

SCIENTIFIC FREE GIFT INSIDE!

The **Magnet**^{2^D}

**MAGIC
SPECTACLES**

and

**MAGIC
PICTURES**

That
**COME
TO LIFE!**

FREE
INSIDE



The Trail of ADVENTURE!

By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter's Whack!

BILLY BUNTER rolled out of the House into the Greyfriars quad and blinked round him through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows," he squeaked, "seen Smithy?"

Whereat Harry Wharton & Co. smiled.

They were standing by the House steps. The winter dusk was falling, but it was not yet lock-up, and there were plenty of fellows in the quad. Among them was Herbert Vernon-Smith—and he was not far away. He was, in fact, very near at hand—leaning on a buttress, with his hands in his pockets. The Famous Five of the Remove had not only seen him, as Bunter inquired, but they could see him now—grinning as he heard Bunter ask the question. In the falling dusk, Billy Bunter did not spot him, even with the aid of his big spectacles. Which made the chums of the Remove smile.

"I say, have you seen that beast?" further inquired Bunter. "I've looked in the brute's study, but he's not there."

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

It struck them as rather funny for the fat Owl of the Remove to be describing Smithy in those complimentary terms, with the Bounder hearing every word.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" grunted Bunter. "I say, that beast's expecting his father to-day. The old bean hasn't blown in yet. I want to speak to Smithy before he comes. It's important! I've got a bone to pick with Smithy! Have you seen him?"

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"Sort of!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The seefulness was terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, I want to find him!" hooted Bunter.

"Perhaps he doesn't want to be found!" suggested Harry Wharton.

"The want may be entirely on your side, old fat man! It generally is!"

Really, it looked like it! Smithy grinned, but he made no other sign. It was not uncommon for Remove fellows not to want to be found when Bunter wanted to find them. The Easter holidays were still a long way off, but Billy Bunter had already begun to make his arrangements. And with an extraordinary unanimity, all the Remove fellows showed a disinclination to have anything to do with those arrangements!

"Well, look here, trot round with me and find the beast!" said Billy Bunter. "We'd better put it to him plain, before his pater comes. I want all you fellows to back me up. I'm not going to be done!"

"Done?" repeated Frank Nugent.

"Yes, done!" said Billy Bunter firmly. "Smithy and his pater ain't going to do me, I can jolly well tell you."

"What the thump——" asked Johnny Bull.

"What the dickens are you blithering about now?" demanded Harry Wharton. "Wandering in your mind—if any?"

"I mean what I say!" retorted Bunter. "I suppose you fellows haven't forgotten that we had the Christmas holidays at Polpelly, and that we found a lot of Spanish doubloons hidden in that putrid old house——"

"We did," said Bob. "You were fast asleep, and snoring, when they were found."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I may have been in bed at the time the doubloons were found, but I'd like to know what would have happened to the lot of you if I hadn't been there to protect you——"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob.

"If you don't remember what I did, Cherry——"

"I do, old fat bean—you ate nearly all the turkey!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle," said Bunter, "but I can jolly well tell you I'm not going to be done out of my share! You fellows can sit down and let old Smith bag all the boodle, if you like—I'm not going to!"

"Shut up, you ass!" said Harry Wharton hastily.

The grin faded from Smithy's face, and was replaced by quite a different expression.

"Shan't!" said Bunter firmly. "You know jolly well that we're entitled to a whack in the gold that was found at Polpelly. I dare say it belongs to old Smith, as it was found on his property, and I dare say the Government had a whack—they would! But we're entitled to a whack——"

"Is he wound up?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I tell you," roared Bunter, "we're entitled to a whack all round, and if you fellows are silly asses enough to be done out of your whack, I'm not going to be done out of mine!"

"Shut up, fathead!" said Bob.

Snort from Bunter! He saw no reason for shutting up—not seeing Smithy! But the Famous Five could see Smithy—and see the expression on his face growing grimmer and grimmer.

As a matter of fact, Harry Wharton & Co. had rather expected that something would come to their address in the matter of the treasure of Spanish doubloons that had been discovered at Polpelly House, where they had spent the last Christmas holidays with Smithy.

It was rather difficult to see what claim Bunter had, for he had had nothing to do with the discovery, and had been in bed snoring when the doubloons were taken out of their hiding-place.

Still, he had been one of the party at Polpelly, and might have been remembered when the loot was "whacked" out—if it was whacked out at all.

Harry Wharton & Co., certainly, had no idea of putting in a claim, and if Mr. Vernon-Smith did not think of remembering them, they were not going to remind him.

As some weeks had passed, they had, in fact, almost forgotten the matter.

Bunter hadn't!

Bunter, least of all entitled to a "whack," was most determined that he wasn't going to be left out.

Having learned that Mr. Vernon-Smith was coming to the school that day to see his son, Bunter considered this a good opportunity for putting in his claim.

So, instead of shutting up, Bunter rattled on with increased emphasis:

"Just like you fellows to be done! Well, if you don't choose to back me up and make old Smith do the right thing, I can jolly well tell you that that won't stop me! I'm going to tell Smithy plainly that I'm in on the share-out! I'm going to tell him to mention it to his pater as soon as he comes—and if he doesn't, I jolly well will! I shall tell Smithy plainly that I'm not going to be done by all the dashed Smiths in the world—see? I'm going to have my whack! I shall insist on having my whack!"

Vernon-Smith detached himself from the buttress.

"Now, if you know where Smithy is, tell a chap," said Bunter. "I want to put it to him before the old bean blows in! I'm going to say, 'Look here, Smithy, where's my whack? I'm going to have my whack!' I'm going to say—Yaroooh—yoop—yarooooooop!"

A sudden grasp was laid on Billy Bunter's collar. He yelled in alarm as he blinked round at the angry face of the Bounder.

"You want your whack, do you?" said Vernon-Smith grimly.

"Ow! Yes! No! Leggo! I—I'm not particular about it, old fellow! I say, you fellows, make him leggo!" squeaked Bunter.

"You're going to have your whack!" said Smithy.

"Oh, good! Leggo—"

"I'm going to give it to you!"

"I—I say—leggo!" yelled Bunter, as the Bounder's powerful grip twisted him over. He yelled wildly in anticipation of what was coming.

It came!

The Bounder's left hand held him twisted over, bent double. The Bounder's right hand rose—and fell—on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars! It fell with terrific force.

Whack!

"Yaroooooooh!"

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

"Yow-ow-ow! Beast! Wow!"

Smithy gave the fat Owl a twist and sat him down in the quad. Bunter sat and roared, and the Bounder walked away.

"Ow! Yow! Wow!" roared Bunter.

"I say, you fellows—whoop! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say—ow! Wow!"

"You've had your whack, old fat man!" chuckled Bob. "How do you like it?"

"Yow-ow-ow! I say, you fellows—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five strolled away, chuckling. Bunter scrambled up, wriggling and spluttering, and in a state of great wrath. He had insisted

An invitation to spend a holiday in far-away Brazil is a chance not to be missed—at least, so think Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars. They look forward to Adventure—and they get it, in fuller measure than they bargained for!

on having a whack—and he had had a whack—but now that he had got what he had asked for, he did not seem to be pleased thereby. Some people in this world are never satisfied!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Car That Crashed!

"SMITHY, old man!"

Vernon-Smith was standing at the school gates staring up the dusky road towards Courtfield Common. There was a frown on his brow, and he did not relax that frown, as the Famous Five joined him.

The chums of the Remove did not need telling that Bunter's words had irritated the Bounder. Generally, Remove fellows passed Billy Bunter's chin-wag by, like the idle wind which they regarded not. But the subject mentioned by the fat Owl had been rather in Smithy's mind of late.

He gave the juniors a dark look and stepped out into the road. They followed him out.

"Look here, Smithy—" said Harry Wharton.

"You getting anxious, like Bunter, about your whack?" asked the Bounder, with a sneer.

"Don't be an ass, Smithy!" said the captain of the Remove. "That's why we've come along to speak to you. No fellow here cares two straws about it, and if your father considered that anything was due to us, it's for him to judge."

The Bounder looked at him, and then his frowning face cleared. He nodded.

"I dare say you've been surprised at not hearing anything about it, so far," he said more amicably. "But you can rely on it that my father hasn't forgotten that you fellows had most to do with finding the doubloons at Polpelly. He bought the place, never dreaming that there was anything of the kind there—and it would still be buried there, if you fellows hadn't come with me last Christmas. Of course, he knows that."

"We've no claim—" said Bob.

"You have a claim!" grunted the Bounder. "And my father will be the first to admit it. But there's a lot of official red tape about the finding of treasure trove—the Government has to take it's whack, and the thing isn't got through in a hurry."

"Of course not," agreed Nugent.

"I shouldn't wonder if that's what my father's coming here about," went on Smithy. "As soon as the matter is settled, and all the red tape wound up, he will see that the fair thing is done. He's a busy man, as I dare say you know, and it's not a big matter to him, though there's some thousands of pounds in it. But you'll find it's all right."

"Sure of it, old bean!" said Bull.

"All the fellows who were there will get a whack," went on Smithy. "You fellows and Redwing, and Redwing's father, and even that fat ass Bunter, though he doesn't deserve it. And—"

Tom Redwing came out at the gates and joined the group in the road.

"Waiting for your pater's car, Smithy?" he asked.

"No; the pater's coming down by train to Courtfield, and he will come from the station in a taxi," answered the Bounder. "I'm waiting for the taxi, and explaining to these fellows that they needn't worry about their whack in what we found at Polpelly in the Christmas hols—"

"Fathead!" said Redwing. "Nobody's worrying about that!"

"Bunter is!" sneered the Bounder.

"Bunter would! Don't be an ass, Smithy!"

"Just what I advised him!" remarked Wharton. "But asses, like poets, are born, not made!"

The Bounder grinned.

"It's close on lock-up," remarked Redwing. "Gosling will be coming out to shut the gates soon."

"The pater ought to be in before lock-up!" said Vernon-Smith. "I dare say that's his taxi."

Far in the distance up the dusky road, the lights of a car gleamed on the dark expanse of Courtfield Common.

The car was still at a great distance, and nothing but the glaring headlights could be seen of it.

This Issue of the MAGNET Contains—

MAGIC SPECTACLES

and

FIRST SET OF PICTURES THAT COME TO LIFE

More Pictures Next Week!

The juniors watched the approaching headlights.

Like two great gleaming eyes they glared from the distant dark, coming at a good speed down the road across the common.

Suddenly, as the Greyfriars fellows watched them, they swerved. It was so sudden, and so startling, that it made the schoolboys jump.

The glaring headlights flashed round in a half-circle, and then turned up, glaring up at the sky like searchlights. For a long moment they glared at the winter sky, and then went out, blotted in blackness.

Smithy gave a husky cry.

"My father!"

He raced up the road.

"Good heavens!" breathed Wharton.

There had been an accident—that was clear. Whether it was Mr. Vernon-Smith's car or not, it had had a spill.

The juniors rushed after Smithy.

Lock-up was forgotten. Gosling, coming down to the gates, stared out.

"Ere!" called out the old Greyfriars porter. "You come in! I'm going to shut these 'ere gates! Wot I says is this 'ere—"

But Gosling was unheard and unheeded. A car was piled up on the road over the common, and the whole bunch of juniors were racing up the dark road towards the scene of the accident. Even Mr. Quelch, severe Form-master as he was, would not have expected the Remove fellows to come in for calling-over, if it was possible for them to give aid in a motor accident.

The Bounder's face was white as he ran with desperate speed. Good sprinters as they were, the Famous Five had difficulty in keeping pace.

Wharton touched the Bounder's arm as he ran:

"Ten to one it's not your father's car, Smithy!" he panted. "Don't jump at that, old man—there's hundreds of cars on this road."

The Bounder did not speak; he ran on with set teeth. He was waiting for his father's car—and he had seen the headlights of a car flash round, glare upwards, and then fade out altogether. His heart was aching with dread—though it was true, as Wharton said, that ten to one it was not Mr. Vernon-Smith's car at all.

The juniors covered the road as if they were on the cinder-path. It was a cold and frosty February day; but the perspiration started out of their faces as they raced. They reached the spot where the road joined the common, but they had not yet reached the scene of the accident, when there was a sound of rapid footfalls in front of them.

"Somebody coming for help!" panted Bob.

Someone, unseen as yet in the deep dusk, was coming down the road towards them, at a great burst of speed. It was easy to guess that he came from the overturned car. Certainly it could not be the portly Mr. Vernon-Smith who was running at such a speed; the footfalls rang like a swift rattle on the frosty road. Possibly the chauffeur running for help!

A man, running desperately, came in sight.

But as soon as the juniors saw him they could see not only that he was not Mr. Vernon-Smith, but that he was not a taxi-driver.

Even in the falling thick dusk they could see that he was a foreigner—a slight, spare man, with a face almost the hue of copper under the broad brim of a foreign hat.

The Bounder panted with relief.

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Who the foreigner was none of the juniors had the remotest idea; but if he came from the wrecked car, as it seemed that he did, it was fairly clear that that car was not Mr. Vernon-Smith's taxi.

"Look!" panted Bob.

The copper-faced man was not ten yards from them, when a shadowy figure moved in the bush beside the road, an arm was swung, and something, the juniors could not see what, whizzed through the air.

Whatever it was, it stopped the copper-faced man in full career.

In astonishment and horror the juniors saw him spin round, and crash on the road, like a man lassoed.

"Come on!" panted Harry.

They tore on.

The man lay without motion, stunned by the crash on the road. A dark figure leaped from the roadside.

But even as he reached the fallen man the juniors came panting up in a breathless crowd, and the shadow, about to bend over the fallen man, straightened up again, and they caught a flash of startled black eyes.

"Barge in!" yelled Bob.

The whole thing was amazing to the Greyfriars juniors. But they could see that the man running from the wrecked car was being attacked—and that was enough for them.

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With a rush they hurled themselves at the shadowy assailant, and he went spinning across the road, sprawling helplessly.

But in a twinkling he was on his feet again, racing away into the darkness of the common. For whatever reason he had made that strange attack, he realised that the game was up, as the Greyfriars crowd arrived on the scene, and he was thinking only of making his escape. That was easy enough; for he ran like a deer, and in a split second vanished into the dusk of the common.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Victim Of The Bola!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. gathered round the fallen man. He lay where he had fallen, without motion.

Bob Cherry groped in his pocket for a flashlamp, and flashed on the light. It gleamed on a coppery face, set in unconsciousness. The man's wide-brimmed hat had fallen off, disclosing a mop of thick, curly black hair, black as jet. Harry Wharton dropped on his knees on the frosty road, and lifted the insensible head.

"He's stunned," he said. "His head must have hit the road when he went down—"

"But what—who—" gasped Nugent.

"Look!" Bob Cherry picked up a sinuous rope that snaked across the road. "That's what brought him down."

"A lasso?"

"Not a lasso; but something like it."

The assailant had fled, leaving his strange weapon behind him. The end of the cord was wound round the fallen man, and the juniors disentangled it. At the extremity was an iron ball.

"A bola," said Harry.

"A which?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"I've never seen one before; but I've read of them. They're used in South America, like the lasso in North America. It's a bola!"

"South America!" Bob whistled.

"That's a long step from here. What on earth is a man doing here with a bola from South America?"

"Goodness knows!"

"We've got to help this chap," said Johnny Bull. "Look here! We'd better flag the next car that passes, and ask for a lift. He doesn't look like coming to in a hurry."

"By Jove! He doesn't! He's had a hard knock," said the captain of the Remove. "Looks as if that was no accident to his car. Somebody was waiting for him on this road."

"Some of us had better get along to the car," cut in the Bounder. "Some of you stay with that chap, and flag the next car—"

He started again at a run, and Redwing followed him.

Harry Wharton hesitated a moment.

"You fellows stay with this chap," he said. "That brute who threw the bola might come back."

"I'll give him a taste of his own bola, if he does," said Bob. "Right-ho! You cut after Smithy; we'll hang on here."

Bob grasped the cord attached to the iron ball. It was a dangerous weapon in a strong hand. And Bob was quite prepared to handle it if the unknown assailant showed up again. That, however, was not probable, judging by the speed with which he had fled.

Harry Wharton ran down the road after Smithy and Redwing. The overturned car lay at some distance, but the three juniors reached it swiftly. It was a small two-seater, and it lay on its side in the grass beside the road. To the relief of the juniors there was no sign of its having contained any other passenger beside the copper-faced man who had fled from the wreck. They had feared to find someone injured, or worse, in the wrecked car.

But it was clear that the little copper-faced man had been driving, and had had no companion in the two-seater.

It was easy to see how the accident had been caused. A heavy log lay in the road near the wreck.

"The villain!" breathed Wharton. "He must have flung that log under the wheels to stop the car. He might have killed the man."

"A sportsman who doesn't stick at trifles, whoever he was," said the Bounder coolly. "Both of them from South America, I suppose—judging by one's complexion, and the other's bola. We've barged into a giddy South American feud of some sort."

"Looks like it," said Harry, with a nod.

Clearly the copper-faced man had been waylaid on the road over the common. His enemy, the man of whom the juniors had seen no more than a shadow and a flash of black

eyes, had watched for his car; stopped it by such desperate means that it might easily have caused a fatality. The copper-faced man had escaped injury in the overturning car, and had leaped from the wreck and fled—the man with the bola in pursuit. The fugitive had kept to the road; his pursuer had cut across the dark common, and got him with the bola, and, but for the lucky arrival of the Greyfriars crowd, he would have carried out his intention—whatever it was.

Undoubtedly it looked as if the Greyfriars fellows had butted into some desperate feud, between two men from a land where the tropic sun made tempers hot and passionate.

"Well, there's no harm done here, except to the car," said Harry Wharton. "Thank goodness for that!"

"Father!"

"Herbert!" exclaimed the millionaire in astonishment, staring at his son. "What the dickens are you doing out of gates? Breaking school bounds! What—what!"

"Not exactly," grinned the Bounder. "There's been an accident, and we trotted along to help. About a quarter of a mile up the road you'll find a stunned man with some of our fellows with him. Will you pick him up?"

"Eh—what? Of course I will!" grunted the millionaire. "Drive on!" The taxi shot onward again.

Harry Wharton and Redwing and Smithy started to walk after it. The rear light winked out of sight across the dark common. The three juniors were far behind when the taxi stopped

sir, I think. He's had a fearful clump on the crumpet!"

"What?"

"I mean, a knock on the head. He wants a doctor—quick—"

"I can see that. I will take him along with me to Greyfriars. No doubt the headmaster will allow him to be taken in, in the circumstances."

"Of course he will, sir."

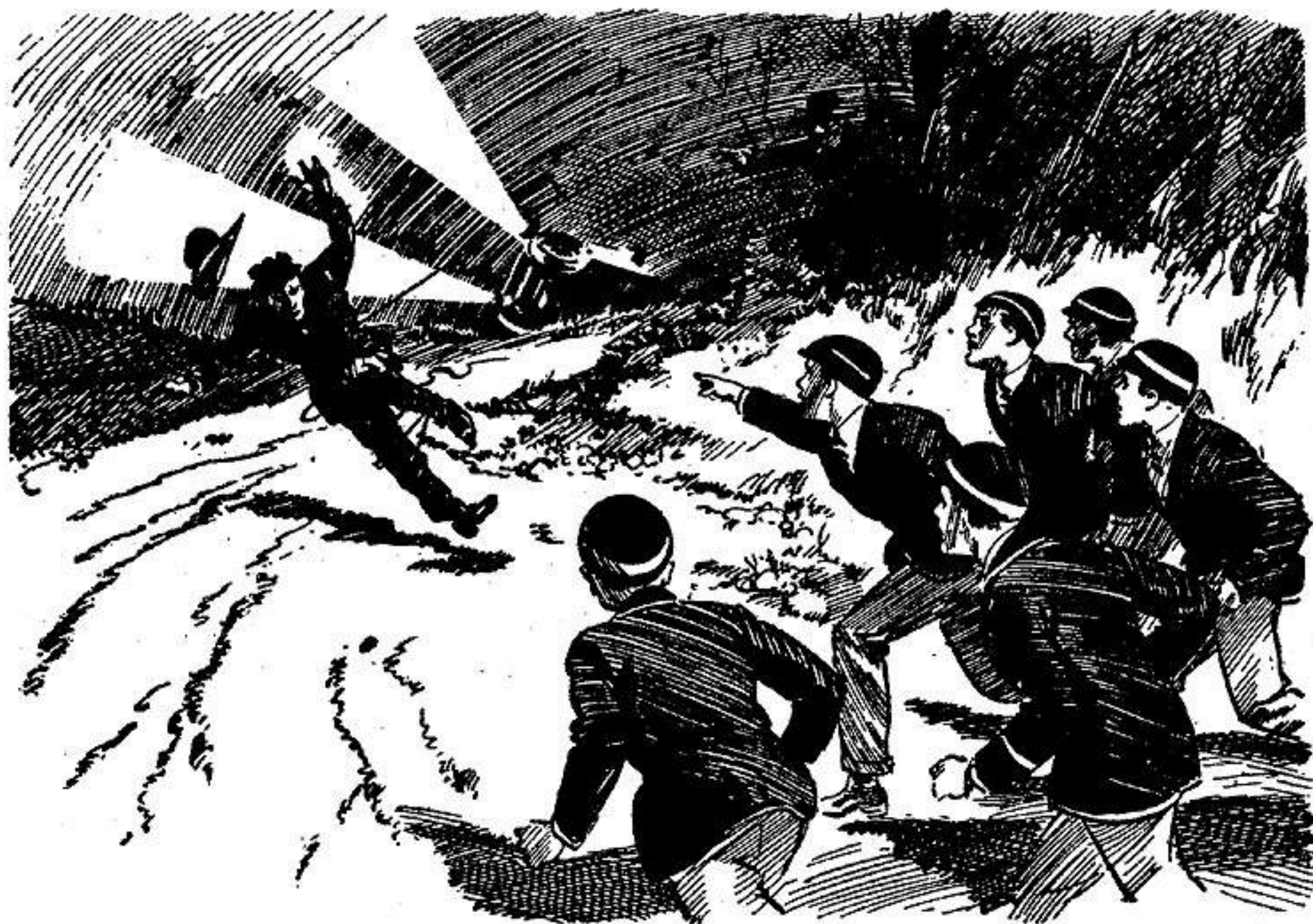
"Lift him in!"

The insensible man was carefully and gently lifted into the taxi. He sagged helplessly in the seat, and the millionaire held him with a plump arm.

"Can you manage, sir?" asked Bob.

"Quite! Get on, driver!"

