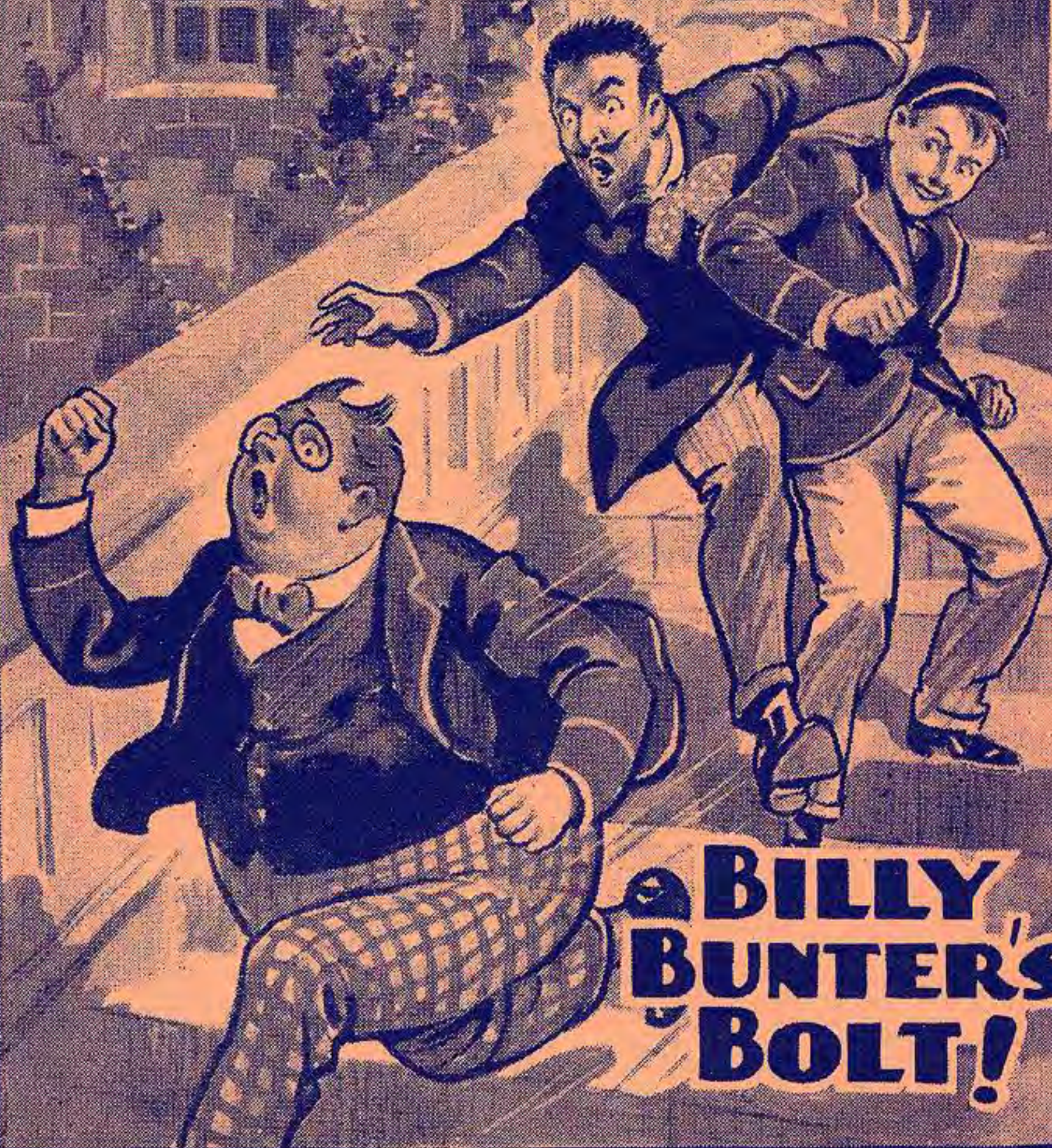


"RIVALS FOR RICHES!" Great Greyfriars School Yarn, By Frank Richards

The Magnet ^{2^D}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**BILLY
BUNTER'S
BOLT!**

INSIDE INFORMATION ABOUT GREYFRIARS by the Man Who Knows—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

A TOUR OF THE SCHOOL. The Recreation Room—or Rag.

(1)

We've finished prep, and with cheerful step

We make our way to the Rag.
This homely room is no place for gloom—

Our tongues begin to wag;
While Bunter sits in a chair that fits
His figure like a glove.
The jokes are played and the plots are laid
With many a push and shove.

(2)

Then Temple's crowd are, of course, allowed

To use the Rag as well.
And many a scene we've had between
The Upper Fourth and the Shell.
When war breaks out we can thump and shout

And fight to our hearts' content,
Till prefects stroll in the door and dolo
Out capital punishment!

(3)

Some fellows read, and there's some, indeed,

Like Mauly who sit and doze;
While some play chess, and I must confess

I'm frequently one of those.
There's "footer jaw," which is sure to draw

An argument in its train,
And the whole room hums until Wingate comes,
And—it's bed-time once again!



AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Tom Brown's Wireless

Browney has a wireless set,
A cottage radio,
And sometimes he's been known to get
That wireless set to go!
In general, it seldom cares
To let its voice be heard;
It likes to mind its own affairs
And never says a word.
When fellows, full of interest,
Are waiting in the room,
That wireless set is like the rest—
As silent as the tomb.
But now and then the thing emits
A most appalling squeak,
Which gives a nervous fellow fits
That last about a week.
The reason why it should produce
These squeaks, I can't explain;
But Browney says a screw is loose
Inside the creature's brain.
Last night, for instance, after tea
I heard a fearful squeal,
And what effect it had on me
I simply can't reveal!
Peter Todd collapsed with grief;
We carried him to bed,
And left him with the firm belief
That blood was being shed.
Then Prout, complete with gun,
rushed in
To stop a fearful crime,
And prefects added to the din—
We had a lovely time!
Meanwhile, the set burst into speech
In German dialect.
A book was lying within my reach—
That's why the set is wrecked!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

CLAUDE HOSKINS,

the Musical Genius of the Shell.

It is for HOSKINS of the Shell,
And let me say, unless I dwell
Upon his talents (?) musical,
I needn't write of him at all.
For Hoskins you can only see
When playing some dashed rhapsody,
Or else composing for a lark
Far greater melodies than Bach,



Or even Mozart, let alone
Such men as Grieg and Mendelssohn.
If Hoskins studied music—well,
They might not chortle in the Shell.
He doesn't study it; he'll look
On music as an open book
Whose secrets are so clearly seen
By a great master—aged sixteen!

ANSWER TO PUZZLE

A blank notebook. If there were 1,000 books in the library, the largest of them could not contain more than 999 words, and, as they all had a different number, one (at least) must have been blank.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

I've just heard of a man who stood quite still upon the corner of a street for nine days. He must have been having a chat with Prout!

Skinner, accused of eating toffee in class, was ordered by Mr. Quelch to turn out his pockets. Luckily, however, he had only a packet of cigarettes and some marked cards on him at the time!

Quelch said recently that no sensible boy would ever gamble, and I bet you anything you like he's right!

Fisher T. Fish has decided to stop giving offence to others. He is going to charge for it!

Loder's face is covered with pimples. Good job it's covered with something!

PUZZLE PAR

In the school library there are a lot of books, no two of which have the same number of words, and there are more books in the library than words in the largest book. What is one of the books?

Answer at foot of column 2.

Don Ogilvy brought his bagpipes to school this term and started by playing "The Campbells are Coming!" First time I've heard the prefects called Campbells!

When Tubb of the Third spilled some acid on his hands in chemistry class, he smiled bravely, and said it might have been worse! Sure! It might have been soap and water!

In the last snowfall we thought someone had built a snowman in the quad, but it turned out to be Gosling, sweeping it up.

When Inky saw Coker on his motor-bike he turned pale with fright. Pale black, of course.

MAKING GOOD at Greyfriars is a hard enough task for Arthur Carter, a "bad hat" who has been turned out of his last school—but "dishing" Billy Bunter, who has cut him out of his uncle's will, is more difficult still!

RIVALS for RICHIES!



By
FRANK RICHARDS

Billy Bunter faced Carter, a threatening frown on his fat face and a warlike gleam behind his spectacles. He brandished a podgy fist under the new junior's nose!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Something Like a Surprise!

"SEEN my gold pencil?"

"No!"

"Well, I want it!" said Carter.

The new fellow in the Greyfriars Remove spoke in so significant and unpleasant a tone, that the other fellows in the study all turned their heads to look at him.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were listening to Wun Lung, who was telling them about a Japanese air-raid that had knocked to pieces his father's "hong" at Canton. Billy Bunter was in Study No. 1—not because he was interested in the Chinese junior's description of Far-Eastern atrocities, but because he was in hopes of staying to tea.

Bunter was waiting impatiently for Wun to come to a finish. Air-raids were thrilling, but sosses and chips were filling; and Billy Bunter would rather have been filled than thrilled.

Arthur Carter came into the study, looked over the table, looked over it again, and then addressed his question to the study generally.

"I left my gold pencil on the table when I went down!" said Carter. "I want to know where it is."

"Look for it!" suggested Harry Wharton.

"I've looked!"

"Look again!" said Frank Nugent.

"Don't talk rot! Where is it?"

Wun Lung ceased his narrative, and his slanting eyes dwelt curiously on the new member of the Remove.

Billy Bunter blinked at Carter, through his big spectacles, with an inimical blink.

Harry Wharton fixed his eyes on Carter.

"What do you mean?" he asked quietly. "You don't suppose that anybody in this study has bagged your silly pencil, do you?"

"I know I left it on the table, and that it's not there now! If you've shifted it, you can say so."

"I've not seen it," said Harry curtly.

"Nor I!" said Nugent.

"What about you, Bunter?" asked Carter.

"Don't talk to me, Carter!" answered

A Super-Quality School
Story, featuring **HARRY
WHARTON & CO.,** of
Greyfriars, by our Star
Author.

Bunter disdainfully. "I've told you I bar you. If you think I'm going to know you here, because you happen to be a distant relation of mine, you're mistaken! Just shut up, see?"

"You fat ass," exclaimed Harry Wharton, "tell the fellow whether you've seen his silly pencil or not."

"Well, I haven't seen it! But I'm not going to tell Carter so; I'm not going to speak to him," retorted Bunter. "He can jolly well find out whether I've seen it or not!"

"Me looker!" said Wun Lung.

He came across to the table, brushing against Carter.

"Don't shove me, you Chinese image!" rapped Carter.

"Plenty solly me shoves nicey feller Carter!" said Wun Lung amicably. "No see pencil along table."

"Go on, Wun!" said Nugent. "You were telling us—"

"You can cut that out!" interposed Carter. "I can't afford to lose a gold pencil. Who's got it?"

"Who's got it?" repeated Harry Wharton. The captain of the Remove looked at Carter with glinting eyes. "Did you say who's got it?"

"Don't you understand plain English?" asked Carter. "I said exactly that, and I want an answer."

"You won't get any answer from me, unless it's a punch on your cheeky nose!"

"Don't get on the high horse, old bean—your favourite mount, from what I hear in the Remove!" said Carter coolly. "I don't suspect your High Mightiness of pinching my pencil. There's a fellow in this study who pinches and pilfers up and down the Remove, and I want to know if he's got it."

Billy Bunter's fat face became as red as a newly boiled beetroot with wrath. His little round eyes flashed through his big, round spectacles.

"You—you—you cheeky cad!" he gasped. "You toad! You worm! You—you—you swab! Do you think I'd touch your rotten pencil?"

"Quite!"

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"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"I've seen you with that gold pencil of yours, Carter," said Frank Nugent. "It looks fearfully expensive and frightfully swanky. But it's not eatable, is it?"

"What do you mean, you ass?"

"I mean that if it were eatable, Bunter's eaten it—but if it isn't, he hasn't touched it, and you know it as well as we do."

"I don't know it!" said Carter. "I know I left it on this table, and it isn't there now! I know that if I left a cake, or a bun, Bunter would pinch it—I've seen you fellows booting him for pinching tuck in this study. A fellow who would pinch a cake would pinch anything else."

"As if I'd pinch a cake!" roared Bunter indignantly. "I suppose you're making out that I had Bob Cherry's cake. So far as I know, it's still in his study cupboard. If it isn't, I don't know anything about it."

"Will you hand over that gold pencil, Bunter?" asked Carter. "It was a birthday present from my uncle, and cost some guineas, and I'm not going to lose it. I want it—at once."

"I advise you to chuck that, Carter!" said Harry Wharton. "What you say about a cake or a bun is true enough, but you know perfectly well that Bunter would not touch your things. You wouldn't dare to say so, if he could handle you as you deserve for your cheek."

"I say, you fellows, I'll jolly well boot him!" gasped Bunter. "I say, you hold him while I boot him!"

"I'm waiting!" said Carter.

"Beast!"

"Very well!" said Carter compressing his lips. "I've lost an article of value in this study, and I'm bound to report it to my Form-master! I'll go down to Quelch!" He turned to the door. "Unless Bunter turns out his pockets, this minute, I'm calling Quelch in! He can take his choice."

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton. "Bunter, you fat ass, you ask for this sort of thing by snaffling tuck in the studies—"

"If you're trying to make out that I snaffle tuck in the studies, Harry Wharton—"

"Oh, shut up, fathead! Look here, nobody here except that suspicious cad believes that you would touch his mouldy pencil. We don't want Quelch up here! Turn out your pockets and satisfy the cad!"

"You're calling me some pretty names!" sneered Carter.

"I'm calling you exactly what you are!" said the captain of the Remove contemptuously. "If you fancy that Bunter would pinch your mouldy pencil, you're a suspicious cad."

"Hear, hear!" said Frank Nugent.

"Well, let us see the pockets turned out!" sneered Carter. "I left the pencil in this study, and it's gone."

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here then!"

And the fat Owl of the Remove began turning out his pockets.

He gave a sudden jump.

"I say, you fellows! My watch is gone!"

"Bother your watch!" snapped Harry Wharton.

"But it's gone!" yelled Bunter. "I've nearly lost it two or three times, since I sold the chain to Fishy. I say, you fellows, have you seen my watch?"

"Plaps Cartee gottee!" suggested Wun Lung innocently.

Carter glared round at the Chinese junior.

"What's that?" he roared.

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"You tinkee Buntce gottee pencil—plaps you gottee watchee blong Buntce!" grinned Wun Lung.

The Remove made a stride at the Chinese junior, his fists clenched and his eyes blazing.

Wun promptly dodged behind the captain of the Remove.

"You can chuck that, Carter!" said Harry. "You lay a finger on Wun, and you go out of this study on your neck!"

"You heard what he said!" yelled Carter.

"Yes—just what you said of Bunter! Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander! If you don't like it, lump it!"

"He, he, he!" from Bunter.

Arthur Carter breathed hard.

Wun grinned at him cheerfully, from behind the sturdy defence of the captain of the Remove.

"Get on with it, Bunter, and get it over!" said Harry.

"But my watch—"

"Bother your twopenny rolled gold watch! Get on with it, before that cad starts a yarn up and down the Remove that there's been pinching in this study!" exclaimed Wharton, impatiently.

Bunter grunted, and resumed turning out the lining of his pockets.

There was a sudden gleam of gold in the wintry sunlight from the window.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter.

His eyes almost popped through his spectacles as he dropped a gold pencil on the table.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent stared at it blankly, and Arthur Carter's lip curled in a bitter sneer.

"What about that?" he asked sarcastically.

But Wharton and Nugent did not reply. They could only stare at the gold pencil turned out of Billy Bunter's pocket in dumb amazement.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Only Wun!

BILLY BUNTER stood blinking at the gold pencil.

He blinked with bulging eyes.

If the other fellows in the study were amazed, Billy Bunter seemed more amazed still. He seemed hardly able to believe his eyes or his spectacles as he stared at the gold pencil.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Oh crikey!"

Carter looked at him with a hard, grim look. Bunter looked amazed, but he was not likely to believe that that amazement was genuine. The gold pencil could not have got into the fat Owl's pocket of its own volition.

"That does it!" said Carter. "I knew it, and I suppose you fellows admit it now! This is going before the Head! I'm not going to keep this kind of thing dark!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I never touched it!" gasped Bunter.

"It jumped into your pocket!" sneered Carter.

"Beast!"

"You—you—you utter ass!" gasped Harry Wharton, finding his voice at last. "You—you benighted idiot! What—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Did you take it for a joke, or what, you thumping chump?" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"I—I never took it!"

Carter laughed.

"You can tell Dr. Locke that!" he said. "I'm going down to report this to Quelch, and he will take it before the Head! You fellows will have to speak up as witnesses!"

Wun Lung made a swift scuttle across the study, turned the key in the door, jerked it out, and scuttled back behind Wharton.

It was done before Carter could raise a hand to stop him.

The new junior stared at Wun.

"Unlock that door, you Chinese idiot!" he snapped.

"No hully!" said Wun coolly. "You goey 'long old Quelch; say Buntce pinchee pencil! P'laps Buntce likee goey; say you pinchee watchee!"

"Give me that key, you heathen ass!"

"Don't be a duffer, Wun!" said Harry Wharton. "You can't keep the fellow here."

"Turnee out pockee, all samee Buntce!" said Wun. "Me tinkee watchee blong Buntce stop along pockee blong Cartee!"

"Rubbish!" said Harry.

"No tinkee lubbish! Me savvy plenty too much!" declared Wun. "You makee Buntce turnee out pockee blong him; makee Cartee samee!"

Carter clenched his hands almost convulsively. Only the fact that Harry Wharton was between them prevented him from hammering the Chinese junior right and left.

"Will you let me out of this study?" he hissed.

"You turnee out pockee!"

"I—I say, you fellows, you make him turn out his pockets!" gasped Billy Bunter. "I—I shouldn't wonder if he's got my watch! He's making out that I pinched his rotten pencil—"

"Look here, Wun, if you've got any reason to believe—"

"Me savvy."

"Now, look here, Carter," said Harry Wharton quietly, "Bunter's the biggest fool at Greyfriars, and he must have picked up your pencil for some idiotic idea of a joke on you—"

"He can tell the Head that!" sneered Carter.

"I never—"

"Shut up, you fat chump! But Wun says you've got Bunter's watch," said Harry, his eyes gleaming. "We've made Bunter turn out his pockets; now turn out yours before you go down to Quelch about Bunter!"

"I shall do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Carter fiercely.

"You will!" retorted Wharton. "What's good for Bunter is good enough for you! You'll turn out your pockets before you leave this study! And if you refuse, I'll hold you by the neck while Nugent turns them out!"

"What-ho!" said Frank. "Blessed if it doesn't look as if he's got the watch!"

Carter gritted his teeth.

"You're two to one!" he said. "I'll turn out my pockets, if you like. But you know perfectly well—"

"Turn them out!"

Carter, with a savagely angry face, turned out his jacket pockets.

But the expression on his face changed strangely as a large timekeeper, obviously of the kind of gold called "rolled," came into view.

It thudded on the table as he dropped it there, with blank amazement in his face. There was a squeak from Billy Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, that's my watch! He had it!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Nugent.

"That's Bunter's old turnip, Carter!" said the captain of the Remove. "And it was in your pocket! How did it get there?"

"I—I—I—" Carter gasped. "I—I don't know!"

"It jumped into your pocket!" grinned Nugent.

Carter gazed at the watch. He seemed as amazed by the sight of the watch as Bunter had seemed by the sight of the gold pencil. He looked as if he could hardly believe his eyes.

"Well, you're a precious pair, and no mistake!" said the captain of the Remove. "I don't and can't believe that Bunter meant to keep your pencil, Carter; but you're not a fool like Bunter—"

"I—I never—" stammered Carter. "You can go down to Quelch together!" said Harry. "Unlock that door, Wun, and let them get out!"

Wun Lung, grinning, unlocked the

ing little Chinese idiot—at his potty tricks again!"

"Tinkees velly funnee!" chuckled Wun. "Me puttee pencil blong Cartee long pockee blong Bunttee; watchee blong Bunttee long pockee blong Cartee! Plenty too funny!"

"What?" gasped Carter blankly. Harry Wharton almost gasped with relief. It was, after all, only one of the weird trickeries of the Chinese junior.

"Hankee blong Flanky stop along pockee blong you!" went on Wun, chortling. "Pockee-knifee blong you stop along pockee blong Flanky!"

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent,

after kick as the Chinese flew, yelling, up the Remove passage.

A dozen fellows stared out of the studies as Wun flew by, waking the echoes, Carter pursuing him with a savage face, kicking and kicking again.

"Hallo! What's this game?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Peter Todd.

Wun flew on. Carter flew after him. He landed a dozen, at least, before the Chinese reached his study, No. 13 in the Remove.

Wun Lung hurled the door open and tore in, yelling frantically.



"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, as Wun Lung burst into the study. "What the merry dickens—" "You stoppee that fellee Cartee, nicey old Bob Chelly!" yelled the Chinese junior. "Plenty too muchee kickee 'long tlousers b'long me!"

door. But Arthur Carter was no longer eager to leave the study.

"Look here," he said hoarsely, "this is some kind of a trick! I never knew that that watch was in my pocket. It must have been slipped in!"

"I never knew the pencil was in my pocket!" hooted Bunter. "I dare say you slipped it in when you pinched my watch!"

"Why, you fat rotter—"

"You skinny beast—"

Harry Wharton gave a sudden start, and his eyes turned on Wun Lung, who was almost doubled up in an excess of merriment.

A sudden suspicion shot into the mind of the captain of the Remove. He remembered the little Chinese's weird sleight-of-hand trickeries. There had been an incident something of the same kind in that very study last term. Wharton suddenly remembered it now.

"Wun!" he roared. "You young rascal!"

"Wun—" repeated Nugent.

"Allee light! Only little jokee!" gasped Wun, gurgling with laughter. "Me makee you laugh plenty too much!"

"Oh!" gasped Nugent. "That blither-

in silence, made an exchange of a handkerchief and a pocket-knife.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "That little Chinese beast playing tricks all the time!"

"But what," gasped Carter—"what—"

"Oh, you're new here!" snapped Wharton. "You haven't seen Wun at his mad tricks! He got such a booting for it last term I thought he'd chuck it. Wun put your rotten pencil in Bunter's pocket, and Bunter's mouldy watch in your pocket! Now do you understand—or do you want to go down to Quelch, and accuse your relation and yourself of stealing?"

"Oh!" gasped Carter.

He understood now, and he gave the chuckling Chinese junior a glare of concentrated rage.

Wun, evidently, regarded that extraordinary practical joke as extremely funny. Nobody else in the study took that view.

"Boot him!" said Harry Wharton.

Wun made a jump to the door.

Billy Bunter landed one as he jumped, and Wun gave a yell.

Carter rushed after him as he scuttled from the study, and landed kick

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came Bob Cherry's voice from within the study.

"What the merry dickens—"

"You stoppee that fellee Cartee, nicey old Bob 'Chelly!" yelled Wun Lung. "Plenty too muchee kickee 'long tlousers b'long me."

Bob Cherry jumped up.

Carter was pursuing the Chinese into the study, when Bob's stalwart figure stood in the way.

"Stop that!" rapped Bob.

"Do you know what he's done?" yelled Carter furiously.

"No; and don't want to! Get out!"

Bob slammed the door on Carter's nose.

Carter grabbed the door-handle, but he let it go again. Perhaps he concluded that Wun Lung had had enough. Wun had certainly come to that conclusion.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Gummy!

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH, master of the Greyfriars Remove, sat in his study and frowned.

