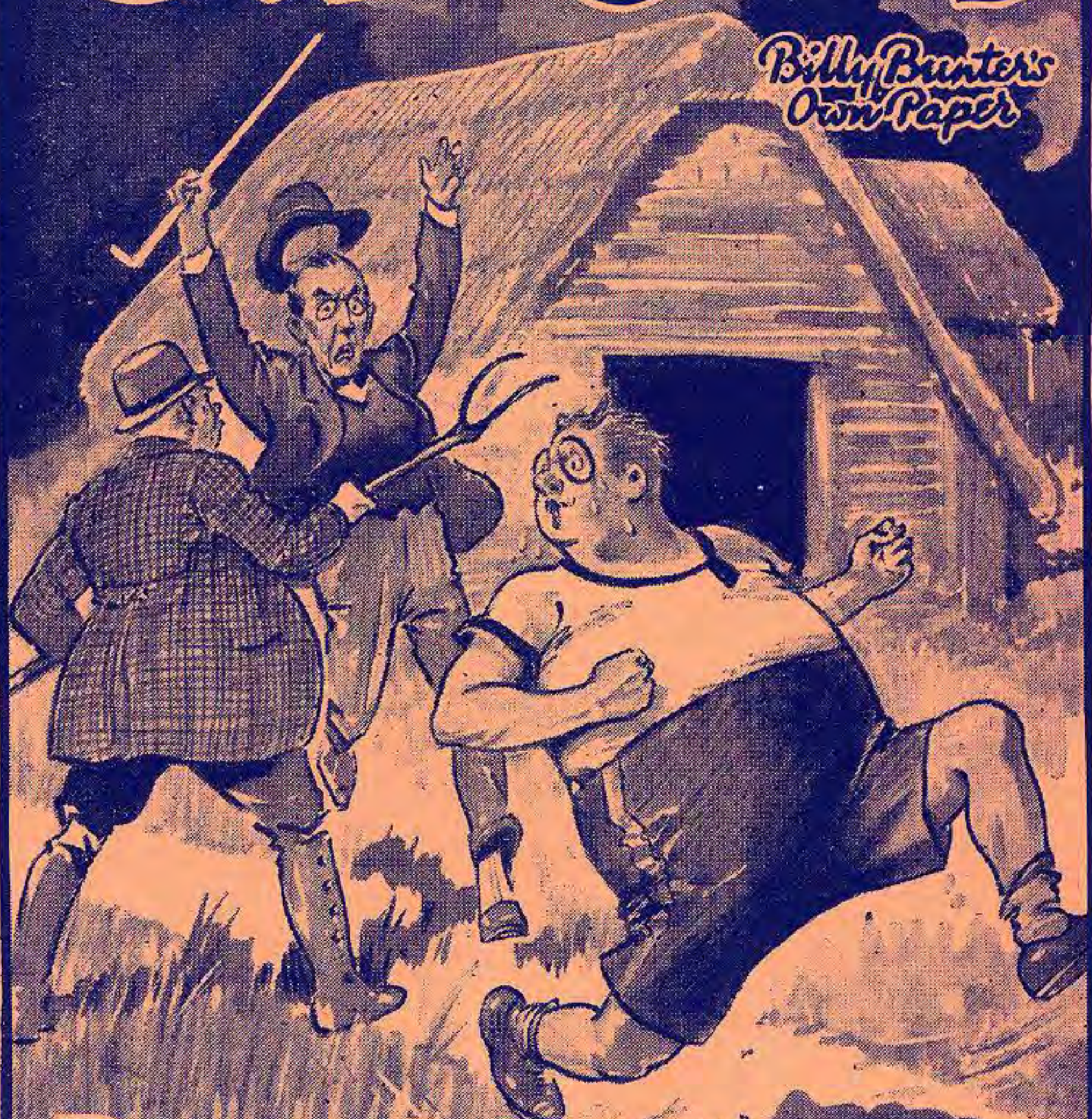


"THE SCHEMER OF THE REMOVE!" 35,000 - word
School-Adventure Yarn of Harry Wharton & Co.

The Magnet

2^D

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



BUNTER'S BREAKAWAY!

NO CHARGE FOR ADMISSION, CHUMS! STEP RIGHT IN WITH—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

A TOUR OF THE SCHOOL. The Dormitories.

(1)

The dorms are similar, you know,
For each is long and wide,
With beds and lockers in a row
On either side.
There's very little to attract
The chap who likes a circus,
It's rather bleak, in point of fact,
And not unlike a work-us!

(2)

No pictures, curtains, rugs or fire
Or anything to make
A fellow sleepless with desire
To keep awake!
But, still, it's healthy, big and clean,
And daren't be ornamental,
For pillow-fights have seldom been
Conspicuously gentle!

(3)

We pillow-fight from sheer delight
In being young and strong;
We'd like to keep it up all night,
But don't for long!
The masters stop that little plan,
Their arguments are stinging!
And hardly have we slumbered than
The rising-bell starts ringing!

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Black Beauty



Regard it with wonder and awe,
A sight that is pleasant to see!
Oh, Topper, that shiniest on Temple, the
finest
Of verses are feeble for thee!
Behold its black body and brim,
It's far too delightful for him!

But now the world rocks in despair,
The stars in the heavens fall flat!
It's awful, unnerving! A turf has come
curving
And landed on Temple's top-hat!
That topper has rolled in the mud—
A crime to be answered in blood!

Too stricken with horror to move
Stands Temple, bereft of his sense!
In stupefied loathing that tricks upon
clothing
Are played in this college for
gents!
Stands Greyfriars, he asks, where it
did,
When fellows can turf a chap's lid?

And now a vile scoundrelly boot
Has lifted that topper a mile,
Astounding! Amazing! While Temple
stands gazing,
They're playing a game with the
tile!
And Cherry—inhuman young brat!—
Has scored a neat goal with the hat.

In gibbering rage and dismay
He rescues that topper at last.
Too late, for its glory is only a story,
A tale that is told and is past!
Bespattered and dented and creased,
Black Beauty is now a Black Beast!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

MARK LINLEY,
the Lancashire Lad of the Remove.

L is for LINLEY, a Lancashire Lad,
At Learning his Lessons his Labours are
glad;
He has quite a Liking for Latin and
Lore,
Not Languid or Lazy, but ready for
more!



His scholarship made him despised by
the worms,
Like Skinner and Bunter for several
terms,
But Marky was steady, good-humoured
and cool,
And soon won a place with the best in
the school!
At sport he is sound, never flashy or
tame,
He plays for his school and the good of
the game;
But please don't imagine that Marky is
dull,
A "little tin saint" with a ring round
his skull!
He may be a little more steady than
some,
But that doesn't mean he is gloomy and
glum;
He's always at home in a rag or a lark,
And fights like a Trojan—good health
to our Mark!

A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

A reader asks why Bunter wears
glasses in bed. Well, he's so short-
sighted, he wants to see what he's dream-
ing about!

Yesterday, Quelch sent Bunter out of
class for half an hour to wash his neck.
This morning, thirty-one fellows turned
up with unwashed necks.

Fisher T. Fish is getting so absent-
minded that he's just swindled himself
out of fourpence.

The big mirror in the Remove dorm
is cracked. We've warned Bolsover
major dozens of times not to look in it.

Hurree Singh offers to teach any
Remove fellow Hindustani free of
charge. Well, it might help us to tell
Coker what he really is.

PUZZLE PAR

Three boys had to share two
pies, one of which was twice as
big as the other. They insisted
on each having exactly the same
amount. How did they manage
to cut the big pie into two exact
halves?

Answer at foot of column.

Coker has just asked Mr. Prout to
excuse him from classes in future
because "his time is rather occupied."
He must have foreseen that he would
get 1,000 lines!

After Hoskins had finished one of his
brilliant (?) piano studies, he asked the
Shell what they thought of his execu-
tion. They were strongly in favour of
it, at an early date.

David Morgan is collecting sea-shells.
We're afraid this wild excitement will
be bad for him.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE

They put the small pie on the big one
and cut round it

COUSINS AND RIVALS! Carter, the schemer of the Remove, lays a cunning trap for his cousin, Billy Bunter, in the hope of keeping him out of his wealthy uncle's good graces!

The SCHEMER of the REMOVE!

By FRANK RICHARDS



Carter crammed Mr. Quelch's manuscript into the study fire, with the exception of one sheet which he slipped into an inner pocket!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Heavy Hand!

KNOCK!

"Come in!" said Mr. Quelch irritably.

The master of the Greyfriars Remove had, as a rule, a calm, though severe temper. Sometimes he was wrathful. Sometimes he was quite fierce. But he was never irritable in the Form-room.

But Mr. Quelch, at the present moment, was sitting at the typewriter in his study, clicking off one more chapter of that celebrated "History of Greyfriars," which had been his constant companion for twenty years or so.

So he was, at the moment, not a schoolmaster, but an author. Authors are well-known to be an irritable tribe! Interruption of their literary labours makes them snap like dogs, or spit like cats!

That knock at his study door irritated Quelch. His fingers ceased to wander idly over the noisy keys, and he snapped "Come in!"

The door did not open.

Quelch glared round at it.

"Come in!" he repeated.

Still the door did not open.

Quelch breathed hard and deep! Some fool—some insensate fool—had tapped at his door by mistake, it seemed, and passed on!

He resumed typing.

Click, click, click, click!

The frown faded from his brow. His mind drifted happily back over the centuries. He became absorbed in the History of Greyfriars.

Knock!

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

That was what he said; but his tone was more emphatic than his words.

"Come in!" he almost snarled.

The door did not open.

"Upon my word!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

It could not be a mistake this time! Such a thing could hardly have happened twice! Yet no one entered.

It seemed impossible—unthinkable—that any fellow could be "ragging" the master of the Remove. Wiggins and Capper were sometimes ragged. Quelch was about as safe to rag as a tiger in the jungle. Yet there had been two successive knocks at his door and no

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Schoolboy Adventure, starring
HARRY WHARTON & CO.,
of GREYFRIARS.**

one had entered. It was a rag, or nothing.

Mr. Quelch rose from his chair, leaving a half-written sheet in the machine, picked up a cane, and stepped to the door.

He opened the door suddenly.

No one was in sight in Masters' Passage. Whoever had knocked had vanished. Up the passage, down the passage, Quelch's gimlet eyes glittered. Like Moses of old, he looked this way, and he looked that way, but there was no man!

With feelings that could hardly have been expressed in words, but which were plainly indicated in his speaking coun-

tenance, Mr. Quelch shut his door and returned to the typewriter.

But he did not recommence clicking on the keys.

Inspiration had departed.

Interrupted authors cannot carry on regardless. At such moments, they are dangerous to approach. Quelch sat with knitted brows.

He did not expect that unknown practical joker to come again. But he rather hoped that he would! He wanted to catch him! He would have given half a term's salary as master of the Remove to catch him. It was quite pleasant to think of the cane ringing on that practical joker's trousers.

Knock!

Quelch started.

"Come in!" he gasped.

But the door did not open. Amazing as it was, it was that japer again. This time Quelch did not go to the door.

He knew that the young rascal would have vanished, as before, by the time he got the door open. He sat breathing hard. The expression on his face might have terrified any practical joker.

He waited!

If that young villain came again, Quelch was not going to say "Come in," and give him time to clear! He was going to make one bound to the door and catch him fairly in the act.

He listened intently.

Hitherto, he had heard nothing of the enemy's approach. The fellow, whoever he was, tiptoed cautiously to the door. But, straining his ears, the Remove master hoped to catch a sound that would put him on his guard! By this time he would have given a whole term's salary to catch the young rascal.

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He wondered which young rascal it was! Harry Wharton & Co. were sometimes given to japing, but they would not play tricks like this. More likely Vernon-Smith—he was almost the only fellow in the Form with nerve enough to rag Quelch. On the other hand, this kind of thing—runaway knocking—was rather beneath Smithy's usual style. Whoever was doing this was not merely disrespectful, but stupid as well. Thinking of stupidity naturally made Mr. Quelch remember Billy Bunter!

Was it Bunter? Bunter had been more than usually troublesome that term. Moreover, Bunter had lines, which he had to bring to his Form-master at tea-time. He was much more likely to turn up with some excuse for not having done them. If it was Bunter—

There was a sound in the passage.

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet, his eyes glittering. Silently he stepped to the study door, cane in hand. If a knock came, the young rascal was not going to escape this time!

Knock!

Quelch grabbed the door-handle with his left, and the door flew open. His swiftness was really like lightning. In a split second more, his hand was grasping at a collar.

"Oh!" came a startled gasp.

It was Bunter! There stood the fat ornament of Mr. Quelch's Form—his eyes almost popping through his spectacles in startled surprise.

He stood there only for a moment! Then the grasp on his collar whirled him into the study.

"I—I—I say—" gasped Bunter.

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

Whack!

Quelch did not tell him to bend over, as was the custom! He seemed unwilling to let go of Bunter, now that he had got him!

Grasping him by the back of the collar with his left, he laid on the cane with his right.

Whack, whack, whack!

The whacks rang like pistol-shots! Louder still rang the frantic roars of Billy Bunter! He wriggled and squirmed in his Form-master's grip! He roared, he howled, and he yelled! But it booted not! The whacks came hard, and the whacks came fast.

Whack, whack, whack!

Quelch was putting his beef into it.

Whack, whack!

"Ow! Wow! Yow! Yaroop! Help! Stop it! I say—yaroooooh!" roared Bunter. "Oh crikey! Oh crumbs! Oh scissors! Oh jiminy! Oh lor! Whoo-hooooop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"There!" gasped Mr. Quelch. He was getting tired; though not so tired as Bunter! "That will be a warning to you!"

"Yarooooop!"

"Leave my study!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Bunter was glad to leave the study. Quelch had stopped—but he looked like restarting after the interval.

Bunter bolted! He did Masters' Passage at about 50 m.p.h.

Mr. Quelch sat down again! He was feeling better! He was assured that there would be no more runaway knocks at his door! He was right—there were none!

Calmness and peace of mind returned, at last, and Mr. Quelch resumed literary clicking! He dismissed the matter from his mind.

Bunter did not! It was not so easy for Bunter to dismiss it!

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THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Dog with a Bad Name!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"What—"

"What's that cad been up to?" growled Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five of the Remove were walking in the quad after class. They were engaged in a rather warm argument.

The topic was the match with St. Jim's, which was booked to come along shortly. Bob Cherry, the best half-back in the Remove, did not want to figure in that match. He did not, at all events, want to do so if Carter, the new fellow in the Remove, was in the team.

Which was disconcerting to his friends, and extremely exasperating to one of them who happened to be football skipper.

Argument was waxing warm, when Bob Cherry suddenly changed the subject. He was staring towards the windows of Masters' Studies.

On a raw February afternoon, those windows, naturally, were closed. But one of them had opened, and from within, a junior dropped into the quad.

It was the fellow of whom they had been speaking—Arthur Carter, the new Removee.

The window from which he had dropped was that of Prout's study. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was out.

During his absence, it seemed, Carter had some business in his study, and had preferred to leave by the window.

So swift was Carter's drop from the window, that few would have been likely to notice it. One instant he was at the window—the next, standing on the earth below the sill, looking quite casual, as if he had just strolled there in the most harmless way imaginable. Of the five juniors, only one saw him—Bob, because he had happened to be looking in that direction when Carter dropped.

The other four glanced round.

"That's Bunter's jolly old relation, Carter!" said Frank Nugent. "What about him? What do you mean, Bob?"

Grunt, from Bob Cherry.

"What's he been doing in old Prout's study?" he snapped.

"Has he been in old Prout's study?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I saw him drop from the window, just before you fellows looked round."

"Blessed if I saw him!" said Harry Wharton. "He doesn't look as if he's been up to anything, Bob! Sure—"

"Think I'm blind?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No—but you bar that new man, and you dislike him so much, old bean, that you seem to see something wrong in everything he does—or doesn't."

"The esteemed window is opened!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Prout might have left it open," said Johnny Bull. "I don't see what a Remove man would want in the Fifth Form beak's study. Still, if the chap's been japing old Pompous, where's the harm?"

Bob Cherry's brow darkened.

"That cad has been up to something in Prout's study!" he said. "He won't get nailed for it—ho hardly ever does get nailed for his dirty tricks! If Bunter gets nailed for it, I shall chip in."

"Bunter?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Haven't I told you, and don't you know without being told, that that cad Carter has been landing things on Bunter ever since the term started?" exclaimed Bob. "If he's ragged in Prout's study, he's left something to make it look as if Bunter's been there."

"Well, I know it's looked that way sometimes, but—"

"Oh, he makes me ill!" growled Bob. "Look here, I can't play in the St. Jim's match if that fellow plays. He hacked me in the match with Highcliffe last week, and I was limping for days afterwards. I had to go off the field. No good having to send a man off in the St. Jim's match."

"That was an accident, old chap—"

"Accidents will happen, sometimes, in Soccer!" said Johnny Bull. "Any man might get a hack."

"I know that! Am I the fellow to do a song and dance about a hack?" grunted Bob Cherry. "He fell on me, when a Highcliffe man barged me over, and hacked me as he fell—it was just deliberate. Smithy saw him, and he knows."

"Smithy bars him, like you do, so he's not an unprejudiced judge!" said Frank Nugent.

"And why does Smithy bar him? Because the cad gave him away to the beaks," snorted Bob.

"Smithy may think so, but—"

"Well, it's no good jawing!" said Bob. "That cad crooked me in the Highcliffe match, and he'd do the same again, if he felt like it. He loathes me, for standing up for Bunter, and stopping his tricks on that fat fool. Whatever it is that he's just done, nobody will spot him—if I don't! He's been in old Pompous' study, and sneaked out by the window. What does he care about japing Prout? Not a thing—unless he's got some foul play on hand."

Four members of the famous Co. exchanged a smile.

It was not like cheery, honest old Bob to take deep dislikes; he had a kind-hearted toleration for everybody, from Smithy, the bad hat of the Remove, to Billy Bunter, the grub-raider of the studies. He could be friendly with Bolsover major, who was a good deal of a bully, and with Skinner, who was artful and malicious. He could even see some good in Fisher T. Fish! But he barred the new man, Carter, thoroughly and whole-heartedly; and it was a fact that he could see no good in anything that Carter ever did or said. If Carter had said that it was a fine day, Bob would almost have suspected that there was some trick behind it! To Bob Cherry, Carter was a dog with a bad name!

"Well, look here," said Harry, "let's ask him! If he's gummed old Pompous' slippers, he can tell us."

"More likely to tell lies!" grunted Bob.

"Oh, rot! Come and ask him."

Carter was strolling away with his hands in his pockets, his air careless and casual.

Harry Wharton & Co. cut after him, and he glanced round at them as they came up.

"What are you on Prout's track for?" asked the captain of the Remove, directly.

Carter stared at him.

"On Prout's track? What do you mean? I've got nothing to do with Prout."

"I mean, what have you done in his study?"

"In his study!" repeated Carter.

His eyes narrowed at the Famous Five. Up to that moment, he had supposed that his sudden and surreptitious exit from Prout's study had been entirely unobserved. He had noticed the chums of the Remove in the distance, that was all. But Wharton's question showed him that he had been seen.

"Are you going to tell us you haven't been in Prout's study?" asked Bob Cherry scornfully.

Carter gave him a dark look.

"Bob saw you drop from the window!" explained Nugent.

"He seems very interested in what doesn't concern him," drawled Carter. "Suppose I dropped into the Fifth Form beak's study, and dropped out again after looking at his newspapers, what about it?"

like!" snorted Bob. "I don't believe a word of it! If anything's happened there——"

"Nothing has!" said Harry. "You're making a hobby of being down on that man Carter, Bob. Chuck it and come in to tea!"

And the Famous Five went into the House—where a buzz of voices and a sound of laughter drew them to the Rag.

"Hippopotamus?" suggested Skinner. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I—I barely escaped with my life!" gasped Bunter. "I say, Wharton, now you're here, will you go to the Head about it? You'd better do it, as captain of the Form. Go to Dr. Locke and tell him——"

Harry Wharton stared.

"Go to Dr. Locke and tell him that Quelch has gone mad!" he ejaculated.



"What on earth's up?" asked Carter, as he peered into the study. "What's the matter with Bunter? Is he off his rocker?" "Oh!" Bunter popped his head out from under the table. "Is that Carter? You beast, Skinner, you said it was Quelch!"

"His newspapers?" repeated Harry.

"Just that! My Uncle Carter has some property in China, so I'm rather interested to keep an eye on the newspapers to see whether the Japanese have bombed it to bits! Cherry got any objections?" asked Carter sarcastically.