The taxi-driver got into swift motion, and the taxi raced away towards the school. It vanished in a few moments.



"Look!" panted Bob Cherry. The foreigner from the wrecked car was not ten yards from Harry Wharton & Co. when a shadowy figure moved in the bush beside the road. Next moment, an arm was swung, and a rope, with an iron ball on the end of it, snaked through the air, encircled the running man, and brought him crashing down. "Come on, you fellows!" panted Wharton.

Hallo! Here comes a car! We'd better flag it."

Headlights gleamed on the dark road from the direction of the town of Courtfield. It was now quite dark—past look-up at the school. But the juniors were not thinking of that for the moment.

They stood in the road and waved their hands at the car coming along from Courtfield. There was a grinding of brakes, and the car stopped.

"It's a taxi from the station," said Smithy. "Very likely my pater this time."

A plump and portly face looked from the taxi.

"What the dickens—" came the well-known voice of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith. Evidently it was the Bounder's pater.

Smithy ran to the taxi.

again, its headlights gleaming on the group by the roadside.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that Mr. Vernon-Smith? You'll give this chap a lift, sir?"

"Certainly! Lift him in!"

The four Removites lifted the insensible man from the road. He showed no sign yet of returning consciousness.

The millionaire stared at him.

"Who—what—how?" he ejaculated.

"He was running from his car, when some sportsman got him with this," explained Bob, lifting up the bola.

"Good gad!" Mr. Vernon-Smith stared blankly at the strange weapon from the far-off pampas. Then he stared at the insensible man again. "A foreigner—"

"Some johnny from South America,

"Well, this is a bit of a thrill, and no mistake!" remarked Bob Cherry. He swung the bola in his hand. "I wish that sportsman who handled this thing would show up. I'd like to try it on him. I fancy I could handle it. Look here, Johnny! You stand there, sec, and see if I can get you."

"You blithering idiot!" was Johnny Bull's answer.

"Well, you, Inky—"

"Not this evening, my esteemed idiotic Bob," grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"You, Franky—"

"No fear!" chuckled Nugent.

None of the juniors seemed keen on seeing Bob display his skill with a weapon he had never handled before. The state of the insensible man with

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the copper face was a sufficient proof of what the bola could do.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here they come!" said Bob, as Wharton and his companions arrived. "Any more casualties?"

"Only the car," said Harry.

"Like to stand in the road there, and see whether I can snaffle you with this jolly old bola?"

"No, ass!"

"What about you, Smithy?"

"Idiot!"

"You, Reddy?"

"Fathead!"

Bob chuckled, and the juniors walked on to Greyfriars, Bob swinging the bola in his hand. They walked quickly—to get in before the bell rang for call-over—if they could.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter On The Warpath!

"**C**HEEKY cad!"

"What?"

"I'll make him sit up!"

"What?" repeated Peter Todd.

"Turning a fellow over and smacking him!" said Billy Bunter, in deep wrath. "I'll fix the rotter!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Who did?"

"That cad Smithy!"

"Good man!" said Peter cheerily. "If you take my tip, old fat man, you'll leave it at that, and not ask for any more."

Snort from Bunter.

The fat Owl of the Remove, apparently, was not prepared to leave it at that. Billy Bunter was wrathful.

He had asked for his "whack." He had got a whack—unexpected and unpleasant! Had Bunter been a fight-

ing man, he would have trailed down the Bunder, and given him the licking of his life.

But Bunter, except in his imagination, was no scrapper. Often and often he told the Remove fellows of fierce scraps he had had—in the holidays. Big bargees, according to Bunter, had gone down before him and begged for mercy.

But none of these terrific scraps ever happened at Greyfriars, or anywhere near the old school. Bargees on the Sark were quite safe from Bunter, whatever might—or might not—have happened to bargees in parts unknown.

Giving the Bunder the licking of his life was not a practical proposition. But there were more ways than one of killing a cat.

Peter Todd, coming into Study No. 7, found Bunter busy—with a rather remarkable business. He had a large biscuit-tin on the table. Into it he was pouring all the ink available in the study—red and black.

To the ink he added water and a shovelful of soot from the study chimney. He mixed the lot with a ruler.

Peter Todd gazed at him. He gazed at the biscuit tin and the mixture it contained. He gazed at Bunter again.

"Is that for Smithy?" he ejaculated.

"Just that!" said Bunter darkly. "I fancy he'll be sorry for smacking a chap on the bags, when he gets this lot in the chivvy, what?"

"Oh scissors!" gasped Toddy. "I fancy you'll be sorrier very soon afterwards."

"Yah!"

"You potty porpoise!"

"Beast!"

"Wash it out, old man!" urged Toddy.

"Rats!"

Bunter, evidently, was on the war-path. Like the Alpine gentleman in the poem, his brow was set, his eye beneath flashed like a falchion from its sheath! Indeed, his very spectacles seemed to glitter with wrath. That hefty smack on his tight trousers seemed to have got Bunter's goat, as Fisher T. Fish would have described it.

"But," gasped Toddy, "Smithy will break you up into small pieces, if you even go near him with that tin of muck!"

"I'm not going to tell him what I'm going to do!" said Bunter sarcastically. "I shall take him by surprise. I say, is Redwing about? I want to catch the brute when Redwing is not with him!"

"Redwing went down to the gates a little while back," grinned Peter. "I don't know where Smithy is."

"Well, I'll jolly well find him as soon as I get this ready!" said Bunter darkly. "I shall spot him in his study, if I can—rush in, and mop it at him before he knows what's happening, see?"

"Made your will?" asked Toddy. "Don't forget what will happen very soon afterwards."

"I shall expect a pal to stand by me, if Smithy cuts up rusty!" said Bunter, with dignity.

"If!" gasped Toddy.

"I shall let him have it, and clear!" said Bunter. "I don't want a row with the fellow! But if he thinks he's going to smack me—"

"You'd better—"

"Yah!"

Having finished preparing his mixture, Bunter laid down the ruler, and lifted the tin from the table. He rolled out of Study No. 7, with the tin of fluid in his fat hands, leaving Peter Todd chortling.

Bunter stopped at Study No. 4—Smithy's study. There was a light under the door, which showed that the study was occupied. Either Smithy, or Redwing, or both. Bunter, of course, knew nothing about the exciting happenings on the Courtfield road, and had no idea whatever that Smithy and Redwing were out of gates with the Famous Five. He had seen none of them since receiving his whack—having been too busy planning vengeance, and preparing to carry out the same.

He listened.

There was a sound in the study—a squeak of castors, which showed that somebody was sitting in Smithy's arm-chair. Lord Mauleverer came up the passage, and paused to give the fat Owl a surprised stare.

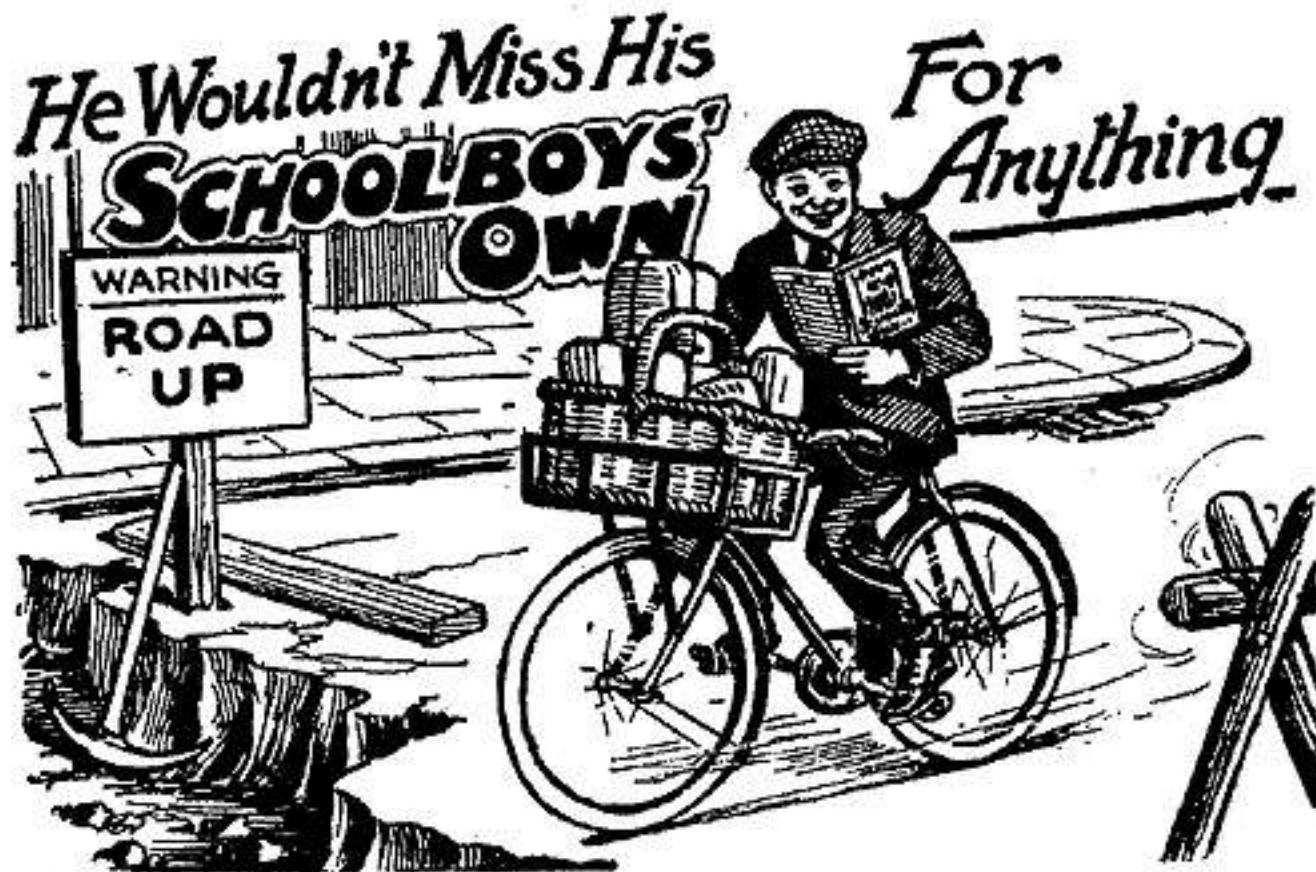
"I say, Mauly, has Redwing come back?" asked Bunter anxiously. "Toddy said he saw him go down to the gates."

"No; he hasn't come in," answered Mauleverer. "I've been at the door. I should have seen him. You frabjous ass, you haven't got that muck for Redwing, have you?"

"Oh, no! Only want to be sure he's not in!" said Bunter. "You see, I shall have to be pretty quick, and I don't want to bung it at the wrong man. I've got this for Smithy."

"Oh, gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. He chuckled, and went on up the Remove passage.

Skinner came up from the staircase. He, like Mauly, stared at the fat Owl. Bunter, at the door of Study No. 4, was just going to begin. Evidently Redwing was not in—so the occupant of the study could only be Herbert Vernon-Smith—alone, just as Bunter wanted



Deposed from his position as captain of the Remove at Greyfriars, and smarting under a sense of injustice, Harry Wharton has only his pride and quick temper to thank for the unhappy position in which he finds himself. In this great story his struggle against odds is depicted in dramatic style. To the last chapter the yarn will be read with a thrill, and it's a story you will long remember.

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him. Fate seemed to be playing into the hands of the vengeful Owl.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Skinner.

Bunter blinked round hastily.

"Quiet!" he breathed. "Don't let him hear you! I'm going to take the beast by surprise!"

"Who?" gasped Skinner.

"Smithy!"

"Smithy!" repeated Skinner.

"Smithy hasn't come in yet, has he? His pater got here, but—"

"He's in all right—in the study now!" whispered Bunter. "You can see the light's on—and I heard him move in the armchair. He will look a pretty sight for his pater to see, when he gets this lot over him! What?"

Skinner gasped.

He opened his lips—and closed them again! Any other fellow in the Remove, who had known what Skinner knew, would have tipped the fat Owl! But not Skinner! Skinner was not going to spoil this tremendous joke.

Skinner happened to be aware of the fact that Mr. Vernon-Smith had arrived already, and, as the Bounder had not yet come in, the millionaire had gone up to his son's study to wait for him there!

Bunter had not the remotest suspicion of that little circumstance. Skinner, quite interested to see how this would turn out, said nothing. He only chuckled.

"Quiet!" whispered Bunter. "Don't warn him, you ass! I'm going to take him by surprise!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Skinner. "You'll surprise him all right, if you're going to chuck that at him." Skinner felt like suffocating. Assuredly Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith would be surprised—greatly surprised—if he received that horrible mixture from the tin in Bunter's fat hands.

"I mean, if I give him a chance, he might grab the tin and tip it over me!" said Bunter astutely. "Just the thing Smithy would do, you know."

"Oh, just!" gasped Skinner.

"Open the door for me, old chap, will you?" whispered Bunter. "Just chuck it wide open, so that I can rush in—"

"Oh, scissors!"

"And let him have it, see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quiet!" hissed Bunter. "Open the door, old chap!"

"No jolly fear!" grinned Skinner. If the City gentleman in Study No. 4 was going to get that mixture, Harold Skinner did not want to have a hand in the proceedings. The consequences were likely to be much too serious for Skinner to want to share in them.

Chuckling, Skinner went on up the passage.

"Beast!" hissed Bunter.

He waited a moment longer, listening at the door. He heard a sound of feet on a fender. His eyes glittered through his spectacles.

Nothing could have suited him better. His victim, evidently, was sitting in the armchair, his feet to the fire, his back to the door! Before he could even turn his head Bunter would have that mixture over him. Softly Bunter turned the door-handle and threw the study door wide open.

Then, with the tin grasped in both fat hands, he rushed in. As he had expected, the back of the armchair was towards him. He had a glimpse of the crown of a head beyond. He did not delay to look at it! A glimpse was more than enough. Up went the tin of inky mixture, and it was instantly overturned on the head of the sitter in the armchair.

Swoosh!

Splash!

A wild, gurgling howl came from the recipient.

"Urrrrgh!"

"He, he, he!" gasped Bunter breathlessly.

Dropping the tin with a clatter, he bounded back to the door. Instant flight was Bunter's cue, now that he had delivered the goods. He reached the door with a bound; another bound took him out into the passage. But before he could make a third bound, the wild howl of his victim penetrated his fat intelligence and apprised him that he had made a mistake.

"Urrrrgh! Good gad! What—what—what— Good gad! Urrgh!"

Bunter spun round.

He stared into the study, his little round eyes almost popping through his big, round spectacles.

An alarming figure had risen into view beyond the back of the armchair. It was not Smithy's. That would have been alarming enough. But this was ever so much more alarming! It was a plump and portly figure of a middle-aged gentleman. The face, streaming with mixed inks, was utterly unrecog-

friendly, but energetic, eliciting a gasp from Gosling.

"Oooogh!" said Gosling.

"Dear old bean!" said Bob affectionately. "Kept the gates open especially for us, like a good little man—what?"

"Urrrrh!" said Gosling. "Don't you poke a man in the ribs, Master Cherry! Urrgh! Pretty goings hon, I says! All sort of folks brought 'ere in taxicabs, as if there wasn't any orspitals, I says."

"My father's got in, with that foreign johnny, Gosling?" asked the Bounder.

"Which he 'ave, Master Vernon-Smith," grunted Gosling. "Foreign-looking bloke, with a bump on his 'ead, which I 'ope he ain't a burglar!"

"Where is he now?" asked Harry.

Another grunt from Gosling.

"I s'pose he's in the sanatorium, as I 'elped to carry him in with my own 'ands!" he answered. "Doctor coming, and all that! Which I 'ope he ain't one of these 'ere motor bandits!" Gosling grunted. "Blooming furriner, anyhow!"

Evidently Gosling had a suspicious eye on all the inhabitants of the globe who had the misfortune to dwell outside the British Isles. Gosling had no use for foreigners of any description.

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nisable; but the portly figure and the voice betrayed the identity of Bunter's hapless victim.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, overcome with horror.

"Gurrgh! Good gad! Gurrgh!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith dabbed and dashed mixture from his face and eyes. He whipped round the armchair and rushed to the door.

Bunter, till then, had stood paralysed. But he woke to action as the portly millionaire rushed doorwards. A flash of lightning had nothing on Bunter as he went down the Remove passage to the stairs.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Inky!

GOSLING grunted.

"Pretty goings on!" said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'ere! Pretty goings hon, I says!"

Whereat Harry Wharton & Co. grinned. It was past the time for the school gates to be closed and locked, but they still stood open when the juniors arrived there. Gosling stood in the gateway, apparently waiting for them. Bob Cherry gave the ancient gentleman a friendly dig in the ribs—

"And the 'Ead says, says he, keep the gate open, Gosling, says he, and let in them young ribs when they come along, says he."

"Yes, I think I can hear Dr. Locke putting it like that!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Sure he didn't say, them blooming young ribs, Gossy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" said Harry. "I can't hear the jolly old bell. I don't think we're late for call-over, after all!"

"Wasted opportunity!" said Bob. "We could have been late, without getting into a row, for once."

The juniors tramped in, and Gosling, grunting, closed the gates. Gosling did not seem to approve of a damaged motorist being brought into Greyfriars and put to bed in the school sanatorium, while a medical man was sent for. But the headmaster of Greyfriars evidently had more benevolent views.

Harry Wharton & Co. were glad that the unfortunate man was in good hands and good care. They were feeling rather pleased with their own share in that strange adventure. Whoever the copper-faced man was, he had been the victim of a dastardly attack, and they had saved him from his pursuer.

They tramped cheerily across the dark quad to the lighted doorway of the

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House. In the circumstances, there was no doubt that Mr. Quelch would have excused them, had they been late for calling-over; still, it was just as well not to put that to the test, if it could be helped. As it happened, they had got back in time for roll-call, though not in time for gates, which were closed some time before the roll was called in Hall. They agreed that it had been quite thoughtful of the Head to tell Gosling to keep the gate open for them. Evidently, Mr. Vernon-Smith had told Dr. Locke of the happening on the road over the common, and the part they had played.

They came into the house in a cheery bunch, and Vernon-Smith called to the first fellow he saw—Ogilvy of the Remove.

"Seen my pater, Oggy?"

"Yes; he was with the Head, but he went up to your study afterwards, and I think he's waiting for you there," answered Ogilvy.

"Right-ho!"

The Bounder cut across to the stairs.

"Call-over in a few minutes, Smithy!" called out Hazeldene.

"Time to see my pater first," answered the Bounder.

He ran up the stairs.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Look out!"

But the warning came too late! As the Bounder ran up, a fat figure came bolting down. There was a terrific crash as they met.

The Bounder reeled over, clutched at the banisters, missed them, and rolled down! After him rolled Billy Bunter.

Bump, bump, bump, bump!

"Ow! Oh! Ow!"

"Yaroooh!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton. "That mad porpoise—"

"What the thump—"

There was a rush to the foot of the staircase. Vernon-Smith and Bunter arrived there mixed.

A dozen pairs of hands sorted them out. Harry Wharton and Redwing lifted up the breathless, dizzy Bounder. Five or six fellows dragged the spluttering Owl to his feet.

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter. "Ooo-er! Leggo! I say, you fellows, I never did it! Groogh! It wasn't me! Oh, dear! I thought it was Smithy in the study! Oh, lor! I say, leggo! The old beast is after me—ooogh!"

"What on earth's happened?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Leggo!" shrieked Bunter, struggling wildly.

"What have you done, you potty Owl?"

"Ow! Nothing! I tell you I thought it was Smithy in his study! Besides, I never did it! I haven't touched a tin of ink to-day. You can ask Toddy. He saw me mixing it! Oh crikey! Leggo!"

Billy Bunter fairly wrenched himself away from the juniors and ran. Trotter, the House page, had come along to close the big door. But it was still open, at the moment; and at that moment Billy Bunter was yearning for the open spaces! To his terrified, fat mind, Mr. Vernon-Smith, smothered with ink, was just behind him. Bunter flew.

He shot out of the door into the dusky quad like an arrow from a bow. Trotter stared after him blankly.

"What on earth—" gasped Frank Nugent.

"What the merry thump—"

"What has the blithering idiot done?"

The Bounder gasped for breath.

"He's jolly well winded me, and given

me about a dozen bumps! I'll smash him into a dozen lumps of suct—"

"But what—"

"Look!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

An extraordinary figure appeared from above, on the stairs. All eyes were fixed on it. Up to the neck, it was Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, millionaire financier. Above the neck, it appeared to be a Hottentot. Black as the ace of spades, Smithy's father came tottering down.

The Greyfriars fellows gazed at him spellbound. They could guess the cause of Bunter's frantic flight, now.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Is—is—is that you, father?" stammered Smithy.

He forgot his own bumps and bruises as he stared at the extraordinary figure on the stairs.

"That ass Bunter—" breathed Wharton.

"That blithering idiot Bunter—"

"Urrrgh!" came from Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Gurrgh! That boy Bunter—that dangerous lunatic Bunter—that—that—Gurrgh!"

Mr. Quelch came rustling up.

"What—" he began.

He broke off at the sight of Mr. Vernon-Smith. His eyes seemed to start from his face at the sight of the millionaire.

"Who—who—what—" stuttered the Remove master.

"It's my father, sir!" gasped the Bounder. "Somebody—somebody has—"

"Mr. Vernon-Smith!"

"Look at me, sir!" roared the millionaire. "Look!"

Really, it was unnecessary for Mr. Vernon-Smith to bid the beholders look. They were all looking, staring—in fact, gaping! Mr. Vernon-Smith was the cynosure of all eyes. He had the spotlight!

"What—what—what—" stuttered Quelch.

"Look at me!" roared Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I am smothered with ink, sir! Look at me! That boy Bunter—that young idiot Bunter—that young scoundrel and ruffian Bunter—the fat boy, sir; I think his name is Bunter—that insane young villain—"

"Has—has Bunter done this?" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Upon my word! He shall be flogged, sir—severely flogged! Upon my word! Pray come with me, sir—come with me! A wash, sir—a wash—"

Mr. Quelch led the inky millionaire away for a much-needed wash. Mr. Vernon-Smith gasped and gurgled, and dripped ink as he went. There was a subdued chuckle. It struck some of the fellows as funny. But the Bounder's face was pale with rage.

"Where's Bunter?" he breathed. "Where's that fat fool got to? I'll—I'll—"

"He cut into the quad!" said Harry Wharton. "He will get enough from Quelch for this, Smithy."

"I'll smash him!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the bell!" said Bob Cherry.