Five minutes ago, Mr. Quelch had sent THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,563.

for a member of his Form to come to his study.

That member of the Remove had not yet arrived.

Wherefore did Mr. Quelch frown, and with each succeeding minute his frown intensified, till at length it really seemed to resemble that "frightful, fearful, frantic frown" of the Lord High Executioner.

Quelch's time was valuable. Not perhaps so valuable as he believed it to be; still, very valuable. And Bunter was wasting it!

Quelch had work to do. There was a pile of Latin papers on the table, over every one of which Quelch's conscientious eye had to rove. But he had to get through with Bunter before he settled down to work: Bunter was keeping him waiting.

Trotter, the page, had been sent for Bunter. Quelch was perfectly well aware that Bunter was not out of gates, or even out of the House. He had actually seen Bunter as he came along to his study from Common-room. Bunter had been in Masters' Passage, and Quelch would have called him had not the fat junior vanished too swiftly round the nearest corner. So he had rung for the House page and sent him to call Bunter, and Bunter, though evidently not far away, had not yet arrived.

Mr. Quelch stretched out his hand to begin on Latin papers. He breathed hard as he did so. Then there was a sound of footsteps in the passage—slow and lagging footsteps that came reluctantly towards his door. He heard a grunt outside that door, a sure sign that Bunter was there. Still there came no tap, and the door did not open.

The Remove master stared at the door,

puzzled as well as irritated. It really seemed as if Bunter regarded his Form-master's study as Daniel might have regarded the lion's den.

It was true that Quelch had caned him in class that morning, but that was no reason why the fat Owl should regard his study as a danger-zone. Unless, indeed, he had some sin on his fat conscience, and fancied that he was sent for punishment.

Mr. Quelch nodded as that suspicion came into his mind. It was quite probable, for Bunter's sins, though not of a very serious kind, were numerous—as numerous as the sands on the seashore. Indeed, Mr. Quelch recalled that he had scuttled off in a very suspicious manner when he had seen him in the passage. Possibly he had been up to some mischief there before Quelch came along from Common-room. Quelch's frowning brow approximated still more to that of the Lord High Executioner.

"Bunter!" he rapped out, like a bullet.

"Oh!" came a gasp outside the door. "Yes, sir! I—I was just—just going to knock, sir!"

The door opened at last, and Billy Bunter came in.

He gave Quelch a very uneasy blink through his spectacles. Obviously the fat junior was in a state of apprehension.

"I have sent for you, Bunter—" began Mr. Quelch.

"It wasn't me, sir!" interjected Bunter. "I know absolutely nothing about it, sir! Besides, I never had any gum!"

"Gum?" repeated Mr. Quelch blankly.

"Yes, sir—I mean, no, sir! As for taking Toddy's bottle of gum, I should

never have thought of it. Besides, he hadn't one."

Mr. Quelch fixed his gimlet-eyes on that hopeful member of his Form as if he would bore into him with them.

"Have you been playing some trick with gum, Bunter?" he rapped.

"Me, sir! Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "It was some other fellow, sir! I—I hope you don't think it was me, sir!"

"I have heard of no occurrence of the kind, Bunter—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I thought—"

The fat Owl broke off, and Mr. Quelch smiled faintly.

Evidently Bunter's tardy arrival in the study had been due to a conviction that he was sent for in connection with some matter involving gum.

Gum sometimes found its way into places where it had no business. It was not unknown in inkpots, and even in the seats of armchairs.

Billy Bunter breathed more freely as he realised that he had had a false alarm. Quelch had not sent for him about gum.

"Please do not talk nonsense, Bunter," went on Mr. Quelch. "I have sent for you because I have received a letter from a relative of yours."

"I—I think my father was awfully pleased with my report last term, sir!" ventured Bunter. "He—he—he was very satisfied, sir."

"Your father expressed no such satisfaction to me, Bunter. But it is of another relative that I am speaking—a Mr. Carter."

"Carter!" ejaculated Bunter.

"The uncle, I understand, of the new boy in my Form," said Mr. Quelch. "A distant relative of yours, Bunter."

"Oh, awfully distant, sir!" said Bunter. "We hardly know the Carters. A rather low lot, sir."

Mr. Quelch stared at him.

"I have told you not to talk nonsense, Bunter," he said. "Mr. Carter has written to me, as your Form-master, to ask some questions concerning you."

"Like his cheek, sir!" said Bunter warmly. "I've only seen the old josser once."

"The what?"

"I—I mean the old bean, sir—that is, old Mr. Carter!" stammered Bunter. "I'd only seen young Carter once before he came here. I don't like the Carters, sir."

"Your relative seems to take an interest in you, Bunter, though he has never displayed it before, so far as I am concerned. He desires me to make a report of you, and intimates that if it is a favourable one, it may be to your advantage in the future."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

His fat face brightened.

"I—I say, sir, he—he's not a bad old bean!" he exclaimed. "Young Carter is a beast, but old Carter's all right. I remember he treated me very decently the day I visited him, a long time ago. I found his specs for him—"

"Wha-a-t?"

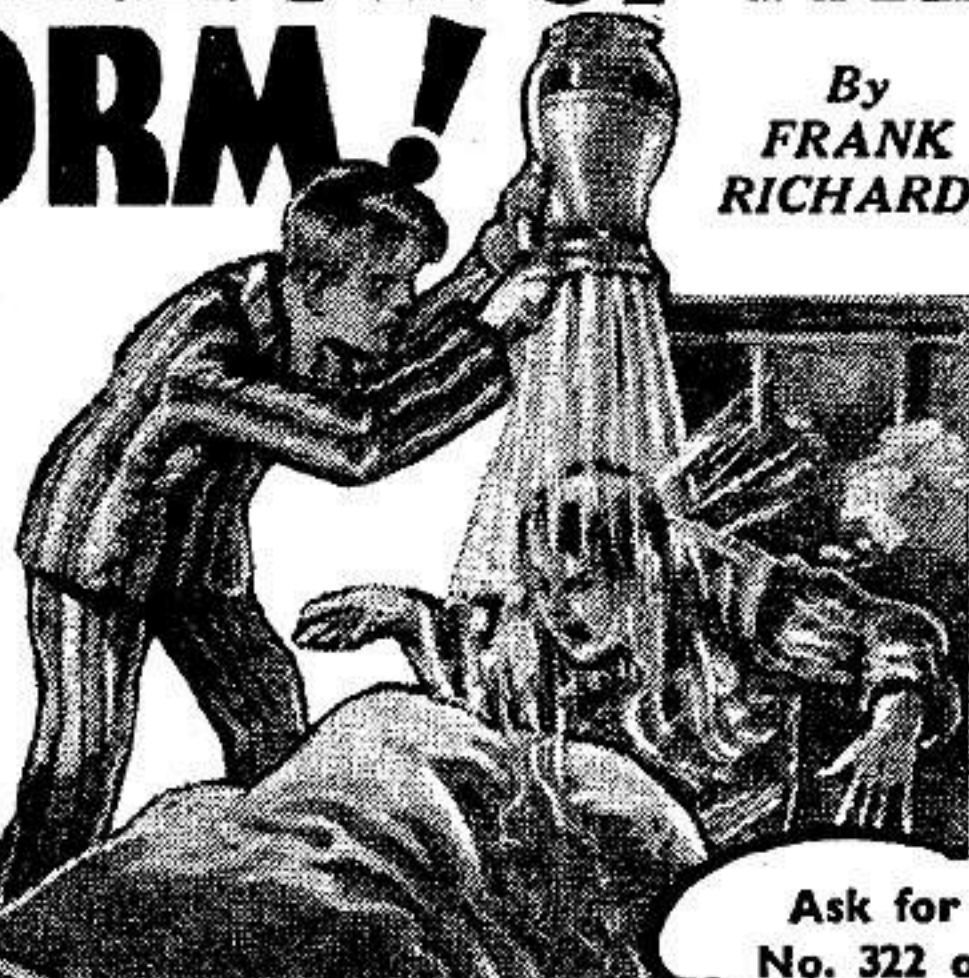
"I believe young Carter hid them," said Bunter. "That's the sort of thing he would do. Anyhow, the old josser—I mean, the old bean—was in a fearful state of stew—I mean, he was upset—and I found his specs, and afterwards young Carter chucked a cushion at me, and—"

"That will do, Bunter! Precisely what Mr. Joseph Carter means by it, I cannot undertake to say; but he states that if you prove yourself worthy it may be to your future advantage. I am telling you this, Bunter, so that you may

THE TERROR OF THE FORM!

By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**

Billy Bunter starts the New Year well—by doing a homeless wail a good turn! And from his benevolent action spring many amazing and amusing incidents—the outcome of which finds Flip, the wail, installed at Greyfriars, where he becomes the terror of his Form! Don't miss this great yarn.



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do your best to earn the good opinion of a relative who takes an interest in you, and is, I understand, very wealthy."

"Rolling in it, sir!" said Bunter eagerly. "Just caked with oof!"

"Oof! Really, Bunter—"

"Spondulics, sir. You know—"

"Spondulics!" Mr. Quelch could hardly believe his ears. "Bunter, what do you mean by—"

"Brass, sir! The old bean's got tons of it, wallowing in it, in fact!"

"Upon my word, if you use such expressions, Bunter, I shall cane you! Now, listen to me. I cannot refuse to send this report to Mr. Joseph Carter, and you understand, I presume, that I can state only the exact facts in it. For your own sake, therefore, I advise you to make some effort at amendment this term."

"Me, sir!" exclaimed Bunter, in surprise.

The fat Owl did not appear to realise that he was in any need of amendment.

Bunter did not, perhaps, regard himself as a perfect character. But he was, he had no doubt, as near perfection as frail human nature could get. At all events, he could see no room for improvement, even with the aid of his big spectacles.

"You are aware, Bunter, of what I had to put in your last term's report," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Laziness, untruthfulness, carelessness—"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Slovenliness, both in classes and in person," said Mr. Quelch. "But most serious of all—untruthfulness."

"Not me, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Are—aren't you thinking of some other fellow, sir?"

"I shall now," said Mr. Quelch, "reply to Mr. Carter's letter. I advise you, Bunter, to do better this term than last, in order that the report, when I send it, may be as favourable as possible."

Mr. Quelch picked up his pen and drew notepaper towards him.

Billy Bunter's eyes and spectacles fixed upon him as he did so.

The pen dipped into the inkpot and came out again, with a straggle of something sticky adhering to the nib.

Billy Bunter backed rapidly to the door. Quelch had not told him to go, but in the circumstances Bunter thought it judicious not to wait to be told.

Mr. Quelch gazed blankly at the sticky substance streaming from his pen.

"Gum!" he ejaculated.

Bunter's fat hand was on the door-handle.

Mr. Quelch bounded to his feet.

"Bunter!"

"Oh crikey! It—it wasn't me, sir!" wailed Bunter. "I—I—I never knew there was any gum in your inkpot, sir! I never put it there because you whopped me this morning, sir! I—I haven't been near the study—"

Mr. Quelch laid down the gummy pen and picked up a cane; the expression on his face was terrifying.

"Bunter, you young rascal, bend over that chair!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yarooo-ooooh-ohh-ooooop!" roared Bunter.

"Now go!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Ooooooooh!"

Bunter scuttled.

The Remove master, breathing hard, sat down to write to Mr. Joseph Carter—with fresh ink. And it was probable, at least, that the incident of the gum in the inkpot would not add favourably to his description of old Mr. Carter's young relative at Greyfriars School.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Wrong Man!

"THAT ass Smithy!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Asking for it, as usual!" remarked Nugent.

"The askfulness, as usual, is terrific and preposterous," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Silly ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Come on!"

"Hold on a minute!" said Bob Cherry, with a glimmer in his eyes.

The Famous Five had been in the gym after lock-ups. Coming out of the gym, they were supposed to go directly back to the House; but Greyfriars juniors, like other mortals, did not always do exactly as they were supposed to do. It was a fine, clear, frosty evening, and the chums of the Remove saw no reason why they should not trot round the quad before going in.

So they trotted round.

That was how they came to spot the fellow who was climbing out over the school wall. Between the tall old elms and the school wall was deep dusk, but in the glimmer of winter stars they saw the clambering figure and had no doubt that it was Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. Breaking bounds after lock-ups was one of Smithy's little ways, well known to all the Remove—though, fortunately for Smithy, not so well known to the school authorities.

"Oh, come on!" said Harry. "No bizney of ours, Bob! Smithy's own pal Redwing can't keep him straight, so it's not much good our trying."

"Redwing doesn't go the right way to work," said Bob cheerily. "He just argues with Smithy. I know a better way."

"Well, what's that?"

"There's a big puddle under that wall. If Smithy rolled in it, I don't suppose he would want to go out after that, even if Bill Lodgey is waiting for him at the Three Fishers."

"Think Smithy's the chap to fall down in a puddle, fathead?"

"Yes—if we pushed him in."

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. "But—"

Bob Cherry evidently had no use for "buts." He cut off towards the wall, rapidly approaching the climber.

The breaker of bounds had his arms over the top by this time and was about to pull himself over to drop on the outer side.

Just in time Bob Cherry got a grasp on his ankles.

There was a startled, terrified gasp from the fellow on the wall.

Probably he thought for the moment that some watchful prefect had spotted him—in which case he would have been marched in to see his headmaster.

The Co. followed Bob, chuckling. They were all more or less friendly with Smithy, in spite of that blackguardly kink in his character—having, like most schoolboys, a wide tolerance, and no desire to set up in judgment on other fellows. Still, it was a friendly act to keep the bad hat of the Remove from breaking bounds and taking the risk of a Head's flogging or the "sack."

The fellow clinging to the top of the wall struggled frantically to draw his feet up. He did not speak and he did not look down, in fear of being recognised if it was a prefect that had collared him.

His struggle to get loose and get away was desperate, but it was of no avail; Bob Cherry had possession of both his ankles—and he kept possession of them.

A moment more and the rest of the

Co. were grasping the wriggling legs; then the breaker of bounds had to let go his hold as they all pulled together, and he came down bumping.

He sprawled, panting, among the five, and the next moment Bob had tipped him over into the puddle. It was quite a large puddle, left by recent rain, and there was a loud splash as the junior's face plunged into it.

"Ooooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Roll him over!" said Bob cheerily. "He won't want to go out smothered with mud! Do him a good turn!"

And the Famous Five did that good turn—rolling the spluttering, gasping junior over in the puddle till he had gathered up most of the mud in it.

Horrible gurgles and gasps came from the wretched victim as he rolled and splashed and collected mud. When the Famous Five released him he sat up in the middle of the puddle, still gurgling breathlessly and glaring at them from a face thick with mud.

"You—urrgh—you—you—urrgh!" he gasped.

"Done you a good turn, old bean!" chuckled Bob. "You can't call on your bookmaking friend in that state—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lucky it wasn't Wingate, or Gwynne, or Loder spotted you, old thing!" chortled Nugent. "You'd have got something worse than mud."

"Gurrgh! You—you meddling fools! You mad cads! Gurrgh!" spluttered the wretched object in the puddle.

Harry Wharton started.

"That doesn't sound like Smithy!" he exclaimed. "That's not the Bounder!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

All the Famous Five had taken it for granted that the breaker of bounds was the reckless Bounder, but really they had taken rather a lot for granted. "Bad hats" were few and far between, no doubt, at Greyfriars, but undoubtedly Smithy was not the only one. Skinner and Snoop of the Remove sometimes followed the Bounder's bad example; and there were fellows in other Forms, such as Angel and Kenney of the Fourth.

"Is it Skinner?" asked Nugent, peering at the muddy face. "Serve him right if it is!"

"You fools! You rotters! You meddling cads!" The muddy junior staggered to his feet, his eyes gleaming with rage from the coating of mud. "You—you—you— Oh, you rotters!"

"Carter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Oh crumbs! Carter!" repeated Nugent.

The muddy fellow's voice was husky with rage, but all the five recognised it now; the breaker of bounds was Arthur Carter, the new fellow in the Remove.

The grin faded from Bob Cherry's face.

"That worm!" he said. "I wouldn't have touched you if I'd known it was you, Carter! You're not nice to touch! The sooner you get yourself sacked the better for the Form!"

"You meddling fools!" hissed Carter. "What's it got to do with you? Can't you mind your own business?"

"Sorry we didn't!" said Bob. "We thought it was Smithy—"

"You fool, are you blind? You never thought it was Smithy; you did this on purpose, you fool—you cheeky rotter!" Carter seemed almost beside himself with rage.

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No doubt he had cause to be exasperated. He was smothered with mud from head to foot, and certainly in no state to keep an appointment outside the school. On that subject, however, the Famous Five had no sympathy to waste on him.

"Oh, chuck it, Carter!" said the captain of the Remove contemptuously. "You deserve what you've got, anyhow! You've kept this sort of thing pretty dark since you've been here—"

"Is it your bizney?" snarled Carter.

"No; but you ought to be jolly well booted, all the same! Come on, you fellows, we've got to get in."

The Famous Five walked away to the House, leaving Carter still gasping and dripping mud.

"Blessed if I knew Carter was that kind of goat!" said Johnny Bull.

"I did!" growled Bob Cherry. "I told you he was a rotter the first day he came. Still, I wouldn't have yanked him down if I'd known it was Carter. I never thought of him—though I might have. The fellow ought never to have come to Greyfriars."

"Well, I suppose he's no worse than Smithy," said Nugent.

"Yes, he is—tons!" grunted Bob. "Smithy's a bad hat, but he's got some jolly good qualities; but that toad—Pah!"

Bob Cherry went into the House frowning, his chums following him smiling.

Arthur Carter certainly, was not feeling grateful, as he panted for breath and scraped off mud. He was still breathless, and still muddy, when he crept in at a back window and sneaked away to the Remove.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Peter Is Pally!

"TODDY, old chap—"

"Stony!" said Toddy old chap, regretfully.

"Don't be a beast, Toddy! Can't a fellow open his mouth, without you thinking that he wants to borrow something off you?" demanded Billy Bunter, warmly.

"Not a fellow named Bunter!" answered Peter Todd.

"Beast!"

The Remove had come up to prep; and in Study No. 7, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were sorting out their books.

Billy Bunter was reposing more or less gracefully in the armchair, apparently occupied by matters more important than prep! There was a deep wrinkle of thought in Bunter's fat brow.

"I say, Toddy, I want you to do something for me!" said Bunter. "I say, you've heard me speak of old Carter—that cad Carter's uncle?"

"Often!" assented Peter. "Too often, in fact!"

"Oh, really, Toddy! He's our rich relation, you know—I mean, one of our rich relations. I've always thought that the stuff was all going to that cad Carter—I know the old bean sent him to St. Olaf's and he had a big allowance there—sticky with oof. I told you he was a rich relation of mine when he came here, Toddy—"

"You did! Fifty times at least! Don't tell me again for the fifty-first!"

"But look here, he doesn't seem to spend a lot of money here," said Bunter.

"He doesn't seem to be rolling in oof here, Peter, like he did at his last

school. That's rather surprising, ain't it?"

"Not at all!" answered Peter. "You see, old fat man, nobody believes in your rich relations excepting yourself—if you do!"

"Beast! I mean to say, old Joe Carter's fearfully rich! Looks to me as if he may be turning his nephew down!" said Bunter. "After all, he may have found out what a rotter he is! I found it out soon enough, after he came here. He is a fearful rotter, isn't he, Peter?"

"Well, there's one thing in his favour."

"What's that?" demanded Bunter, warmly.

"He can't stand you!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter. "Look here, Peter, I was going to take the brute up when he came here, and be kind and friendly, and all that—but you know how he's treated me—"

"I thought the trouble was that he wouldn't treat you!"

"I don't mean that sort of treating, you fathead! You're dense, Peter! Now, look here, old Carter's written to old Quelch, asking him about me. He says something about a good report being to my advantage. That might mean that he's fed up with that cad Carter, and means to shell out in my direction. He might leave me the oof. Even a tenner on a chap's birthday ain't to be sneezed at!" said Bunter.

"What about prep?"

"Never mind prep now! Look here, Peter, I want to get a good report this term! Quelch is prejudiced against me, in a lot of ways: still, he's a fair man: he will tell the truth. The difficulty is, that he can't see that I'm the most decent chap in the Remove—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Peter. "Now, I wonder why Quelch can't see that!"

"Prejudice!" said Bunter, shaking his head. "Schoolmasters have these prejudices, you know! Often they don't have much judgment! Why, Quelch thinks more of you, Toddy, than he does of me! That shows what a fool he is."

"D-d-does it?" stuttered Peter.

"Well, be reasonable, old chap!" said Bunter. "Are you in the same street with me, in anything! Uprightness, straightforwardness, manliness—that sort of thing, I mean."

"Ye gods!" murmured Peter.

"But the truth is, that Quelch has a lot of prejudice," said Bunter. "You'd hardly believe that he put untruthfulness in my last report, Peter! Me, you know—untruthful! Makes you stare a bit, what?"

Peter was undoubtedly staring at Bunter! He was staring at him quite blankly. He continued to stare.

"Well, I've got to set that right, somehow, and get a good report from Quelch this term," said Bunter. "Now, if I've got any faults, Peter—"

"If!"

"Yes, and if you notice them—"

"I—I—I might!" gurgled Peter. "It's just barely within the bounds of possibility that I might notice a few."

"Well, if you do, point them out to me!" said Bunter. "I don't mind your being quite frank. Quelch says I'm lazy and untruthful—goodness knows why! But you know, when a schoolmaster gets an idea into his head, it takes a lot of shifting. I want to shift that idea right out of Quelch's head, though. You see, it's important, if old Carter's thinking of coming down handsome. The fact is, Peter, that fellows sometimes have little faults, without noticing them themselves—and that's where a

real pal comes in, to point them out. See!"

"I see!" gurgled Peter. "I'll borrow a microscope from the lab, and see if I can spot any faults in you, Bunter."

"Point out any you notice, quite frankly," said Bunter. "I mean to say, we've all got our faults: I don't make out that I'm faultless, though I suppose I'm a cut above any other fellow in the Remove. I want to get right with Quelch, before he sends off that report. A fellow might slack a bit, sort of unconsciously—he might draw the long bow a trifle—see? Well, if you ever spot me doing either, Peter, just let me know, quite plain, and I'll set it right."

Peter Todd gazed at the fat Owl.

If Billy Bunter's pal was to point out to him when he was lazy, and when he was untruthful, it seemed to Peter that that pal was going to be a little man with a busy day! Still Peter was ready to oblige.

"Well, what about prep?" he asked.

"Oh, blow prep!" said Bunter, peevishly. "I'll have a shot at it presently. If Quelch begins on me in the morning, I can tell him I lost a book or something."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

Bunter blinked at him.

"What are you cackling at now?" he demanded.

"Looks to me as if I shall have to work overtime!" remarked Peter. "Still, here goes! Get out of that armchair!"

"Eh? What for?"

"Prep!"

"Blow prep! I'm tired! I say, leave that chair alone! Why, you beast, wharrer you at?" roared Bunter. "I say—yaroooooop!"

Peter grasped the armchair by the back and tilted it.

The fat Owl rolled on the carpet with a bump and a roar.

He sat there, gasping, set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose, and blinked at Toddy with a petrifying blink.

"What do you think you're up to, you idiot?" he bawled.

"Pointing out to you that you're lazy!" explained Peter. "Quite unconscious on your part, I've no doubt, old fat bean: but it's generally considered lazy to squat in an armchair and cut work! See?"