"You haven't been japing old Pompous?"

"Not at all."

"Nothing happened in his study to make him go raging to Quelch, to call Bunter over the coals?" said Bob Cherry, with savage sarcasm.

Carter laughed.

"Still got that bee in your bonnet?" he asked. "Well, I don't want to get into a row for borrowing the newspapers in a master's study—but if you hear anything's happened in Prout's study, you can put it down to me, and you can go to Quelch about it, and I'll come with you! Can't say fairer than that, can I?"

"Hardly!" said Harry Wharton laughing.

"I'll keep you to that!" grunted Bob. "Do!" said Carter. And he walked on, with his hands in his pockets.

Bob stared after him grimly.

"What the dickens was his game in that study?" he muttered.

"He's told us!" said Nugent.

"Oh, rats! You can believe him if you

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Startling News!

"I SAY, you fellows!" "What the dickens——" "Quelch has gone mad!" "Wha-a-t-t?"

"Mad as a hatter!" gasped Billy Bunter. "Dangerous! Raving!"

Billy Bunter, in a state of great excitement, was in the Rag, surrounded by a crowd of juniors. Some of them were laughing. Some looked startled. All were interested. Bunter, evidently, had a startling tale to tell. As the Famous Five came in, he gave them a blink and an excited squeak. They joined Bunter's audience, in great surprise.

"Mad!" repeated Bunter. "Fancy a—a Form-master, you know, going right off his onion! And—and I went to his study, you know, not knowing that he had gone mad, and he got me! Grabbed me——"

"Grabbed you?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Clutched me!" gasped Bunter. "Just like a clutching hand on the films, you know."

"Quelch did?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Sprang at me!" spluttered Bunter.

"Leaped at me like a—a leopard! Sprang at me like a—a tiger! Hurled himself at me like a—a—a——"

"Yes; at once, old chap," said Bunter eagerly. "Don't lose any time about it."

"I can see myself doing it!" gasped Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what's happened?" roared Bob Cherry. "Has anything——"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"It's jolly queer, from what Bunter says," remarked Peter Todd. "But Bunter's such a fearful fibber——"

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"He's been whopped," said Vernon-Smith. "He says Quelch whopped him for nothing."

"Bunter always gets it for nothing," grinned Hazeldene. "Never was there such an innocent chap as Bunter."

"Haden't you done your lines?" asked Nugent.

"You see, it was like this," gasped Bunter. "Do shut up, you fellows, and let me tell Wharton! He will have to go to the Head about it. Quelch will have to be collared——"

"Collared!" gasped Harry.

"Yes; and put under restraint, you know."

"Oh crikey!"

"I mean to say, he went for me with the cane; but suppose he got hold of the poker——"

"The poker! Great pip!"

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"Or a bread-knife, or something!" said Bunter. "You can see the danger, now he's gone mad."

"Is the madfulness terrific?" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, listen. I went to his study— You see, I was going to ask him to let me leave my lines till after tea, owing to having a pain in my finger."

"Which finger?" grinned Johnny Bull.

"I don't know. I—I mean, what does that matter? Never mind that. I had a pain in my finger, and I couldn't do the lines. So I went to Quelch—"

"You might have expected a whopper like that to get his rag out, fathead!"

"But I never told him!" gasped Bunter. "I never said a single word. I hadn't time to speak. I only knocked at the door, and then— Oh crikey! I say, it makes me shudder now, really. Quelch was hiding inside the door—"

"Hiding!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Lurking," said Bunter.

"Lurking! Oh, my hat!"

"Lurking just inside the door, like—like a tiger waiting for his prey," said Bunter. "The instant I knocked, he tore the door open and seized me. He sawed me as soon as he seed me—I mean, he seized me as soon as he saw me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tain't a laughing matter!" hooted Bunter. "Fancy a chap knocking at his Form-master's door, and his Form-master grabbing the door open suddenly, springing on him, and dragging him into the study."

"What utter rot!" said Bob.

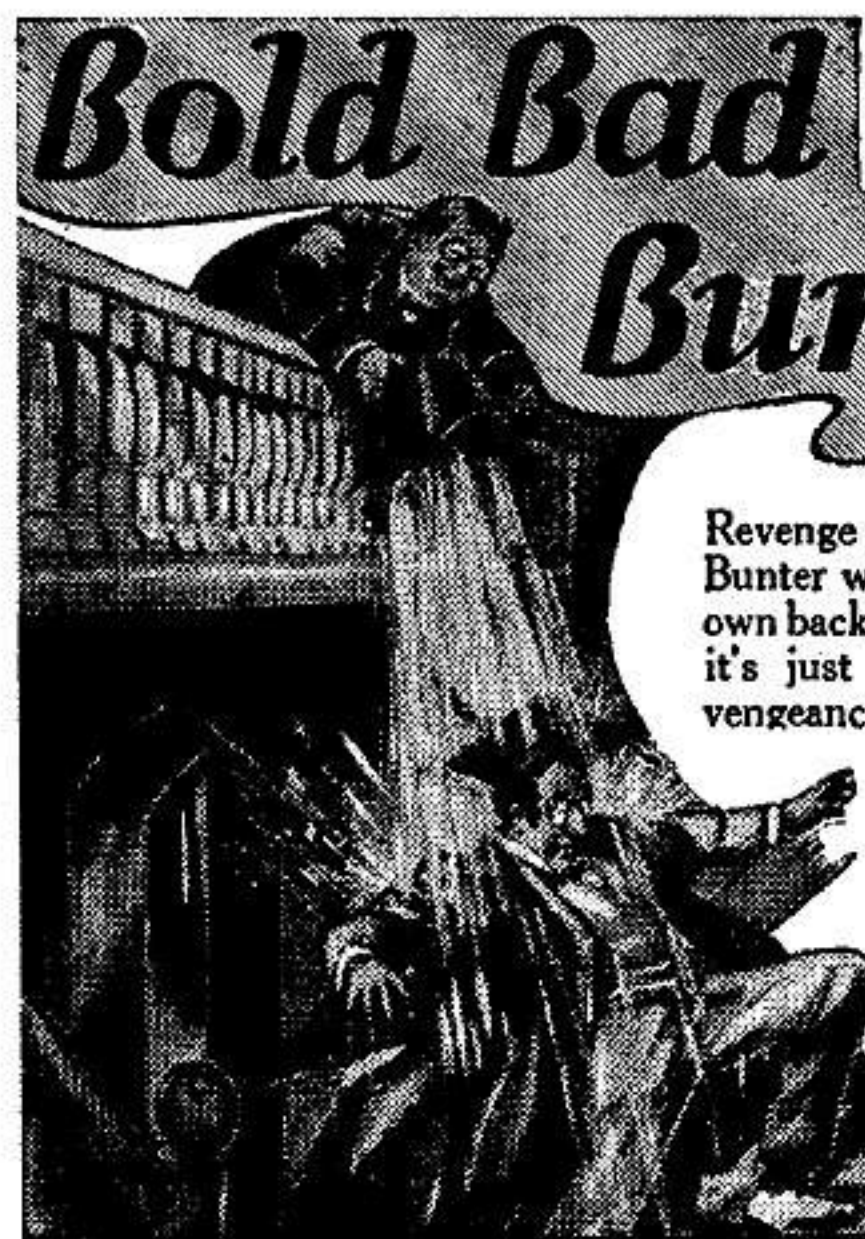
"That's what he did!" yelled Bunter. "I—I was fairly flabbergasted! Quelch has always been a beast, of course, but he's never been a wild beast before—that I've noticed. Grabbing me with one hand, he pitched into me with the cane in the other—right and left, like billy-ho! I hadn't said a word. He never even knew why I'd come to the study—never knew I hadn't done my lines, or anything! Tain't time to take them in yet, anyhow. Not a word—nothing! Just seized me like a raging lion, and whopped me right and left!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared blankly at the fat Owl of the Remove. This tale sounded more incredible than usual—though Billy Bunter was well known for telling the tale.

That such a thing could have happened was simply impossible. And yet, impossible and incredible as it was, it was clear that Bunter, for once, was telling the truth—or as near to it as Bunter could be expected to get. No doubt he was exaggerating, and piling on the agony—that was Bunter's way. But his excitement and terror were evidently genuine. It was clear that the fat Owl had been scared almost out of his fat wits.

"I've had a fearful whopping," he went on breathlessly. "Quelch has hardly ever laid it on like that before. For nothing, you know! I never did anything—never said anything! I'd only just knocked at the door, when it flew open, and there was Quelch springing at me like a tiger! What do you fellows think of that?"

"Blessed if I can make it out—if it happened!" said Harry Wharton. "Had you been playing any silly trick at the door?"



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"I'd only just got there!" gasped Bunter. "I told Toddy I was going, didn't I, Toddy? I was here in the Rag. I wasn't sure I'd go, you know. Quelch mightn't have believed that I had a pain in my finger; he's doubted my word before, as you fellows know. That cad Carter ought to have done the lines for me, and I told him so. It was his fault I got them. You know the beast got me those lines in class—dropping a book, and making Quelch look round just as I was putting a bullseye into my mouth."

"Never mind Carter now!"

"Well, it was all his fault, and I told him he ought to do the lines; but the beast only laughed and went out. Then I asked Toddy to do them; but he was selfish, as usual—he wouldn't. So I decided at last to go and tell Quelch about the pain in my finger—see? Well, Toddy knows that I went straight to his study from here, don't you, Toddy?"

"Yes; that's so," said Peter. "And I know you came back five minutes afterwards, yelling like a Red Indian."

"You'd have yelled, I think, if a mad beak had clutched you, and pitched into you right and left!" howled Bunter indignantly. "Why, two or three of the other beaks looked out of their studies. I saw Capper and Wiggins and Hacker as I came away. They wondered what was up. I hooked it as soon as Quelch let go—you bet! Sprinted! I—I was afraid he might come raging after me, you know—perhaps with the poker in his hand!"

"You've done nothing?"

"Nothing at all, except knock at the door. Instead of saying 'Come in!' as usual, I tell you he grabbed the door open, and sprang at me."

"Well, this beats the band!" said Bob. "I believe Quelch is doing his typing stunts. I heard the clicking from his window, I believe. He doesn't like being interrupted when he's on that typewriter of his. But—"

"But he wouldn't—" exclaimed Nugent.

"He couldn't—" said Johnny Bull.

"He did!" howled Bunter. "I'm not going to his study again, I can tell you. I shan't take in my lines—I—I daren't! Suppose he got hold of the poker, and knocked my brains out—"

"Well, he could hardly do that," remarked the Bounder. "He might get hold of the poker, but he couldn't spot the brains."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! You can cackle!" exclaimed Bunter. "I jolly well shan't go to his study again—I know that! I think Wharton ought to go to the Head about this. I mean to say, Dr. Locke ought to be warned. He ought to be told that Quelch is mad, before he does something awful. It happened to be me this time, but it might have been anybody. I say, you fellows, suppose he sprang at the Head?"

"Oh crikey!"

"Well, he might. A maniac might spring at anybody. I can tell you he's as mad as a hatter! Lurking just inside his study door, and springing at a fellow when he knocked—"

"Is that Quelch coming in here?" asked Skinner, as the door of the Rag reopened.

"Ow! Help!" yelled Bunter.

He made a dive for the table, and bolted underneath it. He disappeared like a ghost at cock-crow.

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

It was only Carter who had come in. He stared round him in surprise.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off!"

came a squeak of terror from underneath the table.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth's up?" asked Carter. "What's the matter with Bunter? Is he off his rocker?"

"Oh!" Bunter peered out from under the table. "Is that Carter? You beast, Skinner, you said it was Quelch—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter, reassured, crawled into view again.

Carter stared at him.

"I say, don't you go to Quelch's study, Carter!" exclaimed Bunter.

"Why not, fathead?"

"He's gone mad!"

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"Mad as a March hatter—I mean a March hare! He was lurking inside his study door, and sprang on me like a savage tiger when I knocked—"

The Famous Five left the Rag, and went up to the Remove to tea, leaving Billy Bunter telling the thrilling tale over again from the beginning. They no more knew what to make of it than the other fellows. That the calm, sedate, severe master of the Remove had suddenly gone out of his senses seemed very improbable—to say the least. But, if things had happened as described by Bunter, Quelch's actions were hard to account for, on any other theory. Not a fellow could understand what it all meant; but Billy Bunter, at least, remained convinced that his Form-master had gone dotty—stark staring, raving dotty! Really, it looked like it.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Desperate Measures!

PETER TODD grinned. Tom Dutton stared. Billy Bunter quaked. Tea was going on, in Study No. 7 in the Remove, as in other studies. Probably for the first time in history, Billy Bunter was not devoting his whole attention to the foodstuffs.

Bunter was pricking up his fat ears, like a rabbit alarmed by a dog. Every footstep in the Remove passage made him start and quake.

Starting and quaking, therefore, were almost incessant, as there were, of course, a good many footsteps in that passage at tea-time.

"I—I—I say, is—is that Quelch?" asked Bunter, for the umpteenth time, when Lord Mauleverer sauntered past the study door. "Oh dear!" He gave a gurgle of relief as the footsteps passed on. "I say, Toddy, ain't it awful?"

"Frightful!" agreed Toddy.

"I haven't taken in my lines," groaned Bunter. "I daren't go to a study with a raging maniac in it, Toddy!"

"I'll take them in for you, if you like, old fat man."

"Well, I haven't written them yet, you know! I say, Toddy, it's only a hundred; you might do them and take them in—"

"I'll watch it!" said Toddy.

"Still, he may forget all about the lines, being mad," said Bunter hopefully. "Do potty people remember things, Peter?"

"Dunno. You ought to know. What's your own memory like?"

"Beast!"

"I say, is anything up, you fellows?" asked Tom Dutton, who had been staring at Bunter in great surprise and curiosity.

Dutton, being deaf, was the only fellow in the Remove who had not heard Bunter's strange and startling tale.

"Quelch has gone mad!" answered Bunter.

"Eh?"

"Quelch—mad!" hooted Bunter. "Gone off his dot!"

"Rot!" said Tom. "I should have heard it if a shot had gone off. I'm not so deaf as you make out."

"Not shot—dot!" shrieked Bunter. "Dot, not shot."

"Oh, draw it mild! A lot of shots. How could a lot of shots have gone off? Do you mean old Prout's rifle, that he keeps in his study?"

"Quelch!" yelled Bunter.

"Quelch doesn't keep a rifle in his study, does he? Old Prout keeps that old gun because he used to go hunting with it—though I've heard Price of the Fifth say that he bought it second-hand at old Lazarus', in Courtfield. But Quelch—"

"He's potty!" roared Bunter.

"Gammon! If he's potted anything with old Prout's rifle, what has he potted? Tell me that!"

"Quelch has gone barmy!" howled Bunter.

"I never knew that. I don't believe he was in the army! I've never heard of it before. When was he in the army?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Trying to pull my leg, because I'm deaf?" asked Dutton crossly. "I'm not so deaf as you make out. I heard all you said. It's news to me that old Quelch was ever in the army—and I don't believe it, either."

Another footstep came along the passage. This time it was a heavier tread.

Bunter knew that tread.

He bounded.

"I—I—I say, Peter, that—that's Quelch!" he said faintly.

"He's come up to ask about your lines, fathead!"

"Help!"

"You blithering ass—"

"Don't tell him I'm here, Peter!" Bunter made a bound behind the back of the armchair and squatted, invisible.

"I say, old chap, keep it dark! If he springs at you I'll rush out and help you—I will, really. Honest Injun! But—but d-d-don't you give me away!"

There was a sharp rap at the study door, and it flew open. The severe countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch looked in.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton rose to their feet at once. Bunter did not! The fat Owl squatted out of sight, hardly breathing.

Peter looked very curiously at his Form-master. He could detect no signs of insanity in that severe and majestic countenance. Quelch looked the same as usual, only he was frowning. But his frown was accounted for by the circumstance that Bunter had not taken in his lines when due, and that Quelch had had to come to his study to see about the matter.

"Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch, in a deep voice. Then he glanced round the study. "Is not Bunter here?"

That was a difficult question for Peter to answer. He did not share Bunter's terrors on the subject of Quelch's alleged insanity, and he saw no reason why the fat Owl should not face his Form-master. But he could hardly let Quelch know that Bunter had hunted cover to dodge him. On the other hand, he had to answer Quelch.

"Bunter, sir?" he repeated. "I—I don't see him here, sir."

That answer was perfectly true, though it savoured, perhaps, a little more of the wisdom of the serpent than of the innocence of the dove!

"This is his study!" snapped Mr.

Quelch. "Can you tell me which study Bunter is in at the moment, Todd?"

"I don't think he's in any of the other studies, sir!" answered Peter, again truthfully, and again with more wisdom than innocence.

"Dutton! Do you know where Bunter is?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Certainly, sir!" answered Tom, in surprise. "A man who hunts, sir."

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch. "What do you mean, Dutton?"

"I suppose that's right, sir!" said Dutton, still more surprised. "A hunter is a man who hunts—"

"Bless my soul! I did not ask you what a hunter was, Dutton! Have you seen Bunter?"

"Only Mr. Prout, sir."

"Mr. Prout?" repeated the Remove master dazedly.

"I have heard that he used to be a hunter, sir. I don't know that I've ever seen any other hunter."

"Bunter!" bawled Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter!" repeated Tom. "Oh, no, sir; Bunter's no hunter! Fancy Bunter hunting! I shouldn't think so, sir."

Mr. Quelch, breathing hard and deep, turned to the door again. As he did so, his glance fell on the tea-table, with plain and obvious evidence that three fellows had been at tea. The frown on his brow intensified. If Bunter was not there, clearly he had been there very recently; and Quelch had not seen him leave the study as he came up the passage from the stairs. He fixed his eyes on Peter's face.

"Todd! Was Bunter in this study? Is it possible—is it even imaginable—that that reckless and disrespectful boy is deliberately eluding me, his Form-master? I have already caned him severely this afternoon. Apparently, I was too lenient with him, however. Is Bunter here?"

"I—I—" stammered Peter.

Mr. Quelch stared—or, rather, glared—round the study. It was really almost unimaginable, to Mr. Quelch, that a member of his Form could, or would, dare to dodge out of sight when he came along looking for him! But it certainly looked as if Billy Bunter had done so.

There was only one possible hiding-place in Study No. 7, and that was behind the high back of the armchair.

Mr. Quelch grasped the top of that high chair-back and twirled the armchair aside on its castors.

Bunter, squatting in terror, was revealed!

Mr. Quelch gazed at him.

"Bunter!" he gasped.

"I'm not here! I mean, keep off! Help!" roared Bunter. "Rescue! Hold him, Toddy! Keep him off! Help!"

"Bunter!" shrieked Mr. Quelch. "What do you mean? How dare you? Are you out of your senses, Bunter? Come here at once!"

"Ow! Keep off!" shrieked Bunter, springing up and dodging round the armchair. "Keep him off, Toddy! I won't be murdered! Help!"

"Bunter!" gurgled Mr. Quelch.

"Boy! Are you mad?"

"No! You are! Help!"

"Boy!"

Quelch made a clutch. In the fixed belief that it was a maniac clutching at him, Bunter was desperate. He grabbed the cushion from the armchair and hurled it.

Bang!

The cushion landed on Mr. Quelch's scholastic gown, where that gown screened the third button of his waistcoat! It landed hard.

"Oooooop!" came from Quelch.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,555.

He staggered.

He sat down.

There was a bump in Study No. 7.

Mr. Quelch sat, amazed, astounded, breathless, gazing at Bunter—indeed, almost gibbering at him.

Bunter did not stay to be gibbered at. Promptness and presence of mind had saved him, for the moment, from the maniac's clutch. But he had no time to lose. He bounded to the door. He grabbed it, and slammed it after him as he fled.

"Bunter!" gurgled Mr. Quelch.

Slam!

Bunter was gone;

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Hunting Bunter!

"SAVE me!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Help!"

"What—"

"Hide me! He's after me!"

Seven fellows were at tea in Study No. 13—the Famous Five of the Remove, and Mark Linley and little Wun Lung. Seven fellows bounded like one man, as the study door was hurled open and Billy Bunter shot in like a stone from a catapult, and banged the door after him and yelled.

"I say, you fellows, help!" roared Bunter. "He's after me! He nearly got me in my study! Help! Save me! Hide me! I say, back me up! Get hold of the poker, some of you! Have you got any cricket stumps or anything? I say—"

"You mad ass!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Who's after you?"

"Quelch!" shrieked Bunter.

"Quelch!" gasped Mark Linley.