The Greyfriars fellows trooped away to Hall for calling-over. Smithy's gleaming eyes watched for Bunter. Every fellow had to turn up for call-over; so the fat Owl was naturally expected to join the ranks of the Remove.

But Bunter did not turn up.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, called the names. But no fat squeak from the Remove answered "Adsum" when Bunter's name was called.

Evidently, the terrified Owl was cutting call-over. Prout marked him absent, which was serious; but there was

no doubt that the Bounder would have marked him still more seriously had he not been absent! Anyhow, he did not turn up, and after roll-call he was not seen in the House. Just at present Billy Bunter, like Brer Fox, was lying low!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Something Like A Windfall!

"COME up to the study, you fellows!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the Rag, after calling-over, when Tom Redwing looked in and called to them.

Most of the fellows, with grinning faces, were discussing Billy Bunter and his antics. Bunter was missing from the House.

Mr. Quelch had been inquiring for him. Several prefects of the Sixth had been looking for him. He had not been found.

Clearly the fat Owl was in no hurry to be found.

Perhaps he was waiting for Mr. Vernon-Smith to go before he showed up. Perhaps he was simply postponing the evil hour, too unnerved to face the consequences of what he had done, till he could no longer help it. The juniors wondered whether he would turn up for prep, or stay out of the House till dorm. Probably Bunter was not enjoying a cold, misty February evening out of doors. Still, it was doubtless more enjoyable than an interview with Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith—in the circumstances!

The Famous Five joined Redwing. Mr. Vernon-Smith, cleaned and newly garnished, had gone up to his son's study with the Bounder, and Redwing had come to call the other fellows. They had rather wondered whether the millionaire would want to see them, and it appeared that he did. This looked as if the Polpelly affair was on the carpet—which was rather hard lines on Bunter, who had been so deeply concerned about his "whack." But not even to secure his whack would the fat Owl have interviewed Mr. Vernon-Smith just then.

The chums of the Remove went up with Redwing, and found the millionaire in Study No. 4. Mr. Vernon-Smith was still looking a little flustered; but he greeted the juniors very kindly and cheerfully. There was a grin on Smithy's face, from which they guessed that he knew what his father had to say.

The millionaire, having greeted the juniors, glanced at his watch. Billy Bunter's misdirected vengeance had taken up a great deal of the time he had to spare; and Mr. Vernon-Smith's time, of course, was of tremendous value. He had a train to catch, and trains, like time and tide, wait for no man.

The juniors would have liked to ask him a question about the injured foreigner he had brought to the school in his taxi, but there was no time for that. The millionaire, probably, had already forgotten that unimportant incident.

"Now," he said, "I've only a few minutes! My taxi's waiting, and I've got a train to catch at Courtfield. Have you boys thought anything about that Spanish treasure that was discovered in my old place at Polpelly in the Christmas holidays?"

"We hadn't forgotten it, sir," answered Harry Wharton.

"You didn't think I had, I hope," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Well, the doubloons have been valued and disposed of; the proper proportion of the



"Urrgh! Good gad! What—what—what—good gad! Urrgh!" Billy Bunter spun round, and stared into the study, his little round eyes almost popping through his big round spectacles. The plump and portly figure of Mr. Vernon-Smith, the millionaire, had risen into view. "Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, realising only too well that he had inked the wrong person.

proceeds paid over to the Government official concerned, and the remainder left in my hands, as the owner of the property."

Mr. Vernon-Smith paused at that.

Had Billy Bunter been present, undoubtedly a protesting squeak would have been heard in the pause.

Fortunately, Bunter was not present.

The Famous Five, not knowing what to expect, were silent. They really did consider that a whack all round would not be amiss. But certainly they had no idea of putting in a claim.

Mr. Vernon-Smith, smiling a plump smile, resumed:

"It seems to me only fair play for a certain proportion of the proceeds to be divided among all the boys who had a hand in the discovery. The actual discovery, I believe, was made by Bull."

"Franky was with me," said Johnny Bull.

"But you spotted it," said Nugent.

"Oh rot!" said Johnny Bull. "Anyhow, neither of us would have got away with a single bit of it if the other fellows hadn't found us and got us out of the scrape we were in."

"That's right as rain!" agreed Frank.

"Chiefly Smithy," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, spare my blushes!" grinned the Bounder. "We're all standing in this together!"

"That is the idea!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Even that idiotic boy Bunter—he had little to do with it. I think, but he was a member of the party, and my son has told me that even Bunter came in useful on occasion. Are you boys agreeable to share equally with Bunter?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Of course!"

"After what happened in this study an hour ago," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, rather grimly, "I was a little inclined to change my mind about Bunter. However, as he is going to receive a flogging for his folly, we will let it go at that. Share and share alike!"

"Right as rain!" said Harry.

"There are nine persons to share, including my son and Redwing's father," went on Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Five hundred pounds each—"

"Eh?"

"What?"

The Famous Five fairly blinked at Mr. Vernon-Smith. What the value of the Polpelly treasure might have been they did not precisely know. But the idea of receiving such a sum as five hundred pounds each rather took their breath away.

"You're not serious, sir?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Quite!"

"Five hundred pounds!" gasped the captain of the Remove.

"Precisely that!"

"Bunter will burst!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Naturally," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, "I cannot place such a sum in the hands of schoolboys."

"Hardly!" grinned Bob. "Quelch would have something to say about a Remove chap having five hundred quids in his pockets."

"The sayfulness would be terrific!"

"Probably your parents will advise you how to dispose of it," said the millionaire. "The Easter holidays are not very far off, and you may elect to spend it on a holiday—a trip abroad, or something of the kind."

"We could get farther than Margate on five hundred pounds!" remarked Bob.

"But that is your affair," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "The money will be yours, to do exactly as you like with, subject to your parents' approval, of course. In the meantime, I have placed it with your headmaster, Dr. Locke. It will be safe in his hands until you have communicated with your homes. Is that satisfactory to you?"

"Quite, sir!"

"Yes, rather!"

"You're awfully good, sir," said Harry. "Of course, we landed on the stuff at Polpelly; but you're not bound—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith waved a plump hand.

"Fair play's a jewel!" he said. "Mr. Redwing has already received his share, and Tom has asked me to place his share in his father's keeping, which I shall do. My son's share I have banked for him. Six shares, belonging to you five boys and Bunter, are lodged with Dr. Locke." Mr. Vernon-Smith glanced at his watch again. "Satisfied, I hope?"

"More than that, sir!"

"Hurrah!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled.

"Now I must go," he said. "Herbert, you may come down to the taxi with me. Good-bye, my boys!"

He shook hands very cordially all round with the Famous Five, and left the study with the Bounder and Redwing. Left in Study No. 4, the chums of the Remove gazed at one another.

"Five hundred pounds!" said Bob, with a whistle. "I say, I suppose we ain't dreaming this?"

"The dreamfulness is not preposterous!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Five—hurrah!—hundred—hurrah!—quids! Hurrah! Hip-hip hurrah!" roared Bob Cherry, in tones that woke most of the echoes of the Remove passage.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's ripping!" he said. "Top-ping!"

"The topfulness is——"

"Terrific and preposterous!" roared Bob, grabbing the Nabob of Bhanipur, and waltzing him round Smithy's study table.

"Ow! Leggo! My esteemed idiotic Bob——" gasped Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Hip-hip—Yaroooooh!" roared Bob, as he slipped in a pool of ink and went over, dragging the nabob down with a crash to the floor.

"Yoo-hoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner looked into the study.

"What on earth's the row?" he asked.

"You fellows come into a fortune?"

"Just that," said Nugent, laughing.

"Old Smith tipped you five bob each?" asked Skinner.

"Five hundred pounds each!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Five hundred pounds——"

"Five hundred rats!" said Skinner. "Tell that to somebody who will believe it!"

And Skinner walked away, laughing. But Skinner's unbelief did not worry the Famous Five. When they went along to their studies to prep, they went rejoicing.

Fellows were not supposed to talk to one another in prep; but that evening a good many fellows in the Remove did. Before prep was over, all the Remove knew of the Famous Five's windfall. All but Bunter—who was still missing. Bunter had not heard yet. Somewhere out in the February mist the hapless Owl of the Remove remained in ignorance even of his own windfall.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Dodging In The Dark!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. found Mr. Quelch at the door when they came down after prep.

The Remove master had his coat on, and was, apparently, going out. They wondered whether he was going to look for Billy Bunter. The captain of the Remove stopped to speak to his Form-master.

"If you please, sir——" he began.

Mr. Quelch glanced round.

"What is it, Wharton?"

His manner was very gracious. The Remove master was pleased with the part the boys of his Form had taken in helping the injured foreigner, now under medical care in the school sanatorium. Who the man was, and why he had been attacked, nobody knew; but it was certain that the Removites had saved him from his mysterious assailant.

"That foreign chap, sir!" said Harry. "I—I wondered if we might be allowed to see him, sir. We're rather sorry for him——"

"The sorrowfulness is terrific, honoured sahib!" remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"I am about to pay him a visit myself," he said. "You may come with me if you wish. I hope we may find that the poor fellow has recovered consciousness by this time."

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The Famous Five were quite pleased to walk out with their Form-master to pay that visit. They were curious about the copper-faced man, and they were interested and sympathetic. They put on coats and caps, for the school sanatorium was detached from the other buildings, and the night was cold and misty.

With a hope that they would find the victim of the "bola" on the way to recovery, they followed Mr. Quelch.

"You have seen nothing of Bunter, Wharton?" asked the Remove master, as they crossed the corner of the quad towards the Head's garden.

"No, sir," said Harry. "I don't think he came in for prep."

"The utterly foolish boy seems to be terrified at what he has done," said Mr. Quelch. "He has reason, of course, as undoubtedly he will be flogged by his headmaster. The most severe flogging——"

"Ow!" came a squeak from the darkness.

Mr. Quelch jumped.

"Who—what—is that Bunter?"

"Oh lor'!"

There was a patter of running feet.

The chums of the Remove exchanged grinning glances. Evidently the fat

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Owl had been lurking near the House, and he had been within hearing of Mr. Quelch's voice.

"Bunter! Stop!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Stop at once! I shall take you to your headmaster!"

If Bunter was still within hearing of Mr. Quelch's voice, he was getting out of it as fast as his fat little legs would carry him. The patter of flying feet died away in the gloom.

Mr. Quelch breathed hard and deep.

"The utterly stupid boy!" he muttered.

He walked on to the gate of the Head's garden, on the other side of which was the sanatorium. It was very dark at the gate, and as the Remove master reached it, he gave a sudden jump as a shadow stirred.

"Bunter! Is that you Bunter?"

"Oh crikey!"

Evidently it was Bunter!

"Secure that stupid boy at once!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

But that was easier said than done. There was a wild scrambling in the gloom, which hinted that the fugitive fat Owl was scrambling over the gate. Bob Cherry made a dive for the sound, and grabbed—and staggered back with a wild yell:

"Wow!"

He clasped a hand to an anguished nose. Something had smitten that nose hard—apparently Bunter's boot, as he scrambled over the gate and fled into the Head's garden.

"Cherry!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yow-ow! Ow! Wow!"

"Why are you uttering those ridicu-

lous noises, Cherry?" thundered the Remove master.

"Ow! My nose! Ow! My boko! Wow!" gasped Bob. "I've got a bang on the boko—wow! Ow!"

"Oh! That ridiculous boy! Bunter! Bunter! BUNTER!"

Quelch's voice was lifted in wrath. But answer there came none! Billy Bunter had vanished into the dark shrubberies.

Breathing very hard and very deep, Mr. Quelch opened the gate, and the juniors followed him into the shadowy garden—Bob with a red-spotted handkerchief pressed to his nose!

They followed the path to "sanny." Under the leafless branches, amid thick shrubberies, it was very gloomy.

A sudden shadow crossed the Remove master's path, darting away.

"Bunter!" he hooted.

No answer.

"Was that Bunter, sir?" asked Harry. "It seemed to me bigger than Bunter."

He peered after the vanished shadow.

"Who else could be lurking in this garden at this hour, Wharton?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Certainly it was that foolish boy! BUNTER!"

But there came no reply, and the shadow had vanished. Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips, stalked on again, followed by the juniors.

Billy Bunter was postponing the evil hour; but he certainly was not improving matters by so doing. Mr. Quelch's wrath, like wine, improved with keeping!

A light gleamed from a window of "sanny" over the dark garden. The window was only partly curtained, and as the room was on the ground floor, the juniors could see Mrs. Kebble, the matron, moving within. That room, they supposed, was occupied by the copper-faced man. They were quite anxious to see him, and see how he was progressing.

They followed Mr. Quelch into the building and down a passage. A door opened, and Mr. Quelch spoke to Mrs. Kebble in a low voice, the juniors respectfully waiting.

The Remove master turned round to them at last.

"It appears that the unfortunate man has not yet recovered consciousness," he said. "You may, if you desire, see him, but tread softly."

"Yes, sir!"

The juniors passed in, on tiptoe.

A shaded light burned, glimmering on the copper-complexioned face of the foreigner who had been roped in by the "bola" on the Courtfield Road, a few hours ago. The black-haired head was bandaged; the eyes closed. But the copper-faced man stirred and muttered. In the silence, the juniors caught a muttering of foreign words from his lips.

"Poor chap!" muttered Bob.

That crack of his head on the frosty road had evidently hit the man hard. The stirring and muttering seemed to hint that consciousness was struggling back, but the eyes had not yet opened. Mr. Quelch listened intently. He knew many languages; and by picking up a word or two, he hoped to trace the nationality of the sufferer.

"Nao toque! Corpo de Deos! Nao toque!" came quite clearly.

"Is that Spanish?" muttered Bob.

"La fazenda——" came the mutter.

Harry Wharton gave a start as he listened.

"Portuguese!" he said.

Mr. Quelch gave his head boy a surprised stare. Portuguese was quite an unknown tongue at Greyfriars school.

Mr. Quelch had already realised that a tongue which sounded like Spanish, but had a nasal intonation, was no doubt Portuguese; but he certainly had not expected any boy in his Form to be acquainted with that circumstance.

"Sim, sim, senhor!" came the mutter, and then it suddenly changed to English, "Greyfriars school—in a county of Kent in Inglaterra—sim, sim, I shall go to find it—sim, sim!"

"Bless my soul!" breathed Mr. Quelch. "Is it possible that that unfortunate man was coming to this very place when he was attacked?"

The juniors stood amazed. The copper-faced man had been coming down the road from Courtfield in his car towards the school, when the attack and the disaster had happened. But they had never dreamed that he could be heading for Greyfriars itself. Yet, to judge by his mutterings, Greyfriars school had been his destination.

Mr. Quelch signed to the juniors to follow him, and they went out into the passage. The matron closed the door on them, shutting off the strange mutterings of the man from the tropics.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Night Out!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir!"

"You suppose the man to be a Portuguese?"

"From what he said, sir—"

"Quite so!" said Mr. Quelch, eyeing his head boy. "But surely you are not acquainted with the Portuguese language, my boy?"

Harry Wharton smiled. All the Portuguese words he knew might have been counted on his fingers. Still, as it happened, he did know enough to recognize the language when it was spoken—having a good memory.

"Oh, no, sir!" he answered. "But I picked up a few words from a chap who used to be in the Remove here—"

"There has never been a Portuguese boy at Greyfriars to my knowledge, Wharton!" said the astonished Remove master.

"No, sir, but you remember Valentine—"

"Valentine!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"Jim Valentine, sir, who was here some time ago. He had an uncle in Brazil, and at one time he hoped to go out and join him, and studied Portuguese for that reason. You remember he was in our study, Nugent—"

"Yes, rather!" answered Nugent.

"Valentine used to talk about his uncle in Brazil sometimes, sir," explained Harry. "You remember, sir, that when he left Greyfriars, it was when his uncle came for him, and he went back to Brazil with Mr. Valentine—"

"I remember, certainly," assented Mr. Quelch.

"Jim—I mean, Valentine—spouted Portuguese in the study sometimes," said Harry. "He kept it up because he always hoped to hear from his uncle in Brazil, where they speak that language. That's how I happen to know a few words, sir."

"I see!"

"I remember the word 'fazenda,'" said Harry. "They call a coffee plantation a fazenda in Brazil."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch.

"And 'Corpo de Deos' is what the Portuguese say when they mean 'my hat' or 'By Jove!'"

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"It's just like Spanish, of course,

sir!" said Harry. "But there's a difference in the vowels, and I remember Valentine telling me about it. His uncle was used to speaking Portuguese in Brazil, and he said once or twice, 'Corpo de Deos!' and Valentine told us—"

"I understand, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch, with an approving nod. "You have a retentive memory, my boy—a very useful thing. There can be no doubt that this unfortunate man is Portuguese, whether European or Brazilian; and this may help us to trace his friends, if necessary."

The juniors followed their Form-master back to the House. On the way, Mr. Quelch kept a keen eye open for a sign of Billy Bunter. But there was neither sign nor sound of the fatuous fat Owl.

Arrived at the House, Mr. Quelch went to the Head's study, perhaps to apprise him that it had transpired that the unconscious man in "sanny" was of Portuguese nationality. The juniors went into the Rag, wondering whether Bunter had come in during their absence.

But the fat figure and big spectacles of William George Bunter did not meet their view.

"Hasn't that blithering owl come in?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Not yet!" grinned Peter Todd. "The dear boy's going to make a night of it, it seems!"

"He dodged into the Head's garden," said Harry. "Surely the howling ass will have sense enough to come in, in time for dorm."

"Has he ever had any sense?" demanded Peter.

"Well, no, but—"

"He's got it coming to him!" granted Johnny Bull. "If he had the sense of a bunny rabbit, he would come in and get it over."

"Alas!" said Toddy. "He hasn't!" It looked as if Toddy was right; for when half-past nine came, the bedtime for the Remove, Bunter was still missing.

The Lower Fourth marched off to their dormitory: a good many grinning faces among them.

Billy Bunter was well-known in his Form, to be innumerable sorts of an ass. But Bunter's latest really seemed the limit! It was true that a flogging awaited him when he turned up. No fellow could be expected to be anxious to bag a flogging. But the fatuous Owl was only putting it off—it had to come, and the longer it was put off, the more severe it was likely to be.

Wingate of the Sixth saw lights out for the Remove. After he had gone, there was a buzz of talk in the dormitory. Bunter was the topic. Even the Famous Five's windfall took second place. Bunter, lurking in outer darkness, did not even know that he was richer by five hundred pounds since the visit of the city gentleman over whom he had mopped the ink. For some time, the juniors expected,

every other moment, to hear the dormitory door open, and to see the fat Owl marched in.

But the door did not open; Bunter was not marched in. Fellows dropped off to sleep one by one. It was a very late hour, and the juniors were asleep, when Harry Wharton started out of a doze, at the sound of a loud crack!

He sat up in bed in astonishment.

"What the thump—" he ejaculated.

"That's the window!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, also awakened.

Crack!

Another loud, sharp crack came, and fragments of glass dropped inside the dormitory.

"Some potty ass chucking stones!" gasped Bob. "At this time of night, too!"

"Bunter!" exclaimed Wharton.

He jumped out of bed, and ran to the window. There was a ripple of merriment in the darkness. Somebody was throwing up stones from the quad outside, and evidently it could only be the fat Owl, trying to attract the attention of his Form-fellows. One pane was cracked, and one was broken. Wharton jerked open the high window, and stared out.

There was a glimmer of starlight through the February gloom. It gleamed on a large pair of spectacles, upturned.

Bunter was below—far below.

Apparently he saw Wharton's head projected from the window, for he ceased to hurl stones.

"I say, is that you, Toddy?" came a breathless squeak from below.

"You potty ass!" howled Wharton.

"You howling lunatic—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You've broken the window, you piffing porpoise!"

"Blow the window! I believe I've broken two or three—some of the stones fell short—"

"Oh scissors!"

"I had to make you hear. I've been chucking up stones for a quarter of an hour, you beast!" howled Bunter.

"Go and knock at the door, fathhead! Quelch will let you in!"

"I'll watch it!" gasped Bunter.

"You unspeakable idiot—"

"Beast! I say, old chap, is Quelch waxy?" squeaked Bunter. "I mean, hasn't he got over it yet? Think he's still waxy?"

(Continued on next page.)

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"Still waxy!" gasped Wharton.

He stared down at the fat figure, an anxious fat face below. Apparently Bunter had been nourishing a hope that, with the passage of time, Mr. Quelch's wrath might abate! It did not seem probable to Harry Wharton! Far from it! Rather was the Remove master's wrath likely to intensify, till it reached boiling point.

"Yes, old fellow. Think the brute's got over his tantrums yet?" inquired Bunter anxiously.

"Hardly!" gasped Wharton.

"Oh lor'!"

"Look here, you fat chump, knock at the door——"

"No fear! Not if Quelch is still waxy! I say, you come out and bring me some blankets——"

"B-b-blankets!" stuttered Wharton.

"And a pillow——"

"Pip-pip-pillow——"

"And some grub—I'm fearfully hungry——"

"Grub?"

"Yes, old chap. It's up to you to stand by a fellow, after all I've done for you. You can risk breaking bounds, you know, for a pal. I say, I can camp in the summer-house in the Head's garden, if I have some blankets and a pillow, and some grub—mind you don't forget the grub."

Bunter broke off suddenly.

A door opened, and a flood of light streamed out into the darkness of the quadrangle. Two or three figures appeared in the light.

Bunter's stone-throwing exploits, and the sound of voices, had evidently drawn attention. The fat junior spun round in dismay.

"Bunter!" came a deep voice.

"Oh crikey!"

"Bunter—stop——"

Bunter vanished.

Harry Wharton popped back from the window. He did not want to be seen there if Mr. Quelch looked up.

Keeping back, he could see flash-lamps moving about in the gloom, like will-of-the-wisps. Evidently the Remove master and some of the prefects were looking for Bunter.

"What did the howling ass want?" asked Bob Cherry, as the captain of the Remove groped back to his bed.

"Only blankets and things for camping out," answered Harry.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear old Bunter!" chuckled Toddy.

"Isn't he a lad?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They're after him!" said Harry. "I dare say they'll be marching him in in a few minutes now."

But they did not march Bunter in. If he had scuttled back to the Head's garden they were not likely to search that shadowy expanse for him. The dormitory door did not open; Bunter did not come marching home. Evidently the terrified fat Owl was making a night of it.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Man At The Window.

" H lor'!" groaned Billy Bunter.

Bunter was feeling bad.

A dozen times, at least, the fat Owl had been tempted to give it up, and his footsteps had been turned in the direction of the House. But every time the awful prospect before him drove him back. The fat Owl of the Remove never, perhaps, had much in the way of sense, and now he was scared fairly out of his fat wits, such as they were.