"You silly ass!" howled Bunter, staggering up. "Look here, I'm not going to do any prep, see?"

"If you don't, I shall keep on pointing out to you that you're lazy—in the same way!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter drew a chair to the table, and sat down.

Peter, grinning, sat down also to his books.

Bunter gave one blink at Virgil—and another blink at the Latin dictionary—and pushed back his chair.

"I can't do any prep, Toddy! I've got a fearful headache!"

Peter picked up a ruler from the table. There was a sound like a pistol-shot in Study No. 7, as it cracked on Bunter's fat knuckles.

Bunter's frantic yell ran the length of the Remove passage. He sucked his knuckles and squealed wildly.

"You mad ass, wharrer you up to?" he shrieked.

"Pointing out to you that you're untruthful!"

"You—you—you beast, can't you take my word that I've got a toothache!" roared Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! As well as the headache?"

"I—I mean a headache! I've got a



"You fools—you rotters—you meddling cads!" The muddy junior staggered to his feet, his eyes gleaming with rage.
 "You—you—oh, you rotters!" "Carter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, recognising the muddy junior's voice.
 "Oh crumbs! Carter!" repeated Nugent.

dreadful headache in a double-tooth—I mean a frightful toothache in the back of my head—that is, I mean to say— Yarooooop!"

Crack!
 "You beast, keep that ruler away!" raved Bunter. "Look here, you beast, I'm sorry I asked you now—I don't want you to do it—mind your own business, see? Just mind your own business, and leave a fellow alone, you beast!"

Peter shook his head.
 "Now I've started, I'm going to carry on the good work!" he declared. "I'm going to help you clear Quelch's mind of those prejudices. You slack any more, or tell any more lies, before we go down, and you get the ruler."

"Look here—" roared Bunter.
 "You asked me to be pally, didn't you?" demanded Peter. "Well, I'm playing up! Get on with your prep!"

"I've got a—a—I mean, all right, you beast! Keep that ruler away! I'm getting on with it, ain't I?" yelled Bunter.

And he got on with it. He paused, every now and then, to give Peter Todd an infuriated blink. But he did not pause long—the ruler was ready, at Peter's elbow, and Peter was evidently going to be pally!

Not for the first time, Billy Bunter was dissatisfied at getting what he had asked for!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Putting It Plain!

"WHAT'S up?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Blessed if I know."

"Is the upfulness terrific?" inquired Hurrec Janiset Ram Singh.

"What the dickens—" grunted Johnny Bull.

Four members of the famous Co. came into Study No. 1 after class.

Arthur Carter was there, working at a Latin exercise. He was working in a slow, desultory, unwilling way at a book of Suetonius.

Since he had been at Greyfriars, the new junior had had spasms, as it were, of swotting. It was clear that he wanted to get on in class, and earn the good opinion of his Form-master; and at the same time, it was clear that he did not like work, and had no taste for learning anything. He seemed like a fellow who had made up his mind to do, somehow, what he most emphatically did not want to do.

He glanced up, irritably, as the four juniors came in. However, he could hardly complain of the fellows who shared the study coming in and bringing their friends with them. He dropped his eyes to his work again, and ploughed on.

"Bob's got something to say!" said Harry Wharton. "He asked me to round up you fellows here. That's all I know."

Carter looked up again.
 "Cherry coming here?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Harry.

"Not much use a fellow trying to work, then," grunted Carter. "I'll chuck it, and get out!"

Bob Cherry appeared in the study doorway at that moment. He heard Carter's words, but he stepped in, and closed the study door behind him.

"Hold on, Carter," he said quietly. "I've got something to say to these fellows that I want you to hear."

Carter stared at him.

"I'm not interested in your chin-wag!" he answered.

"I think you will be, when I get going. Anyhow, I want you to hear."

"You can wait!" said Carter, with a scowl. "You've cut this study, ever since I've been here! Now you can

keep your jaw for your friends—I don't want to hear it."

"Well, you're going to hear it!" said Bob. He put his back to the door. "I shan't keep you long, Carter."

"You won't keep me at all!"

"You're staying here till I'm through!" said Bob. "I'm standing by the door till I've finished. If you want a scrap on your hands, you're your own master—but you're not going out of this study till I've said what I've come here to say."

Carter looked at him in mingled anger and astonishment. He did not, certainly, want a scrap with the heaviest fighting-man in the Remove. His eyes gleamed, as he looked round at the Co.

"What does this foolery mean?" he asked.

"Haven't the foggiest," answered Harry Wharton. "Bob asked us to come here, and I suppose from what he says he wants you, too! Keep your temper—it won't hurt you to hang on for a few minutes."

"Do you fancy I'm going to be bullied like this?"

"Well, look here, Bob, this is rather thick, you know," said Johnny Bull. "I don't see making Carter stay here if he doesn't want to."

"Lots of things you don't see!" answered Bob. "Carter's got to hear me—but if he calls this bullying, he can go down, if he likes—and I'll say what I've got to say before a whole crowd. I fancy he will be rather sorry to have his private affairs known all over the Remove, that's all."

Carter gave a start.

"What the thump do you know about my private affairs?" he exclaimed.

"More than I want to know!" retorted Bob. He stepped away from the door. "Go out, if you like—and if you want all Greyfriars to hear about your

rotten treacherous scheming against your relation Bunter."

Carter caught his breath, and the colour wavered in his cheeks.

Three members of the Co. stared blankly at Bob, and Harry Wharton compressed his lips a little.

"Look here, Bob—" he began.

"I'm going to have this out!" said Bob. "It's been on my mind ever since that day at Lantham. I've heard what happened in this study the other day when Wun Lung was here, and that settles it. Carter's got to stop it, and it's only fair to warn him."

"I can't imagine what you're talking about!" muttered Carter. "Everybody knows that I bar that fat cad Bunter. Any fellow would bar him for trying to stick on as a relation! But—"

"If that was all, it would be no bizney of mine!" said Bob. "But that's not all. Bar him as much as you like—but you're not going to play treacherous tricks if I can stop you."

"You're simply talking in riddles!" said Carter, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Looks to me as if you're wandering in your mind."

"Can't say I make you out, Bob!" said Frank Nugent.

"Well, I'll clear it up!" said Bob Cherry. "I've told Wharton—and nobody else, so far. I'm going to tell you fellows—before Carter! You know how Ponsonby and his gang ragged me at Lantham Station a couple of weeks ago—tying me up, with a hanky stuffed in my mouth, behind the door in the waiting-room—"

"What on earth's that got to do with Carter?"

"It was the day Carter came. He came with that man Gooch, and they changed trains at Lantham, and waited in the waiting-room."

Carter gave another start.

"They never knew I was stuck there behind the door, and I couldn't make them hear me," said Bob. "I never got loose till some Cliff House girls came in, a long time afterwards, as I've told you. Well, Carter and that man Gooch jawed in the waiting-room, and I couldn't help hearing what they said."

"Oh!" gasped Carter.

He knew now, in a flash, why it was that Bob Cherry had barred him from the day he came to Greyfriars. It had puzzled him, but it puzzled him no longer.

"Hold on, Bob!" said Johnny Bull quietly. "You couldn't help hearing what was said, the way you were fixed, but that doesn't give you a right to repeat a private conversation."

"That's why I've said nothing," answered Bob. "I never told Wharton till a few days ago, to ask his advice. But I tell you, it's got to come out now—Carter's got to stop."

"I don't see—"

"You will when I tell you. The long and the short of it is, that Carter acted like a blackguard at his last school, and his uncle turned him down in consequence of—"

"It's false!" hissed Carter, white to the lips now.

Bob did not heed him.

"Old Mr. Carter's cut him off, and he and that man Gooch have found out somehow that he's leaving his money to another relation," he went on. "They never mentioned names, but they said that the relation was at this school. That can only be Bunter."

"No business of ours, or yours!" said Johnny.

"I've not finished yet. Carter's playing a double game here, from what he and Gooch said to one another—he's

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going to play good, to get back into old Carter's good graces—"

"Why shouldn't he?"

"No reason why he shouldn't! But that's not all. The other half of his game is to blacken his relation here, to make the old man think that he's no better than the rotter he cut off. They said all that quite plain. Carter's own words were, that he would fix the cad who had cut him out."

Carter sneered. He had had the shock of his life, but he had pulled himself together very quickly.

"Did you go to sleep in that waiting-room?" he asked.

"No!" answered Bob quietly.

"Then how did you come to dream all this?"

Bob Cherry did not answer that question.

"You fellows have seen how he's been on Bunter's trail, ever since he's been here," he went on. "He's as artful as a bagful of monkeys, and he always manages to be in the right, but he's landed Bunter in trouble time and again. You fellows have fancied that he dislikes him because he's a relation he'd rather keep at a distance, and the fat ass was trying to hook on to him because he believed him to be well off, as he used to be. Well, that wasn't Carter's reason—his reason was to dish Bunter with old Mr. Carter."

"It's a lie!" said Carter.

"Oh, shut up, Carter!" said Johnny Bull. "If Bob says so, it's the truth, and we all know it."

"It's been bothering me ever since it happened," said Bob. "I didn't want to talk about the cad or repeat anything I'd heard in such a way, and I thought at first I'd just keep an eye on him, and see that he never got away with any tricks on that fat chump. But what happened here the other day tears it. Wun Lung played a silly trick, and Carter jumped at the chance. He would have made Bunter out to be a thief if he could have."

"What was I to think when my gold pencil was found in his pocket?" sneered Carter.

"Anything but what you were glad to think!" snapped Bob. "Bunter raids a fellow's tarts or cakes, and he's been jolly well booted for it, but he would no more steal than I would. You don't know that because you don't want to know it. You fancied he would pinch your rotten gold pencil. I shouldn't wonder if you left it lying about on purpose!"

"Bob!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Anyhow, you fellows saw how he jumped at the chance. He watches that fat idiot like a cat to catch him napping."

"No fellow can be caught at anything if he keeps straight!" sneered Carter. "He's not going to pinch my things—I know that!"

"Well, you needn't talk too much about keeping straight when you're the fellow we caught sneaking out of bounds last night!" answered Bob Cherry scornfully. "If Bunter snaffles a tart or a bun, he doesn't go pub-haunting after lock-up!"

"I was going out for a ramble."

"Oh, yes! And the day we saw you with Pon at the gate of the Three Fishers, you weren't going in!" said Bob contemptuously. "You can cut that out! No bizney of mine if you're a blackguard here, the same as you were at St. Olaf's! That's up to the prefects, not to me. But you're going to leave Bunter alone. I'm putting it out plain now to warn you. Now you know that your game's known to five fellows in the Form, you may have sense to chuck it.

If you don't, you can bank on it that you'll be jolly well stopped!"

"Is that the lot?" sneered Carter.

"Yes, that's the lot: and if you chuck it, nothing will be said outside this study. But you've got to chuck it."

Carter shrugged his shoulders.

"If you're finished, I'll say my piece," he said coolly. "I don't care a boiled bean for your opinion; but I'd like to set myself right with the other fellows, as two of them are my study-mates here. It's true—as you learned from behind a door—that I had some trouble at my last school—not my fault, by any means. It's true that my uncle's got his back up, and that he's given me another chance to make good at this school. I'm doing my best, and any decent fellow ought to wish me luck."

"That's all right," said Harry Wharton. "But the rest—"

"There isn't any rest. Bunter doesn't come into the picture at all. Your precious pal says himself that no name was mentioned when he was listening behind a door. Gooch and I were speaking of a relation—a much nearer one. I remember saying I'd fix the cad who had cut me out; what I meant was that I'd punch his nose if I met him in the hols. All the rest is bunk. I fancy Cherry must have been to the films that day, and it got into his head a little."

The Co. looked at him, and looked at Bob Cherry.

Carter's explanation was plausible enough, and they could not help feeling dubious.

"Leave it at that, if you like," said Bob quietly. "The proof of the pudding's in the eating. If you leave Bunter alone, all right! If you don't, every fellow here will know what to think."

"I've nothing to do with the fat rotter! I bar him, and he bars me since he's found out there's nothing to be borrowed. I'd be jolly glad if he left; so would you be if he claimed you as a relation. But that's all. Do you think I'm going to crack the Head's safe and hide the loot in his pockets?" asked Carter sarcastically. "If he chooses to be a lying, pilfering rotter, and gets landed for it, that's his look-out, not mine!"

"Quite," said Bob—"so long as you don't have a hand in landing him. That's what I'm going to stop, and that's why I've warned you."

With that, Bob Cherry opened the door and walked out of the study. His friends followed him.

Carter was left alone, to get on with his Latin exercise if he liked. But he did not look at it. He moved restlessly about the study, with a knitted brow and his hands driven deep into his pockets.

"Making good" at Greyfriars was a difficult task for the "bad hat" who had been turfed out of his last school; "dishing" Bunter had seemed a much easier one. But he realised that both parts of his peculiar double game were going to be full of difficulties now!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

No Offers!

"I SAY, you fellows, don't come barging in now!"

"What?"

"I mean, Linley's going to do some Latin for me. Ain't you, Linley?"

"No!" answered Mark Linley.

The Famous Fivo had arrived at the door of Study No. 13—Bob Cherry's study.

Mark Linley was standing by the table, engaged in argument with Billy Bunter. Little Wun Lung was curled up in the armchair, grinning.

Bunter waved a fat hand at the five. He did not want a lot of fellows to come bothering just then, and, apparently, he had an idea that they could be waved away like chickens.

But they couldn't. They tramped cheerily into the study, regardless of Bunter.

"Now, look here, Linley, old chap," urged the fat Owl, "this is up to you, and you know it! You like that rotten Latin; you're a beastly swot. I've seen you reading Virgil just for pleasure. You needn't deny it—I have!"

The Lancashire junior laughed.

"Guilty!" he admitted.

"Well, then, this is simply pie to you!" said Bunter warmly. "It's fearfully hard to me. Mind, I could do it on my head if I could bring my mind down to the stuff."

"Better bring it down, then!" suggested Mark.

"Well, look at the waste of time!" argued Bunter. "It doesn't matter about you, as you're keen on the tripe. If that beast Quelch had set us Virgil I could manage all right! I've got a crib to Virgil. But it's Suetonius—"

"What's the trouble?" asked Harry Wharton.

Bunter blinked round indignantly.

"Would you fellows believe it?" he said. "That beast Linley won't do my translation for me!"

"Awful!" said Bob solemnly. "You'd learn such a fearful lot of Latin if other fellows did your translations for you!"

"Well, who wants to learn a lot of Latin?" asked Bunter. "I know I jolly well don't! Lot of good Latin will be to me later on, when I'm an air marshal!"

"Oh crikey!"

"It's no good arguing with Quelch, of course," said Bunter. "He's paid to ram it in, and I suppose he thinks he ought to earn his salary. I've thought once or twice that he even fancies there's

(Continued on next page.)

LEARN TO PLAY FOOTBALL!



THE LAST LINE OF DEFENCE

WHEN I was giving my "lecture" last week on the dangers of heading in football, there was one player on our side who probably felt he was rather out of it—the goalkeeper. Goalkeepers don't head the ball, because the laws of the game allow them to use their hands. The hands are, of course, much more useful than the head, when it is a question of reaching a high ball. Therefore, we never see a goalkeeper, in football, using his head.

To make up to our goalkeeper for having to listen to me telling you all about heading last week, I am going to tell you now about the goalkeeper's job.

That doesn't mean that all the rest of you can take a nap while this lesson is going on. Forwards particularly should listen carefully to what I am telling the goalkeeper. After all, the question of the number of goals the attackers score depends, to a large extent, upon what the goalkeeper does.

You all realise, of course, that the goalkeeper is really the last line of defence of a football side. When the half-backs and full-backs have been beaten, he alone stands between the opposing side and the goal. If a full-back, for the sake of example, misses his kick, or makes some other mistake, a colleague may come to the rescue. But if the goalkeeper makes a mistake, there is no time for anyone to help him out of his trouble. Mistakes by goalkeepers usually mean goals.

Thus the goalie's job is a very nerve-racking one. Unless you have "cast-iron" nerves, as they say, you will find it hard to stand up to the strain of an important match, in which your play may make all the difference between defeat and victory for your colleagues.

A TRYING ORDEAL

I CAN show you just how great that strain is, by the well-known story of Frank Swift, Manchester City's goalkeeper. Until Christmas-time in 1933, Frank had never played in a first-class football match. On Christmas Day, he had a fine present when he was told that he was to be given a chance

This week's interesting article by our Soccer master tells of the secrets of successful goal-keeping and the things the "man between the sticks" should do.

in Manchester City's first team. He did well, and kept his place. About four months later he had the tremendous good luck for which the footballer sighs—that of playing in a Cup Final at Wembley. He was the City's goalkeeper in their Final tie against Portsmouth. Frank came through that game with flying colours, and the City won. But so great was the mental strain which Swift had gone through, that when the whistle blew for the end of the match, he fell down in a faint—overcome by the ordeal of those ninety anxious minutes. That will show you that the goalkeeper's job really is nerve-racking.

A cast-iron nerve is not the only thing a goalkeeper needs, of course. He must be always alert, quick in his movements, and sometimes he needs a great deal of pluck to throw himself at the ball when making a desperate save. Height will help him, of course, in saving high shots. But there are some people who say that the taller a goalkeeper is, the longer he takes to get down to the ground to save the low shots. That may be true. Anyway, there have been small goalkeepers in the past. Harry Hibbs, for years the best goalkeeper in England, is by no means a big 'un. It's the speed of movement which counts more than size.

But even when you have all these things—general alertness, speed, pluck, and, of course, a good eye—you aren't by any means a tip-top goalkeeper. There is one thing which makes the difference between an ordinary and a really good 'keeper. It is the art of anticipation—the ability to know where the ball will go before it actually arrives. That is the secret.

SOUND ADVICE

I HAVE mentioned Harry Hibbs, the Birmingham and England goalkeeper. If you get the chance to watch him play—or, for that matter, any of the really first-class 'keepers in the game to-day—notice how many times you get the impression that the forwards are shooting the ball straight at him. Instead of sending the ball wide of him, on one side or the other, they always seem to shoot just where he is standing. Why is that? Simply because Hibbs has an uncanny knack of anticipating where a forward will shoot. He makes up his mind that the ball will come to a certain place, and when it does, he is there to catch it, and you think the forward has shot straight at him.

If you see a goalkeeper making all sorts of flying saves, diving here and there, just tipping the ball wide of the goal, don't immediately make up your mind that he's a good goalkeeper. If he has to dive across to the ball at the last minute, that means that he hasn't been able to anticipate where it would come. The best goalkeepers are the ones who make the job look easy.

Harry Hibbs once told me how he sets about developing his powers of anticipation. When the Birmingham players are playing a private practice match during the week, Hibbs can often be seen playing the part of a forward. He says that by doing this he gets to know what the goalkeeper looks like to a forward who is trying to score goals. He also learns some of the tricks which forwards get up to in their efforts to beat him.

Hibbs gave me another tip to pass on to you young goalkeepers. When you are practising, don't always use a football. Get one or two of your mates to throw tennis-balls at you. It won't be such hard work for them, and you will get your eyes and feet in training, and your hands accustomed to the ball, just as well as with a football. There are two tips for you to try, straight from the mouth of a goalkeeper who makes a good model for all young hopefuls.

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some sense in it; schoolmasters are queer fish, you know. We had Suetonius the other day, and, of course, I skewed it, and he's set me a translation. And how can I touch it without a crib? I say, you fellows, have you got a crib to Suetonius?"

"Alas!" grinned Frank Nugent. "We crib not, neither do we slack!"

"You're getting jolly keen all of a sudden, Bunter," said Johnny Bull, staring at him. "Can't you hand over your usual rot? I suppose you're not worrying about turning Quelch's hair grey?"

"Oh, blow Quelch!" said Bunter. "You see, it's fearfully particular now. I've got to get a good report this term, if I can. Old Carter——"

"Who?" exclaimed the Famous Five together.

"Young Carter's uncle, you know," explained Bunter. "Distant relation of mine; oodles of oof, as I've told you. Well, yesterday Quelch called me into his study to tell me that old Carter wanted to hear about me. He's going to get a copy of my report this term, as far as I can make out. That looks as if he's got an eye on me, and it may be worth something. What I mean is, I'm not thinking of his money, but of pleasing a kind old gentleman——"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Very nice old chap!" said Bunter. "Quite different from his nephew. I've always liked him—not because he's rich, you know. I never give a thought to such things, as you fellows know. Still, if a rich relation's got an eye on me and wants to hear whether I'm doing well at school, of course a chap wants to play up. Sense of duty, and all that, you know."

The Famous Five looked very curiously at Bunter.

These remarks from Billy Bunter rather corroborated what Bob Cherry had been saying ten minutes ago in Study No. 1.

It was evident that Carter's uncle had an eye on Bunter if he had written to his Form-master at Greyfriars about him—which certainly looked as if Bunter was Carter's rival for the riches.

"Well, you'd better play up, old fat top!" said Bob Cherry. "Very decent of Quelch to give you the tip! Play up, old barrel!"

"That's what I want to do," explained Bunter. "Quelch has given me this translation. Well, I want to take it in to him in first-class style. No mistakes, you know—mixing up rotten ablatives with mouldy datives, and all that. I want it to be a real good thing."

"Good man!" said Harry Wharton. "Now cut off to your study and slog at it."

"Don't talk rot, you know," said Bunter peevishly. "I want to make a really good impression on Quelch! That's why I want Linley to do the translation for me."

"Oh, my summer hat!"

"Linley can do it on the back of his neck," explained Bunter. "You fellows have seen Quelch grin with satisfaction over Linley's translations! They've often put him almost into a good temper! Linley being a beastly swot, is just the fellow to do it for me!"

"You put it so nicely, Bunter!" said Mark, laughing.

"I say, you fellows, you talk to him!" urged Bunter. "Make the silly ass understand that he can't let me down when there's such a lot at stake. If I take my usual stuff to Quelch, he will snort, as usual—you know him! I want to please him this time! I'm rather surprised at Linley not wanting to back

up a chap in pleasing his Form-master."

"You fat ass——"

"All I want Linley to do is to translate the stuff!" said Bunter. "I can copy it out afterwards. I don't mind doing that—I'm not lazy, I hope! Besides, it would have to be in my fist! There's not much of it—only a few lines from old Suet-pudding. It would take Linley only ten minutes——"

"You howling ass!" said Mark. "Can't you see that that's not the point? I can't do your work for you."

"And Quelch called me lazy!" said Bunter. "Hark at him!"

"I'm not going to help you pull Quelch's leg!" hooted Linley.

"Eh? Why not?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll go through it with you, if you like, and help," said Mark. "Quelch would be down on that—but I'll go that far! But can't you see, you blitherer, that I can't let you take my work in to Quelch and call it your own?"

"But it will be mine, if you give it to me!" argued Bunter. "You just make a translation, and give it to me. Then it will be mine."

"Oh, you blithering owl!"

"Well, I call it mean," said Bunter. "Quelch makes out that I'm lazy and slack, and he's even going so far as to put it in my report—me, you know! It might do me a lot of harm with old Carter."

"Why not stop being lazy and slack?" asked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Wharton, you're not so jolly lazy as Linley, and your Latin is jolly nearly as good. Will you do it for me?"

"Can't be done, fathead! There's a limit to spoof!" explained the captain of the Remove. "Besides, Quelch is a downy bird—he would spot it, ten to one."

"I'll risk that!" said Bunter. "That's all right! If he asks me if any fellow helped, I can say no, can't I?"

"Well, I suppose you could, as you're a direct descendant of Ananias! I shouldn't like to."

