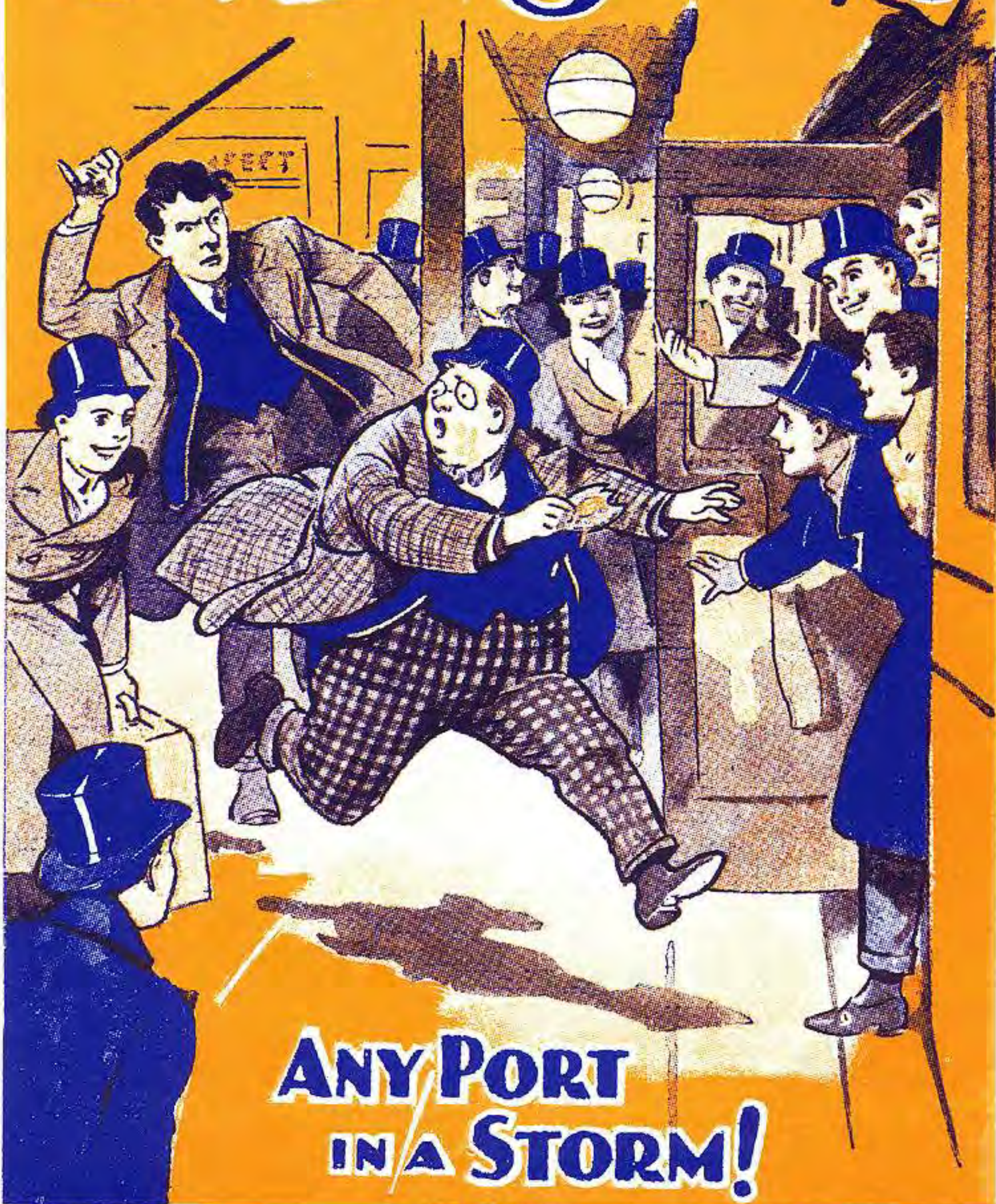


"BUNTER'S BID FOR A FORTUNE!"

**Screamingly-Funny School Yarn of
HARRY WHARTON & Co. - - INSIDE.**

The Magnet

2nd



**ANY PORT
IN A STORM!**



COME INTO the OFFICE, BOYS - AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

I NTERESTED in circuses, chums? Who isn't? An acquaintance has just been telling me some most interesting facts about circuses that I thought well worth while passing on to you. For instance, have you heard of

CLOWNS WITH COPYRIGHT FACES?

It's a fact! When a clown thinks of a new way of making up his face, he "copyrights" it to prevent other clowns using the same make-up. One famous American clown has an apple-like nose—with a red light on the end of it! Did you know that circuses have their own police forces which accompany them on their world tours? These police forces are necessary to deal with all sorts of crooks who follow circuses around, and they work in conjunction with local police forces. How many miles of rope and cable would you imagine a circus needs? Here are some amazing figures of one big circus: Over 24 miles of rope and cable are used in the aerial rigging alone. Including everything under the "big top," this figure increases to 41 miles. There are 60,000 feet of rope in the meshes and guy ropes of the nets which are used to protect the trapeze artistes.

And, talking of

THE MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE,

would you believe that, although these artistes throw themselves about in the air at such amazing heights, many of them actually get dizzy when they look out of high windows? One famous circus artiste who appeared in London recently does a most breath-robbing performance on the high wire. Yet when this same artiste saw a newsreel of himself doing the same act, he immediately fainted! He hadn't realised the risks he was taking until he saw them with the eyes of an ordinary spectator. Sometimes trapeze artistes lose control of mind and body for a space of time while they are actually whizzing through the air. If it is only a short space of time, they can recover their senses and make a safe "catch." But if they make the slightest error in their calculations it is likely to prove serious, for, even though there might be a net beneath them, the shock of landing on their heads is not easily overcome.

Circus life may be romantic, but it's certainly dangerous!

There are many other ways of risking one's life. For instance, an inventor is shortly going to risk himself in what he calls

A GYRO-AUTOMOBILE.

Ever heard of it? It's a combination of a motor-car and an autogyro. This particular invention has a gear drive with a clutch which works either the wheels of the car when used on land, or an autogyro propeller when used in the air. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,456.

This combination has no wings, as the autogyro propellers are designed to provide the necessary lifting power.

If this invention proves successful, there's a chance that it might reduce the casualties which occur on our roads. When a crash with another car seems imminent, all the driver of the gyro-automobile has to do is to soar into the air and escape it!

Incidentally, the United States Government has ordered new wingless autogyros which can fold back their rotor blades, and gear their engines to their wheels. This will allow them to travel along the roads like cars.

Here's another new invention which will interest those of you who are mechanically minded. A famous British motor-racing driver, has evolved what he calls

THE "TEAR-DROP" RACING CAR.

It has been given this name because, in shape, it is like a tear-drop, wide in front and tailing off to a point behind. It looks something like a streamlined aeroplane without wings. It is a "baby" car with a 4½-h.p. motor. The engine is placed in the back of the car, behind the driver. This new baby racer is so small that the whole upper part of the car must be taken off to allow the driver to get into it. Then the upper part is placed over him, and he is completely encased.

This new, peculiarly shaped car is now undergoing trials on our race tracks, and it is expected to make strong bids to smash existing international records in forthcoming speed runs.

I CAME across an interesting yarn the other day concerning

ONE SURVIVOR OUT OF THIRTY THOUSAND!

Just imagine a terrific cataclysm which killed thirty thousand people—and only one man survived it! Yet that was what happened when the dreadful earthquake and volcanic eruption occurred in Martinique. It's thirty-three years ago since it happened. A volcano in the West Indies erupted suddenly, and the noise could be heard 300 miles away. Plantations, villages, and homesteads were destroyed, and two thousand people killed. But that was only a beginning.

Two days later, Monte Pelée, in Martinique, erupted, and the town of St. Pierre vanished almost in a flash, together with all its inhabitants—30,000 of them! For nearly two months the eruptions continued, then, when things began to quieten down, exploring parties went over where the town had been. They were astounded to hear a voice crying for help.

Investigations discovered one man trapped in a dungeon in the foundations of the gaol. He was a convict who had been sentenced to death. The strength

of the prison had saved him, and he had managed to find a little food, which kept him alive.

He died a short while ago, having been reprieved for thirty-three years by one of the most terrible tragedies in history!

By the way, do you know that Vernon-Smith, the Famous Five, Tom Redwing, and his father, and Billy Bunter are coming into

A PACKET OF MONEY

as the result of their discovering Galleon Gold while staying at Polpelly House during the Christmas vacation? Well, you'll very soon be apprised of the fact. How these fortunate ones dispose of their windfall will be told in a special series of stories now being written by Frank Richards, and which will appear in the good old MAGNET in due course. Bear this information in mind, chums, and prepare yourselves for a rattling good treat.

NOW for a selection of RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

to various other queries sent in by my readers:

What is the Fastest Rocket-Driven Vehicle? The rocket-driven sledge. One has already put up a speed of 235 miles per hour. The rocket-driven car comes next with 131 m.p.h., and the rocket-driven aeroplane last, with only 85 m.p.h.

What is the Most Curiously Named Island in the World? There are many islands with most curious names, but I think the palm goes to an island in the Pacific Ocean—Latitude 30 degrees North, and Longitude 140 degrees East. This island is called "Lot's Wife."

What is the Highest Mountain in England? Scafell, which is 3,210 feet in height. Ben Nevis (4,406 feet) is the highest in the British Isles, with Snowdon second (3,560 feet). But when you compare these with Everest (29,002 feet) and Godwin-Austen in Central Asia (28,278 feet) they appear to be only molehills!

Who Invented Fireworks? The Chinese. Nowadays they are still the most frequent users of them. They let off fireworks at military functions, births, weddings, and even at funerals!

I am afraid those are all the questions which I have space to answer in this week's chat. But don't be afraid to send along your queries. The more I get, the better I am pleased. And when you send along your query, you might also tell me what you think of the MAGNET, and what type of stories you like best; and if you have any criticisms to make, don't be afraid to make 'em!

I'm sure, however, that none of you will criticise next week's long complete yarn of the Chums of Greyfriars. It is entitled:

"THE BOY WHO WOULDN'T MAKE FRIENDS!"

By Frank Richards.

Every year sees new boys arrive at Greyfriars. But never before has so strange a character swelled the ranks of the Remove as Eric Wilmot, a nephew of Mr. Hacker, master of the Shell. Try as they do to make pals with the new boy, Harry Wharton & Co. find that there is "nothing doing"! Believe me, chums, the first yarn in this grand new series will leave you thirsting for more! Be sure and take my oft-repeated advice to order next week's MAGNET in good time.

You're booked for more thrills, too, in David Goodwin's super-serial, and lots more fun in the "Greyfriars Herald." Our clever rhymester will be in evidence as usual, and there'll be a lot more interesting information in my chat.

Meet you again next week, chums.

YOUR EDITOR.

BUNTER'S BID *for a* FORTUNE!

By FRANK RICHARDS



Ever since Billy Bunter first came to Greyfriars he has been expecting a postal order and borrowing small loans on the strength of it. This week the great "W.G.B." gets a postal order—and the shock of his life in the bargain!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bright of Bunter!

TRAIN'S late!" said Bob Cherry. "Snow on the line!" remarked Harry Wharton.

"Blow it!" said Johnny Bull. "It's parky!"

"The parkfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a shiver.

"Well, we've got to wait!" said Frank Nugent.

"Good!" said Billy Bunter.

Which remark caused the Famous Five to stare at the fat Owl of the Remove.

It was cold! It was frosty! It was windy! And it was the first day of the new term at Greyfriars School.

Courtfield Junction swarmed with Greyfriars fellows, landed there by train after train. They crowded the platforms, turned up their coat-collars against the winter wind, stamped their feet to keep them warm, and waited for the local train which was to take them on to Friardale for the school. That train was late.

There was a block of snow somewhere on the line. Until it was cleared they had to wait. With the keen wind from the sea howling along the platform it could not be called nice.

"Good!" repeated Bob Cherry. "Like standing about in this wind, fathead?"

"I mean, we can get a snack at the buffet while we wait!" explained Billy Bunter. "I'm rather hungry."

Whereat Harry Wharton & Co. grinned. They realised that they might have guessed that one!

"You can get a pretty good feed here, you know," went on Billy Bunter, blinking seriously at the chums of the

Remove through his big spectacles. "I say, you fellows, what about it?"

"Roll away and feed!" said Bob.

"But what about you fellows?" asked Bunter. "I'm not thinking of myself—you know I never do—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And it's not much I eat, at any time, as you know—"

"Great pip!"

"But I dare say you fellows could do with a bite!" said the Owl of the Remove. "Come on! My treat, old beans!"

"Count up your cash, you men!" said Bob Cherry. "You'll need it if Bunter's going to stand treat."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Temple of the Fourth in a topper!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What about footer to fill up the time? It was thoughtful of old Temple to bring that topper along."

"Good egg!"

"Come on!"

Standing about in the wind, with their hands in their pockets, did not appeal to such strenuous youths as the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove. A little liveliness was much to be preferred. And it was certain that a little liveliness would result if they played football with Cecil Reginald Temple's shining topper—perhaps a lot! So Bob's cheery suggestion was adopted at once.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter. "Don't walk off while a chap's talking! I say—"

The Famous Five did not walk off—they rushed off!

"Beasts!" grunted Bunter.

He rolled away to the door of the refreshment department. The buffet was already rather crowded with Greyfriars fellows. Billy Bunter blinked in,

rather like a lion seeking whom he might devour. As he had told the Famous Five, a good feed could be had at that buffet; but there was one little difficulty—a fellow had to pay for it.

That was why Bunter preferred to have pals with him when he fed. So far as feeding went, Bunter was prepared to do his bit—more than his bit! The less attractive item of paying the bill he was willing to leave to others. It was, indeed, a matter of necessity, as William George Bunter had turned up for the new term in his usual stony state. So he blinked round in search of a fellow who might be "touched" for the purpose.

A shove in his podgy back suddenly sent him staggering. He gasped, and blinked round in great wrath.

"Ow! Beast! Look here—"

"Don't stick in the gangway!" said Coker of the Fifth.

Bunter gave him a glare of wrath. It was like Horace Coker of the Fifth Form to shove a junior out of the way instead of asking him to step aside. Coker had a short way with fags. But Coker was too big and beefy for Bunter to do anything but glare and back away on the platform.

Coker gave him no further attention. Indeed, he forgot his existence on the spot. Having been shoved out of the doorway, Bunter was done with.

"Now, look here, you men!" said Coker. He addressed Potter and Greene, his pals in the Fifth. "We can get some hot coffee here—"

"Right-ho!" agreed Potter and Greene with heartiness.

They did not always agree with Horace; but they were in full agreement now. Hot coffee on a cold and

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frosty day struck them as a very good idea—uncommonly intelligent on Coker's part.

"And some grub," continued Coker. "I don't know what you fellows feel like, but I could do with some sandwiches."

"What-ho!" said Potter and Greene. It seemed to them that Coker was full of good ideas this term.

"Well, I'll give the order while you fellows go and scout for a taxi!" continued Coker.

"Eh?" said Potter and Greene.

"We're not waiting here with that mob for the train," said Coker. "Goodness knows how long it will be. We can take a taxi to the school! One of you fellows might have thought of that, really, before they were all snapped up. But it's the same as ever—I have to do all the thinking."

Potter and Greene had, as a matter of fact, thought of it. But as Coker would have to pay for the taxi to the school they had felt a certain delicacy about suggesting it! They waited for Coker to think of it for himself! Now he had done so—after all the taxicabs were gone. There was rather a rush on the taxis at Courtfield Station that day!

"Run and bag the first taxi you see," went on Coker. "They'll be coming back empty sooner or later."

"But—" said Potter and Greene.

"Then come back here. Tell the man to wait for us," said Coker. "Don't waste time jawing—just cut off!"

"What about having the coffee and sandwiches first?" asked Potter in a casual sort of way.

"That's just like you, Potter!" said Coker. "You never think, old chap! It may take a jolly long time to get a taxi to-day. Cut off, and I'll wait for you here!"

With that Coker walked into the buffet.

Potter and Greene cast expressive glances at his broad back, looked at one another still more expressively, and went along the platform to the exit. They did not want to start the term by collaring Coker and banging his head on the nearest wall—especially as there would have been neither a lunch nor a taxicab to follow had they yielded to their natural inclinations. So they suppressed their feelings and went.

Coker found a table and sat down.

He ordered refreshments on his usual lavish scale. Billy Bunter—once more in the doorway—blinked at him with a vengeful blink through his big spectacles.

There was Coker, feeding on the fat of the land while his friends hunted for a taxi in the windy street outside—and Billy Bunter, whom he had shoved out of the way as a trifling object that did not matter, could only gaze, like a fat Peri at the gate of paradise, at the good things he could not share!

Bunter would have liked to jam the sandwiches over Coker's features, plug the jam tart into his hair, and pour the hot coffee down the back of his neck!

That, unfortunately, was impracticable! But as the hungry, fat Owl gazed at Coker's well-spread table a bright and happy idea germinated in his podgy brain.

Bunter was not always bright—indeed, his Form-master, Quelch, considered him remarkably and extraordinarily dense. But Billy Bunter could be bright at times—the more sight of foodstuffs set his fat wits working at double pressure.

He rolled into the buffet. He rushed up to Coker's table.

"I say, Coker—" he gasped.

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Coker gave him a stare, or, rather, a glare.

"Don't you squat at this table, Bunter!" he snapped. "I don't want fags here!"

"I—I say—"

"Cut off!"

"I—I say, poor old Potter—"

"Eh! What about Potter?"

"I—I came to tell you—" gasped Bunter.

"Anything happened to Potter?" snapped Coker. "I can see it's going to be the same this term as last—everything goes wrong, as soon as my eye is off them. What—"

"Potter's run over—"

Horace Coker stared at Bunter for a second, then bounded up, and rushed out of the buffet.

The Owl of the Remove blinked after him. He grinned.

Coker had taken the bait without a doubt or a suspicion. He had rushed off in alarm. He left his feed without a thought. But that was all right—Bunter was thinking of it for him.

Some fellows might have considered Billy Bunter an untruthful chap. But he had stated a fact! He had seen Potter run over to the exit with Greene, both of them being in a hurry to bag that taxi as soon as possible, and get back to the coffee and sandwiches. His statement, therefore, "Potter's run over," was true, though not in the sense in which Coker understood it. But that was Coker's look-out—not Bunter's.

Billy Bunter sat down in Coker's vacated chair. He started gastronomic operations at once. And the good things on Coker's table vanished at a much faster rate than when Horace Coker was dealing with them.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Horace In A Hurry!

"HALLO! Hallo! Hallo!"

"Look out!"

"Where are you barging?"

Harry Wharton & Co.

waxed wrath. They were accustomed to lofty and high-handed manners and customs from Coker of the Fifth. But this, really, was the limit.

Coker, of course, was in a hurry. In the belief that Potter had been "run over" by some vehicle outside the station, Coker rushed for the exit from the platform, doing about 50 m.p.h. But on a platform crowded with fellows watching and waiting for a train, there was no room for a fellow to exceed the speed limit in that style.

The Famous Five of the Remove had dealt with Temple's topper. That bright and shining topper had gone sailing over innumerable heads, and Cecil Reginald Temple was in wild chase of it. From sheer exuberance of spirits they had sent Hobson's hat after it—and Hobby of the Shell was also in frantic chase of a hat. The train was not yet in, and the cheery chums of the Remove were feeling rather like Alexander of ancient times—looking for fresh worlds to conquer. Then Coker happened.

He happened suddenly.

The five juniors were in his way as he rushed along the platform. He had no time to go round them—besides, there was not much room to go round, in such a crowd. He rushed through them.

Never had Coker's short way with fags been so extremely short and sharp! He charged like a bull.

Harry Wharton went staggering to the right, Bob Cherry to the left. Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh and Frank Nugent were strewn headlong. Johnny Bull had

just time to dodge, and Coker careered by.

But with considerable presence of mind Johnny Bull put out a foot as Coker careered, and Coker, of course, did not see it till he stumbled over it.

Thus it came to pass that Horace Coker was added to the number of fellows sprawling on the platform.

He sprawled and bellowed.

The juniors were up first. They jumped up, breathless and excited, and more than ready for war. They closed in on Coker, as he gained his knees.

"You cheeky ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Collar him!"

"Bump him!" shouted Wharton.

"Bump him terrifically!" gasped the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Coker heaved up—in the grasp of the Famous Five. In another moment Coker would have been whirling and bumping. But he yelled:

"Leggo! You young ass! Potter's run over! Leggo!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob. "Well, that's no reason why we should be run over, too!"

"Let go!" roared Coker.

"Chuck it," said Bob. "We'll slay Coker another time—"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"But if Potter—"

"Never mind Potter—hold on! I don't think Potter's fearfully damaged," said Harry. "Keep hold of that mad rhinoceros."

In point of fact, Potter and Greene were coming in at that very moment, and Harry Wharton sighted them coming on the platform.

They had had luck, bagging an empty taxi returning from the school, and having bagged it, they were coming back to tell Coker.

Seeing Potter of the Fifth walking in, without a sign of damage, Harry Wharton rather naturally doubted the statement that he had been run over. If he had, it was clear that he had had a quick and surprising recovery.

So he held on to Horace Coker, and his comrades, catching sight of Potter, held on also.

Coker did not observe Potter and Greene. His head was under Johnny Bull's arm, in a vice-like grip, and so the visibility, so far as Coker was concerned, was not good.

Coker struggled and bellowed and wrenched. But the Famous Five were more than able to handle the Fifth Form man, big and brawny and beefy as he was. They handled him.

Bump!

Coker smote Courtfield platform.

"Whoop!" roared Horace, as he smote. "You young villains! Leggo! I'll smash you! I tell you Potter's run over—"

Bump!

"Yarooop! Will you leggo?" shrieked Coker. "Oh crikey! I'll spifficate the lot of you! I tell you—Yarooop! I keep on saying—Yarooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bump!

"Go it!" yelled Vernon-Smith, coming along with a crowd of Removites. "Give him a few more! Here, let a fellow lend a hand."

And the Bouncer found room on Coker for a grasp. Coker bumped again, Peter Todd annexed his hat, and cheerfully stamped on it. Skinner jerked out his necktie. Coker was getting quite untidy and dishevelled-looking.

Bump!

"Urrrrggh!" gasped Coker.

"I think that will do!" said Harry Wharton. "We have to teach Coker

manners at the beginning of the term—but I think that will do."

"Do you think it will do, Coker?" asked Bob.

"Gurrgh!"

"If you're satisfied, old man, we are!"

"Groooogh!"

Leaving Coker strewn on the platform in the midst of a grinning crowd—Potter and Greene grinning with the rest—the Famous Five walked away. The train was signalled now, and they had no more time to waste on Coker of the Fifth. Besides, Coker had had enough. He felt as if he had had too much.

"Urrrgh!" gurgled Coker. Greene came forward and gave him a hand up,

last. Horace Coker gazed at him, staring as if he had been the ghost of George Potter.

"Eh? What? Yes," said Potter.

"What's up?"

"You haven't been hurt?"

"Not a lot! What was there to hurt me?"