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He was going to be flogged when found—that was a cert! The only resource was, not to be found! But how long Billy Bunter could keep up this extraordinary game was a problem to which he had no idea of finding an answer.

He had a hope—a faint one, certainly—that Quelch might relent—and get over his temper. The just wrath of a school-master was, to Billy Bunter, merely temper. Merely that and nothing more.

And if it was merely temper, a man might get over it—given time. Bunter was giving Quelch plenty of time.

But even the fat and fatheaded Owl of the Remove realised that this was a very frail reed to lean upon. Even Bunter had a glimmering of the fact that a fellow who dodged punishment was rather more likely to exasperate a beak than to pacify him.

Still, he was getting out of the flogging—so far! That, after all, was the important point. If only he had had something to eat, Bunter would have considered that, so far, he had handled the situation pretty well. Billy Bunter's fat intellect moved in mysterious ways, its wonders to perform.

Quelch's heart, he hoped, might be touched, by a fellow staying out of doors on a cold and clammy night. He might get anxious about Bunter—and perhaps anxiety might banish wrath.

On the other hand, it might intensify it. You never could tell. Bunter could only hope for the best.

In the meantime the hour was late; Bunter was cold, he was sleepy, and he was hungry. But he was too cold to sleep, generally his resource when he had nothing else on hand. He might have forgotten the empty space within, in slumber. But he could not forget the cold. It kept him awake.

He had tried to sleep, stretched on the bench in the summer-house. But in February, that little building seemed cruelly mis-named. It was a winter-house, not a summer-house now. Hence Bunter's desperate attempt to get help from the Remove fellows. If only those unfeeling beasts would have supplied him with blankets, he could have managed.

Instead of which the captain of the Remove had only called him names from the window, and cracking panes had given the alarm, and the fat Owl had had another narrow escape.

Bunter groaned dismally.

He tramped on the damp and clammy paths in the Head's garden—where he was safe from capture, though not from cold and hunger. And these began to seem to Bunter almost worse than capture, as the night grew older. He haunted the vicinity of the glimmering window of the sanatorium building. That light, burning through the dark night, was some sort of company for the lonely and solitary Owl.

Bunter knew nothing about the foreign motorist who had been brought in. He had been busily occupied at the time in his study.

He was rather surprised to see a light burning so late in the sanatorium; he was aware that no Greyfriars fellow was on the sick list.

Blinking in at the half-curtained window, he spotted Mrs. Kebble several times; but after a late hour the matron was seen no more. Somebody was occupying the room, but a screen was in the way, and Bunter saw nothing of the copper-faced man. But the light showed that the room was occupied—a shaded light burning through the night.

The desperate idea even came into Bunter's mind of getting in at that

lighted window, and curling up in some corner where it would be warm, at least.

It would have been easy enough, for the window was on the ground floor, and it was open at the top. Bunter could have pushed up the lower sash and got in. But he did not dare make the venture.

"Beasts!" groaned Bunter, alluding to Harry Wharton & Co., Smithy, and his father, the Head and his staff, and the world generally.

Once more he almost made up his fat mind to surrender. He was dismally debating it, when a sound in the silent garden made him jump. It was a rustle in the shrubbery, made by someone coming quietly towards the open space where Bunter stood, blinking at the glimmering window.

That sound, hinting of capture, banished the idea of surrender at once. Bunter made one bound to escape.

He bolted into the nearest rhododendrons, caught his foot, stumbled, and fell. As he lay panting, he heard a footfall, and dared not rise again. Someone was close at hand, and if he rose, the glimmer from the window would reveal him. He lay and palpitated, his fat heart pounding.

Quelch, of course, hunting for him. That was a certainty to his terrified mind. In sheer terror he listened as he lay.

To his intense relief the footfalls did not approach him. He had not been seen.

A long, long minute passed. There was silence. The footfalls had ceased. Had the beast gone?

Bunter ventured to lift his head at last, and blink round through his big spectacles. He popped back, as he saw a dark figure standing in the glimmering light of the window.

The man, whoever he was, was not a dozen feet away. But it dawned on Bunter that the man's back was to him, and that it was not Mr. Quelch. Cautiously, he raised his head again, and blinked.

It was a thick-set, stocky man who stood at the window, peering in through the space left by the curtain. The light from within showed his face—brown as a berry, with an aquiline nose—a nose rather like a beak. Bunter had a glimpse of a short, pointed black beard and jetty eyelashes. Certainly it was not Quelch—it was nothing like Quelch! It was nobody Bunter had ever seen before—the man was a complete stranger to him, and evidently a foreigner of southern race.

Bunter blinked at him, petrified with astonishment.

What was that foreigner—that dago—doing there? Anywhere else in the school precincts at that hour he would have supposed that an intruder was a burglar. But the most enterprising burglar could hardly have set out to burgle a school sanatorium. The fellow was not a tramp, looking for a surreptitious night's lodging. He looked quite well-dressed—his overcoat was good, so was the foreign-looking hat slouched over his dark face. Who was he? And what did he want?

Whoever he was, and whatever he wanted, he was up to no good, that was certain. If Bunter would have been terrified by the appearance of Mr. Quelch, he was doubly and trebly terrified by the appearance of that dark, foreign-looking man. He crouched in the shrubbery, not daring to make a sound, his eyes and his spectacles glued on the swarthy profile of the face at the window.

The dark man pressed that dark face



"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, as Vernon-Smith ran up the stairs. "Look out!" But the warning came too late. As the Bounder ran up, Bunter came bolting down. There was a terrific crash as the two juniors met, and they both rolled down the stairs together. Bump, bump, bump! "Ow! Oh! Ow!" "Yaroooh!"

close to the glass, peering into the lighted room. A muttered word came from him, catching Bunter's straining ears.

"Bom!"

Bunter knew as much Portuguese as he knew of the language of the man in the moon. But he knew what that ejaculation meant; the pronunciation being very much like the French word "bon." And Bunter knew as much French as Monsieur Charpentier had been able to drive into his head. It was not much, certainly; but he knew that bon meant "Good." He concluded that the man at the window was a Frenchman, and that he was satisfied with what he saw in the lighted room—whatever it was. Harry Wharton could have told him that "bom," with a nasal intonation, was a Portuguese word; remembering that he had heard it from Valentine of the Remove long ago. But to Billy Bunter it was French!

The dark man ceased to peer in at the window. He groped and fumbled, and quietly raised the lower sash.

Bunter blinked at the stocky figure clambering in at the window. It dropped silently inside the room, and vanished.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

The window was left wide open. From within came a startled exclamation that reached Bunter's fat ears—in another voice he had never heard before.

"O lobo! O lobo! É possível?"

This was Portuguese, but it was Greek to Bunter. He might have guessed—had he thought—that "lobo" meant "wolf"—but he could not have guessed that "o" was the definite article in Portuguese, and meant "the." The man in the bed—evidently con-

scious now—was exclaiming, in startled tones:

"The wolf! The wolf! Is it possible?"

"Sim, sim, João Frulo!" came the hissing answer. "O lobo, de veras! A carta—a carta—"

"Nao!" gasped the man in the bed. "Nunca!"

"A carta—de presso—"

Billy Bunter heard that exchange of words, without giving them any attention, however. He heard them over his fat shoulder as he bolted. Now that the dark-faced man was out of his sight, it was a chance for Bunter to go—and he went. Scrambling out of the rhododendrons, gasping for breath, Bunter bolted down the dark path as fast as his fat little legs could go. And there was a sudden crash, and he squeaked with terror as hands seized him in the darkness.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Out of Bounds!

"ROT!" said Johnny Bull.

"The rotfulness is terrific!" yawned the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Well, I'll go!" said Harry Wharton. "Fathead!" said Bob Cherry. But he turned out of bed.

"This means a row!" remarked Nugent, as he pulled on his trousers.

"Well, look here, I'll go, but you fellows—"

"Don't be an ass, old chap!"

"Sink or swim together!" said Bob Cherry. "If you're going to ask for a licking from Quelch, we'll all say the same!"

Harry Wharton was already dressing in the dark. His comrades turned out,

and followed suit. It was not pleasant on a raw and clammy February night! And it was rather a serious matter to break bounds at midnight. It meant severe trouble, in case of discovery—especially with Mr. Quelch already in a perturbed and exasperated frame of mind, on account of Bunter's antics.

"Look here, we shall manage it all right!" said Harry. "That fat idiot, from what he said, is in the Head's garden—most likely in the summer-house there. We shall find him all right!"

"He won't come in!" said Johnny.

"He will if we take him by the ears."

"Something in that!" agreed Bob, with a chuckle. "Luckily, they're large, and there will be plenty of room for all of us to hold on!"

"We can't leave that howling ass out all night if we can hook him in," said the captain of the Remove. "They'll find him in the morning—and they may as well find him in bed as out of it!"

"Quite as well," agreed Bob. "Bunter would understand that if he could understand anything."

"Going after Bunter?" yawned Skinner. "If you can't find him, I'll tell you how to wangle it!"

"How's that?" asked Harry.

"Make a noise like a jam tart! Bunter will come running!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!"

There was a chortle from the fellows awake in the Remove dormitory. The Famous Five dressed quickly in the dark.

Now that he knew where to look for the fat and fatuous Owl, the captain of the Remove was disinclined to go back to bed and leave the hapless

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(Continued from page 13.)

Bunter out in the cold. Obviously, it was better for Bunter to be found inside the House in the morning instead of outside it. It was likely to lessen his punishment if he did not, after all, have a night out. And it was very likely that he would catch a bad cold if he stayed out—and it was clear by this time that the combined effect of funk and folly would not let him come in.

Once he was collared, he would not have any choice about that. Wharton was prepared to pull him along by a fat ear, if necessary; and it was certain that wherever Bunter's fat ear went, Bunter would follow!

Quietly, the Famous Five went to the door, stepped out of the dormitory into the dark passage, and closed the door softly behind them.

They trod away on tiptoe to the stairs.

As they descended with great caution to the Remove passage, they could see a glimmer of light at the foot of the main staircase. Late as it was, everybody had not yet gone to bed. They had no doubt that Mr. Quelch was remaining up on account of the fat Owl, and they could guess his frame of mind—they could guess it so accurately that they were extremely anxious that Quelch should not discover them out of their dormitory.

In deep darkness, they trod down the Remove passage to the box-room at the end.

From the box-room window it was easy for active fellows to drop to the leads outside and clamber to the ground.

In a few minutes more the chums of the Remove were under the faint glimmer of stars from a misty sky.

When they emerged into the quadrangle, they looked towards the window of Mr. Quelch's study, and saw that a light was still burning there. Evidently, the Remove master was still up.

"Lucky he's not still hunting Bunter!" murmured Bob. "He might find unexpected game!"

"Quiet!" breathed Wharton.

"What—"

"Quiet! Look!"

A tiny winking light appeared in the darkness of the quadrangle. It was evidently that of an electric flash-lamp. The juniors caught their breath.

"Quelch!" breathed Frank Nugent.

"Who else?" muttered Wharton.

"Quiet, for goodness' sake!"

It had not occurred to the Famous Five that Quelch might be still rooting after the elusive Owl at that late hour. But as the winking light passed at a distance, they had a glimpse of a tall, angular form and a grim set face. It was Quelch—and they were only too glad to see him, and his light, disappear beyond the elms.

"A night out for Quelch, as well as Bunter!" murmured Bob. "I sup-

pose the prefects have gone to bed—but poor old Quelch—"

"Hark!"

A voice came from the darkness.

"Have you seen anything of him, Wingate?"

"No, sir!" came back the voice of the captain of Greyfriars.

The juniors, blotted in a dark corner of the wall, made no sound or movement. Their hearts were beating. Quelch, evidently, felt that it was his duty to keep up the search for the missing Owl. But it was very doubtful whether he would have regarded it as the duty of members of his Form.

The Remove master's voice came again.

"Perhaps you had better go to bed, Wingate. The others have gone. It is my duty to find that foolish boy. He may catch a serious cold. But you—"

"I'll stick it as long as you do, sir."

A winking light glimmered again, and disappeared. Master and prefect were gone, and the Removites breathed more freely.

"Come on!" whispered Harry.

The risk of the expedition was increased by the discovery that a master and a Sixth Form prefect were out of the House, searching for Bunter. As he had been spotted near the House, when he called up to Wharton at the dormitory window, probably Mr. Quelch suspected that he was still near at hand, seeking another opportunity to communicate with his Form-fellows. Anyhow, it was in the quad that Quelch and Wingate were searching, while Wharton had no doubt that the fat Owl had scuttled back to the safe darkness of the Head's garden, and was probably to be found in the summer-house there.

Quickly the juniors reached the garden gate, and clambered over it. They were rather glad to have that gate between them and Mr. Quelch.

"This way!" breathed Wharton.

He flashed on an electric torch in the summer-house, but the beam of light revealed at once that it was empty.

"Not here," muttered Bob.

"Bother the fat idiot!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Where is he?"

"The wherefulness is terrific!"

They emerged from the summer-house, Wharton shutting off the torch. The light might have been spotted from the quad on the open path. Ahead of the juniors, glimmering through the misty night, was the lighted window of the room occupied by the injured Portuguese in "sanny."

Bob uttered a startled exclamation.

"By gum! That window's wide open!"

"Open!" repeated Wharton. "Has Bunter—"

"Has even that footling ass—"

"Looks like it. Come on!"

They could see that the lower sash of the window was pushed right up; the curtains fluttered in the night wind. Obviously Mrs. Kebble could not have left it so, and the juniors could only conclude that the fatuous Owl had climbed in for warmth and shelter—as, indeed, he had thought of doing.

"The blithering ass!" breathed Harry. "We shall have to hook him out of that. Buck up!"

They rushed up the dark path. There was a sudden crash as they rushed into a running figure bolting towards them. The juniors staggered right and left under the unexpected shock.

"Ow!" came a startled squeak.

"Ow! Wow! Ooogh! Leggo! Keep off! Oh crikey!"

"Bunter!" gasped Bob.

Frank Nugent and the nabob were sprawling; but Wharton, Bob, and Johnny Bull grasped the fat Owl at once.

Why he was rushing at headlong speed down a dark path they could not begin to guess. But it was Bunter; and they had got him! They grasped him hard.

Bunter struggled wildly.

"Ow! Leggo! It wasn't me! I meant it for Smithy, too. Besides, I never did it! I haven't been near Smithy's study, and I never—"

"You howling ass!"

"Oh crikey! I say, you fellows, I thought it was Quelch! I say, leggo! I say, have you brought me some blankets? What about the grub?"

Bunter ceased to struggle. "I say, you fellows, don't go near that window! That villain's there! I fancy he's got a knife!"

"Wha-at!"

"That Frenchman!" gasped Bunter. The juniors gazed at him.

"Frenchman!" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Yes; he was speaking French, at least. I say, I believe he heard me. He must have heard me! He will be after me! Run for it, you fellows! Oh crikey! There he is! Suppose he's got a knife! Leggo! Oh lor'!"

Bunter blinked back at the lighted window. Harry Wharton & Co. stared at it in utter amazement. Bunter had feared that the dark-faced man might have heard his hurried flight; and he was right. Some sound of the scrambling Owl had reached keen ears, and given the alarm. Framed in the window was a stocky figure, surmounted by a slouched hat.

The juniors gazed at it, spellbound.

Hidden in the deep darkness they were invisible to the man at the window. But they saw him clearly in the light—the stocky figure, the slouched hat, the swarthy face with its beaky nose and pointed black beard. As they gazed, petrified, the man, apparently satisfied by the silence, turned from the window, and disappeared from their sight.

"I say, you fellows!" spluttered Bunter. "Run for it! He's a burglar, or something! I say, suppose he's got a knife? I say, run—run!"

Harry Wharton & Co. ran—but not from the lighted window. They ran towards it. Some stranger had entered by the window—the room where the injured Portuguese lay. And they hardly needed telling that it was most likely the unknown man who had attacked him on the Court-field road. In a breathless bunch the juniors, leaving Bunter to his own devices, raced for the open window, and the fat Owl, staggering and gasping, blinked after them.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Removites To The Rescue!

"**N**AO—nao—nunca!" repeated the copper-faced man, sitting up in bed, his face desperate, his eyes gleaming under the bandages. "Nao—nao!"

"A carta—a carta!" snarled O Lobo savagely. With a savage look on his swarthy face he whipped a knife from under his overcoat. There was a flash of bare steel in the light. "Nao se mexa—a carta!"

The panting juniors heard the words as they reached the window. The stocky man was demanding a letter from the man in the bed; and they caught the flash of steel.

Harry Wharton put his hands on the sill, and vaulted into the room—a single jump which he could hardly have made at any other time. But he did it, and landed on his feet within. He staggered and straightened up as the stocky man turned from the bedside with a panting cry of rage.

The bandaged man, as surprised as his assailant, stared.

"Corpo de Deus!" he gasped.

The Co. were scrambling headlong in at the window. Harry Wharton was leaping at the midnight intruder; but he jumped back as the knife went up in a dusky hand.

Bob, as he scrambled in, stumbled over a hassock. He grabbed it up as he leaped to his feet.

The stocky man, whom the other called by the strange name of "O Lobo," faced the juniors, his dark face ablaze with rage and alarm.

"Tome cuidado!" came gasping from the man in the bed; which Wharton, at least, knew to mean "Take care!" Whiz!

The hassock flew from Bob Cherry's hands. O Lobo's snapping, black eyes were on Wharton when the hassock came, with all the force Bob's strong arms could put behind it.

It struck him full on his aquiline nose, and he staggered, bumped on the bedside, and stumbled over on the floor.

As he sprawled Wharton leaped forward again instantly, and kicked the knife from the dusky hand.

The steel flashed as it whizzed across the room, and dropped in a corner.

"Bag him!" panted Wharton.

With the activity of a panther, or of the wolf after which he was named, O Lobo sprang to his feet.

He gave one infuriated glare round for his weapon, but he had no chance of reaching it.

The five juniors were springing at him. He was barred off from the open window by which he had entered. Backing, panting with rage, he made a desperate bound for the door.

Before the juniors could seize him, though their finger-tips were almost on him, he had thrown the door open, and darted into the passage.

"After him!" panted Bob.

The juniors rushed out of the room in pursuit. There was a crash of glass from a breaking window.

A moment more, and they stood at the passage window, staring at the smashed glass. Outside, in the darkness, pattering footsteps of a man wildly fleeing died away into silence.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

"He's gone!"

"Let's get back to that chap," said Wharton hurriedly.

The juniors ran back to the lighted room.

The copper-faced man, sitting in the bed, gazed at them with bulging, black eyes as they came back. Bob Cherry ran to pick up the knife dropped by O Lobo. Wharton ran to the bedside.

"All safe now, sir!" he gasped. "The brute's gone! It's all safe!"

"Corpo de Deus! Muito abrigado, senhor!" gasped Joao Frulo, clasping a hand to his bandaged head. "Much to oblige, little senhor."

"Wharton!"

It was a deep, stern voice at the window. The juniors spun round, to

see the grim face of Mr. Quelch looking in.

The astonished face of Wingate of the Sixth stared in at his shoulder.

Evidently the disturbance had drawn the Bunter-hunters to the spot. Under the level of the window, unseen by the juniors within—but audible to them—Bunter wriggled. His fat and breathless squeak floated on the night air.

"Ow! Leggo, Wingate! Ow!"

"Silence, Bunter!" hooted Mr. Quelch over his shoulder.

"Ow! Yes, sir! I ain't going to dodge, sir! I say—Grrrrggh!"

Billy Bunter gurgled into silence as Wingate shook him by the collar.

"Wharton!" Mr. Quelch's eyes glittered in at the open window. Seldom had those hopeful members of his Form seen him look so intensely angry.

"Wharton! You—you are here! You—and the others—What does this mean? Have you ventured to disturb an injured man—the headmaster's guest—"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Wharton.

"I see," rumbled Mr. Quelch, "that he is awake! Obviously, you have awakened him—"

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"Oh, no! No, sir!" stuttered Harry. "We—"

"You are here! What are you doing out of your dormitory—out of your House? The severest punishment—"

"But, sir—" gasped Bob Cherry.

"We—we came out to catch Bunter, sir!" stammered Wharton. "We—we thought we'd get him back to the House, in—in case he caught cold, or—"

"Beast!" floated in at the window.

"Silence, Bunter! You should have done nothing of the kind, Wharton, as you know very well! Luckily, Wingate and I heard you struggling with Bunter, I presume, and came this way and found him on the path—"

"Oh lor'!"

"Will you be silent, Bunter! Fortunately, the foolish and troublesome boy is now caught!" said Mr. Quelch. "But you—you appear to have left him and entered at this window—"

"Yes, sir. We—we—"

"Bunter told us—" gasped Bob.

"A—a man—" stuttered Nugent.

"Explain yourselves!" hooted Mr. Quelch, apparently unaware that he was not giving the Removites a chance to explain. "This outrageous act—"

"But, sir, Bunter told us—"

"And we saw—"

"The man—"

"Outrageous—unheard of—unprecedented! I am amazed—"

The bandaged man in the bed was staring at the Form-master in the window. The screen had gone over in the rush and scramble of O Lobo and the Famous Five.

Joao Frulo cut in.

"Senhor! Se me faz favor!" he gasped. "Do me one favour to hear! These young ones save me a life! O Lobo—he come—he shall have one knife—he demand a carta—a letter—Yes, sir! One life the young ones shall save to me!"

"Wh-a-a-at!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Favour me to hear, senhor! Yes! I sleep—I wake—I see with an eye, O Lobo, who demand of me a letter—one letter that I carry to deliver to a senhor English—he shall have one knife—"

Bob Cherry held up the knife he had picked from the floor.

Mr. Quelch gazed at it with starting eyes.

"A—a—a deadly weapon!" he gasped. "Who—what—has anyone been here, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Harry, glad to get it explained at last. "Bunter warned us that a man had got in by the window—"

"Bless my soul!"

"And we saw him, sir—a dark-faced man, with a black beard—and we heard him threatening this gentleman in the bed—"

"Upon my word!"

"We got in to handle him, sir. We—we thought you'd approve, in the—the circumstances!" added Wharton tactfully.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch. "I had no idea—not the faintest! Is it possible that this gentleman has been attacked again—doubtless the same ruffian who wrecked his car—"

"Sim, sim, senhor! O Lobo," cut in the foreign gentleman, "ello tem quizilha contra mim—"

"Eh?"