"Has Quelch put anything in your report about telling whoppers?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Eh? Yes. I don't know why."

"Oh crumbs! He doesn't know why!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wish you fellows wouldn't cackle when a chap's worried," said Bunter reproachfully. "I say, Bob, you're rather a dud at Latin—but you might try it on. I mean to say, you can't help being rather a fool, and I shall be satisfied if you do your best, see?"

"Some fellows," remarked Bob, "are born tactful."

"The tactfulness is terrific."

"Well, look here, what about you, Bull?"

"If you ask me to help you tell lies to Quelch, I'll jolly well boot you!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Beast! I've got to take this translation in before tea!" howled Bunter. "What shall I do?"

"The translation!" suggested Nugent. "Oh, don't be a silly ass! What do you think I'd better do, Wharton?"

"Some work!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

That suggestion, evidently, was of no use to William George Bunter. Work was a very, very last resource—only to be resorted to in the most desperate extremity. The case was not yet so desperate as that—there were other studies in the Remove, to which Bunter

could take Suetonius, in the hope of finding a translator.

He rolled to the door.

He paused there, to cast a disdainful and scornful blink at the grinning juniors in Study No. 13.

"Well, if you won't back up a pal, you won't!" he said. "I must say that I despise the lot of you. Letting a man down like this! And I can jolly well tell you, that if I get something decent from old Carter, I jolly well shan't lend you anything out of it, so yah!"

And with that crushing valediction, the fat Owl of the Remove rolled away—leaving Study No. 13 chortling.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Begs for It!

"GET out!"

"Oh, really, Carter——" Arthur Carter had sat down again to his Latin; when the door of Study No. 1 opened, and a fat face looked in, and a big pair of spectacles glimmered. Carter gave his podgy relative the blackest of black looks.

It was not surprising, perhaps, that he did not like Bunter. Even nice-natured and good-tempered fellows sometimes got fed-up with Bunter. Even Lord Mauleverer, the most tolerant fellow ever, sometimes felt that he could not stand Bunter. Carter had neither a nice nature nor a good temper—and his feeling towards the fat Owl was a mingling of dislike and scorn.

Neither could he be expected to feel pleased, because Bunter was likely to take his place in the good books of old Mr. Carter.

He could not fairly say that Bunter had "cut him out," as Bunter knew little or nothing about the matter, and had certainly made no move in it. And Bunter, with all his faults—and their name was legion—was quite incapable of unscrupulous scheming like Carter's. Bunter often schemed—but his scheming was fatheaded and fatuous.

But whether he could justly blame Bunter in the matter, or not, made very little difference to Carter, if the fat Owl of the Remove's name replaced his own in old Joseph's will.

A better fellow than Carter might have set matters right by mending his ways, playing the game, and winning back the good opinion he had lost by bad conduct. But that was not Carter's way. He disliked and despised the fat Owl; and he cultivated those amiable feelings, as a sort of justification for scheming against him.

At the present moment, he was in the very bitterest of tempers, owing to Bob Cherry's plain talk, in that study; and the risk it meant for him in carrying on with his peculiar campaign. It was rather an unfortunate moment for Bunter to drop into the study.

Carter's hand reached to the inkpot. The fat Owl eyed him warily, but he did not depart. Apparently he had some special purpose in dropping into that study; which was hard to guess, as only Carter was there.

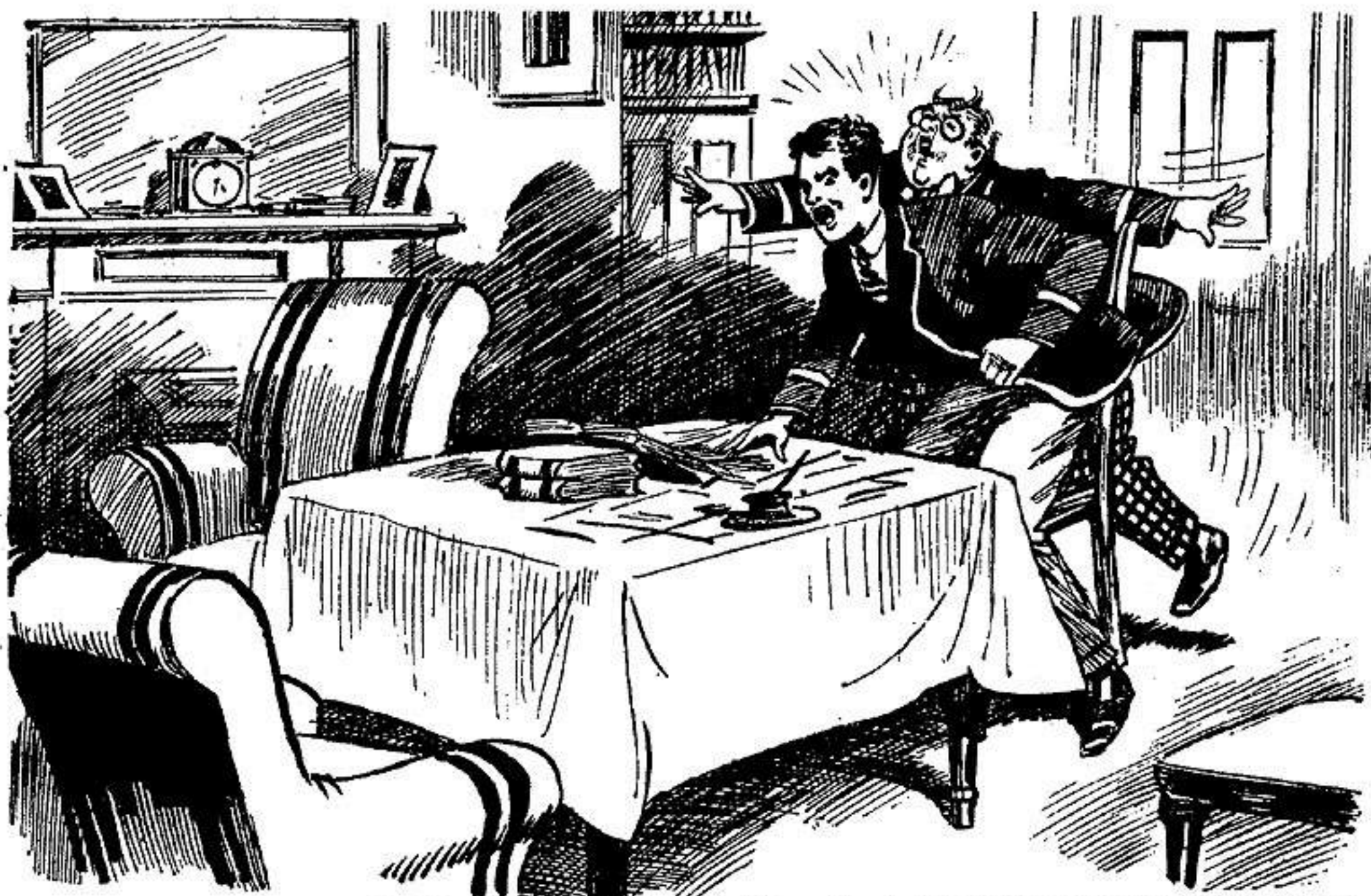
"Are you getting out?" snarled Carter.

"I can come into Wharton's study if I like, I suppose!" answered Bunter, with dignity. "Think it belongs to you, because it happens to be your study, too! I'm not going to look at your rotten Latin."

Carter, staring at him, withdrew his hand from the inkpot.

"My Latin!" he repeated.

"I know you're doing Suetonius," said Bunter. "But if you think I'd



Billy Bunter was leaning over Carter's shoulder in the hope of getting a "squint" at his translation, when the new boy rose suddenly. Bang! "Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, in anguish, as the top of his relative's head came in contact with his fat chin. "Ow! Beast! Wow!"

take a hint from you, you're jolly well mistaken I can do it better than you can, any day, and chance it."

Carter eyed him, very curiously, for some moments, and then resumed work on his exercise.

Bunter came a little farther into the study.

"The fact is," he went on, "that Wharton's asked me to look for a pencil he left somewhere! You mind your own business, see?"

Carter gave him no further heed.

The fat Owl hovered round the table. If he was looking for a pencil, he did not find one. He blinked, stealthily and cautiously, at the paper that lay before Carter, and which the new junior was translating.

Several times he hovered behind the junior's chair and glanced over his shoulder. He was more and more encouraged by the fact that Carter paid him no attention.

"I say, Carter, what part are you doing?" he ventured to ask, at last.

"Find out!" answered Carter, over his shoulder.

"What I mean is, I might help you!" said Bunter. "You're an awful rotter, you know, but after all, you're my relation. If you happened to be doing the forty-ninth in Book Six, I've got the same stuff to do."

Carter grinned.

Billy Bunter fancied that he was being fearfully astute. As a matter of fact, his words revealed his true object. If Carter was working at that particular section of Suetonius, what Bunter wanted was a "squint" at his paper, to copy down Carter's translation!

Carter, though not a willing learner, was pretty good; but if he had been a dud at Latin, he could hardly have been such a dud as Bunter. His translation, whatever it was like, was certain to be miles better than Bunter's.

So the fat Owl had the happy idea of taking a copy of it if he happened to be doing the same section.

This would make a good impression on Quelch, as an improvement on Bunter's usual performance, and would save Bunter work, which was still more important.

As it happened, Carter was doing a section of Book Five, dealing with the Emperor Claudius. Bunter's "squints" over his shoulder, had, therefore, been of no use to the fat Owl, so far.

But while apparently turning a deaf ear to the fat junior's talk, Carter now turned to Book Six, which dealt with Nero. He turned the pages till he came to Section XLIX, the one that Bunter wanted.

Bunter hovered round the table, and finally came back behind Carter's chair, and blinked over his shoulder again.

His fat face brightened.

Carter had refused to answer him, but this was as good as an answer in the affirmative. Carter was now working on the very bit that Bunter required to see him through.

He had taken a fresh sheet of paper, and, as regardless of Bunter as if the fat Owl had not been in the study at all, was translating XLIX, descriptive of the last hours of the Emperor Nero.

Bunter winked at the back of his head.

This, Bunter considered, was all right. All he had to do was to see what Carter wrote, and copy it down. Quelch was going to be quite surprised by the excellence of Bunter's work this time!

That there was anything unscrupulous in this kind of thing did not even occur to Billy Bunter. He was so accustomed to adopting every trick and dodge to get out of exerting himself, that anything that saved work came as naturally as breathing to him.

Moreover, Bunter did not share his Form-master's opinion that fellows were

at school to learn. Bunter had no desire to learn. Indeed, he objected to it!

Latin, in Bunter's valuable opinion, was beastly stuff that a beak bunged at a fellow's head, and that a fellow dodged, if he could, like a snowball.

The question with Bunter was, not ought he, but could he? Now it seemed that he could, so that was all right.

Unfortunately Carter moved his head, blocking the fat Owl's view.

Bunter glared at the back of that head.

"I—I say, have you seen Nugent's pen?" he asked, hoping that Carter would look round, and thus remove his obnoxious head out of the light. "Nugent asked me to come here and fetch his fountain-pen."

Bunter belonged to the class of persons who proverbially required good memories; but he had a rotten one.

Carter did not answer or shift, and the exasperated Owl continued to glare at the back of his head. He leaned over Carter's shoulder in the hope of getting a "squint."

Carter rose suddenly.

Bang!

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, in anguish, as the top of his relative's head came with a sudden crash on his fat chin.

He staggered back, clasping a fat hand to the fat chin.

"Ow! Beast! Ow!" roared Bunter. "You did that on purpose! Wow!"

Carter glanced round at him, grinning.

"Were you looking over my shoulder?" he asked.

"No, you beast!" hooted Bunter. "Of course I wasn't! I was looking for Wharton's pocket-knife that he left here. Ow!"

RIVALS for RICHES!



(Continued from page 13.)

"Well, I can't let you see my translation, if you're doing the same stuff," said Carter. "Quelch would hardly like that."

"Who wants to see it?" hooted Bunter. "Yah! Beast! Wow!"

Carter shrugged his shoulders, gathered up his papers, and left the study.

Billy Bunter watched him with an infuriated blink. His chance was gone now.

The next moment he uttered an ejaculation of surprise and glee. Carter, apparently from oversight, had left one of his papers on the table. And it was the very one that Bunter wanted!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at it eagerly. There was no mistake about it. There it was, headed "Book Six XLIX." Carter had translated the paragraph from "Tunc" to "pereio," which was exactly what Bunter had to do.

The fat Owl could hardly believe in his good luck.

He was glad now that Carter had left the study, as he had left that paper behind him. It could not have happened better for Bunter. All he had to do now was to sit in Carter's chair, copy the paper before him, and take it down to Quelch. Then, he hoped, he would see that grin of satisfaction dawn on Mr. Quelch's crusty visage, as often happened in the case of Mark Linley, but never in the case of Billy Bunter.

Bunter dipped pen into ink, annexed a sheet of paper, and started.

Having the translation before him, he did not even trouble to look at the Latin! That would have been an unnecessary bother!

Bunter would have been well advised to do so, all the same. Had he taken a "squint" or two at the Latin, it might have dawned on him what a very remarkable translation Carter had left behind him.

Even Bunter, on his own exertions, would hardly have turned "Qualis artifex pereio" into "What larks!"

Carter had done so, and the rest of the translation was on the same lines. But it did not even dawn on Bunter that Carter was aware of his game, and was pulling his podgy leg.

Happily satisfied, Bunter copied down that astonishing translation, which was calculated, not to make Quelch grin with satisfaction, but to make him bound out of his chair and clutch the nearest cane!

Grinning with satisfaction, the fat Owl rolled out of the study to take that translation down to Mr. Quelch.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Vials of Wrath!

MR. QUELCH smiled.

He did not always, or often, greet Bunter with a smile.

But he smiled now.

For one thing, Bunter had brought in THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,563.

his translation promptly to time, instead of handing over various excuses, as usual, all of them untruthful. That looked like a sign of improvement in Bunter.

Moreover, the fat junior entered the study quite briskly, instead of lagging in like a fellow going to execution. That looked as if Bunter had shown a little keenness, for once, and had a translation to show up, for which he expected commendation. As a rule, Bunter was completely satisfied if he escaped whopping.

"Ah, you have done your paper, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch, quite genially.

Bunter was a trial to him in the Remove, but he was the man to encourage a dense and backward fellow who did his best.

"Yes, sir!" answered Bunter brightly. "I—I've taken a lot of trouble over this, sir, and—and I think I've done it rather well."

"I hope so, my boy," said Mr. Quelch. He picked up a school Suetonius from the table. Suetonius in the Remove was not handled in the complete state; it was taken in chunks, like pineapple. "Now, let me see, Book Six, I think—"

"Section XLIX, sir."

"Exactly! You may read out the Latin, Bunter, and I will then look at your translation."

"Yes, sir!"

Bunter could read out Latin, if he could not understand it when read. He proceeded to read the description of the last hours of Nero, beginning with "Tunc uno quoque," and winding up at "Qualis artifex pereio."

Now, the translation of that passage, in brief, was to the effect that Nero's companions in his flight urged him to escape death at the hands of Galba's soldiers by suicide, whereupon Nero bade them make the necessary preparations, and gather wood for the funeral pyre, meanwhile weeping and repeating "What an artist perishes!"

Bunter, had he tackled it, would have made endless mistakes, but he would have had some shots at the meaning, even if some of them had missed the mark.

But Bunter's very worst effort would have been nothing like the translation he now handed over to Mr. Quelch.

Quelch received it with a benign expression, prepared to see something better than usual.

But when he looked at it his face changed remarkably.

His gaze became fixed, and he looked as if he could hardly believe his eyes. Indeed, he hardly could.

Bunter, watching him in the hope of seeing that expected grin of satisfaction, realised that something was wrong.

He did not yet realise how awfully wrong that something was.

Mr. Quelch did not speak. He gazed and gazed and was dumb.

Bunter grew more and more uneasy. Obviously Quelch was not satisfied. Obviously he was not going to grin. Thunder was gathering in his brow.

Which, if Bunter had only known it, was not really surprising, considering that that translation ran:

"While his companions talked to him like Dutch uncles, Nero told them to go and eat coke, which they accordingly did, and meanwhile he chuckled and chortled, continually repeating: 'What larks!'"

Mr. Quelch was accustomed to all sorts of translations from Billy Bunter. It was Bunter who had set the Remove in

a roar by construing "Arma virumque cano" into "The armed man and the dog!" It was Bunter who had turned "Est in conspectu Tenedos" into "He was expecting a tenner!"

Bunter, really, was capable of anything, or almost anything.

But this was the limit!

Even from Bunter, Mr. Quelch had never had anything like this before.

This was no crass example of blundering—it was not even carelessness—this was a deliberate leg-pull!

It could not possibly have been anything else! It was that or nothing!

Mr. Quelch found his voice at last! When he found it, it resembled that of the Great Huge Bear.

"Bunter!" he thundered.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter, quaking.

"Isn't it all right, sir?"

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch. "What did you say, Bunter?"

"Is—is—isn't it all right, sir?" gasped Bunter. Only too clearly he could see that it wasn't.

"How dare you, Bunter!" boomed the Remove master. He jumped to his feet.

"Hand me that cane, Bunter!"

"That—that—that kik-kik-cane, sir!" stuttered the hapless fat Owl.

"At once!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

In the lowest of spirits, Bunter handed over the cane.

Mr. Quelch swished it.

"Now, Bunter!"

"But I—I—I say, sir," stammered Bunter. "If—if there's any—any mistakes in it, sir—"

"Mistakes!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! I—I took a lot of trouble with it—nobody helped me, sir—I never asked Linley to help me, and he never said he wouldn't—"

"Bunter!"

"I—I—I thought it was pretty good, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Carter ain't bad at Latin—"

"Carter?" repeated Mr. Quelch. "What has Carter to do with it?"

"Oh, nothing, sir! I never copied this down from Carter's paper—he wouldn't let me see his paper, sir—he's a beast—I mean, I never wanted to see his paper, of course, sir—"

"Had you brought me a translation, Bunter, full of your usual careless mistakes, I should, I hope, have dealt with you patiently," said Mr. Quelch. "But this act of deliberate impertinence—"

"Wha-a-t, sir?"

"You may consider it amusing, Bunter, to make a jest of a task given out to you by your Form-master! I shall convince you, I hope, that it is not a jesting matter." Mr. Quelch swished the cane again. "Bend over that chair, Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh! Owl! Woooooh!" roared Bunter.

"Yow-ow-woooo!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Now, Bunter, I shall expect that translation this evening. You will bring it to me, or I shall cane you again. If you venture to make another absurd jest of it—"

"I—I didn't—I never—oh crikey!"

"I shall cane you more severely! You will be detained on Wednesday afternoon, Bunter. Now you may go!"

The unhappy Owl crawled from the study.

His progress up to the Remove passage was punctuated by moans and groans. He tottered along that passage, and blinked into Study No. 13, where seven fellows were at tea.

Johnny Bull picked up a cushion but

at the sight of Bunter's woebegone face he laid it down again.

"What's up, fathcad?" asked Harry Wharton.

Bunter groaned.

"That beast Quelch! That beast Carter! Oh dear! He was pulling my leg! Ow! I see that now! Wow! He meant me to copy that beastly translation—ow!—and he did it all wrong to get me into a row with Quelch—yow-ow-ow! He was pulling my leg—ow!—and Quelch thought I was pulling his—and so—yow-ow-ow-ow!"

There was a chuckle in Study No. 13.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" groaned Bunter. "I've had six! Ow! I've got that mouldy translation to do over again! Yow-ow! I've got a detention for Wednesday! Oh dear! Ow!"

"Serve you jolly well right for copying another man's paper!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Ow! Beast! Wow! Ow!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You fat ass! You'd better not copy other fellows' papers—but if you do, you'd better steer clear of Carter's."

"The betterfulness will be terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter."

"Ow! Oh crikey! Ow!" groaned Bunter. "I say, Bob, old chap, you go and wallop that cad—ow!"

Grunt from Bob Cherry.

"You silly ass, you asked for it! You jolly well know you oughtn't to have copied his paper, and if you'd had the sense of a bunny rabbit, you'd have known that he wouldn't let you, except to pull your silly leg!"

"Beast!" groaned Bunter. "The awful cad took me in, you know! I believe he wants to get me into rows with Quelch, for some reason. I say, you fellows, I've had six, I've got a detention, and I—I haven't had my tea!"

That pathetic appeal was irresistible.

"Roll in, barrel!" said Bob.

Bunter rolled in. He was still feeling bad, very bad indeed; but not too bad to clear up most of what remained in the eatable line on the tea-table in Study No. 13.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter on the Warpath!

ARTHUR CARTER stepped quietly into Mr. Quelch's study, and closed the door quickly when he was inside.

He stepped towards the table and looked round him with swift, furtive eyes. And, as he did so, the gleam of a bright steel key sticking in one of the table drawers, caught his eye.

Carter's visit to his Form-master's study was surreptitious, but he was not there, as some fellows might have been, to "jape" Henry Samuel Quelch. He was not likely to put gum into the ink-pot, like the fatuous Owl. He was, in fact, after the evening paper.

Evening papers were delivered in Common-room, and some of the beaks carried off their papers to their studies. Quelch often did. Carter had a particular reason for wanting to see the paper that evening. He was deeply interested in the fate of Bobby Bangle, who had run in the three o'clock that afternoon.

He could not venture into Masters' Common-room, but he could penetrate into a study when the occupant thereof was absent.

Mr. Quelch had been called away suddenly by a message from the Head.

Carter had seen him go, and so here he was, looking for the newspaper.

But he forgot the newspaper, and even Bobby Bangle at three to one, for the moment, as he saw the steel key sticking out of the drawer.

Quelch kept private papers in that drawer, as plenty of fellows knew. He was very careful to keep that drawer locked, and the key on his ring.

But the most careful of men are careless at times. Quelch had had a sudden call from the study, and he had omitted to put that key back on his ring before he left, for once.

Carter stood looking at it.

Billy Bunter, in his place, would probably have unlocked the drawer and peered in—inquisitiveness being Bunter's besetting sin. But Carter, though he had worse faults, was not inquisitive, and did not think of looking into the drawer. Quelch's papers had no interest for him.

For a long minute he stood still, staring at that gleaming key. Then he whipped it out of the lock, slipped it into his pocket, and left the study—without even glancing round again for the newspaper he wanted. After what he had done, the sooner he was off the scene the safer he was.

He strolled into the Rag with the key in his pocket.

A half-formed scheme was in the back of his scheming mind, and he required time to think it out in its details.

A dozen or more fellows were in the Rag after tea; among them, Billy Bunter.

Bunter's eyes, and spectacles, turned on Carter with a glare of ineffable scorn.

"Beast!" he hooted across the Rag.

"Cad! Rotter!"

"Talking about yourself, as usual?" asked Carter.

"I say, you fellows, what do you think that beast did?" squeaked Billy Bunter. "He let me see a translation, and I took it to Quelch, and it was all wrong!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You shouldn't bag another fellow's translation, old fat thing!" grinned Carter. "Honesty is the best policy."

"You jolly well let me see it on purpose, you beast, and you translated 'Qualis artifex pereo' into 'What larks,' and I've found out since what it really means—"

"Into what?" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"What larks!" roared Bunter indignantly. "Of course, if I'd thought a minute, I should have known that Nero wouldn't say 'What larks' when they were after him. But—"

"But thinking's not your long suit, is it?" chuckled the Bounder. "Mean to say you handed that to Quelch?"