"Well, you're jolly lucky, after being run over—"

"Who's been run over?"

"Haven't you?" bawled Coker.

"Not that I know of! If I have, I didn't notice it!" yawned Potter.

"You—you—you haven't been run over?" gasped Coker. "That young villain Bunter was pulling my leg.

The Famous Five captured a carriage, and Fry of the Fourth was barged away headlong. There were six places in the carriage and only five of the Co., but they were going to keep the sixth place for a Remove man.

They packed in, and guarded the door—packing their goal, as it were, against attack. Fry picked himself up, shook a list, and went farther along the train.

Hobson and Hoskins and Stewart of the Shell came up with a determined rush—but it booted not, they were strewn on the platform. Vernon-Smith and Redwing were allowed in, having the honour of belonging to the Remove. Squiff and Tom Brown followed, and



Horace Coker charged into the Famous Five like a bull. Johnny Bull had just time to dodge, and Coker careered by. With considerable presence of mind, Johnny Bull put out a foot, and Coker stumbled over it. "Yooop!" he yelled, as he went sprawling.

and he staggered to his feet. "Where's my hat? Urrgh! I'll spifficate them! Urrgh! Is that you, Greene? Urrgh! How's Potter?"

"How's Potter?" repeated Greene.

"Is he alive?"

"Alive?" stuttered Greene. Potter was almost at his elbow, looking as lively as usual.

"How did he get run over?" gasped Coker.

"Run over!" repeated Greene, like a parrot.

"Where is he now?"

"Eh? He's here!"

"Have they brought him in?"

"Eh?"

"Can't you talk sense?" bawled Coker. "Jabbering like a parrot while poor old Potter's smashed to bits—"

"Smashed to bits!" Greene was still parroting. Really, he was wondering whether Coker had taken leave of his senses—such as they were!

"I was coming," gasped Coker, "when those cheeky fags collared me, and stopped me! I came at once when Bunter told me—and—why—what—is—is—that you, Potter?"

Potter of the Fifth dawned on him at

then! He came to me in the buffet and told me you'd been run over! I'll smash him! What are you grinning at, I'll mop up the station with him!"

"We've got the taxi—"

"Blow the taxi!"

"It's waiting—"

"Let it wait!"

Coker rushed back towards the buffet. Potter and Greene followed him. No doubt it was a relief to Coker to find that there had been no accident to Potter, after all. But he was not thinking of that for the moment. He was thinking of Billy Bunter—and vengeance! He wanted vengeance, and he wanted it quick! Billy Bunter, half way through the jam tart on Coker's table, was destined never to get to the end of it.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Startling!

"HERE'S the train!"

"Pack in!"

"Barge that Fourth Form ass off!"

The train was in, and there was a rush for it.

the carriage was getting full! But on such occasions fellows expected to stand—and there was still standing room. Hazeldene came up, and was granted admission. But when Price of the Fifth arrived, the whole pack of Removites turned on Price as one man—and he departed in a great hurry. Hilton of the Fifth, beholding the fate of Price, grinned and passed on in search of more accessible quarters.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Bunter—"

"Oh crumbs!"

A terrific yell woke the echoes of Courtfield Junction, as Billy Bunter suddenly appeared from the doorway of the buffet.

The cause was quickly apparent.

Behind him came Coker, in hot chase. The Owl of the Remove was fleeing for his life!

There was a smear of jam on his fat face. There was a jam tart clutched in a sticky hand.

But Billy Bunter was not thinking of jam tart now! He was thinking only of getting away from Coker. Twice

already Coker had smitten, once with a heavy hand, once with a heavier boot. Bunter wanted no more of either.

"Ow! Keep off! Rescue! I say, you fellows—yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"Stop!" roared Coker.

Bunter was not likely to stop! It was the very last thing he was thinking of doing!

He charged on wildly, with Coker close behind. Harry Wharton & Co. stared at him across the platform. They shouted encouragement. There was not much room in their carriage, especially for a fellow who was double-width. But Bunter was welcome to the fold—if he could reach it!

"This way, Bunter!" yelled Bob.

"Put it on, fatty!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Come on, porpoise!" shouted Wharton.

Bunter gave them a wild blink through his spectacles, and charged across the platform. But Coker's grasp fastened on him before he was half-way across.

The fat Owl of the Remove whirled in that mighty grasp.

"I say, you fellows—whoop!" roared Bunter. "I say—gurrgh!"

Billy Bunter bumped on the platform, roaring. Coker disdained to punch him. But he smacked! He smacked hard! His hands were large and heavy, and they came down like flails.

Smack, smack, smack, smack!

"Ow! Help! Wow! Help! Yow! Help! Yaroooh!"

Smack, smack, smack!

Billy Bunter struggled frantically. He was no use in Coker's hefty grip, but he did his best. He wriggled, he struggled, he kicked and howled and yelled. His coat split up the back, his hat rolled off, his spectacles slid down his fat

little nose; all sorts of things exuded from his pockets and scattered on the platform—a stump of pencil, a handkerchief much in need of a wash, an envelope, a penknife with a bulls-eye sticking to it. Bunter did not heed his scattering property. He heeded only Coker and his hefty smacks.

Smack, smack, smack!

"Ow! Rescue! Wh-hoop!"

"Rescue, you men!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, jumping down from the carriage.

"You'll lose the train!" said Hazel.

Bob did not heed. It was very probable that Bunter had asked for what he was getting—but he was getting it on too generous a scale. Bob Cherry dashed to the rescue, and the rest of the Co. followed him fast.

"Take that!" Coker was bawling.

"Take that, and that, and that, and—Oh crumbs! Whoop!"

Coker was grasped, upended, and hurled away. The Famous Five picked up the sprawling, spluttering Owl.

"Come on, old fat bean!" grinned Bob.

The train was about to start. There was no time to lose. Harry Wharton & Co. rushed the fat junior across to the carriage and bundled him headlong in and followed him.

Coker was close behind. He had not finished yet, it seemed! But the hapless fat Owl was safe out of his reach now, and the Famous Five packed the doorway.

"Sheer off, Horace!" said Bob Cherry. "Train's just going!"

"Hook it, Coker!"

Coker did not sheer off, and he did not hook it. Coker was in a boiling state, and he boiled over. He charged headlong.

Head and shoulders came in. But the

rest of Coker did not follow, for the head and shoulders were grasped and hurled back, and the rest of Coker, naturally, had to accompany them. Coker was extended on his back on the platform, spluttering.

A porter ran up and slammed the door. The engine was screaming.

Coker sat up dizzily.

Bob Cherry waved a parting hand at him from the window as the train began to move.

"I—I—I!" gasped Coker.

He scrambled up. Potter and Greeno caught him in time. The train glided out of the station, the windows lined with laughing faces, and Coker of the Fifth was left to boil.

"Dear old Horace!" said Bob, as the train ran out of Courtfield. "Always asking for it, and always getting it! Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who told you to bag that seat, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter had annexed Bob's seat while the Co. were busy with Coker. Several fellows were standing, but Bunter saw no reason for adding himself to the number.

"Oh, really, Cherry!" he gasped. "Weren't you keeping this seat for me?"

"No, you fat fraud!"

"Well, I'm jolly well not going to stand!" said Bunter indignantly. "You fellows rushed me into this carriage, and you can't expect me to stand!"

"You fat, foozling, frabjous frump, I—"

"I say, you fellows, where's my hat?"

"You left it on the platform, I fancy," said Harry Wharton.

"Mean to say you left my hat behind? Well, you silly ass!" exclaimed Bunter. "You always were a bit of a fathead, Wharton, but that's too thick. Dragging a fellow into a train and leaving his hat behind—"

"Did you want us to leave you to Coker?" bawled Johnny Bull.

"You needn't roar at a fellow, Bull, because you've acted like a lot of silly fools!" yapped Bunter. "Look here, one of you fellows had better let me have his hat! Yours will fit me, Wharton! I've borrowed your hats sometimes, when I've been staying at Wharton Lodge."

"You have," agreed Wharton; "but you're not borrowing this one, old fat bean!"

"If you're going to be a selfish beast, Wharton—"

"Right on the wicket! I am!"

"I must have something on my head!" hooted Bunter. "It's pretty thick—"

"It is—the thickest at Greyfriars!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass, I don't mean that! I mean—"

"Never mind what you mean, old fat man—just shut up!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter relapsed into indignant silence. Bob Cherry remained standing, and Bunter kept the seat. He was not silent long.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Is that Bunter talking again?" asked Vernon-Smith, from the other end of the carriage. "Can't one of you men kick him?"

"Beast! I say, you fellows, I've lost my handkerchief, too! My hanky must have fallen out of my pocket. And, I say, my penknife's gone! I say, that was a jolly good penknife, except that both blades were gone, and the handle split. I say, did you pick up my hanky and my penknife?"

"I saw your hanky," said Johnny Bull.

"Did you pick it up?"

"No fear!"



The Hit of the Month!

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"And why not?" roared Bunter.
 "Because I hadn't a pair of tongs."
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared all the fellows in the carriage, while Billy Bunter blinked at Johnny in almost speechless wrath.

"You—you cheeky rotter!" gasped Bunter. "Now I've lost that hanky! And the penknife, too! It was the one you gave me, Nugent."

"The one you borrowed, and never gave me back, do you mean?"

"Yah! I say, it was pretty thick—"

"Are you talking about your head again?"

"Beast! It was pretty thick, leaving all my things lying about the platform. I might have lost—" Bunter slid a fat hand into an inside pocket and gave a yell of dismay. "Gone!"

"Oh crikey! What's gone now?" asked Bob.

Bunter's yell of alarm sounded so full of consternation that the juniors wondered whether he had lost something valuable.

"The envelope!" shrieked Bunter.

"What envelope, ass?"

"With the papers in it!" yelled Bunter.

"What papers?"

Bunter started to his feet.

"Stop the train!" he yelled.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Pull the cord—the communication cord!" howled Bunter. "I've got to have those papers back. Do you hear? Those pi-pip-papers—"

"You howling ass, you can't stop the train—"

"I've lost those papers! Top the strain—I mean, stop the train!" stuttered Bunter. "Pull the cord—communication comm—I mean the communication cord—my pip-pip-papers—"

Bob Cherry pushed the fat Owl back into his seat. Bunter plumped there, with a spluttering gasp.

"You can't stop the train, ass! Friardale in a few minutes now. You can get a train back—"

"My papers—"

"What the dickens papers can that fat idiot have had to make a fuss about?" asked the Bounder in wonder.

"My pip-pip-pip—" gasped Bunter.

"Wait till the train stops, old fat bean."

"I can't! Suppose they're lost! I shall lose all the money!" howled Bunter. "Oh, lor'! I can't afford to chuck away a hundred pounds! I mean, I could afford to, but I'm jolly well not going to, see?"

"A hundred pounds!" roared Bob.

"Yes, and more! Stop the train!"

Nobody was likely to stop the train. But the fellows in the carriage gazed at Bunter in utter wonder. If Bunter had come back for the new term with a hundred pennies they would have been surprised. Now he talked of a hundred pounds—and more! It was amazing!

Certainly, Bunter had a light and airy way of talking of fivers, and tenners, and even of "ponies," as if he lived, moved, and had his fat being in an atmosphere of unlimited wealth. Nobody, of course, believed a word of it. It was rather too difficult to reconcile unlimited wealth with a constant state of hard-upness!

But the fat Owl was not merely "gassing" now, that was clear. He was wildly excited, and fearfully dismayed, and he would actually have pulled the communication-cord and stopped the train, had he been allowed to get at it. It really looked as if the hundred pounds was real—or that Billy Bunter, at least, believed it was.

"Potty, I suppose!" said Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Hazel.

"Will you stop the train?" yelled Bunter.

"Hardly, old bean," said Bob cheerfully. "But here we are at Friardale. We stop in a minute or two."

The train ran into the village station and stopped. Doors were flung open and Greyfriars fellows swarmed out. Most of them were thinking of making for the school bus and Greyfriars. Not so Billy Bunter! Billy Bunter was a spoofer, from the toes to the eyelids, and was generally "gammoning." But this time, he was not gammoning. Even the prospect of a meal on arriving at the school did not tempt him. His fat thoughts were concentrated on getting back to Courtfield and recovering possession of those mysterious and valuable documents he had dropped on the platform.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Lost!

"I GUESS I'm glad to see you guys a few!"

Fisher T. Fish looked glad.

His bony face was quite bright as he met the Greyfriars crowd on the platform at Friardale.

"I'll tell a man, you ginks, it's a sight for sore eyes to see you humming around!" said Fishy.

Fisher T. Fish generally passed the holidays at the school, his home in New York being rather too distant for the trip. Sometimes a fellow asked him home, but not often. Fishy was not a very attractive character. Fishy talked a lot, but he had only two topics. When he was not talking about money he was talking about the immense superiority of the Yew-nited States over Yurrupe. Which palled, in the long run, on inhabitants of Europe.

But though Fishy regarded his schoolfellows as a bunch of boneheads and their native land as a piece that the cat might have brought in, he was glad to see them again. His unlimited chin-wag had to be bottled up while they were all away, and at the beginning of the term Fishy was almost bursting with suppressed conversation. So he had walked down to Friardale to meet the train, and waited till it came in—late. And now he beamed on the Removites with a bright, if bony, countenance.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, old bony bean!" said Bob cheerily. "Glad to see you again, Fishy!"

Bob, as a rule, was a stickler for truth, but something was due to politeness.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Say, lost your roof, Bunter?" grinned Fisher T. Fish. "Blown off—what? I'll say it's windy! Look yero, I can fix you up with a noo hat. I've got jest the hat that will suit you down to the ground—"

Fisher T. Fish always had something to sell.

"Bunter doesn't wear his hats down to the ground," remarked Bob. "Only down to his ears!"

"Say, Bunter, old big boy," said Fishy eagerly, "you come along, and give that hat the once-over!"

In his eagerness to do a trade, Fisher T. Fish forgot that he had come there to greet the new arrivals. When it was a question of cash Fishy forgot time and space, and everything else. He did not heed Bob's little joke. He grabbed a fat arm with a bony hand.

"Shut up, you ass!" yapped Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, lend me my fare back to Courtfield. I've come away without any money. I say, all of you

come back with me and help me hunt for those papers. I say—"

"I can see us doing it!" remarked Johnny Bull. "I'm going on to the bus."

"Same here!"

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"Here's a bob, old bean!" said Harry Wharton. "Good-bye!"

"I say, you fellows, you come back and help!" roared Bunter. "I'm not going to lose a hundred pounds to please you. I say, if you walk off while a chap's talking, you rotters—"

Harry Wharton & Co. were already joining in the rush for the bus. The fat Owl roared after them in vain.

"Beasts!" he gasped.

"Hallo, what's that about a hundred pounds?" asked Skinner, pausing as he came along with Snoop and Stott and Bolsover major. "Lost a hundred pounds, old fat frog?"

"Yes, and more!" gasped Bunter.

"Whose was it?" asked Skinner sympathetically.

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

Skinner & Co. passed on, laughing. Billy Bunter rolled away, to get to the other platform, breathing wrath. Whether his wealth was real or imaginary, it appeared that Bunter took it seriously, though the other fellows declined to do so. But Fisher T. Fish, after an amazed stare at the fat Owl, cut after him and followed him to the up platform.

Fishy was interested.

The mere mention of money was sufficient to interest the youth from New York! Like Vespasian of old, Fishy believed that the smell of all money was sweet, and even the mention of it had a pleasant sound to his long ears.

True, it was unlikely that Bunter had any money—especially such a tremendous sum as a hundred pounds! Even the wealthy Bounder, even Lord Mauloverer, never had sums like that. Still, as Fishy sagely considered, you never could tell. There had been one great and famous occasion, when Mr. Bunter had had a run of luck on the Stock Exchange and had shelled out fivers to his sons at Greyfriars. Billy Bunter and his minor, Sammy of the Second, had rolled in brief—alas, too brief!—wealth. Fishy guessed that it might have happened again. Lots of people were making money now that the great slump was over and the country getting prosperous once more. If Billy Bunter had a hundred pounds, or a tenth part of that sum, he was a fellow Fishy wanted to know.

"Beastly rotten line!" grunted Bunter, finding that he had ten minutes to wait for a train back to Courtfield. "Blow 'em!"

"Say, bo—" said Fisher T. Fish in his most agreeable tone.

"Oh, don't bother!" snapped Bunter.

That answer did not diminish Fishy's agreeableness; rather, it increased the same. If a fellow had lots of money he could afford to be cheeky—at least, to Fisher T. Fish.

Had Bunter been friendly and cordial, Fishy would have taken it as a sign that he was going to ask for a little loan—and would have faded out of the picture promptly. But if Bunter had no use for Fishy, it looked as if Fishy might have a use for Bunter.

"Say, don't go off on your ear, big boy!" said Fishy. "I'll mention I heard you handing out the dope to those jays. What was that about a hundred pounds?"

"Find out!" retorted Bunter.

"You dropped a lot of money at Courtfield—or what?" asked Fishy. "Got into a rookus there, mebbe?"

The loss of Bunter's hat looked as if something had happened at the junction. "That fool Coker!" snapped Bunter. "The envelope must have fallen from my pocket when he was handling me—blow him!"

"With a hundred pounds in it?" gasped Fishy.

"It's worth more than that, I expect."

"Oh, not a banknote?"

"Eh? No, you ass! Don't ask me any questions and I'll tell you no lies," grunted Bunter. "I'm not telling anybody about it. You sheer off, Fishy!"

Bunter rolled along the platform.

Fisher T. Fish did not sheer off. The more Bunter sought to get rid of him, the more determined Fishy was not to be got rid of.

When the up train came in Bunter parked himself in the nearest carriage, and Fisher T. Fish followed him in.

Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles with a far-from-welcoming blink.

"What do you want?" he grunted.

"I guess I'm going to help you look for what you've lost, big boy," said Fisher T. Fish amicably. "After all, we're friends, old-timer—ain't we?"

"Oh!" said Bunter. "All right, then! I'll be glad. I'm a bit short-sighted, and the envelope may have been kicked anywhere in that crowd. Mind, I'm not going to tell you what's in it!"

"O.K.!" said Fishy. "I guess I ain't inquisitive—"

"You jolly well are!" said Bunter. "But I'm not telling you anything—or anybody else, either. Fellows will stare, I fancy, when they see me with fivers and tenners. But I'm not telling anybody."

It was sheer mystery to Fisher T. Fish. Fishy was a cute youth. He could see that Bunter was in earnest; he expected to be in possession of fivers and tenners, and to dazzle Greyfriars therewith. He wondered if it was a cheque in the missing envelope. Lord Mauleverer sometimes had cheques to cash. If it was not that, Fishy could not guess what it was.

But one thing was a "cinch"—a fellow who was expecting to roll in fivers and tenners was a fellow entitled to the purest and most loyal friendship from Fisher T. Fish. Fishy could not be sufficiently glad that he had come to Friardale to meet the returning Greyfriars crowd. Otherwise, he would have missed this.

The train ran into Courtfield. The junction was almost deserted now; a second train had carried on the rest of the Greyfriars crowd. Bunter lost no time in getting to the platform where he had been so soundly smacked by Coker of the Fifth. Fortunately, Coker was long gone; the taxi had already landed Coker & Co. at the school.

A porter came up to Bunter and presented him with a rather damaged hat. Bunter thanked him for the same, brushed it, and put it on his bullet head.

"Seen an envelope lying about?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"I dropped one here!" said Bunter.

"Come on, Fishy, help me to look for it!"

The porter gave Bunter rather an expressive look. Possibly he had expected a tip for having fielded that hat. Perhaps that was why he did not offer to help look for the missing envelope. Anyhow, he didn't. Bunter and Fishy hunted for it up and down and round about.

But really it was a hopeless quest. Nearly an hour had passed since that

envelope had been dropped, and a crowd had surged over the platform since, and it was windy. No doubt it had been trampled on, kicked aside, blown away—anything might have happened to it. At all events, it was not to be found.

For a good half hour they hunted. Fisher T. Fish would have gone on hunting, for he was intensely curious and inquisitive about that envelope and what it contained. But Bunter, as usual, was lazy. Keen as he was to recapture the lost envelope, laziness supervened, and he decided to chuck it.

"It's gone," he said at last.

"I guess it's sorter vamoosed," agreed Fisher T. Fish. "If it was a banknote and you had the number—"

"It wasn't!" grunted Bunter.

"If it was a cheque, easy enough to get it stopped, and to ask your popper for a noo one," suggested Fisher T. Fish. Fishy was trying hard to pump Bunter and learn what had been in the missing envelope.

"It means a waste of time!" grunted Bunter. "Of course, I can write and get a noo—" He broke off.

"A noo what?" asked Fishy eagerly.

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter. "Blow the thing! This means that I shall be short of money for a time. Bother it!"

Which brought Fishy's curiosity up to burning-pitch. He guessed, reckoned, and calculated that it could only have been a cheque in the missing envelope. It looked—it certainly looked—as if there was money about in the Bunter clan. Fisher T. Fish almost made up his mind to lend Bunter half-a-crown—as a sort of sprat to catch a whale.

But not quite. He felt that he had to be quite certain before he parted with anything in the nature of cash. He was prepared to be friendly, deeply and devotedly pally, up to that point, but at the actual point of parting with cash Fishy jibbed like a shy horse.

But when Bunter went on once more to the school Fishy went with him—friendly and attentive, and listening to Bunter's chin-wag about great doings in the hols, without once telling Bunter to can it. Bunter, it was clear, was—or believed that he was—going to have pots of money; and if there was anything in it, Fisher T. Fish was going to be a friend clinging closer than a brother.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Stamp For Bunter I

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1 in the Remove.

That celebrated study had quite a bright and cheery look, contrasting with the dim and misty winter weather outside.

A bright fire glowed in the grate; the study was well swept, tidy—in fact, in apple-pie order—owing, no doubt, to its owners having been absent so long. Harry Wharton was unpacking a box; Frank Nugent was putting up a picture, specially brought from home for the adornment of the study; Bob Cherry, sitting on the corner of the table, was swinging his legs and talking. Bob had come along from Study No. 13, his own study, to borrow some racks for the fixing up of a gorgeous Christmas calendar, but he had stayed to chat. Then a fat face and a large pair of spectacles loomed in at the doorway, and Bunter's squeak was heard.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob. "Bunter's got the jolly old gift of second sight! Or how did he know you have a cake in that box?"

"I say, I want you to lend me—"

"Beginning early—what?" asked Bob. "Dash it all, old fat bean, you can't have been disappointed about a postal order yet! Give it a chance to get here."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I want you to lend me—"

"Didn't you find that million pounds you dropped at Courtfield station?" asked Bob. "Was it a million, or only a thousand?"

"I say, you fellows, I never found that envelope!" said Bunter. "I shall have to write for another lot. It's pretty thick being short of money owing to you fellows playing the giddy ox! I want you to lend me—"

"Sorry!" said Harry Wharton gravely. "I left all my ten-pound notes at home on the hundred-guinea radiogram!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Same here," said Frank Nugent, with equal gravity. "I absolutely forgot to bring my fifty-pound notes with me."