"He's madder than ever!" panted Bunter. He gurgled for breath, his eyes popping through his spectacles, perspiration trickling down his fat face. "I say, he came up to my study after me, and nearly got me. If I hadn't bowled him over with a cushion he would have had me!"

"You bowled Quelch over with a cushion?" shrieked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, just in time; got him right in the bread-basket!" gasped Bunter.

"He'd have had me. I say, he's madder than ever—grinding his teeth, and his eyes flashing fire! I say, if he comes to this study don't tell him I'm here. Tell him I've gone home."

"You blithering bloater!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"I say, where can I hide? He spotted me behind the armchair in my study. You know how sharp madmen are!" groaned Bunter. "I say, I'll get under the table, and if all you fellows sit round close he'll never see me there. Mind you don't give me away!"

"You potty porpoise—"

"Fattee ole Buntsee velly funnee!" chuckled Wun Lung. "Tinkoo fat ole Buntsee gone off lockee."

"Beast! Make room for a chap, will you?" hissed Bunter. "I believe I can hear him coming!"

There was not much room to squeeze under a study table with seven fellows sitting round it; but it was a case of any port in a storm, and Bunter plunged wildly among fourteen legs. He squatted, gasping, under the centre of the table, surrounded by legs and feet.

"I say, you fellows, can you hear him?" came a terrified squeak from under the table.

"Come out of it, you howling ass!" roared Bob.

"No fear! I say, you fellows, don't

move; sit tight, and keep me out of sight. If Quelch looks in here, say I've gone to the Head—or—or say I've gone home—or—or say I've fallen down-stairs! Say anything that will keep him off. I don't mind what, so long as you keep him off!"

"Quelch will want some keeping off if Bunter has really been biffing him with a cushion!" gasped Frank Nugent.

"I say, you fellows, get hold of something—the poker will do! Get him when he opens the door! Stun him!" gasped Bunter. "If you stun him, I—I'll help you tie him up—"

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

"You howling chump—"

"You barmy bloater—"

"Don't let on that I'm here! I hardly got away alive!" groaned Bunter. "I say, you fellows, if you all grab him together, I could get away and go to the Head. The Head ought to know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, is he coming? Can you hear mad yells or anything?" gasped Bunter.

There was a good deal to be heard from the Remove passage. Most of the Form were in the studies at tea, and most of them seemed to be turning out into the passage. Doors opened and voices called. The Remove seemed to have been disturbed like a hive of bees.

Through the hum and buzz came the sharp tones of Mr. Quelch, cutting like a knife.

"Where is Bunter? Has anyone seen Bunter?"

The Remove master's tread approached the door of Study No. 13.

"Come out of it, Bunter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "You can't stick there, you potty oyster, when Quelch wants you."

"Beast! Don't you give me away. I say, is he coming?"

"Sounds like it!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Seems to be looking in all the studies."

"Oh crikey!"

The door of Study No. 13 opened.

Harry Wharton & Co. rose respectfully to their feet. They stood as thickly round the table as they could, in the hope that a host of legs would screen Bunter. Quelch, it appeared, had come up the passage, looking into study after study, so he could not know that the fat Owl was there.

If Bunter had cushioned Quelch, as he stated, the penalty was awful to think of. There was no saving Bunter ultimately; still, it was something if he could keep doggo till Quelch had had time to cool down. Anyhow, the juniors in the study did not want to hand him over. A forest of legs hid the terrified fat Owl from Quelch's searching eyes.

"Linley— Oh, you are here, Wharton! I am looking for Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "I fear that something has happened to the unfortunate boy. He does not seem in his right mind. Do you know where he is? I think he ran into one of the studies. I must find him immediately."

"Is—is anything wrong with Bunter, sir?" stammered the captain of the Remove, diplomatically avoiding a direct answer.

"I fear so, Wharton. His actions are so very strange. However, he does not seem to be here."

Quelch turned back into the passage. The juniors looked at one another. If Quelch found out that Bunter had been in that study all the while it meant trouble all round; but that could not be helped.

There was only one more study for Quelch to search—Study No. 14. He looked into that study, and found Fisher

T. Fish alone there; then he turned back along the passage.

As he did so a fat squeak floated out of Study No. 13.

"I say, you fellows, shut that door! For goodness' sake shut that door before he comes back!"

Mr. Quelch jumped.

"Quiet, you potty ass!" hissed Bob Cherry.

"Beast! If that mad old ass finds me—"

"Bunter!" It was quite a roar, as Mr. Quelch reappeared in the study doorway. "Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Wharton, Bunter is here—I heard his voice. How dare you conceal his presence from me! Is this a conspiracy? Every boy here will take two hundred lines! Bunter, come out at once! Bunter, where are you?"

"I—I ain't under the table, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Upon my word! Will you emerge, or will you not emerge?" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, emerge this instant!"

"I—I—I won't!" howled Bunter desperately. "I ain't going to be murdered!"

"What?"

"I say, you fellows, hold him—keep him off while I get away!" yelled Bunter, from beneath the table. "Catch hold of him, Cherry! Grab him, Wharton! All of you hold him while I bunk!"

"The boy is mad!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "He must be insane! Bunter, emerge from under that table immediately! Wharton, Cherry, remove that table!"

There was no help for it. The table was shifted aside. Once more a squatting fat Owl was revealed to Quelch's gimlet eyes.

"Now, Bunter—"

"Keep off!" shrieked Bunter, bounding. "Don't you clutch me, you maniac! I won't be clutched by a maniac! Keep off!"

"Bunter, you ass—"

"Shut up, you fathead!"

"For goodness' sake, Bunter—"

But appeals were lost on the frightened fat Owl. He was too terrified to heed. He bounded round the study as Mr. Quelch strode at him.

A sudden shove from Bunter sent little Wun Lung staggering in the way of the Remove master.

Bunter dodged out of the study.

"Bunter!" roared Mr. Quelch. He flew out of the study after Bunter, his gown streaming behind him.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Oh scissors!"

The juniors rushed to the door to watch. In the Remove passage a score of fellows were buzzing with wild excitement. Bunter was doing that passage like the cinder-path. His feet seemed hardly to touch the floor as he flew. After him rushed Quelch. Quelch was not only angry; he was alarmed. He could only suppose that Bunter had taken leave of his senses. Bunter had to be secured at once. But Bunter was not going to be secured by a mad Form-master, if he could help it. Not Bunter!

"Bunter—stop!" roared Mr. Quelch. "Stop that boy! Do you hear? Stop him!"

Nobody stopped Bunter, he flew out of the passage, across the landing. He descended the stairs three at a time, bounding like a kangaroo. After him bounded Quelch, leaving the Remove passage in a roar.



Peter Todd made quick work of Billy Bunter's book. The pages, in bunches, were torn up and reduced to fragments. Bunter sat and gurgled for breath, as the fragments dropped into the empty bag on the table, glaring at Peter with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Merely a Misunderstanding!

DR. LOCKE gave so violent a start, that he dropped his pen, scattering blots.

He gazed in amazement—almost incredulous amazement—at a fat, breathless figure that dashed into his study. His eyes bulged at Billy Bunter! Never had the headmaster of Greyfriars School been so startled and astonished.

"What—" gasped the Head. "What—what does this mean? What—"

"Help!" gurgled Bunter.

"Boy!"

"He's after me—"

"Bunter—"

"He's mad!"

"Bless my soul! What—" Dr. Locke started to his feet, as pursuing footsteps reached his study door. "Mr. Quelch—what—"

Quelch panted for breath.

"I regret, sir, that you should have been disturbed by this boy of my Form—I fear that the boy has lost his wits—"

"Goodness gracious!"

"Keep him off!" shrieked Bunter.

"Oh, save me—save me! Keep him off, sir! He's mad!"

"Bunter," gasped Mr. Quelch. "Calm yourself—"

"Keep away! I won't be clutched by a lunatic! You keep him off, sir! Oh, help! Make him go away, sir! He's mad!"

Bunter in desperation, dodged round the Head's chair, as Mr. Quelch stepped into the study.

The Head gazed at him, dazedly, and gazed at Quelch.

Mr. Quelch shut the study door.

"I am sorry, sir—" he gasped.

"The boy appears to be out of his wits! It is most distressing! He actually hurled a cushion at me, sir, and fled—I have been in pursuit of him—"

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head.

"Bunter, calm yourself! Endeavour to calm yourself, my poor boy! A doctor shall be sent for immediately! You shall have every care! You have nothing to fear! Be calm, Bunter."

"Keep him off, sir!" moaned Bunter.

"I ain't mad, sir—he's mad!"

"This is dreadful!" said the Head.

"This unfortunate boy—"

"I will take him away, sir—"

"Keep him off!" shrieked Bunter.

"Make him go away, sir! I won't be seized! I won't be murdered! I—I—I won't!"

"Pray leave him to me, Mr. Quelch!" said the Head, hastily. "He appears to be in dread of you, but not of me. Perhaps I can calm him! Bunter, be calm! You are quite safe with your headmaster, Bunter!"

"You won't let him spring on me, sir, like he did before?" gasped Bunter.

"No, no! Be calm! What an extraordinary delusion!" said the Head.

"What can have made this unhappy boy imagine that you did anything of the kind, Quelch?"

"I have no idea, sir! An amazing delusion—"

"He did, sir!" babbled Bunter.

"He's mad, sir! Oh crikey! Hid behind his study door, and jumped out at me—oh lor'!"

"Amazing!" said the Head, pityingly. "Poor, poor boy!" Dr. Locke was not likely to believe that a member of his staff had hidden behind a door, and jumped out at a junior!

"I didn't know he was mad, when I went to his study, sir," moaned Bunter.

"I wouldn't have gone, if I'd known, sir! He sprang on me—"

"Poor boy!"

"He—he seized me, and dragged me into the study, sir, and pitched into me with a cane! Oh, dear! I told all the fellows he was mad, but they don't believe me, sir! I asked Wharton and Cherry to collar him, but they wouldn't! Oh lor'!"

"Extraordinary!" said the Head. "Have you noticed any delusions of this kind in the boy before, Mr. Quelch?"

Mr. Quelch did not answer that question. His eyes were fixed on Bunter, with a rather startled look. He recalled the scene in his study, following the series of runaway knocks that had interrupted his literary labours.

"Nothing of the kind has occurred, of course, Mr. Quelch!" said Dr. Locke, rather surprised by the Remove master's look.

"The boy is giving a foolish and wildly exaggerated account of something that did actually occur this afternoon!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "I had occasion to cane him for playing disrespectful tricks at my study door—"

"I never!" howled Bunter.

"Be silent, Bunter, please! What did the boy do, Mr. Quelch?"

"After class, sir, I was engaged on some literary work, and I was disturbed by a series of knocks at my study door!" explained Mr. Quelch. "I caught Bunter in the act, and caned him—"

"I never—"

Dr. Locke looked searchingly at Bunter's fat excited face. That fat face was wildly excited and alarmed; but that was all. It dawned on the Head that there was some strange misunderstanding here.

Bunter had, certainly, acted like a fellow out of his wits! But he was not out of his wits—it was only that he

supposed for some extraordinary reason, that his Form-master was!

"I never, sir!" repeated Bunter. "That's because he's mad, sir! He sprang on me like a tiger, sir—"

"Be silent, Bunter! There is some extraordinary misapprehension here!" said the Head. "Possibly this stupid boy can explain it. You knocked at Mr. Quelch's door, Bunter—"

"We have to knock, sir—"

"Yes, yes, but you knocked more than once—"

"Oh, no, sir! The minute I knocked he jerked the door open and jumped at me, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't know he was mad, or I wouldn't have gone—"

"You foolish boy, be silent! You are sure, Mr. Quelch, that there was more than one knock—"

"A whole series of knocks, sir—a miserable and disrespectful trick, to disturb me at my work!" said Mr. Quelch. "After it had happened several times, I did not call out 'come in,' but stood within the door, ready to open it as soon as the young rascal knocked again. I did so, and caught Bunter—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"I understand," said the Head. "But—"

"It wasn't me!" howled Bunter. "I never knocked more than once! I'd just knocked, sir, to speak to him about my lines, and he grabbed the door open and clutched me—"

"It was you!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "At—at least—" He faltered a little, as a doubt crossed his own mind. "At least, I had no doubt, Bunter, as I found you knocking at the door, that—that—"

"It wasn't!" wailed Bunter. "I—I thought you'd gone mad, sir, when you grabbed me like that—"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Is—is—is it possible—that—that that is why you have been acting in this insane manner, Bunter—"

"Ain't you mad, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"Bunter, be silent!" gasped the Head. "Bless my soul, what a very, very extraordinary boy! Is it possible, Mr. Quelch, that Bunter was not the boy who knocked continually at your door, but that he came to your study for some normal reason? In that case, of course, he must have been very much surprised when you—hem—when you—"

"Bunter had no occasion to come to my study, sir! He had lines to bring me at tea-time, but it was yet an hour—"

"I came to ask you to let me leave the lines till after tea, because I'd hurt my finger!" wailed Bunter.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter! Were you, or were you not, the boy who knocked continually on Mr. Quelch's door for a foolish practical joke?"

"Oh crikey! No, sir! I went straight to the study from the Rag—all the fellows know, sir—I hadn't been there a minute—I just came straight up to the door and knocked, and then Mr. Quelch grabbed it open, and sprang at me—"

"I did nothing of the kind!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "As I have said, sir, I waited for another knock at the door, opened it quickly, and finding Bunter there, I took him by the collar, before he could escape."

"I quite understand," said the Head, his face twitching a little. "But if Bunter, as he states, came for a normal reason, and had nothing to do with the runaway knocks, he was naturally very

much surprised, and—and startled—"

"I thought he'd gone mad, sir! I told all the fellows—"

"Say no more, you foolish boy."

"Well, what was I to think, sir, when the door flew open, and he grabbed me, and dragged me in, and whopped me for nothing—"

"Silence!" rapped the Head.

He avoided looking at Mr. Quelch! Quelch's face was growing absolutely crimson.

It was plain that Bunter's amazing antics could only be accounted for by his belief that his Form-master had gone mad—which meant that he was not the runaway knocker! Had he been, he would have known why he was grabbed. But coming to the study, knowing nothing of the runaway knocks, Quelch's unexpected action was really enough to make him think that the Remove master had gone out of his wits.

Quelch stood crimson and dumb!

He had, he knew now, made a mistake. He had made a member of his Form think him insane, and he had punished that member of his Form for nothing! It was awful for Quelch!

Dr. Locke passed his hand over his mouth. He knew that his lips were twitching, and he did not want the dismayed and distressed Form-master to see him smile.

"If you are satisfied, Mr. Quelch, that it was not Bunter who—"

"I—I think, probably, that—that—er—" stammered Mr. Quelch.

"In that case, Bunter's extraordinary conduct may, perhaps, be overlooked," suggested the Head. "I leave the matter entirely in your hands, of course, my dear Quelch! Bunter, leave my study!"

Billy Bunter eyed his Form-master very uneasily as he obeyed. He kept as far from Mr. Quelch as possible as he made for the door. Even Bunter understood now that it was all a misunderstanding, but he seemed to have a lingering doubt of his Form-master's sanity. He kept his eyes—and spectacles—on Quelch, as he circled round to the door.

"Go at once, Bunter!" gasped the Head.

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Bunter made a sudden bolt, and skipped out of the study.

Quelch breathed hard! He looked at the Head, his face red as a peony.

"I—I—I regret, sir—"

"Not at all, my dear Quelch!" said the Head courteously. "Dear me, that foolish boy has caused me to blot my paper! I fear that Bunter must be somewhat of a trial to you in your Form, Quelch!"

Which was very nice of the Head, in the circumstances, and a little comfort to Quelch, as he backed out of the study.

But the hapless Remove master was feeling the biggest idiot ever, as he went; and he had only one consolation—the faint hope of discovering who really had delivered those runaway knocks at his study door that afternoon!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Spotting the Schemer!

IN the Rag that evening there were sounds of merriment.

Mr. Quelch did not regard it as a laughing matter; neither did Bunter! Quelch had caned a fellow for nothing, which was very worrying and distressing to a just man like Quelch. Bunter was the fellow who had been caned—which was, perhaps, more dis-

tressing still! But to the Remove generally it seemed no end of a joke!

Quelch, lurking in wait for the ragger and catching the wrong man, struck the fellows as fearfully funny. It was such an easy mistake to make—and really Bunter's fault, as he had no business at the study at that time, and was not expected there.

Anyhow, Quelch had made that mistake, and whopped the hapless Owl right and left, while the ragger, whoever he was, had got away safely, and was laughing in his sleeve. And Bunter's wild idea that Quelch had gone mad, as the only way of accounting for his actions, made the fellows yell!

Bumping Quelch over with a cushion, fleeing to the Head's study for protection—really, it was the limit! And Bunter was getting off scot-free, after all that—certainly the only Remove man who had ever cushioned Quelch and lived to tell the tale, as it were!

The Removites chuckled over it. They fairly chortled over it. They laughed and howled over it. Only Bunter's fat face was morose. Bunter had a grievance. He had been whopped for nothing! Likewise, he was still feeling many sharp twinges from the whopping.

Bunter did not bother about the dozens of whoppings he ought to have had, but never had had! He concentrated on that undeserved one, which he had had! He felt deeply injured.

Another fellow in the Rag was rather serious—Bob Cherry had a grimly thoughtful brow.

Nothing had been heard of any trouble in Prout's study; nothing in the way of a rag had occurred there, or certainly something would have been heard about it when the Fifth Form master came in. The Co., therefore, had no doubt of Carter's statement, that he had gone into "Old Pompous" study to look at the newspaper, and had left by the window as the safest egress. Bob Cherry had not believed that statement at the time—and believed it still less now that he was thinking over the mysterious affair of the runaway knocks.

Inquiry had failed to reveal the runaway knocker. All that was known was that it was not Bunter, though Bunter had got the benefit of the vials of wrath. Bob Cherry thought that he could guess. Several times, his eyes fixed on Carter with a grim and scornful glare, which several fellows noticed—with smiles. Bob's dislike of the schemer of the Remove was well known, and it was rumoured in the Form that he was taking it to the length of refusing to play in the same football team with Carter.

Bob's friends were talking football, after prep Bob was not listening. He was thinking, and frowning.

"Look here, Bob, about the St. Jim's match," said Harry Wharton, at last. "You can't be such an ass as to want to cut the match. If you really believe that Carter hacked you on purpose the other day—"

"I know he did!" said Bob gruffly.

"Well, I can't get it down, old chap, but, anyhow, I'll shift him off the right wing, and put Inky there—get him as far from you as possible—"

"Never mind that now!" said Bob. "Who do you think did that runaway knocking at Quelch's door this afternoon?"

"Haven't the foggiest!"

"I'll tell you, then—it was Carter!"

"Oh, my only hat!" exclaimed Wharton, in exasperation. "Does that new man do everything that's done these days? Really, Bob—"

"Well, I'm going to put it to the

ear!" said Bob grimly. "I'm rather curious to see what rotten lies he will tell about it."

"Oh, don't row with Carter now, for goodness' sake! You've done nothing but row with the chap ever since he came."

"I'm ready to chuck it as soon as he chucks playing dirty tricks! I'm going to stop him from landing that fat fool Bunter into rows, as far as I can."

"My esteemed Bob—" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bob crossed over towards Carter, who was standing by the fire, in conversation with Skinner and Bolsover major. There was a general movement of interest in the Rag. This looked like a row coming!

Bob's friends followed him, looking, as they felt, worried and irritated. They did not like Carter much, but there was a limit. All the Remove knew that there was a sort of rivalry between Carter and Bunter, for the good graces of old Mr. Joseph Carter. Carter said nothing of it—Bunter had said much. A lot, it was supposed, depended on what sort of a report Bunter got that term.

Bunter was, for that reason, awfully keen on getting a good report from his Form-master for the term. That keenness, however, did not make him show any desire to work in the Form-room, it did not make him cease to scamp his prep; it did not even make him wash his neck, if he could get out of it! Prospects from old Mr. Carter were uncertain; but had they been certain, they would hardly have made Billy Bunter anything but a fat slacker.

That was Bunter's own look out, of course! But if Carter was intervening to spoil Bunter's chance, such as it was, of getting a good report, and to get him a particularly bad one, it was a dirty trick, and Bob Cherry believed—indeed, was quite certain—that it was the case. And it was not surprising that such miserable trickery made Bob loathe the fellow.

In the affair of the afternoon he saw Carter's cunning hand again, though no one else did.

"I want to ask you a question, Carter," said Bob abruptly.

The new junior looked round at him, with a curl of the lip.