"Yes, and he whopped me!"

"No wonder! Oh, my hat! I'd have liked to see Quelch's face when he read it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" roared Bunter. "I got six! I've got that translation to do before prep. I'm going to thrash that cad! I mean, I've a jolly good mind to!"

"Sure it was a dirty thrick in-toirely!" exclaimed Micky Desmond. "I'll hold ye're spees while you punch him, Bunter, mo bhoy. I licked him aisy enough the other day, and so I did. Now you lick the spalpeen."

Billy Bunter blinked at Carter. Bunter would have given a good deal to lick the fellow who had played that trick on him. But Bunter was no fighting man. It was true that Micky Desmond had licked Carter in a scrap, and done it with ease. But Bunter

doubted whether it would be easy to his fat self.

To his surprise, Carter seemed far from keen on putting the matter to the test. Any fellow in the Rag would have said that Carter could have made rings round Bunter, with one hand tied. But he did not seem keen on it.

"My dear porpoise, only a joke," said Carter amicably. "Look here, I'll do the translation for you, if you like. There!"

"Think I'd trust you?" hooted Bunter.

"You can show it round, and see that it's all right."

Bunter stared at him.

That offer was a sound one. But it only showed, so far as Bunter could see, that Carter funk'd a scrap. For no other reason that was imaginable by Bunter, could he have made such an offer.

That was all Bunter needed to screw up his fat courage. If the other fellow was afraid, Bunter wasn't.

The fat Owl rolled towards Carter, with a threatening frown on his fat face, and a warlike gleam behind his spectacles. He brandished a podgy fist under Carter's nose.

Had Carter made a forward movement, Bunter would have made a prompt backward one. But it was Carter who backed away.

That did it. Bunter charged after him.

"You funk!" roared Bunter valorously. "I'm going to lick you! Put up your hands, you rotter!"

Carter backed round the long table in the Rag.

Bunter charged round the table after him. Carter still backed.

All the juniors stared on in surprise. To Bunter this looked like arrant funk; but the other fellows could only suppose that Carter was pulling the fat Owl's leg. Really it was difficult for anyone but Bunter to fancy that any fellow funk'd a combat with him.

"I say, you fellows, stop him!" yelled Bunter. "I say, make the beast stand up to it! He got me six from Quelch. I'm going to wallop him!"

"Look here!" exclaimed Carter. "Chuck it! I'm not going to scrap with you, Bunter."

"Ain't you?" snorted Bunter. "You jolly well are! You should have thought of that before you pulled my leg, and got me six from Quelch. I'm going to alter your features for you!"

"I'll do the translation over again," exclaimed Carter, jumping back from the brandishing fat fists. "Make it pax, old fat man, and I'll see you through with Suetonius."

Billy Bunter paused. Thrashing Carter—if he could do it—was a satisfactory idea. Still, he wanted that translation done.

"No larks?" he asked suspiciously.

"Honest Injun!"

"Well, you jolly well sit down and do it now, with my eye on you, and I'll let you off the thrashing!" said Bunter.

"Done!"

A dozen fellows watched Carter as he sat down to Bunter's Suetonius. They could only suppose that he was going to produce another ridiculous translation for the fat Owl to take to Quelch.

But if that was his game, a good many fellows present were ready to put paid to him. A joke was a joke; but getting a fellow caned was rather more than a joke.

Vernon-Smith and Peter Todd
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looked over Carter's shoulders as he worked. Both of them were better men at the classics than Carter, so they were able to judge easily what his work was like.

To their mystification, he produced a good translation of XLIX, Book Six. It did not take him very long, though it would have meant hours of slogging to Billy Bunter. Carter had, in fact, been through it before with the help of a "crib," so it did not present any great difficulties to him.

Billy Bunter watched him with a suspicious eye. He was prepared to carry on hostilities, if Carter pulled his fat leg again.

When the task was finished, he blinked at it. Then he blinked inquiringly at the Bounder.

"Is it all right, Smithy?" he asked.

"Right as rain," answered Smithy.

"Quite all right," said Peter Todd. "But if Quelch knew that Carter had done it for you—"

"Well, I'm not going to tell him that," said Bunter. "I'll jolly well make Carter do all my translations after this. I'll jolly well thrash him if he doesn't—see?" Bunter grinned at that happy prospect. "Now give me that pen, Carter, and you can get out."

Carter gave him the pen, and got out.

Bunter proceeded to copy out the paper. Then he dropped Carter's translation into the fire in the Rag, and carried off his own to Mr. Quelch's study.

Mr. Quelch was not there. He was with the Head, but that did not matter. It was the rule for a fellow to leave his impositions on the Form-master's table, if he was absent when they were taken in.

Bunter laid his Latin paper on the table and rolled away in a state of considerable satisfaction.

That wretched Suetonius was off his fat mind at last. And it certainly never occurred to his podgy brain, that Carter had had any object in getting him to enter Quelch's study during Quelch's absence.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wary Wun!

WUN LUNG'S slanting eyes opened warily as Arthur Carter glanced into Study No. 13.

The little Chinese was alone there. Harry Wharton & Co. had gone to the gym, and Mark Linley had gone with them. The junior from the Flowery Land preferred a warm study and a blazing fire.

Wun was curled up in the armchair, with a rather serious expression on his little yellow face, which generally wore a cheery grin. He was thinking of the tragic happenings in his far-away native land.

To most of the Greyfriars fellows the Japanese invasion of China was little more than news in the newspapers. But to little Wun it came very near. His father, Wun Chung Lung, his grandfather Ko, his little Wun San, were in Canton, where Japanese bombs were falling. Often and often Wun's thoughts wandered to the distant East, where his countrymen had little more than courage and devotion to oppose to deadly weapons.

Wun turned his head as the study door opened.

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At the sight of the new fellow he was wary at once.

His last experience of Carter had been the chase up the Remove passage, and he did not suppose that this was a friendly visit.

To his surprise, Carter gave him a cheery nod.

"Oh, you're here!" he said.

"Me hele," assented Wun. "You wantee see Bob Chelly, old Bob Chelly, go 'long gym."

Carter came in and closed the door.

"I wanted to speak to you," he said.

"You speakee, spouses you likee," said Wun, his slanting eyes curiously on the new fellow's face; his own face child-like and bland.

The little Chinese was as keen and astute as any fellow at Greyfriars, but his face had an expression of lamb-like innocence.

"I got rather wild the other day when you played that trick in my study," said Carter. "Sorry; I lost my temper."

"Allee light."

"It was a jolly clever trick," said Carter amicably. "How the dickens you got away with it, beats me."

"This lill' Chinese velly clevee fellee," agreed Wun Lung. "Plenty muchee blains 'long nappiee blong me."

"Eh? Oh, yes! Look here, as you're so jolly clever at that sort of game, I want you to help me in a jape," said Carter, his keen eyes on the innocent face of the little Celestial. "Look at this!"

He produced a packet of toffee from his pocket.

Wun Lung looked at it. It was a small cardboard packet.

"What you wantee do?" asked Wun, puzzled.

"You shoved my pencil into Bunter's pocket the other day," said Carter. "He never knew. You could shove this toffee in the same way."

"Easy, easy," assented Wun Lung.

"You shoved Bunter's watch in my pocket, too," said Carter. "I suppose you did it when you pushed against me in the study, but I never knew."

"This lill' Chinese velly clevee," said Wun complacently.

"It's really wonderful," said Carter. "You're a clever little beggar, and no mistake. Now, suppose that fat ass Bunter found a packet of toffee in his pocket, what do you think he would do?"

"Him eattee toffee plenty quick!"

"Exactly!" grinned Carter. "And suppose a fellow had bored a hole in the toffee, and put some mustard in!"

Wun Lung chuckled.

"Velly funnee jokee on ole Bunter!" he said.

"Well, that's the idea!" said Carter. "Pulling the fat duffer's leg, you know. If I gave him the toffee, he would smell a rat—but if he found it in his pocket, he would scoff it on the spot, and then—"

"Coughee and gargle plenty!" chuckled Wun.

"And we'll watch him coughing and gurgling!" grinned Carter. "The fat ass will think he had the toffee, and forgot it—he will never guess that it was slipped into his pocket by a giddy conjurer. Anyhow, he's jolly certain to eat it. And then—"

The little Chinese chortled.

"Plenty funnee jokee 'long fat ole Bunter!" he said. "You leavee toffee 'long me, me puttee 'long pockee blong Bunter."

"Here you are, then!" said Carter. "The fellows will be coming up to prep soon, and you can bump against the fat

ass in the passage, or on the stairs, and the trick's done."

"Me savvy!"

Wun, with a cheery grin, slipped the toffee-packet into his pocket, and Carter left the study.

After he was gone, the little Chinese winked at the glowing fire. Then he took out the toffee-packet, and opened the end of the cardboard carton.

His bland and smiling face had expressed nothing to Carter but enjoyment of the jape on Bunter. But behind that bland and smiling face, there was an Oriental keenness of which Carter had no suspicion.

No doubt it was no end of a joke to set Bunter coughing and gurgling with a dose of mustard hidden in a chunk of toffee. But Wun Lung meant to know exactly what was in that packet before he landed it on the Owl of the Remove.

To all appearance, it was an ordinary packet of toffee, with nothing whatever suspicious about it.

But there was more in that packet than met the eye.

Wun removed the chunk of toffee, and a gleam of metal in the carton caught his eye.

It was a small steel key that was packed under the toffee—invisible until the chunk was removed.

Wun's almond eyes fixed on it, and widened.

Then he examined the toffee. There was no sign on it that it had been bored for the introduction of mustard.

The little Chinese sat in deep thought for a few minutes. He did not like Carter, or trust him, and he knew that he was down on Bunter. Now he knew that his sleight-of-hand skill was to be made use of to plant that key on the unsuspecting fat Owl.

He knew that key! All the Remove fellows had seen it dozens of times. It was the key of Quelch's specially private drawer in his table, which was always kept carefully locked.

Private correspondence and all sorts of documents such as copies of school reports, or notes for the same, were kept in that drawer. Few fellows at Greyfriars would have cared to nose into it—but Bunter was one of the few! Bunter could always be relied upon to nose into anything, if he had the ghost of a chance.

How Carter had got hold of that key, Wun could not guess. Evidently he had done so somehow, and he intended to land it on Bunter!

That was the true meaning of the "jape" in which Wun was to lend his sleight-of-hand assistance.

A rather grim look came over Wun's little yellow face. Having reflected for a few minutes, he replaced the toffee in the packet and closed it—putting the key in his own pocket!

After which, with a cheery grin, the little Chinese strolled out of the study, and loitered about the passage till the Remove came up to prep.

Carter, in the doorway of Study No. 1, had an eye on him. He grinned as Wun gave him a wink, and continued to watch.

The fat Owl of the Remove came rolling into the passage.

Wun Lung stumbled against him as he passed.

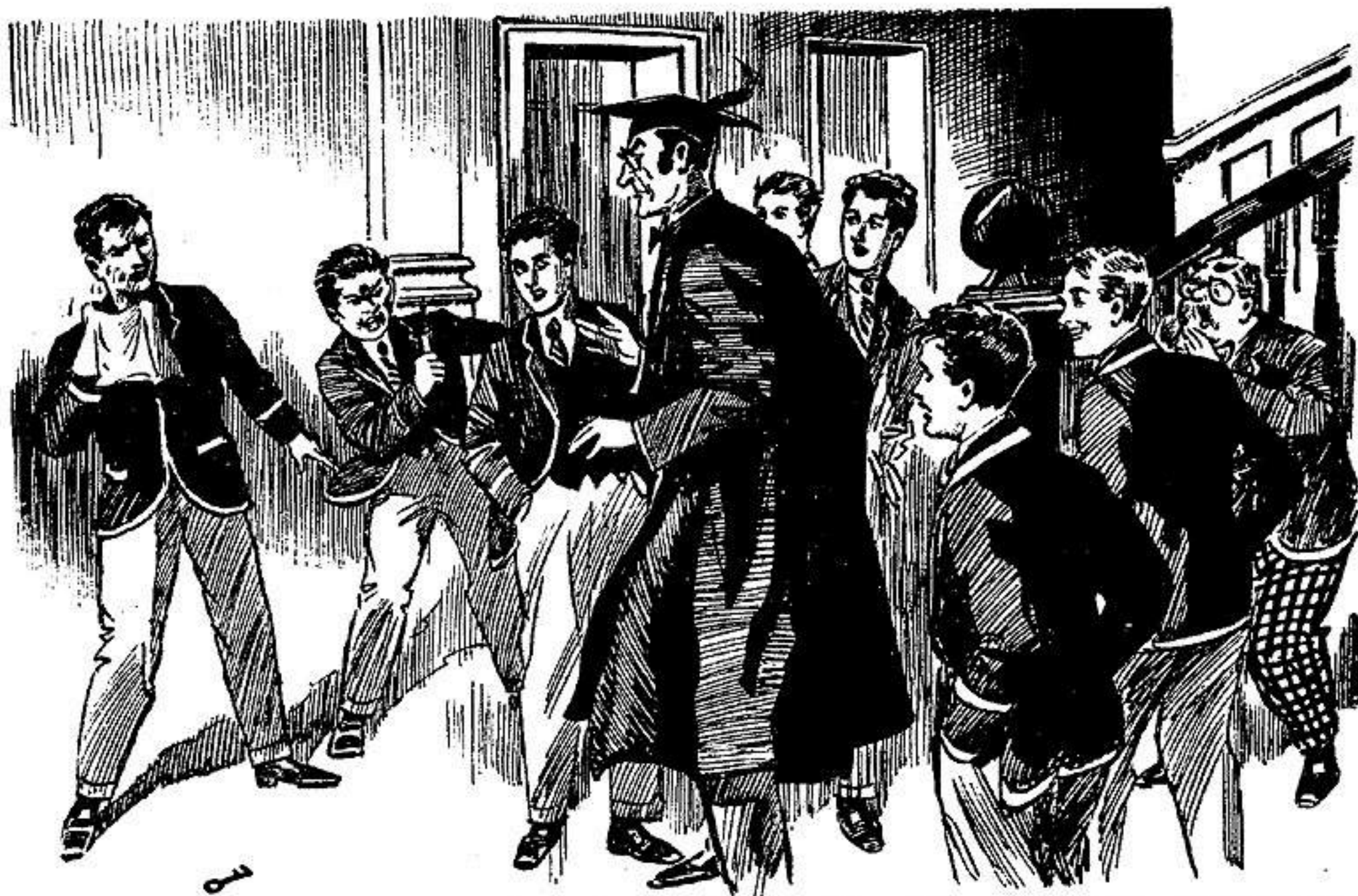
Carter, watching keenly, had a glimpse of a toffee-packet in the little yellow hand for a moment. It vanished instantly.

"Urrrrggh!" gasped Bunter, as he tottered. "You clumsy heathen, wharrer you bumping into me for?"

"Plenty solly!" said Wun. "Foot slippee—"

"Oh, get out, bother you!"

Bunter rolled on to Study No. 7,



"Gurrgh!" gurgled Carter, as a stream of water from Wun Lung's squirt caught him full in the face. He grabbed out his handkerchief to dab his streaming face. Clink! A key, which had evidently been in the handkerchief, dropped to the floor.

happily unconscious that there was now a packet of toffee in his jacket pocket.

Wun Lung closed a slanting eye at Carter, who turned into Study No. 1 grinning—happily unconscious that the key was no longer in that toffee-packet.

Wun trotted back to Study No. 13, where Bob Cherry, Hurree Singh, and Mark Linley, had gone in for prep. His little yellow face was wreathed in grins.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob. "You're looking fearfully amused, Wun! What fatheaded trick have you been playing now?"

"Pullee leg blong Cartee!" grinned Wun.

"Oh, blow Carter!" grunted Bob.

And they settled down to prep in Study No. 13—Wun Lung interrupting his work, every now and then, with a little squeak of merriment.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Missing Key!

"**B**LOW prep!" said Billy Bunter peevishly.

"Lazy!" said Peter Todd.

"I've a jolly good mind to chance it with Quelch! After all, if I'm put on cou, I can tell him I had a bad headache."

"Untruthful!" said Peter.

"Oh, shut up, will you?" roared Bunter.

Peter grinned.

"Don't you want me to be pally any more?" he asked.

"No, I don't, if that's what you call pally!" growled Bunter. "Blow prep! I've had enough to do, with that rotten Suetonius! Lucky I made that cad Carter do it for me!"

"You made him!" chuckled Peter.

"You were there!" snorted Bunter.

"You saw how funky he was! I jolly well made him—and I'll make him do the next, too, now that I know he's funky!"

"Is that how you're going to get a good report from Quelch this term?"

"Oh, rats!"

There was a tap at the door of Study No. 7, and Trotter, the page, looked in.

"Mr. Quelch's study, Master Bunter, please!" he said.

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter rose unwillingly to his feet. Interruptions to prep certainly were welcome. But he did not want to see Mr. Quelch again. He had a very painful recollection of their last meeting.

"I—I say, Peter, that filthy translation was really all right, wasn't it?" he asked anxiously. "You saw it, you know."

"Right as rain!" answered Peter. "Quelch will give you good marks, old fat man, unless he tumbles to it that another fellow did it for you! In that case you'll probably get marks, too—from his cane."

"Well, I don't want to see him about it," growled Bunter. "But I suppose I'd better go, as the beast has sent for me."

"Much better!" agreed Peter.

And Bunter went.

He arrived in Quelch's study in an uneasy frame of mind. Both Smithy and Toddy had said that the Suetonius was all right; so really he ought to have nothing to fear on that score. But with a beak, you never could tell! Quelch might fancy that it had been done for him—he was a suspicious beast!

Mr. Quelch's expression was far from reassuring, as he entered.

For the second time that day, Quelch's brow was heavy with frowns, as if he was again understudying the Lord High

Executioner. His gimlet-eye gleamed at Bunter.

"You came to my study during my absence, Bunter!" he rapped.

"Yes, sir!" mumbled Bunter. "I—I left my paper on the table, sir! I—I hope it's all right this time, sir! I—I've given myself quite a headache doing it over again, sir."

"Your translation is fairly correct, Bunter—unusually good for you," said Mr. Quelch. "So far as that is concerned, you have shown that you can do better work than you have done this term, and I shall expect an improvement, therefore, in your work in Form."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. This was rather a drawback to "making" Carter do his translations for him!

"But I have sent for you," continued Mr. Quelch, "to speak of another matter, Bunter! A key is missing from my study."

"Is it, sir?" asked Bunter, blinking at him. He saw no reason why Quelch should confide this circumstance to him!

"It is, Bunter! I was called away rather hurriedly by the headmaster, and inadvertently left the key in the lock of the drawer. It has been taken away."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He caught on now. "I—I haven't taken it, sir! When I want a key, I ask Fishy—he keeps a bunch of keys, and—"

"You were in the study, Bunter, in my absence. The key was taken away during my absence. No other boy in the Form had any business here, and I cannot suppose that any boy came here without a reason. Did you abstract the key from the drawer, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped the dismayed Owl. "I never saw it, sir! Oh lor'!"

"You are, apparently, the only boy who came to my study during my absence!" said Mr. Quelch. "You were here, Bunter—"

"I—I wasn't, sir!" gasped Bunter.
 "What?" thundered Mr. Quelch.
 "How dare you make such a statement, Bunter, when I found your Latin paper on my table!"

"Oh—I—I—I mean——"
 "You were here!" said Mr. Quelch, with intensifying sternness. "You have been punished on several occasions for inquisitiveness—indeed, on one occasion I myself caught you prying into my desk! Whoever has taken that key must have taken it with the intention of prying, at a convenient opportunity, into the private papers in that drawer. He can have had no other motive. You are capable of this, Bunter, and I think that no other boy in the Form is either so prying or so stupid!"

"Oh, really, sir——"
 "In short," said Mr. Quelch, "it is perfectly clear to me, Bunter, that you saw the key in the lock when you brought your translation to my study in my absence, and that you abstracted it!"

"Oh crikey!"
 "You will now place it on the table, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, taking up his cane.

"But I haven't got it, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never saw it! It wasn't there when I brought my paper in, sir. I—I should have seen it."

"It certainly was there, Bunter!"
 "It wasn't, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I should have noticed it when I looked at the table drawers, sir——"

"You looked at the table drawers?"

"Oh, no! Not at all, sir! I never thought that any of them might have been open, and never looked to see!" gasped Bunter. "I hope I'm not the sort of chap to do anything of the kind. I—I never went round the table at all, sir. I—I just stepped in and laid my Latin paper down, and—and went out."

If Billy Bunter hoped that his Form-master would believe that statement, it showed that Bunter had a really hopeful nature.

"Place the key on the table at once, Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"I—I can't, sir, as—as I haven't got it!" groaned Bunter. "You couldn't have left it there, sir, or I should have seen it when I went round the table—I—I mean, I shouldn't have seen it, as I didn't go round the table! Perhaps you've got it in your pocket all the time, sir——"

"Bunter!"
 "I mean to say, you might forget putting it back in your pocket, sir," said Bunter hopefully. "Very old people do forget things, sir. My great-grandfather——"

"Silence, Bunter!" hooted Mr. Quelch, with a petrifying glare. "Place the key on the table this instant!"

"I—I would, sir, if I had it!" gasped Bunter. "But I haven't! I hope you can take my word, sir! I—I should be very sorry for you to think me untruthful, sir, especially if you're going to mention it to Mr. Carter!"

Mr. Quelch breathed hard and deep.

"Turn out your pockets on my table, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter, quite cheerfully.

Bunter knew, if his Form-master did not, that he had not taken the key, so he had no objection to revealing the contents of his pockets.

He turned out all sorts of articles, among them a cardboard packet of toffee.

Bunter blinked at that in surprise. He had not been aware that he was the happy possessor of a packet of toffee. If it had ever happened that Bunter had

overlooked such a possession, such happenings had been very rare!

But it certainly seemed as if he had overlooked this, for there was the toffee.

Every pocket was turned out to the lining. Nothing in the nature of a key was revealed.

Mr. Quelch examined the articles on the table, some of which might have been receptacles for a key. He opened Bunter's tattered notecase—without seeing any notes therein! Neither was there a key in it. He even opened Bunter's watch, which was big enough to have contained that missing key. But the big watch only contained the works that didn't work! He opened the packet of toffee, Bunter watching him uneasily.

He did not exactly suspect that Quelch might eat that toffee. Still, he felt relieved when the chunk was pushed back into the carton. Nothing but toffee was revealed in the carton.

"You—you see, sir——" stammered Bunter.

Mr. Quelch eyed him. The missing key certainly was not on Bunter, and neither Quelch nor Bunter had the remotest idea how very nearly that key had been discovered in the toffee packet.

"What have you done with the key, Bunter?" asked Mr. Quelch at last.

"Nothing, sir! I haven't touched it!"

"I cannot believe that statement, Bunter! But——"

Quelch paused. He had had no doubt that the key was on Bunter. But it clearly was not on Bunter.

A doubt crept into Mr. Quelch's mind. It was not a very strong doubt. He was assured that Bunter had taken the key. Still, there was now an element of doubt in the matter.

Mr. Quelch, to Bunter's immense relief, laid down the cane.

"For the present, Bunter, you may go," he said, after a long pause. "I shall make further inquiry into the matter."

"Yes, sir," said Bunter.

And he packed his possessions back into his pockets, and went.

Mr. Quelch's suspicious stare followed him till the study door shut.

Bunter rolled back to Study No. 7 in the Remove. He grinned at Peter Todd as he rolled in.