"And I'm in the same boat," said Bob, with a sad shake of the head. "All my hundreds of currency notes went clean out of my head."

"Ask next door, old man!" said Wharton.

"If you fellows think I want to borrow any money—"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Don't you?"

"No!" roared Bunter.

Wharton ceased unpacking the box. Frank Nugent suspended the operation of hanging the picture. Bob nearly fell off the table. All three of them gazed at Bunter, as if dumb-founded.

"You don't want to borrow any money?" gasped Bob.

"No!" howled Bunter. "I hope I'm not the kind of fellow to go round borrowing money!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Wonders will never cease!" remarked Nugent. "Look here, Bunter! Keep this up! Keep it up all through the term!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" snorted Bunter. "Next week I shall have pots of money! You fellows will be coming round, civil enough, then, I fancy! I jolly well shan't lend you anything!"

And Bunter blinked scornfully at three grinning faces.

"I want you to lend me a stamp!" he went on.

"A stamp!" repeated Nugent.

"Yes. Having lost that envelope, with my papers in it, I shall have to write for another lot! I'll let you have your stamp back," sneered Bunter, "and a dozen more with it, if you like. Lend me a stamp, Wharton."

"Pleased," said Harry, laughing, "only—"

"Oh, don't jaw—just hand over the stamp! I hope you're not going to be mean!"

"Not at all! But—"

"Look here! Will you give me a stamp or not?" hooted Bunter.

"Not! You see, I haven't one!"

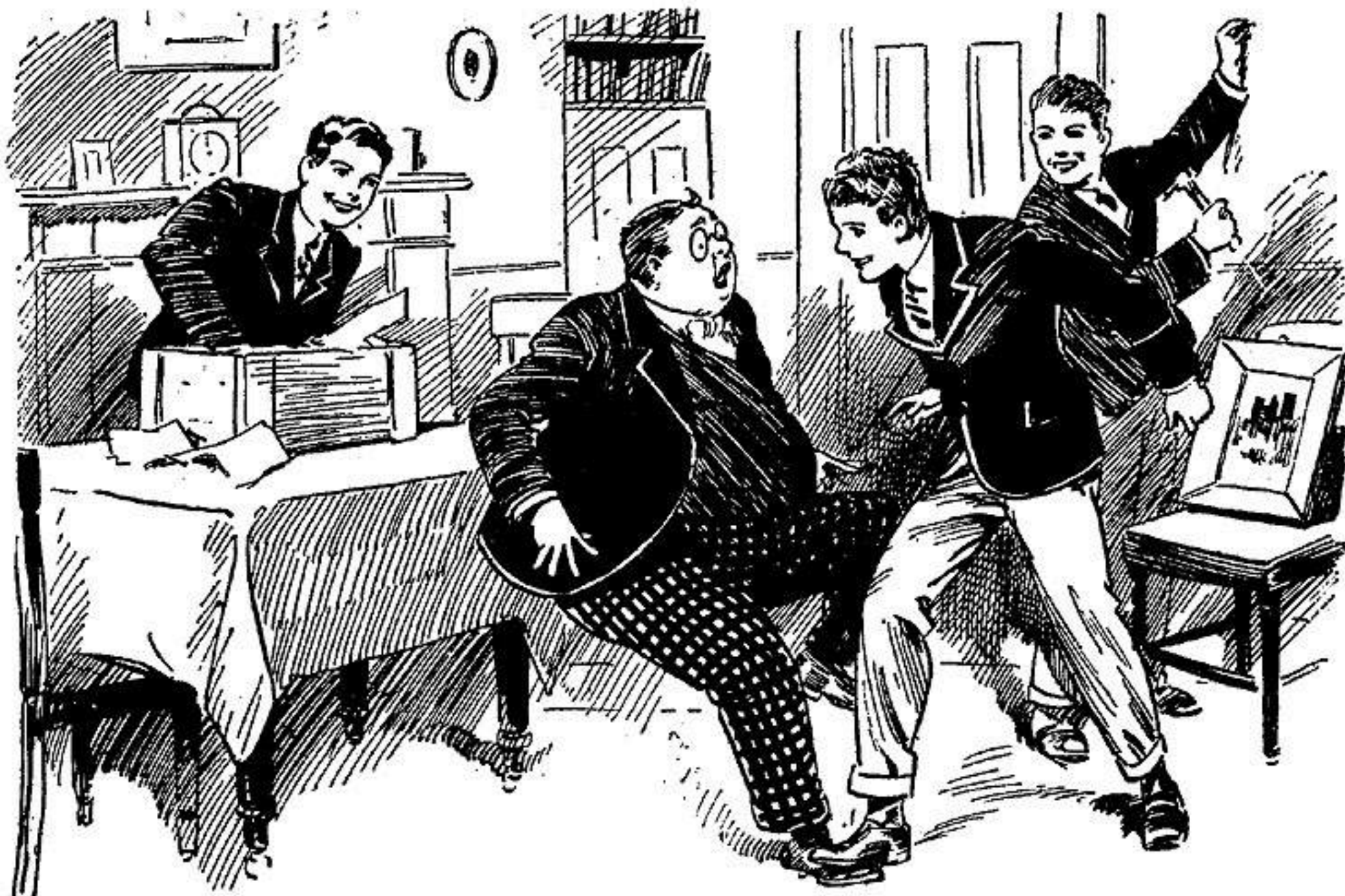
"Oh! Why couldn't you say so, then, instead of so much jaw? Give me a stamp, Nugent, old chap!"

"Pleased—but I haven't one, either."

"You silly idiot! Give me a stamp, Bob."

"I haven't one!" grinned Bob.

"Well, of all the mean rotters!" exclaimed Bunter, in disgust. "Here am I, stuck up for want of a stamp, and pots of money coming to me, and you're too jolly mean to lend me a stamp! It was your fault I lost the envelope, too—dragging a fellow about a railway platform! Look here—"



"If you are sure you want a stamp, Bunter," said Bob Cherry, "I can only give you one sort." "Give it to me, then," said Bunter, "and not so much jaw!" Bob Cherry lifted one of the largest feet in the Greyfriars Remove and brought it down—on Bunter's foot. Stamp! "Wow!" howled Bunter. "Wharrer you doing?" "Giving you a stamp!" smiled Bob.

"I think I can oblige you, old chap!" said Bob, getting off the table. "I said I hadn't a stamp, but if you're going to call it mean, I shall have to find you one."

"Get on with it then," grunted Bunter. "I've got to catch the post!"

Bob Cherry came across, Wharton and Nugent gazing at him in surprise. If Bob said he hadn't a stamp, he hadn't one! How he was going to find one, when he hadn't one, was rather a mystery.

But the mystery was soon elucidated. "Sure you want the stamp, Bunter?" asked Bob.

"Eh? Yes, ass!"

"I can only give you one sort."

"Well, give it to me, and not so much jaw!"

"Right! Here you are!"

Having reached Bunter, Bob lifted one of the largest feet in the Greyfriars Remove, and brought it down—on Bunter's foot!

Stamp!

Bunter hopped and howled.

"Owl! Wow! Beast! You've smashed my toes! Wow! You silly ass! Wharrer you doing?"

"Giving you a stamp."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wharton and Nugent. They understood now the kind of stamp Bob was finding for Bunter. It was not a postage-stamp!

"Yaroo! Whooop! Wow!" roared Bunter.

"Have another?" asked Bob.

"Yoop! Keep off, you beast!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you said it was mean not to give you a stamp—and that's the only sort I could give you."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Lots more if you want them."

"Owl! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter. He glared at the cheery Bob with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles. "Ooogh! Beast! I'll jolly well—Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have another, old chap?" said Bob, lifting his foot again.

Bunter hopped hastily out of the study.

"Beast!" came in a howl from the Remove passage.

And Billy Bunter was gone.

He was still in need of a stamp; but, evidently, he did not want any more from Bob Cherry. One was enough—or, rather, more than enough!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER

Great Expectations!

FISHY!

"Yep?" said Fisher T. Fish, turning on the most agreeable smile of which his bony features were capable.

"Lend me—"

The smile faded from Fishy's face, as if wiped off with a duster.

He had dreaded this!

He was keen, very keen, on being friendly with Bunter. But he did not want to lend him anything. And it was rather difficult to cultivate friendship with Bunter without lending him anything.

"Oh!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "I—I guess—"

"A stamp!" said Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish breathed again.

Certainly he did not want to part even with a postage-stamp, except for value received. But a postage-stamp was not a great deal to risk, if pots of

money were coming along to Bunter. Still, Fishy was rather anxious to know what denomination of stamp Bunter wanted.

"I guess I've got a ha'penny stamp," he admitted.

"That's no good," said Bunter.

"I—I—I guess I might scare up a penny stamp—"

"I want to stamp a letter."

Fisher T. Fish looked at Bunter. He had a letter in his hand! Evidently a three-halfpenny stamp was required. It gave Fishy a pain—or, rather, it gave him three pains, one for each halfpenny! But he made up his mind to it! It cost him an effort, but he did it!

He squinted keenly at the letter in Bunter's fat hand. But the Owl of the Remove held it so that the address was hidden.

"Writing home for a noo cheque?" asked Fishy casually.

"Look here! If you've got a stamp, let—"

Fishy sorted out a penny stamp and a halfpenny stamp.

"Here you are!" he said. "I'll stick them on for you." Fisher T. Fish wanted to see the address on that envelope.

"I can stick them on!" answered Bunter, quite aware of what Fishy wanted. "Give them to me, Fishy."

Fishy handed over the stamps. Bunter licked them, turned his back to Fishy, and stuck them on the envelope.

Fisher T. Fish circumnavigated Bunter. But he was not in time to give the envelope the once-over. The address was hidden again in Bunter's fat hand.

Fishy breathed hard. He saw no reason why Bunter should be—

sively secretive. If he was writing home, there was no reason why a fellow shouldn't see the address. But where else could he be writing for money? It was all very mysterious. Fishy was smitten with an agonising doubt that his three-halfpence might be a sheer waste.

"I—I guess there's just time to catch the collection, Bunter," he remarked. "I'll cut down to the box with that letter, if you like."

"I'm going to post it, thanks!"

"I'll come with you!" said Fishy.

Bunter grinned, as he rolled away, convoyed by Fisher T. Fish. He kept the letter in his hand, the address out of sight. Why the fat Owl was so mysterious about it was a puzzle. But it was clear that he did not intend anyone to see the address on that letter.

They reached the letter-box in the school wall. Fisher T. Fish eyed Bunter as he lifted the letter to the slit in the box. Only the back of the envelope was visible.

The transatlantic junior was strongly tempted to grab Bunter by his fat neck, up-end him, and give that letter the once-over, before it dropped in. That, no doubt, would have gratified his curiosity. But it would rather have dished his scheme of becoming the chosen pal of the fellow who was going to have pots of money.

Fisher T. Fish hesitated. He who hesitates is lost! The letter dropped into the box, and was gone!

"That's that!" said Bunter, with satisfaction.

He rolled back to the House. Fishy walked by his side, his long, thin legs keeping time with Bunter's short, fat ones.

"Your popper is skinning them on the Stock Exchange, old chap?" asked Fishy. "Is that where it's coming from?"

Bunter grinned, and did not reply. Perhaps it amused him to keep Fishy on tenterhooks!

"When's it coming along?" asked Fishy.

"Next week."

"A hundred pounds?"

"More, very likely."

"Don't you know exactly how much you're getting?" asked the puzzled and mystified Fishy.

"How should I know till after Saturday?"

"Saturday? What's Saturday got to do with it?" asked Fishy, in still greater astonishment.

"Oh, nothing!"

"You might tell a pal!" urged Fishy.

"I might!" agreed Bunter. "I'm not going to, though!"

"I—I say!" Fishy gave a gasp as a sudden awful suspicion occurred to him. "You're not backing a horse, are you?"

It was unlikely that even Bunter was ass enough to suppose that he could make money by backing horses. Still, it looked rather like it! A fellow who expected "pots of money," not knowing exactly how much, and only after a certain date—what did it look like?

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter. "Not likely!"

"Waal, I guess it's impossible!" said Fisher T. Fish. "They wouldn't take bets on tick from a schoolboy, and you've got no ready money—"

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"But look here, you put me wise—"

"Hallo, there's Mauly!" said Bunter, and he left Fisher T. Fish, and cut away to intercept Lord Mauleverer.

Fishy was left trying to think it out. Bunter was not backing horses; he realised that! If the "pots of money"
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were coming at all, it could only mean that Bunter senior had been "skinning them on the Stock Exchange," as Fishy expressed it. But if that was the case, why was Bunter so secretive and mysterious about it? Fishy could see that this was not Bunter's usual "gas." The "pots of money" were not in the same class with his famous postal-order, which he was always expecting, and which never came. Bunter really and truly was expecting to handle those pots of money! Fisher T. Fish was keen and sure and spry—he had been raised in a burg where they cut their eye-teeth early—but he had to confess that this had him beat—beat to a frazzle!

In the Rag that evening a good many fellows looked at Billy Bunter curiously.

The matter was getting more widely known.

Billy Bunter had turned up for the new term in his usual impecunious state; that was certain. But his great expectations had been talked of in the Remove. It was known that he actually had gone back from Friardale to Courtfield to search for that lost envelope. Such an exertion on the part of the laziest fellow in the wide world, showed that Bunter, at least, regarded the contents of that lost envelope as extremely valuable.

Then the juniors knew that he had been going up and down the Remove for a stamp for a letter which had to catch the collection—in connection with that lost envelope!

Smithy was making a joke of the matter—asking Bunter whether he had found his hundred-pound note, and whether he would take twopence for it. Ogilvy put in a claim for fourpence, which Bunter had owed him for whole terms, and offering to give Bunter change for a hundred pounds. But Skinner remarked, wisely, to Snoop, that you never knew; and Sidney James Snoop agreed that you never did.

"Old Bunter had some tin once, and shelled out fivers to that fat freak," remarked Skinner. "One never knows! It costs nothing to be civil to a chap."

"After all, Bunter's not a bad sort!" said Snoop. "He's a greedy pig, I know, and a fearful fibber, and all that; still, there are worse fellows than Bunter about."

"They want some finding!" said Skinner. "Still, you're right, Snoop— if there's anything in it, Bunter will have plenty of friends when the money comes along, and I don't see why a chap shouldn't get in on the ground floor, what?"

To which Snoop agreed; and they proceeded to get in on the ground floor, by being very civil and pleasant to Bunter that evening. Skinner gave up an armchair by the fire to Bunter—Snoop threw him a cushion. Fisher T. Fish, observing these proceedings, was confirmed in his belief that the "pots of money" were possible, if not probable. And Fisher T. Fish, scenting rivals in the field, astonished the natives by presenting Bunter with a packet of toffee. It was the first time that Fisher Tarleton Fish had been known to give anything away.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

The Mysterious Letter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO., during the next day or two, had plenty of matters to occupy their minds—to the exclusion of Billy Bunter and his mysterious affairs.

There were a lot of things to think about at the beginning of the new term;

and there was the football, too, with matches coming along. There was a rag on Coker of the Fifth. There was a row with Loder of the Sixth. There was a raid on the Shell dormitory, and a pillow-fight with Hobson & Co. So they almost forgot Bunter.

Neither did Billy Bunter bestow so much of his company on them, as he had been wont to do. He had other friends.

Fisher T. Fish had started the ball rolling, as it were. Skinner and Snoop had followed it up, on the sound theory that civility costs nothing.

People are a good deal like sheep, who will follow where other sheep lead. On the second day of term, Hazeldene also realised that civility was an inexpensive luxury; and gave Bunter a friendly nod and word in the quad. On the third day, the rather solid brain of Bolsover major assimilated the same fact, and he shared a bag of doughnuts with Bunter. Other fellows began to think that a civil word might not be wasted. Stott, having a bag of bullseyes, asked Bunter if he liked bullseyes. Bunter did—and he helped himself generously—so generously, that Stott barely refrained from telling him what he thought of him. Still, he did refrain. Skinner seemed to think Bunter worth cultivating, and Skinner was a very sharp youth.

Bunter did not need to barge into a study at tea-time, in his old style, hoping not to be kicked out. Study doors were open to him now—on his great expectations—some of them, at least. "Pots of money" seemed a sort of magic formula, like "open sesame."

In morning break, Bunter would roll along to the letter-rack in obvious and eager anticipation of a letter.

But it was not his celebrated postal order that he was expecting now. He had almost forgotten that long-expected postal order.

It was an answer to the letter he had written on the first day of term; and he was very anxious for it to arrive.

So were his friends.

It was in vain that they attempted to "pump" Bunter on the subject. He would tell them nothing.

Whatever the mysterious source of his expected wealth, he was keeping it strictly to himself.

Which was remarkable, for, as a rule, it was very difficult for Bunter to keep his capacious mouth shut.

Among the fellows who hoped to share in the pots of money, if those pots turned up, there was keen curiosity on the subject. Other fellows passed Bunter by, like the idle wind which they regarded not. But every time Bunter blinked at the letter-rack, there were two or three fellows with him, extremely interested, for once, in the fat Owl's correspondence.

But the letter seemed slow in coming.

Bunter manifested great impatience, his fat brow was quite worried. If he had been expecting a fortune by post, he could not have been more anxious and impatient. On the fourth morning he seemed to feel confident that his letter would be there. But it was not there, and Bunter rolled into the Remove Form Room for third school with a puckered brow. Some of the fellows noticed that Mr. Quelch gave him a sharp look. When the Remove were in their places, Quelch addressed the fat Owl.

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter, blinking at him.

"A letter came for you this morning."

"Oh!" Bunter brightened up. "It wasn't in the rack, sir?"

"Quite so!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "And it will not be placed in the rack, Bunter."

"C-c-can I have it now, sir?"

"You may not have it now, Bunter!"

You will come to my study after class, and I shall speak to you on the subject."

"But, sir—"

"That will do, Bunter."

"But my letter, sir—"

"Silence!"

Bunter was unwillingly silent; and third school proceeded. Skinner & Co. exchanged glances.

The letter had arrived! That was certain now. It had passed through Mr. Quelch's hands, like all the correspondence for his Form. It was Quelch's duty to keep an eye on that correspondence.

For some reason Quelch had examined that letter and detained it. That was clear.

Such things had happened before. For instance, when a generous but injudicious relative had sent Lord Mauleverer a tip of twenty pounds, that magnificent tip had been stopped in transit. Fellows were not allowed to have such sums of money—not if the beaks knew of it, at all events.

Was that the reason in this case?

Quelch was evidently annoyed; and it was plain that Bunter was due for a royal and imperial jaw when he went to his Form-master's study after third school. What else could be the matter?

Bunter looked very worried during that class. But when the Remove were dismissed, his friends gathered round him in the corridor. So far as friendship went, he had consolation for his loss.

"Rough luck, old man!" said Skinner.

"Rotten of Quelch to butt in like that!" said Snoop.

"I guess it's the rhinoceros' side-whiskers!" said Fisher T. Fish. "It sure does get my goat!"

"But Quelch will have to let Bunter have it," said Hazel. "If not all at once, a bit at a time!"

"Might send it back, though," remarked Snoop. "He did that time Mauly had twenty quids, and a stiff letter along with it, I believe!"

"Still, Bunter will get it sooner or later," declared Bolsover major. "If a fellow's pater wants to, he will tip him all right."

"Oh lor'!" said Bunter.

"Buck up, old chap!" said Skinner encouragingly. "It's only delayed, you know!" Skinner was quite convinced about the "pots of money" now. "And if you're short of tin, temporarily, you've got friends!"

"That's so!" agreed Snoop.

Bunter brightened.

"I say, you fellows, the fact is, I'm rather short," he said. "If one of you chaps has got a half-crown he doesn't want—"

Mr. Quelch came down the corridor.

"Follow me, Bunter!" he said.

"Yes, sir!" mumbled Bunter.

He rolled after the Remove master to

his study. Skinner & Co. followed, as far as the end of Masters' Passage. Quelch's door closed, and shut off Bunter and his Form-master from view.

They would have been very glad to see what was to be seen, and to hear what was to be heard, in that study. But that was impossible, and they could only wait and conjecture.

"A fiver, perhaps!" remarked Snoop.

"Quelch would let him have a fiver," said Skinner, shaking his head. "Fellows have had fivers before now!"

"A tenner!" said Hazel, with a whistle.

"Bunter was talking about a hundred pounds!" remarked Bolsover. "I suppose that was all gas!"

"Well, you never know," said Skinner.

"His pater may have been raking it in on stocks and shares, or something; and easy come, easy go, you know. Of course, a man who sent a schoolboy a hundred pounds would be a silly idiot. But then, Bunter's pater is very likely a silly idiot—judging by Bunter, I mean!"

"A hundred pounds!" breathed Fisher T. Fish. "Why, that's five hundred dollars in real money! And I'll tell a man, Bunter said plain that that envelope he lost at Courtfield had something in it worth a hundred pounds!"

"But if it's from his pater, why is he so jolly secret about it?" asked Hazeldene.

"Goodness knows! But it must be," said Skinner. "He hasn't won it in a raffle, I know that!"

"Must have been a cheque, if anything," said Stott. "But—it sounds awfully thick! I can't quite believe all—"

"Why has Quelch kept the letter?" demanded Skinner. "Doesn't that speak for itself?"

"It does!" said Hazel.

"Mauly gets cheques sometimes on the Courtfield bank," said Skinner. "Now Bunter's got one. Looks like it, at any rate. He had it when he came back for the term—he lost it, and asked his father for another. That's how I work it out. Mind, I had my doubts—jolly strong doubts—till now! But why has Quelch kept his letter?"

There was a general nodding of heads. They waited eagerly for Billy Bunter to emerge from Quelch's study.

He emerged at last.

He came rolling down the corridor with a dismal fat countenance and empty hands. Evidently, Quelch had not handed over the letter. He blinked dolorously at his friends.

"I say, you fellows, the beast won't let me have my letter!" groaned Bunter.

"He jawed me for ten minutes instead!"

"Did he let you see it?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, yes! He had it there on his table!"

"Was there what you expected in it?"

"Eh? Of course! That's why the beast kept it back!" groaned Bunter. "He doesn't want a Remove chap to have a lot of money, the beast!"

Fisher T. Fish slipped his hand into his pocket. But he drew it out empty. It looked certain now—as certain as anything could look. But cash, after all, was cash; and expectations were only expectations. Skinner, however, took the plunge.

"If half-a-crown's any use, Bunter, to go on with—" he said.

"What-ho!" said Bunter promptly.

"I say, you fellows, I'm not standing this, of course. I shall manage it all right, and blow Quelch! I'll lend you five pounds next week, if you like, Skinner."

Skinner had never parted with a half-crown so willingly.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Catspaw Wanted!

"HARRY, old chap—"

Harry Wharton laughed. It was nearly time for prep, and Wharton and Nugent had gone to their study, when Bunter rolled in.

"How much?" asked Wharton.

"Eh? What do you mean, how much?" grunted Bunter.

"I mean what I say—how much?" answered the captain of the Remove. "As you called me, old chap, I suppose you want something?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

Billy Bunter blinked at Wharton and then at Nugent.

"I want to speak to you, old fellow," he said. "You mind getting out, Nugent? It's rather private!"

