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BUNTER, THE HERO!

SHADOWED in SOUTH AMERICA!

By FRANK
RICHARDS



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Dubble-oo Gee in Difficulties!

"I SAY, you fellows!" It came in a loud howl. Jim Valentine chuckled. "That's jolly old Bunter!" he said.

It sounded as if Billy Bunter was in trouble!

The steamer Comet was berthed by the quay in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. Harry Wharton & Co., of the Greyfriars Remove, having "rolled down to Rio," had arrived at last at that famous city.

Rio was round them, blazing in the tropical sunshine. Quays and docks swarmed with a black and white, brown and yellow population. Officials of every shade of dusky complexion were as thick as mosquitoes.

The Famous Five had got ashore at the earliest possible moment to meet their old pal, Jim Valentine, who was waiting on the quay to greet them. Sad to relate, they had forgotten Bunter!

Now they were reminded of him.

Bunter, still on the steamer, had been stopped at the gangway. Other passengers, having complied with the multifarious and innumerable regulations connected with landing in Brazil, had been allowed to pass freely. But an arm was placed across Bunter's way—and he blinked through his big spectacles at an obstructive official with angry indignation.

Dom Joao Frulo, under whose charge the schoolboys had voyaged out to Brazil, had disappeared to look after the baggage. The other fellows were on the quay. Bunter was on his own. In vain he gabbled English at an official who jabbered back in Portuguese.

Neither could understand the other.

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Hence Bunter's yell to the fellows on the quay.

The Owl of the Remove was getting alarmed. The official was getting excited. The Comet was going on to Buenos Aires, after a stay of only twenty-four hours at Rio. Bunter was anxious to get off.

South America is a leisurely country; but even a Brazilian official was not likely to spin out a conversation to the length of twenty-four hours. Still, Bunter was alarmed. He wanted to get after the other fellows—and he couldn't. The official arm barred his way.

"That ass!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter.

"Why the dickens don't they let him come?" said Bob Cherry. "All the papers are in order—Mr. Frulo saw us through that—"

"Trust Bunter to get into a row of some sort!" remarked Frank Nugent.

Harry Wharton cut back to the steamer.

"Beast!" roared Bunter, as he saw him coming, no doubt by way of thanks. "Leaving a chap behind—"

"Why didn't you come with us, you silly ass?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"I had to get this bag from my cabin, you fathead! Now this blithering idiot won't let me pass!"

Bunter had a small suitcase in his hand.

It was quite small, though it contained all Bunter's outfit for the long journey from the Old World to the New. Bunter, as usual, was travelling light. Anything he wanted, he borrowed from the other fellows' outfits. So that was all right.

On the suitcase appeared Bunter's name in capital letters: "WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER." The Rio official was pointing with a dusky finger, at

that name. It seemed to be the root of the trouble.

"O nome do senhor?" said the official, for the tenth time.

Bunter knew that much Portuguese. He had heard it a good many times as the Comet came into Rio Harbour. He knew that the dusky gentleman was asking his name.

"W. G. Bunter!" hooted the fat Owl, also for the tenth time.

"Nao!" said the official, shaking his head.

"The beast won't believe that that's my name!" howled Bunter. "The other beasts have been over the passports, and they jolly well know it's my name! But this beast makes out that it isn't! Perhaps he thinks I've pinched this suitcase, blow him!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Most likely!" he remarked. In fact, Bunter's suitcase did not look as if it was worth "pinching."

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! The rotter's keeping me on the ship—I shall be going on to Boonos Aires at this rate! Tell the blithering idiot to let me pass."

It was rather fortunate for Bunter, in one way, that the Brazilian did not understand English. Had he comprehended Bunter's description of him, it was probable that he would have taken offence.

Harry Wharton, collecting some of the Portuguese he had learned from Mr. Frulo, addressed the man in uniform.

"Que ha?" he asked, asking what the matter was.

"O nome!" hooted the dusky one.

"That's my name!" roared Bunter.

"W. G. Bunter, see? That's my nomey, as you call it in your silly language! Nomey, W. G. Bunter."

"Nao! Dubble-oo Geo—nao! Nao!"

snorted the dusky official. "Boonter—sim, sim! Dubble-oo Gee—nao! Nao!"

"The man's mad!" said Bunter. "I say, Wharton, you barge him over, old chap, while I nip across."

Wharton chuckled.

What might have happened, had he "barged over" a port official at Rio de Janeiro, he could hardly imagine. Certainly he was not going to try it on. Such a shock to officialism might have caused the Republic of Brazil to quiver, from the President of the Republic down to the blackest porter on the quay.

"It's your fault, you fat ass!" he said. "Why can't you tell the man your name?"

"I've told him a dozen times!"

The official waved Bunter back. Obviously he was not going to let a passenger off the ship when the name of William George Bunter was plainly painted on his bag, and he gave the name of Dubble-oo Gee Bunter. To the official mind, there was something very doubtful and suspicious in this.

All sorts of dubious characters arrived at the port of Rio. The port officials were very keen and watchful and wary, especially—like all port officials—in dealing with travellers who were quite above suspicion.

Clearly, to the official mind, there was something wrong; for there was no resemblance whatever between the name William George and the name Dubble-oo Gee!

"Por ali! Entende vossa merce? De pressa!" gabbled the official, pushing the Owl of the Remove back. "Digame, o nome!"

"What does the idiot mean, Wharton?"

"He's telling you to get back, and to tell him your name, you blithering fat ass!"

"I've told him!" shrieked Bunter. And he roared at the official. "My name's W. G. Bunter! See! Can't you see it on the bag?"

Bunter roared his loudest. Like many other people, he seemed to have an idea that foreigners could be made to understand English, somehow, by shouting it.

But the official did not understand; and he was growing more and more suspicious. He pushed Bunter back.

It was well for Bunter that Wharton had come back for him. Otherwise there was little doubt that he would have been detained on the Comet, and passed from official to official, till he arrived at one who understood English. And by that time he might have become an object of such suspicion that he might not have been allowed to land in Rio at all.

But Wharton, having grasped the difficulty, weighed in with the necessary explanation.

"Excuse me—desculpe me!" he said, raising his hat very politely to the official gentleman—remembering that in Brazil, as in all Portuguese countries, politeness comes before everything, even before washing. "O nome e William George Bunter—"

"Dubble-oo Gee Bunter—"

"What does the fathead mean by Dubble-oo gee?" howled the Owl of the Remove.

"You silly ass, you've given him your initials, and he thinks your initials are your name!"

"Oh crikey!"

Wharton's Portuguese failed him. To explain that absurd mistake in the native tongue was beyond his powers.

But the language of signs is understood in all lands. He pointed to the first letter of the name William on the bag—then to the first letter of the name George.

"W!" he said. "G!"

The Brazilian stared at him, then at the name, and then at Bunter. Then comprehension slowly dawned on the official mind. Really, there was some excuse for the misapprehension, as the "W" had no existence in his own alphabet, and was quite a new one to him.

But he comprehended at last.

His frowning face relaxed into a grin—which Wharton was very glad to see, for there was no telling what might have happened when officialism was once roused.

"Entendo!" he said, which meant that he understood. His barring arm was

Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, have had a most thrilling time travelling across half the world to meet Jim Valentine. But what they have passed through is nothing in comparison with the exciting times ahead of them!

withdrawn from Bunter's path. "Va so embora!" he added.

"What does the 'idiot' mean, Wharton?"

"He means go away!"

"Oh! Good!"

Bunter was glad that he had got some sense out of the man at last! He did not wait for the official to say "va se embora" twice! He scudded.

Harry Wharton was more ceremonious about it. Being in a ceremonious country, he played up according to the rules. He raised his hat and bowed. The official bowed with great politeness. Wharton bowed again, and the official bowed again. Then, considering that he had done enough, even for a Portuguese country, the captain of the Remove followed Bunter to the quay.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter Doesn't Like It!

"BOM!" said Mr. Frulo.

Which meant good.

His coppery face beamed with satisfaction.

The dusk of evening had fallen on Rio, and the city and the islands in the bay twinkled with lights.

On the veranda of the Hotel Gloria, facing the bay, the Greyfriars fellows sat over their coffee, and every face

expressed contentment—except Billy Bunter's.

Bunter seemed peeved.

Nobody, however, seemed to observe that important fact. The chums of the Remove were giving all their attention to Jim Valentine, and once more Bunter was forgotten.

They had dined well, and were feeling good. Bunter, who had dined more than well, was not feeling so good.

Mr. Frulo had just rejoined the party. He had been busy in the Customs—always rather an arduous business at Rio. The baggage had not yet come on to the hotel. It was not likely to arrive till to-morrow—perhaps the day after. "Order and Progress" is the national motto of modern Brazil. But the natives of that great country take their order and progress in a leisurely way. Nobody hurries—except the drivers of cars, who whiz.

"Bom!" repeated Mr. Frulo, beaming.

He was glad to see the party safely arrived, at last, at their destination, in company with the young Senhor Valentine, whom they had come so far to see.

The voyage out to Brazil had been accompanied by unexpected perils—through which the Greyfriars fellows had safely passed. It was a great relief to Joao Frulo that it had ended well.

"What does that old ass mean by bong?" Billy Bunter inquired of Harry Wharton, in a voice that was not, perhaps, intended to reach the ears of Mr. Frulo, but which did reach them.

"Shut up!" muttered Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Bom means 'good,' like the French 'bon.' Now dry up!"

"Shan't! Blessed if I see anything good here!" grunted Bunter. "Rotten country, if you ask me!"

"Nobody asked you, sir, she said," sang Bob Cherry.

"Yah!"

Jim Valentine raised his eyebrows a little as he glanced at William George Bunter.

Valentine, browned by tropical suns, handsome and cheery as when the juniors had known him in the Greyfriars Remove, and he had shared Study No. 1 with Wharton and Nugent, was very glad to see his old friends again.

Possibly, during his long absence, he had rather forgotten what Billy Bunter was like. He had said, in his letter to Wharton, that Billy Bunter could come along if he liked. Bunter had liked—and he had come! A few hours of Bunter, it was very probable, had made Valentine rather wish that he had left that bit out of his letter to Greyfriars.

Bunter was feeling the heat. It was hot in Rio, even in the dusk of the evening. Bunter stated that there were flies. There were! Bunter had more than his share of them, because he was generally rather sticky, and the small winged inhabitants of Brazil seemed to have taken a fancy to him.

Moreover, there had been red wine on the table at dinner. Bunter, disregarding advice, had sampled it, just to show that he could do what he jolly well liked when he was away from school. It had

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not agreed with Bunter. Altogether, there was no doubt that Bunter was not at his bonniest.

Mr. Frulo gave Bunter a look.

On board the steamer coming out from England, Mr. Frulo had fallen into the habit of strolling along the deck whenever Billy Bunter had anything to say. Thus he was able to elude the temptation to take the fat junior by his podgy neck and shake him. This resource came to his aid now.

"It needs," said Mr. Frulo, "to see once more about a baggage. Yes!" And with a polite bow to the juniors, he disappeared down the steps of the veranda.

Five separate and distinct glares were turned on William George Bunter.

Bunter did not mind.

"I say, Valentine—" he began.

"Yes?" said Jim.

"I advise you to sack that man!"

"Eh?"

"I don't like him," explained Bunter.

"Unsolicited testimonial in Mr. Frulo's favour!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"You shut up, Cherry! For goodness' sake give a fellow a chance to speak! You chaps are like a sheep's head—all jaw! A fellow can't get in a word edgeways! I say, Valentine—"

"What about a walk round Rio?" asked Valentine.

"Good egg!" said the Famous Five all together.

"I'm speaking!" hooted Bunter.

"You generally are," sighed Bob.

"The speakfulness of the esteemed Bunter," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "is like the absurd brook in the ridiculous poem, which went on everfully."

Jim Valentine chuckled. It was long since he had heard the Nabob of Bhanipur talk English, and he evidently enjoyed it.

"Good old Inky!" he said. "It's ripping to see you again, and all you fellows. I like Brazil; but I've never forgotten Greyfriars."

"If you don't want to hear me—" said Billy Bunter, with crushing dignity.

"Who possibly could?" asked Bob.

"Yah!"

"Run on, old man!" said Jim Valentine. Bunter was his guest in Brazil, and could not be kicked, as he could have been in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, in far-off England. "What's the trouble?"

"About that man Frulo," said Bunter, frowning. "He was cheeky to me a good many times on the steamer."

"Perhaps he didn't quite realise what an important fellow you are, old man!" suggested Valentine gravely.

"Lots of times," said Bunter, unheeding, "he never even answered when I spoke to him. Only yesterday, I asked him whether Brazilians ever washed, and he had the cheek to turn his back on me."

"Oh!" gasped Valentine.

"The best thing you can do," said Bunter, "is to sack him! That's my advice to you, Valentine."

"Thanks," said Valentine. "But as Frulo is employed by my Uncle Peter to manage the fazenda on the Rexo, you'd better speak to Peter. I've no doubt he will be grateful for your advice."

This was sarcasm; but a sheer waste on Billy Bunter.

"Well, I'll mention it, then!" said the fat Owl. "Is he going to travel with us to your uncle's plantation?"

"No; he's got a lot of business on hand in Rio and Sao Paulo. You're

coming up-country under my convoy," answered Jim. "Frulo's staying here after we leave for a few days."

"When do we start?"

"Day after to-morrow."

"Why not at once?" demanded Bunter.

"Well, don't you want to have a squint at Rio?" asked Jim. "Besides, the baggage won't be through the Customs. That takes time in Brazil."

"What a rotten country!" remarked Bunter.

"Not so bad when you get to know it," said the boy planter cheerily, "and, if you don't mind my mentioning it, Bunter, lots of these people sitting about here understand English."

"Let 'em!" said Bunter. "They're welcome to hear my opinion. Your uncle must have been rather an ass to settle in Brazil, Valentine."

"Oh!"

"I remember seeing him, when he came to Greyfriars. I thought then that he looked a bit of an ass."

"Oh!"

"Are you going to shut up, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry.

"No! Are there any mosquitoes in the Rexo, Valentine?"

"Tons!"

"Oh crikey! I've been bitten by mosquitoes already! I can see now that I was an ass to come!"

"Why did you come, old fat man, if you don't like the place?" asked Valentine.

"Well, we get out of lessons," explained Bunter. "If we can hang it out till the Easter hols we cut practically half a term's lessons."

"Oh, my hat!"

"That's all very well, though," went on Bunter. "But if a chap's going to be bitten by mosquitoes, scorched by the sun, chewed up by jaguars and pumas, stung by poisonous snakes, and murdered by bandits, I can jolly well tell you that I'd prefer old Quelch and his cane at school."

Jim Valentine laughed.

"Luckily the Comet hasn't pulled out yet," he said. "If you're fed-up with Brazil already, Bunter, nothing's easier than to go back on the steamer to England—she goes home after touching at Buenos Aires. We'll all come down to see you off, old chap."

"Yes, rather!" said Bob.

"Pleasure!" said Nugent.

"The pleasurefulness will be terrific."

Billy Bunter blinked round at the Famous Five, and then fixed his eyes and his spectacles on Jim Valentine with an accusing blink.

"Is that what you call hospitality, trying to get shut of a fellow after you've only seen him a few hours?" he asked.

"I dare say I might have expected it—I remember what you were like at Greyfriars!"

Harry Wharton rose from his chair.

"Let's get out on that walk!" he said. "Come on, you men! You coming, Bunter?"

"If you think I'm going to fag up and down those rotten long streets when I'm tired out, Wharton—"

"Sit where you are, then!"

"If you think I'm going to stay in a beastly foreign hotel all by myself—"

"Oh dear!"

Jim Valentine and the Famous Five went down the steps. Billy Bunter heaved his weight out of his deep cane chair to follow. Bunter was tired. He had been born tired, and had never got over it. But he was not going to be left on his own.

"I'm coming!" he squeaked. "Wait for me!"

"Buck up, then!"

"Shan't!"

There was at least one custom in Brazil that appealed to Billy Bunter. That was the custom of taking time about everything and proceeding, in all circumstances, in an extremely leisurely manner. A snail had nothing on Bunter as he rolled after the Greyfriars fellows.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Shadowed in Rio!

"THIS is the Rio Branco!" said Jim Valentine.

"Eh? I thought a rio was a river!" said Bob Cherry.

Jim laughed.

"So it is! I mean, this is the Avenida Rio Branco—White River Avenue, if you like that better! Some street, what?"

The juniors admitted that it was! More than a mile long, more than a hundred feet wide, the avenue ran, with great trees down its centre and its sides lined with vast buildings. It was a great artery of traffic in Rio, and cars and crowds were numberless.

After so long a time on the steamer the schoolboys were glad to stretch their legs on land. They were prepared to enjoy every minute of their first ramble round the great South American capital. All things were new and strange to them. In a dozen paces they saw a dozen different shades of complexion and heard a dozen different languages. And they were struck by the strange contrast between the leisureliness of the general population and the terrific hurry of the drivers of cars. Every chauffeur they saw seemed to be fearfully pressed for time, whizzing like an arrow, as if it were a matter of life or death to arrive somewhere swiftly. Why there wasn't an accident every two or three minutes they could not guess; but fortune seemed to favour the reckless.

Jostling innumerable pedestrians, Jim Valentine and his friends kept together more or less. Billy Bunter trailed behind.

Unwilling to lose the fat junior in a strange city, Harry Wharton & Co. looked round for him every now and then and called to him.

Bunter did not trouble to answer.

If the beasts did not choose to slacken pace and accommodate their walk to Bunter's snail-like rate of progress, they could fancy he was lost if they liked!

But, as a matter of fact, when they looked back they always caught the gleam of Bunter's big spectacles in the bright lights, and knew that he was keeping the party in sight. Bunter, certainly, had no intention of getting lost in Rio de Janeiro if he could help it.

So they ceased, at last, to bother about the fat and fatuous Owl and gave all their attention to Jim Valentine as he pointed out endless objects of interest to sightseers.

Bunter, grunting, rolled on astern.

Every now and then he lost sight of the party, but it was easy enough to pick up a bunch of six fellows again, and whenever they got too far ahead the fat Owl accelerated a little.

It was through this that the Owl of the Remove became aware of another person who was following the Greyfriars party.

Innumerable pedestrians passed and re-passed between him and the group ahead, but Bunter noticed, at last, that one figure, which became familiar to his eyes, continually recurred.

It was that of a rather burly man

with an immense shady hat which looked as if he had come in fresh from the "sertao"—the back country.

That big hat bobbed incessantly behind the Greyfriars fellows and in front of Billy Bunter. Every time Bunter blinked about him to make sure that the beasts were not getting out of sight that big grass-hat bobbed into his view.

Billy Bunter grinned a sour grin.

Unaware that one of the party was trailing behind, watching him, the man in the grass-hat shadowed the schoolboys along the Avenida Rio Branco, never thinking of looking backwards.

And Bunter had spotted him!

Bunter had heard all sorts of tales of Rio; which was not, in fact, a safe place for strangers to wander in, unless

hard, swarthy face with its jetty eyes and black, pointed beard and moustache.

Bunter knew that face!

It was the face of O Lobo, the Brazilian bravo. The man who had followed Mr. Frulo to England, and followed the Greyfriars party back to Brazil. The man from whom Harry Wharton had narrowly escaped on the island of Teneriffe, and Bunter himself at Pernambuco.

"Oh crikey!" breathed Billy Bunter.

O Lobo had jumped from the steamer as the Comet came into the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. He had not been seen again.

Whether he had been picked up by one of the swarming boats in the bay, or whether he had gone down to his

"Oh lor'!" murmured the fat Owl, in dismay.

He realised that it would be wisest to put on speed and join up with the party ahead.

To do that, however, it was necessary to pass O Lobo—which Bunter dared not do! He shivered at the thought of those jetty, glittering eyes falling on him.

In a state of deep trepidation, the fat Owl plugged on behind O Lobo, as O Lobo followed on behind the juniors.

From the Avenida Rio Branco, Jim Valentine and his friends turned into the Rua Ouvidor, the "Regent Street" of Rio.

In that crowded and busy street the peculiar procession went on; Harry Wharton & Co., thinking only of the



"O nome do senhor?" said the Rio official, pointing with a dusky finger at the capital letters on Bunter's suitcase. "W. G. Bunter!" hooted the fat Owl.

they kept to the lighted streets. He guessed that some desperate character had marked out this bunch of schoolboy visitors as his prey, and was shadowing them in the hope that they would wander into some more obscure quarter, where he could carry out his intentions—whatever they were! It could hardly be with friendly intentions that he was tracking them.

Passing a building with huge plate-glass windows, Harry Wharton glanced back to catch the gleam of the fat Owl's spectacles again.

As he did so the man in the grass-hat turned aside and stood gazing into the shop window, thus keeping his face away from the Greyfriars fellows ahead.

Bunter, behind him, blinked at his reflection in the window.

Then the fat junior gave a convulsive jump.

It was only for a moment that he saw the reflection; then the man was following the juniors again.

But a glimpse was enough of the

death, the chums of the Remove did not know—but Bunter knew now.

Evidently the bravo had escaped with his life, and now he had picked up the trail of the Greyfriars party again in the busy streets of the city.

Bunter's fat heart quaked.

His fear of O Lobo, the Wolf, was deep. He slowed down, his first thought being to get off the scene and out of the neighbourhood of O Lobo as fast as he possibly could.

But he gave up that idea. If he lost sight of the Famous Five he was hopelessly lost; he had not the faintest idea of how to get back to the hotel on his own. Moreover, suppose O Lobo spotted him, as he certainly would if he gave one glance round to his back? Bunter was a fellow who, once seen, was not likely to be forgotten. He was aware that he was rather a distinguished-looking fellow, though he was not aware that that was chiefly due to his circumference.

sights of the city, unconscious of the bravo shadowing them; O Lobo, half-hidden under the big grass-hat, keeping them in sight; Bunter trailing behind the bandit.