"Don't you bar me?" he asked.

"You know I do!" growled Bob.

"Then hadn't you better keep your distance?" suggested Carter. "I'd really rather you didn't speak to me!"

"I'm going to speak, all the same! They're hunting for the fellow who banged on Quelch's door this afternoon. I'm not going to give you away to the beaks," added Bob scornfully, as Carter gave a start, "but it was you!"

"Think so, if you like," said Carter, shrugging his shoulders, "I'm really quite indifferent to what you think."

"Dash it all, draw it mild, Cherry!" said Bolsover major. "You're always accusing that man Carter of something."

"Only of what he does," said Bob. "Dirty trickery isn't good enough for the Remove."

"What's the latest, old bean?" grinned Skinner. "No fearful wickedness in ragging Quelch, is there? I've done it myself."

"No; but landing it on another fellow is a different story!" said Bob. "It was just after Quelch bagged Bunter at his study door that I saw Carter getting out of Prout's window. I know now how the ragger wasn't caught. Prout was out, and the chap hid in his study, crept out to bang Quelch's door, and ran back again. He was using Prout's study as a hide-out,

and after the row he left it by the window."

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton.

"Well, where's the harm?" asked Bolsover major. "Why shouldn't he?"

"I'll tell you why he shouldn't," said Bob. "He knew that that fool, Bunter, was going to Quelch's study with a lying tale about hurting his finger and being unable to do his lines—"

"Oh, really, Cherry!" squeaked Bunter.

"Quelch wasn't expecting Bunter, as he had no business there," went on Bob. "Carter got his rag out with runaway knocks, and parked himself in Prout's study when Bunter came along. It was a hundred to one that when Bunter knocked, Quelch would think it was the ragger again—as he actually did."

"Oh gum!" said Skinner. "It sounds thick! I don't suppose Carter knew anything at all about what the fat ass was going to do."

"He did," said Bob. "He was here when Bunter was gabbling about it to Toddy. Bunter wanted him to do the lines, like the fat ass he is. Wasn't Carter here then, Toddy?"

"Yes, he was," answered Peter Todd. "He cleared off about ten minutes before Bunter started for Quelch's study."

"And now I've told you why!" said Bob savagely. "What have you got to say now, you rotter? Are you going to deny that you were landing Bunter into another row with Quelch?"

All eyes turned on Carter. He was quite cool. Bob Cherry had worked it to his satisfaction, but there was, at all events, nothing in the nature of proof.

Arthur Carter laughed lightly.

"Quite a Machiavellian scheme!" he said. "You ought to be a detective, old bean! Sorry there's nothing in it. I went to Prout's study, as I said, to look at his newspaper. I got out of the window because I heard a row in the passage, and thought some beak might spot me leaving by the door. If Quelch thought it was Bunter hanging at his door I've no doubt he was right. Bunter's got out of it by lying, as he usually does."

"Why, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter, "I never—"

"So you say it was not you who ragged Quelch?" said Bob.

"Not at all! Sorry if it disappoints you."

"Then who was it?" said Bob Cherry, looking round the circle of faces. "We're all here, and nobody will give the man away. No harm in a rag on Quelch—if it wasn't a dirty trick on another Remove man at the same time. Nobody need be afraid of letting the Form know. Who was it?"

Carter set his lips. He had not foreseen that. There was, as Bob said, no reason why the ragger should not own up to the Form; indeed, he might have been expected to tell the story in the Remove as an exploit.

To Quelch it was a disrespectful prank; to the juniors it was just a jape. And a fellow who had japed Quelch, and got by with it, had no reason to conceal his exploit from the rest of the Form.

But Bob waited in vain for an answer.

"Who the dickens was it?" asked Hazeldene. "We're all here. It was one of us! Speak up, somebody!"

Nobody spoke up. "Anything to say now, Carter?" asked Bob contemptuously.

"Is it my fault that the fellow,

whoever he was, prefers to keep it dark?" asked Carter.

"You're the only fellow who would keep it dark, because you did it as a dirty trick on Bunter," said Bob. "Any other fellow would have done it just as a jape on Quelch, and he would tell us so at once."

"Right on the wicket!" said Vernon-Smith. "Cherry, old man, you're getting quite bright. Sherlock Holmes was a goat to you."

"Blessed if it doesn't look—" said Harry Wharton slowly. "Look here, Carter, what were you in Prout's study for at that very time?"

"Looking at his newspaper," drawled Carter. "I've told you."

"Only a coincidence that you were on the spot when that runaway knocking was going on?" snorted Bob.

"Just that. I never knew anything about that till afterwards. Catch me ragging Quelch, when I specially want a good report this term," said Carter.

"And you specially want Bunter to get a bad one!" growled Bob. "Well, I can't fix it on you—you're too artful to let anything be fixed on you—but every fellow here with as much sense as a bunny-rabbit knows that you did it, and knows why. I fancy Quelch would know, too, if he knew that you were parked in Prout's study while it was going on."

"You can go and tell him if you like!" sneered Carter.

"That's a safe thing to say, as you know I won't. But I've shown up your rotten trickery to the Form, and I'll do the same every time I catch you at it—even if you back me in Soccer afterwards for doing it!" added Bob savagely.

With that Bob Cherry turned his back on the new junior, and went out of the Rag. He left his friends looking very dubious.

But Billy Bunter was not dubious. He rolled up to Carter, fixed a withering blink on him through his big spectacles, and emitted a scornful squeak.

"Cad!"

"You fat chump!" growled Carter.

"I know your game!" snorted Bunter contemptuously. "Old Joe Carter's turned you down because he's found out what a rotten worm you are. He's thinking of putting me down in his will instead, because he wants to leave his money to a decent, honourable, straightforward fellow, the sort of fellow who's a credit to his Form and his school—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! If I get a good report this term it may mean a lot to me," said Bunter. "Old Carter said plainly that it would be to my advantage. I've told you fellows so. Well, all I can do is to go on being upright and honourable and straightforward."

"When did you begin?" gasped Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! That's all I can do," said Bunter, "and that cad is trying to dish me! Yah! Cad!"

(Continued on next page.)



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"Will you shut up, you fat fool?" snapped Carter.

"No, I won't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Worm!" roared Bunter. "Cad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carter made an angry stride towards the fat Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter promptly dodged behind Smithy.

"Cad!" he howled, over the Bounder's shoulder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you let me get at that fat pig and shut him up, Vernon-Smith?" said Carter, between his teeth.

"No," answered the Bounder coolly, "I won't. If you want a scrap, get on with it. I'm more your weight than Bunter is."

"Swab!" roared Bunter. "Rats!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Shan't! Swab! Cad! Worm! Beast! Sneak!" roared Bunter victoriously, over the Bounder's shoulder.

"Yah! Rat! Pig! Worm!"

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

Carter, with a crimson and furious face, walked out of the Rag. He did not want a scrap with the Bounder, and he did not want any more of Bunter's bright and genial conversation, so he had to leave the fat Owl victorious.

"Yah! Cad! Swab! Funk! Sneaking worm!" came Bunter's scornful squeak, as he went.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carter slammed the door. In the passage he passed Bob Cherry, and if looks could have damaged, Bob would have been left seriously crooked when Carter had passed him. Fortunately looks couldn't!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Precious Pair!

MR. GIDEON GOOCH set his thin lips tightly, and the wrinkles on his forehead deepened in an angry frown.

Coming along the footpath in Friar-dale Wood, Mr. Gooch turned off, and followed a scarcely marked track which led through the thickness of the wood. Then his narrow slits of eyes fell on a Greyfriars junior who was waiting and lounging under a big oak-tree, with a cigarette in his mouth.

Arthur Carter did not remove the cigarette as Gooch came up. He gave the thin man in black a careless nod.

"You young fool!" was Mr. Gooch's cheery greeting.

"You old ditto!" was Carter's polite answer.

"You are smoking."

"Safe enough here. Don't be an ass, Gideon! If you've come along to give me sermons, the sooner you go back for your train the better."

"And it was you," said Gideon, "who was kicked out of St. Olaf's for bad conduct; you who hardly scraped into another school; you who have no prospects unless you can get back into Joseph Carter's favour. A bad report from your Form-master for your first term means that Mr. Carter will not even keep you on at Greyfriars. Yet you cannot behave yourself, with so much at stake."

"Cut it out! I'm careful," said Carter. "Nobody's been able to get anything on me, so far. I've learned a lesson from what happened at St. Olaf's. I'm as sharp as you are when you're diddling clients."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

Mr. Gooch looked at his schoolboy cousin with an expressive look. At that moment he would have liked nothing better than to have boxed the young rascal's ears soundly.

But he restrained that natural desire.

"Have you anything to tell me?" he snapped.

"Only rotten luck, all along the line!" growled Carter. "That fool I've told you of—a fellow named Cherry—makes a lot of trouble for me. He's wise to it, and some other fellows are getting wise to it, too, owing to him, and if anything happens to that fat fool he shouts it out for everybody to hear that I had a hand in it. It's pretty awkward."

"It is an unlooked-for difficulty," said Gideon; "but, like other difficulties, it must be overcome. Your task should have been a perfectly easy one. From what you have told me of Bunter, it can be only necessary for old Joseph to know him exactly as he is to discard any idea of putting him in your place."

"I know; but—"

"A copy of Bunter's report this term will go to Mr. Carter. If it is a bad one—a very bad one—he will dismiss Bunter from his mind. You say that he is lazy, untruthful; that he pilfers food in the studies, slacks in class and slacks at games. A far from creditable boy, by your description."

"Yes; but I never have any luck. Cherry backs him up all along the line, and watches me like a cat. Another fellow—Smithy—has got his knife into me, too. And Cherry's friends are suspicious of me."

"I don't see how it concerns any of them—"

"It doesn't. They don't care a straw about my affairs or Bunter's," said Carter irritably. "The fat fool has gabbed it all over the shop since my uncle wrote to Quelch asking about his report. But they don't believe much, and don't care anything. It's their idea of fair play; in they think I'm landing that fat idiot in trouble in an underhand way they'll stand up for him like one man."

"I understand that. You must be cautious—doubly cautious."

"It's all very well to jaw!" grunted Carter. "But everything seems to go wrong. I thought I had him one day, and got another fellow by mistake—Smithy—and made an enemy of him. Not that he bothers his head about it much; he's not a fellow like Cherry. That fool Cherry would walk ten miles to help a lame dog over a stile. He sticks up for Bunter just because the fat idiot is a helpless ass."

"If you had been a little more like him, Arthur, you would never have been expelled from St. Olaf's," said Gideon. "You might do worse than take him for a model."

"Oh, don't be a fool!"

"The term is wearing on," said Gideon. "You know what is at stake. You must get a good report, and Bunter a bad one. If Bunter will not land himself in trouble with your help—"

"I help him all I can in that direction," said Carter, with a sour grin.

"You must help him more. Such a fatuous fool as you have described—"

"I believe there's such a thing as fool's luck," grunted Carter. "He keeps on asking for it, but never seems to get it—even with my help. The other day he drew an idiotic caricature of our Form-master that would have made Quelch hopping mad if he'd seen it—"

"You should have contrived that he saw it."

"I did. I got hold of it and left it on Quelch's table. Some other fellow

must have seen it there and snooped it in time. Anyhow, Quelch never saw it. And only yesterday I had him on toast, but—"

"What happened yesterday, then?"

Carter snarled out the story of the runaway knocking at the Remove master's door.

Gideon listened very attentively. His foxy face remained wrinkled in thought for some minutes after Carter had finished speaking.

"This may be useful," he said at last.

"I tell you it was a rotten fizzle. Bunter got a whopping, but that's no use; Quelch knew he got it for nothing."

"From what you have told me, he is the sort of fool to resent a caning and make some stupid attempt to get back on the master."

"Oh, that's Bunter all over!"

"This literary work you have mentioned—is Quelch very much concerned about it? Does he value the papers highly?"

"Eh? Yes. He would raise Cain if anything happened to any of his scribble."

"Something might happen to it," said Gideon. "Bunter might destroy some of the papers in revenge for that caning."

"Just what the silly idiot would do if he thought of it. That's the kind of benighted fathead he is. I suppose I can't suggest it to him!" snapped Carter. "What are you getting at, Gideon?"

"I will leave you to think that over."

"Oh, speak out plain!" snarled Carter. "You're not a solicitor in an office, pulling a client's leg now; you're in this game with me. Put it plain. Can't you ever be straight?"

"I make no suggestions," said Mr. Gooch calmly. "But it appears to me that if some of those papers were torn or defaced, and an odd sheet or two found in Bunter's study—"

"Oh!" gasped Carter.

Mr. Gooch looked at his watch.

"I must walk back to Friar-dale for my train now," he said. "Think it over, Arthur—and, above all, be cautious."

Carter stood looking after the man in black as he creaked away on his creaky shoes, then he lighted another cigarette.

There was a thoughtful frown on his brow when he took his way back to Greyfriars at last. The schemer of the Remove was, as Mr. Gooch recommended, thinking it over.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

On the Scent!

THERE was a sound of rending and tearing in Study No. 13.

In the middle of the room stood a large basket; round that basket sat the Famous Five, tearing and rending. Old newspapers, ancient exercises, all sorts of papers were being rent to fragments, and the fragments dropped into the basket—from which any observer might have guessed that the Remove fellows were making preparations for a paper-chase.

Five voices hailed Billy Bunter at once when he opened the door and blinked in through his big spectacles.

"Lend a hand, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the study. But he had not, apparently, come to lend a hand; he rolled across to the armchair and plumped into it.

"Not looking for work?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.



Mr. Quelch's eyes glittered as, from the heap of paper fragments, he picked out a small piece of foolscap on which was written the word "Greyfriars." Bob Cherry and his friends, seeing that that fragment bore a word in Quelch's "list," exchanged startled glances.

"I've come here to help—" said Bunter.

"Pile in, then!" said Bob Cherry.

"With a suggestion—" added Bunter.

"You can keep the suggestions and lend a hand tearing up these papers!" said Harry Wharton.

"You want a lot of paper for scent," said Bunter, unheeding. "I can tell you where to get lots."

"Oh? Fire away, then!" said the captain of the Remove. "We've been up and down all the studies and bagged all the old newspapers we can get hold of and we haven't got enough. I noticed a paper in your study, but Toddy said it was yours. The 'Burglars' Boarding-School,' I think it was called; I nearly had it—"

"You jolly well let that alone!" exclaimed Billy Bunter warmly. "I haven't finished reading that yet. I say, you fellows, it's a jolly good story—all about a boarding-school for burglars, with the headmaster a crook, and the assistant masters all convicts. A real-life story, you know."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "It sounds a lot like real life!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Thrilling, too," said Bunter. "I can tell you that the part where young Burglar Bill gets a gun on the headmaster in his study is ripping—realistic, and all that! I'll tell you about it. He walks into the study as cool as you please and says 'Hands up, headmaster—'"

"Oh crikey!"

"And just as he's making the Head hand over the loot another master comes in and slugs him on the back of the head with a gaspipe," said Bunter. "That's the sort of story I like—realistic!"

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

"Eh? What are you cackling at?" asked Bunter. "'Tain't a funny story!"

"Sort of sounds funny!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Look here, you'd better let us have that jolly paper for scent, Bunter."

"I'll watch it! I gave threepence for it!" said Bunter. "I borrowed the threepence specially from Toddy. I say, the part where the Head shoots the Scotland Yard man and hides the body behind the blackboard is fine! And the part where young Burglar Bill blows up the school with dynamite—"

"Fetch it along!" said Frank Nugent.

"You'd like to read it?" asked Bunter.

"No; I'd like to tear it up for scent!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! Look here, I can tell you where to get lots of scent," said Bunter. "That's why I've come here. I'd go and get it myself, only Quelch might think it was me—"

"Quelch!" repeated Harry Wharton, looking round.

"Well, I mean to say he whopped me for nothing yesterday," said Bunter. "He might think I was getting back on him. I prefer to remain clear of the matter personally."

"What has that fat idiot got into his silly head now?" asked Bob Cherry. "Are you thinking of bagging Quelch's Latin dictionaries and Greek lexicons, you benighted bloater?"

"No fear! What about his 'History of Greyfriars'?" asked Billy Bunter, with a fat and cheery wink.

"What!" yelled the Famous Five.

"Stacks of it; all the scent you want—and a bit over!" said Bunter. "He'd be rather wild, what, if it went?"

"Wild?" gasped Bob Cherry. "Yes, I fancy so—just a spot! You howling ass, Quelch would raise the roof if anything happened to his precious manuscripts! Have you gone quite hatchy?"

"Well, I'd like to see him raising the roof, so long as he didn't get after me," explained Bunter. "That's important, of course. He gave me a fearful whopping, and all you fellows know it was for nothing. He's let me off my lines since—but what's that? I say, you fellows, wouldn't it make Quelch sit up if his History of Greyfriars went?"

The Famous Five ceased to tear and rend, and looked at Bunter almost in horror. Evidently he was in earnest. The fatuous grin on his podgy countenance revealed that much.

Any fellow but Bunter might have shuddered at the thought of what would follow if anything happened to Quelch's precious manuscripts. But fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

"Pay him out all right, what?" grinned Bunter.

"You—you—you unspeakable idiot!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Quelch would be as mad as a hatter!"

"That's what I want."

"He would go to the Head—"

"Let him!"

"And the Head would sack the fellow who did it!" shrieked Bob.

"Well, he couldn't, if he didn't know who it was!" Bunter pointed out. "He wouldn't know, you know! That's all right."

"Let me catch you going after Quelch's papers!"

"I'm not going after them!" said Bunter, shaking his head. "I've said that Quelch might suspect that it was me. You fellows go after them, see? Wharton would be best, as he's head boy, and Quelch would never guess that

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,565.



(Continued from page 13.)

he did it! Besides, Quelch would take his word, if he said he didn't, so that's all right!"

"I—I—I—" stuttered the captain of the Remove. "I'm to pinch Quelch's papers, and tell him lies about it—"

"Well, I suppose you tell one or two now and then," said Bunter. "I wouldn't myself—it's not the sort of thing I could do; but you ain't so jolly particular, old chap!"

"You—you—you—" gurgled Wharton.

"Safe as houses," said Bunter. "We make Quelch sit up for giving me that whopping for nothing, see? You get a lot of scent for the paper-chase to-morrow—tons of it."

"Luckily, Quelch keeps his papers locked up, so that fat idiot wouldn't be able to get at them," said Nugent.

"He's always got some on his table, though," said Bunter, "and he might leave the drawer unlocked, and you could get the rest. Anyhow, you could snaffle those on his table. Every little helps, you know."

"That's the chap who wants to get a good report this term!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Well, that's all right, as I'm not going to do it," said Bunter. "If Wharton's funky, you do it, Bob! You're not funky, old chap."

"I suppose," said Bob Cherry slowly, "that Bunter can't help being a born idiot! But he can help being a revengeful little beast! I think we ought to give him a lesson about that."

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, I got a whopping, didn't I?" argued Bunter. "An eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, you know—I mean a tooth for a tooth! I believe in paying a beast out."

"Sure you do?" asked Bob.

"Yes, rather!"

"All right! A beast—a very greedy beast—snooped a bag of toffee out of this study yesterday—"

"Eh?"

"So I'll pay him out—"

"I—I say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter—apparently repentant of having come to Study No. 1 with that valuable suggestion—jumped out of the armchair and bolted for the door.

He was grabbed in transit.

"Yaroo!" roared the fat Owl, as he was twisted over a chair in a hefty hand. "I say—leggo! I say—"

"Hand me that ruler, Nugent."

"Here you are!"

"I say, you beast, if you touch me with that ruler, I'll—yarooooop!" roared Bunter.

Whop, whop, whop, whop!

The ruler fairly rang on Billy Bunter's trousers. Bunter's frantic yells rang far beyond Study No. 13.

Whop, whop, whop!

"Leave off! Leggo! Help! Yaroo!" roared Bunter. "I say, you fellows, rescue! Make him leggo! Yoo hoop!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

"Now," gasped Bob Cherry, "do you still believe in paying a beast out?"

"Ow! Yes!"

Whop, whop, whop!

"Yaroo! No!" roared Bunter.

"Not at all! I—I don't want to pip-pip-pay anybody out! Nothing of the kind! Never! Yaroooo!"

"Sure?" demanded Bob, lifting the ruler.

"Ow! Yes! Leggo! I—I don't want to pay old Quelch out! Nothing of the sort! After all, it was only a mistake! I—I wouldn't pay him out for anything!" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mind, if you get paying Quelch out for that whopping, I'm going on paying you out for snooping my toffee!" grinned Bob. "Sauce for the goose is sauce for the jolly old gander! Quite sure?"