"As I've come up here for prep, I do mind!" assented Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"What's the row, old fat man?" asked Harry. "From what I hear, you ought to be in the pink! The fellows are saying that Quelch has barged in to stop an enormous tip coming to you."

"The awful beast!" said Bunter.

"Well, can't you ask your pater to let you have it on the instalment system?" asked Harry, laughing.

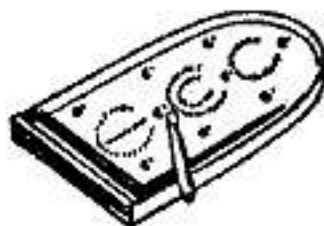
"Tisn't my pater. It's rather a secret!" said Bunter. "That's why I've come to speak to you about it, old chap. We've always been such firm friends—"

"Have we?" ejaculated Wharton, in surprise. "First I've heard of it!"

"Well, who stood by you when you

(Continued on next page.)

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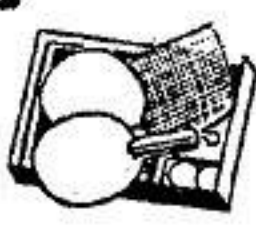


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first came to Greyfriars and saw you through all the troubles of your first term?" demanded Bunter warily.

"Nugent," answered Harry.

"Oh, really, you beast! I mean, look here, old chap, after all I've done for you, I want you to play up. See? I sometimes wish I hadn't changed out of this study into Study No. 7; I like you so much, old fellow!"

"I'm a likeable chap!" assented Wharton gravely. "None nicer! But may I suggest laying it on not quite so thick?"

"I'm not flattering you, old chap, just because I want you to do something for me!" said the fat junior. "Nothing of the kind, you know! I've come to you because we're such friends, and because you've got pluck!"

"Pluck!" repeated Harry blankly.

"Pluckiest chap in the Remove, and chance it!" said Bunter firmly. "That's what I chiefly admire about you, old fellow, though I admire you in every other way, too, of course!"

The captain of the Remove stared at Bunter, while Nugent chuckled.

"Go it!" gasped Wharton. "But don't lay it on with a trowel!"

"I mean every word of it," declared Bunter. "You've got pluck—heaps of it—you're not afraid of a beak, like some fellows! You're not afraid of old Quelch, crusty beast as he is! You wouldn't be afraid to go into his study while he's in the Common-room, would you?"

"Not fearfully!" agreed Wharton. "I've been into Quelch's study more than once, and I'm still alive to tell the tale!"

"I mean, he might come in and catch you," said Bunter. "Still, you could spin him a yarn. Being head boy, you could make out that you came there to speak to him about Form matters. See?"

"Could I?" gasped Harry.

"Easily, old chap! Besides, he would never guess that you were after the letter. If he caught me there, he would guess at once. See? Now, you, with your pluck, wouldn't think twice about it, would you, dear old fellow?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wharton and Nugent.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter crossly. "What are you sniggering at? I'd like to know?"

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

Wharton and Nugent roared. It was easy to see now why Billy Bunter had come to Study No. 1 and unloaded "soft sawder" there! He wanted a catspaw—and the captain of the Remove was to pull his chestnuts out of the fire!

It was generally believed now that Billy Bunter had had a whacking remittance from somebody—so whacking that his Form-master refused to let him have it. That had happened to Mauly—and now, apparently, it had happened to Bunter!

So Wharton was not surprised that Bunter was very keen to get hold of that letter. Neither was he surprised that Bunter wanted another fellow to do the actual getting hold of it!

It was rather a risky game to raid Quelch's study; and Bunter did not like risks. In fact, he disliked them extremely.

"I say, you fellows, do stop cackling!" exclaimed Bunter peevishly. "I say, will you get that letter for me, Wharton? I can tell you exactly where to get hold of it."

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Harry, laughing. "Quelch will have locked it

up safe enough, if there's money in it."

"He hasn't locked it up," said Bunter. "That's all right! You'll only have to nip in the study and bag it!"

"Ask Skinner," said Harry. "I understand that you're fearfully pally with Skinner now."

"Well, I don't want to tell Skinner," said Bunter. "I can trust you to keep a secret, old chap! See? I wasn't going to tell anybody. But what's a fellow to do, with that beast Quelch bagging a fellow's letter? Mind, I'll make it worth your while."

"Fathead! Think I want to borrow your money—if any?"

"Tain't money, you ass!"

"What?"

"Mind, I'm going to tell you the secret," said Bunter. "Once I let you into it, you can make a lot of money, as well as me. I mean, you'll have a chance. Of course, it needs a lot of cool sense and judgment—that's where I come in strong. Still, you'll have a sporting chance—and, look here, I'll help you. With my knowledge of football—"

"Football!" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Yes, old chap."

"What you know about football could be put into a thimble, and leave a lot of room for a finger!" remarked the captain of the Remove. "But how in the name of all that's idiotic has football got anything to do with it?"

"It's a pool!" whispered Bunter.

"A—a—a—what?"

"A football pool! Ginker's Golden Football Pools!" explained Bunter. "Mind, I wasn't going to tell anybody; but I'm letting you fellows into it! Keep it dark, you know! No need to let everybody know that your money comes from football pools! But, I can tell you, you may make a hundred pounds in a week—more, very likely!"

"A—a—a football pool!" said Wharton, quite faintly, while Frank Nugent stared almost open-mouthed at the Owl of the Remove.

"That's it!" said Bunter. "You put on a tanner and name so many winning teams, see? The money's divided among the winners. The beauty of it is that they let you have the first go on tick, because ready-money betting is illegal. They trust you to pay up the next week, see? That's easy—out of your winnings."

"Oh crikey! Is it easy out of your losses?" gasped Wharton.

"In my case, that's all right!" explained Bunter. "With my knowledge of football generally, and my keen, cool, sagacious judgment—"

"Oh scissors!"

"I got the papers from Ginker's at home," said Bunter. "But owing to you fellows playing the goat, I lost them at Courtfield. I had to write for a fresh lot, and Quelch has kept them back. He makes out that it's gambling."

"So it is, you fat idiot!"

"Not in my case," said Bunter. "You can't call it gambling when it's a certainty. You see, I'm going to win!"

"Oh, my only summer bonnet!"

"Quelch made out that he was shocked at me," said Bunter, in an aggrieved tone. "He jawed me no end! He said he would have caned me, only he was sure it was rather stupidity than anything else. He called me stupid! What do you think of that?"

"Quelch knows you!" remarked Nugent.

"Oh, don't be an ass! Well, you see, that's how the matter stands," said

Bunter. "I got a new set of coupons, you know, the same as those I lost in the envelope at Courtfield—and Quelch is keeping them back. I've got to have them—you see that?"

"Not quite!" chuckled Wharton.

"I mean, you have to fill in the regular coupons!" explained Bunter. "You could name the winning teams all right, on a sheet of notepaper, if it came to that—but you have to use Ginker's Coupons, see? So I've simply got to have them! You see it now?"

"No!" denied Wharton. "I don't see it even now. But I'll tell you what I can see—and that's the biggest ass at Greyfriars! You don't know anything about football, old fat man—you couldn't name a winning team, except by accident—and it's bad form to bet on football—and you wouldn't win anything—and if you lost, you wouldn't pay up, which would be putrid—and—"

"Are you would up?" yapped Bunter. "For goodness' sake, dry up, Wharton—you're making me tired! Look here, Quelch chucked my coupon sheets into his wastepaper-basket, under the table in his study. It won't be cleared till morning. Will you cut in and get my papers back?"

"Hardly!"

"I suppose a funky fellow like you would be afraid!" sneered Bunter. "I say, Nugent, you've got more pluck than Wharton! You're a bit of a milk-sop, but you're no funk, old chap! Will you cut into Quelch's study, and get my football coupons—"

"Hardly!" grinned Frank.

"Well, you're as funky as Wharton!" exclaimed Bunter, in disgust. "Pair of rotten funks! Never saw such a funky study! There's no risk—not an atom! Quelch will be in Common-room—and you can nip in and out—"

"Sure there's no risk?" asked Harry.

"None at all, old fellow!"

"A chap can nip in and out quite safely?"

"Absolutely!"

"Then I'll tell you what—you do the nipping!" suggested the captain of the Remove.

Bunter blinked at him. Frank Nugent chortled. Safe as it was, with absolutely no risk, it was clear that Bunter did not want to "nip" into Mr. Quelch's study! In fact, he was not going to make the venture, even for the sake of the enormous sums he could—perhaps—win on Ginker's Golden Football Pools!

"Anyhow, buzz off!" added Wharton. "Prep, old fat bean!"

"Beast!"

"Shut the door after you!"

"Rotter!"

"Hand me that dick, Nugent!"

"I—I say, old fellow!" gasped Bunter, warily preparing to dodge the dictionary when it flew. "I say, look here, you go and get those coupons for me, and I'll stand you ten pounds out of my winnings!"

"Make it ten thousand!" suggested Wharton.

"I can't, you ass—I shouldn't win ten thousand pounds—"

"You're as likely to win ten thousand as ten!" explained Wharton.

"Quite!" chuckled Nugent.

"Look here, you cackling rotters!" roared Bunter. "You're a pair of rotten, shivering funks, and cads and ticks and blighters, and I despise you, see? And I jolly well won't lend you anything out of my winnings, either! You can come squirming round for it, as civil as you please, when I get a lot of money from Ginker's, you sneaking worms, and I shall only say—Yaroooh!"



As he talked to Prout in the doorway, Quelch had his back to Bunter. The fat Removite dropped his pen, as an excuse for stooping. Then he went down on his fat knees and groped with a fat paw in the wastepaper-basket, in search of his missing letter!

Thud!
The dictionary flew.
Bunter sat down.

"Ow! Yaroo! Beast! Wow!"
roared Bunter.

"Now hand me the inkpot, Franky!"

Billy Bunter did not wait for the inkpot! The dictionary was enough for him! He bounded up, slammed the door, and flew!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Verbs For Bunter!

PETER TODD in Study No. 7, looked up from his work at a fat figure reposing in the arm-chair in that study.

Peter and Tom Dutton were at prep; but Billy Bunter did not seem to be thinking about prep. He was thinking—the deep wrinkle that corrugated his fat brow showed that—but not about prep! Much more urgent matters occupied Bunter's fat mind.

He sucked toffee as he sat, perhaps as an aid to thought. Hazeldene had given him the toffee, as he came along to Study No. 7.

"What about prep, fathead?" asked Toddy.

"Blow prep!" answered Bunter morosely.

"You can't blow Quelch in the morning!" remarked Peter.

"Bother Quelch!"

Peter shrugged his shoulders and resumed. Bunter continued to suck toffee and reflect.

He had to have those coupons. Fortune was almost within reach of his fat fingers—at least, he was firmly convinced that it was. Only old Quelch's fussy intervention stood between Bunter and boundless riches.

He realised that it was useless to attempt to enlist Toddy. Toddy was a

silly ass like Wharton, and certain to take the same view.

At present he supposed, like the other fellows, that Bunter had had a whacking remittance which Mr. Quelch considered too much for him, and he was sympathetic. But if he learned that the famous letter had contained only football coupons from Ginker's, Bunter knew that he would only cackle—just cackle—like those silly dummies in Study No. 1.

Moreover, Bunter did not want to spread the news through the Remove that his new wealth was to come from such a source.

Bunter's idea was to mop up enormous sums from Ginker's by means of the football pools, but to keep Ginker's dark. Fellows were to suppose that his wealth was just the common-or-garden wealth, so to speak, of the Bunter family about which he had often told them.

Often and often Bunter had told fellows how wealthy his people were. They hadn't believed him.

But they would have to believe him when he swanked about with pots of money—when he had fivers in his note-case like the Bounder.

That, Bunter realised, would look ever so much better than letting it be known that he had made the money on football pools.

Every time he received a large sum from Ginker's, it was going to be supposed in the Remove that it was a remittance from some wealthy relation.

Bunter had all this cut and dried.

It was intensely exasperating for so rosy a dream to remain simply a dream because his envelope of coupons had been lost at Courtfield and Quelch had bagged the new lot.

He had to have the coupons. Wharton and Nugent had refused to help, but he could trust them not to let out his secret. If he got hold of the coupons, it would be all right.

Mr. Quelch, after "jawing" him, had thrown the whole lot into the wastepaper-basket, not even understanding that he was throwing away a fortune.

They were still there—if a fellow could get hold of them. But how was a fellow to do it?

Bunter thought over that problem during prep instead of doing any preparation. Prep at such a time was an irritating triviality. Suppose he went to Quelch's study! Suppose Quelch caught him there!

"After all, a chap can go and speak to his Form-master," said Bunter suddenly.

Peter Todd looked up again.

"Suppose he's not there, I can bag my letter," argued Bunter; "and if he's there, I'll make out I came to ask a question about—what can I ask him a question about, Toddy?"

"Better steer clear of Quelch's study, fathead!"

"I didn't ask you that! If he catches me, what question can I ask him?" snorted Bunter. "Deponent verbs will do—he was jawing me about deponent verbs, blow em, in class! I'll tell him I came to ask him about deponent verbs!"

It seemed a sound scheme, and immediately prep was over Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 7 and went downstairs.

He rolled cautiously along to Masters' Studies.

Prout, the master of the Fifth, was standing in the passage talking to Monsieur Charpentier. He glanced round at Bunter.

Had nobody been about, Bunter could have put in some scouting; he might even have ascertained whether Quelch was in his study by means of the key-hole. Under Mr. Prout's eye, that was impossible. He had to chance it.

So he rolled on to Quelch's door,

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BUNTER'S BID for a FORTUNE!

FRANK RICHARDS



(Continued from page 13.)

tapped, and opened it. Very likely Quelch was in Common-room, jawing with the other beaks. Bunter hoped and trusted so.

But his hope and trust proved unfounded. Mr. Quelch was seated at his study table, and he glanced up as Bunter rolled in.

"What is it, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh lor'!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, I—I've been rather puzzled about football verbs, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"About what?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I mean, deponent pools, sir—that is, I—I mean, deponent verbs. I—I was going to ask you to explain, sir, if you don't mind—"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, in pleased surprise.

There were few fellows in Quelch's Form keen on any kind of Latin verbs. Least of all, as a rule, did they like deponent verbs—those irritating verbs which are passive in form, but active in meaning. And Billy Bunter was the very last fellow in the Remove whom Quelch would have expected to come to his study of his own accord to ask about deponent verbs.

Naturally, Quelch was pleased.

This seemed to show a very welcome improvement in his most backward pupil. Even Bunter was capable of learning things, given a desire for knowledge. This looked like a desire for knowledge.

Quelch was a dutiful Form-master. He had been thinking of going along to the Common-room for a chat with the other beaks, but he gave up that idea now. If Bunter wanted help with deponent verbs, Quelch was the man to give him the help he wanted, regardless of the inroad on his own scanty leisure.

"Very good, Bunter—very good indeed!" said Mr. Quelch. "I can give you half an hour, Bunter. You may draw a chair to the table, my boy."

"I—I hope I—I'm not wasting your time, sir?" groaned Bunter.

"Not at all—not at all, Bunter!"

"I—I mean, I—I think perhaps I oughtn't to take up your time, sir."

"On the other hand, Bunter, I am very glad to see you desirous of instruction," said Mr. Quelch kindly. "You may sit down, Bunter."

Bunter fell, rather than sat, on the chair.

He was for it now.

The next half-hour was like a nightmare to Bunter.

Deponent verbs were bad enough in class, where other fellows took their share of them. Now Bunter had them all to himself. He had always known that deponent verbs were beastly, putrid, unspeakably dismal and dreary and detestable. But never had they seemed so weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable as they did now.

Bunter's feet, under the table, established contact with the wastepaper-

basket in which reposed the coupons from Ginker's. So near, and yet so far! He had come for the coupons, and taken the risk of deponent verbs, and it was the deponent verbs that had materialised.

Bunter could have groaned, but he dared not. In his terror that Quelch might guess why he had really come to the study, he had to affect to take an interest in those loathsome verbs.

Suddenly there came a gleam of hope.

There was a tap at the door, and it opened and Prout looked in.

"My dear Quelch—"

Mr. Quelch rose. He stepped to the door to speak to the Fifth Form master. Billy Bunter's fat heart thumped.

A blink under the table showed him the wastepaper-basket, half-full of crumpled papers. Was there time for a grab?

Quelch's back was to him as he talked to Prout in the doorway. Bunter resolved to try it on.

He dropped his pen as an excuse. Then he went down on his knees, and groped with a fat paw in the wastepaper-basket.

Unfortunately, it was at that moment that Prout passed on his way, and Mr. Quelch turned back into the study.

"Bunter!"

Quelch gazed in surprise at a bending, fat figure by his table.

"Bunter, what—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He rose quickly, rather forgetting that his head was under the table.

Bang!

"Whooooop!" roared Bunter.

The back of his head banged, almost lifting the table. He squirmed up, rubbing the back of that bullet head.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "Oh crikey! Wow!"

"Bunter, what—"

"I—I—I dropped my pip-pip-pen, sir!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I—"

"Did it drop into the wastepaper-basket?"

"Oh! Yes, sir! I—"

"My dear boy, there it is, lying beside your chair," said Mr. Quelch kindly. He could feel for a fellow handicapped by short sight. "I hope your eyesight is not deteriorating, Bunter."

"Oh! Yes! No! I—"

"We will now resume!" said Quelch.

Bunter, in the lowest spirits, picked up the pen, and they resumed. It was only ten minutes before dorm when Bunter, at long last, escaped from the study and deponent verbs. He almost tottered away. He left Mr. Quelch feeling very pleased with him. But he was not feeling pleased with Quelch!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Chance!

HARRY WHARTON, in the Remove dormitory that night, looked at Frank Nugent, and Nugent looked at him—and both laughed.

It was really rather amusing.

Billy Bunter was worried. But he still had the consolations of friendship—though no doubt he would have preferred the Ginker coupons.

Skinner had brought some bullseyes up—for Bunter! Snoop untied a knot in his bootlace for him. Bolsover major gave him an amiable grin—quite an unaccustomed expression on Bolsover's face. Hazel asked him whether he was booked for tea next day, and, finding that he wasn't, booked him forthwith. Fisher T. Fish hovered round him, picking up a boot that Bunter dropped, and

glaring at Stott, who hunted under a bed for a stud belonging to Bunter, and found it.

In view of what Bunter had revealed in Study No. 1, Wharton and Nugent found these demonstrations of friendship rather entertaining.

They could not help wondering whether that friendship would have faded away as suddenly as it had arisen had Skinner & Co. learned the facts of the case—that Bunter's expected wealth depended upon winning a whack in a football pool!

But of that, Skinner & Co. had no suspicion, so far; and they were not going to learn from Wharton or Nugent. The chums of the Remove had their own opinion of Bunter and his antics, but they did not feel entitled to give him away, though it really was hard to keep such a joke to themselves.

Skinner & Co. were still under the happy delusion that Mr. Quelch had kept Bunter's letter back because it contained an over-generous remittance!

So long as they were under that delusion, there was not likely to be any faltering in their friendship.

Perhaps Bunter found comfort in it. In the bullseyes he certainly did. But he was deeply worried about his coupons. In the morning Mr. Quelch's wastepaper-basket would be cleared, and the football coupons would be thrown away with the other rubbish. Bunter's expected wealth would be gone from his gaze, like a beautiful dream!

The fat Owl of the Remove was getting desperate now—so desperate, that he resolved to remain awake that night and steal downstairs in the dark hours and raid that wastepaper-basket.

With this fixed intention in his fat mind, Bunter kept his eyes open after lights out in the Remove dormitory.

Quelch would be gone to bed by eleven at the latest. Then all would be safe! All Bunter had to do was to keep awake till eleven!

Unfortunately, he fell asleep at a quarter to ten!

When he awakened, it was to the sound of the rising-bell; and the grey winter dawn was glimmering in at the windows.

Clang, clang, clang! went the bell.

Bunter sat up in bed.

"Oh lor'!" he ejaculated.

He blinked at the glimmering windows. He put on his spectacles, and blinked again! But he could not blink away the daylight! Only too evidently, it was too late for a night raid on Quelch's study.

Bunter got out of bed.

Generally Bunter was last out of bed in the Remove dormitory. He usually contrived to get an extra few minutes by cutting down washing to the very minimum. Now he surprised the whole Form by getting up first! Even Bob Cherry, accustomed to leap from his bed before the bell ceased to ring, was second.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob, amazed to see Bunter out of bed. "You up, old fat man? Ill?"

Bunter did not answer. He was bundling into his clothes. For once, the Owl of the Remove was in a hurry to get down.

For there remained one last chance! If he could get at Quelch's wastepaper-basket before it was cleared, the situation was saved. If he couldn't, the game was up!

Bunter never did a lot of washing in the morning. On this occasion he did none at all. He was dressed, and gone, while some of the Remove were still yawning before turning out.

"What on earth's the matter with Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, staring at the podgy back of the fat Owl as he went. "First up, and first down!"

Harry Wharton laughed. He guessed what Bunter was after. So did Frank Nugent. But it was a surprise to all the rest of the Form. Skinner & Co. did not dream of guessing. In the belief that it was a remittance of Bunter's that Mr. Quelch had stopped in transit, they naturally supposed that the Remove master had locked up the letter. They were not likely to guess that it had been deposited in the wastepaper-basket.

Billy Bunter rolled breathlessly down the stairs.

Mr. Quelch was not likely to be in his study so early in the morning. If an early housemaid was there with brooms and things it did not matter very much. It was all right so long as Quelch wasn't there.

Bunter rolled along to Masters' Passage.

He blinked round the corner cautiously.

"Oh lor!" he gasped.

His head popped back like that of a tortoise into its shell! For the first object he beheld as he blinked into the passage was his Form-master, Henry Samuel Quelch!

Quelch was not in his study! He was standing in the passage, in conversation with Mr. Capper.

Bunter backed away hurriedly.

Obviously he could not burgle Quelch's study under Quelch's eyes!

There was nothing doing! Almost for the first time in his fat and lazy career, Bunter had got up early—for nothing! That early rising was a sheer waste!

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter.

He was standing in the doorway of the House, blinking out into the early sunshine, trying to think out this new problem, when a nasal voice greeted him over a fat shoulder.

"Say, bo, you're up airy!"

Bunter blinked round at Fisher T. Fish.

Fishy regarded him curiously. Like the rest of the Remove, he was surprised by Bunter's early-rising stunt.

"You sure look peeved, big boy!" said Fishy. "You worrying about that letter of yours? I'll tell a man, it sure is the hippopotamus' moustache, and then some! I'll say Quelch is a slab-sided mugwump!"

Bunter had a gleam of hope.

"I—I say, Fishy, I'm going to bag that letter!" he whispered. "You get Quelch away from the passage somehow, and I'll nip in—"

"Forget it!" said Fishy. "Quelch will have locked it up! He wouldn't leave money loose about his study—especially a lot like that!"

"Tain't locked up!" breathed Bunter. "I know exactly where to put my hand on it, Fishy!"

"But Quelch would sure be hopping mad if you cinched it!" said Fisher T. Fish, with a stare. "He would make you hand it over again."