"I say, Toddy, what do you think the old ass wanted?" he asked. "He's lost a key to his table drawer. He, he, he! He had the cheek to fancy that I might have snooped it!"

"Didn't you?" asked Peter.

"No, I didn't!" roared Bunter. "The old ass has got it in his pocket, I expect! I know it wasn't sticking in the drawer when I took my paper to his study, because I had a look round, and I should have seen it. Making out that I took his silly key! As if I'd look into his rotten papers and things——"

"So you would, if you had a chance, you fat villain!" said Peter. "If you've got Quelch's key——"

"I've told you I haven't!"

"I know that! If you have, the sooner you get it back to his study the better! If I see you with it, I'll wallop you!"

"Beast!"

Bunter sat down again to prep.

"I say, Peter, I'm rather glad old Quelch sent for me. He made me turn out my pockets, and, I say, I found a packet of toffee in my pocket. I'd forgotten I had it. Blessed if I know how I came to, but I must have! Look!"

Bunter displayed the toffee with great satisfaction.

"I'd whack it out with you, Peter——"

"Thanks!"

"Only I feel rather hungry!"

And the chunk of toffee was jammed into Bunter's capacious mouth, and there it comforted him during prep.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Wun's Weird Way!

THE door of Study No. 1 was hurled open, and Wun Lung rushed breathlessly in.

Wharton, Nugent, and Carter stared up at him in surprise.

"What the thump——" exclaimed Harry.

Wun Lung tore breathlessly in, stumbled against Carter, and caught at him for support.

Carter pushed him off, and jumped up.

"You young ass! What——"

"Ole Bob Chelly after me!" gasped Wun Lung.

"Bob after you?" exclaimed Nugent, in astonishment.

There was a heavy tread in the Remove passage.

Bob Cherry's ruddy face looked in at the doorway, streaming with water.

Then the three juniors in Study No. 1 noticed that the Chinese had a squirt in his hand.

"That potty heathen here?" roared Bob. "I'm going to give him a licking! You young idiot——"

Wun, grinning, dodged behind Wharton and Nugent.

"Me velly solly, nicey ole Bob Chelly!" he gasped. "Me tinkee you laugh, 'long me squirted watee along face!"

Carter chuckled. He, at least, was amused.

"You potty little ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Do you think it's funny to squirt water in a fellow's face?"

"Tinkee plenty muchee funnee!"

"You—you—you——" gasped Bob.

"I've a jolly good mind to lynch you, you potty heathen! So I will if you ever do it again!"

Bob took out his handkerchief to dab his face dry. He was accustomed to tolerating all sorts of weird pranks on the part of Wun Lung; but, really, this was rather over the limit.

"No do any more; spossee you no likee, handsome ole Bob Chelly!" said Wun meekly. "Me velly solly, nicey ole Bob!"

"Bother you!" grunted Bob.

And he walked back up the Remove passage.

"Well, of all the blithering little idiots!" said Harry Wharton. "Lucky it was Bob. Any other Remove man would have scalped you!"

Wun Lung grinned cheerfully. Bob had chased him down the Remove passage, after that extraordinary prank, but he was well aware that he had no punching to expect from Bob.

He sidled out of the study, grinning. And certainly it did not occur to any of the three fellows in the study that, when the artful little Chinese had rushed in and collided with Carter, he had transferred a little steel key to Carter's breast pocket. That key was back in Carter's possession now—if he had known it!

But he did not know it—and was not likely to learn it, until he had occasion to take the handkerchief out of that pocket.

Prep was nearly over in the Remove. Carter finished his work, in a mood of considerable satisfaction. He had no doubt that Bunter had been sent for, to Mr. Quelch's study—for it was hardly possible that Quelch had failed to

suspect Bunter, when he missed the key. It was a practical certainty that Bunter had had to turn out his pockets, and that the purloined key had been found—hidden in the toffee packet. Whether Bunter had been whopped, or not, Carter cared little—it was one more black mark against him, and that was what the schemer of the Remove aimed at.

Indeed, in Carter's peculiar campaign against his rival for a fortune, he was able to bank on unintentional assistance from Bunter himself! For what he had planned to make Bunter appear to have done, was exactly what the prying Owl might have done, had opportunity offered. That fact, being well known to the Remove master, made it hopeless for Bunter, if the key was found on him. And Carter had little, or no doubt that it had been found. He had heard Bunter pass the door of Study No. 1 during prep, and that settled it, to his mind.

That simple little Chinese would suspect nothing, even if he heard that Quelch had found his key in the toffee-packet in Bunter's pocket! The obvious supposition would be, that Bunter had put it there, to keep it safe.

It was rather fortunate that the little Chinese was not quite so simple as he looked, and as Carter supposed him to be!

Herbert Vernon-Smith looked into the study, when prep was over.

"You fellows know what's up?" asked the Bouncer.

"Is anything?" inquired Harry.

"Looks like it! Quelch is on the landing, and a prefect with him! Bunter been gumming his inkpot again, I wonder?" The Bouncer chuckled. "It would be like him to jape Quelch, and leave his Latin paper on the table to show that he had been there!"

"Just like him!" said Harry, laughing.

The Removites came out of the studies. Something, plainly, was "up"—for it was uncommon for Quelch to post himself on the Remove landing, to see his Form after prep. He stood there, with a frowning brow, and Wingate of the Sixth came along the passage, calling to the juniors.

"All of you out of the studies!" he called.

"What's up, Wingate?" asked several voices.

"Quelch will tell you!"

The Greyfriars captain shepherdled the whole Remove down the passage to the landing. There, Mr. Quelch signed to them to stop, and they stood facing their Form-master, every fellow wondering what the trouble was.

Wun Lung insinuated himself near Carter. The squirt, full of water again, was in his little yellow hand. There was a sly grin on Wun's face. Nothing could have suited him better than this, as he had been pondering how to catch Carter in the presence of his Form-master!

"My boys!" said Mr. Quelch. "I have a question to put to the whole Form. A key has been taken from my study, which I inadvertently left in a drawer in my desk. So far as I can ascertain, no boy but Bunter went to my study during my absence, but Bunter denies all knowledge of it."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Wharton. All eyes, for a moment, turned on Bunter. There were few fellows in the Form who doubted that the fat Owl knew all about the missing key. It was exactly one of his fatuous performances.

"I can only conclude," went on Mr. Quelch, in stern tones, "that the key of that private drawer has been taken with a view to prying into the private papers kept in it."

"Bunter or nobody!" whispered Skinner.

"I sent for Bunter, and he turned out his pockets in my presence," resumed Mr. Quelch. "The key was not found on him."

"I never—" squeaked Bunter.

"Silence, please!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

Carter caught his breath. He had had to conceal the key, for transfer to Bunter's possession. But surely Quelch could not have been ass enough to overlook it, if Bunter had turned out his pockets! But it looked as if he had!

"I cannot, and will not, order the boys of my Form to turn out their pockets," went on Mr. Quelch. "Bunter is an exceptional case—for I had, and have now, very little doubt that Bunter abstracted the key, and he has been guilty of such foolish and unscrupulous pranks before. But the key must be returned to me. I require it at once. I must ask, first, whether any boy here,

apart from Bunter, entered my study after tea."

There was no answer. "Very well!" said Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips. "Some boy here present has taken the key. It must be returned. Until the key is returned to me, the whole Form will be under detention for all half-holidays."

"Oh!" gasped the Remove.

"I am sorry for this," said Mr. Quelch. "But I see no other resource. Some boy here has the key."

Swiiiiissssh!

Mr. Quelch jumped. There was a sudden swish of water from a squirt—a most extraordinary and unheard of interruption when the Remove master was addressing his Form.

Carter gave a yell.

Full in his face came the whizzing stream of water from Wun Lung's squirt! It splashed all over his face.

"What—what—" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Wun Lung, how dare you?"

"Is the kid mad?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Wun, you awful little ass—"

"Upon my word!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Wun—"

"Gurrgh!" gurgled Carter.

"Oh! You little idiot! Ooooh!" He grabbed out his handkerchief to dab his streaming face.

Clink.

A small steel key, which had evidently been in the handkerchief in Carter's pocket, clinked on the landing, under all eyes.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Culprit!

MR. QUELCH was making a stride towards Wun Lung. He stopped.

His eyes were glued on that steel key, which had clinked down within a few feet of him, and lay glinting in the light.

So were all the eyes of the Remove.

Most, if not all, of the fellows, knew that key by sight. They had often seen Quelch using it in his study. It was the missing key—there was no doubt about that! And it had fallen from Carter's pocket!

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy

(Continued on next page.)

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Bunter, in great excitement. "I say, that's the key! That cad Carter had it!"

"Carter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "By gad! Carter!" said the Bounder. Carter, dabbing his face, ceased to dab, and stared at the key. He stared at it like a fellow in a dream.

Indeed, he almost wondered whether he was dreaming!

He had hidden that key in the toffee-packet, and he knew that Wun had slipped the toffee into Bunter's pocket! Yet the key was in his own pocket all the time! It had fallen out, when he took out his handkerchief, under all eyes!

His brain fairly reeled! Had he only fancied that he had put the key in the toffee-packet? Really, it looked like it! There was the key—fallen from his own pocket.

Wun looked on with a smile that was child-like and bland! His amazing action with the squirt was almost forgotten, in the excitement at the unexpected discovery of the key.

"Carter!" Mr. Quelch found his voice. "You! You young rascal! Pick up that key, and hand it over to me at once!"

Carter in a dazed state, picked up the key, and handed it to his Form-master.

Mr. Quelch slipped it on his key-ring. His brow was thunderous as he did so. Nobody envied Arthur Carter what was coming next.

"Carter!" "Ye-es, sir!" gasped Carter.

"You abstracted the key from my study!"

"I—I—I—" stammered Carter, helplessly.

"Wun Lung, you should not have played that foolish trick. But in view of this, I shall not cane you. You will take a hundred lines, and hand me that squirt."

"Yes, sir!" murmured Wun, meekly. He handed over the squirt.

"As for you, Carter, your punishment will be exemplary!" said Mr. Quelch. "I am surprised and shocked to find you capable of such conduct. I did not believe that there was such a boy in my Form, with one exception, capable of such a despicable action! I could have found some excuse for Bunter, as he is a very stupid boy, but there is no such excuse for you."

Carter stood gasping. He could not begin to understand how it had happened, but he was fairly caught; he understood that.

"My boys," said Mr. Quelch, "I am glad that this unpleasant matter has been cleared up. There will, of course, be no detention for the Form, as the boy who abstracted the key has now been discovered! Carter, follow me to my study!"

Carter limped down the stairs after his Form-master. The Remove were left in an excited buzz on the landing.

"Carter, all the time!" said Vernon-Smith. "What the dickens did he want Quelch's key for? He's not a Peeping Tom, like Bunter."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Can't make the fellow out!" said Peter Todd. "He must have sneaked into Quelch's study and snaffled it—goodness knows why."

"By gum, what a cad, though!" said Bolsover major. "He was going to let the whole Form get detention—he wasn't going to say a word if that key hadn't happened to turn up."

"Jolly lucky it did, as we're playing football to-morrow afternoon!" said Harry Wharton, with a deep breath. "What a rotter!"

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"The rotterfulness is terrific!"

"But why—" said Nugent blankly. "He can't want to play Nosey-parker, like Bunter—"

"Look here, you beast—"

"He jolly well knew that Quelch would jump on Bunter!" snorted Bob Cherry. "It's just one of the fat chump's silly tricks—and Bunter had been to his study, too, as it happens."

"Oh!" said Harry. "You think—"

"I don't think—I jolly well know!" growled Bob.

"I say, you fellows, what an awful beast!" said Billy Bunter. "I'll bet he knew Quelch would think of me. You know, people do always think of me, somehow, if there's anything missing. I don't know why—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! All you fellows would have thought it was me if that key hadn't turned up!" exclaimed Bunter hotly.

"Your own fault!" said the Bounder. "You shouldn't do such things, old fat man. Nobody else in the Remove would—until your jolly old relation came. I suppose it runs in the family."

"Beast!"

"Well, I don't envy Carter!" said Johnny Bull. "Quelch will take the skin off him. Serve him jolly well right, too!"

"That isn't all he's going to get," said Billy Bunter darkly. "I'm going to thrash him for this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" roared Bunter. "You should have seen him funk in the Rag, after tea! Fairly trembling under my eye! I made him do my translation, because he was afraid to put up his hands. You wait till Quelch has done with him. I'll give him worse than Quelch!"

And Billy Bunter pushed back his cuffs—in readiness! His eyes gleamed behind his spectacles with the light of battle.

"Fattee old Bunteo velly funnee!" said Wun Lung.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter. "You wait and see! If Carter's got any pal here, he'd better stand ready to pick up what I leave of him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd better give him a miss, old porpoise!" chuckled the Bounder. "He won't be in a good temper after Quelch is through with him."

"Fat lot I care for his temper!" jeered Bunter. "You all saw how he funk'd, in the Rag! I'll jolly well make him cringe!"

"Let's hang on and see the circus!" chuckled Peter Todd. "Bunter will need first aid when he begins thrashing Carter."

"Oh, really, Toddy! You saw me make him do my translation—"

"I saw him do it," grinned Peter, "and I wondered why. Looks to me now as if he wanted to make you walk into Quelch's study about that time!"

"I tell you he was funky!" roared Bunter. "And I jolly well know that he pinched that key to make Quelch think it was me. And I tell you I'm going to mop up this landing with him."

"We will all stand round and watch the mopfulness!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But I think it may be a boot on the other leg."

"Yah!"

A few minutes later, Carter was seen coming up the stairs.

Many curious eyes turned on him. His face was quite pale, and his brow was as black as thunder. His look showed that he had been through it very severely in Quelch's study.

Nobody had any sympathy to waste on him, however. Whether he had abstracted the key for prying purposes, or whether, as some of the fellows suspected, to land Bunter in a row, he fully deserved what he had received.

He came scowling across the landing, to go to his study.

Billy Bunter rolled into his way.

"Hold on!" yapped Bunter.

Carter gave him a deadly look.

"You fat fool! Get out of my way!"

"I'll watch it!" grinned Bunter.

"I'm going to wallop you, you cad! You wanted to land me in a row with Quelch, you beast! I'm going to mop up the landing with you, and then I'm jolly well going to boot you along the passage! I can jolly well tell you that I'm jolly well going to—yaroooooop!"

Carter smote only once; but it was a hefty smite!

Billy Bunter went rolling along the landing, amid a yell of laughter. He brought up against the banisters, and sat there spluttering.

"Ooogh! Oh crikey! Keep off, you beast! Yooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carter, scowling, went on to his study, went in, and slammed the door.

Billy Bunter gurgled for breath.

"Go it, Bunter!" chortled Skinner.

"Go for him!"

"Ain't you going to mop him up, Bunter?" giggled Snoop.

"Pile in, old fat man!" said Peter Todd encouragingly. "We're all waiting to see him mopped."

"Groogh! Urrrggh! Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. He set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose and tottered to his feet. "I say, you fellows, keep that beast off! I say, where's that beast?"

"He's gone," chuckled Peter. "You're in luck, old fat porpoise!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "If—if—if he's run away, I—I—I'm not going to soil my hands on the rotten funk!"

"Have him out of his study!" urged Bolsover major. "Come on!"

"I—I—I think I'll—I'll—I'll let him off!" gasped Bunter. "After all, he had it bad from Quelch. I—I don't want to be hard on him, really."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, we haven't waited up here for nothing!" said Peter. "Collar him and walk him along to Carter's study!"

"Good egg!"

"Bag him!"

Billy Bunter gave the grinning juniors one blink, turned, and scuttled down the stairs like a fat rabbit!

Evidently, Bunter's warlike ardour had petered out, and he was no longer thinking of mopping up the landing with Carter! It had dawned on his fat brain that the mopping up would be, as Hurree Singh expressed it, a boot on the other leg!

The fat Owl flew down the Remove staircase, missed his footing in his haste, rolled, and bumped on the next landing. And his yell, as he landed, was answered by a yell of laughter from the Remove.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Wanted!

"O H, get out!" muttered Harry Wharton.

Fellows in the changing-room looked round.

On Wednesday afternoon the Remove footballers were getting ready for a match with the Shell.

Hobson & Co. of the Shell were a rather tough team for the Lower



"Ooooooggggh!" spluttered Sir Hilton Popper, as he grabbed hold of Billy Bunter's outstretched fat hand. "Hold on!" gasped the fat Removite. "Oh crikey! I say, don't pull me in! Oooogh!" The willow swayed and creaked as Sir Hilton's weight fell on Bunter.

Fourth to tackle, and the best men in the Remove had been picked for the game. But it had been generally understood that there would be a new recruit in the team—Carter, the new man.

Partly, perhaps, because of his somewhat irresolute resolve to do better at Greyfriars than he had done at St. Olaf's, and partly because he really was keen on the game, Carter had devoted himself to Soccer since he had been in the school. Bob Cherry admitted that that was one redeeming point in an unpleasant character. He would rather have expected Carter to loaf about on a half-holiday with Pon & Co. of Highcliffe than exert himself on the football field.

But Carter was keen, and had shown good quality, and the captain of the Remove had intended to play him in that match. His name, however, had not appeared in the list posted in the Rag, after all. And when he looked in at the little crowd in the changing-room Wharton told him to get out.

Carter coloured under the many eyes that were turned on him.

"What do you mean?" he snapped. "You as good as told me that I should be wanted this afternoon."

"I know that. If you're keen to play you've only got yourself to thank," said Wharton curtly. "We came jolly near having this match washed out through that rotten trick you played on Quelch. If that key hadn't turned up we should all be in detention now—through you."

"That's got nothing to do with Soccer."

"Oh, quite! But we're all feeling rather fed up—see? You were going to have a chance in this game, because you're good enough; but there's other fellows just as good, so you stand out, and you can go and eat coke!"

Carter stood silent, biting his lip. He had no special claim to play. He

was not, like Bob Cherry or Squiff or the Bounder, one of the mighty men who could not be spared. He was good—but, as Wharton said, there were others as good, and it made no difference to the team whether he played or did not play. And that narrow escape, caused by Carter, of the match having to be scratched, had made him, for the time, at least, extremely unpopular among the footballers.

Carter's eyes gleamed round at Bob Cherry, who was sitting on a bench, putting his football boots on.

"I suppose I owe this to you!" he snarled.

Bob gave him a look.

"I'm not skipper," he answered. "But if I were I wouldn't play you."

"I say, you follows—" Billy Bunter pushed past Carter and rolled into the changing-room. "I say, is Wharton here?"

"Here," answered Harry, laughing. He was only a few feet from the Owl of the Remove.

"Oh!" Bunter blinked round at him. "I say, old chap, I suppose you know I've got a detention this afternoon."

"Time you got along to it, then."

"Well, the fact is, I don't want detention!" explained Bunter. "I want you to get me off, old fellow."

"Pleased, if I could do it!" answered Harry. "If you think Quelch will take orders from me, go and tell him to let you off at once."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! What I mean is, Quelch always lets a fellow off if he's wanted in a match—I mean, he's done it before more than once," explained Bunter. "He did with Smithy, as you know! Well, if you put me in the team—"

"If I put you in the team—" gasped Wharton.

"Yes, and go and tell Quelch that

you're absolutely relying on me to see you through in this match—"

"Oh crikey!"

"Ten to one he would let me off!" said Bunter hopefully. "I don't mean to say I'm specially keen on barging about at footer, you know; but I'd rather play football than stick in detention! Any fellow would."

"You would—really!" stuttered the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, old chap—lots!"

"No time, I'm afraid!" said the captain of the Remove, shaking his head. "You see, you'd have to learn to play Soccer first! That would take you about thirty years! We can't ask Hobby and his men to hang about on Little Side all that time!"

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

"Now, don't be a beast, old chap!" urged Bunter. "I'm really particular about this, you know! Quelch is going to stick me in the detention class with Mossos—he's got about a dozen for French. I hate French much more than I do football—really and truly, you know—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can stand football all right—anyhow, I could dodge off the field when I got tired—see? That would make it all right."

Billy Bunter did not seem to see anything entertaining in this happy suggestion. But the Remove footballers evidently did. They yelled.

Bunter blinked round at them, apparently quite surprised by the merriment.

"I say, you fellows, I wish you wouldn't keep on cackling whenever a fellow opens his mouth!" he said crossly. "I simply can't be detained this afternoon, Wharton. My sister Bessie's asked me to tea at Cliff House, and she's got a cake. So, you see, it's

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rather important for me to get off. My idea is this—you beg me off with Quelch, and I'll play footer till it's time to start for Cliff House, and then chuck it—see? That will be all right."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled all the changing-room.

"Is it a go, Wharton?" asked Bunter anxiously. "I'll put in all the goals I can before I have to leave. Of course, I couldn't stay for the finish, or I should be late at Cliff House. But—"

"No!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "It isn't a go, old walrus! You see, Soccer's Soccer, and we want to beat the Shell—even if you have to miss the cake at Cliff House! Awfully and fearfully sorry, and all that—but now roll away like a good barrel!"

"Well, look here, old chap!" said Bunter. "I needn't actually play—it will be near enough if you go and tell Quelch that I'm wanted to play and you can't do without me. I don't suppose he will ever find out. I believe the beast is going out this afternoon, so he won't see the game. You cut off to Quelch and say—Leggo, you beast!"

"Ho, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton took the fat Owl by a fat neck and twirled him round in the doorway of the changing-room. Then he planted a football boot on Bunter's tight trousers, and the Owl of the Remove departed with a loud howl!

Carter scowled after him as he went. Then he bestowed another scowl on the footballers and lounged away.

Angry and irritated, he loafed in the quad, and scowled again at the sight of Mr. Quelch.

He was still feeling some twinges from the licking of the previous day. There was no doubt that Quelch had laid it on uncommonly hard. It was probable that, had Mr. Quelch known his real reason for abstracting the key, he would have laid it on harder still! But it had been hard enough, and Carter gave his Form-master an evil look as he saw him in conversation with Mr. Prout.

Prout's booming voice reached his ears:

"I am walking to Courtfield, Quelch! If you would care—"

"I should be delighted, but I have to call at Cliff House this afternoon," answered the Remove master. "Miss Bullivant desires to consult me about her young brother—you may remember the boy; he was in my Form here last term—"

Carter heard no more as he walked on.

But his eyes glinted unpleasantly as he went down to the gates.

Quelch was walking over to Cliff House that afternoon. He was fairly certain to take the footpath through the wood, which was half the distance by the road. Carter had been only a few weeks at Greyfriars, but he had learned his way about. He knew that footpath—and the plank bridge over the stream in Friardale Wood. It came into his vengeful mind that there was an easy and safe way of making Quelch sorry for that severe licking.

When the Remove master was going to start he did not know, but not yet, it was clear, for he was still talking to Prout in the quad. Carter had plenty of time to get ahead of him and clear off again before his Form-master came along.

He went at a trot, and in a few minutes was scudding along the woodland footpath. He reached the stream in the wood—which was low in the summer, but filled to the banks in the winter. The water splashed on the under side of the heavy old plank that

crossed it, resting on stones on either bank. Chips of ice floated in the water.

Carter crossed the plank, stopped, and cast furtive glances round him. There was no one in sight—few passengers used that path through the cold, frosty woods in winter-time. Leafless trees, gleaming with frost, surrounded him.

He bent and grasped the edge of the massive plank. It was not easy to shift, but he exerted his strength and shifted it.

He left it with only the tip of the plank resting on a slanting edge of stone, in such a position that it was certain to slip under the weight of any one crossing.