Then they walked on to the sea-front, the vast promenade that faces the bay, lined with white villas and tall, waving palms. Here there were open-air cafes; and Bunter was relieved, at last, to see the party come to a halt, and sit down round a table that commanded a wide view of the great bay.

A dusky waiter brought them refreshments, and the man in the grass-hat, on whom Billy Bunter's eyes and spectacles were glued, glided away to a massive palm-tree at a little distance from the table, and was almost blotted from view behind the soaring trunk. There, leaning on the tree and smoking cigarettes, O Lobo waited for the Greyfriars party to get on the move again.

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And Bunter, feeling it safe to get on at last, made a dash for it, and arrived breathless at the table where the juniors sat.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Danger!

"I SAY, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

"What are you cackling at, you silly ass?" demanded Bunter.

"I knew the foodstuffs would do it!" chuckled Bob. "You've been crawling behind us for jolly old miles, old fat man—but I knew you'd rush in as soon as you saw food!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

"Look!" said Bob, pointing to a cake on the table. "We're only having iced drinks, but we've ordered a cake for you, Bunter! Tuck in and enjoy life!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

The juniors chuckled. They had no doubt that it was the sight of refreshments, liquid and solid, that had induced the fat Owl to accelerate and bestow the fascinations of his society upon them once more.

But, as it happened, they were mistaken; Billy Bunter, for once, was not thinking of food. He was thinking of the dark figure blotted behind the palm a dozen paces away.

"Pile in, old man!" said Jim Valentine, laughing. "I hope you haven't left your appetite behind you at Greyfriars, old bean!"

"Oh, really, Valentine—"

"Anything the matter?" asked Harry Wharton.

In the light of the coloured lanterns, hung in the branches over the table, he noticed that Bunter's face was pale, instead of its usual red, and that his little round eyes were almost popping through his big round spectacles.

"Oh! No!" said Bunter sarcastically. "Nothing! Only I'm looking after you, as usual, as I did all the way out from England! Saving your lives again, as I've done before!"

"Any danger?" grinned Bob.

"The dangerousness does not seem to be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Otherwise, the scootfulness of the esteemed Bunter would also be great."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Well, what's the trouble?" asked Frank Nugent. "Has some desperate character of Rio spotted your rolled-gold watch, Bunter?"

"It's all right, Bunter," said Jim Valentine. "Travellers in Rio aren't in any danger, unless they go round looking for it."

"That's all you know!" sneered Bunter. "Perhaps you don't know that I saved all these fellows' lives on the way out!"

"Nobody knows that!" grinned Bob.

"That's what you call gratitude, I suppose!" sneered Bunter. "Who saved you from being mopped up by O Lobo on the steamer?"

Jim Valentine gave a start. He had heard nothing, so far, of the adventures of his friends on their way out to Brazil.

"O Lobo!" he repeated.

"Oh! You've heard of him?" said Bunter.

"Yes; but I can't guess how you

have," said Jim, puzzled. "O Lobo is a rather tough character on the Rio Rexo, up-country—pretty well known to do business in the bandit line. What the dickens can you fellows know about him?"

"We've been going to tell you," said Harry Wharton. "But we haven't had time for talking yet. O Lobo followed Mr. Frulo to England, and tried to get the letter off him that he delivered to us at Greyfriars."

"He did!" ejaculated Valentine, in astonishment.

"He wanted to stop that letter, if he could, to keep us from coming out to join you. And he followed us all the way here."

"My hat!"

"He attacked us several times," went on the captain of the Remove. "He nearly got me when we went ashore at Lisbon, and again at Teneriffe. He tried at first to make us turn back by threats, and after that he came down to brass tacks."

Valentine whistled.

"That means that he knows something about the diamonds," he said.

"I could have told you that one!" said Harry, with a smile. "He mentioned 'os diamantes' to me, so I guessed what it was your Uncle Peter was after. I can't guess why he's so keen to keep us away from your place up-country, but it's quite plain that he's fearfully keen on it."

"No doubt about that," said Bob. "He got on the steamer as a passenger at Pernambuco without our seeing him, and only Bunter's funk saved us from what he intended to do."

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Bunter was too funky to sleep, and so—"

"That's gratitude!" said Bunter bitterly. "You'd hardly believe, Valentine, that I stayed awake to watch over these fellows' safety, giving up my night's rest, and absolutely reckless of danger—"

"Hardly!" agreed Valentine.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why you beast—" gasped Bunter.

"After he was spotted O Lobo hid in the coal bunkers, and jumped overboard as he came into the harbour," said Harry. "That's the last we saw of him, and we don't know whether he ever came up again."

"I do!" said Bunter.

"Fathead!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Nobody's seen him since," said Harry. "Whether he was drowned or not, I hope we've seen the last of him."

"I've seen him!" grunted Bunter.

"Bow-wow!"

"Look here, you beast—"

"Well, if you've seen him, where is he?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Standing behind that palm-tree yonder, and watching us at this blessed minute!" snorted the Owl of the Remove.

"Wha-a-at?"

"That's what I came to tell you!" sneered Bunter. "I never knew you had a cake. Still as you've got it, I'll have some."

And Bunter had some!

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at the fat junior; then they stared at the tall, massive palm towards which he had jerked his head. They could make out that a man was leaning on the other side of it, though they could see very little of him.

"Can't you see him?" jeered Bunter.

"Somebody's there," said Harry, "but I don't suppose it's O Lobo. You see O Lobo in every shadow, old fat man."

"He's been following you nearly all

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the way you've come, and I had an eye on him all the time," said Bunter. "Some fellows would have left you to it after your rotten ingratitude. Not me! I saw his face reflected in a window and knew him at once. See?"

"Rot!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

Jim Valentine's sunburnt face was serious.

"Better make sure whether Bunter's right," he remarked. "If that villain O Lobo is in Rio and watching us, we want to know. He can't do us any harm here, but we shall hit some pretty tough and solitary spots on our way up to the fazenda on the Rexo. Let's look."

"Come on, Bunter!" grinned Bob, as he rose from his chair. "If it's that jolly old bandit, we shall want you to do the life-saving act!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter devoted himself to the cake. It was a nice cake—much nicer than a Brazilian bandit at close quarters!

Jim Valentine slid his hand into his pocket, as if to make sure that something was there. The Famous Five gave him rather startled looks. They realised that the boy planter was armed. On the Rio Rexo, in Brazil, manners and customs were very different from those of the Remove at Greyfriars.

But Valentine did not seem in a hurry to move. His face grew more and more serious.

"Hold on a minute or two, you fellows," he said quietly. "We'd better think this out. I told you in my letter, Wharton, that my Uncle Peter was on to a good thing. And you seemed to have picked up from O Lobo that it has to do with a discovery of diamonds. I couldn't put too much in a letter; but it's true that there are diamonds in the case, and that the Wolf and his gang have got scent of them. And—" He paused.

"And what?" asked Harry.

"I never dreamed that O Lobo knew so much, or that he was so desperately determined about the matter. Uncle Peter's on his guard against him—so am I. But we had no idea of this—what you've just told me. I'm rather afraid that I'm dragging you into danger that I never foresaw. It's pretty rough and tough on the banks of the Rexo, and—" He paused again.

"Think we've got cold feet?" asked Bob, with a grin.

"I know you haven't, old chap. But if O Lobo tried so hard to keep you away from the fazenda at Boa Vista—if he made a trip across half the world to stop my friends from coming out—it's clear that he won't stick at much in dealing with you. I can't quite see his game; but it's plain that he's in deep earnest about it, from what he's done. And I don't want you fellows to get a 'faga' in your backs, or a bola round your necks. I—I think you'd better think it over."

The Famous Five gazed at Jim Valentine. Bunter gobbled cake.

"Let's have it clear!" said the captain of the Remove. "If we're going to be a bother to you up on the Rexo, Valentine, we're ready to step on the steamer before she pulls out of Rio. But if you mean that there's danger ahead, that will only make us keener to stick to you so long as it lasts. Put your cards on the table, old chap. We shan't be offended."

Valentine smiled.

"I'm thinking wholly and solely of the danger you may be running into,

now that O Lobo is on your track," he said.

"Then wash it out!"

"We're not funky, old bean," said Bob. "And we may be some use at the fazenda, if you have trouble with O Lobo's gang."

Jim Valentine nodded.

"Done, then!" he said. "I thought I ought to warn you. Now we'll go and spot the sportsman on the other side of that palm. If it's O Lobo, there's more than enough against him for him to be collared, and handed over to the police. That will keep him safe till we join up with Uncle Peter at the fazenda. He swaggers about, a free man, on the Rexo; but in Rio, if he were recognised, the police would be very glad to lay hands on him."

And the chums of the Remove followed Jim Valentine towards the tall palm, Valentine's hand in the pocket where, as his comrades now knew, he carried an automatic pistol. And though they doubted whether Bunter was right, and whether the man under the palm was the bandit of the Rexo, the juniors felt their hearts beat faster as they approached him. Billy Bunter remained alone at the table under the

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coloured lanterns. He blinked after them through his big spectacles, still gobbling cake.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Bandit's Escape!

O LOBO drew a deep, hissing breath.

Leaning on the palm, his big grass-hat over his eyes, he did not expect the Greyfriars fellows to recognise him, even if they glanced in his direction.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of people, were passing up and down the endless promenade that fronted the bay of Rio de Janeiro, or lounging about singly and in groups, and every cafe was crowded within and without. The roadway buzzed with incessant cars. Amid such swarming crowds the bandit did not expect to draw any particular attention—especially as the Greyfriars party had last seen him disappearing under the waters of the bay. And, in fact, they would not have given him any attention, but for Billy Bunter's warning.

Now, however, as the whole party left their table, and came directly towards the palm-tree against which he lounged, O Lobo knew that he was known. He stepped quickly away from the palm towards the roadway, with the intention of mingling with the crowds, and disappearing.

But that movement had the effect of convincing the juniors that Bunter's warning was well-founded. They made

a sudden rush, and surrounded the bravo before he could get away.

In the bright lights of the esplanade they glimpsed the dark, black-bearded face under the slouched brim of the grass-hat, and knew him at once.

"O Lobo!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Pare, stop!" rapped Jim Valentine.

The bravo leaped back, as hands were raised to seize him.

He backed desperately against the palm, his dusky right hand slipping to the back of his belt for a knife.

Jim Valentine fixed his eyes on the dark, desperate face.

"I know you, O Lobo," he said quietly. "You watched my Uncle Peter on the sierra at the Rexo, and now it seems you have tracked my friends out from England. If you draw that knife, I will shoot you where you stand!"

Valentine's hand whipped from his pocket, with an automatic in it. Harry Wharton & Co. hardly knew their old chum of the Remove at that moment. Jim Valentine's sunburnt face was set and grim and hard as iron, his eyes gleamed like cold steel.

There was a buzz of amazed voices round the group. Promenaders stopped to stare on at the scene. Several cars, passing along at the usual whizzing speed, slowed down, the drivers staring at the group on the pavement. Immediately, as it seemed, the Greyfriars fellows and the bandit were the centre of attraction for hundreds of eyes.

O Lobo's voice came hissing through his black beard.

"Tome cuidado! What do you want with me, young Senhor Valentine?"

"I want you!" said Jim Valentine grimly. "You're going to be arrested, O Lobo, and put where you will do no harm. Leave that knife where it is."

There was a flash of sharp steel in the electric lights. From the circling crowd came a buzz of startled voices. O Lobo, knife in hand, rushed straight at the juniors, his face ablaze with fury.

Caution was thrown to the winds now. Rio was not the Rexo; and once in the hands of the police, it was unlikely that the bandit would ever tread again the wilds of the sertao. O Lobo was utterly desperate.

Crack!

The Greyfriars juniors, unarmed, could have done nothing against the flashing knife wielded in a sinewy hand. But Jim Valentine, automatic in hand, was watching the bandit like a cat, ready for that desperate move, and he fired as the bandit sprang.

There was a fearful yell from O Lobo.

He staggered back from the shot.

With thumping hearts the juniors feared, for a moment, that Valentine had shot him down—an act justifiable enough, but for which they certainly were not prepared.

But the next moment they saw that O Lobo's dusky right hand was streaming with blood, and the knife clattering on the ground. Valentine had shot the knife from his grasp, and a strip of skin along with it. That savage right hand was disabled, but, otherwise, the bandit was not hurt.

He recovered himself in a moment. Stooping swiftly, he grabbed up the knife with his left hand, and sprang away. This time he bounded round the palm-tree, and ran in the opposite direction.

The crowd on the promenade surged and roared.

Jim Valentine shouted in Portuguese

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as he rushed after O Lobo, the automatic in his hand. After him rushed the juniors.

Hands were lifted to stop the fleeing ruffian; but the flashing knife, the fierce face, caused them to fall again. He twisted through the crowd and gained the open roadway.

"Stop!" shouted Valentine.

He fired again, knocking up a cloud of brown dust at the feet of the bandit. He could have shot the man down with ease; but, anxious as they were to secure so deadly an enemy, the juniors were glad that Valentine did not think of doing so.

And O Lobo's escape seemed impossible. Word was passed from mouth to mouth that a bandit from the sertao was evading capture. And there were a hundred pursuers, as well as the juniors. Several police officers appeared on the scene. Cars roared and honked wildly as the bandit and the pursuing crowd surged in the crowded roadway.

O Lobo cast a wild, desperate stare round him. He had taken chances in shadowing the Greyfriars party in the city of Rio—and he had taken one chance too many.

With a desperate bound he leaped on the running-board of a passing car.

The chauffeur gave him a startled stare, swerved, and almost crashed into another car. Barely avoiding a collision, he would have braked; but the bravo was on him, bending over him, his right hand streaming crimson on the man's collar, his left thrusting with the knife.

"De pressa!" hissed O Lobo.

With the bandit, knife in hand, crouching over him like a jaguar of his native forest, the driver raced on, and the car flew like lightning.

In an instant O Lobo was far out of reach of his pursuers—his desperate device had succeeded.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

Jim Valentine gritted his teeth.

"He's gone!" he breathed.

Three or four cars, one of them commandeered by police, raced in pursuit of the bandit. They passed almost in a flash out of the sight of the Greyfriars juniors. A wild roar died away down the long promenade, and the crowds, surging in the same direction, left the juniors almost alone.

Valentine, with a shrug of the shoulders, slipped the automatic back into his pocket.

"Let's get back to the hotel!" he said.

They collected Bunter from the table; he had finished the cake and was ready to go.

"Did you let him get away?" asked Bunter. "I must say it's just like you fellows! If you'd waited for me, I'd have had him all right!"

"How long should we have had to wait?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"The waitfulness would have been terrific!" grinned Hurrec Singh.

"Yah!" was Bunter's elegant rejoinder.

And the juniors walked back to their hotel; Billy Bunter, this time, taking care not to trail behind. O Lobo certainly was not likely to have any leisure at present for Bunter; but the fat Owl was taking no chances.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Hats Off!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. spent the next day in Rio. Under the charge of Dom Joao Frulo, they walked and drove about the great city, seeing the sights, and ascended the Sugar-Loaf Mountain.

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by the aerial railway, and visited the summit of Corcovado, and made a trip on a motor-boat among the islands in the bay.

In those happy excursions they did not have the company of William George Bunter, who preferred to under-study the shy violet, and remain unseen. With O Lobo at large in Rio, the lounge or the veranda of the Hotel Gloria seemed, to Bunter, as much of the sights of Rio as he wanted to see. Moreover, the food at the Gloria was good, and Bunter ate a good many meals between meals, and found comfort therein. And the other fellows did not mourn over the loss of Bunter's company. Great as that loss undoubtedly was, they really seemed to thrive on it.

But they missed Jim Valentine during the morning. The affair of O Lobo had made rather a sensation, and Valentine had police interviews to go through. Officialism, always long-winded in Latin countries, wound its red tape round him, so to speak, and he was almost glad that O Lobo had escaped; for had the bandit been captured, there really was no telling when the party might have got out of Rio—if ever they got out!

But O Lobo had got clear.

It transpired that he had forced the driver of the car, at the point of the knife, to drive him into the hills behind the town, where he had jumped out and vanished in darkness.

He was gone, and it was pretty certain that he would not dare to put in an appearance in Rio again, and the juniors were relieved of him. It was understood that a search was going on for him; but the chums of the Remove had already seen enough of Brazil to guess that most of the work was done with the chin!

Valentine rejoined his friends later in the day; and in the evening they visited the Municipal Theatre, where they saw an opera of which they understood not a word, but which they enjoyed all the same. When they came back to the hotel, Bunter was already in bed, and, to judge by the deep rumbling that reached their ears as they passed his door, fast asleep.

Dom Joao was staying behind at Rio, and the juniors were sorry to part with the kind-hearted, copper-complexioned gentleman—except Bunter! Billy gave him a stern blink through his spectacles when Mr. Frulo saw the party off at the railway station.

But as Dom Joao seemed to have forgotten Bunter's existence, that blink did not disconcert him so much as it ought to have done. Mr. Frulo said farewell to the Famous Five at least a dozen times over, but quite omitted Bunter from his effusive farewells.

The good Mr. Frulo would doubtless have gone on saying good-bye, and expressing his undying esteem for the Greyfriars fellows, for the remainder of the day, had not the train pulled out of the station.

Harry Wharton & Co. waved their hands in affectionate farewell as they went; and Dom Joao, hat in hand, bowed and bowed, and was still bowing, like a mechanical figure that had been wound up, when he was lost to sight.

Billy Bunter grunted, and settled down comfortably in a corner.

"How long do we stop in this beastly train, Valentine?" he inquired.

"All day!" answered Jim, with a smile.

"Oh crikey!" said Bunter.

And he went to sleep.

The other fellows found plenty of interesting things to keep them awake. Valentine, who had been up and down

to Rio a good many times while staying with his uncle at the fazenda on the Rexo, knew the route like a book; but it was all new and exciting to the school-boys from the old country.

They gazed at the scenery, talked about the old days at Greyfriars, and were cheery and contented; what time Billy Bunter's snore mingled with the rumble of the train.

When Billy Bunter awakened, it was to draw supplies from a well-packed lunch basket, devour the same, and go to sleep again.

But later in the day, when the shades of evening were falling, Billy Bunter was effectually awakened from his sixth or seventh nap.

The train had come to a halt in a station—a stop of ten minutes, Jim Valentine told the other fellows.

After twenty minutes had elapsed they were beginning to think that that was quite a good ten minutes, even for Brazil.

But the train did not move on.

A great many people on the platform were talking rather excitedly to one another; but that was nothing new. Chin-wag, the juniors had observed, was one of the chief products of South America.

Suddenly there was a terrific blare of music.

The juniors stared from the windows. There was no sign of a band to be seen, and they were puzzled for a few moments, to discover whence that blare proceeded.

"It's a loudspeaker!" said Jim Valentine.

"Oh, the jolly old wireless!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hats off!" exclaimed Jim.

He whipped his hat from his head. The other fellows, without understanding the reason, followed his example.

They were not familiar with the strains of the Brazilian National Anthem. Jim leaned over Bunter and shook him.

"Ooogh!" mumbled Bunter.

"Wake up, old man!"

"Gurrrgh!"

Shake, shake, shake!

Bunter opened his eyes behind his spectacles and glared.

"Are we there?" he snorted.

"We're here!" said Jim. "Get up and take off your hat, old man! They're playing the National Anthem!"

"What rot!"

"They're rather particular about such things here," said Jim. "For goodness' sake be civil, Bunter!"

"Bosh!"

In his own country, even Bunter had the grace to acknowledge the National Anthem by rising and taking off his hat. But foreign national anthems were nothing to Bunter, and he was too lazy to get up for nothing.

However, if he needed help, he had it! The chums of the Remove did not want to draw disapproving attention to themselves by the rudeness of one of the party.

Bob Cherry cheerfully knocked Bunter's hat off, and, as the fat junior gave an angry howl, Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent seized him by his fat ears.

"Getting up?" asked Johnny.