Bunter opened his mouth—and closed it again.

He was unwilling to confide the facts to Fishy! But Quelch had to be got off the scene somehow! It was neck or nothing now!

"Look here, Fishy, you get Quelch away!" he breathed. "You can tell him the Head wants to speak to him!"

"Eh? And get licked for pulling his leg!" ejaculated Fishy.

"Well, what's a licking?" said Bunter.

"What's a licking?" repeated Fishy. "You can risk it for a pal!"

"Yep, but—I'm telling you, old-timer, you can't keep the letter, even if you cinch it!" argued Fishy. "Quelch will know you had it, and he will make you hand back the money!"

Had the letter contained a remittance, as Bunter's friends believed, Fishy would have been right. It would have been useless for Bunter to "cinch" it, even if it was left about the study, for Quelch would certainly have been on his track very shortly afterwards!

But Bunter knew that Mr. Quelch was not likely to miss a crumpled old letter from his wastepaper-basket! He realised that he had to confide in Fishy, if he was to get Fishy's help.

"Look here, I'll jolly well tell you, Fishy!" he whispered. "Mind, don't let it go any farther! I'm not telling everybody! It's not money!"

Fisher T. Fish jumped.

"Not spondulics?" he ejaculated.

"No!"

"Not a remittance?"

"No!"

"Then what the rhinoceros' whiskers has Quelch kept it back for?"

"It's football coupons."

Fisher T. Fish gazed at William George Bunter.

He did not speak. He seemed bereft of speech. He had wasted time and trouble on Bunter! He had even given him a packet of toffee! That packet of toffee had cost him sixpence—and a pang! And now—

Incapable of speech, Fishy just gazed. "Catch on?" said Bunter eagerly. "Mind, I'm only telling you, not everybody! That's where the money's coming from—it's a football pool, see?"

"That—that—that—" Fishy found his voice. He stuttered. "That—that—that's where the money's coming from! Oh, wake snakes and walk chalks!"

"Yes! I expect to win a hundred pounds or so! See? But I can't do it without the coupons! They're in Quelch's wastepaper-basket! See? Now you get Quelch off the scene—"

"Great jumping frogs!"

"Tell him the Head wants him! Never mind if you get a licking—"

"Search me!"

"And I'll nip into the study and bag the coupons! I'll stand you a fiver out of my winnings—"

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

From the following verses it's quite plain to see that there's no love lost between our clever Greyfriars Rhymester and

GERALD LODER,

the rascally prefect of the Sixth Form.

(1)

Now Loder, you know by repute!
A rascal, a rogue and a rotter,
A bully, a beast, and a brute,
A prefect, a pest and a plotter!
He likes breaking bounds after dark,
He'll soon be expelled and sent packing
And that, I'm compelled to remark,
Will be a most popular sacking!

(2)

No eye will be heavy with tears
When Loder's kicked out of the college,
Instead, we shall burst into cheers,
Which even the Sixth will acknowledge!
Oh, hasten sweet day of our dreams,
When Loder, so rank and so rotten,
With all his pet vices and schemes,
Shall go and be swiftly forgotten!

(4)

I hadn't seen Loder since then,
And I was extremely unwilling
To interview Loder again
Until he'd got over his spilling!
I wanted to keep out of sight,
But duty (a plague on it!) waited,
So, though I would rather take flight!
I went, as I've previously stated.

(5)

I went! And I chuckled with glee!
My spirits soared up like a rocket!
For outside his door was his key,
Which seemed to invite me to lock it!
I guessed why his key was outside,
He meant to go out on a flutter!
He'd look up his bedroom and slide!
'Twas better than using the gutter!



(8)

My question made Loder quite mad,
He hammered the door in a passion!
His language was badder than bad,
He raved in a terrible fashion.
I still remained calm and polite:
I said: "There's no need to be stodgy!
Say, where are you off to to-night?
To billiards with Joliffe and Lodgey?"

(3)

With feelings of terror and woe
I wended my way to his quarters,
You'll understand why when you know
I'm not one of Loder's supporters!
Moreover, that very same day
I'd cut out a slide on the gravel,
And Loder, when walking that way,
Had stepped on the slide! Did I travel?



(6)

I turned Loder's key in the lock,
Made sure that he couldn't get near me,
And (changing my voice) with a knock,
I shouted: "Hi, Loder! You hear me?"
Cried Loder, his voice like a rasp,
"Who's that?" I said: "Never you worry!"
I heard the beast stutter and gasp,
And come to the door in a hurry!



(7)

I saw the door rattle and shake,
"I've locked it, old fellow!" I
hinted.
I thought Loder's jawbone would break!
His language could never be printed!
I chuckled and chortled—in fact,
I found I was liking this visit!
"Say, Loder, what horse have you
backed?
And what is your total deficit?"

(9)

I wanted to get the thing clear,
(I'm rather a plain-spoken talker),
When someone took hold of my ear:
I turned! It was Loder's pal, Walker!
His face, I could easily see,
Was far from good-tempered. That's
certain!
He unlocked the door with the key—
And here's where I'm drawing the curtain!

"Carry me home to die!"
 "Nothing mean about me, I hope!" said Bunter. "I promise you a whack in my first hundred pounds from Ginker's—"

Fisher T. Fish gazed at him. Time and trouble and a packet of toffee had Fishy wasted on Bunter, in the belief that pots of money were coming to him! Now it transpired that the pots of money depended on Bunter spotting winners in a football pool! Billy Bunter was the same impecunious fathead he had always been—only a bigger fathead than Fishy had guessed or reckoned! And that was all! That was what he was to risk a licking for!

"Buck up, old chap!" said Bunter. "Get along to Quelch now, and say—Ow! Wow! Yaroooh! Yooop! Beast! Rotter! Yaroooooooooop!"

Bunter did not know why Fisher T. Fish pitched into him so suddenly, so savagely, and so ferociously.

But he knew that Fishy did!

On that point there was no room for doubt.

Fishy punched him! He punched hard! He grabbed him by his fat neck and banged his head on the door. He up-ended him, landing him on the floor with a terrific concussion. Unsatisfied even then, Fishy banged his head on the floor, and banged it again.

Billy Bunter squirmed, and roared, and howled, and yelled.

"There, you fat mugwump!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "There, you slabsided jay! That's for you, you pie-faced clam!"

And Fisher T. Fish, breathless from his exertions, jerked away, leaving Billy Bunter wriggling like a fat eel, and gasping, and gasping, and gasping as if he would never leave off gasping.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

At Last!

"BUNTER'S making history!" remarked Bob Cherry, at the breakfast table.

He was!

He had been first up of the Form that morning. Now he was last into breakfast! Two records had been broken in one morning!

Not only was Bunter last in to brekker; but he was very late indeed.

Strange to relate, his fat face was bright and cheery when he rolled in late.

If getting up early and being late for meals made Bunter feel merry and bright, he was a changed Bunter!

Fisher T. Fish glared at him. So did Skinner. Already Fishy was spreading the news of the true nature of Bunter's great expectations. The effect on Bunter's friends was to deflate their friendship like a punctured tyre.

But Bunter did not heed.

He was evidently bucked about something, and seemed to have forgotten even the vigorous way in which Fisher T. Fish had handled him before prayers.

Harry Wharton smiled at Frank Nugent, who chuckled. They thought they knew why Bunter was late, and why he came in so cheery and bright. Had he nipped into Quelch's study for those lost coupons instead of coming in when the bell rang for brekker? It looked as if he had!

When the juniors went out after breakfast, the satisfied, happy grin was still on Bunter's fat face.

But it disappeared suddenly, as

Bolsover major came across to him in the quad and kicked him.

Bolsover did not speak. He did not condescend to explain why he kicked Bunter. But he did kick him—hard!

Bunter roared.

The bully of the Remove, having kicked him a second time, walked away, leaving the fat Owl wriggling and yelling.

Why Bolsover major had done it, Bunter did not know. He did not, as yet, connect Bolsover's action with what he had told Fisher T. Fish that morning. It was quite a mystery to Bunter—a painful mystery.

Even after that kicking, Bunter was still looking very cheery when he went into class with the Remove.

Had he not cause for satisfaction?

In his pocket reposed, at long last, the set of coupons issued by Ginker's Golden Football Pools!

It had occurred to Bunter's fat brain that during breakfast there would be a last chance of retrieving that treasure.

Quelch was at breakfast in Common-room; and there was a maid in his study with a broom. That did not matter. Bunter was in time.

Naturally, he had not thought of this idea at first. It involved being late for a meal—a thing not likely to occur to Bunter in a hurry!

Still, it did occur to him, and he heroically resolved to postpone brekker while he tried it on. It was worth it, for the enormous sums he was going to win from Ginker's.

The maid with the broom stared at him when he rolled into the study and scouted in the wastepaper-basket. That basket, luckily, had not yet been dealt with.

There, among other wastepaper, was the crumpled envelope and the crumpled sheet of coupons, just where Quelch had thrown them the previous day.

Bunter grabbed them.

The astonished maid watched him, but did nothing but stare. Bunter rolled off with his prize. Fortune at last had favoured him, and it was no wonder that he grinned happily at the breakfast table, no wonder that he recovered from Bolsover's kicking, no wonder that he smirked a fat and fatuous smirk as he rolled into the Form-room with the Remove.

That sheet of coupons in his pocket was worth—what? Hundreds of pounds, Bunter hoped! He had a hopeful nature!

There was a general grin along the ranks of the Remove. Most of the fellows had heard by that time.

It was no longer necessary for Wharton and Nugent to keep Bunter's extraordinary secret. That secret was out. Fisher T. Fish, breathing wrath and indignation, was telling the world.

It seemed no end of a joke to most of the Remove. It did not seem much of a joke to the fellows who had been buttering Bunter in the belief that a big remittance had arrived for him.

Only the fact that Bunter was short-sighted prevented him from noticing the changed looks of his friends in class. They looked at Bunter as if they could have bitten him.

The rest of the fellows grinned. Mr. Quelch noticed signs of unusual hilarity in his Form that morning, and frowned. He did not know what was amusing the Remove—rather fortunately for Bunter!

Billy Bunter had never been keen on class. But he found it more boring than ever that morning. He was anxious to get going on his football coupons! Lessons seemed a very irritating waste of time in the circum-

stances. The fat Owl simply could not give Quelch any attention.

Second lesson was history, and Quelch asked his Form questions. He addressed Bunter twice without receiving an answer. Bunter was deep in thought—not on historical subjects!

"Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, for the third time, in a deep, rumbling voice.

Bob Cherry kicked Bunter under the desk.

"Wow!" gasped Bunter. "I say—Oh! Yes, sir! Did you speak, sir? I heard what you said, sir!"

"Indeed!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "If you heard what I said, Bunter, kindly answer my question at once!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, wondering what on earth question Quelch had asked.

Mr. Quelch gave him a grim look. Quelch did not approve of fellows allowing their thoughts to wander during class.

"Bunter, who was defeated at the battle of Bosworth?"

"Manchester United, sir!"

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean, Sheffield Wednesday, sir!" gasped Bunter.

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

Evidently Bunter's fat mind was running on League teams which he was selecting for his football coupons.

"Bunter! How dare you make such absurd answers!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "You will write out 'Richard the Third was defeated at the battle of Bosworth—a hundred times!'"

"W-w-was he, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"Do you not know that he was, Bunter?"

"I—I thought he was defeated once, sir—"

"What?"

"I—I never knew that he was defeated a hundred times, sir—"

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

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "This boy's stupidity is beyond belief! Bunter, you will write out a hundred times that Richard the Third was defeated and slain at the battle of Bosworth."

"Oh! Yes, sir! I—I see! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"And if you do not give attention to the lesson, Bunter, I shall cane you!"

"Oh, lor'! I mean, certainly, sir."

After which Bunter tried hard to dismiss more important matters from his fat mind, and give Quelch some attention.

But it was a great relief to be dismissed for break. In break, however, a surprise awaited Bunter.

As he went down the corridor Stott and Snoop barged him, together, and he went rolling, with a roar.

As he rolled Hazeldene stopped and kicked him! Fisher T. Fish kicked him, too! Skinner came up with a run, and kicked!

Then they walked out, leaving Billy Bunter sprawling and bawling. He sprawled, and bawled, till Bob Cherry kindly picked him up, and set him on his feet.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Beasts! I say, what did those beasts pitch into a chap for? Wow!"

"Looks like the end of a devoted friendship, old fat bean!" answered Bob, with a chuckle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! I jolly well shan't let them have anything out of what I get from Ginker's now!" gasped Bunter.

"Looks as if they don't expect a lot!" chuckled Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beasts! Wow!"

Bunter rolled away to his study.



"Kindly answer my question at once, Bunter!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Who was defeated at the battle of Bosworth?"
 "Manchester United, sir!" said Bunter, his thoughts wandering. "What?" roared the Remove Form Master. "I—I mean, Sheffield Wednesday, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Remove.

There he was safe from his disgruntled friends, and he was able to get busy on his football coupons.

He was late for third school. He came in ten minutes late, and was duly rewarded with another hundred lines. But he hardly gave the lines a thought.

Lines did not matter very much to a fellow who was shortly going to roll in pots of money—perhaps!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Going Strong!

"**E**VERTON are a good team, Peter—"

"Few better!" agreed Peter Todd.

"Huddersfield are pretty good—"

"Fine!"

"Think Everton will win?"

"Jolly likely."

"But what about Huddersfield?"

"Quite likely."

"You silly ass!" said Billy Bunter. "They can't both win."

"Why not?" asked Peter. "They're both first-rate teams."

"I mean, they're playing one another—both sides can't win in a Soccer match."

"Oh!" said Toddy. "No! If they're playing one another, old fat bean, the chances are that both won't win!"

"But they might draw!" said Bunter. "They might!"

"Well, what do you think, Toddy?"

"I think you're a howling ass, old chap!"

"I mean, what do you think about the football coupon, you fathead?"

"I think you'd better shove it in the fire."

"Oh, shut up!" snorted Bunter. He wanted advice; but advice of that sort was no use to him.

Peter chuckled and went out of Study

No. 7, leaving Billy Bunter deep in League football; with a sheet of coupons on the table before him, a pen in his hand, a thoughtful wrinkle on his fat brow, and a smudge of ink on his fat little nose.

Bunter was busy spotting winners.

Bunter was not a great man in the Soccer line. Except for Coker of the Fifth, he was probably the worst footballer that ever was. His knowledge of the form of League teams was even more limited than his knowledge of the game itself.

This, certainly, presented difficulties. Still, he hoped to have luck. He had heard of fellows making a lot of money on football pools. He had not actually met anyone who had acquired great wealth from that source, but he had heard of such fellows. One thing was certain—if he named the winning teams he shared in the dividend—and the dividend might be simply tremendous!

On the other hand, of course, it mightn't!

But Bunter did not bother about that! He preferred to look on the bright side of things.

He knew that Ginker's paid out great sums, because they said so, and they, of course, knew!

Why shouldn't some of these great sums come Bunter's way? Bunter saw no reason why they shouldn't.

All he had to do was to spot winners. There were quite a lot of coupons on the sheet to choose from, and Bunter selected one that required the naming of five winning teams.

On this he concentrated. He wrinkled his fat brows as he weighed up the various chances of the various teams. He was rather handicapped by having no knowledge of the subject.

Still, he fancied he knew. He had great faith in his own cleverness. Bunter knew, at least, that he was clever, though on what grounds he

founded this belief, was a mystery to other fellows.

He filled in his coupon at last.

Five teams were named to win, and Bunter's idea was that they were going to win. They were, in fact, as likely to win as to lose, being all good League teams. They were also as likely to lose as to win, their opponents also being all good League teams. If chance favoured Bunter, he was all right. If it didn't, he wasn't. And that was that!

Anyhow, he was finished.

He filled in his address as "Greyfriars," leaving out the "School," for Ginker's had a rule on that subject, which the fat Owl cheerfully disregarded. They would suppose that "Greyfriars" was the name of a country house, or something of that sort.

There was also a condition that a fellow had to be over twenty-one years of age, which Bunter would also have disregarded had he noticed it. But he did not, as a matter of fact, observe that rule at all.

Having completed his coupon, he enclosed it in an envelope, and addressed it to Ginker's.

Then a stamp was required.

He was not disposed to ask Bob Cherry for a stamp. And, in the changed circumstances, it was useless to apply to Fisher T. Fish, or any other of his estranged friends.

Luckily, he found a stamp in Peter Todd's desk. Peter, perhaps, would not have regarded that discovery as lucky. But it was all right for Bunter.

With the envelope duly stamped, he rolled out of the study. Several fellows in the Remove passage grinned at him. Bunter, as a spotter of winners, was causing some hilarity in his Form. The Famous Five, on the landing, were talking football—though not in connection

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with pools. They smiled as the fat Owl rolled by.

Bunter gave them a disdainful blink. "You can grin!" he remarked contemptuously.

"Thanks—we will!" said Bob Cherry. "The grinfulness is terrific, my esteemed and idiotic Bunter!" chuckled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Sniff, from Bunter! "You'll jolly well grin on the other side of your mouth when you see me rolling in money!" he sneered. "I shan't lend you any!"

"Not even a tenner or two?" asked Bob. "Dash it all, don't be mean, Bunter! You wouldn't miss a tenner out of it, would you?"

"Not out of a whole hundred pounds!" chortled Nugent.

"It may be more than a hundred!" said Bunter loftily. "I heard of a chap who made hundreds and hundreds."

"Lucky man!" said Bob. "Who was he?"

"I haven't actually met him——"

"Ah! I thought not!" sighed Bob. "One never does actually meet the chaps who make these huge sums! One hears of them, but never meets them."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, cackle!" said Bunter. "Wait till Saturday, and you see my teams all winners! You won't cackle then! Yah!"

And Bunter rolled away downstairs to post his letter. He left the chums of the Remove still cackling.

The fat Owl rolled across the quad, and dropped the letter into the box. He was feeling quite bucked.

After so many difficulties he had got through. There was only one worry left on his fat mind. Quelch had kept back one letter from Ginker's, and if he spotted the next, that might be detained also. Still, even if Quelch bagged the letter, he couldn't bag the cheque in it! The cheque in it would be Bunter's property, and would have to come to him sooner or later. He did not doubt that there would be a cheque in it.

Besides, very likely the letter would get through all right. Quelch wasn't always so jolly watchful.

The letter containing the coupons had been rather bulky, and so had drawn his attention. The next letter would contain only a cheque—and most likely Quelch would not notice it at all.

A cheque did not bulk large—even a cheque for a large sum! Exactly how large the sum was going to be Bunter did not feel sure.

It might be a hundred pounds! It might be two or three hundred! On the other hand, he realised that it might be only fifty or so!

Still, fifty was pretty good—especially if he went on every week bagging as much! A fellow who made even a mere fifty pounds a week couldn't grumble, Bunter considered.

It was rather rotten, with such prospects and expectations, to lack, at the actual moment, the price of a jam tart! Having posted his letter, Bunter rolled away to the school shop to feast his eyes—as he could not feast his fat interior till his winnings arrived from Ginker's.

He found Fisher T. Fish regarding Mrs. Mumble's window with a thoughtful eye. Fishy was considering whether to expend threepence on tuck for tea. It was a painful problem for Fishy to think out, for tuck, once consumed, was gone for ever, while threepence, unexpended, was a permanent possession. After long and anxious cogitation Fishy decided to keep his threepence, and turned away from temptation—and nearly ran into Bunter.

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Bunter blinked at him.

"I say, Fishy——" he began.

"You pre-faced gink!" said Fishy.

"I've posted my coupons, old chap——"

"You loosed geck!"

"I shall have lots of money next week——"

"You ornery bonthead!"

"I'll tell you what, Fishy! You've been trying to sell that watch you got off Tubbs of the Third! I'll buy it—next week!"

"You slabsided jay!"

"I'll give you a quid for it—if you lend me half-a-crown now!" said Bunter. "What about that?"

Fisher T. Fish did not reply in words. He seemed to have exhausted his eloquence. He proceeded to action. Taking Billy Bunter by the collar, he banged his head on the tree outside the shop, and walked away, leaving Bunter yelling. Evidently the fat Owl was not going to raise anything more on his expectations—now that his friends knew what those expectations were!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Wants To Know!

HARRY WHARTON & CO were playing football on Saturday afternoon. It was the first football match of the term, and they were playing Hobson & Co. of the Shell. Potter of the Fifth was referee.

A good many fellows rolled up to see the game, and among them the captain of the Remove was rather surprised to note the fat face and gleaming spectacles of Billy Bunter. It was a little uncommon for Bunter to be keenly interested in the Form games—especially on a cold and windy day! It looked as if his new interest in Soccer was extending from pools to play.

"I say, you fellows——" began Bunter, blinking round apparently in search of someone. "I say, I heard a chap say that Potter was going to ref——"

"So he is!" answered Harry.

Bunter's interest, it seemed, was not in the Remove match, but in the referee—which was really more surprising.

"Well, where is he, then?" asked Bunter.

"Just coming along," said Harry.

Potter of the Fifth was in sight—of everyone except the Owl of the Remove.

"What the thump do you want Potter for, you blithering owl?" asked Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, I just want to speak to him," said Bunter.

"No time now, ass!"

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"You can speak to him after the game, fathead!" said Nugent.

"That won't do!" said Bunter. "It will be too late to go to Courtfield then, you see."

Harry Wharton & Co. just then were interested in football, and not at all in W. G. Bunter! But that remark caused them to stare at the fat junior.

"What the dickens is the fat chump talking about?" asked Bob Cherry. "Do you happen to mean anything, Bunter?"

"The meanfulness does not seem to be terrific!"

Billy Bunter did not trouble to answer. He had discerned Potter of the Fifth now, arriving on the spot, and he rolled to intercept him.

"I say, Potter——"

"Get out of it, Bunter!" rapped two or three voices.

"What's that fat freak doing here?" asked the Fifth Form man. "Not playing, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha! No!"

"I say, Potter, is Coker getting his evening paper to-day?" squeaked Bunter.

"Eh?" said Potter.

"Last term Coker used to get an evening paper for the football reports," said Bunter. "Is he getting one to-day?"

"I believe so!" answered Potter. "What the dooco does it matter to you whether he is or not? Got out!"

"But, I say, I want to know—— I say—— Wow! If you kick me again, Johnny Bull, you beast, I'll—I'll—— Yoooop!"

Two or three football boots gave Billy Bunter a hint—a strong hint—that he was superfluous on the spot. He roared and rolled away.

The match began, and Bunter was completely forgotten. Had the Removites thought about the matter they could have guessed why Bunter was interested in Coker's evening paper. The results of the League matches would be given in that paper, and Bunter was going to know whether he had spotted the winners or not. But, as a matter of fact, the juniors did not guess, for they did not think about the matter at all. They had something rather more important to think of than Billy Bunter's weird antics.

It was a strenuous match with plenty of mud about, and fellows round the field stamped their feet and cheered the goals. But Billy Bunter was not among them. Bunter had come there for information, not to watch the game—and while the heroes of the Remove covered themselves with glory and mud Bunter frowsted over the fire in the Rag and dreamed golden dreams of gold from Ginker's.