There was no danger of drowning; or, if there were, it did not occur to him. The water was not more than three feet deep.

But the idea of giving a middle-aged man a ducking in that freezing water was one from which even an unfeeling fellow might have recoiled.

But Carter was in an evil, bitter, and revengeful mood. Having made that preparation for Quelch, he cut off through the wood and reached Friardale Lane. He walked back to the school with an unpleasant grin on his face.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Bolt!

"BUNTAIR!"

"Oh lor'!" mumbled Bunter.

"Zat you sit down!"

snapped Monsieur Charpentier.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter under his breath.

A detention class was never a happy function. Fellows under detention were never merry or bright, and Mossoo, probably, did not enjoy his task as detention master.

There were a dozen fellows in Classroom No. 10, going through extra French. Skinner and Snoop, Micky Desmond and Wibley of the Remove, Fry and Kenney of the Fourth, Hoskins of the Shell, and a few others, shared Bunter's woe that fine and frosty afternoon. They suffered under French irregular verbs and gave Mossoo all the trouble they could, which was the nature of a detention class.

Bunter was not thinking of ragging Mossoo—he was thinking of escaping from detention if he could.

Mossoo's back being turned for a moment, Bunter rose to slip out. Unfortunately Mossoo looked round just as he made a move.

Bunter sat down again.

Irregular verbs went on their irregular way. Billy Bunter was not absorbing much knowledge of Mossoo's beautiful language. His fat mind was concentrated on getting away.

It was not merely that Bunter disliked detention. It was not merely that he disliked work. But if he stayed in Mossoo's class he lost not only his half-holiday, but Bessie's spread at Cliff House.

That beast Wharton might have begged him off from Quelch by putting him in the Remove eleven and explaining to Quelch how indispensable he was there. Quelch was considerate in such matters.

But the unspeakable beast had refused to do it! Just as if a football match mattered a boiled bean, in comparison with Billy Bunter's comfort!

It was rather a reckless idea to break out of detention. With any master but Froggy, Bunter would not have thought of it.

But Froggy was a kind and peaceable

little man, and never—if he could help it—reported a man to his Form-master. He endured almost any amount of ragging; and Bunter knew that Smithy had once slipped out of the detention-room, and Mossoo had affected not to notice that he was gone. Other fellows had played the same game and got by with it. Why not Bunter?

Even if he was reported to Quelch it meant only a licking—and the feed at Cliff House was worth it. At least, it seemed worth it to Bunter while the feed was near and the licking far.

But ten to one Mossoo would say nothing. Peace at any price was his maxim—a maxim which certainly did not make his life at Greyfriars School very peaceful.

Still, even Mossoo's good-natured tolerance had its limit; a fellow could not venture to walk out under his eyes. At the very least he had to wait till the French master's back was turned.

Bunter waited wearily for it to be turned again.

Micky Desmond dropped a book with a loud bang and drew Mossoo's attention. Up rose Bunter again.

"Desmond, zat you keep ze order!" rapped Mossoo. "I vill not have ze rag in ze class! Ecoutez, you verree bad one! Zat is zhree time zat you drop one book on a floor."

"Sure, it dhropped, sorr—"

"Faisez-vous! If you drop zat book vunce more— Buntair! Vy fer you leave your place, Buntair?"

"Oh crikey! I—I wasn't leaving my place, sir!" gasped Bunter, who was two or three yards from his Form. "I—I—I—"

"Go back viz you, Buntair!" roared Mossoo. "Is it zat you zink zat you go out from zis class-room while zat my back he is turn?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I wasn't going out!" gasped Bunter. "Nothing of the kind, sir! I—I—I wouldn't!"

"If you move one more time, Buntair, I frappe you viz ze pointair."

Bunter sat down again, in the lowest of spirits.

On the football field Harry Wharton & Co. were enjoying life. That beast Carter, who had got him a detention, was free to do as he liked—and Bunter had to stick in detention!

A dozen other fellows had to, it was true, but they did not matter; only Bunter mattered.

A dreary half-hour crawled by. Twice in that half-hour Bunter rose—and sat down again, under Mossoo's glittering eye.

But his chance came at last.

Monsieur was chalking on the blackboard; his back was turned; he seemed to have forgotten Bunter.

The fat Owl rose once more.

On tiptoe he crept towards the door. All eyes in the class-room were fixed on him, except Mossoo's. All the fellows were grinning. They all wished Bunter luck.

Nearer and nearer the door crept Bunter, his fat heart thumping. Mossoo did not glance round.

He reached the door; his fat hand was stretched out to the door-handle.

It was quite a breathless moment of excitement in Class Room No. 10. A few moments more and Bunter would be gone. If Mossoo did not look round—

But he did!

Perhaps he heard the sound of the opening door, cautiously as Bunter turned the handle. Anyhow, he looked round and spotted the fat junior in the very act of escaping.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Ducking for Quelch!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He ambled on his way down Friardale Lane, gurgling for breath, but came to a sudden halt at the sight of a well-known figure in the lane ahead.

Fortunately, he had only a back view of Mr. Quelch, and the Remove master did not look round.

He had escaped the clutches of Mossoo, and it would have been simply awful to fall into those of Quelch outside the gates—like an ancient mariner weathering Scylla and coming to grief on Charybois.

Quelch, it seemed, was walking down to Friardale. Where he was going Bunter did not know, but he was glad to see only his back.

He slowed down, blinking anxiously after Quelch.

There were two ways of getting to Cliff House School—one by the road through the village; the other by the footpath through the wood. The road was much longer, but the footpath was much muddier; so it was a matter of personal taste. Bunter would have preferred the footpath, preferring mud to distance. Quelch, who was a vigorous walker, and liked long walks, preferred the road—a circumstance that Carter had never thought of guessing when he made his preparations at the plank bridge.

Quelch, much to Bunter's relief, walked on to the village. That Quelch was going to Cliff House School by the longer way never occurred to Bunter. He, of course, knew nothing of Quelch's intention to call on Miss Bullivant, the games-mistress of Cliff House, in reference to a boy who had been in the Remove the previous term. So far as Bunter could see, Quelch was going down to Friardale—and he was glad to see him go.

The Remove master disappeared round a turn of the winding lane; and Bunter, in great relief, rolled on to the stile that gave on the footpath.

He sat on that stile to rest. After a quarter of a mile Billy Bunter needed a rest. He had lots of time to get to Cliff House, and Bessie would not be expecting him yet.

He sat and rested and puffed and blew.

He was not feeling fearfully bucked. True, he was free for the afternoon now, and going to tea with Sister Bessie at her school, and he knew that there was a cake. But the way he had got out of detention was far from satisfactory. Had he slipped out unseen, he could have hoped that Mossoo would say nothing about it, as had happened more than once before. But after bolting under Mossoo's nose, and being chased as far as the door of the House, he could hardly hope that even Mossoo would overlook the occurrence. No doubt the cake was worth a licking; still, Bunter did not want the licking.

It was Carter's fault for getting him that detention. It was Mossoo's fault for watching a fellow like a cat! It was Wharton's fault for not begging him off! It was, in fact, everybody's fault but Bunter's. He had the consolation, such as it was, of realising that he was entirely blameless. But he could not hope that Quelch would take the same view, if Froggy reported him.

Still, there was Bessie's cake to think of, and he thought chiefly of the cake.

He had been resting about a quarter of an hour on the stile, when a tall,

angular gentleman came striding up the lane.

Bunter blinked at him rather uneasily. Sir Hilton Popper was a governor of Greyfriars School and had he known that Bunter was out of detention, it was very probable that Sir Hilton would have walked him into it again.

Still, it was quite impossible for the lord of Popper Court to guess that Bunter was out of detention. There were plenty of Greyfriars juniors about in a half-holiday, and Bunter was only one of them.

The fat junior capped Sir Hilton respectfully as he came striding up. His fat face did not reveal what he was thinking—that Sir Hilton was a fussy old ass whom he would much rather not have seen just then.

Sir Hilton gave him the briefest of nods in acknowledgment, and stopped.

"Nice afternoon, sir!" ventured Bunter, supposing that the old baronet had stopped to speak to him.

"Kindly allow me to pass over that stile!" granted Sir Hilton.

"Oh, yes; certainly, sir!" gasped Bunter.

He realised that Sir Hilton had not stopped for a little conversation with a particularly nice member of his old school. He only wanted Bunter to get out of the way.

Bunter got out of the way.

Sir Hilton Popper stepped over the stile, and strode on his way up the footpath through the wintry wood. Apparently he was walking to Pegg through Friardale Wood. Bunter blinked after him.

"Beast!" he murmured.

Having got off the stile to allow Sir Hilton to pass, Bunter rolled on his way.

Sir Hilton's long legs covered the ground at a much more rapid rate than Bunter's short, fat ones, and the old baronet drew farther and farther ahead.

He reached the plank over the woodland stream, while Bunter had only a distant view of it.

But he was still in sight, though at a distance, and Bunter saw the tall, angular figure stride across the plank.

What happened next made Bunter jump.

One moment that tall figure was standing on the plank over the stream; the next, it was spashing headlong in the water.

A suffocated yell floated back to Bunter.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

He stood blinking through his spectacles. His impression was that Sir Hilton had clumsily slipped off the plank. But the next moment he saw that the plank itself had disappeared from its place, and was floating down the stream.

In the middle of the woodland stream rose the long, lean figure of Sir Hilton Popper, splashing wildly.

He was a tall gentleman, and the water was hardly up to his waist. Had he kept his footing he would have been all right.

But that sudden plunge in icy water had made Sir Hilton quite dizzy, and the current was swift and strong.

Under Bunter's horrified eyes, the tall figure went whirling over, with wild spashing.

Billy Bunter broke into a run. Sir Hilton was not merely getting a ducking; he was in need of help. He was splashing and snorting like a grampus, evidently unable to get out.

Bunter charged along the footpath breathlessly. He could not help thinking how lucky it was that Sir Hilton had

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"Buntair!" shrieked Mossoo.

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter had one foot in the passage. The sudden shriek behind him startled him, but it did not make him draw that foot back. The other followed it. Under Mossoo's exasperated eyes the fat Owl bounded into the passage.

"Mon Dieu! Zat Buntair!" roared Mossoo.

He rushed after Bunter.

Had the fat Owl escaped unseen, no doubt Mossoo would have let it go at that—and even, perhaps, forgotten to report it to Quelch afterwards. But even Mossoo could not let a detained fellow walk off right under his nose.

He rushed into the passage and waved wild hands after the scuttling fat Owl.

"Buntair!" he bawled. "Zat you come back viz you! Verree baddest of all ze bad boys, zat you come back!"

Bunter flew.

It was in for a penny in for a pound now! The fat Owl raced down the passage, turned a corner, and bolted for the door of the House.

Mossoo bolted after him.

He was going to grab Bunter by a fat ear and lead him back into the fold.

Bunter, hearing the pattering footsteps behind him, put on speed. Breathless, he reached the doorway.

A fellow was coming in as he reached it. It was Carter, just back from his walk in Friardale Wood. Carter, as he came in at the gates, had seen Quelch starting—with considerable satisfaction. Now he was coming into the House—just in time to meet Bunter in his flight.

"Gerrout of the way!" gasped Bunter.

Mossoo was close behind.

"Zat you stop him, Cartair!" shouted Mossoo.

Carter made a movement to obey, but he checked himself. If Bunter was breaking out of detention, and doing it in this reckless way, Carter was not the man to save him from heading into bad trouble.

He made a catch at Bunter, and was careful to miss him.

The fat Owl, gasping, barged through the doorway.

But Mossoo was right behind him now, his outstretched hand about to clutch. Bunter would infallibly have been caught—had not Carter been there.

Carter stumbled in Mossoo's way in the nick of time.

Mossoo bumped on him, staggered, and missed his clutch at Bunter.

Bunter bounded into the quad and flew for the gates.

"You verree clumsy garcon, Cartair!" gasped Mossoo.

"Sorry, sir! I was trying to help you. You called to me—"

"Buntair! Zat you come back, Buntair!" roared Monsieur Charpentier. He stood in the doorway, gesticulating. He did not feel disposed to chase Bunter across the quad.

Bunter heard, but he did not heed. He fled for the gates and vanished.

Monsieur Charpentier gesticulated and gasped for breath.

"Mon Dieu! Zat verree bad boy! I report zat verree bad boy to Mr. Quelch!" he gasped. "Mon Dieu! On en a assez—I report zat verree bad boy for zis!"

And monsieur gasped his way back to Class Room No. 10.

Carter winked at his back as he went. There was no doubt that Billy Bunter was giving him plenty of assistance in his campaign to land the fat Owl in trouble.

gone over the plank first—otherwise it would have been Bunter that got that ducking. Still, he was more than willing to render any aid he could.

He arrived breathless on the bank, and blinked through his big spectacles at the struggling figure in the water.

Sir Hilton Popper had grabbed at a bunch of grass, but it tore away in his fingers. He whirled over in the middle of the icy stream, spluttering frantically, and grasping wildly in all directions. Though it had never occurred to Carter, for a moment, there was actual danger of drowning unless a man had his wits about him—and Sir Hilton's wits, never of the best quality, were scattered far and wide.

"Ooooooggggh!" came spluttering from the water, as the old baronet's head went under for the third or fourth time.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, sir, this way! This way! Catch hold of my hand! Oh crumbs!"

Sir Hilton's head came up again. His feet found a footing in the mud at the bottom of the stream, and he heaved himself up.

Bunter grabbed a willow-branch with one hand, to hold on, and reached out with the other. Sir Hilton was within easy reach if he retained enough of his senses to catch hold.

Sir Hilton was on his feet again, grabbing frantically at space. But the rush of the water tumbled him over again. But as he tumbled he grabbed hold of Billy Bunter's outstretched fat hand.

"Hold on!" gasped Bunter. "Oh crikey! I say, don't pull me in! Oooooogh!"

The willow swayed and creaked as Sir Hilton's weight came on Bunter. The fat Owl held on desperately with his other hand. He could not have held on long; but Sir Hilton was on his feet now, steadied by his grip on Bunter's fat paw, and he scrambled up the bank.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton Popper, as he stood at last among the

frozen rushes, streaming and dripping. "Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Meeting Mr. Quelch!

BILLY BUNTER gasped for breath. His fat arm felt as if it had been almost wrenched out of its socket. He was splashed from head to foot, his trousers were drenched, and he was spattered with mud.

But Sir Hilton Popper was in much worse case, if that was any comfort. He was soaked from head to foot, his hat had disappeared in the stream, and he stood in a pool of water that ran down his long limbs. He gasped and gasped and gasped.

"Good gad!" repeated Sir Hilton. "Oooooogh! Good gad! That dashed plank! The local authorities are to blame! Good gad! Urrgh! I shall catch a cold! Gurrgh! Thank you, my boy! Wooogh!"

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter. "I'm all wet!"

"Thank you for coming to my assistance, Punter. I think your name is Punter. I have seen you before. Groogh! Thank you, Punter!"

"Bunter, sir!"

"Oh, yes, Bunter! I am much obliged to you Punter—I mean, Bunter! You had better go in at once and change, or you will catch cold. Urrgh!"

With that good advice, Sir Hilton turned and strode away, back the way he had come, dripping water as he went. Evidently he had given up his walk, and was thinking only of getting out of his wet clothes as quickly as possible.

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter.

He was glad, no doubt, that he had helped Sir Hilton out of the water. But he was wet and cold and horribly uncomfortable. He did not think of taking Sir Hilton's good advice, and getting in and changing. That meant getting back into detention, and no tea at Cliff

House. But it was a dismal Owl that tramped away from the spot.

The plank being gone, he could not cross the stream. He had to walk back to the lane and take the longer way round. It was more than two miles—a dismaying prospect to Bunter.

He plugged drearily on his weary way. Luckily the exercise warmed him, though damp trousers were still horribly uncomfortable. Bunter could not help feeling that he would have earned that cake by the time he began masticating it.

It seemed an age to the fat Owl before Cliff House School came in sight at last. Comforted by getting to the end of his journey, he rolled on hopefully to the gate. He cheered up at the thought of the warm fire in Bessie's study, and big hunks of cake going down like oysters.

And then—

He reached the gateway, and was about to roll in, when Mr. Quelch stepped out!

"Bunter!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "Is—is that you, Bunter?"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean, yes, sir! I—I—oh crikey!"

"You are out of detention, Bunter!"

Bunter would gladly have denied it! But there he was—a good two miles from the detention-room!

"What are you doing here, Bunter?"

"I—I—I came over to see my—my sister, sir!" gasped Bunter. "She—she's ill, and—and I was very anxious about—"

"I have just passed your sister in the garden, Bunter, and she did not look ill!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

"Oh crikey! I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"I am about to walk back to Greyfriars," said Mr. Quelch. "You will walk with me, Bunter."

"Oh lor'!"

"I shall take you to your headmaster immediately we arrive at the school. I shall request him to administer a flogging for this outrageous disrespect for disregard of authority, Bunter."

"Oh crikey!"

"Come!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

Billy Bunter tottered away by his side. He could have groaned. After all the risks he had taken, he had not even entered Cliff House—he was not even going to see the cake. He was going to see his headmaster instead, and bag a flogging from that gentleman! If life was worth living, under these harrowing conditions, Bunter did not see it.

"We will take the short cut, Bunter," he said. "This way!"

That reminded Bunter.

"We can't, sir—the plank's gone!" he groaned.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch. "Then we must walk through the village. Are you sure the plank is gone, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I saw it!" Bunter had a gleam of hope. He wondered whether his eminent service to Sir Hilton Popper would make any difference, if he told Quelch! After all, he had hooked the old bean out of the water, and Sir Hilton was a governor of the school. "I—I say, sir, the plank fell in when Sir Hilton Popper was walking across it—"

"Indeed!"

"I—I saved his life, sir—"

"You—you—you did what?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"I—I plunged into the stormy waters,

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sir, at—at the risk of my life, and brought him ashore—"

Mr. Quelch came to a halt, and fixed his eyes on Bunter. Never had they seemed to Bunter so much like gimlets.

"Bunter"—Quelch's voice came like the filing of a saw—"how dare you talk such absurd nonsense to me, your Form-master! If you utter another word before we reach the school, I will box your ears!"

Quelch strode on again.

Billy Bunter trailed after him, in the lowest of spirits, and did not utter another word till they reached the school.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Poor Old Bunter!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"That ass—"

"Wasn't he in detention?"

"Looks as if he wasn't!"

The football match was over, and Harry Wharton & Co. were feeling rather bucked by the fact that they had beaten the Shell by two goals to one. They came along from the changing-room in time to see a weary, dreary, dismal fat Owl trail in at the heels of a frowning Form-master.

To state the exact fact, they had forgotten Bunter's fat existence that afternoon. Still, had they thought of him, they would have thought of him sitting at extra French. It was quite a surprise to see him trailing in after Quelch.

Bunter gave them a sad and lugubrious blink. Seldom had the fat Owl looked so sorrowfully down on his luck.

Quelch left him waiting, while he went to take off hat and coat. That gave the juniors a chance of asking him what was up. He told them dolorously.

Carter, who was lounging by, chuckled as he listened. He had expected the hapless fat Owl to land in a row, but he had hardly expected him to walk right into Quelch's clutches. But he was puzzled, too. If Bunter had run into Mr. Quelch at Cliff House, it looked as if the Remove master had not, after all, captured the ducking planned for him by that dutiful member of his Form. Quelch would hardly have walked on, to call on Miss Bullivant, if he had been ducked.

But as Bunter proceeded with his tale of woe, the schemer of the Remove understood. The wrong man had walked into his trap, which was annoying to Carter—but the fact that Bunter was "for it" was a solace for the young rascal.

"I say, you fellows, Quelch wouldn't listen to me when I told him how I got old Popper out!" wailed Bunter. "I say, do you think the Head would? I mean to say, they ought to let me off when I saved a man's life, don't you think? I mean, it's no joke to plunge into icy water, and—"

"Was the water wet?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Eh? Of course it was, you ass! Wharrer you mean?"

"I mean that it's jolly odd that it hasn't wetted your clobber if it was!" grinned the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better not tell the Head any lies, old fat man!" said Bob Cherry.

"Mauvais garçon!" Monsieur Charpentier came up. "Vous êtes de retour—you are of return viz yourself, isn't it? You Buntair—"

"I—I say, sir, I—I'm fearfully sorry I cleared off," said Bunter, blinking at

him. "If you'd put in a word for me, sir—"

"Vat?" ejaculated Mossuo. "You verree bad boy, Bunter. I shall report you to Mistair Quelch—"

"I say, sir, while I was out this afternoon, I shaved a man's wife—I mean, I saved a man's life!" gasped Bunter. "If I hadn't gone out, sir, Sir Pilton Hopper—I mean, Sir Hilton Popper—would have been drowned—"

"Parbleau!" ejaculated Monsieur Charpentier.

"He fell in the water, sir," said Bunter hopefully. "I—I leaped in, sir, at the risk of my life, and got him out. My jacket isn't wet, because I took it off before I—I plunged in, sir."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured the Bounder.

Evidently Bunter had taken a tip from his remark on the jacket.

"After a fearful struggle, sir, I got him ashore," said Bunter. "If—I hadn't gone out, I couldn't have done it. So—so perhaps you'll put in a word for me, sir. I—I hope you believe me, sir."

"Mon Dieu! I believe not van vord!" exclaimed Mossuo. "I zink zat you are ze most untrootful boy zat ever was, Buntair. Voici Monsieur Quelch!" The Remove master came back for Bunter, and Monsieur Charpentier greeted him with gesticulating hands. "Monsieur, zis Buntair, he go out viz himself in ze detention—he run, he fly, he bunk, and I also, I run, I fly, I bunk, and I catch him if zat Cartair do not get in ze vay. But zat Cartair he get in ze vay, and zat Buntair he go, and I do not catch him. And—"

"I am already acquainted with Bunter's conduct this afternoon, Monsieur Charpentier," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "He came to Cliff House School, where I had called. I am about to take him to his headmaster, to report him for a flogging."

"Oh crikey! I say, sir—"

"You need say nothing, Bunter. Follow me."

"Oh, lor'!"

The fat Owl trailed away dismally after his Form-master to the Head's study.

Bob Cherry gave Carter a dark look.

"So you got in Mossuo's way, and stopped him from catching Bunter," he said.

Carter shrugged his shoulders.

"Can't I do my relation a good turn if I like?" he asked. "Wouldn't any fellow help a chap, with a beak after him?"

Bob gave an angry grant. Had Mossuo caught Bunter before he escaped the matter would have ended there. Carter's intervention had been intended to help the fatuous fat Owl land himself in serious trouble. Bob had not the slightest doubt on that point. Nevertheless, almost any man in the Remove would have said that it was a good turn, to help a fellow who was dodging a beak. Bob Cherry grunted, but he said no more.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "He's up for a flogging this time. Of all the howling asses he's—"

"The fat chump walked out right under Mossuo's nose," said Wibley. "Bolted like a rabbit, with Mossuo after him. Even Froggy couldn't stand for that. And then to walk into Quelch's claws—"

"Bunter all over!" grinned the Bounder.

"Poor old Bunter!"

There was plenty of sympathy for

the forlorn fat Owl. Unfortunately, sympathy could not save him from receiving that for which he had asked so emphatically.

Billy Bunter was looking and feeling as if the sum total of the troubles of the universe had landed in a heap on his fat shoulders, as he trailed after his Form-master into the Head's study.