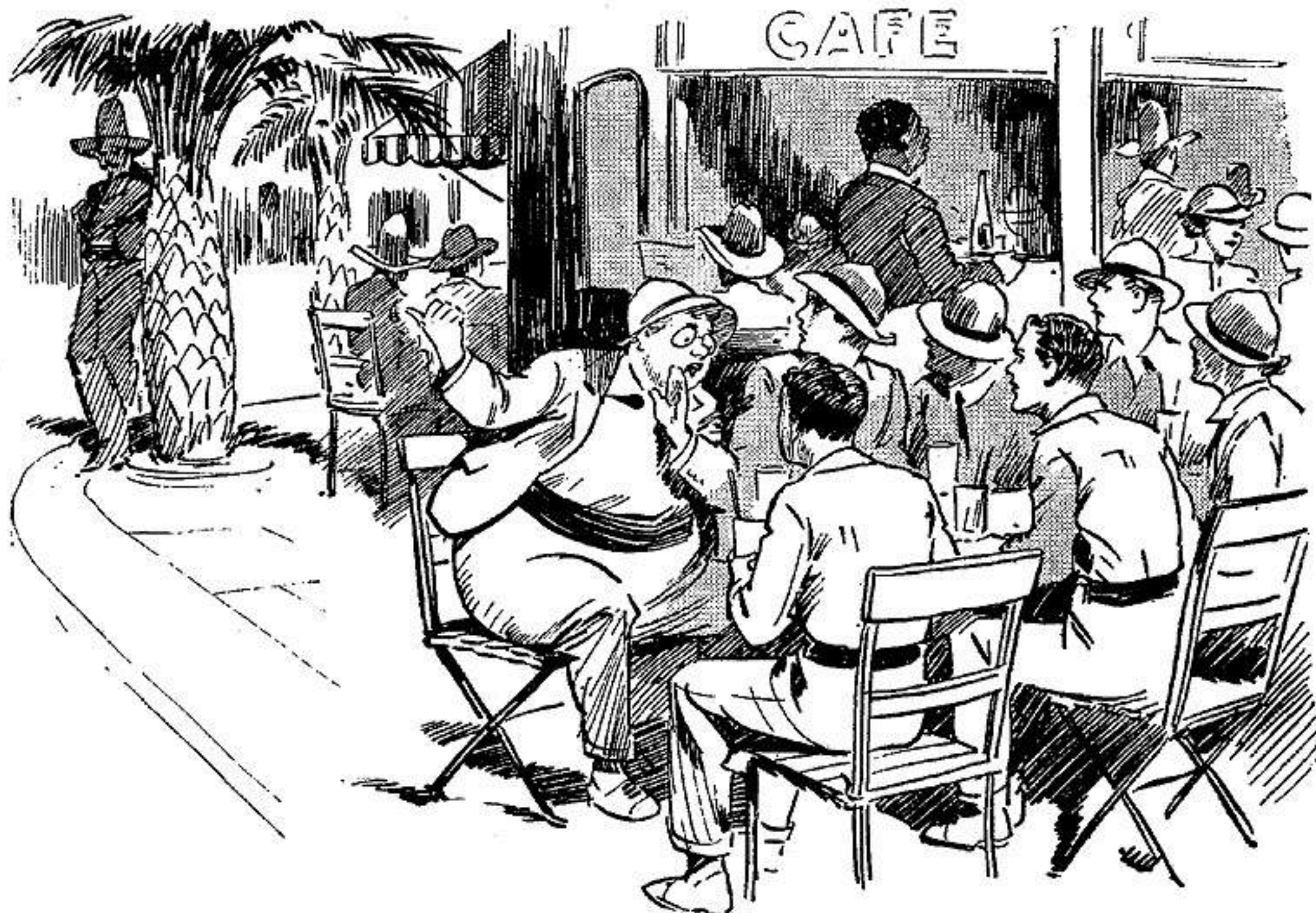
"No!" roared Bunter.

"Your ears are!" said Nugent.

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter's ears did—and, naturally, Bunter did also! He had to follow his ears, which were in a firm grip. A parting would have been painful!

"Ow! Beasts! Wow!" howled Bunter. "Leggo, you rotters! Blow that rotten row—call it a tune! Yah! Leggo!"



"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter, seating himself at the table where the Greyfriars party sat. "I've seen O Lobo!"

"Well, if you've seen him, where is he?" grunted Johnny Bull. "Behind that palm tree, and watching us at this blessed minute!" snorted Bunter. Harry Wharton & Co. stared in amazement.

"Stand up, then, you fat tick!" growled Johnny Bull. "You sit down again before they're through, and I'll bang your silly head!"

"Beast!"

However, Bunter stood up, grunting.

The scene on the station was worth watching, though William George Bunter was not interested in it. The train remained at a standstill, and everybody on board was on his feet, hat in hand. Everybody on the station had his hat off. From the loudspeaker came the roar of stirring music.

Soldiers, merchants, tattered half-breeds, porters as black as the ace of spades, all stood at respectful attention. Patriotism is a passion in Brazil, the emotional South American letting himself go full length on that subject.

So far, the scene was natural enough, though the juniors could not understand why the patriotic music was turned on at such a time and in such a place. But when it was over, and there was a moment of blessed silence, and they put on their hats again, the National Anthem re-started after the brief interval.

Crash! came the roar of music from the loudspeaker—that seemed to have the power and volume of five hundred megaphones.

From what wireless station, and where, the music came, the juniors did not know, but wherever it was, it was obviously a very patriotic spot. With a thunderous roar, the anthem boomed out again, and the whole crowd in their sight, black and white and all shades between, stood at attention once more, with serious and solemn faces.

"Play up!" said Harry Wharton, and he hooked off his hat again.

"The play-upfulness is the proper

caper!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Hats off, the juniors stood at attention, while the music blared through the hot tropical air.

It drew to a close again.

It was rather a relief to be able to sit down once more. But as the chums of Greyfriars put on their hats, and sat down, the National Anthem burst forth from the loudspeaker once more, at full blast.

Up jumped the juniors, hats off again.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bob. "I say, is this going on for ever? Fellow wants to be civil, but isn't there a limit?"

Jim Valentine grinned.

"No limit to patriotism in Brazil!" he answered. "But I fancy there's something a bit out of the common going on—I don't know what! Some celebration of some jolly old anniversary, or something. They're always celebrating in Brazil. Stick it out!"

"Oh, yes, rather!"

"Look here, I'm going to sit down!" howled Bunter. "Think I'm going to stand up for hours and hours and hours, while they kick up that row?"

"Sit down, and I'll bang your head fast enough!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Look here——"

"Shut up!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stood respectfully hat in hand, while the anthem roared out for the third time.

By that time, even the patriotic black, white, and yellow population of the platforms seemed to be feeling the strain a little. Hats were replaced, and a buzz of voices started.

Then, to the amazement of the juniors, came the roar of the anthem for the fourth time. Off went hats again, faces

became grave and serious, figures stiffened up rigidly, and the whole audience played up as one man.

The Greyfriars fellows played up, like the natives, but they had to suppress a strong inclination to laugh. Patriotism was all very well, but they could not help feeling that this was overdoing it a little. It was possible to have too much of a good thing!

Mercifully, the wireless ceased after the fourth repetition. Silence, which is said to be golden, had never seemed so golden to the juniors, as it did when that loudspeaker ceased from troubling.

Buzzing voices followed: animated groups talking and gesticulating. But the train, at last, went on its way; the juniors wondering what was the cause of that terrific outburst of patriotism.

"Silly asses!" grunted Bunter. "This country is like a theatre, and all the people in it seem to think they're taking parts in a play." And Bunter went to sleep again.

And, for once, the claims of the Remove were rather inclined to concur in Bunter's opinion. There was undoubtedly a touch of the operatic in life in Brazil.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Only a Revolution!

BANG, bang, bang!

Billy Bunter woke up.

Harry Wharton & Co., having looked at scenery, and talked about old times with Jim Valentine, and passed the long hours on the railway cheerfully enough, were feeling a little tired. The train boomed on westward through the darkness, under the

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glittering stars of the south; and a long day of it made the most strenuous fellow look forward with anticipation to halt and bed. But the chums of the Remove, though they were getting sleepy, sat up and took notice at the sudden burst of explosions from the gloom, proceeding apparently from a road that ran under the trees near the railway track.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Motor back-firing!" yawned Johnny Bull.

"More like shooting!" said Nugent. Jim Valentine stared from the window. The juniors crowded round him, staring, too.

But in the gloom they could make out little or nothing. Through big branches of trees there was a glimpse of shadowy moving figures and a twinkling of lights; and that was all.

Bang, bang, bang! sounded more faintly as the train ran on. It was evidently rifle-fire; why, was rather a puzzle.

"Hunting, perhaps!" remarked Nugent. "I suppose we're far enough now from Rio, Valentine, to be among the jaguars and pumas and things."

"Quite!" said Jim, with a smile. "We're over three hundred miles from Rio now, and that's a good step, even in Brazil. But I don't fancy that that was a hunting party."

"What's up, then?" asked Bob.

Valentine shook his head.

"Goodness knows! Might be just a celebration—they're always celebrating. I dare say you've noticed rockets going up, on and off? Rockets are always going up in Brazil!"

"No civil war going on at present?" asked Harry, laughing.

"I believe not, at the moment! But you never can tell in South America! Here, you look out of your window in the morning to see whether there's a revolution, the same as you do in England to see if it's raining."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The train boomed on, leaving the scene of the mysterious outburst of firing far behind. Bunter, asleep once more, snored.

The lights of a station flashed at last, and the train boomed in. Late as the hour was, there seemed to be a great many people about, and most of them seemed excited. Jim's eyes fixed on an object mounted outside the station-master's office, and the juniors, following his glance, were rather startled to see that it was a machine-gun.

As it was partly wrapped in straw, and stood in the midst of straw packing that had been stripped from it, it did not, however, strike them as very dangerous or threatening. On the portion of straw packing that had been stripped from the gun, a soldier lay asleep, with his rifle across his legs. If he was a sentry mounting guard over the gun, it looked as if he was taking his duty on very easy lines.

"Something's up!" said Johnny Bull. "But what?"

"I'll step out and see!" said Jim Valentine. It was clear that matters were not quite as usual along the railroad. Some sort of excitement was in the air.

But as Jim Valentine stepped out of the train, a cavalry officer came clanking across and waved him back. He waved him emphatically, and Jim shrugged his shoulders and stepped back again. The officer was polite, but very firm.

"Nobody's allowed off the train here!" said Valentine. "Goodness

knows why! It's a regular stopping-place! I hope you fellows aren't getting alarmed. It's all right—right as rain!"

Soldiers were to be seen on all sides. Many of them were asleep; others lounging in groups and smoking cigarettes. One man could be seen engaged in a warm argument with an officer. There was no doubt that Brazil was a democratic country!

Although nobody was allowed off the train, the wait in the station was long, and seemed interminable. No passengers got off, none got on; but for more than an hour the train stood there, for reasons unknown. Then, at last, it rolled on its way again into the night!

Harry Wharton & Co. were not feeling sleepy now. The excitement in the atmosphere had communicated itself to them.

Something was going on, that was clear, and they wondered whether war might have broken out, and tried to remember which South American states bordered on Brazil, and how near they were.

Only recently, they recalled, there had been a war, lasting for years, between

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Paraguay and Bolivia, for the possession of the dreary desert of the Gran Chaco. There had been thousands of slain—according to reports in the newspapers! On the spot, probably, the numbers of casualties were much fewer. The South American has a rich and vivid imagination, magnifying every skirmish into something like the battle of the Somme.

The train boomed on, in deep velvety darkness.

There was a sudden clanking halt.

It came so suddenly that Billy Bunter was awakened again, pitching forward out of his seat, and landing with a bump.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

The train clanked and rattled, and rang to a standstill. There were no lights to be seen. It was not a station—no town was at hand. Open country, thick with trees, stretched on either side of the track.

Bunter sat up.

"Beasts!" he roared. "Wharrer you pitch me over for? Was it you, Bob Cherry, you beast?"

"Not guilty, my lord!" grinned Bob.

"I say, you fellows—"

"What the dickens is the matter?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Bunter scrambled up. He set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked round him angrily.

"The train's stopped!" he exclaimed.

"Go hon!"

"Well, it has!" snapped Bunter. "Are we there, Valentine? Is this rotten jolting journey over? I can tell you I'm fed-up with it! I wouldn't have come if I'd known it was going to be like this! I'm sorry I came."

"The sorrowfulness of our esteemed selves is also great!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, shut up! Do we get out here, Valentine?"

"No!"

"Then what are we stopping for?"

Valentine shook his head.

"I don't know!"

"You don't know!" repeated Bunter.

"You silly ass, you ought to know!"

Valentine laughed.

"Can't you ask somebody?" hooted Bunter. "You can talk their rotten, silly lingo. If there's anything the matter, ask somebody—see?"

"I will, as soon as I see somebody!"

Bunter snorted, and sat down again. Jim Valentine leaned from the train, watching the track ahead in the darkness. There was a trampling of hoofs and a ringing of stirrups and bridles. It sounded as if a body of horsemen were crossing the track.

A figure loomed up in the gloom, and Jim Valentine called out, in Portuguese. The half-seen figure answered in the same tongue.

Valentine whistled.

Harry Wharton & Co. regarded him curiously. They had heard both question and answer, without understanding either. But they knew that the boy planter had now learned what was "up."

With a jolt and a jar, the train moved on again. It rumbled on into the starry night.

"Well?" said the Famous Five, with one voice.

Valentine was looking back from the window. He turned to the juniors with a smile on his face.

"It's all serene!" he said. "It's only a revolution!"

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Stranded!

"A REVOLUTION!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

He jumped up. His eyes almost popped through his spectacles. "I—I say, you fellows, let's get out of this! I say—"

"Sit down, old chap!" said Valentine soothingly. "It's all right—"

"You silly idiot!" gasped Bunter.

Bunter blinked at the boy planter in amazement and horror. The word "revolution" had a terrifying sound. Bunter, in the history class at Greyfriars, had had to learn some history—against the grain. Revolutions, in his fat mind, were associated with bloodshed and reckless slaughter. He knew nothing of the South American variety.

Harry Wharton & Co. were rather startled.

"Really—a revolution?" asked Harry.

"Yes! That's why we had the National Anthem four times over way back to-day," said Valentine. "Patriotism going strong. I don't know which side was putting it up—it really doesn't matter which! Both sides are bursting with patriotism in a South American revolution. You remember what Dr. Johnson said—"

"Who's Dr. Johnson?" demanded Bunter. "I haven't seen him since we got here! I never heard him say anything."

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

Whether the revolution was a tragic matter or a comic one, they forgot it for the moment as Billy Bunter made that remark.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" howled the alarmed Owl. "Blow Dr. Johnson, whoever he is! Look here—"

"You fat ass!" roared Johnny Bull. "Dr. Johnson lived in the eighteenth century, in London, so you're not likely to have seen him here!"

"And he said," went on Valentine, "that patriotism was the last refuge of a rascal! In Brazil it is also the last refuge of a silly ass! They chew patriotism in this country like a kid chewing toffee. You can't get away from it anywhere—it's a sort of disease. It's only necessary for some fathead to wag a flag and shout for liberty, for a lot of other fatheads to gather round him and roar. The chief advantage of it is that it interrupts work—South Americans don't like work."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "I—I see! Sort of comic opera!"

"That's it!" assented Valentine.

"But where does patriotism come in?" grunted Johnny Bull. "A real patriot would want to get on with his job, and keep the country going."

"That's only your Yorkshire common-sense!" smiled Valentine. "They don't look at it like that in Brazil! They like excitement and shouting, and wagging flags, and letting off rockets and firing off guns. It's the emotional Latin nature. Spanish-American countries are the same, only more so. Brazil really is the pick of the bunch, and it's a great country when you get to know it. But the people are rather kids, from the Anglo-Saxon point of view."

"Then it's all gas?" asked Bob.

"Mostly gas," assented Valentine. "People get killed sometimes—chiefly by accident. But that's all in the game. I don't think a South American revolution has ever produced so many casualties as the motor-cars in the London streets in a week."

"Oh!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"It's really all right, Bunter!" assured Valentine. "It's safer to be in a South American revolution than to cross Piccadilly Circus!"

Bunter sat down again.

He was not quite at ease, in spite of Valentine's assurance of the comic-operative nature of revolutions in the happy land of Brazil. Still, it was evidently impossible to get out of it.

The train was proceeding slowly—but it was proceeding. Nobody could get off the train. Bunter was in dread of shells bursting over the roof, or bullets crashing in at the windows,

scattering broken glass. But there were no shells and no bullets. So far, the state of revolution had had no effect but to slow down the train.

"But, look here," said Bob, as the juniors resumed their seats. "Even in Brazil a revolution must be about something! What is it about?"

"Any old thing!" answered Valentine. "Perhaps some general who was pushed out at the last revolution wants to barge in again. Perhaps some big gun who is in is afraid of being pushed out at the next elections. Perhaps the State of Sao Paulo is dissatisfied with the way things are done by the central government at Rio. Perhaps the State of Minas Geraes don't like the way they do their back hair in the State of Parana."

The juniors chuckled.

"But—but I—I say," gasped Billy Bunter. "Suppose they begin guillotining—I've heard about guillotines in revolutions!"

Bunter had some vague recollection of the French Revolution, from history class at Greyfriars. He had a horrid vision of heads dropping off under the guillotine.

"My dear ass, the Brazilians are much too polite to hurt one another," answered Valentine.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They have not settled down yet to the glorious state of democracy," explained Valentine. "Some day it will be done by chin-wagging at elections, as at home. Here they prefer to give the game an operative turn, now and then. After all, it's more interesting and picturesque, and it's a good excuse for a man to leave his job and use his chin instead of his hands—not that they need much excuse for that in South America. Of course, there's just a spot of reality at the bottom of the whole game."

"And what's that?" asked Bob.

Valentine laughed.

"Same as in all other countries," he answered. "Fellows who don't like work like to have the spending of the taxes in their hands. Any man in Brazil would rather be a patriot than hoe on a coffee plantation. Even in our own country, I believe, a lot of fellows would rather sit in the House of Commons than push a truck or drive a train."

"No doubt!" said Harry, laughing.

"I suppose politics comes easier than a job of work! But I think I prefer the British tongue-wagging method. At home, other fellows can get on with their jobs while the politicians are wagging their chins. But here—"

"Here the whole country turns out to wag its chin! The rate we're going at now, is a sample. I only hope the train won't stop altogether!"

"Oh, my hat! Is that likely?" "Quite likely, I'm afraid!" said Valentine ruefully. "You see, business of national importance comes first. If they want to move troops, the railroads will be commandeered. This train may be taken over."

"Oh lor!" said Bunter.

"But we'll get there sooner or later—naturally, a bit later, in a state of revolution," said Valentine cheerily; "and you'll have the advantage of getting a glimpse of a South American revolution. You might have missed it—for there may not be another for weeks, or even months."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Back up, Bunter! It's all right."

"But, I say, there might be a food shortage in a civil war! I say, suppose the food runs short—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I jolly well wish I was back at Greyfriars!" groaned Bunter.

"What a coincidence!" remarked Bob.

"I wish you were, too!"

"Beast!"

The train jolted on through the night. Every now and then, streaming in the velvety sky, rockets shot through the heavens. Several times, bursts of stirring music, from unseen performers, reached the ears of the passengers. Two or three times shots echoed in the night.

Suddenly, with a jarring and a clanking, the train drew to a halt. Jim Valentine peered rather anxiously from the window. His chief concern was to arrive in a station in some big town where other means of transport might be obtained, before anything happened. But it was clear that something was going to happen now.

There was no sign of a station or a town. On either side of the line stretched the open, shadowy "campo."

Lights twinkled here and there from lanterns; and at a distance was the ruddy blaze of a camp-fire. Dark figures appeared, disappeared, and reappeared in the gloom. Soldiers, with fixed bayonets, passed along either side of the halted train, much to Billy Bunter's alarm.

Voices shouted in the shadows. Valentine made a grimace.

"What's up now?" asked Nugent.

"We got out here," answered Valentine.

"I say, I can't see a station!" exclaimed Bunter, with an anxious blink through his big spectacles.

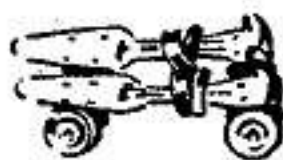
"We're ten miles at least from a station," answered Valentine.

"Then what are we getting out for?" demanded the fat Owl.

"Because we've no choice, old fat man! Can't you hear them shouting?"

(Continued on next page.)

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"I can't understand their idiotic lingo. What are they saying?" asked Bunter peevishly.

"All passengers alight here," answered Valentine. "There's a bridge ahead, blocked by sandbags, to stop the rebels, if they advance."

"Oh crikey! Are they coming?" gasped Bunter.

"Possibly! More likely they're two hundred miles away, and it's a false alarm! But the bridge has been blocked, as a precaution, and very likely it will be blown up before morning. Anyhow, we can't go on."

"Let's sit in the train, then!" suggested Bunter.

"You can't do that, unless——"

"Unless what?" snorted Bunter.

"Unless you're prepared to fight this detachment of Government troops. I believe there's about eight thousand of them."

"That lets you out, Bunter," grinned Bob Cherry. "You couldn't fight more than seven thousand."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not getting out!" roared Bunter. "I'm tired and sleepy! If I can't go to bed, I'm jolly well going to sleep here. See? And you can tell the Government troops to go to Jericho! We've paid our fare!"

"I'm afraid they wouldn't go, if I told them!" said Valentine. "Otherwise, I'd tell them fast enough."

"Well, I'm sticking here!" grunted Bunter.

"You fat ass——" began Bob.

"Yah! Have a little pluck!" snorted Bunter. "Show these dashed dagoes that you ain't afraid of them!"

And Bunter sat tight.

"Oh, all right!" said Bob. "Come on, you men—we'll leave Bunter to declare war on the Republic of Brazil. It's too big a job for us to handle, but Bunter may be able to take it on."

And the Famous Five, picking up their bags and rugs, descended from the train, as all the other numerous passengers were doing. Billy Bunter was left on his own—to declare war on the Republic of Brazil, if he liked! It was probable that he would not like!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Doesn't Like Bayonets!

THE ruddy gleam of a camp-fire at a little distance from the railroad track, shone red through the night. The dancing, ruddy glare, rising and falling, cast strange lights and shadows.

Innumerable moving figures could be seen, and there was an incessant glitter of bayonets. The juniors noticed that a good many of the bayonets were rusty. They noticed, too, an air about the whole affair, as if the actors in it were half-conscious that they were playing a comedy.

Many of the soldiers were smoking cigarettes. A group of officers, highly decorated, stood talking and gesticulating like excited schoolboys. And close at hand a military man had stood his rifle against a stack of luggage, and was sucking a stick of sugarcane. From the rapt expression on his dusky face, as he sucked the succulent cane, it was clear that he was giving much deeper attention to it than to the fate of the national Government, no doubt trembling in the balance.

Still, bayonets were bayonets, and a rusty one rather more dangerous than a clean one. Civilians had to toe the line, and they toed it.

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Harry Wharton & Co., as a matter of fact, were not sorry that this had happened. It meant delay on the journey to the Valentine fazenda; but it was exciting.

They gathered in a group by the track, as other passengers were doing. Baggage was being hurled forth and stacked by the line. In a very few minutes only one passenger remained on the train—Billy Bunter, snorting with mingled indignation and apprehension.

In the circumstances, the juniors naturally expected to hear an outburst of angry irritation from the passengers, whose journey had been so suddenly cut short. A similar scene in England, if they could have imagined it, would have been accompanied by a very large allowance of angry grumbling. But they heard nothing of the kind.