"Ow! Yes! Wow! Ow!"

"Then you can cut, old fat ass!" said Bob. "Hold on a sec. I want to boot you into the passage!"

Billy Bunter did not hold on the fraction of a second. He made one frantic bound into the passage, and disappeared.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"HOW much have you got?"

Peter Todd asked that question as Bunter came into Study No. 7. Peter and Tom Dutton were tearing up old papers for scent, and filling a bag that stood on the study table.

Bunter shook his head.

"Stony, old man!" he answered.

"My postal order never came!"

"You fat chump! I mean, how much scent have you got?"

"Oh, scent!" said Bunter. "I haven't had time to find any old papers, Toddy, and if I had, I haven't time to tear them up. I'm pretty busy, you know, one way and another."

Billy Bunter plumped down in the study armchair, and picked up a volume that bore the thrilling and attractive title, "The Burglars' Boarding-School," perhaps to show how busy he was!

With his fat shoulders in the chair, his fat head on a cushion, and his feet on the table, Bunter fixed his eyes and spectacles on that thrilling literature, and was soon deep in the hectic adventures of "Young Burglar Bill."

Peter glared at him.

"You haven't time to lend a hand tearing up scent?" he asked.

"Eh? No! Don't interrupt a chap when he's reading!" said Bunter.

"Chuck that muck over here," said Peter.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bunter. "I'll read some of it out to you if you like. I don't mind doing that! I never was lazy, I hope! This is the chapter where the Scotland Yard man comes to the school. Listen to this bit. 'Ha!' cried the Head. 'A sleuth from Scotland Yard!' Springing at him like a tiger, he bore him—"

"He bored him?" asked Peter.

"No, you fathead—he bore him—"

"Not so much as you're boring me, old fat bean."

"Shut up! 'He bore him backwards, with a thundering crash, to the floor of the study!'" continued Bunter.

"Drawing a dagger from under his gown—' The headmaster always had a dagger under his gown, Toddy," explained Bunter.

"He would!" agreed Peter. "Sort of thing a headmaster would naturally carry about with him."

"Drawing a dagger from under his gown," went on Bunter, "he stabbed the sleuth to the heart—"

"Some headmaster!" said Peter. "Can't see Dr. Locke treating visitors like that! But I suppose things are different at different schools."

"Do shut up, old chap! I tell you this is good!" urged Bunter. "Frightfully thrilling! 'He stabbed—'"

"Chuck it," said Peter. "That will do to go on with."

"Oh, do shut up and listen! 'Drawing a dagger, he stabbed the tooth—I mean he stabbed the sleuth—to the heart, and with a fearful yell, he expired. 'Ha!' hissed the Head—' If you chuck that book at me, you beast—'"

Bang!

Peter chucked the book, as Bunter was speaking, and it landed on a fat chin. The "Burglars' Boarding-School" fell on the floor, and Billy Bunter clasped his fat chin with both fat hands, and roared.

"Beast!"

"Now get on," said Peter cheerfully. "You've got to lend a hand, old fat frump! If you think you can stick in that chair, while other fellows are doing all the work, the sooner you get another idea, the better."

Billy Bunter rubbed his fat chin, and glared.

Tearing up paper for scent was not, perhaps, hard work. But it was work: and Bunter objected to work, on principle. Besides, he was fearfully interested in that thrilling story, the "Burglars' Boarding-School." There was bloodshed in every chapter. Dead bodies lay about that remarkable school like leaves in Vallombrosa. What could any fellow want more than that?

"If you can't let a fellow read a book in peace!" howled Bunter indignantly. "Look here, can't you let a chap have a little peace?"

"Never mind a little peace—what we want are little pieces!" said Peter. "Let's tear that rubbish up."

"Shan't!" roared Bunter.

Peter Todd rose to his feet and picked up the bag of scent from the table. It was nearly full. All the available supply of paper in the study had been reduced to fragments—except the "Burglars' Boarding-School!" Most of the fellows, in the other studies, had been busy, too; and it was arranged that the supply from every study should be taken along to Study No. 13, and tipped into the big basket there, as soon as the work was done. Peter had quite a handsome contribution to make—to which Bunter had not added one fragment.

"Come on, Dutton," said Peter. "Now look here, Bunter, I'm taking this bag along to Cherry's study, to put in the basket. I'll bring it back here and leave it empty for you."

"You needn't!" yapped Bunter.

"And if you haven't shoved into it your share of scent before prep, I'll bag that precious volume of yours, and it goes into the bag! See? Mind, I mean that!"

"Beast!"

"Look here, Toddy, Bunter's in the paper-chase to-morrow," said Tom Dutton, "he ought to be tearing up some scent. If he won't he ought to be kicked."

"Boot him!" said Toddy.

"Oh, don't be an ass—we can't shoot him! What do you mean? I think he ought to be kicked! What do you think?"

"Go it!"

"Well, you can say stow it, but I think so, anyhow," said Dutton warmly.

"What about shoving that silly book down his neck, then?"

"Good egg!" grinned Peter.

"Look here, get out!" howled Bunter. "You've got to take that scent along to Cherry's study before you go down, and—var-oo! Leggo! Will you leggo?"

Peter and Dutton did not let go! They grabbed the fat Owl and jerked him out of the armchair.

The "Burglars' Boarding-School" was crumpled and stuffed down the back of a fat neck—to an accompaniment of fiendish yells from Billy Bunter.

The fat Owl wriggled and roared. But the crumpled volume was stuffed down his back, and driven well home.

Then Peter and Tom left the study—leaving Billy Bunter wriggling like a fat eel, making frantic efforts to extract the "Burglars' Boarding-School" from the back of his neck.

Peter Todd walked along to Study No. 13, where the Famous Five were still busy, with Mark Linley and Wen Lung helping them on with the good work. He tipped the bagful of scent into the big basket.

"Good man!" said Bob Cherry. "How much has Bunter done?"

"None, so far!" said Peter. "But he's going to do some—or else he's going to be sorry he didn't!"

Peter carried the empty bag back to Study No. 7, where Bunter was still struggling at the task of extraction. He slammed it on the table.

"There you are, Bunt—empty, ready for your lot!" he said.

"Beast!" howled Bunter.

Peter, with a cheery grin, joined Tom Dutton in the passage, and they went down together to the Rag.

Bunter continued his wild struggle with the "Burglars' Boarding-School." It was a considerable time before that entrancing volume was extracted; and by that time, Bunter was crimson and breathless, and less inclined than ever to exert himself adding to the supply of scent.

Gasping, he plumped down in the armchair again; and the empty bag on the table remained empty.

Peter Todd was a man of his word; and there was no doubt that if Bunter failed to play up, Peter would collar the "Burglars' Boarding-School" and put it in that bag in small pieces. But Bunter, deep in the wild adventures of young Burglar Bill, forgot Peter and his dire threat.

He sprawled in the armchair and devoured page after page, till at long last he reached the thrilling conclusion of that thrilling volume.

It was not till he had finished it that he remembered that Squiff was going to bake chestnuts in the Rag, before prep.

The fat Owl heaved himself out of the armchair, threw the "Burglars' Boarding-School" on the table, and rolled out of the study. Luckily he was in time for the baked chestnuts! So all was calm and bright!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Laying the Trap!

ARTHUR CARTER stepped quietly into his Form-master's study and shut the door without a sound.

He stood for a long moment, his breath coming thick and fast, his heart beating unpleasantly.

Mr. Quelch was in Common-room, with the other beaks; there was little danger of being caught in his study. Carter was not so much afraid of that as of what he was going to do.

But, uneasy as he was feeling, he proceeded to do it.

He dared not switch on the light; but he turned on a pocket flash-lamp, and it gleamed over the Remove master's writing-table.

There were many papers on that table. There was a pile of Latin exercises, and several letters pinned under a paper-weight.

Carter's eyes passed over these carelessly, and fixed on a little batch of manuscript, fastened by a clip at the corner.

This was what he wanted! It was a section of Quelch's celebrated History of Greyfriars.

It was Quelch's custom to make the first draft of his literary works with a pen, which, after being corrected, and corrected again, were transcribed on the typewriter, with final improvements.

The mass of typescript was kept in a drawer of the table, which was, fortunately, locked, and out of the young rascal's reach.

These half-dozen sheets of foolscap were covered closely with Mr. Quelch's clear, fine writing, with plenty of interlined and marginal corrections.

Those few sheets represented hours of labour, in sorting over black-letter manuscripts from the School library, and digging deep into dusty old tomes.

The loss of that batch was certain to cause Quelch to go off at the deep end, in the most emphatic manner.

Gum in his inkpot, jam in his armchair, would never have exasperated Quelch like damage to his precious manuscripts.

That the Remove master, when he missed those papers, would feel a painful shock, as well as deep anger, mattered nothing to Carter. He crumpled the little batch of foolscap and crammed it into the study fire, with the exception of a single sheet.

The single sheet he slipped into an inner pocket.

The papers in the fire, he carefully stirred, until every vestige of them was lost among the glowing cinders. He was very careful to leave no sign. Mr. Quelch was to suppose that the batch had been taken away—otherwise, of course, he would not search for them—and it was Carter's game to cause a search.

But Carter was not quite finished yet. From a pocket he drew a grubby, crumpled handkerchief, which he dropped on the floor near the table.

From its grubbiness, any fellow might have guessed that hanky belonged to William George Bunter. The initials "W. G. B." were in the corner, but they were no surer clue to the ownership!

Then Carter shut off his flash-lamp, opened the study door, and peered out. The coast was clear, and he slipped quietly out of the study.

It was getting near time for prep. Most of the Remove were in the Rag. But baked chestnuts had no interest for Carter, at the moment. He went up the stairs and strolled into the Remove passage.

Only one fellow was in sight there—Fisher T. Fish, going into his study at the other end of the passage.

Carter loitered in the doorway of Study No. 1 till Fishy disappeared into Study No. 14 and shut the door.

Then he cut along swiftly to Bunter's study, Study No. 7.

He did not need his flash-lamp there. Bunter, with his usual carelessness, had left the light on when he went down. Carter shut the door, and glanced quickly and keenly round the study.

As Study No. 7 was shared by three fellows, he had to be careful to land

the "clue" to the missing manuscript on Bunter, and not on Todd or Dutton. Quelch was to suppose that the fat Owl had walked those manuscripts off; and the single sheet that Carter had brought away was to be the clue to Bunter as the depredator and destroyer! It had to lead to Bunter, and Bunter alone, of the three fellows who used Study No. 7!

Carter's eyes glinted as they fell on the paper-covered volume, with the startling title of the "Burglars' Boarding-School," lying on the study table where the fat Owl had left it.

A sour grin came over his face.

That volume was well known to be Bunter's. A dozen fellows had seen him reading it. Plenty more had heard him talking about it. Nothing could have suited Carter's purpose better.

He took the sheet of foolscap from his pocket, and tore it in halves. One half he threw into the study fire, where it was burned away at once. The other half he slipped between the leaves of the "Burglars' Boarding-School." Anyone seeing it there would have supposed that it had been used as a book-mark. Plenty of fellows marked a place in a book with a torn strip of paper, or a fragment of an old letter.

Leaving the volume where he had found it, Carter slipped quietly out of the study, and went downstairs.

He heard Billy Bunter's fat voice as he strolled into the Rag.

"I say, you fellows, any more chestnuts?"

"No, you cormorant!"

"Well, I've only had a dozen," said Bunter. "I say, Squiff, you can have one of my bullseyes, old chap. I've had your chestnuts."

Billy Bunter extracted three bullseyes from his trousers pocket. They were sticky, and, being sticky, had collected dust and fluff from his pocket. That made no difference to Bunter. A bullseye was a bullseye. But to any other fellow they did not look fearfully attractive.

Sampson Quincy Ifley Field glanced at the sticky lump in the grubby, fat paw, and grinned.

"Thanks, old bean!" he said. "Lots of thanks! But—"

"I mean it," said Bunter generously. "Take any one of them you like."

Squiff chuckled.

"I'm not awfully keen on bullseyes, old fat Owl," he said. "You scoff them."

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter.

And he scoffed them.

"Lend me your hanky, will you?" he asked. "I've made my fingers sticky."

"Can't you use your own, fathead?"

"I've dropped it somewhere. I believe I dropped it when that beast Carter ran into me after class—at least, I've not seen it since. Lend me yours. I say, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you!" squeaked Bunter. "I say, lend me your hanky!"

But Squiff did walk away. Apparently he did not want sticky fingers wiped on his handkerchief.

"Beast!" grunted Bunter. "Lend me your hanky, will you, Bob?"

"I don't think!"

"Lend me yours, Wharton."

"What about stepping into the lobby and washing your paws?" suggested the captain of the Remove. "They could do with it. You haven't washed them since last term, you know."

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

Extra washing had no attraction for Bunter. As nobody had a hanky to lend, he rubbed his sticky fingers on his trousers, and was satisfied. In some

matters, Billy Bunter was not an easy fellow to satisfy, but in such matters as these, he was the most easily satisfied of all the Remove.

A little later the Remove fellows went up to the studies for prep. Carter's eyes followed Billy Bunter curiously as the fat junior rolled into Study No. 7 with Toddy and Dutton. With prep on hand, Bunter was not likely to open his book, and discover the book-mark. And before prep was over, Carter had no doubt that there would be a terrific row going on on account of Quelch's manuscripts.

He went into his own study, Study No. 1, with Wharton and Nugent for prep.

The three settled down to work, as usual—Carter with an ear on the alert. He, at least, expected prep to be interrupted that evening.

He was thinking a good deal more of his scheme for "dishing" the fat Owl of the Remove, than of prep. That hint from Mr. Gooch had fallen like seed in fertile soil. So far as Carter could see, nothing could go amiss with this carefully laid scheme.

Quelch, when he went back to his study, would discover what had happened to his precious manuscripts. He would find Bunter's handkerchief on the study floor.

That in itself would hardly be proof. Bunter might have dropped it there while in the study after class. But it would be a clue. It would draw Quelch's attention specially to Bunter; and certainly he would remember the whopping he had given Bunter the day before.

What would it look like?

It would look, of course, as if Bunter had wrought havoc with those precious sheets of foolscap, in revenge for that undeserved whopping—as he was quite fool enough to do.

Indeed, had Carter known it, that very idea had occurred to Bunter's fat brain, though Bob Cherry had discouraged it so energetically that the fat Owl had given up the idea.

Quelch would be after Bunter.

Obviously he would search Bunter's study, first of all, for his missing manuscripts, if only in the hope of discovering them yet unharmed.

There had to be proof—and there was proof. The manuscripts were gone; but the book-mark in Bunter's book would not escape discovery. Quelch was not the man to miss anything in a search. And, besides, a book was just the place to look for hidden papers.

His attention being concentrated on Bunter, he would search Study No. 7; he would find that torn sheet used as a book-mark, and he was not likely to want any more proof than that.

What would happen to Bunter, in the way of punishment, Carter cared nothing. What mattered was, that Bunter would be in his Form-master's black books—his very blackest books. His report that term would not only be bad, but the worst he had ever had, and he would, in consequence, be done for, in the direction of old Joseph Carter.

It seemed a certainty this time. On his own the rascal of the Remove had had little luck in his campaign. But with the help of that hint from Gideon Gooch, he looked like backing a winner at last. Thinking it over and over, Carter could see no loophole by which the fat Owl could escape from this cunning snare. He was caught like a fat rabbit in a trap.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1.565.

Carter had no doubt about that. Like many another schemer, he forgot that the most elaborate scheme is always at the mercy of chance. And it might have been useful to him to remember the ancient maxim, that "great is truth, and it must prevail."

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Contribution!

"**B**LOW prep!" grunted Billy Bunter.

He blinked morosely at the study table, where Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were sorting out books. Bunter did not like preparation.

It was true that preparation was rather necessary, if a fellow was going to learn anything from the subsequent lesson. But Bunter had no desire to learn anything from any lesson. So, from Bunter's point of view, prep was simply one of those worries which schoolmasters inflicted on fellows, who could have found lots of pleasanter occupations for their time.

However, prep had to be done. Like the hail and the rain, it fell alike on the just and the unjust.

Peter Todd glanced at the bag on the table. He hardly needed to glance at it to ascertain whether Bunter had added thereto. He could guess that Bunter hadn't. One glance was enough. That bag was exactly as Peter had left it—not a single spot of torn paper in it. Peter's second glance passed to that great work of fiction, the "Burglars' Boarding-School," which lay near the empty bag.

"You lazy ass!" said Peter.

"Well, who likes prep?" grunted Bunter. "Lot of rot, if you ask me!"

"Never mind prep! What about the scent?" demanded Peter. "Didn't I tell you you had to put up your whack?"

"You jolly well know I've had no time!" yapped Bunter.

"And you jolly well know what I told you would happen, if you couldn't find time!" said Peter.

He picked up the "Burglars' Boarding-School."

There was a howl of alarmed protest from Bunter.

"You let that book alone, you beast! I'm going to read that again. Besides, I can sell it for a penny when I'm done with it. Fishy will give me a penny for it, and sell it to some fag for tuppence—see?"

"Fishy might give you a penny for it when you've done with it," admitted Peter. "But I don't think he'd give you a farthing for it when I'm done with it. It's going into this bag. Lots of room for it."

"Beast! Gimme my book!" yelled Bunter. "I say, Dutton, make that beast gimme my book!"

"Rot!" answered Dutton. "No time for cooking now. We've come up here for prep, you fat ass!"

"I didn't say cook—I said book!" howled Bunter.

"What's the use of a cookery-book now? We've got to get on with prep. Besides, I haven't any cookery-book. Think I'm always thinking about grub like you are?"

"Take my book away from that beast!" yelled Bunter.

"Well, I don't know about taking my book away from a feast—I like a spread, as much as any fellow! What feast do you mean?"

"My book—" shrieked Bunter.

"Look at what?"

"Oh, you deaf chump—"

"I'd jolly well like to see you do it! You give me a clump, and I'll jolly soon give you a clout!" retorted Tom Dutton. "What do you mean, you fat Owl? Talking about giving a fellow a clump, just because he hasn't got a cookery-book! How the dickens could I have a cookery-book?"

"Gimme that book, Peter Todd, you rotter!" yelled Bunter, and he rolled round the study table and grabbed at the "Burglars' Boarding-School!"

Peter held that entrancing volume over his head, out of Bunter's reach, in one hand. With the other, he gave the fat Owl a poke on his well-filled waist-coat.

"Gurrrrrggh!" gurgled Bunter.

He sat down, suddenly.

Peter, with a cheery grin, proceeded to tear up the "Burglars' Boarding-School" for scent! He rent it, and rent it, again and again. He tore it limb from limb, as it were.

He made quick work of that volume. The pages, in bunches, were torn across and across.

As he reduced them to fragments, Peter dropped them into the empty bag on the table.

That there was a half-sheet of written foolscap tucked away between the leaves of that volume, naturally did not transpire. It was torn up along with the leaves that enfolded it.

Bunter sat and gurgled for breath, glaring at Peter with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"Beast!" he gasped.

"Hear, hear!" said Toddy.

"Rotter!" panted Bunter.

"Go it!"

"Swosh!" hooted Bunter, "Tick!"

"Keep it up!"

"I'll jolly well make you pay for that book!" howled Bunter.

"I've paid for it once," grinned Toddy. "I'm not going to be a twicer! You can pay for the next!"

"I've a jolly good mind to boot you round the study!" yelled Bunter, as he staggered up. "I jolly well would, only—"

"Only you can't perform impossibilities, old fat man!" agreed Peter. "But I'll tell you what—I'll boot you round the study instead!"

"Ow! Beast! Keep off!" yelled Bunter, dodging round the table. "I say, leave off, will you! I say, old chap—leave off, you beast—look here, old rotter—I mean, old fellow—yaroooooh!"

"What are you kicking Bunter for, Toddy?" asked Dutton.

"For his good!" answered Peter.

"What food?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Plums? Well, if he's got plums he's not whacking out in the study, I'll jolly well kick him, too!" said Dutton. "It's mean to hide food away from the other fellows in the study, Bunter. You have more than your whack here."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

He picked up the bag, and left Study No. 7, leaving Tom Dutton booting the unfortunate Owl.

Peter carried the bag up the passage to Study No. 13, where the Famous Five had been busy after tea tearing up scent into the big basket.