"He owe me—what you say?—one grudge—one vengeance! He is one wicked man! He want to take one letter—a carta—which I shall carry to deliver—he make me to perish with a large knife—yes—"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch faintly. "My dear, dear boys, you have acted very bravely—you have acted very bravely indeed! A ruffian, with a deadly weapon in his hand! You might have—might have—"

"Bob got him with a hassock, sir, and he dropped the knife," said Harry. "He's broken out of the passage window—"

"Well, my hat!" murmured Wingate of the Sixth.

His glance dwelt very curiously on the flushed, excited faces of the Removites.

"I will call Mrs. Kebble," said the Remove master, "and watch shall be kept for the remainder of the night. Perhaps you, Wingate, will remain here for the moment, till other arrangements can be made. I will telephone at once for a constable to be sent."

"Certainly, sir!"

"You juniors will return to your dormitory at once. You certainly should not have left it; but in the circumstances I shall, of course, excuse you! I am thankful that you were here to prevent harm being done. But you must go back to bed at once."

"Very well, sir!"

Wingate remained with the bandaged

man, while Mr. Quelch marched the juniors back to the House. He marched with an iron grip on Billy Bunter's collar. The wriggling fat Owl had no chance of wriggling loose. Now that he was caught his Form-master took care of that.

They reached the Remove dormitory. There was a buzz of voices in that apartment as Mr. Quelch opened the door.

"Here they come!" came Skinner's voice. "Bet you Quelch nobbled them! He's a downy old bird, Quelch is, and I'll bet he's sent them back with a flea in their ear! Seen anything of the old bag of bones, you men?"

"Are you speaking of your Form-master, Skinner?" asked Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice, as he groped for the lighting switch.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Skinner, thus apprised of the alarming fact that Mr. Quelch was there.

The Remove master switched on the light. He gave Harold Skinner a look that made that youth wriggle with apprehension. However, he took no further note of Skinner's unguarded remarks.

"Bunter!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" groaned Bunter. "It wasn't me, sir! I never went to Smithy's study at all—and how was I to know that it was old Smith sitting in the armchair, sir, and not Smithy? Not that I did it, sir! I haven't touched any ink to-day of any kind—"

"You will go to bed, Bunter—"

"Yes, sir! I—I want to go to bed, sir! M-m-may I have some supper first, sir?"

"You may not, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

"I shall deal with you in the morning, Bunter! If you venture to leave this dormitory—"

"Oh! No, sir! I—I'm not thinking of dodging out as soon as your back is turned, sir! It never entered my head—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, Bunter, you incredibly stupid boy—"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Go to bed at once! I shall lock the door and take away the key!"

"Oh crikey!"

It was a doleful and dismal fat Owl that rolled into bed and heard the key click in the outside of the lock. Billy Bunter's night out had been cut suddenly short—his wanderings were over! There was an alarming prospect before him in the morning—and Bunter groaned as he thought of it.

But he was very sleepy—and there was comfort in a warm bed!

For about a minute Bunter groaned in the depths of woe, then his groan changed to a rumbling snore, and the depths of woe changed for the depths of slumber. And that deep snore rumbled on without a break, till it was interrupted by the rising-bell in the winter morning.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Windfalls and Woes!

"FIVE hundred pounds!"

"Yes!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter's eyes almost popped through his spectacles.

The fat Owl was unwilling to turn out that morning. He had lost a lot of sleep overnight.

But Bob Cherry kindly rendered first-aid, rolling him out in a tangle of bed—

clothes, a kindly act which elicited no expression of gratitude whatever from Billy Bunter.

Bunter was woeful as he gave himself the dab that morning which he called a wash. He had forgotten his woes in slumber; but he had to remember them in waking.

By way of comfort, the chums of the Remove gave him the news of his windfall—the first Bunter had heard of Mr. Vernon-Smith's munificence. That glad news banished, for a moment, the thought of what was coming to him.

"Five hundred quids!" repeated Bunter, his eyes dancing behind his spectacles. "Oh, my hat! I say, Smithy, your pater isn't a bad old bean! I wish you'd got that ink instead of him—I do really, old chap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bunder gave Bunter a grim look.

"I'd mop up the dorm with you, you fat freak, but you've got enough coming to you!" he said. "Flogging or the sack—or both!"

Bunter gave a yelp. He forgot the windfall for a moment as he was reminded of his woes.

"I—I say, you fellows, d-d-do you think Quelch will be still waxy this morning?" he squeaked. "Think he hasn't got over it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled Bob Cherry. "Not quite, I fancy!"

"Well, I mean, even a crusty old bean like Quelch might have got over it by this time!" groaned Bunter. "'Tain't as if he had the ink! If I'd mopped the ink over him, of course, I could understand the old bean being a bit waxy! But it was only old Smith got it, and I don't see that he matters—Yaroooh! You kick me again, Smithy, you beast, and I'll—Whooooop!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith apparently thought that his pater did matter; and made the same clear unto Bunter with his foot!

Bunter finished dressing, in a peculiar mixture of high and low spirits. When he thought of the five hundred pounds, he grinned with happy glee; and when that thought was succeeded by the thought of what was coming to him, he groaned dismally. It was really interesting to watch the alternation of cloud and sunshine on his fat face, like an April sky!

The dormitory door was unlocked by Wingate of the Sixth. If Billy Bunter had been contemplating another desperate bolt—as probably was the case—he had to give up the idea at the sight of the stalwart Sixth Form man waiting in the passage. He could guess for whom Wingate was waiting.

"Come with me, Bunter!" called out the prefect.

"Oh! Yes! Wait a tick, Wingate!" gasped Bunter, popping back into the dormitory. "I say, you fellows, don't go for a minute, it's rather important. I say, do listen to a chap!"

"Say on, old fat man!" grinned Bob.

"I say," whispered Bunter, "that beast Wingate is in the passage; he's going to take me to Quelch, or the Head! I say, you fellows, barge him over—"

"What?"

"And grab hold of him—"

"Grab hold of Wingate!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Yes; up-end him in the passage, you know!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Nugent, quite overcome at the idea of grabbing the captain of the school and up-ending him in the passage. "Anything else?"

"Yes—sit on him!"

"Sit on him!" gasped Bob. "Yes. Is that the lot?"

"And keep him safe while I cut!" breathed Bunter. "See? Never mind if you hurt him—I'm not particular about that!"

"Wingate might be!" suggested Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle—you're wasting time! Old Quelch may come up next! I say, you fellows, you sit on that beast while I cut—see? You can stuff something in your pockets at brekker, and give it to me afterwards—"

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

Bunter, it seemed, was prepared to begin his wandering career again that morning! The Famous Five were not prepared to help—not to the extent of up-ending the Greyfriars captain and sitting on him in the passage! Not quite!

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" hissed Bunter. "Look here, be pals, after all I've done for you! Collar that beast Wingate! If I don't go out, he may step in and bag me any minute—"

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

Wingate, at that moment, was stepping in, unseen by the fat Owl as he urged the chums of the Remove to desperate deeds.

"Look here, you beasts, stop cackling!" howled Bunter. "That rotten beast Wingate may barge in any minute and grab me by the neck—"

"Quite!" said a voice behind Bunter.

"Oh lor'!" gasped the hapless Owl, squirming round with Wingate's grasp on his collar. "I—I say—Oh crikey!"

"Did you call me a beast?" inquired Wingate.

"Oh, no! Not at all!" spluttered Bunter. "I—I was speaking of somebody else, Wingate! I wouldn't call you a beast! I—I never say what I think of a prefect!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, Wingate, leggo my collar! I—I—I won't dodge away, you know. I won't cut off, or—or anything—"

"You won't!" agreed Wingate.

"Come on!"

And Billy Bunter was led away by the collar.

The rest of the Remove followed them down, grinning. On the staircase, Billy Bunter's fat squeak was heard.

"I say, Wingate! Leggo a minute while I tie my shoelace, will you?"

"No!"

"I say, I've left my notecase in the dorm, Wingate—it's got all my money in it! Can I cut back a minute?"

"No!"

"Oh lor'!"

There was no escape for the artful dodger. Bunter was led away to the Head's study.

He groaned as he went. Quelch would have been bad enough—especially before breakfast! But the Head was worse! When a culprit was taken to the Head, it was fearfully serious. Obviously, it was going to be a flogging! It might even be the sack!

Even the fat and frabjous Owl could realise that his antics had a serious aspect in the eyes of authority. It was no light matter to cut prep and dorm, stay out of the House till midnight, and keep a Form-master up late hunting for him—not to mention his original and dire offence of mopping ink over a distinguished visitor to the school. Billy Bunter was led into Dr. Locke's study in the lowest of spirits.

He had one gleam of relief. Wingate had to unlock the door to enter the study. That meant the Head was not yet there. Dr. Locke seldom came there before breakfast. On this particular morning, apparently, he was coming specially on Bunter's account.

"Wait here, you young ass!" said Wingate, pushing Bunter in. "The Head won't be long; he told me to bring you here."

"I—I say, Wingate, d-d-don't lock the door!" gasped Bunter. "I say, you can trust me to wait for the Head. I—I want to see him, you know! I—I—like a—a talk with the Head—"

The door shut, and Wingate turned the key again on the outside. He did not seem to believe that Bunter was keen to see the Head!

"Beast!" groaned Bunter. And he waited dismally.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Luck!

BILLY BUNTER quaked. There were footsteps in the corridor.

With the footsteps came a sound of voices—the Head's voice and Quelch's. Both of them were coming—as if one wasn't bad enough!

Bunter blinked wildly round the study.

He had already thought of escape by the window. But it was high from the ground, and Bunter was no acrobat. Now it was too late to think of it again. But as the footsteps approached the study door, terror supervened! There was only one resource—a hapless victim who could not escape might hide! The fat Owl did not stop to think! He seldom did!

He made a nose-dive under the Head's writing-table. It was rather a large table, and it screened the hapless Owl from observation. It was a case of any port in a storm!

Squatting close by a wastepaper-basket that stood under the table, the Owl of the Remove stilled his terrified breathing as the key turned in the lock and the door swung open. The headmaster and the Remove master entered, and Mr. Quelch closed the door.

"Bunter does not seem to be here, Mr. Quelch," said Dr. Locke, glancing round the room.

"He does not, sir!" said Mr. Quelch. "I instructed Wingate to bring him here as soon as your Form came down from their dormitory. Possibly they are not down yet."

"No doubt Wingate will bring him in a few minutes, sir!"

"No doubt!" assented the Head. "Pray be seated, Mr. Quelch!"

So far, so good! Evidently neither of the masters had a suspicion that a fat Owl was squatting under the table.

Bunter hoped that they would remain in that happy state of ignorance. If the Head went, and left the door unlocked when he went, it was all right for Bunter. All he had to do was to wait till the coast was clear, and nip out!

What would be the outcome if he resumed his Ulysses-like wanderings Bunter did not think—thinking was not his long suit, anyhow. There was room for only one idea at a time in his fat brain—and at the present moment his fat mind was fixed on the flogging, and the fact that he didn't want it! Very much indeed he didn't want it!

Dr. Locke sat down at his writing-table, in his accustomed chair, and, naturally, put his feet under the table.

One of them struck against something that moved—and very nearly squeaked; though, fortunately, not quite!

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, startled. "What—"

"What?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"There appears to be something under the table!" said the puzzled headmaster. "I am sure my foot struck something—I am sure—"

So was Bunter! As it was his fat, little nose that had been struck, he was as sure as the Head—or more sure!

"I will see," said Mr. Quelch, about to stoop.

Bunter had a brain-wave!

His fat wits seldom worked quickly. Indeed, there were fellows in the Remove who believed that they did not work at all! But terror sharpens the faculties. Bunter overturned the wastepaper-basket, and sent it rolling out from under the table, at Mr. Quelch's feet.

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch. "A wastepaper-basket!"

"Dear me!" said the Head.

"Apparently, sir, you knocked it over with your foot—"

"No doubt!" said the Head.

Mr. Quelch righted the wastepaper-basket and pushed it under the table again, right end up. He stooped to do so—but his head did not come below the level of the table-top; he did not spot Bunter.

He straightened up again, to Bunter's intense relief.

"Dear me!" said the Head, after a few moments' silence. "I trust that we shall not be kept waiting long for that foolish and troublesome boy."

"The Remove are certainly down," said Mr. Quelch, glancing at the window. "I can see some of my boys in the quadrangle. Wharton, Wilmot—several of them—"

"If that foolish boy has eluded Wingate—"

"Upon my word, sir! If he has—"

Bunter quaked, and hardly breathed.

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

(1)

This week I have to interview
A chap whom Bunter calls a Jew,
Which happens to be strictly true—
Deny it if you can!
But, "Sheeney," "Shylock!"—names
like these
Which Bunter calls him, do not please
Good-natured Montague—for he's
A Jewish gentleman.

(3)

For Monty's Uncle Isaac keeps
A kindly heart which never sleeps,
And also money-bags in heaps,
To Monty's gratitude!
So Bunter tries, and tries in vain,
To grab a share of Monty's gain,
As Monty makes it very plain
That he's extremely shrewd!



(6)

"Now listen, Monty. I want you
To give a little interview,
So kindly cease that pastime, do,
And chuck that silly rot!"
Said Newland: "I've no time to-night!"
And then Dick Penfold played his Knight,
And Monty, chuckling with delight,
Removed it on the spot!



(5)

They took no notice of my cough,
But when I started in to scoff,
They both looked up and said:
"Buzz off!"
We're busy, can't you see?"
I laughed and answered them: "My
hat!"
I wouldn't spend my time like
that!"
And Monty Newland shouted:
"Scat!"
Said I: "You're telling me!"

(2)

But Bunter only calls him names
When Monty smilingly proclaims
That he knows Bunter's little games,
And won't cash his P.O.
For Monty is extremely rich,
A fact well known to Bunter, which
Is why his grubby fingers itch
To collar Monty's "dough"!

(4)

I found old Monty playing chess
With Penfold, and I must confess
He plays it well; for you may guess
His brain is sharp and keen!
And Penfold wore a worried look
As Monty Newland calmly took
His last and most important Rook,
And bottled up his Queen!



(7)

"That's one more gone!" I gaily cried,
And: "Will you shift?" they both
replied.
Then Penfold moved a Pawn aside,
And Newland, with a grin,
Brought up his Rook and chuckled:
"Mate!"
And Penfold, in a worried state,
Said: "Dash it! I can't concentrate
While this ass wags his chin!"



(8)

Said I: "Now play your Queen
like that!"
I moved it for him, and—my hat!
My elbow knocked the pieces flat—
An accident, you betcha!
Then (why, I cannot say) they rose,
And landed two mule-kick-like
blows
Upon my long and tender nose!
I left upon a stretcher!

Specially For New Readers!

A novel way of "putting over" a "Who's Who at Greyfriars." The following verses by our long-haired poet introduce

MONTY NEWLAND,
the Jewish junior of the Remove.

He wondered dizzily what the two beaks would have thought if they had guessed that he was in hearing of their voices—almost touching the headmaster's majestic feet! Evidently they had no suspicion of it. Not having found Bunter in the study, they concluded naturally that the head prefect had not yet delivered the goods.

"The stupid boy deserves punishment—"

"Undoubtedly, sir—"

"I have, however, reflected on what you have told me, Mr. Quelch. Unthinking and absurd and exasperating as that stupid boy Bunter is, it appears that he was inadvertently the cause of preventing what might have been actually a tragedy last night—"

"That is the case, sir! I had a conversation with the Brazilian gentleman, and it appears that he feared for his life, if the man he calls O Lobo had not been interrupted."

"Those boys of your Form acted very courageously, Mr. Quelch."

"I agree, sir!"

"But for that fatuous, foolish boy Bunter, they would not have been on the spot, and, indeed, I understand that he warned them that the man was there."

"That is the case, sir."

"In these circumstances, Mr. Quelch, I think that we might decide to— Bless my soul!"

"What—"

"My foot struck something!" exclaimed the puzzled Head, who had shifted his majestic legs under the table, and thus caused another collision.

"The wastepaper-basket, sir—"

"Oh, quite—quite—no doubt—I will push it out of the way!" said Dr. Locke, as he pushed with his foot at the unseen object under the table.

"Yaroooh!"

The Head jumped. Mr. Quelch bounded. Obviously, it was not a wastepaper-basket that the Head's foot had pushed! No wastepaper-basket, pushed over so hard, had ever been known to make verbal protest!

"What—" gasped the Head.

"What—" stuttered Mr. Quelch.

Bump!

A fat figure rolled out from under the table.

Bunter had been squatting on his heels—safe enough in that position, as long as he was not pushed! He was not expecting to be pushed! But it was the unexpected that happened! The push from the Head's foot caught him in his fat ribs and sent him rolling! He squeaked and rolled.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch, as a fat figure rolled fairly at his feet. "It is—is—is Bub-bub-bub-Bunter—"

"Ow! 'Tain't me, sir!" howled Bunter. "I'm not here, sir—I mean—wow!"

"B-b-bunter!" stuttered the Head.

"Oh lor'! Oh crikey! Ow!"

Mr. Quelch, with a brow of thunder, stooped, grasped the fat junior by the collar, and jerked him to his feet. Dr. Locke, half-rising from his chair, peered at him over his glasses, in wonder.

"That—that—that is—is Bunter!" he stuttered.

"That is Bunter, sir! He was, apparently, hiding under your table! Wingate must have left him here—"

"Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

"You were hiding under my writing-table—"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I wasn't there, sir—"

"What?"

"I—I mean, it—it was only a lark!"

"A—a—alark!" repeated the Head, petrified.

"Ow! Yes, sir! I—I thought—I thought it might—might amuse you, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, staring at Bunter. "Is this boy of your Form quite in his right senses, Mr. Quelch?"

"I sometimes fear not, sir!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Such crass stupidity—"

"Such extraordinary stupidity—" said the Head.

"Such amazing obtuseness—" said Mr. Quelch.

"Such remarkable obtuseness—" said the Head.

It was quite a chorus-strophe and anti-strophe! However, the Head broke off the chorus.

"Bunter!"

"Ow! Yes, sir! May—may—may I gig-gig-go, sir?"

"I was just discussing with your Form-master, Bunter—"

"I—I never did it, sir! I never touched the ink! I never went to Smithy's study at all! I never knew his pater had come! I thought it was Smithy when I mopped the ink over him, sir! I never—"

"Silence, Bunter!" rasped Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, but—but I think I ought to tell the Head that I never did it, and I only did it because—"

"That will do, Bunter," said the Head. "I was discussing with your Form-master the idea of pardoning your extraordinary conduct—"

"Eh?"

"In view of the unexpected, but happy result, of your foolish and reckless proceedings, Bunter—"

"Oh!"

"But if anything of the kind should occur again—" said the Head, in a terrifying voice.

"Oh, yes, sir, certainly—"

"What!"

"I—I mean, oh, no, sir, certainly not!" gasped Bunter. "M-m-m-may I g-g-go, sir?"

"If you agree with me, Mr. Quelch, that this stupid boy may be forgiven, in view of the circumstances—"

"As you decide, sir!"

"Very good! You may go, Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He went! He could scarcely believe his fat ears—and he did not give the Head time to change his mind! He flew!

He burst into the quad, merry and bright. Harry Wharton & Co. ran up—prepared to be sympathetic.

"Flogging?" asked Harry.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Flogging!" he repeated. "What rot!"

"Caned?" asked Bob.

"Hardly!"

"Got off with lines?" exclaimed Nugent. "Mean to say the Head gave you lines?"

"No fear!"

"Then what—"

"Oh, we had a bit of a chat!" said Bunter airily.

"A—a—what?" ejaculated the astonished five, in chorus.

"A chat! I had a bit of a chat with the Head," said Bunter. "He's rather a chatty old sportsman, you know, and he seems to like a few words with me, now and then. In fact, we had quite a pleasant chat!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away, leaving the Famous Five staring.

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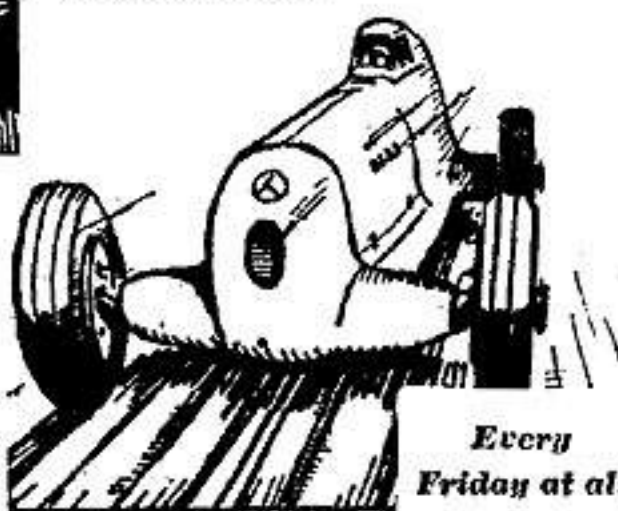


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THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Letter From Jim Valentine!

"GREYFRIARS School!"

"Certainly!"

"E possivel?" ejaculated the copper-faced man. "Do voras?"

Mr. Quelch smiled.

The copper-coloured gentleman, whose name, as it transpired, was Joao Frulo, looked much better that morning. His head was still bandaged, but he had turned out of bed, and was breakfasting at a table by the sunny window where

Mr. Quelch called to inquire how he was progressing. And the news that he was an inmate of the walls of Greyfriars surprised him.

"E possivel?" he repeated. "You shall see, senor, that it is to Greyfriars School that I come from South America. I go to arrive when this so terrible accident he happen along with me. Now I find myself where I do go! Muito contente! Yes, I am surprise, and I am content! Oh, yes!"

Mr. Quelch was already aware, from the man's mutterings in unconsciousness the evening before, that he had been heading for Greyfriars. Why, was rather a mystery to the Remove master.

"That one bad man, O Lobo, he follow and watch!" said Senhor Frulo. "He is one bad man—badder than the wolf whose name he take! Yes! He shall not wish me to deliver a carta—a letter—No! Oh! No! But the letter is safe, and I go to deliver him! Yes! There is in this place one boy who shall call himself by a name of Wharton!"

"Wharton!" repeated Mr. Quelch blankly.

Why a Brazilian had come from South America to a school in Kent was a mystery. But it was more surprising still to hear that he had come on account of a junior in the Lower Fourth.

"You shall know such a name?" asked Joao Frulo anxiously. "He shall be along with himself in this place?"

"Oh! Yes, certainly!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "There is a boy in my Form of that name—in fact, one of the boys who aided you last night."

"Bom! Is it that I shall see him to speak?"

"Certainly, if you wish!" said the amazed Remove master. "I will send him to you, Mr. Frulo."