The Brazilian passengers took it all as if it were in the day's work.

Some of them, at least, must have had serious business to attend to—some must have had urgent reasons for making the railway journey. But nobody made a fuss.

Indeed, it was clear that the civilians, as well as the military, felt that they had their part to play in this peculiar game. They played up almost as if they were members of a theatrical company.

Talk, of course, was incessant, like the spate of a Highland stream. In no Latin country can anything happen without the spilling of oceans of talk. Every chin was going strong.

Business may have been important; but patriotism came first! Nobody complained—nobody grumbled. They talked and talked and talked. Piles of baggage grew higher. Talk went on. Rockets streamed across the sky from the dark campo, for what reason nobody knew; very probably for no reason whatever, except that the simple native mind liked the sight of the streaming sparks.

Suddenly there was a rattle of shots from the darkness ahead of the halted train. A bugle rang.

There was instant alarm. Soldiers dropped their cigarettes and grasped their rifles. Officers ceased to talk and gesticulate. The man near the juniors put the remnant of his sugarcane into his tunic—which looked as if matters were serious, for it was clear that he wanted to finish it. Voices roared orders—men in uniform rushed and ran, scudded and shouted—and in less than a minute the excited passengers were left standing by the train, with hardly a military man in sight. All of them had swarmed off into the darkness ahead.

"What on earth's up now?" asked Bob.

"Rebels advancing over the bridge, so they say," answered Valentine.

"Oh, my hat! That means fighting!"

"Perhaps!"

Shots rang through the night. Harry Wharton & Co. felt a deep thrill of excitement. From what relatives had told them of fighting in Flanders, they could picture what was going on—a desperate struggle on the blocked bridge, cold steel working havoc, men falling on all sides. But the lurking grin on Jim Valentine's face made them doubt the reality of that mental picture.

The shots died away.

The soldiers came streaming back to the train. Whether there were any dead, the juniors did not know; but they could see no wounded. They would have given a great deal to understand the Portuguese that was spilled in such floods round about them.

"You understand them, Valentine,"

said Harry. "Do you know what's happened?"

"Quite!" yawned Valentine. "It was a false alarm! The rebels are not at the bridge yet—and never have been!"

"Then why——"

"A mulceter was trying to get across, and arguing with the guard. That's all."

"Oh crikey!"

Soldiers were now packing into the train. Harry Wharton shouted to the fat Owl, who was still sitting there.

"Get out, Bunter!"

"Shan't!" retorted Bunter.

"They'll shift you!"

"Beast!"

A military gentleman arrived at Bunter's carriage, stared at him, rapped out an order in Portuguese, and pointed to the track. Bunter blinked at him.

"I've paid my fare!" he snorted. "I'm not getting out!"

Another volley of Portuguese.

Snort—from Bunter.

So long as the man only talked at him, Bunter did not mind. But all of a sudden the military man gripped his rifle with both hands, and presented the point of a rusty bayonet at Bunter's podgy chest.

The jump that Bunter gave then would have done credit to the most active kangaroo that ever jumped.

He fairly bounded.

"Yaroooh! Keep that thing away!" shrieked Bunter.

He was off the train in a single bound.

The Brazilian stared after him, and burst into a roar of laughter. He seemed to find Bunter amusing.

"Ow! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter, barging into the bunch of juniors. "I say, you fellows, keep him off! I say, you stand in front of me, Bob, old chap!"

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

"Keep him off!" shrieked Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"He's not after you, you fat ass!" gasped Bob. "He's only laughing, you podgy piffler! Ain't you enough to make a cat laugh?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He realised that he was in no danger. But he had no further desire to assert his right to remain on the train. He was tired of that train.

Packed with military men, the train moved off. It disappeared from sight, leaving the stranded passengers in groups beside the line, discussing what they were going to do with themselves and their baggage.

To go on was impossible, even by walking, the bridge ahead being blocked and guarded. The last station, it seemed, was twenty miles back, so a walk back was not attractive. Gesticulating groups discussed the situation with great earnestness. It was clear that none of the natives shared the amusement of the Greyfriars fellows—at the antics of the military department. Everything was taken with a great assumption of seriousness.

But though the revolution and the military operations might be serio-comic, it was rather a serious matter to be stranded in the middle of the night beside a pile of baggage, long miles from everywhere. Without Jim Valentine, the Greyfriars party would have been hopelessly at a loss.

"What are we going to do?" asked Bob, when the baggage had been carefully stacked in a heap.

"Walk," said Jim, with a smile.

Snort—from Bunter.



The military man gripped his rifle with both hands, and presented the point of a rusty bayonet at Bunter's podgy chest. "Yaroooh!" shrieked Bunter. "Keep that thing away!" He jumped backward, lost his footing, and fell among the juniors, grouped beside the line.

"There's a town about six miles off the railway, and we've got to walk it," said Valentine. "I know every inch of the way—that's all right. We can get a car there, and send it back for the baggage. Pick out a few things you'll need for the night. We can leave the rest. I'll tip a man here to keep an eye on it for us. The sooner we start the better."

"Six miles!" roared Bunter.

"About that."

"I'm not going to walk it."

"Well, you can sit on the baggage here till we're able to send a car back, if you like," suggested Valentine.

"If you think you're going to leave me alone here, among this crew of rotten foreigners—"

"Well, old chap, you must either stay or go," said Valentine patiently.

"We can't stick here for ever. And it may be a week before there's another train available."

"The silly asses ought to be kicked!" groaned Bunter.

"Right as rain; but we really can't kick the whole Brazilian Army," said Valentine. "It's Shanks' pony, or nothing."

"So this is what you've asked us to," said Bunter bitterly. "Nice sort of a holiday to invite fellows to."

Jim Valentine had no answer to that. Johnny Bull lifted his foot, quietly and deliberately, and kicked Bunter. It seemed to Johnny that Bunter needed a reply that he could understand.

"Yooop!" roared Bunter.

"Come on!" said Valentine; and he led the way.

Leaving the baggage stacked, with a local native who agreed to guard it for a handful of milreis, the Greyfriars fellows turned their backs on the railway, and tramped in dusky darkness across the wide-stretching campo.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bucking Up Bunter!

NOBODY enjoyed that walk.

The juniors followed a grass-grown track across the campo, and then among planted fields, lighted on their way only by the stars.

It was rather rough going. And it was long past midnight. And everybody was tired. And six miles was more than a step at the best of times.

But it had to be done, and certainly no member of the Famous Five thought of grousing. With their legs aching from fatigue, as if they would drop off, they tramped on with determined cheerfulness.

It was, as Bob Cherry remarked, all in the day's work, or, at least, the night's. It couldn't be helped, and that was that. The only thing to do was to take it philosophically.

But Billy Bunter had no use for philosophy. Bunter groused and grunted and groaned at every step.

Certainly the walk came harder to Bunter than to the others; he had ever so much more weight to carry. And, though he had slept more than half the day in the train, he was sleepy. And when Bunter was sleepy he was apt to be peevish.

Bunter really seemed to think that Jim Valentine had done all this on purpose to make him uncomfortable.

A dozen times, at least, he stated that he wished he hadn't come to Brazil. Quelch, in the Form-room at Greyfriars, was better than this. Even a whopping from Loder of the Sixth was better. But as breath failed him the fat Owl ceased to complain, though his grunts and his groans seldom ceased for more than a minute or two.

About a mile from the railway, on a path that ran by a coffee fazenda,

Bunter came to a halt. He sat down on a knoll, and refused to stir.

The other fellows gathered round him. They were all tired, but that, of course, was of no importance. It was only Billy Bunter's fatigue that mattered.

"Come on, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton.

"Shan't!" groaned Bunter.

"Get a move on, you fat slacker!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

"Do you want to stop here on your own?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Oh, go on and leave me!" said Bunter bitterly. "It would be like you!"

"We can't stand about here till morning, old chap," said Jim Valentine.

"Beast!"

The juniors waited ten minutes or so to give the fat Owl a rest. But ten minutes were of no use to Bunter. He refused to stir.

"Roll him along like a barrel," suggested Bob.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"Better not shout, old man!" said Jim Valentine.

"Eh—why not?"

"Well, if you attracted a jaguar to the spot—"

"A jag-jag-jaguar!" gasped Bunter. He jumped up as if the grassy knoll had suddenly become red hot. "D-d-did you say jig-jig-jaguar?"

He blinked round fearfully into the gloom through his big spectacles.

"Are there any jig-jag-jaguars here?" he stuttered.

"You wouldn't like to spot a jaguar?" asked Jim.

"Ow! Beast! No!"

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

"Well, I can tell you that a jaguar's pretty certain to be spotted."

"I say, you fellows! Come on! What are you hanging about for?" howled Bunter.

And he started, almost at a run.

The juniors followed on, grinning. They did not suppose that there was much danger of a jaguar turning up among the coffee plantations near the railway. But the bare idea of a ferocious wild beast lurking in the shadows was enough to spur Bunter on.

His run soon dropped to a walk. But there were no more halts. Bunter was now the most anxious of the party to get on.

They tramped on, to an accompaniment of moans and groans from the Owl of the Remove.

There was a glimmer of dawn in the sky when the grassy track changed into a road—of sorts—and led them into a town. They limped on wearily into the "praca," or square, where Jim Valentine stopped at the door of "o hotel" and knocked and knocked till it was opened.

The "proprietario" came down half-dressed and rubbing his eyes. But he was very courteous and hospitable, and the juniors were immediately shown into the "sala de jantar," where they sat down to a meal while rooms were being prepared for them.

They were glad enough to sit down. Bunter, tired as he was, was not too tired to make a good supper. While he parked the foodstuffs the Owl of the Remove blinked suspiciously at Jim Valentine.

"We never saw any jaguars!" he said.

"Did you expect to see any?" asked Jim. "If you're keen on jaguars you'll have to go farther afield."

"Why, you beast," hooted Bunter, "you told me that a jaguar was certain to be spotted on the way here—"

"That's right!" agreed Valentine.

"What do you mean, you silly ass?" snapped Bunter. "How could a jaguar be spotted if there's none here to spot?"

"You're forgetting the natural history you've learned in the Remove, old chap!" answered Valentine gravely. "Jaguars are always spotted."

"Wha-a-t?"

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

"Jaguars are always spotted!" repeated Bunter. "You—you—you silly ass! Of course I know that jaguars are always spotted, like leopards, you idiot! But I thought you meant—"

"You thought?" asked Valentine.

"Yes, you fathead, I thought—"

"Then you've changed a lot since I left Greyfriars! You never did any thinking while I was there."

Billy Bunter glared at the boy planter with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles.

"You—you—you cheeky beast!" he gasped.

Billy Bunter rolled off to bed in a

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state of great indignation. On that weary night tramp he had put his best foot foremost in dread of seeing the glaring eyes of a jaguar gleaming through the darkness. And now he knew that his fat leg had been pulled just to buck him up.

But the fat Owl soon forgot his indignation in happy slumber.

Neither bed-rooms nor beds were fearfully clean; but the Greyfriars fellows did not expect too much at an inn in a small town off the railway, and they were too tired to be very particular.

They turned in, and slept like tops.

The Famous Five were far from being slackers like Bunter, but they did not turn out the following morning till nearly eleven o'clock. They had been tired out and they needed a rest. When they turned out Billy Bunter was still snoring, and they left him to snore.

They came into the sala de jantar to breakfast, and found that Jim Valentine was already up and out. After breakfast they went out into the praca, which was blazing with brilliant sunshine.

Most of the town was built round the praca. There were shops and stores, five or six open-air cafes, and a cinema, and other buildings. Plenty of people were about, in groups, talking excitedly; and the juniors guessed that the revolution was the topic.

Six or seven cars were parked in the praca, and two or three more stood outside a garage, and there were a number of soldiers smoking at the little tables of the cafes. From one of the cafes came the roar of a loudspeaker, and a crowd gathered round to listen. No doubt the latest news of the rebellion was coming over the wireless; but as the juniors did not understand a word of it they were not enlightened.

A car dashed suddenly into the praca, driven at the reckless speed which they had already noted as a national custom in Brazil. Two officers sat in it, who jumped out at an official-looking building, into which they dashed. The whole praca was left in a buzz of excitement.

The wildest surmises passed from mouth to mouth. From what little Portuguese they knew the juniors were able to pick up some of the rumours that floated about. Rio had been taken by a rebel army from Sao Paulo—Sao Paulo had been taken by a loyal army from Rio—a desperate battle had been fought on the Parana, with hundreds killed—all Minas Geraos was up in arms and marching on the capital—Rio Grande do Sul had declared on the side of the Government—or on the side of the rebels—anyhow, it had declared something or other!

Excitement reigned, which intensified when the two officers came out of the official building, leaped into their car, and dashed away again at the same reckless speed. The praca was left in a roar of excited voices.

Harry Wharton & Co. could not help having a suspicion that nothing had happened at all, and that it was all more or less a sort of semi-serious theatrical performance!

They strolled round the praca while they were waiting for Jim Valentine to return, guessing that he had gone back to the railroad for the baggage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look at this!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, at the doorway of a shop where hunting equipment was sold.

It was the head of a jaguar, stuffed, with glass eyes, looking extremely life-like, fierce, and savage. The juniors looked at it.

"I'd rather see that chap stuffed than

meet him in the jungle while he was a going concern!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I'm going to buy it!" said Bob. "If it's not too dear, that is."

"My dear chap, you can't carry that thing around all the while we're in Brazil!" said Harry.

"I only want to carry it as far as the hotel."

"What on earth for?"

"Bunter!" answered Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob stepped into the shop, and the dusky proprietor thereof came forward, bowing, to inquire what he wanted. Bob pointed to the stuffed head, and asked:

"Quanto?" Which meant "How much?"

"Um conto, senhor!" was the reply.

"Oh, my hat! What's a conto, you fellows?" asked Bob.

"A thousand milreis, I believe," answered Harry, laughing. "Rather expensive for a joke on Bunter."

"Oh crikey! That's about twenty-five pounds! Bunter isn't worth that, lock, stock, and barrel! Help me out with some Portuguese lingo."

"Isso e demais!" said Harry Wharton, meaning "That is too much!"

The Brazilian shopkeeper bowed and smiled.

"Quinhentos milreis!" he said.

"Anybody know how much that is?" inquired Bob.

"Five hundred milreis!" answered Harry.

"Oh, my hat! If we ask him often enough we shall get it for nothing in the long run!"

"Worth trying on!" grinned Nugent.

"Isso e demais!" said Wharton again. Another bow and smile!

"Quatrecentos milreis!" said the dusky merchant.

"What's that?" asked Bob.

"Four hundred milreis—about ten quid."

"I shouldn't wonder if it was worth that! But it's too much for a joke on Bunter! I wonder if we could hire it for an hour."

Hiring the jaguar's head proved a difficult business.

The shopkeeper had a few words of English, the juniors a few words of Portuguese. But the shopkeeper's wife and several other relations came to the rescue, and three or four polite Brazilians stepped in from the praca to lend assistance, and after about twenty minutes the matter was elucidated; and for the moderate sum of twenty milreis, about nine or ten shillings, the jaguar's head was hired, to be shown to a friend at the hotel. And the Greyfriars fellows walked off with it wrapped in a bundle.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Jaguar!

"**B**EASTS!" murmured Billy Bunter.

He murmured that complimentary remark as he heard the footsteps of the chums of the Remove outside his door.

Bunter had breakfasted in bed while the other fellows were strolling about the praca. A half-Indian "moco" had been kept very busy, bringing supplies, and his jetty eyes almost popped from his dusky countenance in his astonishment at the amount the fat Owl packed away. Now the moco had been dismissed, and Bunter, loaded over the Plimsoll line, was prepared to take another nap.

His eyes gleamed behind his

spectacles as he heard the juniors coming up the passage. If they fancied that Bunter was going to get up, when it was barely noon, they were making a big mistake.

Bunter wasn't sufficiently rested yet. Moreover, it was the custom of the country to take a rest during the mid-day heat—a custom of which Billy Bunter fully approved, little as he thought of foreign manners and customs as a rule.

It was not the custom, certainly, to prolong the night's rest into the midday "siesta"; that was an improvement that Bunter thought of for himself.

That, at any rate, was what Bunter was going to do; and as the juniors came along to his door, he laid his head on the pillow and snored.

The door opened, and Bob Cherry looked in.

Snore!

"Fast asleep, as usual!" grinned Bob. "I suppose Bunter could sleep twenty-four hours a day, and a few over, if he wasn't woke up! Don't wake him this time, though."

"No fear!" The Famous Five came quietly into the room and closed the door. They gazed at the sleeping beauty.

Bunter snored. He was, as a matter of fact, wide awake, though his eyes were tightly closed behind his big spectacles.

He had heard Bob Cherry's remark. His first intention had been merely to affect slumber, because he did not want to get up. Now he realised that the juniors had not come to root him out, but for some other purpose for which it was desirable that he should remain asleep.

Bunter was not quick on the uptake; but he scented a jape, and he wanted to know what was on. So he kept his eyes shut, and snored on. Bunter was not brainy, but he could be sly. Now, with great slyness, he snored, and listened with all his fat ears.

"Quiet!" murmured Nugent, as Bob proceeded to unwrap the bundle.

"Catch him waking up!" answered Bob. "A thunderclap would hardly do it when he's going strong. Bunter's all right."

Bunter contrived not to grin. He opened one eye very cautiously and blinked.

On a table, at a little distance from his bed, a bundle was being unwrapped. From the wrappings a startling object was taken.

Startling as it was, it did not startle Bunter, as he could see that the jaguar's head had no body attached. Even Bunter was not scared by a section of a defunct jaguar.

Having taken out the stuffed head, Bob Cherry dropped the wrappings into a corner and stepped towards the bed.

Bunter's eyes were glued shut again, and he snored.

It was all that he could do to keep from grinning. They were going to pull his fat leg with that stuffed section of the monarch of the jungle—or they fancied they were. Bunter fancied that they weren't.

Bob Cherry stopped beside the bed and arranged the fearsome-looking head beneath it, just peeping out.

Had Bunter awakened suddenly and seen that fierce and bristling countenance looking out from under the bed, certainly it would have startled him. As it was, all that Bunter had to do was to suppress his grins.

"I say, though, that fat funk will be scared out of his silly wits!" said Frank Nugent. "Nobody else would fancy that a jaguar could have crept into the

hotel, but Bunter's funky enough to fancy anything."

"My dear chap, Bunter's asked for it—in fact, begged for it!" said Bob. "This is going to feed him up with Brazil. It's not fair to land the fat boulder on Valentine, is it?"

"Well, no. But—"

"Valentine can't kick him here as he could at Greyfriars. We ought to be kicked ourselves for letting him come! If he can't behave himself decently—and he can't—the best thing for him to do is to beat it for home. And if he fancies there are jaguars about, a ton of jam-tarts wouldn't stop him from bolting."

The juniors chuckled.

It was not surprising that they were fed-up with the manners and customs of William George Bunter. If Billy Bunter chose to give up the trip, go back in a car to Rio, and take the next steamer for home, the state of affairs was obviously going to be more satisfactory for everybody concerned. The loss of Billy Bunter's fascinating society was

undoubtedly worth twenty milreis and more.

"All ready!" said Bob. "Now we'll wake him! Bunter!" Bob roared. "Wake up, Bunter! Bunter! Bunter! Bunter!"

Snore!
"BUNTER!" roared the Famous Five together.

Snore!
"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob. "Talk about Rip van Winkle!"

He grasped a fat shoulder and shook. Snore!
Shake, shake, shake!

Bunter's eyes opened behind his spectacles. He blinked at the five faces at his bedside drowsily, like a fellow newly awakened from slumber.

"I say, you fellows, wharrer you wakin' me up for?" yawned Bunter. "I'm not getting up yet!"

"Aren't you coming on with us?" asked Bob. "We're starting when Valentine's fixed up about a car."

"Tell Valentine he's a beast!"

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

This week our merry Greyfriars Rhymester brings before your notice
DONALD ROBERT OGILVY,
the Scottish junior of the Remove.

(1)
"Hoots, mon!" I exclaimed, as I visited Don,
Our lad from the Land of the Thistle;
To make him feel fine, I began "Auld Lang Syne"
In a piercing and powerful whistle.
I'd whistled as far as the twenty-third bar
When he landed me one with a ruler,
Which dampened my zeal, and which caused me to feel
On the whole, undeniably cooler.

(2)
"Talk sense!" yelled the ass. "Or else keep off the grass!"
Your Anglo-Scot accent is awful!"
"Och, havers!" said I. "It's no pairfect, forbye,
But I canna mak' mair of a jawful!
I'm wantin', ye ken, a sma' interview, when Ye're sae guid as to gi'e me a hearin'.
Sae dinna look dour, ye can talk for an hour,
An' I'll tak' doon the words ye are spierin'!"

(3)
He started: "My birth happened way up in Perth,
On the twenty-first day of November.
I cannot say more about that event, for I was rather too young to remember!
I knew all the tricks of stag-hunting at six,
At eight I could pipe without pumping,
And round about ten I could ride down the glen
On a horse, which meant pretty high jumping!"



(4)
"As soon as they built me a sporran and kilt
I knew I must act like a Spartan,
My father said: 'Don, it's your pride to put on
The time-honoured Ogilvy tartan!
This ancient design, which the gods had made mine,
With its red, blue and black, white and yellow,
Inspired me to try to be staunch and not sly,
It's a very good aim for a fellow!'"

(5)
"Nae doot," I agreed, taking notes with great speed,
"Tis guid to mak' ilka endeevour!"
"Look here," was his cry, "are you Scotch, or am I?
Don't talk like a frog in a fever!"
He sniffed and went on: "Very soon we were gone
From Loch Voil, and the mountains I plodded;
Our present address is not far from Loch Ness—"
"I've read of your brother," I nodded.