Coker of the Fifth had gone out with Greene that afternoon, early. Billy Bunter was anxious to know whether he was going to bring the evening paper in with him—and still more anxious to see it when it came.

Every now and then he rolled away from the fire and blinked out of the window of the Rag. But he did not cast a single, solitary blink towards the football field. He was looking out for Coker.

But Coker had not come in by tea-time, when the football match was over and the fellows were cleaning off any amount of mud in the changing-room. When the Famous Five came tramping cheerily up to the Remove passage they found Bunter waiting for them in the doorway of Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! We've beaten them, Bunter, old fat man!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Have you?" said Bunter. "Oh, good! They're rather rotten footballers in the Shell, ain't they?"

"You silly ass, they're a jolly strong lot!" said Harry Wharton. "Hobby was in great form."

"Couldn't be much if you beat them," remarked Bunter. "But never mind football now. What about tea?"

"Couldn't be much if we beat them—and what about tea?" repeated the captain of the Remove. "Do you always ask yourself to tea in that tactful way?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What I mean is, of course, you beat them, being such splendid footballers!" said Bunter hastily. "What about tea?"

"Second thoughts are best!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Being such splendid footballers, let's show Bunter how we kick for goal! Now, we'll take Bunter as the Soccer ball—stand him in the middle of the passage, and—— Where are you going, Bunter?"

Bunter was going—fast! On the landing he turned to yell:

"Yuh! Think I want your measly tea? Don't expect me to ask you to a spread next week when I get my money! I jolly well shan't!"

Bunter went down to tea in Hall. He consoled himself with the reflection that in a few days he would be feasting on the fat of the land. Ginker's were going to be the founders of the feasts—perhaps!

After tea he looked for Coker.

But Coker was at the pictures with Greene, and they had tea'd in Court-field; and Horace did not turn up till just on call-over.

Bunter snaffled him as he came in.

"I say, Coker—"

"Sheer off!" snapped Coker.

"Did you bring in a paper?"

"Eh? Yes! Get out!"

"Let a chap squint at it, will you?"

Coker stared for a moment at Bunter. That fat and fatuous youth did not realise what an awful cheek it was to bother a Fifth Form man at all, let alone to ask him for his evening paper. Having stared at Bunter, Horace Coker proceeded to demonstrate what a short way he had with fags. He took Bunter by the collar and sat him down on the floor with a heavy bump. Then he walked on with the grinning Greene.

"The cheek of these fags!" said Coker.

"Yoo-hoop!" was Bunter's remark.

At calling-over in Hall, Billy Bunter blinked across at the Fifth, his eyes and spectacles on Coker. Coker had an evening paper about him, and in the "Stop Press" columns of that paper were the results of that day's League matches. And the swanky ass wouldn't let Bunter see the paper. Bunter, of course, was going to see it!

After call-over Coker went up to his study. Potter and Greene didn't, because Coker did. Greene had had enough of Coker's conversation that day; and Potter had no yearning for it. So when Billy Bunter blinked into Coker's study, he saw Horace alone there, sitting in his armchair, with his long legs stretched out, his foot resting on the table, and in that elegant attitude perusing the evening paper.

Bunter did not ask him again to be allowed to "squint" at the paper. Once bitten was twice shy.

"I say, Coker—"

Coker glared over the top of the paper.

"Get out!"

"Have you looked at the notice-board since you came in?" asked Bunter.

"Eh? No. Anything on it?" asked Coker.

"I thought you'd like to know that Wingate's put your name up—"

"What?"

Coker gathered in his legs and jumped out of the chair.

"My name!" he ejaculated.

"For the Rookwood match—"

"Is the list up already?" exclaimed Coker. "By gum! Has Wingate really had sense enough to pick me out for the first eleven? By George!"

Coker tossed the paper on the table and rushed out of the study. He did the Fifth Form passage as if it had been the cinder path. He did the stairs three at a time. If Wingate had put up the list for the Rookwood match, and put Coker's name in it, nothing else in the wide world mattered. Coker arrived quite breathless at the notice-board. Hilton and Price of the Fifth were standing there, and they glanced at him in surprise.

"Rookwood list up?" gasped Coker.

"Not that I know of," answered Hilton. "It won't be up till Tuesday."

"Bunter told me it was," Coker scanned the board with eager eyes. "He said my name was in it."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hilton and Price.

The idea of Coker's name being in a first eleven list struck them as the best joke, so far, that term.

Coker, unheeding, scanned the board. No first eleven list was there. Had it been, Coker's name was about the last at Greyfriars likely to be included therein. Coker gasped with wrath.

"P-pulling my leg!" he stuttered.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Hilton and Price.

"I'll spifficate him!"

Coker of the Fifth tore back to his study with the full design of spifficating Billy Bunter. But Bunter was no longer there. Billy Bunter was gone, and so was Coker's evening paper.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

All The Winners!

"I SAY, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter.

Bunter was in the Rag.

In that apartment most of the juniors had gathered after call-over. Harry Wharton & Co., in a cheery group, were discussing the afternoon's game. Skinner & Co., in low voices, were discussing the chances of Nobbled Nick at three to one against. Fisher T. Fish, with a clouded brow, was thinking of the sixpence he had expended on toffee for Bunter—a dead loss which haunted Fishy's thoughts, and almost kept him awake o' nights. Bunter, with eager eyes and spectacles, was scanning football results in the evening paper he had obtained by so masterly a stratagem.

His sudden yell rang through the Rag.

Bunter, of course, had faith in his own judgment as a spotter of winners. He knew what a jolly clever chap he was, if nobody else did. Still, it was with a feeling of trepidation that he scanned the results. He might have got one wrong, or even two. The first result relieved him; he was right. The second was encouraging; he was right again. The third turned out to be correct, also.

By that time Bunter's fat heart was thumping.

His fat fingers almost trembled as he compared his list with the list in the "Stop Press" column to ascertain the fourth result. Right again.

And then he read the fifth result, and his eyes almost popped through his spectacles. Right once more. Right on the mark. Billy Bunter, knowing nothing whatever about the matter, had got the winners. Eagerly he compared his list once more with the list in the paper. Right every time. He had named five teams on his coupon—safe now at Ginker's. He had been lucky—fool's luck, no doubt. Anyhow, he had them right.

Then he yelled with glee.

Fellows looked round at him.

"I say, you fellows!" shrieked Bunter. "I say—Hurrah! I say! Rippling! I say! Oh crikey!"

He jumped up from the armchair, and flourished Coker's evening paper round his head as if he were waving a flag in triumph.

"I say, you fellows! Oh crumbs! I say!" gasped Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Mad, old chap?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Wherefore this thushness?" inquired Peter Todd.

"I say, you fellows, I've got 'em!" yelled Bunter.

"Got 'em?" asked Bob. "Got what? The collywobblers?"

"Gone potty?" asked the Bounder.

"The pottiffulness seems to be terrific!"

"I've got 'em!" yelled Bunter. "I'd like to hear what you'll say now? Don't I know something about Soccer—what? I've got all five right! See! I've got the winners on my coupon!"

"Gammon!"

"Look!" yelled Bunter. "Just look! Here's my list—same as I put on my Ginker coupon! Here's the results in the paper! Look! I had a sixpence on! Look!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked. They really were interested now. It was about a million chances to one against Bunter; but it was always possible, of course, for the millionth chance to turn up. Apparently it had.

Bunter's fat face was fairly transfigured with joyful satisfaction. He looked as if he was going to dance.

"I say, you fellows, look!" he howled.

He handed his list to Bob Cherry and the paper to Harry Wharton. They proceeded to compare notes.

Skinner & Co. exchanged startled glances. Fisher T. Fish breathed quickly through his long thin nose. Skinner & Co. ceased to be interested in Nobbled Nick. Fishy forgot his lost sixpence.

Not for an instant had they supposed that the fat and fatuous Owl would win anything in Ginker's Golden Football Pools. Even a fellow who knew Soccer inside out was not likely to win anything. So how could a fat duffer like Bunter, who knew nothing at all? Sheer chance—the very sheerest chance—must have done it. Skinner & Co. gathered round, deeply interested. Had they foreseen this, had they even dreamed that it was possible, they would not have been in such a hurry to drop Bunter's friendship. But who could have foreseen such a chance as this?

"Read 'em out!" squeaked Bunter breathlessly. "I say, read 'em out, old man!"

For once the fat Owl of the Remove had the general attention. Bob Cherry proceeded to read out his coupon list, while Harry Wharton glanced down the list of results in the paper.

"Arsenal?" said Bob.

"Won!" said Harry.

"Everton?"

"Won!"

"Manchester United?"

"Won!"

"Sheffield Wednesday?"

"Won!"

"West Ham?"

"Won!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "What on earth made Bunter put them down as winners, if they were going to win?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I told you so!" trilled Bunter. "I know all about Soccer, you chaps! I'm going in for this regularly, after this! Fancy getting a hundred pounds a week—what?"

"Fancy!" gasped Bob. "Lot of fancy about it, I think!"

"The fancifulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Skinner looked at Snoop.

"The fat idiot's done it!" he whispered. "Of course, it was sheer chance. He couldn't do it again to

saves his idiotic life! But—he's done it this time!"

"How much do you think?" breathed Snoop.

"Well, the stakes are divided, you know. It depends on how much there was in the pool, and how many winners share out. I heard of a fellow who made ninety pounds once. I never knew him, but I heard of him."

"Ninety pounds!" gasped Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, what do you think now?" Billy Bunter was enjoying his success tremendously. "Think I don't know anything about footer—what?"

"Not a thing!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "It's happened once, by chance, but it won't happen again, old fat man!"

"Yah!"

"And look here, you fat ass," said Johnny Bull, "you'll get into a row if this gets out. Gambling on football matches—"

"Yah!"

"Rotten bad form, dear boy!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Yah!"

"You fellows leave Bunter alone," said Skinner. "I dare say you'd be jolly glad to do what Bunter's done, anyhow."

"Jolly glad, I fancy!" said Snoop, taking his cue from Skinner.

"All very well to preach at Bunter," said Hazeldene. "I call it envy!"

"And I'll say that's the right name for it!" weighed in Fisher T. Fish. "I'll tell a man Bunter's a bully boy with a glass eye and then some."

"Don't you take any notice of those carping fellows, Bunter," said Skinner. "Your friends are jolly glad of your luck, anyhow!"

"Grattiers, old chap!" said Stott.

Billy Bunter blinked at Skinner & Co. This sudden revival of friendship was a little startling, to say the least. For the last two or three days Skinner & Co. had not spoken to him, except to call him unpleasant names. Now, it seemed, he was their dear old pal again—renovated equal to new, as it were.

"I say, you fellows, you can jaw at a chap, but you jolly well can't do what I've done," said Bunter, with an indignant blink at the Famous Five. "And if you think you're coming in on what I get from Ginker's, you're jolly well mistaken—see?"

"Kick him!" said Johnny Bull.

"You let Bunter alone," said Skinner warmly. "Here, Bunter, old chap, let's get out of this. We've got some supper in my study—"

Skinner & Co. marched Billy Bunter out of the Rag.

The fat Owl rolled away with them, in happy mood, his fat little nose high in the air.

Bunter did not, perhaps, value Skinner & Co.'s friendship very highly, but supper in the study was attractive.

It was no light matter to ask Bunter to supper, but evidently it was worth while if the "pots of money" were coming home to roost. And now it really looked as if they were!

Skinner & Co., not usually hospitable or open-handed, combined resources for that study supper, and even Fisher T. Fish weighed in with a contribution.

In Study No. 11, in the Remove, Billy Bunter, happy and sticky, fed on the fat of the land, as Skinner & Co. cheerfully anticipated doing when the pots of money came along!

They had not come along yet!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Backing Up Bunter!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Want anything, Coker?"

Harry Wharton & Co. had come up to the studies for prep when Coker of the Fifth barged into the Remove passage. Coker's rugged face was wrathful, clearly indicating that Horace was, as usual, looking for trouble. The Famous Five, also as usual, were prepared to give him all he was looking for, and a little more, for which he was not looking.

"Where's Bunter?" demanded Coker, with a glare. "I suppose he's up here for prep. I've been looking for him! Where—"

Coker broke off as the fat figure of Billy Bunter appeared in the doorway of Study No. 11, up the passage. Having finished the spread provided by the hospitality of Skinner & Co., Bunter was coming out of Study No. 11 to go along to his own study for prep. As he came rolling cheerily down the passage Coker started to meet him, with long strides.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, as he sighted the great man of the Fifth. And he whirled round and bolted back into Study No. 11, like a fat rabbit into a burrow.

"Stop!" roared Coker.

Bunter vanished. Coker rushed up the passage. Harry Wharton & Co. looked after him, and looked at one another.

"Roll him home?" asked Bob.

A strenuous football match that afternoon had by no means exhausted all Bob's exuberant energy.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Bunter's got his pals with him," he said. "No need for us to butt in."

"That's so!" agreed Bob, rather reluctantly.

Coker reached the door of Study No. 11.

In that study Hazel and Fisher T. Fish were about to leave, and Skinner and Snoop and Stott were thinking of prep when Billy Bunter bolted in again, gasping. Surprised by that sudden return of their distinguished guest, Skinner & Co. stared at him.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"What—" began Skinner.

But he did not need to ask. There was a heavy tramp in the passage, and Horace Coker stared in at the doorway.

"Got you, you young sweep!" hooted Coker, with a terrifying glare at the dismayed Owl of the Remove.

Bunter dodged round the table in great alarm. In his happy satisfaction at what he had learned from Coker's evening paper he had quite forgotten Coker, and his probable annoyance. Now he was reminded of both.

Skinner & Co. stood and stared.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off!" spluttered Bunter.

Coker tramped in.

"Pulling my leg—what?" he roared. "Making out that my name was up for the First Eleven, and sneaking my evening paper as soon as my back was turned! By gum!"

"Look here, Coker, you get out!" said Skinner. "You—Yaroooh!"

A sweep of Coker's heavy hand sent Skinner staggering, and the Fifth Former tramped round the table after Bunter.

"I—I guess—" stammered Fisher T. Fish. "I guess—oh, wake snakes!"

A shove from Coker caused Fishy to sit down suddenly.

"Now!" roared Coker, grabbing at Bunter.

The fat junior dodged wildly.

"I say, you fellows!" he yelled. "Ow! Leggo, Coker, you beast! I never had your evening paper! I only wanted to look at it, too. You can have it back! I say—whoop! Rescue!"

Bunter dodged in vain. Coker's mighty grasp was on him.

Bunter yelled frantically.

He had not forgotten that hefty smacking Coker had bestowed on him at the station on the first day of the term. Now history was going to repeat itself. Bunter yelled for help.

Smack!

"I say, you fellows! Rescue! Help! Dragimoff!" raved Bunter. "I say—yaroooh! Beasts! Wow! Will you dragimoff? Funks! Wow! I say, back up, you fellows! Oh crikey! Wow!"

Skinner & Co. exchanged dismayed looks. Tackling Coker was a task for which they had no relish whatever.

On the other hand, what was to become of their renewed and renovated friendship with Bunter if they left him to the tender mercies of the enraged Horace? Obviously, such a base desertion of their dear old pal would wash out any chance of sharing in the pots of money!

"Ow! Help! Rescue!" shrieked Bunter, as Coker's hefty hand smacked, and smacked again, and the tightest trousers at Greyfriars rang like a drum.

"Back up!" breathed Skinner desperately. Really, there was no help for it.

Skinner and Stott rushed at Coker. Hazel rushed after them. More slowly, Snoop followed, and Fisher T. Fish hovered in the rear. The five of them, certainly, could have handled Coker, had they put their beef into it.

Their principal desire was not to get hurt. Tackling a fellow like Coker, on those lines, was rather a dubious proposition. Really, it was impossible to handle Coker of the Fifth without getting a bit damaged.

Skinner and Stott grasped Coker, to drag him off Bunter. They got hold of his arms, and hung on to them desperately, hoping to prevent Coker from using them.

"Back up!" panted Skinner. "Snoop, you funk—"

"Hazel, you worm—" gasped Stott.

Hazel gripped Coker round the neck. Snoop and Fishy, screwing up their courage to the sticking point, added their grasp.

Coker swayed in the midst of the five. But he did not go over, and he did not let go Bunter.

Keeping hold of Bunter's collar with his left, he wrenched his right arm free and swept it round.

Skinner spun in one direction, Stott in another. They crashed! Then Coker hit out, and Hazel, feeling as if a battering-ram had smitten him on the chest, flew across the study and rolled along by the wall.

Fisher T. Fish jumped back just in time—caught his legs on Skinner, and rolled over him.

He rolled off Skinner—and rolled under the table. That, at the moment, seemed the safest and most desirable spot to Fisher T. Fish.

Howls and yells woke the echoes. Loudest of all rang the yells of Billy Bunter, as Coker resumed smacking.

"Ow! Help! Rescue! Yaroooh!" bellowed the Owl of the Remove. "I say, you fellows—whoooo-hooooop!"

Skinner & Co. piled in again. Fisher T. Fish, judiciously, remained under the table—and Hazel was still gasping helplessly by the wall. But Skinner, Snoop and Stott got hold of



"Leggo!" roared Coker. "I'll smash the lot of you! I'll—" He broke off suddenly, as Vernon-Smith grasped his legs, like the shafts of a cart, and dragged him out of the study on his back. It was clear that that method of travelling was very uncomfortable, by the way Coker reared and yelled. "Oooogh! Wow! Ow!"

Horace, and struggled with him—and this time they succeeded in dragging him off Bunter.

The fat Owl squirmed away, yelling. But Skinner & Co.'s last state was worse than their first. They now had the advantage of Coker's whole and undivided attention: and it seemed to the hapless three that a traction-engine was loose in the study.

In about a minute they were strewn, panting and gasping, on the floor, and Coker was jumping at Bunter again.

But by that time the uproar in Study No. 11 had brought a crowd of the Remove along. The doorway was swarming with grinning faces.

"Want any help, you men?" asked Bob Cherry.

"They look rather like it!" remarked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, help!" shrieked Bunter, as Coker grabbed him again.

"I say, rescue! Yaroooh!"

"Pile in!" shouted the Bounder.

"Go it!" chuckled Bob.

Bob Cherry rushed in, and the rest of the Co. followed, with Smithy and Peter Todd, and several more fellows. Then the scene changed with startling suddenness.

Much more hefty hands than Skinner & Co.'s were laid on Coker, and he was up-ended in the twinkling of an eye.

Billy Bunter promptly bolted.

"Roll him home!" chortled Bob.

"Leggo!" roared Coker. "I'll smash the lot of you! I've come here to whop Bunter, but I'll whop you all round if you don't—Groogh! Whoop! Wow!"

"Serag him!"

"Serag him terrifically!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker rolled and roared. Vernon-

Smith grasped his legs, like the shafts of a cart, and dragged him out of the study—on his back!

It was clear that that method of travelling was very uncomfortable. Coker roared and yelled and spluttered as he went.

But many hands and feet helped him on his way. In the midst of a yelling mob, Horace Coker was led out of the study and down the passage—and by the time he was taken across the landing, and dumped down in the Fifth Form passage, Coker had had enough—more than enough!

When the merry Removites left him, Coker could only gurgle feebly for his second wind. They left him gurgling.

In Study No. 11 there were sounds of woe and anguish. Fisher T. Fish, owing to his masterly strategy, had suffered least; but Hazel limped away moaning, and Skinner and Snoop and Stott, heedless of prep, leaned on the study table and groaned. Skinner groaned through a handkerchief, which he held to a streaming nose.

"Oooooooooogh!"

"Oh! Wow! Ow!"

"Oh crikey! Wow! Ow!"

For a long time those remarks were all that were heard in Skinner's study. Even the prospect of a share in Bunter's dividend from Ginker's Golden Football Pools failed to comfort the suffering three. If they ever got it, there was no doubt that they had earned it!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER. Bunter Wakes Up!

"BUNTER!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"Sit still!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

It was Wednesday morning. In Form that morning Billy Bunter might have been likened to a cat on hot bricks!

How was a fellow to sit still?

For on Tuesdays, Ginker's posted the winnings of the lucky ones who had spotted Saturday's winners.

On Wednesday morning, therefore, Bunter's "whack" in the Golden Pool was due to arrive at Greyfriars.

In morning break he expected to see a letter for him in the rack—containing, of course, the cheque from Ginker's.

Class always seemed rather a weary and dreary performance to Billy Bunter. But never had it seemed so weary and dreary—so endless, as it seemed this Wednesday morning! It seemed to Bunter that centuries passed while he waited for break!

He could not sit still. Every other minute he blinked at the Form-room clock through his big spectacles—and every time he blinked at it he thought that the clock must have stopped.

Quelch could hardly fail to notice his restlessness. He snapped at him several times. Fortunately for Bunter, he had no suspicion of the cause of that restlessness.

Bunter had one comfort. Quelch had said nothing about the letter. If he had spotted it, and stopped it in transit, he would certainly have mentioned the matter—indeed, there was no doubt that he would have caned Bunter for his reckless disobedience to orders.

It was quite probable that Bunter would have been up for a Head's flogging had his Form-master discovered that he had, after all, recaptured those coupons from the waste-paper-basket and gone in for a gamble. So, as Quelch made no reference to

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the matter, it was clear that, this time, the letter had escaped his guileful eye. It would be in the rack, in break, like other letters for the Greyfriars fellows. That was a comfort. But it did not make the slow minutes pass more quickly. They crawled.

Bunter's friends were almost as eager as Bunter. And plenty of other fellows were curious to know what the outcome would be. Bunter was going to have an audience when he bagged that letter and displayed his winnings. But would break ever come?

Something like a century passed in the Remove Form-room. Then, at long last, came the word to dismiss.

The Remove marched out. Billy Bunter scampered for the letter-rack. After him scampered Skinner & Co. And nearly every fellow in the Remove followed on.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! One for me!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "And one for you, Bunter! Hero you are, old fat man!"

He handed down Bunter's letter.

The Owl of the Remove grabbed it. His eyes danced behind his spectacles. "It's come!" he gasped.

"Open it, old chap!" breathed Skinner.

"It's from Ginker's!" murmured Snoop. "See the postmark—"

"I guess it's the goods! Yank it open, old-timer!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

Billy Bunter jabbed a fat thumb into the envelope. His friends gathered round him, as eager as himself. And the other fellows looked on with interest.

Bob Cherry found a tip in his letter—a ten-shilling note from his pater, which interested him more than the vast wealth coming to Bunter. But most eyes were fixed on the fat Owl.

From the Ginker envelope, Billy Bunter drew a folded sheet of paper. Something was folded inside it.

That, no doubt, was the big cheque!

Was it for a hundred pounds—or two hundred—or even five hundred—or a mere fifty? Or, perhaps, only twenty or thirty!

Scarcely breathing, Billy Bunter

unfolded the folded sheet, and revealed the treasure!

It was a postal order! Not a cheque at all! A postal order! Bunter gazed at it! Often and often had Billy Bunter expected a postal order, and it had never come! Now, when he least expected it, a postal order had arrived! Really, it was the irony of fate!

"A pip-pip-pip-postal order!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, there must be some mistake! You can't send a large amount by postal order!"