"Agadeco-lho!" said Senhor Frulo, bowing his black mop over his coffee-cup. "I thank your nobleness! Yes!"

Mr. Quelch, in a state of great surprise, walked back to the House. It was time for him to take his class, and he found the Remove already gathered at the door of their Form-room. He was, in fact, a few minutes late for once, and Bob Cherry, in the passage, was filling up the time and improving the shining hour by using a Latin grammar as a football. It dropped at Mr. Quelch's feet as he arrived, and Bob jumped and coloured as he fielded the volume.

"Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, "will you go at once to Mr. Frulo? He desires to speak to you."

"Yes, sir!" answered Harry.

And he went, followed by some rather envious glances from the Remove. Most of the fellows were rather curious about the man from South America—and a chat with a traveller from a far-off tropic land was much more attractive than Latin with Mr. Quelch.

"I—I say, sir, does—does the chap want to see me, too?" asked Billy Bunter.

"He does not, Bunter!" answered Mr. Quelch grimly.

"I—I mean, sir, as I saved his life and—"

"You did nothing of the kind, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, sir! What I mean is that—"

"Go into the Form-room at once, Bunter!"

"I—I mean, sir, as I shaved his wife—I mean, saved his life—"

"Take fifty lines, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

Bunter went in with the Remove. His idea was that the foreign gentleman

desired to render thanks for services received, and his idea also was that he, W. G. Bunter, was the proper person to receive those thanks. He was not, perhaps, so keen on the thanks as on getting out of first lesson. But there was no getting out for Bunter.

Harry Wharton walked away cheerily in the frosty sunshine. He supposed that he was wanted to listen to some voluble and flowing foreign expressions of thanks, though he did not quite see why he was singled out for the same. However, he was very pleased to go, and he went.

He arrived in Mr. Frulo's room, and the Brazilian gentleman, who had now finished breakfast, and was lighting a thick, black cigar, rose to greet him, with a graceful bow. His coppery face was not handsome, but it was very pleasant and good-humoured, and Harry Wharton liked his looks. He shook a dusky hand which was extended to him, getting at the same time a pungent whiff from the cigar that made him choke a little.

Sitting down again, Senhor Frulo gave him a beaming grin.

"Little senhor, you are Wharton?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!" answered Harry, with a smile. Junior schoolboy as he was, he was as tall as the foreign gentleman who called him "little senhor."

"This one, he is Joao Frulo!" said the Brazilian. "With much surprise I find myself where I go to come, which is very singular. Yes!" Mr. Frulo could speak English, though not exactly as spoken by the natives of the island. Still, it was no doubt better than any Portuguese that was spoken at Greyfriars!

"I am glad to see you looking so well, sir, after your accident!" said Wharton politely.

"Yes! I receive with myself one very hard knock on what you call in your language a crumplet!" said Mr. Frulo. He rubbed his head. "But he is very hard, that crumplet, and he go to come all right. He is one tough old nut! Yes! But is it not one large surprise that I go to come to see one Wharton, and this Wharton save me a life from O Lobo?"

"You came to see me!" exclaimed Wharton in astonishment.

"Sim, sim! Yes! Yes! I have a carta—"

"A carter?" repeated Harry misunderstanding.

"Which is wrote by my master—" continued Mr. Frulo.

"Oh! A letter!"

"Such do you call her in English!" assented Mr. Frulo. "O Lobo desire very much that my young master's friends shall not receive one carta—letter. Yes! That is because he attack me."

"Because—" stammered Wharton. Then he grasped it that the Portuguese gentleman meant "why." "Oh, I see!"

"Here," said Mr. Frulo, groping in a pocket, "is a letter, which, as you will see with half an eye, as the English say, is of your address! Please to take."

He held out the letter to the captain of the Remove. In utter astonishment, Wharton took it, and glanced at the superscription. In a clear and beautiful calligraphy, which seemed familiar to his eyes, was written his name and the address of Greyfriars School, Kent.

"You shall read!" said Mr. Frulo, with a wave of his cigar, which gave Wharton another whiff of pungent smoke.

The astonished junior slit open the envelope and drew out the folded sheet within. Unfolding it, he read:

"Boa Vista,
"Rio Rexo,
"Brazil."

"Dear Wharton,—I've written to you once since I've been here; but no doubt you'll be surprised to get this letter by hand. Mr. Frulo, my uncle's coffee manager, is in England on trade business, so it was a chance not to be missed. This is no end of a country—gorgeous, old chap! You should see the trees—and the rivers—and the alligators! That's what I want you to do! See?"

"You remember that when I left Greyfriars so suddenly it was mentioned that you and your friends might find a chance of paying me a visit in the hols. Well, what about getting leave to start the Easter holidays a bit early and coming back to Brazil with Mr. Frulo? He will see you safe through the voyage and land you here, at Boa Vista, this side up with care! Get me?"

"You and your friends—my friends, too, I hope, still! You can roll Bunter along if you like—after being away from Greyfriars so long I should be glad to see even that fat boulder's podgy face. There are alligators here that remind me a lot of Bunter."

"It's a pretty expensive trip out, I know; but, as it happens, that's all right. My uncle wants to see to that bit. To give you a hint of something, my Uncle Valentine—the best man that ever breathed—is on to a jolly good thing that I will tell you about when I see you—it's hardly safe to shove it in a letter, even a letter like this, with certain tough characters rooting about with their eyes too wide open on other people's business. But it's all right about the dibs—Frulo is empowered to see to that! See?"

"And you can bet that I shall be glad to see you if you can wangle it—you, and Franky, and Johnny, and old Bob, and the great and glorious Jampot! What-ho!"

"We've got everything here to make life worth living—alligators and pythons and pumas, Red Indians and black niggers, bolas, poisoned arrows, snakes in the beds—even bandits! Doesn't that make your mouth water?"

"Now, if you can wangle it, tip Frulo to tip me a cable and come! The Head is such a jolly old sport that I'm sure he will give you leave. You see, he's great on education, and a trip to Brazil is an education in itself. I shall wait for that cable!"

"Your old pal,

"JIM VALENTINE."

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Glorious Prospects!

HARRY WHARTON'S eyes danced over that letter. Senhor Frulo watched him, with a cheery grin on his copper face.

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. "Oh, my hat!"

The chums of the Remove had never forgotten Jim Valentine, once an inmate of Study No. 1 in the Remove. They had had a letter from him, telling of his new home in Brazil with his uncle, Peter Valentine. But this was unexpected—this was great and glorious! If it could be worked—

"You like—yes?" asked Mr. Frulo.

"What-ho!" chuckled Wharton. "Why, if we get leave now, there will be lots of time for a trip even to Brazil before the end of the Easter hols. If the Head will let us go—"

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"He let!" said Mr. Frulo. "If he say nao, I go to come to him and beg on one knee—"

"Oh, my hat! We'll try to work it!" said Harry. "By gum, the fellows will be glad to hear this! Tell me about Valentine, Mr. Frulo! I had no idea you came from him—not the foggiest! But why the thump did that black-bearded bounder, Lobo, want to stop this letter getting here? What could it matter to him?"

Joao Frulo shook his head.

"Nao faco idea!" he answered. "That I do not know! He do not want young master's friends to go to arrive Boa Vista, I tink, but I do not know because! Nao! But he is one bad man."

Wharton could not help feeling puzzled. O Lobo, seemingly, had followed Mr. Frulo from Brazil, to attempt to prevent the delivery of that letter. It was strange and mysterious enough. The man was in desperate earnest about it, judging by his actions. He had wrecked a car, and when the injured man was brought into the school, he had tracked him there, and attacked him in the night, to intercept the letter.

Had he succeeded, Jim Valentine's letter would never have reached the chums of the Remove. What Mr. Frulo—a stranger to them—said by word of mouth would certainly not have caused them to voyage out to Brazil. The trip would not have been thought of had the letter disappeared in transit. But why on earth should O Lobo desire to prevent Jim Valentine's old school chums from visiting him in his new home?

Wharton looked at the letter, and read again the lines referring to the "tough characters" who had their eyes too wide open. He could guess that O Lobo was one of the tough characters alluded to. Possibly the reason was the "good thing" to which Uncle Valentine was "on"—whatever that mysterious "good thing" could be! It was all very perplexing!

But on one point there was no doubt—no possible, probable shadow of doubt! That trip was coming off, if it could be worked!

With the letter in his hand, Wharton sat and talked to Mr. Frulo for nearly an hour, asking him questions about Jim Valentine, Boa Vista, and Brazil! Then he remembered, rather late, that though Mr. Quelch had given him leave to visit the damaged gentleman, he had not excused him from classes!

So he left Joao Frulo at length and returned to the Remove Form Room.

He was in time for second lesson. Mr. Quelch gave him a glance as he came in, but that was all.

Wharton was on tenterhooks for the next hour. He wanted to hand Jim Valentine's letter over to his friends to read—which was not feasible in class. It was not easy for him to give attention to instruction from his Form-master in that class—valuable as it no doubt was! But he was very careful to give as much as he could! Quelch had a voice in the matter of leave, and in such circumstances a fellow could not be too careful!

When the Remove were dismissed for break, Mr. Quelch signed to his head boy to remain.

"You have seen Mr. Frulo, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir! He brought me a letter from Jim Valentine—he's Mr. Valentine's manager on the estate in Brazil."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch.

"If you'd care to see the letter, sir—"

"Unless there is something of a private nature in it, Wharton—"

"Not at all, sir! I'd like you to read it, if you would."

"I should be very glad to do so," said Mr. Quelch. "I remember Valentine with the greatest kindness, Wharton—an excellent boy!"

Wharton was glad to hear it. He passed Jim's letter to his Form-master, and looked as unconscious as he could while Mr. Quelch perused it. The Remove master smiled once or twice—perhaps at the allusions to Bunter! Then he looked very thoughtful.

Harry watched him hopefully.

With Quelch on his side, there would be little difficulty in getting leave from the Head. And he remembered that Quelch had always liked Valentine. It was, indeed, Mr. Quelch who had generously placed the boy at school, at his own charges, before the uncle from Brazil turned up. And though Jim's friends had had only one letter before this, Mr. Quelch had had several, all breathing the gratitude of the boy he had befriended. Wharton was not aware of that; but it was fortunate, in the circumstances.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch, very thoughtfully, as he handed the letter back to his head boy. "A very agreeable letter, Wharton—a very pleasant letter. Valentine evidently has not forgotten his old friends here."

"We've never forgotten him, sir!" said Harry. "It would be ripping to see him again!"

"Um!" said Mr. Quelch gravely. "No doubt! No doubt! But—"

"And the educational value of a trip to Brazil, sir—" ventured Wharton.

"The what?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"The—the—" Wharton faltered.

"The educational value—hem—" "Is that what you are thinking of chiefly, Wharton?" asked Mr. Quelch dryly.

"Oh! No-n-no! No, sir!" admitted Wharton frankly. "I—I'm afraid not, sir! But it would be such a gorgeous trip!"

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"I shall consider this matter, Wharton! You may be sure that I shall, if possible, meet the wishes of a boy I remember very kindly. I think your headmaster will probably accede to my views."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Harry.

He knew what that meant; and he was walking on air as he left the Form-room. His chums surrounded him in the quad.

"Now, what—" began Bob Cherry.

"Look!"

The Co. read the letter from Jim Valentine all together! They grinned with glee as they read.

"We're going!" said Bob.

"The go-fulness will be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I believe Quelch is going to work it with the Head," said Harry. "He as good as said so!"

"Good old Quelch!"

"It's jolly decent of old Valentine's uncle to offer to stand the exes," said Johnny Bull. "But we're not having that, of course."

"No need!" said Nugent. "We're rolling in it now. We were wondering how we were going to spend Mr. Vernon-Smith's quids! This is the way!"

"What-ho!" said Harry. "Of course, it's a fearfully expensive trip—running into hundreds of pounds; and old Valentine foresaw there might be a pinch in that shoe. That's why he put that bit in, like the brick he is. But

we're all right for funds—owing to Smithy's pater weighing in."

"Hurrah!"

"I say, you fellows," Billy Bunter rolled out to the group, his very spectacles gleaming with inquisitiveness. "I say, what's the news? Is that a letter from home? Anything in it?"

"Lots!" chuckled Bob.

"The lotfulness is preposterous!"

"Well, look here, you fellows," said Bunter. "My postal order hasn't come—I've looked in the rack! It's jolly odd, as it was coming from one of my titled relations! But, there it is—it hasn't! And, fancy, I've got five hundred pounds in the Head's desk—and nothing in my pocket! Bit fat-headed of old Smith to park it with the Head, wasn't it?"

"Is that the Bunter way of expressing gratitude?" asked Bob.

"Oh rats! It's mine, ain't it?" grunted Bunter. "The Head hasn't said anything about it so far. I say, you fellows, I hope it's safe in his hands!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Well, I'd rather have it in my own!" said Bunter. "I was thinking of asking him for a tenner to go on with! Look here, if you've had a remittance, lend me a quid, and I'll settle out of what the Head's got for me."

"But we haven't!" grinned Bob.

"You said there was a lot in the letter—"

"So there is—worth more than money! It's a letter from Valentine—"

"Eh! Who's Valentine?"

"You fat, frabjous, fozzling fathead, don't you remember Jim Valentine, who was in the Remove?" roared Bob.

"You needn't yell at a fellow, Bob Cherry! I think I remember the chap now—rather a cheeky ass, wasn't he?"

"You blithering bandersnatch—"

"He kicked me once—more than once—"

"Good! Let's all do the same!" suggested Bob.

"Hear, hear!"

"Beast! I say, you fellows, have you been grinning like a lot of monkeys over nuts, because you've had a letter from that ass Valentine?" exclaimed Bunter, in disgust. "Of all the idiots—"

"He mentions you in it!" said Bob.

"Oh, does he?" said Bunter. "What does he say about me?"

"The alligators in Brazil remind him of you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cheeky ass!" said Bunter. "Let's see the letter, though, if I'm mentioned in it! I dare say you're trying to pull my leg! I did a lot for that chap Valentine when he was here, and he may remember it. Some people are grateful—not you chaps! Let's see the letter."

Bunter perused the letter. It was destined to go the round of the Remove, and Bunter had first shot. He grunted over it.

"Same cheeky ass that he always was!" he remarked. "Still, I'll go."

"You'll go!" repeated the Famous Five.

"Oh, yes. Valentine's asked me, hasn't he?"

"Well, in a way—"

"He says he would be glad to see me again. Of course he would—the only decent chap he knew here—"

"Oh scissors!"

"I don't mean I'm fearfully keen on seeing him, and I've no doubt that Brazil is a rotten place; but it means weeks off classes—see?"



With a savage look on his swarthy face O Lobo turned from the man in the bed and faced Harry Wharton & Co., a gleaming knife in his hand. Whiz! The hassock flew from Bob Cherry's hands and struck the intruder full on his aquiline nose, sending him staggering backwards. "Bag him!" panted Wharton.

"Oh!"

"Fancy getting off in the middle of term, instead of waiting for the hols!" said Bunter, his eyes glistening behind his big spectacles. "Fancy going on a steamer to Brazil, while the other fellows are grinding in the Form-room with Quelch! He, he, he! They have jolly good grub on those steamers, I've heard."

"Which is the important point?" remarked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Eh? Exactly! If the grub's all right, everything's all right—what?" Billy Bunter blinked at the letter again. "I say, Valentine doesn't say anything about the food in Brazil. Same old thoughtless ass he always was—forgetting the important things. I wonder what the food's like? What do they eat in Brazil? Anybody know?"

"Nuts!" said Bob. "I've heard that Brazil is where the nuts come from."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bunter. "I wish the silly fathead had mentioned it. It's a bit of a risk! Still, we get off classes! After all, we shall have plenty of money; and when mine's gone I can borrow some of you fellows. I fancy it will be all right. We're going!"

"If the Head gives us leave!" said Harry.

"Oh, we'll wangle that. I'll get some of my titled relations to put it to him, if necessary—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

"Buzz off and phone your titled relations," said Bob. "Buzz off, anyhow!"

And until the bell rang for third school Harry Wharton & Co. discussed gleefully that glorious chance of a trip to Brazil and seeing Jim Valentine again, while Billy Bunter with equal

satisfaction, contemplated the glorious prospect of getting out of lessons for weeks and weeks!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Off To Rio!

"YOU'LL captain the side while we're away, Smithy?"

"Leave it to me," said the Bounder.

"Mind you beat St. Jude's and St. Jim's!" admonished Bob Cherry.

"My dear chap, you'll help me!" declared Smithy.

"How can I help you, fathead, when I'm on the way to Brazil?" demanded Bob. "I shall be hundreds of miles away by that time!"

"That's how!" explained Vernon-Smith affably.

"You silly ass!" roared Bob, while the other fellows chuckled.

Plenty of fellows envied the Famous Five, good-naturedly; all wished them luck, and a good time. Luck was on the knees of the gods, but there was no doubt that they were going to have a good time! They had all made up their minds about that—especially Bunter!

For it was settled—they were going. The Head had been a little dubious about so long a leave from school; but Mr. Quelch had put in a word—indeed, a good many words—and it was so! Parents had been informed and consulted, and had given a cheerful consent. There was plenty of cash for a very expensive trip, owing to Mr. Vernon-Smith's munificence! Nothing, indeed, could have been more timely and useful.

The Bounder, who had been putting on all his old form of late at Soccer, could be trusted with the football, which

was Wharton's chief concern. He understood that, in Soccer matters, everything should go as well as if Wharton captained the side. In fact, a little better!

Mr. Frulo, informed of the decision, beamed all over his coppery face. He had taken a liking to the cheery chums of the Remove—which was natural, considering the service they had rendered him. He was glad to take them back to Brazil under his convoy, and he cheerily despatched the cable to Jim Valentine, in the far-off land where the nuts come from, to inform the old boy of Greyfriars that they were coming.

The next day Joao Frulo left Greyfriars, mended and well, to attend to the business that had brought him to England, and it was arranged that the juniors should join him in London the following week, when all arrangements had been made. Nothing more had been seen or heard of the black-bearded man with the aquiline nose. The local police had looked for him, without finding him. As he had failed, at the finish, to intercept the letter, it was supposed that O Lobo had cleared off—though why he had planned to intercept that letter remained a puzzle.

Evidently—though inexplicably—O Lobo's object had been to prevent Jim Valentine's Greyfriars friends joining him in Brazil. And he had failed—they were going!

But they did not waste much thought on O Lobo during the next few days. Their thoughts were on the future—the near future. The wonderful land of Brazil, with its mighty rivers, almost seas in themselves, rolling down to the ocean; its vast forests, its white-walled cities, burning in tropical sunshine; its plantations of coffee and rubber; its

diamond mines; its dark-skinned population; its tribes of Indians roaming forest and plain, with arrows and bolas, or navigating the vast rivers in their canoes! Even Bunter was interested in one of the productions of that mighty land—its nuts! Bunter liked Brazil nuts!

When the party left Greyfriars, on a cold and windy morning, Mr. Quelch shook hands with them, and gave leave for some of their friends to see them off in the train at Courtfield for London, where Mr. Frulo was waiting for them. Smithy, and Redwing, and Toddy, and Lord Mauleverer, and several more fellows came. On the platform they had a last "jaw," while Billy Bunter grunted and complained of the cold! Later on, in Brazil, no doubt Bunter was going to complain of the heat! Hot or cold, William George Bunter was the man to find something to grouse about.

Harry Wharton & Co. packed into a carriage, the fellows seeing them off packing round the door. Just as the train was signalled to start, a man, muffled in a thick coat, with a hat drawn down over his brows, darted across the platform and jumped into the carriage next to that occupied by the juniors.

The Famous Five saw nothing of him, still less did Bunter, who was groping in his pockets for toffee to comfort him on the journey. But the Bounder detached himself from the group, moved a little along the train, and glanced into the carriage into which the muffled man had jumped.

He came back grinning.

"Well, good-bye, you men!" said Bob Cherry. "We're going rolling down to Rio! First change, Lantham!"

"Mind you beat St. Jim's and Highcliffe, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton.

"Consider them beaten!" said the Bounder. "With Cherry helping us, as he's going to do—"

"You fathead!" roared Bob.

"But hold on a tick!" The Bounder put his head in and lowered his voice. "I've never seen that sportsman you call O Lobo—what a name!—but didn't you mention that he had a nose like an eagle, and a black beard?"

"Yes," said Harry. "Why?"

"There's a man with a beak and a black beard in the next carriage, that's all," said the Bounder. "Good-bye!"

"Oh, my hat! Good-bye, Smithy, old man!"

The door slammed, the train rolled out, and the fellows on the platform waved their hats. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another as Courtfield dropped behind. Smithy's last words had rather startled them.

"O Lobo—on this train!" said Harry. "If Smithy's right, that looks as if the brute hasn't done with us yet! He tried to stop Valentine's letter—can he have any idea of trying to stop our going?"

"If he's on the train, he isn't on it for nothing," said Johnny Bull. "Keeping us watched, at any rate."

"I say, you fellows, don't be nervy!" said Billy Bunter. "I'm with you, you know."

"You fat owl!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"If he's on this train, he's after us, that's a cert!" said Nugent.

"Rot!" said Bunter. "Lots of men with beaks and beavers! You fellows are getting funky about nothing."

"Squash that bluebottle!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"We'll keep an eye open when we

change at Lantham," said Harry decidedly. "Smithy's jolly keen, and it may be a useful tip. If it's really O Lobo—"

"We could give him in charge," said Nugent. "He's wanted for wrecking Mr. Frulo's car."

"Um—yes; but that means losing the train. It's only a few minutes to change at Lantham, and we don't want to miss the express, with Mr. Frulo waiting at the other end. There's other ways—Remove ways!" Harry Wharton laughed. "If it's O Lobo, he isn't following us as far as London."

That was settled, in the minds of the Famous Five, as the train rolled on to Lantham. They were by no means displeased at the prospect of bestowing a little handling on the "Wolf," who was apparently an enemy of their old chum, Jim Valentine. During the run to Lantham, Bunter munched toffee, and Bob Cherry burst into merry melody—more merriment than melody, perhaps!

"That's a jolly song, 'Rolling Down to Rio,'" said Bob. "I believe I remember a bit of it—let's see!" And Bob roared:

"I've never sailed the Thingummy,
I've never reached Brazil,
But the Something-or-other and the
What-d'ye-call-it,
They can go there when they will!"

Bob, apparently, did not remember a lot of the words—though it seemed that he remembered still less of the tune!

"Serve that chap jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull.

"Eh? What chap?" asked Bob, breaking off his vocal efforts.

"That beaky bloke in the next carriage. He can hear you, unless he's deaf! And serve him jolly well right!"