(6)
Said he with a frown: "You had better pipe down!
No organs or street-cries permitted!
And just take that face out of here to a place
Like the Zoo, for which spot it is fitted!"
"Whisht, mon!" I replied. "Can ye no shet your heid?
Guid Scots like the pipes, sae they tell us!
'Tis pipin' like mine when I whistle 'Lang Syne'
As wad mak' onny Hielandman jealous!"



(7)
"I lived as a boy in the land of Rob Roy,
The Outlaw and Chief of MacGregors,
I've climbed up the Braes of Balquhider to gaze
At the haunts of those fire-eating beggars!
I know all the tales of the mountains and vales,
Of MacLarens and Drummonds and Campbells,
And Alan Breck, too, and of old Duncan Dhu,
And of all their adventures and rambles."



(8)
"My brother?" said he, staring grimly at me.
I answered with cheerful elation;
"Yes, wasn't it him who's been having a swim?
Or perhaps it's some other relation?"
Then Ogilvy rose and he flattened my nose
With a punch which has pretty nigh bent it!
I stayed for no more. I flung open the door,
As I shouted: "Good-bye!"—and I meant it!

"You can tell him that yourself, old fat man! If you're not ready, you'll be left behind!"

"Yah! Catch you going on without me!" sneered Bunter. "Too funky, I fancy!"

"What?" roared Bob

"Funky!" said Bunter. "You fellows haven't much pluck! Where would you have been all along without me? I can see you fellows running into danger without me to protect you—I don't think!"

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter.

"You blithering fat ass!" said Johnny Bull. "You——"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Bunter. "I'm the only fellow here with an ounce of pluck, and you know it! We might run into a jaguar or something! You'd feel jolly sorry for yourselves then if I wasn't there!"

"Why, you—you——" gasped Bob.

Bunter waved a fat hand

"Chuck it!" he said. "I'm going to look after you and protect you, same as I've always done! You might be grateful, though I don't expect it of you. But don't jaw, and don't gas! You're a funky lot! Luckily, I've got pluck!"

The Famous Five breathed hard and deep. They had been a little dubious whether to carry on with that jape; now they banished all doubts! Bunter's pluck was going to be put to the test!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob suddenly. "What's that?"

He pointed to the fearsome head peeping out from under the bed.

With one accord, the chums of the Remove jumped back, their faces expressing a startled horror that did them credit as members of the Remove Dramatic Society.

"A jaguar!" yelled Nugent.

"Look out!"

"Help!"

"Save us, Bunter!"

The juniors jumped away across the room to the window. Bunter, peering over the edge of the bed, was left to deal with the jaguar.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Plucky Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER did not turn a hair.

He blinked over the bed at the fearful beast through his big spectacles with a calmness that was really amazing.

Across the room the Famous Five watched him.

They expected to hear Bunter howl with terror or see him bury himself under the bedclothes, as assuredly he would have done had he believed that the jaguar was genuine.

He did nothing of the kind.

Instead of that, the fat junior jumped from the bed. He was perfectly cool. They gazed at him in dumb astonishment.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Bunter, "buck up! I'll save you! Keep where you are! Leave him to me!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Are we dreaming this?" gurgled Johnny Bull.

It really seemed, to the amazed juniors, that they were dreaming it. In moments of danger Billy Bunter was calculated to display about as much courage as a rabbit—a very timid rabbit. Now he exhibited the courage of a lion.

Left to deal with the jaguar, Bunter dealt with it.

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Utterly regardless of the grinning jaws and gleaming eyes of the dreadful face looking out from under the bed, the fat Owl grabbed up a stick. Brandishing the stick, he turned on the jaguar.

Crash!

The thick stick came down with a terrific concussion on the head of the jaguar.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood transfixed. A fellow who tackled a jaguar with a stick was, presumably, a fellow not only with plenty of pluck, but endowed with unbounded and reckless courage.

And Bunter was doing it.

Crash, crash! came again.

Bunter belaboured that fearsome head with the stick with all the strength of his fat arm.

A stuffed head was not likely to sustain such an attack without damage. A live jaguar would have torn Bunter in pieces before he could have delivered a second swipe. But a stuffed head was a different proposition.

It cracked and split, and the glass eyes rolled out on the floor.

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Bunter whacked and whacked. Under the rain of blows, the head itself rolled out from under the bed, breaking into pieces.

Then Bob, coming to himself as it were, jumped forward. That head had been hired for nine or ten shillings, but its price was ten pounds—and Bunter was knocking it to pieces!

"Keep back!" yelled Bunter. "It's all right! Leave him to me! I've knocked his head off——"

"Stop it, you frabjous idiot!" roared Bob.

"Keep back, I tell you! I'm saving your lives! I don't want any help! I can handle the brute!"

Crash!

The stick came down again!

Bob grasped the fat Owl by the shoulder and dragged him back. Another swipe from the stick landed on the floor.

"Stop it!" howled Bob.

"Keep off, you ass! I'm going to finish him!" roared Bunter, brandishing the stick. Perhaps it was by accident that it came into contact with Bob Cherry's head! Perhaps not!

Anyhow, it did establish contact, and Bob yelled and jumped away. Bunter leaped at the jaguar's head again, and delivered another terrific swipe.

The head went into fragments. Glass eyes and stuffing strewn the floor. It was clear that the most cunning craftsman would never be able to renovate that trophy of the chase! All the king's horses and all the king's men could never have put that jaguar's head together again!

Harry Wharton & Co. grasped Bunter on all sides, and wrenched the stick away from him.

"You silly ass!" gasped Harry.

"You terrific fathead——"

Bunter jerked himself away, set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked at them disdainfully.

"Don't be frightened!" he said reassuringly. "I've killed the brute! After this, I hope you won't make out that I don't look after you!"

"You howling idiot——"

"That's gratitude, I suppose!" sneered Bunter. "I'd like to see you fellows tackle a jaguar with a stick! I'd like to see it!"

"You jolly well knew it wasn't a jaguar, you spoofing oyster!" roared Johnny Bull. "You'd have been in a blue funk——"

"Oh, really, Bull——"

Bob Cherry stooped and gathered up the fragments. But the case was evidently hopeless. That trophy was done for, and somebody had to pay ten pounds for it!

"Get the body out from under the bed!" suggested Bunter. "I've rather smashed the napper, knocking it off, but we can have the skin stuffed——"

"You jolly well know there ain't a body, you spoofer!" hooted Bob.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, don't be an ass, Cherry!" he answered. "How could a jaguar's head get here without a body?"

"He wasn't asleep!" said Harry Wharton, the truth dawning on his mind. "He was only pretending to be asleep, and he heard every word we said."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"That's it, of course!" said Nugent.

"It isn't!" roared Bunter. "I was fast asleep all the time, and I never heard a word you fellows were saying! I never heard Bob speak when you opened the door, and I wasn't snoring to make out that I was asleep—nothing of the sort. I never knew you brought that napper here in a bundle, and I didn't watch you unwrapping it, either."

"Oh crikey!"

"You spoofing porpoise!" yelled Bob. "You knew it was a jape, and you smashed up that head on purpose."

"He, he, he!"

"Now it will have to be paid for——"

"He, he, he!"

"Ten quids!" said Bob, glaring at the fat Owl of the Remove as if he could have bitten him.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you shouldn't try to pull my leg, you know! You haven't the brains for it! Of course, I thought it was a live jaguar! I'm not afraid of jaguars, if you fellows are! And I jolly well smashed it up to pay you out! He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at Bunter, looked at one another, and then walked out—in silence. That jape on Bunter had worked out the wrong way, and there was no doubt that the laugh was on Bunter's side.

They left him chortling as he dressed. Bunter, at least, was hugely amused by that disastrous jape. A bill of ten

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Neck or Nothing!

"PACK in!" said Jim Valentine. In the cool of the day, the Greyfriars fellows prepared to resume their interrupted journey. Outside the hotel stood a car and a lorry. On the lorry, the baggage was piled, and the car was to take the party of seven—of which one member was double-width. It was rather a roomy car, but it was clear that it would be rather packed.

Billy Bunter eyed it disapprovingly through his big spectacles.

"Is that the only car you can get?" he asked.

"The one and only!" answered Jim. "And we're rather lucky to get that! The others have been commandeered for the military—and by to-morrow I've no doubt this one would be gone, too. I had to talk Portuguese for two hours to bag this car and the lorry."

"Well, there won't be room for the lot of us!" said Bunter. "We can't all squeeze into that. What about one fellow sitting on the baggage in the lorry?"

"Bit more uncomfortable than the car, I should think," said Jim, with a smile. "But sit on the baggage in the lorry if you like, of course."

Bunter blinked at him.

"I didn't mean me, you ass!" he grunted. "I meant one of the other fellows."

"Valentine must have forgotten what you're like, Bunter, or he would have guessed that one," grinned Bob.

"Well, look here, I don't see squeezing into that rotten car!" said Bunter crossly. "I think two of you might go in the lorry. Then a fellow would have room to stretch his legs a bit."

"Good egg!" said Bob. "Both of you go in the lorry."

"Eh? What do you mean, you ass—both of me?"

"I mean what I say. As you're double width you count as two, and both of you had better go in the lorry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

Jim Valentine laughed.

"Pack in!" he said again.

The Famous Five packed in. Jim sat beside the swarthy Brazilian driver. Bunter squeezed in, grunting, after the five; he blinked disapprovingly at the driver. The man—dressed in a red-striped cotton shirt and trousers, with a big grass-hat, and a cigar in the corner of his mouth—did not look much like a chauffeur, in Bunter's opinion.

The driver of the lorry looked much the same, except that his shirt had yellow stripes. Neither inspired Bunter with confidence.

The bill was paid at the hotel, the landlord came out with graceful bows to speed the parting guests, waiters and other attendants backed him up, and a crowd of idlers gathered.

All was ready to go, and the Greyfriars fellows supposed that they were going; but they did not yet quite know their Brazil. South America is the land of interminable delays.

The driver of the car had to finish a conversation with somebody; when he had finished, the driver of the lorry had to say good-bye to somebody else; then both drivers entered into an animated discussion with half a dozen people with reference to the route to be taken.

According to some, roads were up and bridges broken; according to others, the rebels from Sao Paulo were advancing, and all routes were blocked by revolutionary troops. One man averred that the Parana was in flood and roads impassable. The juniors sat and waited while volleys of Portuguese crackled on all sides.

Jim Valentine cut the conference short at last and insisted on starting. The drivers shrugged their shoulders almost over their ears, as if disclaiming all responsibility for expected disasters.

But they were ready at last; and then the Revolution barged in—in the shape of a military officer, who came up with a clanking of spurs and volleyed Portuguese. Jim Valentine answered, and for a good ten minutes volleys went to and fro briskly.

The juniors, listening, tried to understand. They gathered at last that the officer was in need of a car, and was thinking of commandeering the one in which they sat, for the service of the Republic—which, of course, came before everything else in importance.

It was a dismaying possibility. But they had a lurking suspicion at the same time that the decorated military man was only "throwing his weight about," and that after a sufficient quantity of chin-wag the affair would be arranged.

And so it was.

Jim Valentine had learned in South America to be patient as well as polite. It is a country in which patience is sorely needed. With imperturbable good temper he argued and expostulated and explained, and at last convinced the military gentleman.

Then they parted, with great courtesy and esteem—Valentine raising his hat, the juniors following his example, the military man saluting, the crowd buzzing, and the car at long last getting into motion.

It rolled away, followed by the lorry, on a road that was little better than a grassy track and considerably bumpy. But it was a great relief to the travellers to get going at last.

A mile out of the town they were held up by a military patrol. After a spate of Portuguese the patrol was satisfied that they were not rebel spies and allowed them to pass on.

"Chin tired, old man?" asked Bob Cherry sympathetically, as they rolled on their way once more.

Valentine chuckled.

"It's had a lot of exercise in this country," he answered.

"The jawfulness in this esteemed country is truly terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Now Bunter's going to begin!" sighed Bob.

"Beast! I say, tell the driver to stop!"

"What on earth for?"

"Look and see!" snorted Bunter, pointing with a fat finger.

Ahead of the car was a stream—one of the innumerable streams of interior Brazil—with little water in it, but with steep sides; it was crossed by a bridge.

Looking at that bridge the juniors

(Continued on next page.)

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pounds for the japers was exactly what they deserved, in Billy Bunter's opinion.

When he came down, the Famous Five had gone out, to settle the matter with the proprietor of the jaguar's head. Jim Valentine was back, and a car stood outside, loaded with the baggage brought in from the railroad. Jim glanced at the fat Owl's grinning face.

"Where are the other fellows, Bunter?" he asked.

"Oh, gone out, I think!" answered Bunter. "I believe they've got rather a bill to pay somewhere! He, he, he! I say, Valentine, did you ever see such a set of funks?"

"Eh?"

"No end of a joke!" said Bunter airily. "Some ass stuck a jaguar's head under my bed, for a joke, you know; and they saw it, and were frightened out of their wits. You should have heard them yell! I turned out at once, and knocked the thing to pieces! I really believe they'd have gone into fits from sheer funk if I hadn't! He, he, he!"

"What rot!" said Jim, staring.

"Oh, really, Valentine—"

"Has anything happened while I've been gone?"

"Haven't I just told you?" hooted Bunter.

"Oh, yes; but I mean, has anything really happened?"

"Why, you cheeky beast—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Valentine!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the Famous Five came in.

There was a cackle from Billy Bunter, and the chums of the Remove gave him a glare.

"Here they are!" grinned Bunter. "Got over your funk yet, you fellows? I've just been telling Valentine how you howled with funk when you saw that jaguar's napper under my bed. He, he, he!"

"You fat octopus!" roared Bob. "You know we put it there."

"I don't know anything of the sort!" said Bunter coolly. "I know you were scared stiff when you saw it! You howled to me to save you."

"You knew we were pulling your silly leg!" shrieked Bob.

"I don't! You can't crawl out of it like that, Bob Cherry! You were jolly well frightened out of your seven senses, and you know it! I thought you'd go into fits! He, he, he!"

Bunter rolled away, still chuckling, to see whether lunch was ready. Jim Valentine looked at the red and discomforted faces of the Famous Five. They told him the true story of the jaguar's head, and, rather to their surprise, he burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you think it's funny?" asked Bob, rather gruffly. "We've had to pay that dago ten quids—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Valentine.

"That fat villain was pulling our leg all the time, when we thought we were pulling his—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob stared at him. Then his face broke into a grin.

"Well, I suppose it was rather funny, in a way!" he admitted. "Bunter's got the laugh this time! But he will laugh on the other side of that dumpling he calls a face if we run across a real jaguar!"

On which point, certainly, there was no doubt.

would not have imagined that it was planned for motor traffic.

It was built of long beams laid across, with short beams resting their ends on the long beams.

Some of the shorter beams were decayed by wind and weather, and were rather loose; many had spaces between them.

Obviously they were not calculated to support the weight of a well-packed car and a lorry laden with baggage. The only way to get safely across the bridge was to drive so carefully that the weight of the wheels fell on the long side beams—and that was a feat that required skilled driving, with only a few inches to spare on either side, and a deep rugged watercourse yawning below.

"Are we crossing that?" asked Bob.

"Yes, and lots more like it," answered Valentine. "They call it a 'mule-killer' in this country; mules often break their legs in the gaps."

"But a car—" murmured Nugent.

"A car's got no legs to break, luckily," said Bob. "But—"

"The butfulness is terrific," murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The Famous Five had plenty of pluck, but they looked rather serious as the car ran on to the wooden bridge; they expected the driver to slow down and take it with care; instead of which, he drove at the usual reckless pace, roaring down to that dangerous crossing at a great speed.

They sat tight.

In spite of themselves, they felt their hearts beating; but they sat tight and said no more.

Not so Bunter: the fat junior yelled. He seemed hardly able to believe at first that the car really was going to cross that bridge. As they rushed down to it he yelled with alarm.

"Stop! I say, you fellows, stop him!"

"It's all right, Bunter," said Valentine soothingly.

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "I'm not going to be smashed up to please you! You'd like to see me smashed up, you beast! Stop the car!"

"Shut up, you fat ass!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Lemme gerrou!" yelled Bunter.

"My dear chap," said Valentine, "we shall cross all right—and we shall cross twenty bridges like that before we finish."

"Yaroooooh!"

The car was at the bridge now. The chauffeur did not even take the trouble to approach it in a direct line; he reached it at an angle, and it seemed to his passengers that nothing could prevent the car from shooting over into the ravine.

Bunter, too terrified even to squeak, clutched hold, gasping, and his eyes almost popped through his spectacles. Harry Wharton & Co. held their breath.

At the last second, as it seemed, the driver gave the steering wheel a wrench, and the car shot on the bridge, getting the long beams with the wheels with an exactness that seemed miraculous.

It shot across.

Lounging at the wheel, chewing his cigar, with an expressionless face, the Brazilian chauffeur raced across the flimsy structure, not turning a hair even when one of the transverse beams, shaken by the impact, dropped away and crashed on rocks thirty feet below.

"Ooogh!" gurgled Bunter.

They were across! Glancing back, they saw the lorry roaring over the bridge at the same reckless speed.

"Ooogh!" repeated Bunter.

Bob Cherry drew a deep breath.

"Are we still alive?" he asked.

"You'll get used to it," said Valentine, laughing. "Lots of bridges like that ahead of us. These drivers look reckless, but they know the game. No good talking to them; you'll never get a Brazilian driver to go slow. But it's all right."

The car raced on up the incline from the stream; after it raced the lorry. Billy Bunter wiped the perspiration from his fat brow.

"Oh lor!" he said.

It was, as Valentine said, all right. But it did not look all right, and it did not feel all right. The juniors realised that there were some things in Brazil that wanted a lot of getting used to.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

O Lobo Again!

"RIPPING!" said Bob Cherry. "Rotten!" said Billy Bunter.

The Greyfriars party spent the night in a small village, where there was plenty of hospitality plenty of food, plenty of politeness, but where washing seemed never to have been heard of. To the schoolboys, accustomed to cleanly English life, there was something horrifying in the insect population of the bed-rooms. Even Billy Bunter was willing to rise early for once, and the whole party were glad to get on the road again in the rosy morn.

Then it was, as Bob declared, ripping.

In the cool of the morning, with the sun coming up in a blue sky, the air as yet cool and fresh, it was really ripping to bowl along in the fast car, eating up the miles, by a road—or, rather, track—that varied almost at every mile.

Sometimes the car, with the lorry in attendance, raced across wide stretches of open and apparently illimitable "campo." Then it would rush by planted fazendas. Then it would rock over risky bridges—to which, as Jim had told them, the juniors soon became used—even Billy Bunter ceasing to howl with alarm. Then, in other places, stretches of primeval forest or scrub blotted out the landscape, the rich tropical growths sometimes encroaching on the car so closely that branches whipped at the windows and startled parrots screamed in the very ears of the travellers.

Sometimes they passed ox-carts, drawling along at a snail's pace, strangely in contrast with the buzzing car. Sometimes strings of mules, with muleteers, came swinging along, and police salutations were exchanged.

Dust, and dust, and dust greeted them almost everywhere; sometimes inches thick on the roads, flying in clouds across the campo when the wind stirred. In the forest roads fallen branches crackled under the wheels, some of them thick with big, sharp thorns; and the juniors wondered what would happen to the tyres—but there were no punctures. It rather seemed to the Greyfriars fellows that they got on their way by a succession of miracles.

But they got on it—and the rapid miles flew under the wheels. Jim told his friends that unless anything happened they would reach the Rio Rexo by night. But it seemed to the juniors that it was very probable that something would happen!

But they were in great spirits—not at all displeased, on the whole, that the revolution had interrupted the journey by rail. In any case, the last hundred miles would have had to be by road, for the Rexo country was far from the railway.

It was a close fit in the car, but nobody grumbled except Bunter. All through the sunny morning they rushed and roared on—and saw nothing of the revolution, and almost forgot it.

They stopped to rest and eat at another little village, and roared on again in the golden afternoon. Now the way lay through a tract of uncleared forest, with gigantic trees rising on either side, branches interlacing overhead and shutting out the sun.

A twilight reigned on the forest road. It was hot, and mosquitoes swarmed; but in the dim shade it was difficult to believe that, above the interlocked branches, the sun was blazing like a furnace.

The going was rough. If the road

"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDER!"



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had ever been cared for, it was a long time since. Perhaps the inhabitants had been too busy with revolutions to bother about roads. Even Billy Bunter could not go to sleep with the car rocketing and bounding.

But rough as the going was, the Brazilian chauffeur seldom slackened speed. Speed seemed to be the one desire of his heart.

Suddenly, however, he braked, and the car almost left the ground in the sharpness of the halt. Bunter, with a yell, plumped off his seat, and landed among countless feet, and yelled again.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" asked Bob, staring round. "What's up?"

That was soon ascertained.

An ox-cart had broken down on the road, barring the way. It was a huge and heavy wooden construction, drawn by six couples of oxen—now standing idle, and probably not sorry for a rest. Two dusky drivers were dealing with the damage in the leisurely manner of the country, indifferent to the fact that the ox-cart blocked the road to all who came behind.

"Can't get round that!" remarked Bob.

"Hardly!" said Jim Valentine. "We shall have to wait till they get clear."

Bunter scrambled up.

"Tell the silly idiots to get out of the way!" he snorted. "What the dickens do they mean by blocking up the road?"

Jim Valentine alighted and went to speak to the ox-drivers. The lorry came to a halt behind the car, and both chauffeurs went to join in the talk. Nothing loth, the ox-drivers quitted their labour, and talked instead of working. Valentine came back with a rueful grin on his face:

"We're hung up here for two hours, at least," he said. "There's a good half-hour's work in getting that cart going again."

The juniors laughed. From what they had seen of Brazil, they knew that they would be lucky if they had to wait only two hours for half an hour's work to get done.

"Rotten!" growled Bunter.