"Look at it!" hissed Skinner.

Skinner was aware that a large amount could not be sent by postal order. But he did not think there had been a mistake—he knew there hadn't.

Bunter unfolded the postal order.

He gazed at it.

He could not believe his eyes! He could not believe his spectacles! It was simply unbelievable, that Ginker's had sent him, after naming all the winners, a postal order for one shilling! But that was the amount stated, in plain print, on the postal order! One shilling! Merely that, and nothing more!

"Bob!" said Skinner.

"Bob!" said Snoop.

"Bob!" said Stott.

"Bob!" said Hazel.

They seemed unable to say anything else. As for Fisher T. Fish, he did not speak at all. His feelings were too deep for words.

"A b-b-bob!" stuttered Bunter blankly. "I—I—I say, you fellows, why have Gig-Gig-Ginker's sent me a b-b-bob?"

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

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'd like to know what they mean by sending me a bob!" hooted Bunter. "What do they mean by it?"

Harry Wharton chuckled.

"You fat ass, they mean that you've won one shilling! They've sent you your winnings all right! There they are!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I thought it was going to be hundreds of pounds!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"A hundred, at least—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I heard of a chap who won pots of money—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, there must be some mistake! Of course, there's some mistake!" He blinked at the accompanying letter from Ginker's. Unfortunately, that letter left no doubt on the subject. It was a plain and business-like statement that the dividend on that particular pool was the sum of one shilling, which they had pleasure in forwarding.

Whatever pleasure Messrs. Ginker might have had in forwarding it, Billy Bunter had none in receiving it! His fat jaw dropped, and he blinked in dismal dismay.

"Oh crikey!" said Bunter. "One shilling! Oh lor'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner stepped nearer to Bunter, and drew back his foot. Friendship, once more, was at a discount, and there was some slight solace in kicking Bunter. But Harry Wharton gave Skinner a shove in time, and he sat down suddenly with a bump.

Bob Cherry clapped the dismal fat Owl on a podgy shoulder.

"Buck up, old fat bean!" he said kindly.

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

"It serves you jolly well right, you know!" said Johnny Bull. "Best thing that could happen for you, in the long run, too!"

"Beast!" groaned Bunter.

Johnny's words, undoubtedly, were the words of wisdom, but they brought no comfort to the dismal Owl.

The pots of money had not materialised. Bunter had to wake up from his dream of boundless wealth. He groaned.

"Buck up!" said Bob. "I say, I've had a tip in my letter—"

Groan!

"It's for ten bob—"

Groan!

"Cut across to the tuckshop with me?"

Bunter ceased to groan.

"What about jam tarts—"

Bunter brightened.

"And ginger-pop—"

Bunter smiled.

"And coconut-ice and marsh mallows—"

"I say, come on, old chap!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

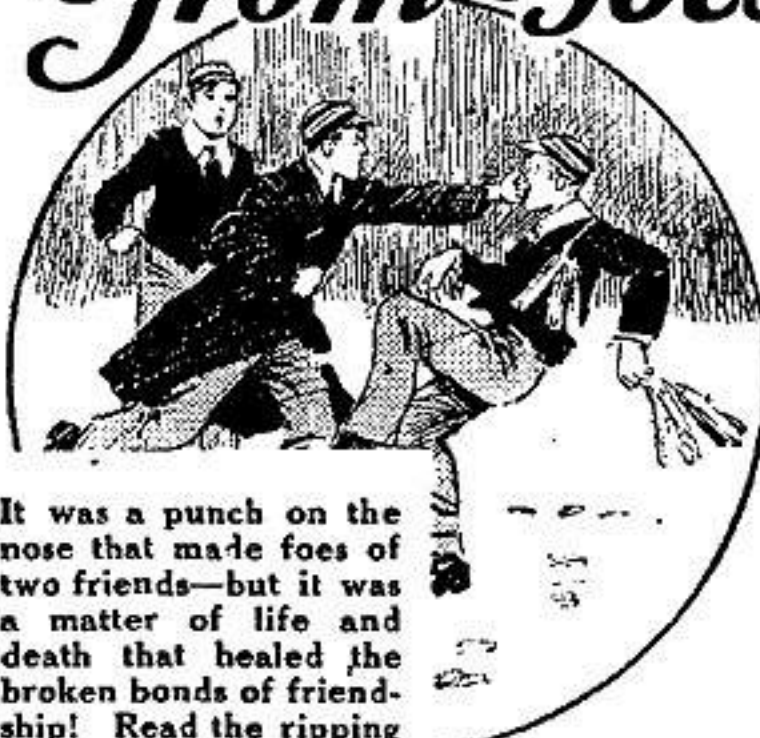
There was still balm in Gilead! Seated on a high stool at Mrs. Mimble's counter, with a capacious mouth quite full of sticky things, Billy Bunter realised that life was still worth living!

But the fat Owl was done with football pools! It was only too clear that he was not going to roll in pots of money; though he still fancied that he could, if he liked, spot all the winners!

THE END.

(Look out next Saturday for another topping tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "THE BOY WHO WOULDN'T MAKE FRIENDS!"—the first of a grand new series, featuring Mr. Hucker's nephew—something new in new boys!)

From Foes to Friends!



It was a punch on the nose that made foes of two friends—but it was a matter of life and death that healed the broken bonds of friendship! Read the ripping story of the Xmas Holiday adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. in the GEM. They're cheery schoolboys who you'll be glad to meet. Get to know them to-day!



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DAN of the DOGGER BANK

By DAVID GOODWIN.

In the Nick of Time!

KENNETH GRAHAM, son of a millionaire shipowner, is rescued off the Dogger Bank by the crew of the fishing trawler Grey Seal.

His past life a blank, he is given the name of "Dogger Dan," and signed on as fifth hand under Skipper Atheling, Finn Macoul, Wat Griffiths and Buck Atheling.

Aware of his nephew's fate, and knowing that he will be heir to the shipowner's money when his brother dies, Dudley Graham engages Jake Rebow and his cutthroats of the Black Squadron to get Kenneth out of the way for ever.

Following a fruitless attempt on their lives by Rebow's confederates, Dan and Buck Atheling catch the crew of the Adder, the Black Squadron's flagship, smuggling. Boarding the trawler they imprison the two men left in charge, and make for port.

Caught in a hurricane they are wrecked on a sandbank, the only occupant of which is a wealthy old Dutchman named Jan Osterling.

After confiding in the two boys, Jan is murdered by the two prisoners from the Adder.

Arrested by a party of fenmen from the Dutch marshes, Dan and Buck are saddled with the crime. In an effort to clear himself and his chum, Dan tells his story to Hans, the only man of the party able to speak English, who translates it to the captain of the fenmen.

A growl went round among the fenmen. The boys saw plainly that the feeling was against them. Buck did not like the cold gleam in the captain's eye.

Hans turned to the Squadron prisoner. The man's face was white and set.

"Who are you?" said Hans.

"John Atheling, of the Grey Seal," said the man.

Buck and Dan gasped at the brazen offrontery of it. Buck opened his mouth to speak, but reflected, and closed it again.

"What?" said Hans. "The father of that cub?"

He pointed to Buck.

"Father?" returned the prisoner. "No fear! That's Josh Stevens, o' the Adder. The other young rip is Jim Horrocks, o' the same craft."

"Ha!" said Hans. "And how did you get here?"

"I was in the Grey Seal's footboat, settin' long lines, o' Friday. The gale come up sudden an' drove me fifty mile off, an' cast me ashore here."

"What then?"

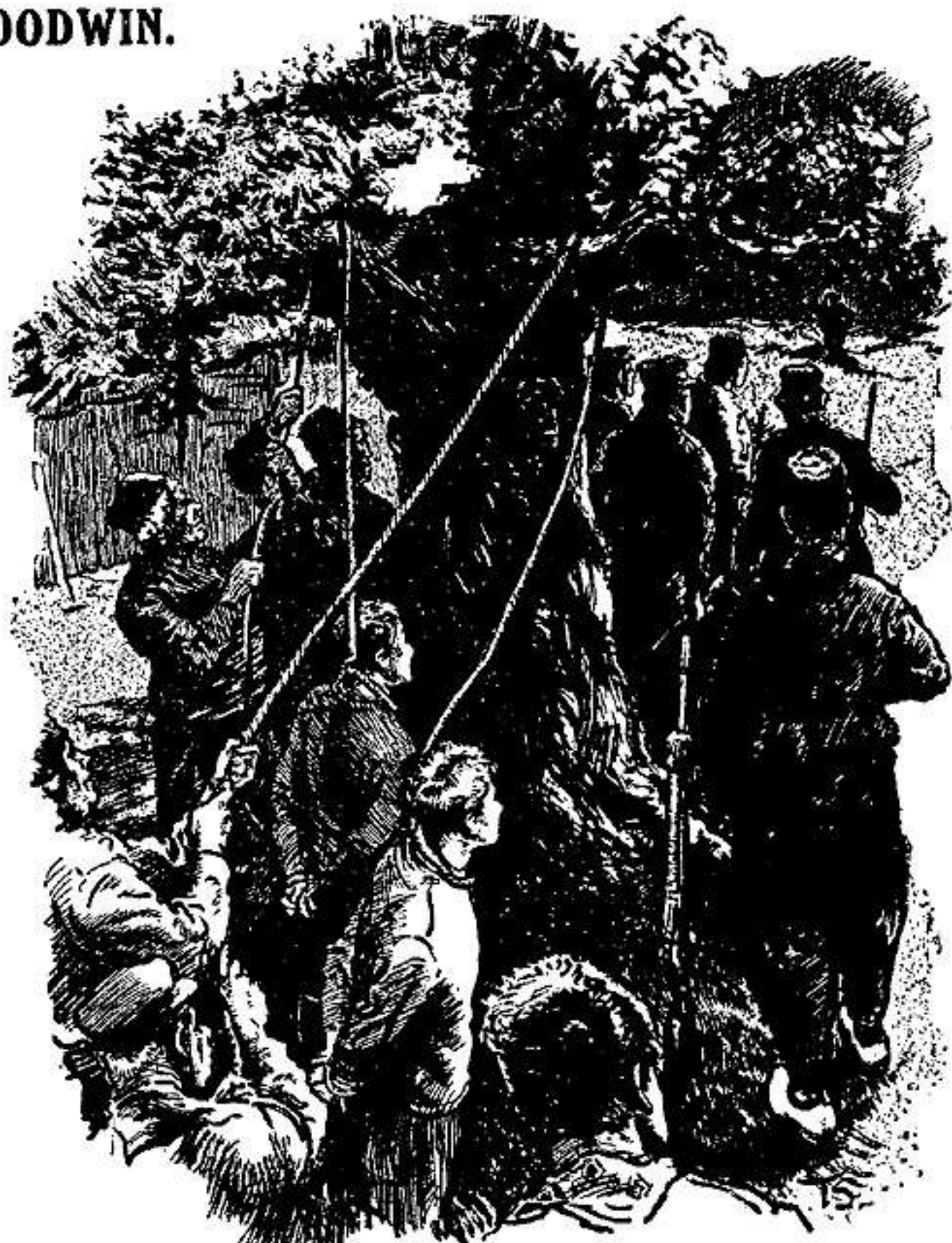
"I was thrown up on the beach, half dead," said the unblushing liar. "I crawled up to the house, and good old Jan Osterling took me in, and put me in hot blankets, an' fed me. Ah, he saved my life, did poor old Jan! An' now he—he's done in!"

The scoundrel brushed away a tear. A murmur went round among the fenmen, who seemed visibly affected.

"Of all the—" growled Dan, but he was cut short by the captain, whose eyes blazed.

"Go on!" said Hans, to the prisoner.

"And then," said the man, "these two young beggars came in. The Adder



Dan and Buck were pinioned, the nooses settled around their necks, and a couple of stalwart men stood at the fall of each rope. Suddenly, from the distant sandhills, came a breathless voice: "Hold!"

was driven ashore the same night, an' all her crew drowned but them cubs. It ain't much loss, mates, you'll agree."

"Ay, ay!" growled the fenmen.

"Well, them two was nearly as badly done up as me—'alf drowned an' starved. I knew who they was—who don't on the Dogger?—an' I warned Jan agin' 'em. 'Jan,' says I, 'they're a bad lot, them two. You keep an eye on 'em. They're Black Fleet birds, they are.'"

"But, bless you, old Jan didn't care. I thought he was a pore man, with nothin' to lose, or I should ha' got him to feed 'em in the sheds. But he put 'em to bed, and gave 'em 'ot food an' drinks, an' we was all of us well agen in the mornin'."

"Them two cubs, they shammed sick, an' got Jan to give 'em their breakfast in bed. But that didn't suit me. Stiff an' sore as I was, I ups an' dresses, an' I says to Jan, I says: 'Jan, I'm goin' to do something for the grub you gave me, afore I goes to the mainland and gets away.'"

"Why, mate," says Jan, "I don't want you to do nothin': I'm proud to ha' saved a decent fisherman like John Atheling, o' the Grey Seal." But I

wouldn't have it, an', findin' 'e was short o' firewood, I went down the dunes to get 'im some.

"Not knowin' my way about very well, I was gone some time, an' I got stuck in a quicksand, too, down by the shore, an' it was all I could do to get out. Howbe, I gets away an' puts a good load o' wreckwood together, and ties it up and piles it on my back. I staggered along under it till I come to the house, an' there I put it in the shed, where you'll see it now, an' walks into the room. An' then—"

He passed his hand before his eyes as if to shut out the sight, and gave a dramatic sob.

"It breaks my 'eart when I thinks o' pore old Jan! There 'e lay on the floor, 'is life-blood ebbin' away. Them two young toughs was lootin' the room, an' gold pieces was all over the floor! Pore Jan rolled his eyes on me as I come in, an' says in a faint voice: 'John, they've killed me!' An' then 'e died."

"Them two rips was on me like tigers afore I'd got over it. I was so 'orror-struck I could 'ardly make a fight for it. They got me down, an' they tied me up. For two mortal days, mates, I

lay there without food, bound like an ox in the slaughter pen.

"One of 'em was for killin' me on the spot, but the other—'im that's been talkin'—says: 'No, let's keep 'im, an' if anybody turns up afore we've done, we'll shove the blame on 'im!'

"An' for two days, mates, they raged about like maniacs, turnin' the house out an' searchin' the island. They would 'ave it there was a big treasure somewhere, an' what they'd got was only a flea-bite to it. They put the first lot back in the clock-case, where they got it. An' all the time I lay starvin'.

"Then, while they were 'untin' in the house, the rest o' the Squadron landed, and was on 'em afore they knew it. 'Fight for it!' says they. 'Blow goin' shares! There's a cupboard full of rifles, an' we can pot the lot without them gettin' at us!'

"An' so the fight began, mates, an' when you came the beggars outside had pretty nigh dished 'em up. But when these two 'card you comin', they agreed the first tale wouldn't wash, an' they would say as Jan was murdered by one o' the squadron that got away. That's my tale, mates, an' I leaves it to you which is the straightest—theirs or mine?"

The fenmen glowered at the boys. The captain spoke, and Hans took up his words.

"What have you to say to that?" he said grimly to Buck and Dan.

"Simply that it is a lie from beginning to end," said Dan. "That scoundrel there is from the Black Fleet! He is not John Atheling, and is no more like him than you are! He was first up to us when we ran for the house, and we stunned him and bound him."

Again the captain spoke, and again the angry murmur went up behind him.

"There is no doubt about it," said Hans. "You have told us a string of lies that a child would not believe. John Atheling has told us the truth. By your own statement you came here

on the Adder. Captain Atheling recognises you as two of her crew.

"When we entered the house we found it locked and barred. Jan Osterling's body lay within, murdered. This man was the only other person within. He was bound and helpless. Therefore, you did the deed."

The fenmen's captain gave a stern order:

"Fritz, bring some rope!"

A heavy hempen rope was brought from Osterling's shed and cut into two lengths. These were swiftly fashioned into running bowlines, and slung over a jutting bough of a tree, whence they dangled, suggestive and hideous.

"This is murder!" cried Dan, as they bound his arms behind him. "You can't take a liar's word against ours!"

The grim fenmen did not speak. The boys were pinioned, the nooses settled around their necks, and a couple of stalwart men stood at the fall of each rope.

"Swing them up!" said the captain hoarsely.

Dan felt the noose tighten round his neck. He set his teeth and braced himself to meet the death of a felon with what fortitude he might.

Even as his feet left the earth a distant, breathless voice came with the wind over the sandhills.

"Hold!"

Justice Is Justice!

THE men at the ropes paused. Dan felt his feet touch the ground again, and the sickening pressure on his throat relaxed.

"What now?" demanded the leader angrily.

"It's Max Osterling!" cried half a dozen voices.

A young man of lighter build than the fenmen was running rapidly across the dunes towards them.

Dan's heart gave a bound.

"It's Osterling's nephew!" he cried.

The stranger arrived breathless. It was the man whom the boys had helped to load his vessel with the sea-fowls' eggs—Jan's nephew—he for whom they held the trust from the dead man.

"What are you doing to these boys?" he cried, panting. "I saw it all."

"You have the right to know, Max Osterling," said the captain quietly. "They have murdered your uncle for his money, and they're going to hang for it!"

He told the story shortly and concisely—both the boys' statements and the sham John Atheling's.

The young man turned to the boys and scanned their faces earnestly. His eyes lit upon the face of the other prisoner, who had been released. He had not made off, having a relish to stay and see the tragedy out. Under the penetrating gaze of Max Osterling he began to look uneasy. He wished he had slipped away.

"Who did you say this was?" asked Max of the captain.

"It is John Atheling, whose testimony I have repeated to you."

"You are mistaken, captain. It is Isaac Hunter, of the Black Squadron, mate of the Wasp. I met him at Cuxhaven, where I lay alongside his vessel last year."

The man's face paled. He sidled away as Max spoke, and when the climax came he tried to make a dash for it.

A dozen guns were levelled at him on the instant. Realising that he would be shot down without mercy if he ran, he threw up his arms and stopped.

"Bring him back!" said the captain fiercely.

The man was dragged back again, blustering, and terror-stricken.

"So your tale was a lie!" said the captain.

Isaac tried to bluster—swore he was "honest John Atheling," and had never been to Cuxhaven in his life. But his attempt to escape was evidence enough for the fenmen.

"When were you last here, Max?" said the captain, turning to the young man. "Saturday? Good! Did you see these youngsters then?"

"Yes. My uncle told me that they had been cast ashore. He did not say from what vessel. They had helped him gather eggs all day."

"Did you see this man then?"

"No. Neither did my uncle mention him."

"Take the ropes from the necks of these two boys!" commanded the captain. "Then string this villain up!"

"Hold on! Don't hang the man!" protested Dan. "He's a scoundrel, no doubt, but he didn't do that job. The murderer of Jan Osterling is still at sea."

"Yes," said the big fenman grimly, "so he may be, but this rascal here is one of the crew, anyhow. He nearly fooled us into finishing you. He tried to swear away two lives. You keep out of this, boy. Up with him!"

The noose was already around the prisoner's neck.

Dan looked quickly at Max, who stepped forward.

"Listen, Stillwasser!" he said. "This is my business, and we're standing on my dead uncle's ground. I'll have no hanging here! I say the man shall be sent over in my boat and handed to the police to be tried. Tie him up well, shove him aboard, and let one of your men sail with him



G-MEN of the Ranges!

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across to the mainland. Justice is justice. He's a scoundrel, I know; but I don't believe he's the murderer."

Stillwasser was brought up short. He had more muscle than brains. He looked at Max and rubbed his chin doubtfully.

"I think it foolish," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Still, it's your uncle who was killed, Max, not mine. I can't say you've not the right to have it your own way. Pack him into the boat, then, if you like!"

The prisoner was secured and marched off to a boat under escort of the fenmen, who made no more objections, but recognised Max's right to settle the business as he chose. Max was one of themselves.

The boys drew Max aside into the empty house.

"It seems to me we owe you our lives," said Buck. "It's up to us to do all we can for you, Max."

"See here, your uncle told us to look after his savings an' guard 'em till we could hand them over to you. He hid the stuff pretty carefully; it's a big temptation to anybody. I don't wonder that crew of toughs tried to get after it, but they didn't know where it was hidden. Do you?"

"No," said Max gloomily; "nor care a lot either. I'm not a poor man myself, nor a miser. Hoarding it up has brought poor old Uncle Jan to this, and cost him his life. There's a curse on that money."

"Maybo there is," said Dan. "But there's a rare lot of it, in hard cash, and you've got a family, you know. I wouldn't worry about the curse if I were you. Gold's gold, after all. The bulk of it is in this house; make you a rich man for life. Then there's a second lot, buried somewhere, if we can find it. Jan gave us a line to it and made it over to us. It's the last thing he ever did. Take a look at this paper—it should be about five thousand pounds in English money."

Max looked at the parchment. "I stand by old Jan's word," he said. "That's yours, if you can find it. I doubt if you ever will. Anyway, I won't touch it. Right's right. You say you know where the rest of Jan's gold is?"

"I'll show you," said Dan. "But we'd best wait till those fenmen have cleared off the island. They may be all right, but they're a bit too tough to my taste. They might want to seize it for themselves."

"No, no!" exclaimed Max. "They're a hard lot, but they're honest as the day, those fellows. I tell you, they've got to be witnesses to this—on your account as well as mine. I'll call them in."

He went to the door and whistled on his fingers.

The fenmen came trooping back and entered the house silently.

"This young man has something to tell you," said Max. "Listen, lads."

The fenmen gathered round.

Shortly and clearly, Dan told them the story of the dead man's trust.

The Wrong Trail!

"ALL that's here is to go to Max," said Dan finally. "Hidden on the island is another hoard, and that Jan made over to us. I don't want it for myself, but my friend here must have his share of it, if we get it. I tell you this, though—you must not think we are holding back any that belongs to Max. If you're satisfied, I will hand the rest over right away."

"Good, good!" cried the fenmen, and Max agreed heartily.

Dan cleared the sand from the floor, and he and Buck levered up the flagstone. The hoard of gold lay exposed to the view of all.

Max held forth his hand, and the boys grasped it in turn. Captain Stillwasser did the same with all three, but said nothing.

The fenmen beamed with delight.

Max drew four of the little sacks of gold out and placed them on the table.

"Help yourselves, boys!" he said to the men.

But it was only after some pressing that they were induced to take the gold and divide it among themselves.

Buck and Dan refused to touch a coin, declaring themselves well enough paid by their legacy of the hidden treasure.

"The fenmen are going to help me load the gold on to my vessel," said Max, "and give me a convoy back to the mainland. You'd better come with us."

"Not me, thanks!" said Buck. "It's good of you, but we'd like to be alone on the island a day to root that treasure out."

"But, man, the Black Fleet's still at sea!"

"We ain't afraid o' the Squadron," said Buck. "If you'll leave us a good, fast boat we can nip off to the mainland long before they could close in here."

"Sure, I will!" said Max. "But I think you're taking a chance."

A couple of hours later he and the fenmen had placed the body of Jan Osterling on one of the boats they had come in, loaded the gold aboard, and were ready to move off.