Bob Cherry and Harree Singh, Mark Linley and Wun Lung were in the study now, for prep. The big basket of scent stood in a corner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob, looking round. "What—"

"Scent," explained Peter, as he tipped the bag into the basket. "The



From somewhere in the thickets a lump of turf whizzed, hitting Mr. Quelch's hat fair and square, and knocking it off his head. "Good gracious!" gasped Prout, as the Remove master staggered, with a startled exclamation. "Who—what—"

'Burglars' Boarding-School'—Bunter contributed that.

"Best thing he could do with it!" said Bob, laughing. "He wouldn't contribute that when we asked him."

"Oh, he did it all right when I asked him," said Peter. "I persuaded him. One poke in the bread-basket did it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd carried an empty bag back to Study No. 7. He was greeted there by a glare from a pair of big spectacles.

"Beast!" hooted Bunter. "Rotter! Cad! Swab!"

"Stop talking about yourself, and get on to prep!" said Peter.

"I've a jolly good mind—" roared Bunter.

"Gammon! If you've got one at all, it's a jolly bad one."

"Yah!" hooted Bunter.

And he settled down at last, to prep. The "Burglars' Boarding-School" was gone, and gone for good; and Billy Bunter little guessed how very fortunate it was for him that that priceless volume had gone for good.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quelch on the War-path!

PREP in Study No. 7, was not destined to pursue the usual even tenor of its way that evening.

A quarter of an hour later it was interrupted.

Peter and Tom were working, and Bunter slacking and grousing—which was the usual way of doing prep in that study—when there was a sharp rap at the door, and it flew open.

Mr. Quelch appeared in the doorway. Behind him appeared Trotter, the page, with a rather scared expression on his chubby face. That expression was

reflected on three other faces, when the three juniors looked at Mr. Quelch.

Seldom had they seen their Form-master looking so intensely angry.

He was calm: but it was a deadly calmness. His lips were set in a hard line, and his eyes glinted like steel.

The three jumped to their feet at once. Peter and Tom looked a little alarmed—Bunter terrified. He blinked at his Form-master through his big spectacles with popping eyes. There was always some sin or other on Billy Bunter's fat conscience—and it was unusual for the Form-master to barge in, in prep, especially with that speaking expression on his face.

"Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I mean, no, sir! It wasn't me, sir! If Coker says I've been to his study—"

"Look at this, Bunter!"

Mr. Quelch held up a handkerchief—an extremely grubby handkerchief. He held it up by the extreme tip of the corner, between finger and thumb. He did not seem to like touching that hanky!

"Is that your handkerchief, Bunter?"

"Eh? No! Yes! I—I dropped my handkerchief somewhere, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I—I was going to look for it, sir, but—but I hadn't time—I—I've been so busy helping the fellows tear up scent for the paper-chase to-morrow, and—"

"Your initials are on that handkerchief, Bunter."

"Then—then it's mine, sir! T-t-thank you for bringing it here, sir! I—I'd have come down for it, if I'd known you'd found it, sir—"

"I found this handkerchief in my study, Bunter."

"Oh! I never knew I dropped it there, sir! I—I've been looking everywhere else for it, sir! Everywhere."

"You have been to my study, Bunter."

"Yes, sir, after class."

"And you removed certain manuscripts from my table!" said Mr. Quelch, in a voice like that of the Great Huge Bear.

Bunter jumped.

"Oh! No, sir!"

"I have no doubt that you did, Bunter."

"Oh, really, sir!" gasped Bunter. "You'd have seen me if I had, sir! You wouldn't have let me! How—how could I, sir, with you sitting at the table, glaring at me—I—I mean, looking at me—"

"I was not present when you visited my study, Bunter."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. He wondered whether Mr. Quelch was, after all, "balmy," as he had supposed the previous day! "Don't you remember, sir, you were sitting at your table, and you jawed me—"

"What?"

"I—I—I mean, you pointed out the errors in my Latin paper!" gasped Bunter. "I didn't mean jawed, sir! I never say you jaw a chap, like some of the fellows. I—I don't call it jawing, sir. I—I like to hear you jaw—I mean—"

"I am not alluding, Bunter, to the occasion when I sent for you, after class, to speak to you about the disgraceful state of your Latin paper. You paid a later visit to my study, while I was in Common-room."

"I didn't!" yelled Bunter.

"Then how came your handkerchief there, Bunter?"

"It must have dropped when you were jawing me, sir—I mean, when you were speaking to me about the disgraceful state of my Latin paper—"

"That is, of course, possible!" said Mr. Quelch. "I shall not condemn"

you without proof, Bunter! Do you deny having removed some sheets of written foolscap from my study?"

"Oh! Yes, sir! I never touched them!" wailed Bunter. At that moment the fat Owl was glad, very glad, that Bob Cherry had discouraged him from carrying on with his great idea of "paying out" Quelch.

Somebody else, it seemed, had had the same bright idea, and had done it!

Bunter, looking at Mr. Quelch's expressive countenance, was glad that he was not the fellow!

"Certain papers," said Mr. Quelch, "have been taken from my study. If they are still in existence, the boy concerned will be flogged. If they have been destroyed, the boy concerned will be expelled from Greyfriars. I can hardly believe that any boy, however unfeeling and unprincipled, would venture to destroy my work! If you, Bunter—"

"It wasn't me, sir!" groaned Bunter. "That is what I must ascertain, Bunter! Do you know anything of this, Todd?"

"No, sir!"

"Dutton! Do you know anything of this matter?"

"Do you mean Bunter, sir?"

"What! I was asking you if you know anything of this matter," snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter's fatter than any other chap in the Form, sir. He can't help it, I suppose," said Dutton.

"Do you know anything of the matter to which I have been alluding, Dutton?"

"I haven't seen him with a pudding to-day, sir! Or any mutton, either! I don't think it can have been Bunter, sir!"

Mr. Quelch breathed very hard. He had forgotten, for the moment, that Tom Dutton was deaf. Now he was reminded of it. He gave Dutton up, and turned to the page waiting at the door.

"Trotter! Step into the study."

"Yessir!"

Trotter stepped in.

"You will search this study, Trotter, and hand me any paper written in my hand, with which you are acquainted."

"Yessir!"

The three Removites backed out of the way, and Trotter proceeded to make the search. Quelch's gimlet eye following every movement.

It was quite clear that Mr. Quelch expected Trotter to make a discovery in that study.

He simply could not believe that any boy would have had the nerve, or the audacity, to destroy his precious papers. Such an act of vandalism seemed unthinkable to him. The papers had been taken from his study, and if they had not been destroyed, they could be found. And as he believed that it was Bunter who had taken them, he had little doubt that they would be discovered in Bunter's study. It was, in fact, quite in keeping with Bunter's fatuous obtuseness, to take away the papers and hide them, to pull his Form-master's leg. He had done such things before, and it looked as if he had done such a thing again.

Billy Bunter's fat knees knocked together, as he watched Trotter search.

He knew, of course, that he had not touched Quelch's papers. But it was clear that his Form-master suspected him, and, only too well, he knew that Quelch would not take his unsupported word on that subject or any other.

Under Quelch's direction, Trotter took every volume from the bookshelf, and opened it, and shook it, to make sure that no papers were hidden inside.

Had the "Burglars' Boarding-School"

been in the study, it would have been subjected to the same test—with awful results for Bunter! For, had that torn sheet turned up, in Bunter's book, it could hardly have failed to turn Quelch's suspicion into a certainty.

But from the books in the study, no discovery was to be made. Every volume—even to the school books on the table—was examined. But the result was precisely nil.

Trotter looked inquiringly at the Remove master. Mr. Quelch, with tight-set lips, made a gesture of dismissal, and the House page left the study. There was nothing further to be done in the way of searching. Obviously, the missing manuscripts were not there.

Quelch's eyes fixed on the shivering fat Owl.

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" groaned Bunter. "It wasn't me, sir!"

"What have you done with my papers?"

"I haven't seen them, sir."

"If you have hidden them, Bunter, I shall be more lenient with you, if you hand them over to me at once."

"I—I—I haven't, sir!"

"If you have destroyed them, I shall make a special request to Dr. Locke to expel you from the school."

"Oh crikey!"

"Have you anything to say, Bunter?"

"N-n-no, sir!"

"I believe," said Mr. Quelch, "that some preparations are being made for a paper-chase to-morrow, Todd! I handed Wharton a number of old papers to be torn up for the purpose."

"Yes, sir, we've got a lot of scent now," said Peter.

"No doubt some of the papers were torn up in this study?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bunter! Did you tear up my manuscripts with the rest?"

"Oh crumbs! No, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never thought of such a thing, sir, and Bob Cherry never laid into me with a ruler—"

"WHAT!"

"I—I mean to say, I—I wouldn't!" gasped the hapless fat Owl. "I never went to Study No. 13 after tea, at all, sir! You can ask Wharton and his friends—they were there when I went in—"

"Todd! Cease making signs to Bunter this instant!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Peter.

"I cannot believe, Bunter, that Wharton, or any other sensible boy, would permit you to commit such an act, with his knowledge!" said Mr. Quelch. "But if you suggested it—"

"Oh, no, sir! What—what I really said was, that—that I wouldn't dream of tearing up your papers for scent, sir, even if you offered them to me!" gasped Bunter. "That—that's what I really said, sir, and I never said anything about paying you out for whopping me for nothing, and it was—was because Bob Cherry misunderstood, that he pitched into me with a ruler—"

"Where is this torn paper, Todd?" thundered Mr. Quelch. "I must examine it. Where—"

"It's all collected in a basket now, sir," stammered Peter. "Some if it was torn up in every study in the Remove, and it was all put together."

"Where is the basket?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"In Cherry's study, sir—Study No. 13."

"Very good! I shall examine it! I shall examine the whole of it, Bunter, and if I find even one fragment in my handwriting, I shall know what to believe."

"But I never—"

"What?"

"I never tore up any, sir—"

"You have stated, Bunter, that you did not look for your handkerchief because you were busy tearing up scent for the paper-chase to-morrow!"

"Oh crikey! I—I mean—I—I meant that—"

"That will do, Bunter! You will know what to expect, if I find a single fragment of my papers in the basket in Cherry's study!"

"Oh lor'!"

Mr. Quelch swept out of Study No. 7 like a thundercloud.

Billy Bunter and Peter Todd were left dismayed—Tom Dutton puzzled and curious.

"I say, what did Quelch come here for?" asked Dutton.

"He was after some papers."

"What rot! As if a man of Quelch's age would come here to cut capers! Besides, he wasn't cutting capers! He looked to me jolly bad-tempered," said Tom. "Is anything the matter?"

"Quelch has lost some papers," yelled Peter. "Papers!"

"Oh, tapers! Well, he couldn't expect us to have any tapers in our study! Blessed if I see what he wants tapers for, but he can't expect to find any in the Remove—we don't use tapers in the studies."

And Tom Dutton sat down to prep again.

But Bunter and Peter were too worried for prep—especially Bunter! The fat Owl of the Remove waited in deep and dismal trepidation for what was to come next.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Scrap of Paper!

BOB CHERRY jumped, as a sharp rap came at his study door.

Mark Linley, Hurreo Singh, and Wun Lung were busy with prep—but Bob was giving himself a few minutes' rest, while he added a little to the basket of scent in the corner of the study. Having found some old letters, he was tearing them up, dropping the fragments in the top of the basket, which was already nearly full.

Plenty of scent was wanted, and this was an agreeable change from prep, especially as the Remove were preparing Caesar that evening, and Bob was always specially bored by that long-winded ancient Roman.

"What silly ass—" ejaculated Bob, as that sudden rap at the door made him jump and scatter fragments on the carpet instead of in the basket. "Oh!" he added, with a gasp, as a grim face looked in. "Ah! Oh! You, sir!"

Mr. Quelch rustled in. The juniors seated at the table jumped up.

Bob Cherry coloured under his Form-master's eye. His occupation was evident—and plainly had nothing to do with Caesar's Gallic War. In prep, fellows were supposed to devote themselves to prep, and nothing but prep.

It was quite frequent for fellows not to do as they were supposed to do—especially in junior studies! Still, no fellow liked to be caught.

"Is that how you do your preparation, Cherry?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes—no!" stammered Bob.

"Cherry left off only for a minute, sir, when he found some old letters in his pocket," said Mark Linley.

"You need not speak, Linley."

"Oh, very well, sir!"

Evidently Mr. Quelch was not in his bonniest mood.

The four juniors wondered why he

had come to the study, and what the row was, anyhow. Obviously, there was a "row" on. They soon learned! "Is that the basket of scent to be used in the paper-chase to-morrow, Cherry?" asked Mr. Quelch, pointing to it.

"Yes, sir!"

"Is that all you have?"

"Oh, yes, sir! It will be quite enough, now that we've had it from all the studies," answered Bob, wondering rather dizzily why Quelch was making such an inquiry. "But if you've got any more old papers you don't want, sir—"

"Do not talk nonsense, Cherry!"

"Oh, yes, sir! As you gave Whar-

ton some this morning—" stammered Bob.

"You are sure that this basket contains the total supply of torn paper?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"That's the whole lot, sir."

"Very well! Clear this table, please, and empty that basket in the middle. Take care to spill none on the floor."

The four juniors stared at their Form-master. Really, for a moment, they almost fancied that Billy Bunter had been right about his mental state. Such a command was absolutely astounding.

So astounding was it that they blinked at him, instead of obeying.

"Did—did—did you say empty the

basket on the—the table, sir?" stuttered Bob blankly.

"I did! Do so this instant!"

"Oh, all right!"

Utterly amazed, the juniors cleared books and inkstand off the table, leaving it clear.

Bob picked up the basket and up-ended it on the table, the contents falling out in a very large heap.

It was such a stack of small fragments of all sorts of paper, that anyone less fiercely determined than Mr. Quelch might have hesitated to search through it for a clue.

But Mr. Quelch did not hesitate.

His papers had not been found in
(Continued on next page.)

LEARN TO PLAY FOOTBALL!

OUR INTERNATIONAL COACH

DEFEND AND ATTACK

I POINTED out last week the fact that nearly all the great teams of the past could point to strength in the wing-half positions as one of their most important secrets of success. When we think about the duties of the wing half-backs of a football side, we are not surprised that this should be so. I have explained previously that the wing-half has two distinct duties to perform—he must be a defender and an attacker. It is not possible to say which is the more important of these two. There are the jobs—the player must see that they are both done.

As a means of putting the duties of a wing half-back into a nut-shell, which all of you can crack without much trouble, let me summarise them. I like to think of the half-back line, and the wing-halves in particular, as a brick wall. In the first of my pictures the opposing side is represented by a hard ball, made of lead, or something like that. This hard ball keeps throwing itself at the brick wall, but the wall is too thick to break down, and the ball just drops to the ground, unable to get any farther. In that picture the brick wall is representing half-backs who are very good at the defensive part of their job, but are not well up in the attacking side. They can stop the ball—in other words the opponents—but they can't send it back the way it has come.

Now put that picture side by side with my second one. In this the half-backs are represented by a brick wall in just the same way. The opponents, however, are represented by a tennis ball. The tennis ball keeps on throwing itself against the brick wall. But this time there is a difference. The brick wall throws the ball back again. Do you see the moral of the pictures? The half-backs in the second one are stopping the opposition, and then sending the ball back again to their own forwards. That is what the complete half-back is doing all the time. Breaking up opposition attacks and backing up his own forwards both with actual support and accurate passes.

Speed, ball control and accuracy combined with heftiness and artistry go to make the perfect wing-half. Read what our special reporter has to say about this all-important position on the football field.

THE COMPLETE FOOTBALLER

YOU can see that to do the "brick wall" part of his job the wing-half will find height, weight, and strength a great advantage. I don't say these things are by any means essential. There was a player named Tommy Meehan, of Chelsea, who was well under five and a half feet in height, yet he played at half-back for England. Indeed, I am not so sure that height and weight are so important as the things which are needed to carry out the other part of the wing-half's duties—the supporting and attacking side. For this there must be real football ability—speed, ball-control, accuracy. In fact, everything which goes to make up the complete footballer.

If you can combine "heftiness" and artistry, all well and good. Players like Jack Crayston, of Arsenal, Don Welsh, of Charlton, and Bill Imrie, of Newcastle, are just about the ideal. Big and strong, really good dribblers, and first-class at sending passes up to their forwards.

As I explained to you last week it is impossible for me to lay down the law as to how much attacking and how much defending a half-back should do. He must change his style according to the play of his colleagues, and the way the game is going. Always, however, the half-back who can find time to go up amongst the forwards, and perhaps take a hand in the business of goal-scoring, will be the best sort to have on your side. I mentioned Bill Imrie just now. Do you know that in the early part of this season, Imrie scored more goals than any other Newcastle player?

ONCE IN A LIFETIME

I EXPECT you have all heard of Arthur Grimsdell. A lot of people say that he was the best wing-half who ever kicked a football. In one season in which he played at left-half for Tottenham Hotspur he scored fourteen League goals—more than most forwards score nowadays. I also mentioned Don Welsh a little way back. I wonder how many of you went to see Chelsea and Charlton play at Stamford Bridge on Christmas Day? The people who were there saw Welsh, the Charlton half-back, score the sort of goal which most of us see only once in a life-time. He dribbled the ball a good fifty yards before putting it into the net with a shot which Woodley, who, don't forget, is England's goal-keeper, probably didn't see. That goal would have been remarkable enough if it had been scored by a forward. But Welsh is a half-back. He was helping his forwards in the very best way.

While I was watching that game on Christmas Day, however, I made a little note on the back of my programme. It read like this: "Tell MAGNET readers—Welsh going up—the danger." Looks rather like double-dutch, doesn't it? This is what it means. Just after Welsh had scored his great goal, he tried to do it a second time. But he didn't manage it. He lost the ball to a Chelsea defender, who passed it on down the right wing.

In the normal way, Welsh, who was the left-half, would have been there to stop the inside-right getting away. But Welsh was still farther up the field, and the Chelsea winger had no one to stop him taking the ball down and putting in a centre—from which Chelsea scored a goal. When that happened, I made my little note to point out to you that when a half-back goes up amongst the forwards, perhaps to try a shot at goal, someone must fall back to take his place in case there is any defensive work to be done. Welsh's move was a very good one. The other players were at fault in not filling the gap which he had left in the defence.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

Bunter's study. Bunter denied all knowledge of them. He had as good as admitted that he had, at least, thought of tearing up those papers. Now Mr. Quelch dreaded that they were destroyed. If that was the fact, he was going to make it clear, if he could. If the fatuous Bunter had added fragments of the "History of Greyfriars" to the scent for the paper-chase, no amount of trouble was going to prevent Mr. Quelch from bringing it to light!

Standing by the table in Study No. 13, the Remove master proceeded to sort through that immense collection of torn fragments, of all shapes and sizes—watched in silence by the four juniors in the study.

Prep, as a rule, was regarded as an extremely important function by the master of the Remove. Now he seemed to disregard it entirely. Four juniors stood idle, while he sorted and sorted and sorted again.

Suddenly his eyes glittered.

From the heap of paper fragments he picked a small piece of foolscap with a single word written on it. The word was "Greyfriars"—and the handwriting was his own!

It was a fragment of one of the papers missing from his study! That was a certainty!

He needed to search no farther. It was a case of "ex pede Herculem"—from that single fragment he traced the whole of the missing manuscript!

Mr. Quelch held up that fragment between finger and thumb. His eyes glittered at it. And Bob and his friends, seeing that that fragment bore a word in Quelch's "fist," exchanged startled glances. The Remove master had given Wharton some old papers that morning to be torn up for scent; but none written in his handwriting. How this fragment came to be in the scent was, therefore, a puzzle to the juniors.

It was no puzzle to their Form-master. He had no doubt on the subject now. Bunter had torn up those papers!

"You may replace the paper in the basket, Cherry!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "I have found enough."

"Yes, sir!" said Bob.

"A quantity of that paper was brought from Study No. 7, I presume?" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir, from all the studies—"

"I have asked you particularly whether any was brought from Study No. 7."

"Yes, sir."

"By Bunter?"

"No, Toddy—I mean, Todd brought it here and tipped it into the basket, sir. He brought some more just before prep, and—"

"Very well!"

Mr. Quelch rustled out of the study, leaving the four fellows perplexed and rather scared. He strode back to Study No. 7 with billowing gown.

Billy Bunter gave a gasp of alarm when he reappeared there.

Mr. Quelch held up the fragment of foolscap!

"Bunter! That is a portion of one of the sheets of paper removed from my study!" he said. "That paper was torn up for scent. My papers have been destroyed, I have no doubt—I can have no doubt—that it was done by you!"

"I—I never—" gasped Bunter.