"You silly ass!" bellowed Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

When the train stopped at Lantham, the Famous Five jumped out quickly. They were going to know whether the man Smithy had spotted was O Lobo or not. They moved swiftly along the train—and reached the door of the next carriage as it opened, and the muffled man stepped out. Muffled up as he was, they recognised him instantly at a close view—the hooked nose, the black beard, the jetty eyes. It was O Lobo! He backed, after jumping out,

startled to find the five Greyfriars fellows in front of him. They barred his way coolly.

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Bunter, rolling after them. "I say, it's the other platform for the London express—across the bridge! I say, you'll lose the train! I say, don't you be funky about that beaky beast; he isn't anywhere about— Oh crikey!"

Bunter broke off, with a gasp, as his eyes, and spectacles, fell on the dark, savage face and beaky nose and black beard of the bravo from Brazil.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

He flew for the London train!

"Stand back, if you please!" O Lobo spoke in English. "What do you want? I know you not!"

"I fancy you remember us, you rascal!" said Harry Wharton. "We remember you, at any rate, Mister Lobo! You've been hanging about the school, watching for us, and you followed us on this train!"

"Nao entendo—I do not understand—"

"We'll make you understand!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "You're not following us any farther, you spying scoundrel! Bag him!"

O Lobo, backing, with glinting eyes and snarling teeth, backed on the step of the carriage he had just left and sat down suddenly! As he sat, five pairs of hands grasped him and dragged.

He rolled headlong on the platform, yelling.

"Sit on him!" grinned Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

O Lobo struggled and fought like a tiger. Passengers and porters stared. But the Famous Five were too much for the stocky man—much too much—and they did not heed their astonished audience. They flattened the Brazilian out and sat on him, pinning him down.

Across the line, Billy Bunter waved a fat hand from a door on the London express. Bunter had got to the train.

Wharton, sitting on O Lobo's greasy dark head, sadly crumpling his hat, glanced at his wrist-watch.

"One minute!" he said. "Cut!"

The Famous Five jumped up from their human sofa—leaving the same gasping and wriggling and spluttering, hopelessly winded—and bolted for the bridge over the line. They raced down the opposite platform and crammed into the carriage after Bunter. A porter slammed the door on them, the engine shrieked, and the express pulled out.

Crowded at the carriage window, they gazed back at the down platform and O Lobo! O Lobo was sitting up, gasping and gurgling, dazed and dizzy, blinking across the down line at the departing train. It was evident that he was not going to catch the express!

Bob Cherry waved a cheery hand to him.

"Good-bye, little blackbird!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

O Lobo staggered up, still gasping for breath. He glared after the departing train, and shook a dusky fist. Five laughing faces looked back at him. Then Lantham Junction disappeared behind, and with it disappeared the man from South America; and the express roared on to London, carrying the chums of Greyfriars on the first stage of their journey to far-off Brazil!

THE END.

(Watch out for another exciting yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., and more MAGIC PICTURES in next Saturday's MAGNET.)

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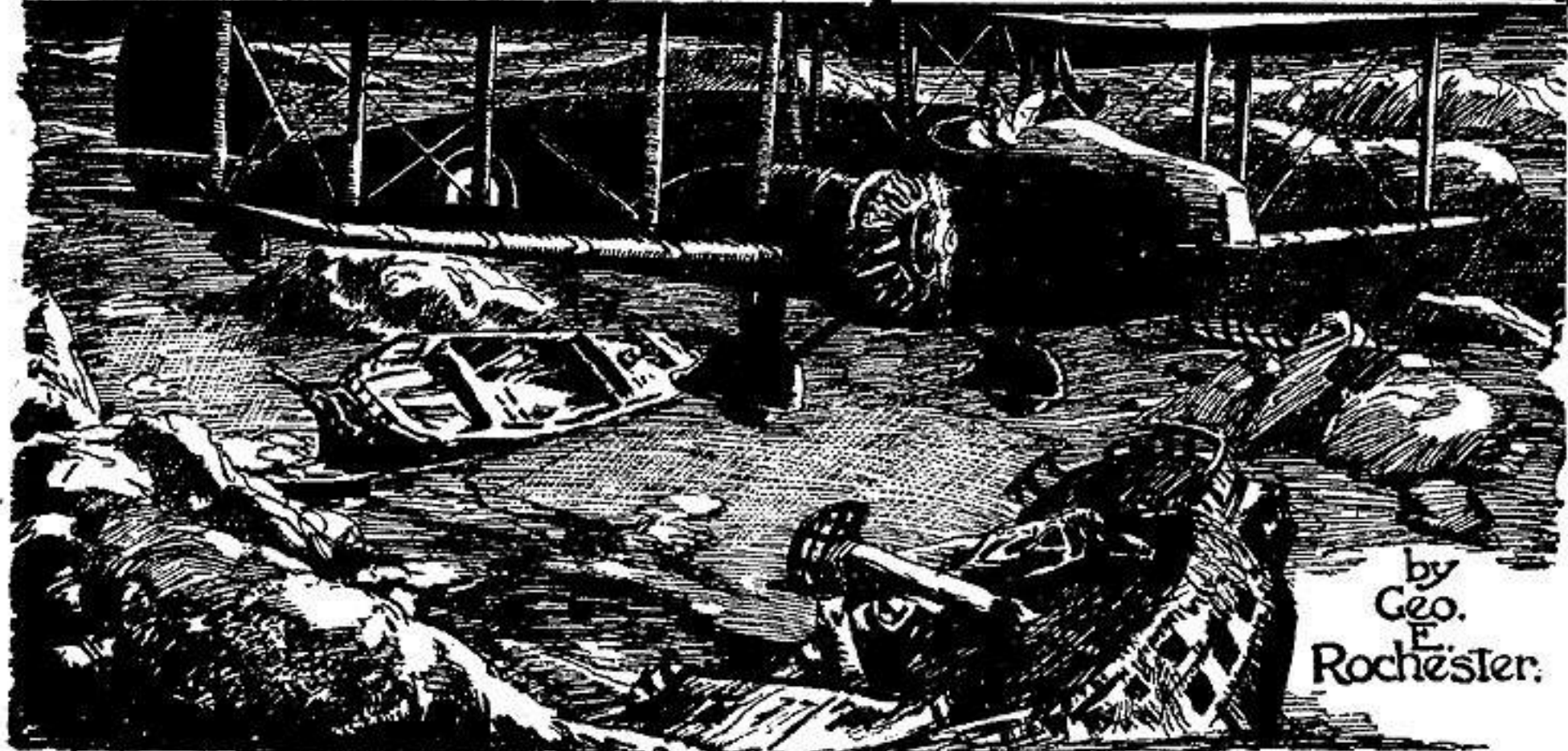
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THE LOST SQUADRON!



A Summer Day!

SPRAWLED in a deck-chair, his well-knit figure showing to advantage in white flannels, Squadron-Leader Akers mopped at his perspiring brow.

"Confound this heat!" he grunted. "I've never known anything like it!"

Flight-Lieutenant Ferris, his youthful navigation officer, sprawled in a chair beside him, grinned.

"Care for a bathe?" he inquired lazily.

"I'd love one," answered Akers, "only I can't be bothered to get the car."

"I'll get it!" volunteered Ferris. "We'll run down to the bathing-pool at Cliftonville, what?"

"Excellent idea!" murmured Akers drowsily.

Rising to his feet, Ferris departed, leaving Akers gazing through half-closed eyes across the parched and withered grass of the aerodrome to where the smooth and placid sea glittered in the pitiless glare of the scorching sun.

Never before had such heat been known in England.

Even night brought no relief from the suffocating heat of the day. Rivers, water courses, and reservoirs were fast drying up, sheep, horses, and cattle were dying in their hundreds, and there was not a town or city in the kingdom which did not report a fast-mounting death-roll through either sunstroke or collapse.

Meteorological experts were at a loss to account for the phenomena. They confessed themselves baffled. Such heat as this which was scorching the whole of western Europe had no precedent they said, nor could they give any explanation of it.

While the majority of Britain panted and perspired in town and city, hoping and praying for rain and a cooling breeze, the lucky minority fled to the coast to seek, in the wearing of the lightest of garb and continuous bathing, some relief from the stifling and oven-like air.

Akers counted himself among the

lucky ones, being stationed as he was at Kranston Aerodrome, on the Kent coast. As he sat lounging in his deck-chair waiting for Ferris to appear with the car, he reflected how perfectly foul it must be under present conditions to be stationed somewhere inland, say, at one of the aerodromes on Salisbury Plain.

He stretched out his hand for the iced drink by his elbow, and, as he did so, Ferris arrived with the old and battered two-seater car which Akers had brought with him to Kranston.

Draining his glass, Akers heaved himself languidly to his feet, and a few minutes later he and Ferris were whizzing along the dry and dusty road which led to Cliftonville.

"There isn't a breath of air to be had even in a car," complained Akers,

Torrential rain : : . a raging sea illumined by a ghostly light : : . the whole sky filled with the crashing roar of thunder . . . and then silence : : . England, submerged beneath the sea, is no more!

leaning forward in the driving-seat in an attempt to coax open the windscreen another fraction of an inch.

"There's air up there, anyway," laughed Ferris, nodding skywards, "and we're flying to-night."

"For which relief much thanks!" grunted his companion. "Edinburgh, isn't it?"

"Yes, a long-distance flight to Edinburgh and back," assented Ferris. "But I say—"

"Yes?"

"Do you notice anything?" Ferris made a comprehensive gesture with his hand. "Anything about the countryside, I mean?"

"No, can't say that I do," answered Akers, staring about him. "What's wrong?"

"I don't know that there's anything wrong exactly," replied Ferris. "It

might merely be my imagination. Would you mind stopping a minute?"

Obediently Akers brought the car to a standstill by the side of the hedgeless road.

"Well?" he inquired, looking inquiringly at Ferris.

"Listen!" said Ferris.

Akers listened, and as he did so, it became borne in upon him that the countryside was strangely silent. Nothing moved, nothing stirred. Over parched land and sea brooded an eerie, deathly hush.

"Look at those cows over there!" The voice of Ferris broke the stillness as he pointed to where the cows in a near-by field were standing close in by the hedge, motionless and with heads adroop. "And look at Lawson's Poultry Farm. There's not a bird to be seen. They've gone to their roosts. They know, Akers!"

"Know what?" demanded Akers.

"That something's coming," replied Ferris. "We're in for a storm!"

"Well, so long as it means the end of this confounded heat wave, I don't mind," said Akers, pressing the self-starter. "But the barometer's high, isn't it?"

"It was at lunch," assented Ferris. "It'll be falling with a run, though, before evening. I'll bet!"

"I hope you're right," observed Akers, "only we don't want flying washed out for to-night. The only time I've been able to breathe this past week is when I've got to twelve thousand feet."

He let in the clutch, and as the car continued on towards Cliftonville he began to agree with Ferris that something in the nature of a storm certainly seemed to be coming.

The sky itself was changing, taking on a yellowish tinge, and although the heat was as oppressive as ever the sun was slowly retreating behind a thin, opaque haze which enabled the naked eye to view the vast flaming ball without hurt.

There were few cars about, and fewer pedestrians.

The beach, however, was packed with people, but Akers could not help
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noting how wan and listless the majority of them looked.

Arriving at the bathing pool, they parked the car, and donning their costumes, plunged gratefully into the water, which was crowded with bathers.

Even the water afforded little relief from the oppressive heat, for it was unpleasantly warm.

"No, sir, I can't understand it," said an attendant, in response to a comment by Akers. "The sea itself is as warm as the pool, and, what's more, it's getting warmer at the rate of five degrees an hour."

"Oh, come, man," laughed Akers, "that's absurd!"

"Absurd or not, sir, it's true," replied the man doggedly. "You go and ask them on the pier. They're taking readings every twenty minutes there."

"I tell you, Akers," said Ferris, who was standing by, "we're in for something."

"You're right, sir," agreed the attendant, with an uneasy look at the metallic sky. "And when it comes, it'll come proper!"

"Well, I'm going in again," said Akers, moving away towards the diving-board. "Come on, Ferris; I'll race you to the raft, then we'll tea and get back to the aerodrome."

"I'm not teeing, thanks," responded Ferris. "A quart of iced orangeade'll about meet my case!"

And iced orangeade he and Akers had when, their bathe over, they had dressed and found a table on one of the crowded terraces overlooking the pool.

Reflecting the colour of the ominous sky, the sea stretched like a sheet of burnished copper as far as the haze-enshrouded horizon, and a speedboat close inshore left behind its droning length a long, boiling wake which spumed and bubbled like molten metal. And over all, heavy and oppressive, brooded a deathly hush which even the chatter on the terraces and the strains of a near-by orchestra could not dispel.

It was as if Nature herself, tense, still, and with bated breath, was waiting—waiting—for what?

With The Night!

THE sun set that evening in a blood-red haze which magnified it into a grotesque and terrifying crimson ball. Long after it had gone, its reflection remained to tinge the darkening sky, which slowly deepened into the blackness of a starless night.

Dinner in the Kranston mess had been over a couple of hours when Squadron-Leader Akers, accompanied by Ferris, strolled on to the aerodrome, where, in front of the vast, illumined hangars, a squadron of ten night-bombers stood with twin engines ticking over and navigation lights aglow on wing tips and tails.

After a word with the flight-sergeant, Akers turned to little Hayes, the meteorological officer.

"What's the latest weather report?" he inquired, drawing on his flying gloves.

The diminutive Hayes proceeded to unburden himself.

"There is no weather report," he stammered. "Atmospherics are so bad that we can get nothing on the wireless except infernal cracklings!"

"Then why not try the telephone?" suggested Akers.

"I have," Hayes assured him. "I got through to the Air Ministry, and they said there's a fine weather area over the whole of Western Europe, with a high barometer."

"What?" exclaimed Ferris incredulously. "A fine weather area with atmospherics like they are and a sunset like we saw?"

"That's what they said!" replied Hayes. "But I must say it sounds dashed queer to me."

"Yes, and dashed queer to me, too!" observed Ferris grimly.

"Well, anyway, let's get off!" said Akers, turning away to clamber up to the pilot's cockpit. "Cheerio, Hayes!"

"So-long!" replied Hayes.

The meteorological officer lingered on the aerodrome until, with a thunderous roar of high-powered engines, the squadron had swept forward into the darkness and soared up into the night sky.

Then, removing his hat in order to mop at his damp brow, for the heat was stifling, he retraced his steps to his office, where a grey-clad corporal was seated at the blanket-covered and paper-strewn table.

"If you want me, Jones," said Hayes, "I'll be in the billiards-room. I'm playing Mr. Simpson!"

"Very good, sir!" said the corporal.

It was to the billiards-room, therefore, that Corporal Jones hastened some twenty minutes later.

"An urgent storm warning has just come through by telephone from the Air Ministry, sir," he said, handing the meteorological officer a slip of paper. "All flying is to be abandoned, and all machines in the air are to be recalled or instructed to land on the nearest landing ground."

"But the squadron left half an hour ago," said Hayes indignantly, depositing his cue against the table. "What's the good of sending a warning now? Is the wireless section in communication?"

"They are trying to establish contact with the squadron, sir," replied the corporal. "But atmospherics are so bad that Major Graham is telephoning all aerodromes along the route to send up rockets."

"All right!" said Hayes. "I'll come to the office. I'm sorry, Simpson, but I'll have to stand by. We'll finish this some other time!"

Meanwhile, flying at a height of twelve thousand feet, the squadron was thundering northwards through the inky darkness of the night. They were following the coast route, but so dense was the blackness that Ferris, leaning far outboards to peer down, could not even discern the thin and continuous line of grey which marked where the North Sea washed the shores of Britain.

"Visibility's getting worse," he said, straightening up and resuming his seat by the side of Akers.

"Yes; and we're bumping a lot," replied Akers. "I don't like it, Ferris. Hallo, what's that?"

Away to port, the blackness of the night had been split by a sudden soaring rocket, which was followed by another and yet another.

"A recall signal for all machines, commercial and military!" said Ferris sharply. "I'd better answer!"

Rising to his feet he took a Very pistol from its rack. Before he could press the trigger, however, the darkness

was rent by a lurid sheet of vivid green flame which filled the whole sky.

Next instant, audible above the thunder of the engines, came a deafening and reverberating roar, and, as though hurled by giant, invisible fingers, the bomber was swept upwards in a wild and sickening swirl.

Desperately Akers fought to regain control. His face was grim and set, and there was something akin to horror in his eyes as he stared ahead. For the whole sky, filled with the crashing roar of thunder, was a vivid greenish arc of flame, weird and terrifying.

Still out of control, the bomber dropped its nose and swooped earthwards, and in that moment Akers caught a glimpse of the pallid ground below, and a raging cauldron of boiling sea illumined in that terrible green light of the heavens.

Blackness shut down again, blotting out everything for one fleeting instant. Then once more earth, sky, and raging sea were illumined by the ghostly light, and so terrific was the incessant roar of thunder that it seemed to the white-faced Ferris as though the very heavens themselves were being torn asunder.

Then came the rain, blinding, drenching, torrential rain, and like a leaf before the gale, the bomber was swept now earthwards, now skywards, swirling madly through the green and terrifying light which was streaked with gigantic forks of darting fire.

And above it all roared and crashed the artillery of the skies like the deafening thunder of a thousand broadsides.

Far below, finding grotesque reflection from the blazing heavens, raging sea, and trembling earth, had merged into one tumultuous and indefinable holocaust.

Half-blinded by the driving sheets of rain, his senses stunned and numbed by the nerve-shattering crash of thunder, and the nightmarish arc of flame around him, Akers hung grimly on to the control column and rudder-bar, striving desperately to regain control of the wildly plunging and reeling machine.

Time and again, when the bomber went hurtling earthwards in mad and rushing dive, he thought the end had come. But always the giant invisible fingers of the hurricane plucked at the wide wingspread and sent the machine soaring up and up again into the flaming sky.

Then, slowly, when it seemed to Akers and the white-faced Ferris that they had been battling for hours through that terrifying tumult of the heavens, the crimson luminosity began to fade and the thunder died rumblingly away until they were flying through inky blackness again, low over a turbulent sea.

Turning westwards, Akers headed back in search of the coast. But there was no coast to be found. An hour dragged past, and then another, and by that time, filled with a strange uneasiness, Akers was circling widely.

It might be, of course, that his compass had been affected by the electrical upheaval. But even admitting that, he should have found land somewhere. In desperation he turned south, flying at a height of one thousand feet.

And when the grey light of dawn came creeping in from the east, he and Ferris saw ahead a strange and desolate land of rock and sand strewn with the gaunt and seaweed-covered wreckage of old-time ships.

The Waste Of Waters I.

"AKERS, where are we?"
There was real alarm in the voice of Ferris, and Akers laughed grimly.

"I was going to ask you that same question," he said, "you being the navigating officer."

Rising to his feet, Ferris gripped the top of the dashboard and gazed long and earnestly at the strange and barren land they were approaching.

"If I was alone," he said hoarsely, turning his white, strained face to Akers, "I'd think I'd gone mad, and was seeing things. It is real, isn't it?"

"Yes, real enough!" answered Akers sombrely.

"But what land is it?" demanded Ferris, his voice rising. "What's the location of it? I never knew such a tract of territory existed anywhere!"

"Nor I," responded Akers. "But, as my fuel tanks are about dry, we'll land and investigate."

Coming in from over the sea, Akers throttled down, and, pushing forward the control column, took the bomber gliding down to land on a long flat stretch of damp, but firm sand.

"Well, what do you make of it?" he said, staring about him, when he and Ferris had vacated the cockpit and dropped to the sand.

"Make of it?" repeated Ferris. "Great Scott, man, I don't know what to make of it! There's not a soul about. Not a tree, not a hedge, not a building in sight. Nothing but sand and rock, seaweed and wreckage. It—it's uncanny, Akers!"

"Yes, it is very strange," responded Akers. "But here comes the sun. When it has cleared the horizon I suggest you take our bearing with the instruments aboard the machine."

The red rim of the sun was creeping up above the distant horizon to trace a shimmering path across the sea, and swinging himself up to the cockpit, Ferris collected his navigation instruments and rejoined Akers.

"I'm wondering what has happened to the rest of the squadron," said Akers gravely. "I doubt if many of them rode out the storm."

"Yes," agreed Ferris sadly, "it came with such terrible suddenness. I don't think I'm an imaginative sort of fellow, Akers, but now that it's over, the whole thing seems to me like some ghastly nightmare, and"—again he gazed about him at the dreary vista of sand and rock—"I can't really believe I'm awake yet."

"You're awake all right," Akers assured him. "But we can do nothing until we know just where we are—until we know what land this is."

"I'll try to get our bearings now," said Ferris, unfolding his chart.

In silence, Akers watched him set to work with sextant, chronometer, dividers, and pencil. Once, when he had checked up his figures for the first time, Ferris gave a stifled gasp, then, with trembling hands, he proceeded to take the bearings again.

"What do you make of it?" inquired Akers.

"Oh, I'm wrong—hopelessly wrong!" said Ferris hoarsely. "Don't talk, Akers!"

Obediently, Akers relapsed into silence again, but his lips tightened into a thin, firm line as he watched Ferris' shaking fingers manipulating sextant, dividers, and pencil.

"Got it yet?" he asked.

"No, no!" croaked Ferris. "I'm making a mess of it—a hopeless mess of it—"



With a terrible, scabbling motion, the stricken creature thrashed backwards, its giant claws flailing the air as it writhed in dumb agony!

He broke off to take the bearings again, shaking as though with the ague. Then slowly he straightened up, and, as he turned to Akers, his face was deathly in its pallor.

"Akers," he gasped, "we're on the Goodwin Sands!"

Akers stared at him in dumb amaze. "Are you—are you mad?" he ejaculated, finding speech.

"No, no!"—the voice of Ferris was shrill and hysterical. "It's the Goodwins—the Goodwins, Akers!"

He thrust forward the paper of pencilled calculations.

"Latitude 51 deg. 17 in. North and longitude 1 deg. 32 in. East," he stammered. "Check them—check them for yourself!"

Like a man afraid of what he is about to see, Akers slowly took the slip of paper and lowered his gaze to the pencilled figures.

"Latitude 51 deg. 17 in. North," he repeated dully, "and longitude 1 deg. 32 in. East. And that is the Goodwins?"

"Yes," answered Ferris. "Look, here it is on the chart!"

Akers looked, then raised his eyes to those of Ferris.

"There is no possible chance that you are mistaken?" he asked, and his voice was strangely quiet.

"No chance at all!" replied Ferris. "I took three readings and all—all were the same. Oh, Akers, what has happened?"