"Can't be helped," said Valentine. "You fellows like to get out and stretch your legs a bit? Lots of time."

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors descended from the car. Bunter sat where he was.

It was hardly possible to wander from the road, for the thick forest barred it, like walls, on either side. Great trunks grew with smaller trunks between them, the whole interlaced by lianas like a network. Innumerable parrots, red and green, blinked from the branches. The juniors strolled about, waiting as patiently as they could for the road to be cleared.

On that solitary road there was little traffic; but presently an ox-cart with an Indian in charge came lumbering along. Finding the road blocked, the dusky driver halted his team and waited with the philosophy of one to whom such incidents were common. Later, a plump priest came trotting along on a mule. He saluted the travellers politely, and they raised their hats in return, and then the ox-drivers left off work again, and remained in talk with the priest for ten minutes or so. After which they managed to get his mule by for him, and he was able to resume his trot on the other side of the obstruction. The Greyfriars party still waited.

They wondered whether any more traffic would accumulate behind them. There was a beat of horses' hoofs echoing through the trees, and a rider came in sight at a gallop.

(Continued on page 22.)



COME INTO the OFFICE, BOYS - AND GIRLS!

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

I NEED hardly ask if you're pleased with this week's set of magic pictures. They're absolutely topping, aren't they? What do your pals who have not yet joined the happy band of "Magnetites" think of them? I'll bet ten to one in doughnuts they envy you! Still, that's their own look out; they should become regular readers of the good old MAGNET! Including the two grand pictures given free with this issue, your collection should now total eight. And there are more magic pictures to come yet! In next Saturday's MAGNET you will find pictures of the famous Cunarder, "Queen Mary," and the crack French liner, "Normandie." Be wise and get your copy early!

HOW OLD IS THE "MAGNET"?

is a question "Magnetite," of Sheffield, asks me to answer. Twenty-eight years, chum! And still going strong! The MAGNET was first published February 15th, 1908—and there has been an issue every week since! It makes one feel really proud to know that this paper has been interesting readers for so many years. And its longevity is mainly due to Frank Richards, who has proved himself without doubt the world's greatest author of boys' stories. He wrote the first MAGNET yarn, and has kept the flag flying ever since!

FROM a Brighton reader I have received a letter asking me for some information concerning

THE MOST MYSTERIOUS COUNTRY IN THE WORLD,

otherwise known as "The Forbidden Land"—Tibet! Until comparatively recent times no white men had ever been allowed to set foot in this country, and it was not until 1904 that a British expedition was sent there and friendly relationships with this country were subsequently established. Would you believe that, in Tibet, one man out of every three is a monk? Here are some further amazing things about the country:

A Tibetan will drink as many as fifty or even eighty cups of tea every day!

There are three thousand monasteries in the country, all built like fortresses!

Bricks made of tea are the usual currency!

Human life is held so cheaply that professional murderers are willing to dispose of people for three or four bricks of tea!

In some of the monasteries monks have been bricked up and entombed alive. They are given just enough food to keep them alive, and this is passed in through a tiny loophole. Men are known to have been entombed in this manner for nearly seventy years!

Yet similar things have happened even in Europe. Have you ever heard of the strange case of Kasper Hauser,

THE BOY WHO WAS BURIED ALIVE?

Exactly who he was has never been revealed. It is one of the unsolved

mysteries of the world. Kasper Hauser was discovered in a German town, and could only speak a few words. For seventeen years he had been locked in a cellar from which all light was excluded, and he was given only bread and water to drink. He could not walk properly, but shuffled along like a seal. How he got out of the cellar no one knows, but when he did, his skin was bleached white, and his eyes were like those of a cat, enabling him to see in the dark. Unable to give an account of himself, he was adopted by an English peer. Strange as it may seem, this boy could actually see the stars shining in the day-time, so affected had his eyes become by his life-long imprisonment in pitch blackness. It is said that he was the heir to a royal throne and had been kidnapped by a rival. But, as he was subsequently murdered, the truth will never be known.

A similar case to the above is the one concerning the famous

MAN IN THE IRON MASK!

Here again was a mysterious prisoner whose real identity has never been satisfactorily explained. He was kept for a long period in various French prisons, but no one—not even his gaolers—were allowed to see his face. It was always kept covered by a mask made of an iron framework and covered with black velvet. The man was not known by name, but always referred to as "the old prisoner." Various theories as to whom he really was have been advanced, but when he died in the Bastille, in 1703, the secret was never discovered. Like that of Kasper Hauser, the mystery of the Man in the Iron Mask remains unsolved to this day.

Now for next week's feast of good things. Topping the bill is another superb long complete story dealing with the Greyfriars chums in South America. It's entitled:

"THE VENGEANCE OF THE WOLF!"

In the tropical forest bordering Jim Valentine's quarters lurks Harry Wharton & Co's deadly enemy, O Lobo—defeated, but as they know only too well, desperate and determined, and still to be reckoned with. There are more thrills per square inch in this yarn by Frank Richards than you can find in any other boys' story.

Next in the list comes further chapters of Geo. E. Rochester's powerful adventure story. You'll be wise if you undo a waistcoat button before you begin reading the chuckleful issue of the "Greyfriars Herald." Our Greyfriars Rhymester is bang up to standard with another of his "Interviews" in verse.

If you miss this bumper issue, chums, you'll miss the FREE MAGIC PICTURES—and I'm sure you wouldn't like that to happen, would you?

YOUR EDITOR.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,464.

Harry Wharton & Co. glanced at him as he came.

At a distance they could see little of him but his big, shady hat and the poncho he wore about his shoulders. He was riding hard and fast, and his horse was covered with dust. Every now and then he scored the heaving flanks with the long, cruel spurs.

It was not till he was quite near that they had a glimpse of a dark face, with a pointed black beard and a beaky nose, under the shade of the great hat.

Then Harry Wharton uttered a startled exclamation.

"O Lobo!"

"That villain again!" breathed Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five drew together, breathing rather hard. In the excitement of the journey up from Rio they had forgotten the bandit, though they had no doubt that he would be heading for the same district as themselves. But for the halt on the forest road they would have seen nothing of him, and the meeting was clearly as great a surprise to the Wolf as to themselves.

He slackened speed as he saw the halted vehicles ahead of him on the road, and scowled at the group of travellers—and then dragged in his horse, staring blankly as he recognised them.

Sitting his horse, he gazed at them with a glitter in his jetty eyes. Jim Valentine slid his hand into his pocket.

"It's O Lobo!" he said. "Look out!"

"You—you think—" muttered Nugent.

"I know!" answered Jim quietly. "He doesn't care two straws for these ox-drivers and what they may see. He hasn't forgotten what happened in Rio. Keep clear—I can deal with him."

The juniors could see that O Lobo's right hand was bandaged. But it was clear that he was still able to use it, for he grasped the bola that hung at his saddle. Keeping the rope short, he whirled the iron ball round his head, and put spurs to his horse, riding straight at the party in the road.

The juniors would have had no chance of escaping that savage charge, save by dodging round the car, which would not have lasted long. But Jim Valentine stood and faced the oncoming horseman with steady coolness, his automatic whipping to a level.

Crack, crack, crack, crack!

The shots rang so fast that they were blended into one another. With thumping hearts, and almost holding their breath, the Famous Five watched—while a deep, rumbling snore proceeded from the car, where Billy Bunter had gone to sleep.

With a wild clatter of thudding hoofs, the horseman came sweeping on, apparently untouched by the whizzing bullets. He was not three yards from the juniors when the horse plunged heavily forward, pitched on its knees, and rolled heavily over.

O Lobo was flung violently to the ground.

But, with the activity of a born rider, he landed on his feet, stumbling against a tree.

Crack!

Jim Valentine fired again with a hand as steady as steel. O Lobo, recovering from his stumble, was about to spring forward, when the bullet struck him.

The juniors saw him stagger back against the tree, the bola dropping from his hand. His left hand went to his right shoulder, where he was hit. They saw the rage in his face fade to a deathly pallor. He leaned on the tree, with the blood running down from the wound in his shoulder.

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Breathless, the Famous Five watched. Their lives depended on Jim Valentine, and they knew it. The automatic was levelled at the bandit, and Jim's face was grim and hard over it.

As on that night in Rio, the chums of the Remove hardly knew their old pal of Greyfriars. What he intended to do was easily read in his face. Two bullets remained in the automatic, and if O Lobo had made another step in advance, both of them would have been planted in his burly body.

But the Wolf knew it, too. With a staggering gait, his hand still pressed to his shoulder, he backed away up the road. He spat out curses in Portuguese as he backed.

Jim Valentine stepped after him, the pistol at a level. Instantly, the bandit plunged into the wall of greenery by the roadside, forcing his way through clinging thorns and lianas, and disappeared from sight.

His voice, panting with rage, came back for a few moments. The dead horse lay where it had fallen. O Lobo's voice died away in the forest.

Bob Cherry wiped his forehead.

"Phew!" he murmured.

From the two chauffeurs, the two ox-drivers, came a babble of excited Portuguese. The Indian driver of the second ox-cart remained silent, impassive, unconcerned by what had happened. Not so the Brazilians. There was a torrent of talk and gesticulation from them.

Billy Bunter blinked from the car.

"What's up?" he demanded. "Car back-firing, or what? Are we going on?"

"Not yet."

"Then I wish you wouldn't make a row and wake a fellow up!"

And Bunter went to sleep again.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough Going!

MILE on mile by the forest road, shut in by walls of greenery, the car followed behind the lumbering ox-cart.

The repairs, at long last, had been finished; the huge, clumsy vehicle was under way again. It rolled on, drawn by a dozen oxen, ahead of the car, nearly filling the narrow road from side to side.

It was impossible to pass, and the car could only crawl behind the ox-cart, the lorry behind the car, and the lately arrived ox-cart behind the lorry.

Billy Bunter, jolted into wakefulness, grumbled, and demanded that the ox-drivers should be told to stop the fearful row their carts were making.

"Don't they ever oil their wheels?" grunted Bunter.

"Never!" answered Valentine, laughing.

"Music hath charms!" said Harry Wharton.

From the ox-cart ahead and the ox-cart behind, came a steady grind of ungreased axles. It was a dull, continuous screaming, never ceasing for a moment. For reasons best known to themselves, Brazilian ox-drivers never grease their axles, and the result is an unending melody.

At first, the juniors tried stopping their ears to it; but they soon became accustomed to the sound, harsh and incessant as it was.

The "funeral march" continued for quite a long time, mile on mile; till at length an embayment in the forest wall was reached, and there was room to pass.

Then the chauffeur shot on, with a sudden speed that made his passengers rock and gasp.

Between the lumbering ox-cart and the wall of tropical greenery there was now bare room to pass, and any driver outside Brazil would have toolled his car by carefully. But the Brazilian chauffeur shot at it, and roared by, missing the ox-cart by inches, and brushing by branches that crashed and shrieked against the rushing car.

"Ow! Stop!" yelled Bunter.

But the car was past by the time he had uttered the yell. It rocked ahead of the ox-cart, and raced on. The chauffeur compensated himself for his enforced crawling by letting out the car to a tremendous speed. It fairly whizzed. The driver of the lorry, not to be outdone, whizzed behind him, the stack of baggage rocking as he whizzed.

The road was rugged, and fallen branches lay here and there, that crashed and smashed under the whizzing wheels. The car rocked and jolted and bumped, and every now and then one wheel or two was off the ground. Indeed, it seemed to the juniors at times, that all four wheels left the road, and that they were bounding on like a kangaroo.

"Brazil for excitement!" grinned Bob Cherry breathlessly. "Anybody got any sticking-plaster? We shall want sticking together by the time we get to the end of this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—ow! I say—wow! I say—urrrgh!" Bunter rocked and plunged, and held on, and gasped for breath.

It was exciting, to say the least. But the Greyfriars fellows, like most school-boys, enjoyed speed, and a spice of danger did not worry them.

On they went, whizzing, the great trees on either side blending their trunks together to the view.

Harry Wharton wondered what would happen if they met another car coming from the opposite direction at the same speed! Fortunately, they didn't!

From the tract of forest the car ran on across a plain patched with masses of scrub.

Here the juniors were reminded of the revolution, which they had almost forgotten. Horsemen appeared on the plain—three or four hundred strong, some of them in uniform, others in ponchos and big grass-hats—dark-skinned, wiry-looking men, splendid riders, but not looking much like cavalry from the European point of view. Whether they were Government troops on the march, or a detachment of rebels, the juniors did not know—they were glad to pass them at a distance, whichever they were.

From the column of riders, about a quarter of a mile away, two officers detached themselves, and galloped towards the car and the lorry. But, swift as their horses were, they were soon dropped behind, and never got near. For which the Greyfriars fellows were duly thankful. They could guess that the military gentlemen had designs on the car—which they were very pleased to put paid to, by whizzing on out of sight!

But ten miles or so farther on, even the Brazilian chauffeur slowed down at a watercourse ahead. There had been a wooden bridge over the stream, but it had been broken down; and on the hither bank a group of soldiers waved to the car to stop.

Whether the chauffeur would have taken the river-course at full speed, heedless of the lack of a bridge, the juniors did not know. But he had to stop at the military command.

The car banged to a halt, the lorry behind it; and both were immediately



Whirling the iron ball round his head, O Lobo rode straight at the Greyfriars party. Suddenly, his horse plunged forward, pitched on its knees, and rolled heavily over. The bandit of Brazil was flung violently to the ground!

surrounded by soldiers with fixed bayonets.

"What next?" murmured Nugent. Jim Valentino shrugged his shoulders. He was resigned to the ways of Brazil.

A tall officer, as brown as a berry, clanked up to the car, and volleyed Portuguese.

As Valentino addressed him as "senhor o capitao," the juniors understood that he was an army captain. He seemed very polite and good-tempered, but extremely firm; and they saw dismay gather in Valentino's face as the interminable talk proceeded.

Jim turned to his companions at last.

"Hop out!" he said ruefully.

"I say, what are we getting out for?" demanded Billy Bunter.

"The car's commandeered!" answered Valentino. "All cars in this district are required for the comic opera—I mean, for military purposes."

"He can't have our car!" roared Bunter indignantly.

"He thinks he can—and I'm afraid he's right," answered Valentino. "Still, if you think you can whop him, and about fifty soldiers along with him, get on with it, and we'll sit in the car and cheer."

"Go it, Bunter!" chuckled Bob.

"Pile in, old fat man!" said Johnny Bull encouragingly.

Bunter did not go it! He did not pile in! He got out of the car!

The other fellows alighted. The brown-faced officer, with many polite bows, expressed his regret at the urgent military necessity, which compelled him to deprive the foreigners of their means of transport. He was leaving them the lorry, as they were glad to learn.

The stoutest heart might have been dismayed at the prospect of being left on foot, in the midst of an unpopulated

campo, sixty or seventy miles from anywhere.

The chauffeur remained with the car. Apparently he was commandeered also. The tall officer immediately got into it, and drove away—no doubt on urgent business of great military or operative importance! Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round the lorry.

"Do they think we can ride in that?" asked Billy Bunter, in tones of the deepest and most thrilling indignation.

"I don't think they care much," answered Jim, laughing. "But if you'd rather walk, Bunter—"

"How far is it?"

"About ninety miles."

"Beast!"

Bunter did not prefer to walk.

It had been a cram in the car. It was a closer cram in the lorry with its stack of baggage.

But it could not be helped, and the voyagers took it cheerfully. They clambered in, and sorted out suitcases to sit on, and the driver drove on.

How he was going to negotiate the stream without a bridge the travellers soon saw. He drove right at it. Luckily it was a shallow stream, with gently sloping banks, and there were only a few inches of water. They wondered if he would have tried to make the car jump it, had it been a deep gorge, like some of the water-courses they had crossed.

The car-driver had seemed to them rather reckless. But the lorry-driver easily went one better. Instead of braking down the slope, he seemed to regard it as a race-track.

The lorry swept down, rocking on rocks, and sending up sprays of sand, leaping like an animal. The occupants were astonished to land on all four wheels in the stream.

They had to hold on to avoid being shot out like pips from an orange. Bunter clung and howled; the Famous Five clung, and were silent. Across the shallow, sandy bed of the stream the lorry roared and crashed.

But in the middle of that sandy bed the driver had to give up his Brooklands style. The lorry stuck.

In vain the chauffeur urged on his mettlesome steed. The wheels, sinking in sand, refused to budge.

"Oh crikey!" said Bob Cherry. "What next?"

All the fellows got out to push. Then the soldiers, who were watching the progress of the party with lazy curiosity, displayed the obliging politeness natural to the Brazilian. Forty or fifty men came down the slope, and helped to shove at the lorry.

Combined efforts got it going. Slowly, almost like a cork from a bottle, the lorry was extracted, and shoved up the opposite bank. After which Jim Valentino turned on Portuguese, and distributed milreis. And the military men clapped their hands as the party got going again.

Under the sunset the lorry rocked on. Suitcases slid from under fellows who were sitting on them. Bunter sat on the floor, groaning. There was no doubt that it was rough going. The travellers had one comfort—Jim Valentino told them that they were now outside the radius of the revolution—that extraordinary performance was now left well behind them. But there was no hope of finishing the journey that day. And the travellers were so thoroughly shaken up that all were glad to halt at nightfall in a lonely village, and glad to get to bed, too.

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ired even to heed the insect population that welcomed them with enthusiasm.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Fight on the Rexo!

"JUMP it!" suggested Bob Cherry, with a grin.

And the juniors chuckled.

It was late in the morning, the following day, when the lorry halted at the bank of a river which, unlike most of the streams they had passed, seemed well supplied with water.

There was no sign of a ford or a bridge, and the Greyfriars fellows wondered how they were going to cross. As the stream was not less than thirty yards wide, and a good many feet deep, it looked as if even the Brazilian lorry-driver was beaten. Though, really, after all their experiences, they would hardly have been surprised had he tried to make the lorry jump it.

"Another beastly river!" groaned Bunter. "How are we going across?"

"We're not," said Valentine, with a smile.

"What do we do here, then?"

"Get out!"

"I'm not going to walk!" roared Bunter. "How far is it to your beastly fazenda now?"

"Only twenty miles or so. This is the Rio Rexo," said Jim Valentine. "And we're going on by paddles."

"Oh, good!" said Harry Wharton.

The Famous Five were not fellows to grouse; but they were undoubtedly tired of bumping in that lorry. The last thirty miles had been across wild campo, hardly marked by a track. The shining river, with branches mirrored in its calm waters, looked refreshing and inviting.

From under a wide-spreading tree a large dugout canoe pushed into sight. There were four Indian paddlers in it, and the juniors guessed that it had been waiting for them, and that Valentine had sent a message ahead during the last night's halt.

Billy Bunter blinked suspiciously at the Indians. He was not quite sure that they had no scalping-knives tucked about them somewhere. However, they looked tame and peaceable enough. And Bunter was very glad to get off the lorry.

With great relief the whole party transferred themselves to the dug-out. The baggage was piled in; the passengers took their places, and the lorry-driver was paid off. The canoe was fairly well loaded when it pushed out into the stream. And the four paddlers set to work, taking it up the Rexo against the sluggish current.

"This ain't so bad," Billy Bunter condescended to admit. Stretched on a rug, with his head resting on a suitcase, and a bunch of bananas in his hand, the Owl of the Remove was taking his ease at last. "I say, you fellows, you might brush these beastly flies away!"

There were plenty of flies, and Bunter, as usual, was getting more than his share. But nobody seemed keen on acting as fly-brusher to Bunter. With bananas in one fat hand, Bunter swatted flies with the other. The gliding motion of the canoe was soothing, after the jolting and jumping of the lorry. And, in spite of the flies, Bunter fell asleep when he had finished the bananas, and his deep snore echoed along the Rio Rexo.

"We're getting home at last," said Jim Valentine. "Uncle Peter will be

glad to see us safe and sound. We've been rather delayed by the revolution. You fellows have had a tougher journey than I expected."

"And enjoyed every bit of it," said Bob Cherry. "Wouldn't have missed the jolly old revolution for worlds!"

"Hear, hear!" said the Co.

The canoe glided on slowly, but steadily covering the miles. Other craft passed them, floating down with the current. The juniors were aware that much of the interior communication of Brazil was by the waterways, the most expansive and wonderful in the world. They learned from Jim that Peter Valentine shipped the coffee and other produce of the fazenda down the Rexo, the plantation being more than a hundred miles from the nearest railroad point. Loaded boats and canoes passed them at intervals as they paddled up the stream.

They lunched on the canoe; Billy Bunter waking up for that important function, and then going to sleep again. Once or twice a swift canoe passed them going up, sometimes paddled by Indians, sometimes by negroes. The juniors watched the banks, sometimes wooded, sometimes open, undulating campo. Countless monkeys and parrots chattered in the branches, and once they had rather a thrill as a spotted

his face—dark, evil, beaky, black-bearded. It was O Lobo, and there was a savage grin of triumph on that evil face.

The pursuing canoe came on hard and fast and drew closer and closer, though the Indians slaved at the paddles. Two of the pursuers now gave up paddling and picked up rifles, the other two easily keeping pace with the heavily laden dugout ahead.

"Three miles yet!" breathed Valentine. His face was set and savage. "Duck behind the baggage, you fellows—they're going to fire!"

Crack, crack! came from astern, and the bullets splashed up the water in spouts. Billy Bunter opened his eyes behind his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, what's that row?" he mumbled, sitting up. "I say, you might let a fellow sleep!"

"Keep low, Bunter!" said Valentine hastily.

"Shan't!"

Crack, crack!

Billy Bunter blinked round. He gave one terrified stare at the pursuing canoe and the two bandits standing up and firing, and then, with a wild howl, flattened himself down on the floor of the dug-out.

Squealing, Bunter crouched. Grim and silent, Harry Wharton & Co. got what cover they could behind the baggage stacked in the canoe. The Indians paddled with all their energy, and the water rushed by.