"You will be judged by your head-master, Bunter! Dr. Locke will be in his study in an hour's time. You will then go there—"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

"I—I say—"

"I shall be there!" added Mr. Quelch grimly. "I can hold out no hope to you, Bunter, that you will escape expulsion from Greyfriars. That you deserve it, for this act of wanton and unfeeling destruction, you must be well aware. That, for the present, is all."

Mr. Quelch thundered away.

Billy Bunter fairly gaped after him.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

That was all that Bunter could say!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Way Out!

HARRY WHARTON opened the door of Study No. 1 and looked out into the passage.

Frank Nugent joined him in the doorway.

Carter remained at the study table—a lurking grin on his hard face. He had expected prep to be interrupted that evening! It had been interrupted!

"What the dickens is up?" exclaimed Wharton.

In prep, fellows were supposed to keep in their studies. There were, indeed, penalties for leaving the same in prep. But that rule was disregarded now by nearly all the Remove.

More than half the study doors were open. More than half the Form were out in the passage. There was a buzz of excited voices.

From amid the buzz came the fat, dismal, dolorous squeak of William George Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, I'm for it! I never did it, you know! You know I never did it, don't you, Bob?"

"I know I thought I'd stopped you, you fat chump!" answered Bob Cherry. "If you were idiot enough—"

"I wasn't going to do it!" howled Bunter. "You jolly well know I wasn't! I asked you fellows if you'd do it! That's quite different!"

"More in your line!" remarked Skinner.

"I knew Quelch would jump on me, if I did!" wailed Bunter. "I told you so, Cherry! You know I did."

"I guess somebody did it!" grinned Fisher T. Fish. "I'll tell a man, you're the nigger in the woodpile, Bunter."

"Beast! I never—"

"What's up!" roared Wharton along the passage.

A dozen voices told him. The captain of the Remove joined the crowd, and Nugent followed him. Carter followed as far as the study doorway and stood looking out and listening.

"But why did Quelch fix on Bunter, Toddy?" asked the captain of the Remove. "Every fellow in the Form had a hand in tearing up the scent, and it was all stacked into the same basket."

"That fat chump dropped his hanky in Quelch's study, and Quelch found it there!" answered Peter.

"That was when I saw him, after class, about my Latin paper!" howled Bunter. "It must have been, you see, because I never went to the study afterwards."

"Sez you!" grinned Fisher T. Fish.

"I tell you I never did—"

"Well, if Quelch found a bit of his manuscript in the scent, some Remove man must have torn up his papers," said Harry. "None of your larks, Smithy?"

He gave the Bounder a rather sharp look.

Herbert Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Hardly!" he said. "I've got some nerve—but not nerve enough to meddle with Quelch's jolly old literary works! Not guilty, my lord!"

"Fancy Bunter having the nerve!" said Hazeldene.

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread!" remarked Squiff.

"I didn't—" yelled Bunter.

"Quelch seems to think you did, if he's going to take you to the big Beak to be sacked!" remarked Ogilvy.

"I don't see that it's proved against Bunter!" said Bob Cherry slowly. "He might have dropped that hanky there when he saw Quelch after class."

"The blithering Owl let out to Quelch that he had the idea in his silly nut," said Peter. "That did it!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I didn't!" roared Bunter. "You heard me, Toddy! I told Quelch that I never thought of such a thing, and that Bob never laid into me with a ruler—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I jolly well know I never did it—why, I shouldn't have dared!" gasped Bunter.

"That bit sounds true!" remarked the Bounder.

Bob Cherry glanced along the passage to the hard face looking out of the doorway of Study No. 1. His lips set. Since he had learned of Carter's scheme against the fat Owl of the Remove, Bob was prepared to see Carter's hand in all the long tale of disasters that happened to Billy Bunter. That suspicion was in his mind now.

Yet he had to admit to himself that that was merely a suspicion, based on his knowledge of the fellow's tortuous trickery. There was not the remotest spot of evidence to connect Carter with the matter at all.

There was a rather strange expression on Carter's face.

He was as much surprised as any other fellow in the Remove, to hear that a torn fragment of Quelch's manuscript had been discovered in the basket of scent. He had expected that discovery to be made in Bunter's book in Bunter's study. But it did not take him long to guess that that book itself must have been torn up for scent, and that that was how it had happened.

"Look here," said Bob Cherry, amid a buzz of voices. "Bunter thought of that fatheaded idea, but he wanted other fellows to do it—he hadn't the nerve himself! I don't believe he did it!"

"Better tell Quelch that!" grinned Skinner. "Quelch knows that Bunter thought of doing it—and knows that it was done! Quelch can put two and two together! He's quite good at arithmetic."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Some Remove chap must have done it!" said Bolsover major.

"I don't believe Bunter did!"

"I jolly well didn't!" gasped Bunter.

"I say, Cherry, was it you did it?"

"What?" roared Bob.

"I mean to say, if you did, you ought to own up, now I'm up for the sack, you know!" urged Bunter anxiously. "I know I suggested it—but if you did it, old chap—"

"You burbling idiot!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Where was Bunter, after I booted him out of my study?" asked Bob. "If he can prove that he was nowhere near Quelch's study—"

"I was in my study, reading the 'Burglars' Boarding-School,' that that beast Toddy tore up for scent afterwards—"



"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Are—are you sure that you have that dog safe, Bunter?" "Oh, quite, sir!" chirruped the fat Removite. "He's all right with me! I—I know how to manage dogs, sir!"

"Then you can't prove—" "Only my word!" said Bunter. "I think Quelch ought to take my word! I could tell him anything if he would, you know! But—he won't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, don't cackle!" roared Bunter. "I've got to go to the Head! Quelch says it will be the sack! I say, you fellows, what can I do?"

"Pack your box!" suggested Skinner. "Beast!"

"Shut up, Skinner!" growled Bob Cherry. "This isn't a matter for joking! That fat ass is for it, if he can't get out of this! I don't believe he did it. For one thing, he was too jolly lazy to tear up any scent."

"I never had time, you know—" "Shut up, fathead!" "Beast!"

"Look here," said Bob, wrinkling his brows in thought. "Some Remove man did it—we don't know who, though I may have an idea. But whoever did it, tore the papers up as scent, and I jolly well know that none came from Bunter. I believe he was the only fellow in the Form who never lent a hand—but I know he didn't."

"Not a scrap!" said Bunter eagerly. "You see, I never had the time—"

"By gum," exclaimed Harry Wharton, "if Bunter never tore up any scent, he never tore up Quelch's papers—"

"I never did—"

"The basket was in my study," said Bob. "I know Bunter never brought any there! Toddy did—"

"Not from Bunter!" said Peter. "I mopped up his gory literature, because he hadn't put a spot of scent in the bag."

"Then if Bunter did it, how did he do it?" demanded Bob. "Quelch found that scrap of paper in our basket of scent. Bunter never contributed a

single scrap! So it never came from Bunter."

"My esteemed Bob, you ought to be an absurd detective!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is terrifically certain that the idiotic Bunter was too lazy to tear up any scent!"

"Beats Sherlock Holmes!" grinned the Bounder. "Blessed if I can see how Bunter can possibly have done it!"

"We'll tell the Head so, when Bunter goes!" said Bob. "We're all witnesses that the lazy fat snail never did any of the work."

"Beast!"

Carter turned back into Study No. 1 with a bitter look on his face. He had thought and thought over his cunning scheme, and had been able to detect no loophole of escape for Bunter. Chance—and Bob Cherry—had found one!

That unexpected chance, that Bunter's book had been torn up and added to the basket of scent, had done it! Nobody knew that Quelch's paper had been in that book—but everybody knew that Billy Bunter had not added a single, solitary scrap to the basket of scent in Study No. 13.

The schemer of the Remove really began to wonder whether it was, after all, chance, or whether there was something in roguery itself that fore-doomed it to defeat!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Pulling Bunter Through!

DR. LOCKE raised his eyebrows. Mr. Quelch glared.

Bunter was expected in the Head's study! An army of the Remove were not! But quite an army marched in with Bunter.

The fat Owl rolled in first. After him walked the Famous Five. Then

came Peter Todd, and Smithy, and Russell, and Ogilvy, and several more fellows. The Head's study was a spacious apartment; but it looked quite crowded.

"What—" began the Head. "What—" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"I understood, Mr. Quelch, that Bunter alone was sent for!" said Dr. Locke.

"That is the case, sir! I cannot imagine why all these other boys have come here with him. Leave the study at once!"

"If you please, sir—" began Harry Wharton.

"I have told you to leave the study, Wharton!"

"Yes, sir; but—"

"One moment," said Dr. Locke, raising his hand. "Possibly these boys have some knowledge of the matter, Mr. Quelch! In that case, it may be as well to hear what they have to say."

"Is that the case, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir!"

"We all know, sir—" began Bob.

"You need say nothing, Cherry, until your headmaster questions you!" said Mr. Quelch acidly.

"Oh! Very well, sir!"

"I will question Bunter first!" said Dr. Locke. "Bunter, do you deny having abstracted certain papers from your Form-master's study?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I never did—"

"You deny having torn them up for— for what I think is called scent, for a paper-chase?"

"I never—"

"Had you any intention of doing so, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I wouldn't!" gasped Bunter. "These fellows know, sir—I told them I wouldn't, because Quelch would guess it was me, sir! I mean, I never thought of anything of the

kind, sir! It's not the sort of thing that I should think of."

"Shut up, you fat idiot!" breathed Peter Todd.

"Oh really, Toddy——"

"Silence! It is clear," said the Head, "that the thought occurred to this foolish boy of doing this very thing, and his statements are absolutely worthless. I will hear what these boys have to say. You will speak, Wharton."

"Yes, sir! It's true that Bunter thought of playing that silly trick——"

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"Silence, Bunter."

"He thought of it, sir," said Harry, "but he never did it. He hasn't sense enough to understand how serious it was; but he never thought of doing it himself. And we all know that he never did it, sir, and we thought we ought to come here and tell you so."

"If you know this, Wharton, how do you know?" asked the Head.

"Mr. Quelch found his papers, or scraps of them, in the basket of scent in Cherry's study, sir. They had been torn up for scent. I suppose it must have been a Remove man that did it; but it certainly was not Bunter, for he never tore up any scent, and never went near the basket."

"Indeed!" said the Head.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Is it not the custom for all the boys concerned in a paper-chase to assist in preparing the scent?" asked Dr. Locke.

"Yes, as a rule, sir; but Bunter was too lazy——"

"Look here, Wharton——"

"Will you be silent, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir; but I never had time——"

"Be silent! Proceed, Wharton."

"Bunter was the only fellow in the whole Form that never helped," went on the captain of the Remove. "He dodged it all the time. Todd left an empty bag in his study for Bunter to fill, and found it empty when he went up to prep. All the scent torn up in Study No. 7 was done by Todd and Dutton, and taken along to Study No. 13 by Todd. Bunter had nothing to do with it."

"Indeed!" repeated the Head.

"The only time he came to Bob's—I mean Cherry's—study was when we were all there, and after we went down Wun Lung stayed in the study. Bunter never went near the basket. He never put anything into Todd's bag. Not a single scrap came from Bunter."

"What do you think of this, Mr. Quelch?" asked the Head. "Wharton, I understand, is your head boy, and you can rely upon him."

"We all say the same, sir!" said Bob Cherry.

"I rely upon all these boys, so far as their knowledge extends," said Mr. Quelch. "But Bunter himself made the explicit statement to me, that he had been too busy tearing up scent for the paper-chase to have time to look for the handkerchief he had dropped in my study."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never meant— Oh lor! Oh crumbs!" Even the fat Ananias of the Remove realised just then that truth had its uses, and reckless prevarication its little difficulties.

"You hear this, Wharton?" said the Head severely.

"Bunter was talking nonsense, sir, as he always does," said Harry. "He never did any of the scent."

"May I speak, sir?" asked Peter.

"You may, Todd, if you have anything to say bearing upon the matter."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

"Bunter fancied that Mr. Quelch was angry with him for losing his handkerchief, and told the first silly lie that came into his head," explained Peter. "He always does, as Mr. Quelch knows, sir."

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"Silence, Bunter!"

"I don't think Todd ought to make out that I'm untruthful, sir," said Bunter.

"Be silent, you foolish boy!"

"We're all witnesses, sir, that not a scrap of paper from Bunter went into the basket of scent," said Frank Nugent. "He couldn't possibly have put in what Mr. Quelch found there."

"If that is the case, Mr. Quelch, and these boys appear certain of what they say——" said the Head slowly.

Mr. Quelch's lips closed harder. Bitterly incensed as he was, he wanted to be just. Very much indeed he wanted to visit dire punishment on the young rascal who had destroyed his precious manuscripts, but he did not want to land it on the wrong man. There was a brief silence.

"In view of this, sir," said Mr. Quelch, at last, "I can only ask you to leave the matter open, pending further investigation."

"That appears to be the only resource," said Dr. Locke. "Boys, you may leave my study."

And the army of juniors marched out, Billy Bunter gasping with relief when he was once safely outside the dreaded door.

"I say, you fellows, I'm jolly glad that's over," he said. "I say, I wonder who ragged old Quelch's silly papers? Some pal of mine, I expect, paying him out for giving me that whopping for nothing. Was it you, Toddy?"

"Idiot!"

"Well, you can tell me, old chap," said Bunter. "I shan't give you away, of course. Was it you, Cherry?"

"Fathead!"

"Well, it must have been somebody," said Bunter. "One of you fellows, of course. I don't see why you can't tell me. If it was you, Cherry—— Owl! What are you grabbing my collar for, you fathead?"

Bob Cherry did not explain why he was grabbing Bunter's collar. Explanation was unnecessary, as Bunter knew the next moment.

Bang!

"Yaroo!" roared Bunter, as his bullet head established contact with the passage wall.

Bang!

"Owl! Wow! Yoo-hoop! Beast! Leggo!"

Bang!

"Yoo-hoo-hoooooop!" roared Bunter.

And the army of juniors marched away, leaving Billy Bunter rubbing his head and glaring after Bob with the deadliest glare of which his big spectacles were capable.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Paper-chase!

"YOUR boys, Quelch?" said Mr. Prout.

"Yes," said Mr. Quelch shortly.

He frowned.

It was the following afternoon—Wednesday, and a half-holiday. The Remove paper-chase was on.

The two Form-masters were taking a walk that afternoon by country lanes and woodland paths, and they were a good many miles from Greyfriars when they spotted the paper-chase.

Quelch was stalking, and Prout rolling, by a glade in Redclyffe Wood, when the note of a distant bugle reached their ears. Then two juniors came trotting in sight—Wharton and Bob Cherry—scattering scent from the bags of torn paper slung over their shoulders.

The two juniors looked bright and cheery and very fit, and were evidently enjoying the run across country—quite a pleasant sight to Mr. Quelch's eyes. But he frowned. He could not help thinking of fragments of the "History of Greyfriars" mixed with the scent the hares were scattering as they ran.

That morning, in class, Quelch had been sharp, indeed acid—like a bear with a sore head, as Skinner disrespectfully described it. Not a clue had been found to the vandal who had scrapped his papers. The one thing clear was, that it was not Bunter; but it might have been almost any other fellow in the Remove. Quelch's Form was a numerous one, so he had plenty to choose from.

The Remove fellows themselves could not guess who the culprit was. Bob Cherry suspected Carter; no one else had even a suspicion. But they all knew that Bunter was not the man.

Quelch had, more or less, to take the same view; but doubt lingered. Searching inquiry had revealed nothing. Certainly he was not going to risk giving Bunter another unjust punishment. One mistake of that kind was more than enough. But he was not satisfied that Bunter was not the man, and the fat Owl had found him quite unpleasant in class. Quelch was just, but Billy Bunter found strict justice rather an uncomfortable thing. Bunter was called to order for every fault that morning, and as the name of his faults was legion he had had quite a hectic time.

Fragments of paper scattered behind Wharton and Bob Cherry, left a trail through the wood; but the ring of the bugle behind showed that they had been sighted. They put on speed, and came racing past the spot where the two Form-masters stood.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Quelch!" ejaculated Bob, in passing.

They ran on, and disappeared into the wood. Then on the paper trail came the pack into sight—Vernon-Smith and Squiff leading, Mark Linley and Carter just behind, and a dozen more Romovites strung out after them. The pack rushed on, and disappeared into the wood after the hares.

"A healthy sport, Quelch!" boomed Prout.

"Oh, quite!" said Mr. Quelch.

Stragglers of the pack came on after the main body, singly or in twos. Last of all rolled Billy Bunter, puffing and blowing.

Mr. Quelch gave Bunter a special frown as he passed.

The fat junior, spotting him, put on speed and vanished after the rest.

Then the two Form-masters resumed their walk.

Hares and hounds ran on, with a long run before they circled back to the school. But there was one member of the pack who was no longer running. That one was Billy Bunter. And there was another if Bunter had known it.

Bunter was not fearfully keen on paper-chases. In fact, he disliked heaving his weight along the paper trail as much as he disliked the labour of tearing up the scent.

Bunter had kept up with the pack, so far, for one reason, and one reason only. Peter Todd had been keeping an eye on him.

Peter's idea was that they did not slack in Study No. 7. This was rather hard on Bunter, whose fat existence was one perpetual slack, so far as he could make it so.

During that run, Bunter had stopped to rest three times, and tried to dodge away four times. Seven times had Peter's boot started him on the trail again, regardless of the loud howls of protest from Bunter.

So long as they were crossing open country, there was no help for it, and Bunter rolled, and plunged, and puffed, and blew, and gave Peter deadly blinks, and thought with longing of a study armchair and a study fire to frowst over. But in the intricate paths of Redclyffe Wood, Bunter's chance came at last.

Amid trees and thickets, Peter's eagle eye looked round for him—in vain. And he had to keep on minus Bunter!

Bunter's idea of a paper-chase was to "chuck" it at the earliest possible moment and pick the shortest route homeward. Now he was, at least, free to plod his homeward way, like the weary ploughman in the poem.

The shortest cut to Greyfriars, from that part of Redclyffe Wood, lay across the land of Redmay Farm. Bunter knew where to find a stile giving access to the farm—and he knew, also, that it was adorned by a large board—"Trespassers will be Prosecuted."

He did not bother about that. Mr. Redmay's objection to strangers rooting over his land, and disturbing his flocks and herds, did not matter so much as the more important fact that it saved a mile on the homeward way.

So, once safe from Peter's eagle eye and active boot, Bunter rolled in search of that stile, recklessly ready to trespass at the risk of being prosecuted—and happily ignorant that another member of the pack was following him.

A footpath led to the stile, and Bunter had almost reached it when he discerned two figures ahead of him, standing at the stile.

"Beasts!" murmured Bunter. And he halted.

He applied that disrespectful epithet to Quelch and Prout! The two Form-masters stood there, looking across at the attractive, sunny meadows beyond, dotted with sheep, their backs to Bunter.

Obviously, Bunter could not disregard that warning board under the eyes of his Form-master. He leaned on a tree to rest, and waited for the beasts to go.

Prout's boom reached his fat ears. "Come, Quelch! A very pleasant walk across these meadows—"

"You see the notice, Prout?"

"Really, Quelch, we shall do no harm to the farmer's sheep if we walk across these meadows! Moreover, I have no doubt that it is an empty threat. How often are trespassers prosecuted?"

"Rarely, perhaps; but once would be too often, if the prosecuted person happened to be oneself," said Mr. Quelch dryly.

"I doubt very much whether the farmer has a right to put up that notice at all, Quelch."

"Possibly not. But I should prefer not to contest the matter in Courtfield County Court, Prout!"

Grunt, from Prout! The portly master of the Fifth had more weight to carry than the long, lean master of the Remove, and short cuts appealed to him almost as much as to Billy Bunter.

"A bad example to the boys, Prout," added Quelch.

"If any were present, perhaps!" grunted Prout.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

He glanced round—and spotted a fat figure on the footpath behind, at a little distance.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

Quelch glanced round, and smiled faintly.

"That is Bunter," he said. "A schoolmaster cannot be too careful, as you see, Prout! If Bunter saw us disregard this board he would be encouraged to do the same. Indeed, it may be with that very intention that he is there! I had better speak to him. Bunter!"

Billy Bunter faded into the wood.

Perhaps he guessed what Quelch was going to say. Anyhow, he had had enough of Quelch for one day. He turned a deaf ear and backed out of sight.

Mr. Quelch frowned. He was almost sure that Bunter had heard him. Still, he could not be quite sure.

"He is gone!" said Prout, with a rather yearning eye on that short cut home.

"Probably not far!" answered Mr. Quelch.

"Really, Quelch, I think— Why— what—what—what is that?" gasped Prout. "Good gracious! What—"

Whiz! Crash!