Akers did not reply. Instead, he turned and looked westwards towards where the coast of Kent should have been. But there was no coast, no sign of land at all, just an unbroken waste

of water stretching as far as the eye could see.

Long he stood there, his hands clenched, his face working strangely. For now in his heart he knew the truth. Slowly he turned again to Ferris.

"All night we flew," he said, "when the storm had passed. And we saw no land. Do you know why, Ferris?"

"No," answered Ferris unsteadily.

"Because there was no land to see," said Akers, in a low and broken voice. "England has gone, submerged beneath the sea!"

The Barren Land!

FERRIS recoiled, his eyes dilating.

"Akers!" he cried.

"It is only too true," said Akers. "That electric storm either caused—or was caused by—a terrible subsidence of the earth's crust. What other explanation can there be? All night we cruised—cruised over England—yet what land did we see? None at all. England has gone!"

"But, man, it's impossible!" cried Ferris wildly.

"Then where is Kent?" asked Akers, and turned with pointing hand. "If these are the Goodwins then the coast of Kent should lie yonder. Where is it, Ferris?"

"These are the Goodwins!" reiterated Ferris desperately. "But, there must be some other explanation—"

"There can be no other explanation at all!" interposed Akers determinedly. "We saw no land, Ferris. We cruised all night and saw no land where land

should have been. Remember, the continent of Atlantis was submerged and—"

"But that is legend!" cried Ferris. "You never believed it, Akers. You never believed such myths!"

"Myths or not," replied Akers, "it is no myth that these very sands were once a tract of arable country which vanished in a night beneath the sea."

"Yes," said Ferris unsteadily. "Yes, that is true."

"And they have appeared again, high and dry above the sea," went on Akers. "The subsidence of the land mass has forced up the ocean bed. I wonder how far this belt of rock and sand stretches—"

"What does it matter how far it stretches?" shouted Ferris passionately. "What does anything matter if England has gone—if those we knew and loved—but you're wrong—you're wrong, Akers—"

With a shuddering sob he dropped his face to his hands, and Akers, his own face grey and haggard, turned away to gaze out across that vast and desolate expanse of water beneath which lay the cities and towns, the villages and hamlets of the England which he knew indeed had gone.

At length, with shoulders squared, he turned to Ferris and touched him on the arm.

"Come, Ferris," he said, "we've got to decide what is best to do!"

"Do?" repeated Ferris dully. "What can we do?"

"Well, in the first place I suggest we taxi the machine to those rocks yonder and picket her down," said Akers. "We've still got a gallon or two of petrol left, so there's no need to abandon her. After that we'll do some exploring."

He set himself then to rouse Ferris from his hopeless dejection. He succeeded, after a time, in so far that Ferris assisted him to taxi the bomber to the nearest rocks and picket it down.

They set off, and, had not their strange surroundings been occasioned by such dire and dreadful tragedy, both must surely have been lost in wonderment and amaze at the grotesque and fantastic land of sand and rock in which they found themselves.

As it was, they could not help a feeling of awe as first they halted to gaze upon the blackened and barnacle-covered timbers of some wrecked ship of yesteryear; and then stayed their progress to view and speculate upon some rusted hull deep-bedded in the sand.

Everywhere were pools, in many of

which floated dead fish, killed by the upheaval of the ocean bed.

On they went, moving steadily in a south-westerly direction, and as they picked their way between gigantic boulders or traversed long stretches of sand, the gaunt and barren land about them gradually widened until the sea to north and south was lost to view.

"I wonder how far this land does stretch!" exclaimed Akers at length, halting beside a massive boulder which reared its grey bulk a full thirty feet above his head. "If I could get up there, I'd be able to get a pretty good view, all round!"

With difficulty, he managed the ascent, for the boulder was smooth and rounded, and gazed about him.

Westwards, as far as the eye could see, stretched grey and barren land, intersected by yellow stretches of sand, utterly desolate, sinister, and forbidding. Far to the north and south was the sea, lapping the silent shores of what but yesterday had been its bed.

Long and earnestly Akers stared about him, then he scrambled down and rejoined Ferris.

"Goodness knows where it ends!" he said. "It seems to go on and on for miles!"

"Well, before I go on another yard," said Ferris, "I'd like to eat!"

"We'll get some fish from a pool and grill them," assented Akers readily. "If we can find some pieces of more or less dry driftwood, we can soon get a fire going by using one of the Very pistol cartridges."

"I wonder just how long these fish will keep fresh in the pools?" commented Ferris.

Akers looked at him quickly.

"Oh, a long time!" he answered.

A near-by pool afforded them ample sustenance for the moment, however, and whilst Akers set to work clumsily to fillet the fish they took from it, Ferris went in search of driftwood.

Returning with an armful, he powdered one of the magnesium cartridges of the Very pistol, and soon had a fire going on an open stretch of firm and drying sand.

Ferris sniffed appreciatively at the appetising odour.

"It smells good, anyway," he began, then broke off, with a sudden startled yell: "Look, Akers—look!"

Dropping the fish he was holding on the end of a sharpened stick, Akers leapt to his feet. As he did so, he caught his breath in horror, for coming

towards them across the sand, moving at a swift, but ungainly run, was a monster, man-eating crab—a creature almost the height of a man and of gigantic, terrifying girth!

Taking Ferris by the arm, Akers ran towards where two massive boulders, deeply embedded in the sand, and leaning together, formed a tiny cave little better than a crevice.

It afforded cover, however, the only cover available, and Akers and Ferris squeezed into it, being forced to squat uncomfortably low in order to gain its farthest recesses.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Ferris. "The brute's spotted us!"

There was no doubt at all that the terrible, stranded denizen of the under seas had spotted them, for at an ungainly scuttle it made for their crevice, and, folding its mighty legs beneath it, crouched down at the entrance, effectively blocking their escape the while it glared at them with cold and baleful eyes.

"Listen, Akers!" muttered Ferris. "I can't stand this any longer. The brute's prepared to stay there for hours. We've got to do something."

"Yes," murmured Akers; and from the pocket of his short leather flying-coat he cautiously drew the squat Very pistol.

"Be careful!" warned Ferris.

Slowly raising the pistol, Akers commenced to move forward inch by inch, watched by those cold, unwinking eyes.

Then, steadily, his finger pressed on the trigger. Simultaneously, the blazing magnesium cartridge shot forward, to strike the monster fairly and squarely between the eyes, burning and blinding with lurid, scorching flame.

With a terrible, scabbling motion, which flung up great spouts of sand, the stricken creature threshed backwards, its giant nippers flailing the air as it writhed in awful agony. Then gradually its pace slowed; its efforts became weaker and more weak, and at length it sank to the ground, quiet and quiescent.

Quitting their refuge, Akers and Ferris returned to the fire and rebuilt it with driftwood. But, as they ate the fish which they cooked, they kept a sharp look-out, for they did not know what other monsters of the depths might be roaming this fearsome and barren land.

(Like the yarn, chums? I thought you would! Geo. E. Rochester has no equal when it comes to writing a really powerful story. Look out for heaps more thrills next week!)



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15-2-36

IN THE HANDS
of the MARTIANS!

Another "Eggsciting" Instalment
of Dicky Nugent's "Shocker"—
"St. Sam's in the Strattersphere!"

Bang! Crash! Wallop!
"Yarooooo!"
"Ow-wow-ow!"
"Gerroff my chest!"
Howls of aggrony re-
sounded through the
interior of Professor
Potty's marvellous rocket
as it hit the surfs of the
planet Mars. Doctor
Birchemall and Mr.
Lickham and the five
Fourth Formers were flung
together in a yelling heap.
It was forchunit, indeed,
that they had fixed on
their crash helmets, or
some of them mite well
have busted their topnots!
Doctor Birchemall was
the first to pick himself
up. He promptly ran
across to the winder to
see what was doing out-
side. What he saw drew a
low wissle of distonish-
ment from him.
"Few! Lickham!
Boys! Come and have a
squint!"
"Whatever is it, sir?"
gasped Mr. Lickham, as
he limped to the winder.
For answer, the Head
started prancing up and
down by the winder with
joy—as eggscited as a
Second Form flag!
"Hooray! Now we've
proved what scientists
have been arguwing the
toss over for centuries!"
he chortled. "Mars IS
inhabited! We've landed
right in the midst of some
of the inhabitants! Come
and look, all of you!"
There was a rush to the
winder—and a yell of
amazement from the egg-
splorers at what they saw.
Crowded round the
rocket, which had landed
in the middle of a sort of
plateau, were hundreds of
the funniest looking
objects the St. Sam's
fellows had ever seen.
They had round bodies,
supported by four legs
with rollers on the ends.
Their heads, which were
underneath their bodies
instead of on top, were
adorned with large flap-
ping ears, a big mouth
spreading from ear to
ear, and one eye in the
middle. Not one of them
seemed to possess such a
thing as a nose!
Jack Jolly & Co. gazed
at the Martians with
fascinated interest. But
Mr. Lickham wasn't a
bit fascinated.
"I vote we get out and
make friends of these
Martian chaps!" said
Jack Jolly.
"Hear, hear!" corussed
Merry and Bright and
Fearless.

Mr. Lickham and
Tubby Barrell did not
answer.
With the majority in
favour of getting out,
Doctor Birchemall crossed
over to the door and
opened it, and the entire
party then quitted the
rocket.
The first thing they
noticed was that they
seemed to weigh much less
on Mars than they did on
the earth. Every step
they took carried them
about ten yards forward
and a couple of yards in
the air! Jack Jolly &
Co. were quite alarmed
for a moment.
"What's the matter
with us, sir?" asked
Frank Fearless. "We
seem to be floating about
like giddy balloons!"
"Ha, ha, ha! Don't
let it worry you, Fearless!"
gasped the Head, who was
nearly busting his sides
with laughter over the
commical site of Tubby
Barrell hopping about like
a fat frog. "It's just
because Mars is smaller
than our earth, and there-
fore the laws of gravity
are different! Ha, ha,
ha!"
"My hat! You seem
to be breaking the laws
of gravity, sir, anyway!"
"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled
Jack Jolly & Co.
"Well, let's cut the
cackle and make ourselves
acquainted with these
Martians," grinned the
Head. And he went up
to one of the Martians
who was standing in front
of the rest as though he
was a leader, and held
out his hand.
"Do you think they
speak English, sir?"
asked Jack Jolly, dew-
biously.
"It's quite possibul.
Jolly, in these days of
wireless. I can but try,
anyway. Good-
morning, my dear
sir!" continued
Doctor Birchemall, reaching
out to grasp one of the Martian
leaders' four legs.
"I trust that you
find yourself in the pink!"
The next moment,
the Head got a shock.
Instead of accepting his
proffered hand of
friendship, the
Martian lashed
out with one of
his legs and biffed
Doctor Birche-

mail farly and squarely
on the face!
Bang!
"Yarooooo!" roared
the Head. "He's busted
my fizz! Woooooop!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
The Fourth Formers
yelled. They couldn't
help it.
Mr. Lickham was the
one who brought the
laughter to a sudden stop.
He pointed a trembling
forefinger at the Martians.
"Watch out, boys!"
he eride horsely. "They're
closing their ranks as if
they mean to go for us!
The Head must have
offended them somehow!"
"Oh, grate pip!"
Jack Jolly & Co.
hurriedly got out their
pen-shooters.
"Back up, St. Sam's!"
eride Frank Fearless. "If
they want a fight, they
can have it! We'll sell
our lives dearly, anyway!"
"Hear, hear!"
And then, just when
things began to look ugly,
Jack Jolly had an inspira-
tion.
"Half-a-minnit, you
chaps!" he eggscclaimed.
"They say that music
has charms to soothe
the savvidge breast. Let's
try my mouth-organ on
'em!"
"My hat! That's a
good wheeze!"
Jack Jolly drew out
his mouth-organ and
applied it to his lips, and
the next moment the
strains of "Rule,
Britannia" were floating
out on the Martian air.
The effect on the Mar-
tians was amazing. They
pricked up their big ears
and looked at each other;
and then, to the delite of
the St. Sam's adven-
cherers, they all started
dancing!

The Head, who had
been rubbing his injured
dial, started to rub his
eyes instead!
"Eggstraordinary!" he
gasped. "You appear to
have succeeded where I
have failed, Jolly! Keep
it up, my boy!"
Jack Jolly did so, and
with such success that
it was soon pretty clear
that he had reduced the
Martians to a state of
real good humour. When
at last the kaptein of the
Fourth brought his recital
to an end, the Martians
all broke into a weird
howling, which was easily
reckernisable as their way
of cheering—and it was
then that the St. Sam's
party realised for the
first time that they spoke
out of a hole at the back
of their heads instead of
out of their mouths.
"My hat, sir!" egg-
claimed Mr. Lickham, who
was beginning to regain
his curridge now. "You
ought to get on well
with these people. They
speak just like you—out
of the back of their
necks!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Fathead!!" growled

the Head. Then he
brightened up as the
leader of the Martians
came up to him and
added: "I do beleovo
they're going to ask us
to have a feed with them
now!"
Doctor Birchemall's fore-
cast proved correct. What
the Martian was saying
wasn't understandable, of
corso, but when he opened
his mouth and pointed
towards it with one of his
legs, the inference was
obvious.
"Thanks!" said the
Head, when his host had
finished eggspaining. "As
you ask us so nicely, we
shall be happy to stay
to dinner. Shan't we,
you fellows?"
"Yes, rather!"
The leader of the Mar-
tians waved his leg as
though he understood,
and in a couple of jiffies
the St. Sam's eggplorers
were being conducted to a
big stone building which
seemed to be a sort of
restorong.
"This is something
like!" grinned the Head,
as they strolled along
with ten-yard steps. "I
must say I'm feeling
rather peckish, and I'm
sure I shall do justiss to
what is set before us!"
"Hear, hear!" grinned
Tubby Barrell.
"Personally, I should
be much more comfortable
if these Martians weren't
such weed-looking creet-
chers," remarked Mr.
Lickham.
"Hero we are!"
chortled Tubby Barrell, as
they entered the building.
"Now for the feed!"
But, sad to relait,
Tubby's first eggspierence
of a feed on the planet
Mars fell much below his
eggspertations.

To begin with, instead of
laving seats, the Martians
had bars running along
under the ceiling from
which they hung by two
of their legs while they
helped themselves to the
bick on the table with the
other two.
That wouldn't have
mattered much from
Tubby's point of view,
perhaps. But what did
matter was the tuck.
Tubby had hoped for a
Martian edition of steak
pie and sossidge-rolls and
jam-tarts and doonutts.
Instead of that, he found
when they brought up the
luck that their staple diet
on Mars konsisted of
lumps of rock!
The hospitable Mar-
tians served up enuff of
these for Tubby to have
built a small house with.
"Of all the dud places
I ever struck, Mars is the
duddest!" snorted Tubby.
"Fancy eating blessed
stones!"
"I agree that it is
rather tuff," mernered
the Head. "But we don't
want to upset these Mar-
tians if we can help it,
so I vote we all remember
our manners as guests
and make at least a
pretence of eating them!"
"Wade in!"
And the St. Sam's
eggplorers, realising that
there was something to be
said for the Head's point
of view, pretended to eat
lumps of rock and enjoy
them—and promised them-
selves a real feed to make
up for it, when they got
back to Professor Potty's
rocket!

(More larks on Mars in
next week's instalment, lads!
Don't miss it!)

BOB CHERRY chuckles over—
Dummies' Desperate Duel!



Chaps who've always
maintained that there never
was such a dummy as
Coker will have to revise
their opinion now. There
is such a dummy as Coker—
and what's more, Coker
has met him!
Last night, Tubb and
Gatty and Myers rushed
along to Coker's study when
he was all on his lonely
own, and announced that a
burglar had broken into
the gym. Immediately
Coker jumped to his feet
and rushed out of the study.
But Coker was in for a
rude awakening. When he
slogged out at the dark
figure he found in a corner,
on entering the gym, he
fully expected that the first
blow would prove a knock-
out. Far from it! True,
his opponent did fly back
when the blow landed; but
he returned a moment later,
and Coker got a fearful
clump on the chin!
Of course, Coker wasn't
standing for that. He hit
out harder, and again his
opponent vanished into the
darkness.
Then he came back once
more, and landed a smasher
on Coker's nose!
Coker saw red and went
for the chap in grim earnest.
But each time Coker got
in a blow, his opponent
came back with a harder
blow!
The end was terrible for
Coker. He took a sock-
dologer right on the jaw,
and faded out altogether
for about twenty ticks.
But the sequel was still
more terrible. When he
came round again, to find

Wingate attending to him
and all the lights turned on,
he made the additional dis-
covery that the "burglar"
he had been attacking was
nothing more formidable
than the new dummy boxer
that has been installed in
the gym this week! It
stands on a heavy base and
always springs up to atten-
tion again, however hard
you hit it. What had
knocked out Coker was not
a desperate crook—but a
dummy on the rebound!
So Coker is not, after all,
the greatest dummy in the
school! After this notable
victory, the title will surely
go to the one in the gym!
Incidentally, to add insult
to injury, Tubb & Co. had
left the words "EVER
BEEN HAD" chalked
across the mirror in Coker's
study when he got back.
They've spent the last
twenty-four hours dodging
Coker and trying to insure
their lives. So far, there
are no takers!

MORGAN'S MARVELLOUS
MOVIES!

By DICK RAKE

"Coming along to my movie-show this evening?"
Morgan asked me, the other day.
"Thanks, awfully," I said. "Got some good
films?"
"Indeed, I've some excellent ones. Fellows
who've seen them already say they're marvellous!"
I went along. A dozen other chaps were also
looking forward to it, apparently, for they were all
there bang on time.
Morgan turned out the light and switched on the
projector, and a beam of light was thrown on to the
screen. It wasn't a very powerful beam, and there
seemed to be a dickens of a lot of wobbly specks
mixed up with it. But we hoped these would vanish
when the film started.
The film, however, seemed to be a long time
starting. Morgan seemed to be having a little
difficulty. A long period passed, and we got a little
restive. Then, at last, the lights went up again.
So far, all we'd seen was a lot of blobs and specks
jumping up and down on the screen.
"Well, when are you going to start, Morgan?"
I asked.
And what do you think Morgan answered?
"START! WHAT DO YOU MEAN! I
STARTED HALF-AN-HOUR AGO, AND I'VE
FINISHED NOW!"
And, believe it or not, kids, he was speaking the
literal truth! We'd seen a half-hour moving-picture
programme without recognising a single picture!
Morgan called his "movies" marvellous. Person-
ally, I consider they're almost miraculous!

Fierce Contests at
FAGS' FISH CARNIVAL

Says HARRY WHARTON

If you haven't seen a
Fag Fish Carnival, you
haven't lived!
In case you're not
already aware of it, I
should mention that a
Fag Fish Carnival is a
Herring-toasting Com-
petition which concludes
with a feed of herrings
cooked by the competitors.
The herrings are toasted
by the Form-room fire on
the ends of penholders.
The enthusiasm is amaz-
ing. The stewards have
quite a job to keep back
the surging crowds round
the fire, and the cheering
and yelling that go on
as the herrings pass
through various shades of
brown, till they reach
the final stage of sooty
black, are contin-
uous.
The contests
were quite excit-
ing. Unless you
have a critical eye
for a well-grilled
herring, of course,
you don't appre-
ciate the finer
points of the
game. But I
managed to get
quite a kick out
of waiting for the
various competi-
tors to jerk their
herrings away
just at the right moment
when they'd reached per-
fection!
The winner was eventu-
ally declared to be Sammy
Bunter, and he was
awarded the prize of
ten doughnuts and a pen-
knife, amid loud rejoicings.
Oh, yes! The Fag Fish
Carnival is well worth
visiting. But if there are
any of you who intend
attending one in the near
future, take a tip from
me. Wear a smell-proof
sack over your clobber,
and put on a gas-mask
before you go in!

ANNUAL
OPEN DEBATE

Fourth and Remove
debate "Which is the best
Form at Greyfriars?" at
8 p.m. next Monday. Roll
up to the Rag in your
thousands! Remove sup-
porters should apply to
the Debating Secretary for
supplies of eggs, tomatoes,
handbells, and rattles.

INQUIRERS
PLEASE NOTE!

No, there isn't a new
kid in the Second. The
kid you saw was Dicky
Nugent—and the reason
you didn't recognise him
is that he recently washed
his face.

The
GREYFRIARS HERALD

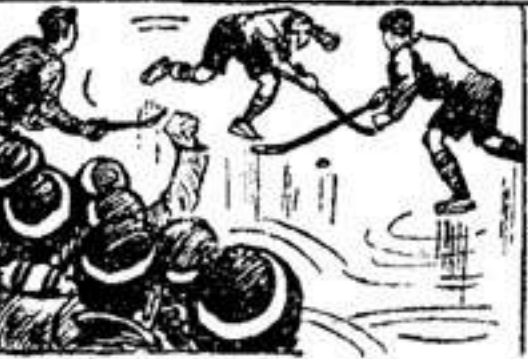
No. 175.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

February 15th, 1936.



WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



An ice hockey match between
Remove and Upper Fourth drew
a huge crowd. Against the swift
Remove forwards Temple & Co.
found it "hard going"—and
their "slips" let Harry Wharton
& Co. in time and again.
Winning 8-0, Remove were too
"slippery" for their opponents.



Owing to a printer's error, W. G.
Bunter appeared in the School
List as being 115 years old instead
of 15. "Smithy" remarked that,
although Bunter has been telling
his story about a postal-order he
is expecting for a very long time,
it hardly seems quite as long as
that!



The new Pegg motor life-boat has
been called out several times
already. On the last occasion
Tom Redwing broke bounds to go
with it—knowing the crew.
Redwing was reprimanded,
but in view of the assistance he
rendered, the Head overlooked
his act. A "saving" grace!



The Courtfield police, experi-
menting with a special "noise
meter" to measure the sound of
the traffic, made Horace Coker
their first victim. Accused of
making too many "decibels"
of noise on his motor-bike, Coker
was too stunned to speak. His
"silence" got him let off!



Bunter was very keen to go on
the "Chair-o-plane" at the
Courtfield Fair. When the
proprietor saw Bunter's bulk,
he felt uneasy. Not so uneasy,
however, as Bunter felt after
whirling round at high speed!
For once the Owl was glad to
get out of a "chair"!



Tom Redwing spent twenty-eight
evenings making a miniature
scale model of a Spanish galleon,
the ship being only 3 1/2 inches long.
Though it is too small to take
any "treasure" on board,
Redwing "treasures" it greatly.
It stands on the mantelshelf of
Redwing's study.

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!