

In the Form-room that morning Bunter's face was clouded more than ever before. When Billy Bunter rolled out in break, he did not barge fellows in the passage; he did not grab Fishy's arm to lead him to the tuckshop; he did not address any fellow in a bullying tone. For the effect of the last dose of the elixir had quite worn off now, and the fat Owl of the Remove was no longer Strong Bunter.

"Merry Christmas, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry, from the brake. It was break-up day at Greyfriars, and the Famous Five were starting with the first crowd for the station.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Good-bye, old fat bean!"

"I say, hold on!" Bunter rushed up to the brake. "I say, you fellows, make room for a chap! I say, Wharton, I'm not going with Mauly, after all! I'm coming with you, old fellow!"

"Guess again!" suggested Wharton.

"Oh, really, you know! I say, give a fellow a hand! Help a chap in! I'm ready—"

The Famous Five, grinning, leaned over and grasped Bunter. They heaved him off his feet. But they did not heave him into the brake. They let go suddenly, and Bunter sat in the snow and roared.

"Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The brake rolled away, leaving Billy Bunter still sitting, and still roaring!

THE END.

(Next Saturday's yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled: "THE MYSTERY OF WHARTON LODGE!" You'll vote it great, chums. Look out also for another set of superb coloured pictures which will be given away with this issue.)

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