Crack, crack! came again, and again, and the bullets splashed the water and smashed on the baggage.

It was a race for life or death. And only too well the juniors knew that they could not win that race, that long before they came in sight of the fazenda the bandits would run them down, and the bullets would search them out of their cover. Only Valentine was armed—and he was waiting and watching.

Suddenly his arm lifted, and he fired.

The pursuers were so close now that the juniors heard the yell of the man who was hit. They saw him drop his rifle and stagger and pitch over headlong in the canoe.

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Bob Cherry.

The wounded man crashed on the paddlers, and the canoe rocked and lost way. The Greyfriars party shot ahead. The Indians streamed with perspiration as they paddled at a desperate burst of speed to escape.

But in a few minutes the pursuer was coming on fast again; three men at the paddles, a wounded man lying in the bottom, groaning, and O Lobo blazing away with the revolver in his left hand. But he was kneeling now, only his big grass-hat to be seen, and twice Jim Valentine sent a bullet through the big crown of the hat without touching the crouching bandit. And suddenly a sharp cry from Valentine made the hearts of the juniors leap.

"Nothing!" he said hastily. "Only a scratch!" A strip of skin had been torn from his arm and the blood was running down his sleeve. He gritted his teeth. "Can you handle a gun, Wharton?"

"I can shoot, old chap—and I'll do my best!" said the captain of the Remove quietly, and he took the automatic from Valentine.

Faces were pale and set now. The pursuing canoe was coming on with a rush, and it was only a matter of minutes before it would rush alongside and four desperate ruffians would be leaping on the dug-out. O Lobo was grinning with glee.

A minute more—Wharton gripped the automatic; the other fellows grasped

(Continued on page 28.)

"THE BOY FROM THE EAST!"

Do you read the "Gem"? Many MAGNET readers will promptly answer "Yes" to that question. But there must be some who have not yet tried our popular companion paper. To these readers I will say this: If you like the MAGNET you will undoubtedly like the "Gem" also. Try this all-school-story paper this week and see for yourselves. The number now on sale contains a thrilling long yarn of Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's, entitled: "THE BOY FROM THE EAST!" In addition, there's a great story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, and other fine features. Get the "Gem" to-day, price 2d.—EDITOR.

head and a pair of glaring, greenish eyes looked out of a thicket at the passing canoe.

Jim Valentine sat looking back with an intent expression on his face, and the juniors saw his hand slip into his pocket, where, as they knew, he packed the automatic. They sat up and took notice at once.

"What's up?" asked Harry.

Valentine made a gesture at a canoe that was coming up the river after them.

It was cutting the water swiftly, paddled by four men who, dark and swarthy as they were, were evidently white men. A fifth man sat in the stern, half hidden by an enormous hat, with a revolver in his left hand, resting on his knee. His right arm was in a sling.

"Not—" began Harry, startled.

"I think so!" answered Valentine quietly. "O Lobo is back in his old haunts now, and has fallen in with some of his gang."

The automatic glistened in the brilliant sunshine. Jim rapped out a sharp order to the Indian paddlers, who looked at him, and looked at the following canoe, and paddled harder than before.

The canoe dashed on; but it had no chance in a race against the lighter craft astern.

The man with the slung arm was standing up now, and the juniors saw

THE LOST SQUADRON!

By Geo. E. ROCHESTER.

The Demon of the Depths!

AFTER battling all night through a terrific storm, Squadron-Leader Akers and his youthful navigation officer, Flight-Lieutenant Ferris, land on the Goodwin Sands, to find that England has been submerged beneath the sea and the ocean-bed has risen up.

Exploring the surroundings, they come upon four stokers from a derelict freighter—Coles, a burly American, Jim Crow, a negro, and two others known as Sam and Huck.

Coles is all out for looting the stranded derelicts, and the party split up in consequence, Sam throwing in his lot with Akers and Ferris. Tramping on, Akers and his companions meet a crazy castaway standing by a pool feeding a giant fish which he calls his master. The castaway makes a murderous attack upon Akers, but is eventually beaten off by Ferris and Sam.

"Shall we follow him, mister?" panted Sam.

"No, Sam," said Akers huskily; "let him go."

"Yes, let him go," said Ferris. "Oh, help! I—I think I'm going to be sick—"

He sat down heavily on the sand, dropping his lacerated face to his hands.

"Here, drink this!" said Akers, taking from his pack a small flask of brandy with which Jim had provided him.

The raw spirit revived Ferris, after which all three bathed their hurts at a near-by pool, the cold salt water proving as refreshing as it was healing.

"And what now?" asked Ferris, straightening shakily up and wringing out his handkerchief as he stared about him in the deepening dusk. "That madman seems to have vanished completely."

"Yes, he's gone," assented Akers. "I think, if you're fit, we'd better have a look behind those rocks."

He led the way towards the low rampart of rock, and, clambering up on to it, the three of them found themselves gazing down at a square and rock-girt pool, in the depths of which glided a long and shadowy shape.

As though attracted by their presence, the thing came shooting up to the surface, thrusting out of the water an enormous, shark-like head, black, glistening, and with cruel teeth gleaming the whole length of its open jaws. Wicked little eyes glared up at the three men, and the mighty black tail of the monster began to thrash the water.

There was something awe-inspiring and terrifying in the impotent rage of that huge demon of the depths. Wilder and wilder grew its frenzy until the water of the pool was one seething inferno of bubbling, creaming foam.

"Look out!" yelled Akers suddenly.

A sweep of his arms sent Ferris and Sam backwards off the parapet to the sand below, as, with a sudden terrific twist of its sinuous body, the monster shot up out of the pool, described a writhing arc in the dusk, and then fell



Ferris caught the madman fairly and squarely with his clenched fist, sending him plunging down into the waters of the pool!

with a resounding splash into the troubled waters again.

"Ye gods!" gasped Ferris. "What do you make of that?"

"The thing's mad with hunger," replied Akers, who had leapt down to the sand simultaneously with the push he had given his two companions. "It must have found itself imprisoned in that pool after the upheaval."

"But what is it, mister?" exclaimed Sam. "It's far too big for a shark, and it ain't the shape of one, neither, being so long and round in the body."

"I don't know what it is," replied Akers. "It looks to me like a giant tope, though I've never heard of one thirty feet or more in length."

"It's a shocking brute, anyway, whatever it is," said Ferris. "What about our feeding it?"

Akers agreed, and the three of them spent the next few minutes collecting the scattered fish which the madman had been carrying in his basket, and throwing them into the pool where they were caught, and ravenously swallowed by the almost exhausted monster.

"It's a pity we haven't an effective means of killing it, instead of leaving it to starve slowly to death," said Akers.

"It won't starve as long as that madman's about, and the supply of fish

holds out," responded Ferris. "I wonder why the fellow called the brute Aar Havig?"

"Goodness knows!" replied Akers. "Giving it a name, and calling it master was just a freakish whim of his unhinged mind, I suppose. Well, what are we going to do? Shall we make camp here, or shall we push on?"

"I vote we push on," said Ferris promptly. "I don't fancy sticking around here any longer than we can help."

"Neither do I," agreed Akers. "The only thing is, I don't like the idea of abandoning that poor fellow without an effort to do something for him."

"You think he may have his lucid moments?" said Ferris. "Personally, I don't think so. To my mind he's a dangerous and murderous maniac, and I'd feel more comfortable if we pushed on."

"What do you say, Sam?" asked Akers.

"I leave it to you, mister," replied Sam stolidly. "Either way suits me."

"Then we'll make camp here for to-night," said Akers, "and take it in turn to keep watch, in case he shows up. Maybe we'll never see him again. Anyway, let's get some driftwood collected and a fire going."

Dusk was by this time deepening into night, and soon Akers and his two companions were seated round a cheery, crackling fire over which Sam heated tinned soup and made coffee.

The frugal meal over, the three sat with pipes aglow discussing their strange meeting with the madman, and speculating upon the story which lay behind his madness. Then the talk drifted on to their own unhappy straits, and again Akers expressed the view that rescue could be only a matter of days.

During the conversation they kept a sharp look-out for the madman. They saw no sign of him, however, and eventually Sam and Ferris turned in, leaving Akers to take the first watch.

It was one o'clock in the morning when Akers awakened Ferris, who was to take the second watch.

"Everything's quiet," he said. "The fellow seems to have gone for good."

"I hope so," said Ferris.

Waiting until Akers had stretched himself out on the sand beside the dying embers of the fire, he settled himself with his back against a rock and commenced his vigil.

The moon had swung up into a cloudless sky, bathing the drear land in cold and silvery light. Nothing stirred, nothing broke the intense stillness, save a faint lapping of water from the pool behind the low parapet of rock.

Tiring at length of inactivity, Ferris stirred, and, rising to his feet, stood gazing around the moon-bathed expanse of rock and sand. Nowhere, however, could he detect a sign of the madman. Turning at length, he clambered up on to the rampart of rock in order to have a look at the giant fish.

Dark and shadowy in the light of the moon, the monster was slowly circling the pool in hopeless, but unceasing effort to find a way out.

Fascinated by the seemingly untiring movement of that long and sinuous body, Ferris stood watching. Suddenly a slight sound close at hand on the rock made him turn his head.

As he did so his heart missed a beat, and his mouth went dry with sudden fear. For, crouching within a few feet of him, glaring at him with eyes which burned in their sunken sockets, was the madman.

For one fleeting instant Ferris saw that tensed and crouching form, the dreadful face a contorted, livid blur. Then the madman leaped at him. As he did so, Ferris' clenched fist shot out, taking the man fairly and squarely on his bony chin, literally lifting him off his feet, and sending him staggering back. With a scream he tried to recover himself, but his foot slipped on the seaweed-covered rock, and, as Ferris watched with horror in his eyes, the poor demented creature went plunging down into the waters of the pool.

Instantly there came a swirl from the farther side of the pool, and Ferris had a glimpse of a long and shadowy body driving towards the doomed man.

Next moment, with a wild, unearthly shriek which echoed far across the hushed and silent land, the madman threw up his arms, and, in a bubbling swirl of water, vanished into the depths, dragged down by the monster he had befriended and called his master.

White-faced, and shaking in every limb, Ferris stood staring into the pool. The unfortunate man had gone to his doom, and help was out of the question!

Fuel!

A WAKENED by that last despairing cry of the doomed wretch, Akers and Sam leapt to their feet, and dashed towards the rocks on which Ferris, white-faced and shaken, was crouched, staring at the now silent pool.

"What's happened, man?" demanded Akers, clutching him by the shoulder.

Ferris explained, babblingly and incoherently, for the horror of the tragedy had unnerved him.

"Well, come away!" said Akers, tugging at his arm. "We can do nothing now for the poor devil!"

Returning, they rekindled the fire, and soon had a crackling blaze going again. Sleep was out of the question for them now.

"It was I who did it!" shuddered Ferris. "I knocked him into the pool—sent him to his death!"

"Forget it!" said Akers tersely, for he realised that the tragedy must not be allowed to prey on the mind of Ferris. "You did the only thing possible. It was your life or his!"

"That's right, Mr. Ferris," said Sam. "You didn't have a chance. If you hadn't got him, he'd have got you, and that would have been a fine look-out for Mr. Akers and me!"

They fell then to speculating again as to who the man could have been, from whence he could have come, and the cause of his madness. But everything they said, every theory they advanced, was, of necessity, the purest guesswork; and time and again as they talked their eyes wandered towards the dark rampart of rock behind which lurked that dreadful imprisoned demon of the depths.

"Only one thing is certain," said Akers at length, "and that is that the fellow was a castaway from some ship. But what vessel it was, and whether his madness was caused through shock, suffering, or a blow on the head, I don't suppose we will ever learn."

"But Aar Havig?" persisted Ferris. "Why should he have called the brute that?"

"Goodness knows!" replied Akers, with a hopeless shrug of his shoulders. "The name conveys nothing to me."

"It's Nordic, anyway," said Ferris. "That might be a clue."

"To what?" replied Akers. "And, anyway, does it matter now?"

"It don't!" said Sam, drawing away at his pipe. "It don't matter anything. And I ain't meaning it unkind-like when I say that p'r'aps, after all, he's better a goner than what he would have been living around here crazy!"

There was a certain simple truth in this crude philosophy with which Akers could not help but agree.

It was, however, with a relief which they made no effort to disguise that the three men saw at length a lightening of the eastern sky, which told that dawn was at hand.

The dawn of a new day!

As they rose to their feet and shouldered their packs, there was in the heart of each a wondering as to what this new day would bring. Before it had run its course would rescue have come, or, doomed to sojourn longer in this dead, grey land of rock and sand, would they encounter fresh tragedy and further horror?

They trekked on steadily. Wrecks and derelicts they saw in plenty, but never a sign of life. It was one of these wrecks—a long and rusted hull far in

the distance—which brought Sam to a sudden halt.

"D'you see that?" he said, raising pointing finger the while he stared with narrowed eyes.

"Yes. What about it?" demanded Akers, gazing in the direction indicated.

"Yon vessel's a tanker," replied Sam. "And if she's loaded, and her tanks ain't busted, you gents might find her useful."

"By Jove!" breathed Akers. "You mean if she's carrying refined spirit, we could use it for the aeroplane?"

"Yes," nodded Sam. "And there ain't no reason why she shouldn't be carrying it."

With a new hope in their hearts, they set off towards the tanker. If she did turn out to be laden with refined petroleum, then it would mean a speedy end to their privations. For all that would be necessary would be to fill the fuel tanks of their machine, take off, and fly eastwards to either France, Germany, or Holland.

As they neared the tanker they saw that she had been badly holed amidships, and all that remained of her bridge and deckhouses was splintered wreckage.

Access to the canting deck was easily enough gained, and, going down to the engine-room, Sam returned with a handful of serviceable-looking spanners.

Watched by the eager Akers and Ferris, he set to work, and within a few minutes had the steel cover off the port safety pump.

"She's got a cargo, all right!" he said, setting to work on the hand control of the pump. "Here it comes!"

Next moment, as a stream of transparent liquid gushed from the pump, Ferris gave vent to a triumphant and joyous whoop.

"Petrol!" he shouted jubilantly.

"That's great!" exclaimed Akers. "Right-ho, Sam! That's enough!"

Obediently Sam released the control of the pump, cutting off the flow of spirit. Then followed a discussion between Akers and Ferris as to the best thing to be done, and it was eventually decided that the pair of them should return to the bomber and fly her to the tanker.

"That stretch of sand yonder," said Akers, indicating a flat expanse of sand about half a mile away, "ought to make a decent enough landing ground. There's sufficient juice left in the tank to get the bus this far. We'll leave Sam here, and he can have a look round and see if he can find any drums or anything in which we can transport the fuel from here to the machine."

Thus it was arranged, and within the hour Akers and Ferris left on the backward trek to the bomber. They travelled as light as possible, taking with them food supplies for a day and a half only.

It was nearing midday when they left the tanker, but such good progress did they make that by dusk they were within sight of the Boston.

Only once had they halted, and that but for a few moments to look at the giant fish which was still circling the pool at the site of their previous night's camp.

Sighting the masthead light of the Boston glowing a tiny, blood-red pinprick far in the distance, Ferris said:

"Shall we make camp here, or push on and see Jim?"

"We'll push on," responded Akers. "We'd better warn Jim that we'll be passing overhead in the bomber, or he'll

probably think we're a rescue machine."

Dusk was merging into night by the time they reached the Boston, and through the saloon skylight came a faint glimmer of light. In response to Akers' hail, Jim appeared on deck, followed by Coles and Huck.

"For de lan's sake, if it ain't Mister Akers!" beamed the big negro, looking down over the smashed and twisted deck rail. "Come right aboard, sah!"

"No, that's all right, Jim," replied Akers. "I just want to tell you that we've found a tanker, and I'm flying the aeroplane to it in order to fill up with fuel."

"What's the idea of filling up?" growled Coles.

Akers explained his intention of flying to the Continent, and, again refusing Jim's cordial invitation to come aboard and spend the night on the Boston, he and Ferris continued their trek, leaving the negro and his two companions to descend again to the saloon.

"This is a blamed fine thing to happen, ain't it?" said Coles.

"Whadyer mean?" demanded Jim.

"Them two jaspers findin' gasoline for their aeroplane," snarled Coles.

"Guess I'm jest a plain, dumb sap-head," said Jim patiently, "'cos I don't get you, Coles, not nohow."

"Ain't it plain enuff?" flared Coles. "Didn't you hear what that feller Akers said? He's gonna fly to the Continent."

"Waal, an' what about dat?" demanded Jim, staring.

"Aw, shucks, ain't you got no sense?" exclaimed Coles impatiently. "If he flies to the Continent, that means we're gonna be rescued, an' we don't wanna be rescued yet awhile."

"Doan' we?"

"No, we don't!" snapped Coles. "We wanna clean up a pile of loot from these wrecks afore we're rescued."

"Aw-w," said Jim slowly, "I gets you now. Yes, dat is kinda awkward, Coles."

"I'll tell the world it's awkward!" snapped Coles. "What are we gonna do about it?"

"What kin we do about it?"

"We've gotta do something. I ain't aiming to see this racket of ours bust by them two jaspers bringing rescuers here. Some way or other we're gonna stop them flying to the Continent."

"I doan' see no way we can do dat," said Jim dubiously.

"We can smash their aeroplane," retorted Coles, "or find the tanker and burn it."

"I doan' reck'n we stan' much chance of findin' de tanker," responded Jim, "cos it 'pears to me, Coles, dat dis heah territory's a mighty big stretch. An' as for smashin' de aeroplane, we ain't gonna do nothin' like dat."

"Aw, is that so?" rasped Coles.

"Yes, sah, it is so," retorted Jim. "I ain't gonna have no trouble of dat sort wid Mister Akers an' Mister Ferris, so you can put de ideah outa yore haid!"

"Getting mighty goody, ain't you?" sneered Coles.

"Mebbe," returned Jim unperturbably. "But I ain't standin' for no rough stuff where Mister Akers an' Mister Ferris is concerned, an' dat goes. Now, you look here, Coles. I agrees wid you dat we doan' wanna be rescued yet awhile, but, as I've said befo', dis 'pears to be a mighty big territory, an' dere's plenty of room for you an' Huck an' me to lose ourselves in. Anyway, dere doan' seem to be no more wrecks aroun' heah, so we'd have to be hittin' de trail in any case."

"Meanin'?" questioned Coles.

"Meanin'," went on Jim, "dat seein'

as how Mister Akers an' Mister Ferris is gonna fly to de Continent, you an' Huck an' me'll just fade away an' lose ourselves an' clean up all de money an' jewels an' things what we find lyin' about aboard other wrecks. By de time us am rescued us'll have c'lected a mighty big pile widout interference from nobody."

In spite of the arguments and protestations of Coles, this was the plan which was finally adopted, for Jim was adamant in his determination that there should be no interference with Akers and Ferris.

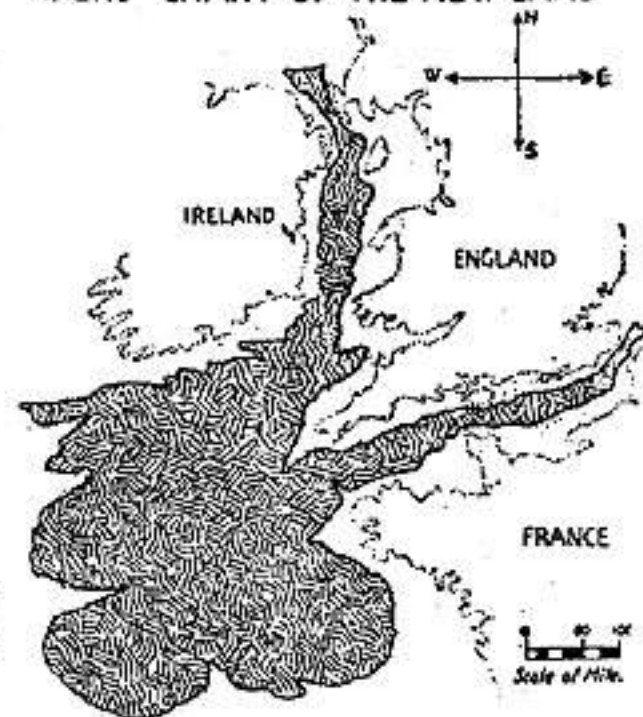
When the night had passed, and dawn had come, Coles, Jim, and Huck left the Boston and, with packs on their backs, trekked away to the west.

That same dawn saw Akers and Ferris on the move again, after snatching a few brief hours of sleep under the lee of an overhanging rock. Throughout the day they made such good progress that the sun had not yet dipped down behind the sea by the time they reached the bomber.

Quickly they went to work untying the picket ropes and removing the tarpaulin covers from engines and cockpits. Then came the task of turning the bomber so that it would face the flat stretch of sand for the take-off.

It was a big task, but they managed

AKERS' CHART OF THE NEW LAND



it at length, and, swinging himself up into the cockpit, Akers switched on whilst Ferris started up the engines.

"We've just about got enough juice to do it," said Akers, glancing at the fuel gauge on the dashboard in front of him. "Are you ready?"

"Yes," responded Ferris, seating himself beside Akers.

First the starboard engine, then the port engine roared in deep, full-throated song as Akers ran them up on brief, but searching test. Then their thunder blended into one pulsating, deafening roar which echoed far across the silent land and lonely sea, and under the pull of her whirling screws, the bomber commenced to move forward, gathering impetus until the firm, hard sand was swirling past, a yellowish blur.

The tail came up, and as Akers eased back the control column the machine soared into the air. Turning on the climb, Akers flattened out, and, flying at a height of not more than one hundred feet, headed westwards in the direction of the tanker.

Ferris, seated in the cockpit and looking down on the barren land of rock and sand sliding away behind their tail, found a strange comfort in being once more aboard the bomber.

The powerful black wings bearing him

and Akers through the air seemed to speak of reality and of the world he had known.