They were very reluctant to leave the boys behind. But Buck and Dan refused point-blank to accompany them. The fenmen left a smart, swift, leeward sailing-boat for the boys' use and departed.

"We'll have it out in less than two hours," said Buck, scanning the parchment chart the old miser had given him. "Keep an eye to seaward. Squadron well away?"

"Yes," said Dan, "they're making off—anyway, they're a long way out."

"There's the dune, with the black-thorn bushes, as marked, an' the little stone cairn on the top. The chart ain't very clear. Nor-nor-east from that, an' the two outside trees of the grove in line. That's right enough. Now the cross-bearing. Big chimney o' the farmstead by the old wreck on the south beach. This is the spot, old boy! Bring the spades!"

Dan's foot was on the spade's shoulder, about to drive it down.

"Go on! Why don't you dig?" said Buck, working away. "Ain't five thousand pounds good enough for you?"

But Dan was staring out to sea as if transfixed.

"What is it?" exclaimed Buck.

"The Grey Seal!" cried Dan, pointing excitedly to the northward, where a smart, raking topsail slashed along at a terrific slant, with three broader ones away behind. "The Grey Seal, heading in for the land, and three of Rebow's smacks in chase!"

"Good heavens! They're after her!" cried Buck. "Look! What's that?"

A long, grey object, like the back of a shark, was tearing through the water towards the trawlers at a terrific rate, greasy, black smoke streaming away from a couple of short funnels amidships.

A puff of white spouted like a steam-jet from the grey vessel's side and feathered away into space, and the boom of a gun rolled along the face of the waters.

"It's a patrol-boat!"

"Let's put off an' join 'em!" cried Buck. "Rally to the old flag again. Rebow'll never catch the Seal!"

"Right you are!" returned Dan. "And we'll come ashore in force an' carry the treasure off!"

With a cheer they raced round to the gateway, where lay the smart little sailing-boat the friendly fenmen had left them.

The boys jumped in and hauled up the anchor. Up went the brown sails, and the little craft leaped ahead like an untethered horse and went skimming down the creek towards the bar. Ten minutes later she was smashing out against wind and sea, breasting the long rollers of the open, clear of the island.

The Grey Seal was flying along goose-winged, and close after her, cleaving the water like sharks, came the three sinister-looking vessels of the Black Fleet.

"They're gaining on her!" said Buck, with a thrill of anxiety. "They're much closer than they were!"

"How's that?" put in Dan anxiously. "The Grey Seal can outsail any of the squadron, surely? Why, even the Banshee could never keep up with her!"

"Look!" cried Buck. "There's no doubt about it. The Seal's foul, I reckon. She hasn't been scrubbed for a month. Dad ain't had the chance. I'll bet there's an inch o' weed on her below the water-line. She'll have time to pick us up, though."

"Ay, ay!" said Dan. "Gosh, how this little hooker walks along! It's a pity to lose her, but we'll have to. Get a pull of your jib-sheet!"

Away to seaward ran the little sailing boat, heading so as to cross the Seal's course on a long slant. Though they looked round carefully for the strange grey vessel that had fired the signal-gun, as they supposed it to be, the boys could see nothing of her. She had been close under the land when first seen, and craft of her colour are difficult to make out. Evidently the Squadron smacks away at sea had not noticed her at all.

"Government dispatch-boat, I reckon," said Dan, "surveying the banks. She must ha' slipped into a gateway somewhere."

"They've spotted us!" cried Buck, waving frantically to the Seal. "They're shifting their course!"

In the bows of the Seal, yet half a mile away, stood the figure of Wat Griffiths, waving his cap to the boys. The trawler altered her course slightly, and as she did so a jet of grey-white smoke spouted from the nearest of the squadron smacks, followed by the thin crack of a rifle.

"Ay, shoot away, an' waste your powder, ye swabs!" grunted Buck. "You won't do much damage at that range. It'll be different when they close up, though!"

"There's a heavy squall brewing to windward," said Dan, looking at the sky. "I hope we get aboard the Seal before it hits us, for this little skimming-dish will never stand up against it."

"They're nearly on to the Seal!" groaned Buck. "She can't set any more canvas, either. The Wasp's leading! Jake Rebow'll be on her, I reckon!"

"She's bearing away!" said Dan. "By George, she's coming after us! Slack away more of your mainsheet!"

The squadron, finding they were overhauling the Seal with ease, turned their attention to the sailing-boat, in THE MAGNET LAMP.—No. 1,456.

which they had long ago recognised the boys.

The Wasp, leading, left her two consorts to hunt down the Seal and turned her attention to the smaller craft, bearing down upon her as a falcon swoops upon a partridge.

"Gosh," said Dan, "this is pleasant! We can't outsail her! She's doing two feet to our one!"

"We'd have been safer ashore, I fancy!" grunted Buck. "But I'm glad we took a hand in the game, for all that. I don't care for looking on from a safe place when the Seal's in trouble. Look! They're going to fire!"

The boys could see Dennis Rebow lying at full length by the bits, taking careful aim. But there was too much sea running to make rifle practice anything but chance work, and the bullets sang harmlessly past the trim little sailing-boat. One ball went through the red sail with a smack like the crack of a whip.

The boys laughed.

"It's no grinning matter, though, by George!" said Buck, a moment later. "She'll get us, unless we head in for the sands, where she can't follow. Shall we do that, or shall we stick to the Seal?"

"Stick to the Seal!" cried Dan. "She's bearing down on us!"

Buck gripped his helm without another word, and held on his course.

But it was soon plain that they had no chance. The squadron vessels were closing in fast. The Seal herself had no firearms. To beat off three crews of armed ruffians was a hopeless task. The Wasp, coming up fast under a heavy press of canvas, was so close that the boys could hear the hoarse voice of Rebow ring across the waters.

"We ha'e them now! Dinna board them, laddies! Gi'e them no chance, but pick them off as ye run by!"

"You were right, Dan!" said Buck bitterly. "They've got us, an' the Seal, too!"

Puff! Boom!

The crash of a heavy gun shook the air, and overhead rang the quavering scream of a six-pounder shell. Right out from the farther gateway, where she had lain hidden, darted a stout, grey gunboat. Her long forward gun threw

a blind shell right across the bows of the trawlers.

A hoarse yell of command, backed with an oath, set the Wasp in a turmoil. With a rattle and a lurch, she swung round on the other gybe, and fled away to seaward like a startled gull. The two consorts hastily threshed round and followed suit.

"Hurrah!" yelled Buck

"German gunboat from Cuxhaven! She's been put on the track o' the Squadron! Run for it, ye swabs! You'll taste a German gaol before you're two nights older!"

A cheer answered from the Grey Seal, and she shot up head to wind.

The boys approached her, and lowered their sails smartly.

Finn Macoul, grinning like a bronze idol, flung them a rope, and in two minutes they were safe on deck once more, with the sailing-boat riding astern. A heartfelt handgrip all round followed.

"Ye young rips!" said John Atheling. "A nice hunt we've had after you! I'll wear out the biggest rope's-end on board on you to-night! But there's no time to hear your story now! Fore-sheet away, Macoul an' let's away to sea! I want to see those chaps laid by the heels!"

The gunboat, yet a long distance off, was steaming out at her best speed. The squadron snicks had scattered like chaff before the wind, each taking a different direction. Already they were well away. But the gunboat, though only a ten-knot vessel for river defence, had the legs of them.

"She won't get 'om all," said Atheling, watching keenly, "but she's bound to snaffle one, if not two. She'll open fire in a minute."

"What's she about?" cried Griffiths. "She's heading after us!"

The Seal was travelling in almost an opposite direction to the flying enemy, and, sure enough, the gunboat headed for her.

Even as Griffiths spoke, another white puff leaped from her bows, and a shell screamed close above the Seal.

"Heave her to!" cried Atheling. "The fools think we belong to Rebow's lot!"

"The swabs!" groaned Buck. "They'll miss the Squadron while they're fooling with us!"

Up came the gunboat. Something unintelligible was shouted from her bridge, and she lowered away a boat, with a crew of six, a warrant officer, and a lieutenant. The latter—a stout, red-faced man of twenty-eight—with the warrant officer, sprang on board.

"You are arrest," he said, "in der name of der German Republic!"

"Look here, captain, you've made a mistake!" said Atheling. "This is the Grey Seal o' Lowestoft! The Squadron are makin' off yonder! For goodness' sake, don't waste time! But—"

"Silence!" ordered the lieutenant. "You vill make your defence in der proper place! I tow you now to Cuxhaven!"

He gave an order to his men, who were evidently to act as prize crew.

Atheling, angry and impatient, insisted on being heard.

"I tell you this is not the smack you are after!" he said. "You are letting the smugglers go! I insist that you inspect my papers, and see that I speak the truth!"

"Well," exclaimed the officer, a doubt beginning to dawn on him, "bring dem to me, den, quick!"

In a few moments Atheling had his papers on deck.

While the Seal lay rocking on the swells close by the gunboat the lieutenant hurriedly inspected them.

"Thunder weather!" he exclaimed, tumbling into his boat again. "Thick-heads, why did you not tell me before?"

"Don't tell me that's a naval officer!" said Dan, as the agitated lieutenant, throwing all the blame of the delay on the Seal's crew, scuttled back to his ship. "I could make a better one out of a reefer suit and a truss of hay! I suppose they used up all the old pattern in the War years ago!"

And, as the night began to settle down upon the tossing sea, the fat gunboat waddled off in chase of a pair of sharp topsails that vanished over the darkening horizon.

(And so all is well for Dan and Buck—for the time being, anyway! Be sure you read next week's chapters of this popular sea-thriller!)

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WHY SPOOKS HAUNTED REMOVE PASSAGE!

By TOM BROWN

He's a good lad, is old Gosling, the Greyfriars porter, but there are one or two things about him that we object to. One is his little habit of making a tour of the Remove studies during each vac. for the specific purpose of reading as many private letters as he can find.

We've always known he did it, and we've never liked him for it. So it's nice to be able to report now that he has just been cured of the habit—probably for good!

"Wot I says is this 'ere," he told me, in an exclusive interview. "I ain't never goin' near those studies agin—not me! The maids can do all the clearin' up theirselvies in future, without my 'elp!

"If you'll believe me, Master Brown, hevery study in the Remove passage is 'aunted—'aunted by spooks an' spirits!

"I went in 'em one arter the other, an' I came out quicker than I went in. I can tell you! It was all right at first, but as soon as I touched a blinkin' desk, things began to 'appen. The blinkin' curtains moved, there was 'owls an' shrieks an' the rattlin' of chains—an' once I reely saw a blinkin' ghost!

"Wot I says is this 'ere: no more Remove passage for me! I've 'ad enough on it, thankee all the same!"

Cheers! We hope you'll stick to your resolve, Gossy!

Cheers also for Vernon-Smith. It was his ingenious little electrical device that made it possible for us to rig up "spooks" that began to work as soon as any desk was opened!

Poor old Gossy!

YOU CAN'T RELY ON POETS!

Says MARK LINLEY

A short stay at Dick Penfold's Friardale home during the Christmas vac. has convinced me that if you want an accurate description of anything, the last man on earth on whom you can rely for it is a poet!

I noticed it on the first day of the holiday. Penfold said:

"Let's go along to the tuckshop in Courtfield High Street. I'd like you to see the new girl they've got behind the counter."

"Is there something special about her, then?" I asked.

"Special?" cried Penfold, with a faraway look in his eyes. "I should just say there is! She's got eyes like mysterious, limpid pools, a grace of movement like that of a sylph, the figure of a Greek goddess, hair of sunlit gold, and teeth like pearls!"

"Great Scott! We must certainly go and see her!" I said, and we duly went along.

Imagine my surprise to find that the girl of Penfold's description had the grace of a camel, a figure like a sack of spuds, dyed hair, and false teeth!

Similar shocks were in store for me right through the vac. He trotted me along to see a picture at the Courtfield Cinema, which he said was "the screen's mightiest epic, built up round a theme that exalts and ennoble by its sublime and inspired beauty."

The picture turned out to be sheer, undiluted tripe.

Of course, it didn't matter, most of the time. But I did feel a bit aggrieved over one particular misdescription. Penfold got hold of a couple of tickets for a local boxing show, and having been before, told me what we might expect to see.

"It'll be a clash of Titans!" he said enthusiastically. "Perfectly proportioned young athletes will fight with a remorseless vigour and indomitable courage that will thrill the vast multitude to the core."

(Continued at foot of extreme right-hand column.)



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 171.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

January 11th, 1936.



HEROES! HERE'S YOUR CHANCE!

Whoops HAROLD SKINNER

Strong, silent lads and rugged he-men, who have been neglected in the past, are coming into their own this year. It has been decided that all deeds of valour shall be commemorated in future by awarding the giddy hero the Remove Order of Merit.

Now this is what I call a long overdue reform. It ought to give a real fillip to those chaps who are always plunging into raging millstreams or hurling themselves into blazing infernos to the rescue of others.

Of course, we all know that virtue is its own reward, and that they don't want prizes for their heroism. All the same, you won't find many who'll say "No" to the offer of being inscribed on the roll of fame! In fact, my own idea about it is that in the beginning there'll probably be a wild rush of chaps anxious to acquire the honour.

If I'm right, we shall have to be careful to see that only the pick of them get the coveted honour. I suggest a scale of marks for different kinds of heroism. Something like this:

MARKS FOR BRAVE DEEDS.

Rescuing from drowning ..	1 mark
Rescuing from fire ..	2 marks
Setting booby-trap for any prefect ..	3 marks
Setting booby-trap for Mr. Quelch ..	4 marks
Borrowing Mr. Prout's gun and using Sir Hilton Popper's portrait as a target ..	5 marks
Smoking a cigar in Big Hall ..	6 marks
Playing footer in the quad with the Head's topper ..	7 marks

With a table like this in front of them, the committee that decides who is to receive the Remove Order of Merit will be able to weed out the lesser heroes on logical lines, reserving the honour for those super-heroes who, by a combination of two or more heroic acts, earn sufficient marks to justify the award!

Shall They Censor Us?

The Sixth are starting the new term by calling a public meeting to demand a censorship for the "Greyfriars Herald." Will all those who believe in free speech kindly roll up and stop them speaking?

Bunter has decided to repair all the punctures in his bike tyres.

His New Year "re-solutions"!

Looking back on the events of 1935, Coker says he can claim credit for the greatest feat seen in the Fifth in the whole year.

Surely he must mean "FEET"?

Be Late for Locking-Up!

Be sporty, somebody, and get locked out of gates! Gosling hasn't had a case to report for a whole week. He'll develop acute melancholia if he doesn't get one soon!

BE A CAVE MAN!

Bludgeon and cudgel fighting, etc. taught by an expert. Boulder-throwing and biting a speciality! Kicking fights twice nightly (bring your own hob-nailed boots!). For terms, write BOLSOVER MAJOR, Professor of Frightfulness, Study No. 10, Remove.

(Continued from foot of column 1.)

What a difference between that and the reality! The hall was three-quarters empty, the spectators spent most of the time yawning and reading newspapers, and the boxers were mostly short, fat men, without twopenn'orth of vigour and pluck between the lot of 'em!

After that experience I decided never again to rely on Dick Penfold for a description. It's pretty obvious that poets see things with different eyes from those of common mortals like myself!

BIRCHEMALL the BILKER!



"Oh, crums! Was it much, sir?"

"Much? Why, it was every penny I possess in the world!" hooted the Head. "To be eggsact, it was fourpence-ha'penny!"

"Grate pip!"

"This is the giddy limmit, and no mistake!" said Doctor Birchemall, eyeing Jack Jolly & Co. narrowly, with his beady eyes. "I was relying on it to buy my return ticket to St. Sam's, you know!"

Jack Jolly laughed.

"Fourpence ha'penny wouldn't cover the cost of that, sir!" he grinned. "The fare to St. Sam's is six and eightpence!"

The Head blushed.

"Ahem! Now I come to think of it, it was eggsactly six and eightpence that I left behind me—not fourpence-ha'penny! But never mind, boys," he went on, brightening up. "One of you can lend me the munny till pay-day. What about you, Jolly?"

"Sorry, sir!" grinned Jolly. "I'm stony broke!"

"Pray don't be slangy, Jolly! What you mean, presumably, is 'harts of oak'!

Well, you, then, Bright?"

"Nothing doing, sir!" said Bright, promptly.

"You can oblige, Fearless, I'm sure?"

"I can—but I'm not going to, sir!" grinned Frank

Fearless. "What about the two bob you've owed me since the term before last?"

"Look here, you mean rotters!"

"Sorry, sir, but we really can't wait any longer!"

Jack Jolly, as glanced towards the platform.

"The guard's just going to blow his whistle. Come on, you fellows."

"Stop!" yelled Doctor Birchemall, desprightly.

"Gimme a penny, one of you?"

"Catch!" grinned Frank Fearless.

The Head caught it—the tip of his somewhat prominent nose—then grabbed it and dashed across to the ortomattick-machine.

that dished out the platform tickets.

The guard's whistle shrieked out and the train began to move off. Just in the nick of time the Head dashed up to the barrier and got through his platform ticket. Then he sprinted up the platform and made a wild leap on to the footboard of the moving train.

"Help! Murder! Perilice!" he yelled, as he hung on to the platform by the skin of his teeth.

Jack Jolly & Co. were serprized, on leaning out of their carriage window, to see who was there.

"Why, it's you again, sir!" cried Merry. "Hold tight, sir, and we'll soon have you aboard!"

"Grab his whiskers!" said out Frank Fearless, as the wind whistled the tip of the Head's beard into the open window.

It was a real inspiration on

Frank's part. All four leaned out and grabbed together, and a moment later Doctor Birchemall was being hawled to safety, hand over hand!

"Woocooop! Yooocooop! Leggo my beard!" he shrieked, as they hawled him safely through the window.

"Can't be did, sir!" grinned Jack Jolly. "I dare say it's painful, but we're only doing it for your own good! This way, sir!"

Crash! Bang! Wallop! "Yarooooo!"

With a final feendish yell, the Head pitched on to the floor of the carriage.

"How did you get through the barrier, sir?" inquired Merry, curiously.

Doctor Birchemall stopped rubbing his injured chin and grinned.

Ask no questions, Merry, and you'll be told no whoppers!" he said. Then he pointed out of the window and cried: "My hat! Just look!"

It was a cunning move on the Head's part. He knew he would have to produce something better than a platform ticket at the other end, and he thought he would be able to swap his ticket for that of one of the boys while they were craning their necks out of the window.

But the Head was in for a disappointment. Jack Jolly & Co. had already guessed what was in the wind, and they took good care to keep a tight grip on their tickets while their eyes were off Doctor Birchemall.

"It's all right, boys!" growled the Head, after rapidly searching their ticket pockets without success.

"There's nothing to look at. Ever been had?"

"Not just lately, sir!" grinned Fearless.

Jack Jolly & Co. were in

grate spirits during the jerney. But Doctor Birchemall's dial grew longer and longer, wondering what would happen when the ticket collector at Muggleton found that he had been travelling on nothing better than a penny platform ticket!

The train clattered into Muggleton Station at last, and they all got out. Doctor Birchemall looked furtively towards the ticket collector, hoping to spot a way of getting past him without being



noticed. But he could see at a glance that there was nothing doing!

Minnits passed. The crowds from the train melted away. The train steamed out again.

But still the Head remained on the platform, wondering what the dickens to do!

At last he saw the ticket collector standing on the edge of the platform, with his back to the line, and a sudden brainwave came to him.

There was an eggpress train approaching the station. If only he could save that ticket collector from being run over by the eggpress.

The man would be so grateful that he wouldn't dream of asking for a ticket!

To think was to act. Doctor

Birchemall crept up unseen beside the ticket collector, and with a sudden movement tripped him up and neatly threw him backwards. An instant later he had jumped on to the track after him.

"Have no fear!" he cried. "I won't let the eggpress run over you! Leave it to me!"

He grabbed the ticket collector by the scruff of the neck, and with a mitey effort flung him on to the platform again. Immediately after, he scrambled back himself—only half a jiffy before the eggpress clattered through the station!

The wheeze worked like a charm. The ticket collector was so dizzy and grateful that it didn't even occur to him to ask Doctor Birchemall for his ticket. And the Head marched out of Muggleton Station in triumph!

Outside, there was a yell from Jack Jolly & Co., who were waiting.

"Here he is!"

"How did you mannidge it, sir?"

The Head flushed slitley. He hadn't really intended to tell anybody, but he couldn't resist the chance of impressing the Fourth-Formers. In a few words he told them of the little ruse he had employed.

Jack Jolly & Co. listened in sheer amazement.

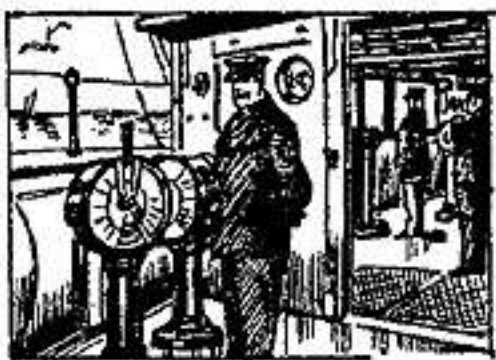
"Do you mean to say, then, sir, that you actually put him in danger of being run over by the eggpress, just so that you could get through the barrier?" hooted Jack Jolly.

The Head winked slyly.

"Well, not eggsactly, Jolly. That's the funny thing about it. You see, although he didn't realise it, the eggpress was on the other line. So neither of us was really in the slitest danger. Not bad, what?"

And the Head walked off to St. Sam's, leaving Jack Jolly & Co. gasping!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Tom Redwing's New Year resolve is to qualify eventually as the captain of an Atlantic liner. The sailorman's son spends much of his leisure time poring over charts of the waters around the coast of Britain. One thing is certain—Tom Redwing will always steer a dead "straight" course!



Greyfriars very nearly began 1936 in ruins when the other day Billy Bunter, trespassing in the pantry in search of provender, accidentally spilled some fat on the gas-stove. The "flare up" was quickly put out by Gosling, the school porter. But Bunter had a "flery" interview with the Head later!



Staying over the holidays with Dicky Nugent, Sammy Bunter thought it great fun to put bristly hair brushes in Nugent & Co.'s beds. When on New Year's morning Sammy was routed out of his own bed just after dawn, and pelted with snowballs, he gasped and squealed and fairly "bristled" with indignation!



A 1935 model aeroplane constructed by Frank Nugent was launched by him on Little Side—whereupon it flew out of sight! It was picked up later in the Channel off Pegg Bay—its gallant attempt at a Channel crossing having failed. Nugent is proudly keeping the plane—in order to "air" the story!



When Billy Bunter complained of stomach pains as the new term drew near, and said he would be unable to return to school, the doctor suggested an X-ray—whereupon Bunter made a sudden and complete recovery. The doctor said he was suffering from nothing worse than indigestion. An "indigestible" fact!



The winter term is the one in which Bob Cherry shines—his habit of early morning rising, followed by a swim, being a constant source of amazement to slackers like Bunter and Snoop. Bob comes into class all "a-tingle"—whereas the slackers are usually awakened by the "tingle" of Mr. Quelch's cane!