The door of that dreaded apartment closed behind him, and his well-wishers listened for the loud howls which would announce that Dr. Locke was getting busy with the birch; but, contrary to expectation, they did not hear the Owl howl.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Luck for Bunter!

DR. LOCKE frowned at the sight of Bunter.

That term he had seen that particular member of Mr. Quelch's Form oftener than he was accustomed to see a Lower Fourth junior. Attractive fellow as Bunter was, his headmaster did not want to see him again.

"What is it this time, Mr. Quelch?" he asked.

He glanced as he spoke towards the birch. Evidently it occurred to him that that instrument might have to be featured in the scene.

"I am bound to report this junior to you, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "Bunter has always been troublesome, but this term he seems determined to give more trouble than ever. You will hardly believe, sir, that when I gave him a translation to do—a short and simple translation from Suetonius—he actually ventured to bring me a paper written in a spirit of mockery."

"I—I didn't!" gasped Bunter. "I mean, I never meant—"

"Silence! For that offence, sir, I thought of reporting him to you, but I decided that a caning and a detention would meet the case. This afternoon, sir, Bunter actually walked out of detention; he actually had the audacity to run, when Monsieur Charpentier followed him and called him back. In the circumstances, sir, I feel that only you can deal with him."

"Quite so, Mr. Quelch," said the Head. "No doubt a flogging—"

"I hope, sir, that a flogging may make this foolish and troublesome boy realise that he is not here to disregard all authority."

"I have no doubt of it," said Dr. Locke. "Bunter—"

"If—if you please, sir—" gasped Bunter.

"You can have nothing to say in extenuation of such an offence, Bunter," said Dr. Locke sternly. "I shall now administer—"

"But, sir, if I hadn't gone out, old Popper would have been drowned!" gasped Bunter.

It was the only card he had to play, and he played it, in the desperate hope that it might prove a trump.

"What?" ejaculated the Head. He withdrew his hand from the birch, and stared at Bunter. "What is the boy saying?"

"Some ridiculous story, sir, of which I do not believe a word," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "Bunter is, I am sorry to say, an absolutely untruthful boy."

"Oh, really, sir! It's true!" groaned Bunter. "You can ask old Popper, sir—"

"Who?" exclaimed the Head.

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"I—I mean Sir Hilton Popper, sir! I—I saved his life, sir—"

"Do not talk nonsense to your headmaster, Bunter!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I ain't!" gasped Bunter. "I really did, sir, and as old Popper—I mean Sir Hilton Popper—is a governor of the school, sir, I thought very likely you'd rather he wasn't drowned, sir—"

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, blinking at Bunter. "If there is any truth in this, Mr. Quelch—certainly it is no excuse for breaking detention—nevertheless, Bunter, you may tell me what has happened."

"Yes, sir. Old Popper—I mean Sir Hilton Popper—I never call him old Popper, sir, like some of the fellows—I'm too respectful—"

"Proceed at once, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir. Old—Sir Hilton Popper fell off the plank in Friardale Wood, sir, and—and I rescued him, sir. Hearing his cries for help, I rushed up, sir, and—and, without thinking of the danger, plunged in, and—and swam with him to safety, sir."

"Do you believe this, Mr. Quelch?"

"I do not, sir!"

"Oh, really—" gasped Bunter.

"Bunter is a very poor swimmer," said Mr. Quelch. "What he states is quite impossible. I do not believe for one moment that anything of the kind occurred."

Not for the first time, Billy Bunter had reason to wish that he could have told a plain tale without trimmings.

"But—but it's true, sir!" wailed Bunter. "I—I fought for my life in the raging flood, sir—"

"Bunter is describing the woodland stream in Friardale Wood, sir," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "I regret that your time should be wasted with such nonsense."

"I shall certainly listen to no more!" said Dr. Locke, frowning. "How dare you make statements, Bunter, which are obviously untruthful?"

"I—I—I mean I—I didn't exactly plunge in, sir—" stammered Bunter. As the Head clearly did not believe in the heroic rescue, Bunter was prepared to moderate his transports, as it were. "What I really mean is, sir, that I—I got hold of a willow and reached out my hand to old—to Sir Hilton Popper, sir, and got him, and—and dragged him out, sir."

Headmaster and Form-master gazed at Bunter.

Had the hapless Owl told the truth to begin with, doubtless he would have received credence. But the facts came too late to be of any service to Bunter. As he had started with fabrication, it was not surprising that the two masters regarded the whole story as fabrication.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, almost dazedly. "You have told me that you plunged into the water,

Bunter, and now you tell me that you reached out a hand to someone in the water. Mr. Quelch, I fear that this boy would say anything that came into his head to escape a just punishment."

"I fear so, too, sir!"

"Bunter, I shall now administer a flogging, all the more severe because of your reckless and unscrupulous prevarications—"

Buzzzzzzzzzz!

The telephone bell interrupted Dr. Locke.

"Pray excuse me a moment, Mr. Quelch!" He picked up the receiver. "Yes, Dr. Locke speaking."

Billy Bunter cast a longing blink towards the door. To bolt from the Head's study, as he had bolted from the detention-room, was hardly to be thought of. But, really, Billy Bunter was capable of almost anything when a flogging impended over his fat head. Mr. Quelch's eye gleamed at him.

"Yes—Sir Hilton Popper!" the Head was saying into the transmitter. "Yes, what—"

The barking voice of the lord of Popper Court came back, audible to Quelch and Bunter, as well as the Head.

"I have rung you up to inquire after the boy, sir—a boy named Punter—"

"Punter! I do not think I know the name—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. His fat face brightened. "He—he means Bunter, sir—"

"Do you mean Bunter, Sir Hilton?" inquired the Head.

"Bunter? Yes, perhaps so—Punter or Bunter—it is quite immaterial—a very plump boy in glasses—"

"Yes, Bunter—"

"I shall be glad to hear, sir, that the boy has not caught a cold, or suffered any ill effects—"

"But what—what—"

"The boy Punter—I mean, Bunter—gave me very material assistance, sir, when I fell into the stream in Friardale Wood this afternoon. The plank, sir, fell in—owing to the crass carelessness, I presume of the local authorities. I intend to take the matter up with the Rural District Council—"

"Yes, yes, but what—"

"I do not think, sir, that I was in actual danger, but I might have been—I might have been, sir, had not Bunter run up and assisted me. I can assure you, sir, that I was very glad of a helping hand out. The boy got very wet, but I shall be glad to hear that he suffered no ill effects—"

"None, I think, Sir Hilton!" gasped the Head.

"I am very glad to hear it, sir! I am very thankful that the boy was there. I should be glad, sir, if you will convey my thanks to Punter."

"Oh, certainly!"

Dr. Locke put up the receiver and turned back to Bunter, with a rather uncertain expression on his face.

"Er—Sir Hilton Popper desires me—er—to convey his thanks to you, Bunter," said the Head. "It—it appears that a—a part of your story, at least, is veracious! Mr. Quelch—"

He looked at the Remove master.

"Sir!" said Mr. Quelch. He looked at the Head.

"In these circumstances, Mr. Quelch—"

"Hem!" said Mr. Quelch.

"An accidental occurrence is, of course, no excuse for breaking out of detention. Nevertheless—"

"Nevertheless, sir—"

"Perhaps, in the circumstances, Bunter may be pardoned—no doubt he will take warning from his very narrow escape from a flogging—"

"I trust so, sir!"

"Bunter, you may go!"

Bunter made one jump to the door!

Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round Bunter when he reappeared. They were prepared to hand out all the sympathy that the sad circumstances required. But the fat Owl did not seem to be in need of sympathy. He was grinning from ear to ear.

"I say, you fellows," chuckled Bunter, "what luck! I say, I've never been nearer a flogging! Not that I care much about a flogging, you know—I can take my gruel I hope, without making a fuss, like some fellows! But—"

"You've got off?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"What do you think?" chortled Bunter. "Old Popper phoned up the Head while I was there, and told him how I saved him. After that, of course, it was all right! Dr. Locke patted me on the head and said 'Gallant lad! Those very words!'"

"Gammon!"

"Beast! And Quelch said he was proud to have me in the Form! His actual words were 'Bunter, I am proud to call you a member of my Form! If only the others were more like you! Those were his words'"

"Rats!"

"Yah! I say you fellows, wasn't it jolly lucky that old Popper took that dip? Somebody must have shifted that plank, you know, and if he hadn't, I should have had a flogging, safe as houses. I wonder who did it? Jolly glad he did, anyhow."

Which Arthur Carter, perhaps, was glad to hear—though more probably not!

THE END.

(Billy Bunter plays the most prominent part in the next yarn in this exciting series. It's entitled: "BUNTER'S BIG BLUFF!" Amusing and amazing situations you'll find in plenty. Order your copy of next Saturday's MAGNET at the earliest opportunity! —Ed.)

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DUSTY'S VISITORS!
Another Bright and Breezy Instalment of:
"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!"
By DICKY NUGENT

"What's the matter with Lickham?"
That was the question that was being asked up and down St. Sam's.
Inky fags were asking it in the Second Form Room. Jack Jolly & Co. were asking it in the Junior Common-room. Stately seniors were asking it within the sacred precincts of the Prefects' Room.
Doctor Birchmell was asking it as he paced up and down the carriage drive in front of the Skool House with Mr. Justiss, the master of the Fifth.
"Really, Justiss, it's beyond a joke!" he said, with a shake of his head. "In fakt, things have come to a pretty pass, as the centre-forward remarked when the outside-right kicked the ball in his face. There's simply no knowing what Lickham is going to do next!"
"Indeed, sir!" said Mr. Justiss pompously.
"Yes, indeed, Justiss! His refined Oxbridge accent has vanished completely. He speaks now in a most coarse and common manner."
"You don't say so, sir!"
"It is too, all the same!"
sighed the Head. "Then again his habits have become low and vulgar to an eggstent that is almost unbelievable. Would you credit it, Justiss, if I told you that I caught him frying fish in the Form-room?"
"Impossible, sir! I should say it was 'cod'!"
"It was herring, as a matter of fakt!" snorted the Head. "Then again, he walks about the skool without a collar, and with a bundle tied up in a red spotted handkerchief and slung over his sholder!"
"By Jove!"
"I tell you, Justiss, Lickham seems a changed man to me!" said Doctor Birchmell seriously. "Unless there's a dickens of an alteration soon there is only one course open to me—to discharge him with ignominy!"
"Who's he, sir?" asked the master of the Fifth innocently.
"I mean, to send him off with a flea in his ear—or, as the vulgar

mite put it, to terminate his engagement compulsorily!" eggspained the Head. "If things don't improve, Justiss, that's what I shall have to do and—"
Doctor Birchmell broke off as the sounds of rawcuss voices fell on his ears.
"We're a-comin in!"
"No, no, you're not!"
"Ho, hain't we? 'Oo's a-goin' to stop us?"
"Me!"
"Haw, haw, haw!"
Doctor Birchmell and Mr. Justiss looked over to the gates from whence this argewment was coming, and their eyes fell on two burly looking tramps trying to force their way on to the premises past old Fossil, the skool porter.
"Bless my sole! How dare these common persons have the sawce to come to St. Sam's?" eggclaimed the Head. "What do they think they're doing of, Justiss?"
"They are certainly not the tipe of visitor one eggspoets at a skool for the sons of gentlemen!" remarked Mr. Justiss, with a frown. "Shall we go and see what they want, sir?"
"Yes, rather!"
Doctor Birchmell and the master of the Fifth broke into a gallop and charged down to the gates. They were just in time to catch the two ruffians biffing Fossil ruffly to one side.
"Stop!" cried the Head, as they turned away from Fossil and started to march up to the Skool House.
The two tramps stopped and leered at the newcomers.
"Ulle, matey!" they cussed. The Head shuddered slitley;



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 277. EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON. January 29th, 1938.



HARRY WHARTON CALLING!

Last week I told you what a lot of outdoor activity goes on at Greyfriars even in this wintry season of the year.
This week, so that you are not left under any misapprehensions, I would like to assure you that indoor recreations are also in full swing.
The frost mentioned last week has now broken, and, skating being over—only temporarily, we hope!—there is a boom in indoor fun.
In the course of the last five evenings, we in the Remove have got through quite an impressive programme.
Inky won the chess championship of the Lower School, beating Peter Todd in two out of three very keen games.
A team of six Remove boxers beat the Upper Fourth team, winning four out of six bouts. This was a rattling fine performance, our opponents being in most cases appreciably heavier than ourselves. Bob Cherry, Vernon-Smith, Johnny Bull and myself were the victors. Dick Russell and Bolsover major were licked—but both earn full marks for putting up a jolly good show.
On Wednesday we had a meeting of our Debating Society and decided by

sixteen votes to ten that schoolboys should be allowed to govern themselves. It is to be hoped that the authorities will sit up and take notice!
Johnny Bull and his band have put in two evenings at practice, and this time they have managed to keep out Hoskins. There is a big future for Johnny's boys despite Hoskins' absence—or because of it!
Wibley started selecting a cast for his new play on Thursday evening. The play is a thriller written by himself. He has called it "The Screaming Mummy" and I understand that it deals with weird events in the house of an Egyptologist. Wib is taking it very seriously. He was not a bit amused when Kipps suggested that it would sound more grown up if it was called "The Hysterical Mater!"
The Remove also played two games of table-tennis—one against the Upper Fourth and the other against the Shell. Sad to relate, our lads lost on both occasions. Can't keep up this non-stop win binney in all departments!
No time for more now. I think I have said enough, anyway, to show you that most of us keep pretty busy after we've closed our books for the day! Meet you again next week, chums!—
HARRY WHARTON.

vulgar slang always filled him with horror.
"What's the big idea?" he rapped out. "Are you aware that you are trespassing on privit property?"
"Ho, no, we hain't!" said one of the preshus pair. "Cawse why? 'Cawse we come 'ere to see an ol' mate of ours, hain't we, Charlie?"
"Yuss, Joe!"
The Head's eyebrows went up sharply.
"You mean to tell me that you have a friend at St. Sam's—two low, common raskals like you?" he cried. "Impossible! Who is he?"
Back came the answer from the tramp called Charlie.
"I'll tell you 'is name, old



covey!" he leered. "It's Lickham!"
"WHAT?"
The Head and Mr. Justiss recoiled as from a blow.
"L-L-Lickham?" phaltered the Head. "You—you mean the master of the Fourth?"
"Yuss!"
"Oh, grate pip!"
Doctor Birchmell looked at Mr. Justiss and Mr. Justiss looked at the Head. The meer thought of a St. Sam's master being on terms of friendship with this pair of grimy raskals was enuff to give them both a blue fit.
A week ago they would have refused to believe it. But after the amazing change that had come over the Fourth Form master recently, they had an uneasy feeling that it was only too troo.
The Head recovered his breth at last.
"Mite I ask how you come to know Mr. Lickham?" he asked.
"Yuss!" leered Joe. "If you want to know, matey, 'e useter be on tramp with us afore 'e come to this 'ere college. Come on, Charlie!"
Doctor Birchmell glared. It was a shock to him to learn that Mr. Lickham had been a tramp before he had come to St. Sam's; but he was becoming used to shocks from Mr. Lickham, and he had no intention, anyway, of allowing these

two grubby spessimens in the skool.
"Take another step at your peril, you low creetchers!" he cried. "Friends of Mr. Lickham or not, you're barred! There's the gate!"
"Ho, yuss!" leered Joe. "Well, 'ere's a one for your nose, matey!" Plonk!
Doctor Birchmell hit the gravel path with a sickening thud; as the ruffian planted his grimy fist into his face. Mr. Justiss uttered a gasp of horror.
"Stop, you villans! Do you realise what you've done? You've nocked down the headmaster!"
"Orlright, matey!" said Charlie, with a brootal larf. "Now we'll do the same for you, an' then you won't be jellus!"
Bang!
"Ow-ow-ow!" Reskew, St. Sam's! Woodoop!"
Mr. Justiss collapsed, yelling feendishly; and the introoders galloped away, larfing callously.
Half-a-minnit later, when Jack Jolly & Co. arrived on the scene, the two tramps had vanished.
The heroes of the Fourth simply blinked when they saw the Head and Mr. Justiss and Fossil sitting on the ground, rubbing their anatomies and groaning.
Their faces darkened when they heard the Head's brief account of what had happened.
"My hat! We can't allow that, sir!" said Jack Jolly. "Of corso, it's rather a lark to see you old buffies nocked about—"
"Eh?"
"But we're not letting strangers take liberties with anybody of St. Sam's, sir—even you! We'll make them pay dearly for this, won't we, you chaps?"
"Yes, rather!"
And Jack Jolly & Co. hurried off to find Mr. Lickham's visitors.
Meanwhile, the two tramps had found the man they were seeking, just coming out of the tuckshop.
Dusty Lickham was looking as pleased as a dog with two tails. He had just lerned from a tellyfone inquiry that the real Mr. Lickham—the cuzzin whose eydentidy he had adopted—had been sentenced to fourteen days in chokey. That left Dusty more than a week in which to go on enjoying himself at St. Sam's. As he stepped out of the tuckshop, there was a smear of jam round his mouth and a cheerful grin on his face.
But that grin disappeared in a flash when he saw Joe and Charlie. A look of alarm took its place.
"Ulle, you coveys!" he said.
"Wotto, Dusty!"
The bogus Form-master started uneazily.
"Not so much of the 'Dusty'!" he said. "My name's Ize Yain

this 'ere skool—Izaak Jolliwell Lickham."
"Ho, yuss?" said Joe, with an unplezzant larf. "Well, you're still Dusty to us, an' our ol' pal Dusty's goin' to 'elp us hover a little job, hain't 'e, Charlie?"
Dusty Lickham frowned feercooly.
"A meer nothink, Dusty!" leered Charlie. "Elp us to kidnap a rich yung bloke of the name of Bullion as 'angs out in this 'ere skool. That's hall. Wot's your answer?"
"Ere it is!" replied Dusty Lickham, with a grim smile.
Bang! Crash! Wallop!
"Yow-ow!" "Elp!"
"Woo-oo!" "Ands hoff!"
"Now git hout!" snapped Dusty Lickham.
Charlie and Joe waited for no more. They ran—and Dusty Lickham returned to the tuckshop to refresh himself with another ginger-pop.
But the introoders had by no means given up hoap of bringing off their kidnapping stunt. As soon as they were out of site of the tuckshop, they asked a gardener's boy where Bullion was. And, as luck would have it, Bullion was just walking across to them from the playing-fields.
The two kidnappers waited for him in the shelter of some bushes.
"Gotcher!" growled the ruffians, as they sprang out on the wealthy yung Fourth Former.
In a brace of shakes, the yungster had been gagged and bound and

bundled into an old sack. Then Joe slung him across his sholder and the kidnappers sneaked out of St. Sam's by a side gate.
Five minnits later, the Head summoned Mr. Lickham to his study.
"Lickham!" he said, sternly. "Much as it grieves me to part with an old and trusted servant, I have decided that it is impossibil to keep a master who hobnobs with common tramps. You are discharged!"
Dusty Lickham's scrubby jaw dropped.
"Ho, crikey!" he mermured. "But look 'ere, old covey, them blokes as you saw hain't really pals of mine. If you'll listen to me—"
He got no further. At that moment, the door was flung open and Jack Jolly & Co. bust into the room.
"Bullion, sir!" gasped Jack Jolly. "He's kidnapped! Those tramps have kidnapped him!"
Doctor Birchmell started violently. Then slowly his gaze returned to the bogus Form-master.
"Kidnapped, eh?" he cried, grimly. "So that's the game—and I fancy I know who's responsibl! There's the culprit—your Form-master, Mr. Lickham! Stop him from getting away, boys! I'm going to tellyfone for the perlice!"
(Looks as if Dusty Lickham—not to mention his "cuzzin"—will shortly be in hot water! Don't miss next week's "eggssiting" developments!)

MY FORM IS THE BEST AT GREYFRIARS!
Claims HORACE HACKER, B.A.

In expressing the opinion that the Shell Form is the best at Greyfriars, I wish it to be understood that I do not pretend that they are more than the best of a bad lot. (SNIFF!)

My experiences as temporary headmaster showed me plainly that a lamentably large number of the boys at Greyfriars are nothing better than defiant and insubordinate young hooligans. (SNIFF!)

That the Shell Form contains a large number of such undisciplined young wretches I do not deny. (SNIFF!)

But I think I am correct in claiming that there are not so many of them as in other Forms,

and the reason for this (SNIFF!) is not hard to find. It is simply that I have, by my firm methods, brought most of them to a condition of comparative tractability.

What they think of me inwardly I do not know and do not particularly care. (SNIFF!) It is sufficient for me that most of them are outwardly respectful and obedient. In this respect I feel sure that they compare very favourably with any other Form and I feel quite safe therefore in asserting that my Form is the best at Greyfriars. (SNIFF! SNIFF!)

(N.B.—We put in the sniffs ourselves to give you the right atmosphere!—Ed.)

COLD COMFORT FOR COKER!

Strange Sequel to a Speedway Race!

Whoopoo! Coker of the Fifth has won a cup for his motor-bike! But if you think the scoffers are piping down, wait till you've heard the full story!

Coker heard there was going to be a race for amateurs at the Lantham Speedway. He heard it from Potter, who heard it from Blundell, who heard it from Hilton; so he received his information in rather a roundabout way.

But that didn't worry Coker. The time and day were definite enough even though the conditions of the race were a bit vague. Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock prompt, Potter said, and Coker made up his mind about it at once.

"I'm in!" he said. "I'm phoning my entry right away. It will mean I shan't be able to turn out for the Fifth at footer, but that can't be helped."



This little difficulty was of no importance, as it happened, for it appeared that Coker had not been selected to play for the Fifth. So everybody was satisfied except the fellows who like getting a cheap laugh by watching Coker play footer!

He phoned through his name and address to the Speedway and his entry was accepted.

On Wednesday afternoon, he drove off in great glee. Ever since he's had a motor-bike, Coker has dreamed of racing it on a Speedway to the frenzied cheering of thousands of fans. Now, it seemed, his dream is at last coming true!

Coker's machine shone like burnished gold when he left Greyfriars.

It looked somewhat different by the time he reached Lantham. In the course of the journey he had collided with a tree and a haystack and landed twice in a ditch. The motor-bike looked slightly the worse for wear. Coker regretted it; but it couldn't be helped.

Coker was relieved, anyway, when he arrived, to find that his machine looked quite a smart affair in comparison with others present. True, it was covered in mud, but its general outline looked businesslike, whereas most of the others looked as if they had come out of the Ark.

Coker was given a number and lined up for one of the heats. The race started and, to his

great joy, Coker rapidly forged ahead and, in spite of occasional wobbles and continual zigzagging, ended up an easy winner! Later he was lined up again in the final and repeated the performance by licking the lot.

Amid loud cheers, Coker was presented with a silver cup.

Then came the unfortunate sequel.

One of Coker's rivals lodged a protest and the stewards scraped some of the mud off Coker's machine and had a look at it. Then they disqualified Coker and awarded the race to the second man.

When Coker started kicking up a dust about it, he made a remarkable discovery, and the discovery was this:

The race he had won was a race for old crooks guaranteed to be not less than 20 years old!

Cheers for Coker, anyway, lads! He can, at least, say he has won a motor-bike race, though we seriously doubt whether he'll boast much about it. If you take our tip, Coker, old man, you'll make the most of it. It's the only speedway race you're over likely to win!

Answer to Correspondent:
G. LODER (Sixth).—"What do you think of the fag who served my dinner all over my head?"
He wanted to see you wearing your old school PIE!