The land below them was dead; a nightmarish country of silence and desolation. But the bomber was alive, and the roar of its engines was a familiar voice telling of salvation and of safety soon to come.

Still flying low—for Akers was nursing every drop of his fuel—they passed over the Boston and both Akers and Ferris were mildly surprised to see no sign of Jim and his two companions.

Not many moments later they passed over the Rensky, and as the tanker came into view Akers' hand closed on the throttle. Next minute the roar of the engine died away, and, with nose down, the bomber glided earthwards, to make a perfect landing on the flat stretch of sand which Akers had previously selected as his landing ground.

Sam was waiting for them, and when they had vacated the cockpit he helped them to picket down the machine for the night.

Sam had not been idle in their absence, for he had found a couple of big tin drums with which to transport the fuel from the tanker to the machine. He had also dried and aired the bedding of two of the cabins aboard the tanker in readiness for Akers and Ferris, and had restored order from out the chaos of pots and pans and cooking utensils in the galley.

The vessel was well stocked with stores and water, and soon Akers and Ferris were seated at a well cooked and satisfying meal served by Sam in what had been the captain's cabin.

Later that evening, as dusk was deepening slowly into night, the trio sat up on deck with their pipes aglow, talking of the morrow, when they would take off in search of land.

British Territory!

AKERS and Ferris and Sam were up with the dawn, and after breakfasting they filled the drums with fuel and proceeded to carry them to the bomber, where this essential life-blood of the machine went gurgling into the almost-dry tanks.

Oil was found in plenty in the engine-room of the vessel, and after Akers had given the bomber's engines a thorough overhaul they roared into life, and the machine was ready to take the air.

Waiting until Ferris had clambered aboard, and Sam had settled himself in the rear cockpit, Akers gave the engines open throttle, and, with a deep, full-throated roar, the machine swept forward, to rise into the clear air of early morning in a long upward climb.

At 200 feet Akers banked and headed towards the south-east, climbing as he went.

"The coast of France should be in sight by now," he said to Ferris, when the machine had climbed to 5,000 feet.

"I know," nodded Ferris; "but I don't see it."

Higher and higher mounted the bomber as it thundered on towards the south-east. But always below it stretched a vast and unbroken expanse of water. No sign of land was there at all, and into the hearts of Akers and Ferris there crept a sickening dread, which showed in their grim, set faces.

When the machine had climbed to 17,000 feet, and the land which they had left lay one hundred miles or more behind their tail, Akers turned to Ferris.

"You understand?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Ferris through livid lips. "The whole of Western Europe has gone."

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"The bearings we took back yonder were correct?"

"You know they were," groaned Ferris. "You checked them yourself."

Without a word Akers turned again to his controls. Yes, he knew their bearings had been correct; knew without the slightest shadow of doubt that the land which lay far behind them was indeed the bed of the English Channel.

On and on thundered the bomber over an unbroken waste of waters stretching as far as the eye could see; then suddenly Akers pressed on the rudder bar, and as the control wheel turned beneath his firm hands the machine banked, and, coming about, headed back towards the north-west.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed Ferris. "Aren't we going on?"

Akers shook his head.

"Our fuel's half done now," he replied. "We dare not take the risk."

Ferris was silently acquiescent, for he knew that to go on might mean that eventually, with empty tanks, they would be forced to come down on the sea, and that would be the end for them.

There was a chance that by flying on and on they might sight land. But it was a chance they dare not take unless they were prepared to gamble their lives on it.

The return journey to the tanker was accomplished without incident, although by the time they landed their fuel supply had run perilously low.

That night Akers and Ferris talked long and earnestly in the main cabin of the tanker, the while Sam sat stolidly listening to their discussion, the upshot of which was that the following morning, with fuel tanks replenished, the bomber again took the air.

This time it flew on a course which, had land existed, would have taken them over England on a line of flight indicated approximately by a line drawn on the map from Brighton to Carlisle.

But there was no land. Nothing but a waste of waters, fringed, far to the west, by a long, greyish stretch of rock and sand.

"That was once the bed of the Irish Sea," said Ferris, indicating the distant tract of flat and barren territory. "The upheaval must have stretched a long way north."

There is no need to dwell on the details of that flight, nor on the subsequent flights which Akers and Ferris made during the next few days. Suffice it to say that their worst fears were confirmed. Britain and Western Europe had gone, submerged beneath the sea.

The submersion had been dreadfully and devastatingly complete, and after he

and Ferris had turned their attention to the new land which had risen up from out the sea. Akers sat down one evening in the cabin of the tanker and drew a rough chart of it, based on the observations which he and Ferris had taken from the air.

"That's about it," he said, pushing the chart across the table to Ferris. "And how many miles of sea separates us from the nearest land, we don't know."

"You're sure there is more land somewhere?" said Ferris, gloomily surveying the chart. "You don't think that every continent's been submerged?"

"I certainly don't," replied Akers. "If our machine had a longer cruising range we would probably be able to find more land. Anyway, here we are, and here we've got to stay until a ship or aeroplane arrives from some country which has been fortunate enough to escape the submersion."

He turned to Sam, who was sitting smoking.

"That broken mast that we found, Sam," he said. "Have you fixed it yet?"

"Yes," replied Sam. "I dug a hole in the sand and erected it all ship-shape, like what you told me."

"Good!" exclaimed Akers, rising and taking from the table a Union Jack, which he had found in a flag locker. "In case of accidents, and to save a lot of possible future argument, we'll hoist this flag, Ferris."

"What d'you mean, argument?" demanded Ferris.

"Well," explained Akers, "actually, this new land belongs to nobody, at the moment. I know it has risen out of British waters, but it is virgin territory, and America or Russia, or whoever arrives here first might claim it, on the grounds of being the first to discover it. To save any argument, therefore, we'll hoist the British flag and formally claim the whole of this territory in the name of the British Empire."

"Right!" exclaimed Ferris. "Come on!"

And on the pole which Sam had erected they hoisted the flag of their country and stood for a moment in rigid salute.

"I don't quite know what one says when annexing territory," said Akers, "but we've planted our flag on it, and we formally claim this land on behalf of and in the name of the British Empire!"

(What move will Akers and his companions make now? Boys, you'll be surprised when you read next week's chapters of this great yarn!)

SHADOWED IN SOUTH AMERICA!

(Continued from page 24.)

what weapons they could find. In the tense excitement of the moment they did not hear, or heed, the sound of galloping hoofs on the campo beside the river—they did not see a sunburnt horseman who rode there with a revolver in his hand.

But they heard, and heeded, when the horseman drew rein on the river's margin and opened fire.

Crack, crack, crack, crack! rang out, the bullets pitching fairly into the pursuing canoe.

Two of the bandit paddlers rolled over.

The canoe swung round on the current and drifted. From O Lobo came a yell of rage and fury.

"Who—what—" gasped Bob.

All eyes turned on the horseman on the bank. Jim Valentine gave a shout of relief and gladness:

"Uncle Peter!"

Crack, crack!

Peter Valentine was still firing at the pursuers. O Lobo was crouching under the gunwale of the canoe, which went drifting down-stream. The planter emptied his revolver at it before he cast a glance at the dug-out.

Down the Rexto, drifting helplessly, the bandits' canoe floated, yells and groans drifting back from it as it went.

The Indians paddled in to the bank. Peter Valentine dismounted and stepped into the dugout.

"Yaroo!" came in a wild yell from Billy Bunter. "Keep him off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five. They could laugh now. Peter Valentine shook hands with the chums of Greyfriars, and regarded Billy Bunter with a puzzled stare.

"It's all right, Bunter!" gasped Jim. "It's my Uncle Peter—the bandits are gone—all serene now, old fat man!"

"Oh!" spluttered Bunter. "Oh! I thought—I mean— Oh dear! Ow!"

It was all serene at last; though Billy Bunter did not feel all serene till he was safe within the walls of Boa Vista. There the fat Owl hoped that perils and adventures were done with. Which proved to be an unfounded hope, for exciting times lie ahead of Harry Wharton & Co. in Brazil.

THE END.

(Get ready for the next story in this exciting series. It's entitled: "THE VENGEANCE OF THE WOLF!" You'll find it in next Saturday's MAGNET, which will also contain more topping pictures for your magic spectacles.)



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BATTLING
BIRCHEMALL!
By DICKY NUGENT

Jack Jolly of the St. Sam's Fourth came galloping into the gymnasium like a yung charger. Burleigh of the Sixth, who was sparring with his pal Tallboy, looked round with a frown.

"What are you doing of, yung Jolly?" he inkwired in his hawty way. "How dare you come barging into the jim like this here?"

"Please, Burleigh, it's the Head!" gasped Jack Jolly. "He's gone off his rocker! He's left off his usual clobber and dressed himself in short culled tights and a dressing-gown!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's no larding matter, I can tell you!" said Jolly, as the seniors roared. "He's on his way here now, and you won't lurf when you see him! He's rushing about like a man demented, and whirling his arms round and round like the sails of a windmill!"

Just as the kaptin of the Fourth concluded, his lisseners received ordible proof that something was amiss. From the passidge outside came a series of defen- ing crashes.

Clatter! Bang! Wal- lop! Thud!

"What's that?" gasped Tallboy. "Is it an earth- quake or a hurricane?"

"Neither!" grinned Jack Jolly. "It's the Head!"

And so it was! Looking towards the door, the startled seniors saw an eggstraordinary site. There was Doctor Birchemall, dressed in a green vest and scarlet shorts with a perple dressing-gown flapping about him, jumping up and down like a cat on hot brix and flinging his arms about in a most pekuliar fashion.

Burleigh took in the situation at a glance.

"Collar him!" he yelled. "He's mad!"

The seniors made a rush.

COKER WAS
AWFULLY BUCKED!
Chortled TOM BROWN

Strolling across the quad the other bright and breezy morn, I saw a sight that made me rub my peepers and utter a loud yelp of amazo. It was Coker and Potter and Greene of the Fifth—all dressed up in the full glory of riding kit!

"What the thump!" I ejaculated.

About a hundred other chaps spotted the trio at the same time, and in the twinkling of an eye Coker & Co. found themselves surrounded by a howling mob.

"What's the big idea?" was the question that was hurled at them.

"Well, what do you think the idea is?" re- torted Coker, with ponder- ous wit. "Does it look as if we're going boating?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Potter and Greene in duti- ful chorus.

"Mind if we come along and watch you, Coker?" I asked, politely.

"Come by all means, kid—the more the merrier!" said Coker, genially. "Per- haps you'll pick up a few tips on how to manage a horse."

"Perhaps!" I agreed cheerfully. And I fell in behind—and a hundred others fell in behind with me. Coker on a horse was a treat not to be missed at any price!

Well, lads, it may sur-

prise you, but I learned more about managing a horse than I'd ever have thought possible!

Potter and Greene I ignored. They just looked like a couple of Fifth Formers on horseback—I could have watched them for hours without picking up a single hint. But Coker! Honour bright, he defied description!

The crowd went into raptures over his display. They sighed admiring sighs when he leaped into the saddle and shot right over the horse's back. They yelled admiring yells when he gallantly sprang to his feet again and climbed up on the other side. They cheered admiring cheers when he gave his mount a flick and pitched back over his tail in doing so.

But it was when his steed started shying and bucking that their ad- miration reached its zenith. The way Coker bumped up and down in the saddle grabbing the horse's ears first and then its neck, would have made a giddy graven



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DID BUN-SHOP GIRL
PROPOSE TO MAULY?
Asks BOB CHERRY

A startling rumour went round to the effect that the young lady at the Courtfield bun-shop had proposed to Lord Mauleverer. The Editor promptly gave me the job of finding out the truth about it.

I found his lordship, as usual, sleeping peace- fully on the sofa in Study No. 12. By the simple expedient of grabbing his ankles and jerking them about five feet into the air, I managed to wake him up. Mauly landed on the carpet with a bump and let out a most unlordly yell.

"Whoooooop! Let a man alone! Ow!"

"The truth, old bean—the whole and nothing but!" I said briskly. "The 'Herald' wants to know all about the young lady at the bun-shop."

A sort of dreamy light came into Mauly's eyes and a faraway look into his face.

"Charmin' girl!" he murmured. "Definitely devastatin'!"

"Ah! That's the talk!" I grinned, fetch- ing out my notebook. "Now let's hear about this leap year proposal she is said to have made!"

"Yaas!"

"Did she propose to you in the soft light of the moon? Or did it happen while she was

dishing you up a small soda-and-milk and a bath bun?"

"Yaas—I mean, no!!!"

"Did she—?"

"Yaw-aw-aw!"

His lordship had gone to sleep again! I poked my notebook and bled me to Courtfield and the bun-shop.

I was in luck's way. There were no customers about, and the girl of Mauly's dreams was be- hind the counter.

"Good-afternoon!" I began cheerily. "Would you mind—?"

"Soda-and-milk and a bath bun? Certainly," said the bun-shop girl.

"But I was going to ask if you'd mind telling me—?"

"The time? With pleasure. It's just three o'clock!"

"No, not the time. About this alleged pro- posal of yours to Mauly—Lord Mauleverer, you know!"

"Will that be enough milk? Let me fill it up with soda-water then!"

"Thanks. But about Mauly—"

"Swoooooosh!"

"Yarooooogh! Cug- gug-grooooooh!" I then said—or words to that effect.

What do you think she'd done? Believe it or not, she'd squirted the soda-water all over my classic countenance.

It's a dog's life for us newspapermen right enough! Lucky we're tough, isn't it?

After that shower- bath I gave it up. And the burning question, "Did the Bun-shop Girl Propose to Mauly?" is still unanswered up to the time of going to press.

"Ow! Leggo, bust you!" shrieked Dr. Birch- emall. "I'm not mad, you idjuts! I'm training for my big fight!"

The Sixth Formers stared at him like fellows in a dream.

"Your—your big fight?" stuttered Tallboy.

"Eggsactly. I was shadow-boxing!" snorted the Head. "Lemme go at once!"

The amazed seniors obeyed. Evidently they had made a mistake in thinking the Head was potty—but it was just as big a serprize to them to hear that he was in training for a big fight!

"Let's got this right,

air," said Burleigh. "Do I understand that you're going to fight somebody?"

Doctor Birchemall grinned and nodded.

"Who is your opponent, sir?" gasped Burleigh.

"Smasher Smirke of the Muggleton Circus!" an- swered the Head. "He's offering five pounds to any- one who can beat him in three rounds—and I'm go- ing to take him on to- morrow evening!"

"Grate pip!"

"I'm going to enter the ring under the name of Battling Birchemall," went on Doctor Birchemall, cheerfully. "And if I don't nock spots off the Smasher, I'll eat my best Sunday mortar-board! As a matter of fakt, boys, I came along here to-nite with the idea of sparring with one or two of you, just to make sure that the old hand had not lost its cunning. Would you like to oblige for a few minnits, Burleigh?"

"Oh, crums! If you like, sir!" gasped Bur- leigh.

"Very well. Lend me your gloves, Tallboy, and we'll get down to it!"

Jack Jolly, who had by this time lost his first impression that the Head was dotty, helped Tallboy off with his gloves and tied them on to the Head's hony hands, and the crowd formed a ring. Then the Head flung aside his dress- ing-gown and faced the kaptin of the Sixth.

"Ready, sir!" asked Burleigh.

"Ready, I, ready!"

Wallop!

Burleigh tapped the Head lightly on the nose. The effect was eggstra-

ordinary. Doctor Birchemall let out a yell of aggeny and started dancing up and down like a dancing der- vish!

"Woooooop! Yooooop! My fizzog! Fowl! Cheert! Yarooooooo!" he howled.

"What the mery dickens—?"

"How dare you fwl your own Headmrr, Burleigh!" roared the Head. "Take a thowsand lines—and take your gloves off!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'll spar with you n- stead, Tallboy!" snorted Doctor Birchemall. "And remember this, if you land me so much as one fowl blow, I shall birch you black and blew!"

"Oh, crums!"

After that warning Tall- boy deemed it wise not to land a blow of any ki- fare or fowl! He dodged about and fainted instead, and the Head survived five minnits of viggeryas sparring without sustaining a single scratch.

Doctor Birchemall was grinning all over his dal at the finish.

"That will be enuff from you, Tallboy," he said. "Now let's see what you're made of, Biffer major!"

Biffer major donned the gloves and wisely adopted the same tactics as Tal- Biffer was followed by Lunge and Parry and Clinch—and all those seniors followed suit. They weren't a bit anxious to be birched black and blew on account of fowling the Head—so they took jolly good care not to touch him at all!

By the time Doctor Birchemall had finished his training in the jimmy-



nasium he was firmly kon- vinced that Jack Dempsey and Kid Berg and Carnera all rolled into one wouldn't stand an earthly against him!

The following evening Doctor Birchemall stopped into the ring at the Muggle- ton Circus to the tune of a defensing cheer from the crowd that had rolled up from St. Sam's. Even the site of Smasher Smirke, a grate, leering broot with collyflower ears and a pro- trooding jaw, didn't affect the Head's konfidence in the result.

Tinkle-tinkle!

The mewsical tinkling of the gong announced that the grate fight had begun!

Doctor Birchemall hurled himself into the fray.

Bang!

The speektators rubbed their eyes and wondered whether they were dream- ing. Amazing as it seemed, the Head had completely vanished from site!

Then a yell from the back of the tent cleared up the mistery. Smasher Smirke had nocked the Head right out of the ring and sent him flying over the heads of the crowd, to land on top of the speektators in the back row.

Attendants carried him

HARRY WHARTON Tells How
LARRY LOST LONGING
FOR OPEN-AIR LESSONS!

back and threw him into the ring again. The Smasher, loering unplez- antly, prepared to give the Head another mitey swipe.

But this time the Head got in first—more by luck than judgment. Stag- gering to his feet, he did a high kick to balance him- self—and his hobnailed boot landed with tremen- jous force on the Smasher's jaw.

Boom!

"Yarooooooo!"

And with that dramat- tick blow the fight finished—but not in the way the Head had hooped! In- stead of awarding him the honners the referee held up the Smasher's hand in the sign of viktory.

"Battling Birchemall is disqualified for fowling!" he yelled. "The winner of this grate fight is Smasher Smirke!"

And thus ended the Head's fond hoaps of mak- ing mince meat of the circus pug and strewing him in pieces all round the ring.

"Well, sir," remarked Mr. Lickham of the Fourth, as he drove home with the crowd in the Head's am- bulance, "you have certainly been given what is techni- cally known, I believe, as a raw deal."

"Eggsactly—and it has cooked my goose as a boxer!" sighed the Head. "Hencefourth, Lickham, I intend to stick to Latin and mathematticks!"

Our maths master, Larry Lascelles, has always had a hankering after open- air lessons. But he won't be hankering after them quite so much in the future as he has been in the past. This week, you see, he actually tried one!

You can imagine how we chortled when we heard that the Head had agreed—rather dubiously—to let him try us out for an hour's maths in the quad. Any- thing seems better in the open air than in a stuffy old Form-room—even maths! We had a confab over it and agreed among ourselves to do nothing likely to prevent the scheme being a rattling success.

But as things turned out, the success of the scheme didn't rest with us.

Things went wrong right from the start. No sooner had we sat down at the desks that had been fixed up in the quad, than a stray bull with a bad temper wandered in from the road and came charg- ing over towards us. And you can't do maths very well with a bull rushing about among the desks, can you? We gave up maths and did a bit of torcador stuff instead. It was all very exciting while it lasted—but it didn't auger well for the future of Larry's open-air class!

When the bull had been chased away another trouble began. About a thousand rooks settled in the trees overhead and

started kicking up such a fearful din that we couldn't hear a word of the lesson.

And then a breeze sprang up and blew all our papers across the quad, and fi- nally overturned the black- board!

By the time we really got going our hour was nearly up. Still, Larry was game- ly going to carry on—till he realised that it was beginning to rain. That did it! In a couple of minutes we were carrying the desks back to the School House in the teeth of a regular gale and torrents of wet- ness. And the open-air class broke up in complete dis- order.

So, taking it all round, Larry Lascelles is not likely to ask for another open- air class in a hurry. Great pity. We were just beginning to enjoy it!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

The school medico found fault with Fisher T. Fish's skinny physique, and said he ought to "fill out." Fishy worries such a lot evolving weird schemes to "fill" his pockets that he is never likely to "fill" out. His latest "frost" was a patent "reducing" fluid. It "re- duced" Removites to laughter—not in weight!

Looking at a 28-foot python in the London Zoo, Billy Bunter was disgusted by the way it "bolted" its food whole. Peter Todd laughed and reminded Bunter that he himself rarely stops to chew. Bunter "chewed" on Toddy's "snake" comparison—but couldn't think of a suffi- ciently "biting" reply!

A Naval career is planned for Johnny Bull by his guardian. It is certain that Johnny's splendid physique will stand him in good stead on the quarter deck of a battle cruiser. G-ur over a battleship last Johnny amazed his chum, lifting a heavy "dummy" shell single-handed! Johnny should turn out a "big noise"!

"Babs" Redfern, of Cliff House School, would like to become an "air girl," and fly the Atlantic solo. "Babs" is perhaps the most go-ahead of the Cliff House girls. For staunchness, though, Bob Cherry plumps for Marjorie Hazeldene. Bob's respect for Marjorie is firmly reciprocated. They are "good companions" to them!

An old gipsy told Bunter he would receive some money before the week was out, and Bunter managed to borrow quite a lot on the strength of it! His dis- appointment when he received a postal-order for a shilling was great—but not so great as that of the fellows who had lent him cash in advance! A "warning" to them!

There is no doubt that Temple, Dabney and Fry are the "nat- ural" trio at Greyfriars. Stroll- ing in the quad the other day, they looked right through the Famous Five. But after the Five had walked "through" them, Temple & Co. looked a sorry trio indeed! They had learned that "threes" into "fives" won't go!