From somewhere in the thickets a lump of turf whizzed, hitting Mr. Quelch's hat fair and square, and knocking it off his head!

The Remove master staggered, with a startled exclamation. His hat dropped at his feet, accompanied by the turf.

"Good gracious!" gasped Prout. "Who—what—"

Mr. Quelch put a hand on the stile to steady himself! He gazed as if transfixed at his hat on the ground. Someone had hurled that turf from the thickets, and knocked his hat off—and only a minute ago he had seen Bunter!

The expression that came over Mr. Quelch's face was positively terrifying. For a moment or two he stood, then he grabbed up the hat, jammed it on his head, and rushed back into the wood in search of the turf-hurler.

He was not likely to find him. Arthur Carter was already cutting after the pack at top speed, leaving the Owl of the Remove to face the music!

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Quelch in a Quandary!

"OH crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter.

Peering out of the thickets, to ascertain whether Quelch and Prout were getting a move on, Bunter's eyes almost popped through his spectacles at the sight of Quelch's hat flying off under the crash of the whizzing turf.

Who had done it, Bunter had not the faintest idea.

He had not given Carter a thought. It was not likely to occur to his fat brain that the rascally young schemer, after seeing Mr. Quelch, had dropped behind the pack in the hope of spotting just such a chance. Had Bunter kept on the run no such chance could have come Carter's way; but, as usual, his own fat slacking was his undoing. As it was, he had played into the young rascal's hands as completely as Carter himself could have wished.

"Bunter!" he heard Mr. Quelch's voice, on a high note. "Bunter!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Bunter! Where—oh! You are here! You young rascal—you disrespectful young rascal!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "How dare you?"

Billy Bunter blinked at him in terror. "I—I say, I haven't done anything!" he gasped.

"You threw that turf—"

"Oh crikey! I didn't!" shrieked Bunter. "Oh lor'! It wasn't me! Oh lor'! I never—"

He jumped back, with unusual activity.

Quelch had a walking-stick in his right hand. With his left he reached at Bunter.

What he was going to do with the walking-stick in his right, after he had grabbed Bunter with his left, the fat Owl did not need telling.

Bunter did not stay to be grabbed!

He dodged, and flew.

"Bunter!" roared Mr. Quelch. "Stop! I am going to punish you most severely! Stop!"

That really was not the way to make Bunter stop! Being punished most severely had no attraction for him whatever!

He bolted, and after him rushed Mr. Quelch!

Prout gave a gasp as a fat figure flew by him, bounded at the stile, and careered over it.

"Stop that boy!" shrieked Mr. Quelch.

Prout clutched—too late!

Bunter was over the stile, and speeding across the meadow, his fat little legs going like machinery! Bunter's one fixed idea, at that moment, was to get out of reach of Mr. Quelch and his walking-stick! Nothing else mattered.

"My dear Quelch—" ejaculated Prout.

Quelch did not answer him. His long legs whisked over the stile, and he rushed after Bunter. Boards announcing that trespassers would be prosecuted failed to interest him at that moment. He wanted to reach Bunter, just as keenly as Bunter did not want to be reached!

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Prout as pursued and pursuer vanished across the green meadow.

Billy Bunter, as a rule, was no sprinter; but he put up quite a surprising speed at this moment. He fairly whizzed!

"Hi!" roared a voice, as he shot past a barn. "Hi! Stop!"

Bunter did not heed, even if he heard! A barking dog was heard in the barn. A red-faced man, in gaiters, and armed with a pitchfork, rushed out into Bunter's way, to stop him. Trespassers were a worry to Mr. Redmay, but he had really never beheld such a flagrant case as this—a school-boy bolting by his barn, under his very eyes, and refusing to heed his call to stop! He rushed to stop him!

No doubt, the farmer expected Bunter to stop at once as he jumped into his way. But Bunter did not stop. With Quelch and his walking-stick behind, he dared not! Bunter charged wildly on, lowered his bullet head, and butted!

Taken by surprise, the farmer sat down suddenly, with a bump that almost shook his farm.

Bunter careered round him and charged on.

The farmer sat and spluttered. A big mastiff came scuttling out of the barn, and pranced round the sitting man, barking industriously.

Bunter scudded on. He was winded, and gurgling for breath; and though the February day was cold, perspiration clotted his fat brow.

Even with Mr. Quelch's walking-stick brandished behind, Bunter could not have kept it up much longer. He plunged through a gap in the hedge

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,566.

into the next field, and blinked back over a fat shoulder.

To his surprise, he saw no pursuer—neither Mr. Quelch nor the farmer!

It was an immense relief!

He tottered on, towards a cart that lay at rest with its shafts to the ground. It was the only spot where he could get a rest out of sight! There was straw in the cart, and Bunter rolled into it with a gasp of thankfulness. He could only hope that Quelch, when he came on, would pass that cart, without guessing that Bunter had taken cover in it.

But Quelch had Bunter only known it, was not coming on!

Quelch had arrived at the spot where the farmer sat spluttering; and it was a case of "thus far and no farther."

The stout man in gaiters clambered to his feet, picked up his pitchfork and glared at the Remove master, blocking his way! It was altogether too much for Mr. Redmay's patience! A school-boy had bolted across his land, and knocked him over in transit. Now a man in a muddy hat and an overcoat was following on—regardless of the rights of property! The farmer was not standing this, at any price! He held the pitchfork threateningly in front of Mr. Quelch—and the Remove master halted and backed away a step or two.

"Off with you, you trespassing rascal!" roared the farmer.

"My good man—" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Good man yourself!" retorted Mr. Redmay. "Get out, or I'll set the dog on you! Here, Toothy!"

"I am a schoolmaster—I am following a boy belonging to my Form—I must ask you to excuse me—" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"You a schoolmaster!" hooted the farmer. "If you're a schoolmaster, can't you read?"

"Eh! What? Yes! Certainly."

"Then you've read that board at the stile, and you know that this is private land, and you're trespassing!" snorted Mr. Redmay.

"Oh! Yes! But—"

"Trampling over my land, and disturbing my sheep! There's been a pitchfork missed from that barn! I dare say you had it!"

Mr. Quelch fairly gurgled. It was true that he was trespassing—he could not deny that! But to be suspected of having "pinched" a pitchfork from a farmer's barn, was really too much.

"How dare you!" he gasped. "You are insolent—I—"

"Seize him, Toothy!" roared Mr. Redmay. "Get him! Get that tramp, Toothy!"

There was a regular tornado of barking from Toothy, and he careered at Mr. Quelch.

Quelch was no coward; but a big mastiff rushing at him, with big jaws, was a serious proposition. He backed swiftly away, whacking out with his walking-stick! He stumbled in the stubble, and the stick slipped from his grasp as he threw out his hands to save himself. Leaping up, weaponless, the Remove master dodged wildly.

"Call that dog off, you stupid man!" he yelled.

"Seize him, Toothy!" roared Mr. Redmay, waving the dog on.

Quelch dodged, and hopped, and jumped! Close at hand was the barn—one of those ancient buildings with a thatched roof sloping down at one end, to within three feet of the ground. Mr. Quelch grabbed at it, and swung himself out of reach.

Toothy had to stop below the eaves, glaring up at him, and barking furiously. Mr. Quelch, clamped on the thatched slope, gasped for breath, and stared down at Toothy.

"Will you call your dog off?" he shrieked.

"No, I won't!" retorted the farmer. "You came on my land without leave, and I dessay you was after another pitchfork—"

"Fool!"

"Oh, all right! I ain't fool enough to 'ave my tools pinched, if I can stop

it! You get off my land, as soon as you like! Watch him, Toothy!"

"I cannot remain here!" shrieked Mr. Quelch, as the farmer turned to go.

"Who's asking you to?" retorted Mr. Redmay.

"Call that dog off."

"Watch him, Toothy!"

The farmer tramped away in the direction Billy Bunter had taken.

Mr. Quelch shouted after him, unheeded. Then he stared down at Toothy—watching him! The mastiff had ceased to bark; but he watched, with a steady eye. The more Mr. Quelch looked at that big, powerful mastiff, the less inclined he felt to come to close quarters with him.

He cast a despairing glance back the way he had come, wondering if Prout could help him. Redclyffe Wood was a dark line in the distance—the stile where he had left Prout was out of sight. Prout had not followed. There was no help for Quelch.

He looked at Toothy again! He liked the mastiff's looks less than ever. He glanced after the farmer—but Mr. Redmay had already disappeared beyond a hedge.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

He remained on the slanting thatched roof. He had to remain there, till the farmer chose to return and call off the mastiff. Obviously, the farmer did not intend to return soon—if at all! He was giving that trespasser a lesson! It was awful for Mr. Quelch!

But there was no help for it! The cold winds of February blew round him, as he bunched himself on the slope of the barn, and watched Toothy, while Toothy watched him. The long, long minutes, weary and dreary minutes, passed, while Mr. Quelch, a helpless prisoner, squatted on the thatch like Patience on a monument!

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter the Brave!

BILLY BUNTER hardly breathed. His fat person was only half-hidden by the straw in the cart, in which he had taken refuge. Anyone looking in, over the side of the cart, must have spotted him. So the sound of footsteps stopping close at hand, was a terrifying one to his fat ears!

Unaware of Mr. Quelch's dilemma, he expected the Remove master to come on in pursuit, any moment; and hoped fervently that he would pass that cart unsuspecting. But the footsteps stopped!

The hapless fat Owl suppressed his breathing! If this was Quelch, he was done for! But he soon learned that it was not Quelch, as he heard a deep voice from the man he could not see.

"Seen a boy crossing this field, George?"

"No, zur—I only just coom—"

"I dare say he's far enough away by this time, the trespassing young scoundrel! Well, I've got the other!"

Bunter heard a chuckle—apparently from George!

"I see un, Mr. Redmay, zur! Stick-ing on the roof of the old barn! Haw, haw, haw!"

Another chuckle—this time from Mr. Redmay!

"Let him stick there, George! P'r'aps he'll learn to keep off a farmer's land! He says he's a schoolmaster! If he is, how'd he like me to walk into his school any time I pleased? People

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seem to think that a farmer's property is everybody's property, George."

"They do so, zur."

"He can stick there as long as he likes! I've got to go over to Courtfield. Don't you go near the barn, George."

"No, zur."

"Toothy's watching him! He won't guess that Toothy wouldn't bite a man for love or money, till he tries to get away!"

"Haw, haw, haw!"

"He won't try it on in a hurry!" chuckled the farmer. "Toothy looks as if he'd bite his leg off! He's frightened plenty of tramps, and they never know that he's as gentle as a young lamb, and takes the children for rides on his back! His looks do it! I fancy that trespasser won't risk it till dark, at the earliest! When he does, he will be all right—Toothy won't touch him!"

George gave a series of throaty chuckles.

He seemed greatly amused, by the idea of the trespasser remaining cornered on the roof of a barn, in terror of a dog that would not have bitten him for love or money!

No doubt it was funny, from the point of view of the farmer and his man—though far from funny to Mr. Quelch, who judged Toothy on his looks, which were formidable enough to scare the heftiest tramp.

"I'll send one of the children to take the dog away, at dusk, if he's not gone!" chuckled Mr. Redmay. "He can have a few hours of it, and learn to keep off other people's property! Schoolmaster indeed! P'r'aps he'd like me to turn my sheep into his school play-ground! Why not, if he can walk about my land whenever he likes? I'll learn him."

Another throaty chuckle from George!

"Get the horse, and take this cart over to Giles' Corner, George!" added Mr. Redmay. "Keep clear of the old barn!"

"Yes, zur."

There was a sound—a glad sound to Billy Bunter's ears—of retreating footsteps.

The fat junior ventured to peer out of the cart.

Mr. Redmay was disappearing in one direction with a vigorous stride, no doubt on his way to Courtfield. An ancient rural gentleman—evidently George—was toddling away in another direction towards a mass of buildings in the far distance, going to fetch a horse to take the cart away to Giles' Corner. The coast was clear!

Billy Bunter waited for both figures to disappear from sight, and then clambered out of the cart. It behoved him to be gone before George returned with the horse.

The fat Owl grinned as he blinked back towards the field he had crossed in his flight where the barn was.

He was quite as amused as the farmer and his man by Mr. Quelch's extraordinary predicament.

Nothing really could have happened more fortunately for Bunter.

Over the hedge he had a glimpse of the ancient barn and its thatched roof, and a figure clamped on the slope of that roof.

That was Mr. Quelch, watched by a terrifying-looking dog that would not have bitten him for love or money if he had tried to escape.

Billy Bunter chuckled

Bunter was not afraid of dogs that would not bite. A dog that was as gentle as a young lamb, and took children for rides on its back, had no terrors for Bunter. After what he had

heard, Bunter was not nervous about that dog.

Quelch evidently was. Blinking at the distant figure, squatting on the sloping thatch, Bunter could see that his Form-master was watching some object below the eaves. But he was making no movement.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

The farmer and George being gone, and Quelch crouching on the roof of the barn, the coast was clear for Bunter, and he started on his way.

But he stopped again.

He was clear of Quelch, so far as that went. Unfortunately, he had to see him again at Greyfriars. Quelch, obviously, would not remain a permanent fixture, on the roof of that barn. Sooner or later, he would blow in at the school, and it was fairly certain that his temper would not be improved by his experiences on Redmay Farm. It was a dismal prospect for Bunter.

But Billy Bunter's fat brain was working. It occurred to him that, if he rescued Quelch from that awful predicament, Quelch could hardly whop him afterwards, especially for something he hadn't done.

Rescuing Quelch from a dog that would not, according to his master, bite for love or money was not really a difficult or dangerous task.

Had it been either, Billy Bunter would have had no use for it. But it was neither. It was as easy as falling off a form.

Billy Bunter halted, turned, and rolled back the way he had come—towards the barn in the last field.

Standing in the gap in the hedge, he blinked at the barn, at Mr. Quelch cramped on the sloping thatch, and Toothy, squatted below the eaves, watching him.

Mr. Quelch's eyes, wandering round the landscape in a sort of hopeless hope of help, fell on Bunter, and he started. He had not expected to see the fat junior there again.

To his surprise, Bunter came rolling from the gap in the hedge towards the barn. Angry as he was with him, Mr. Quelch could not see him rolling into danger without warning him. He waved a hand at Bunter, and shouted:

"Bunter! Take care! There is a fierce dog here! You had better go away at once!"

Bunter rolled on, regardless. From information received, so to speak, he knew exactly how fierce that dog was.

"It's all right, sir!" he called out. "I've come back to help you!"

"Nonsense! Go away at once!"

"I can't leave you like this, sir," said the dutiful fat Owl. "I'll hold the dog while you get down, sir."

"I cannot allow you to take the risk. Go away at once, you foolish boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"It's all right, sir. I've got a way with dogs," said Bunter cheerfully. "They—they like me, sir. I—I'll chance it!"

Gurrrrrrrggh! came a deep growl from Toothy as he spotted the newcomer.

He turned his head towards Bunter, with a display of teeth that was positively terrifying. Bunter came to a sudden halt.

He liked Toothy's looks no more than Mr. Quelch did. A dreadful doubt came into his mind that perhaps the farmer over-rated the lamb-like docility of that mastiff. If Toothy's temper was anything like his looks, Bunter would have liked to be a hundred miles away from Toothy, and would have preferred a thousand.

The growl was followed by a hurri-

cane of barking. Toothy pranced at Bunter, and pranced round him, with bark after bark.

Almost did the fat Owl turn tail and bolt out of the field. Still, even Bunter could not fail to observe that, though the mastiff pranced round him, and barked like a machine-gun in action, he made no attempt to bite.

Taking his courage in both hands, as it were, Bunter advanced on the dog and stretched out a fat hand to him.

"G-g-g-good dog!" gasped Bunter. "G-g-g-good old d-d-doggie!"

Had Toothy snapped, Bunter would have bounded, and would probably not have stopped on the hither side of a couple of fields.

But Toothy did not snap. A fat hand fastened on his collar. Toothy took it like a lamb.

Bunter's courage revived.

He held on to that collar—an easy task, as Toothy made no objection whatever.

Mr. Quelch, from the roof of the barn, gazed in wonder.

"I've got him, sir!" called out Bunter victoriously.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Are—are—are you sure that you have that dog safely, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir! Right as rain!" squeaked Bunter cheerily. "Tain't easy to hold him, sir, but I've got him all right. I—I can hold him while you get out of the field, sir."

Mr. Quelch, though with considerable doubt, slipped off the roof of the barn. Toothy emitted a series of loud barks. But Billy Bunter's fat hand was firm on the collar.

"It's all right, sir!" called out Bunter. "If you get out of the field, sir—"

"I shall certainly not go and leave you with that dangerous dog, Bunter!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"It—it's really all right, sir. Look how quiet he is now I've got him. I can hold him all right, really, sir."

"If you are sure, Bunter—really, the dreadful animal seems quite tame with you—if you are certain—"

"Oh, quite, sir!" chirruped Bunter. "He's all right with me. I—I know how to manage dogs, sir."

"Very well, Bunter! I will go. And I am very much obliged to you, my boy, and very pleased to see you display so much courage. The dog seems very quiet with you, but you have certainly run a very considerable risk. I shall excuse you for your disrespectful act, Bunter, for which I intended to punish you most severely—"

"But it wasn't me, sir! I never chucked anything at your hat!" gasped Bunter.

"Very well, Bunter. In the circumstances, I shall accept your assurance," said Mr. Quelch. "And if you are quite, quite sure that you are safe with that dog—"

"Oh, yes, sir! But—but he's getting a bit restive. If you wouldn't mind hurrying, sir—"

"I shall go at once."

Mr. Quelch started back towards the stile with long and rapid strides. A volley of barks followed him, and Mr. Quelch, though he distained to run, certainly walked very quickly—very quickly indeed.

He disappeared across the meadow towards Redclyffe Wood.

Billy Bunter, his fat face wreathed in grins, released Toothy's collar at last. Toothy blinked at him and trotted away into the barn.

Bunter, with his fat grin extending almost from ear to ear, rolled on his way by the short cut across Redmay

Farm, and rolled cheerily in at Greyfriars—the first man home from the paper-chase.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

All Right for Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!" Most of the Remove were in the Rag after the run when Billy Bunter rolled in. For the last couple of hours Bunter had been adorning the study armchair with his fat person, resting his weary fat limbs. But it was tea-time now, and laziness had to take second place.

Many of the Removes were a little tired. It had been a hard run across country. Even Bob Cherry was glad to sit down. But the hares had got safely in, uncaptured, which was a satisfaction to them. Hardly more than seven or eight fellows had kept on the run to the finish, the weary ones tailing off at various points. Peter Todd was one of the few who had been in at the death, and he fixed a deadly glare on the fat Owl as he rolled into the Rag.

"You fat slacker!" hooted Peter. "You chucked it almost at the start! Come over here and be booted!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—I had to stop, really!" explained Bunter. "You fellows remember passing Quelch and old Prout! I say, which of you stopped behind and knocked Quelch's hat off with a turf?"

"What?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Did anybody?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Gammon!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Well, somebody did!" declared Bunter. "I saw it knocked off! I never saw who did it, but I saw the hat go. I say, Quelch thought it was me at first—"

"Wasn't it?" asked Carter, with a laugh.

"No, it wasn't!" hooted Bunter.

"Is the surefulness terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter?" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I tell you I didn't!" howled Bunter. "Quelch thought I did, because I was there, but I didn't. See? I'd like to know which of you fellows stopped behind and pelted Quelch's hat!"

"Well, a lot of fellows tailed off," said Harry Wharton, "but— Did any fellow here pelt Quelch?"

There was no answer to that question.

"Where were you, Carter?" asked Bob Cherry, with grim sarcasm.

"Find out!" retorted Carter.

"Well, I can't find out, but I can guess!" said Bob contemptuously.

"I say, you fellows, I shouldn't wonder if it was Carter; he's always playing some rotten trick to land me with Quelch! But, as it happened, it turned out all right, Quelch took my word about it afterwards—"

"Quelch took your word!" yelled Skinner.

"Yes, he did—"

"Fan me, somebody!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You see, it was after I'd rescued him from a savage bulldog," explained Bunter. "Quelch was cornered by a fearful, awful, howling bloodhound, and I rushed up and saved him."

"Suffering haddock! Go it!"

"I did, really! You see, Quelch got on a barn, and there was the mastiff watching him, and I rushed up and seized him—"

AND ALL FOR TWOPENCE!

Big things have been happening to our companion paper, **MODERN BOY**. The size has been increased to twenty-four large pages, measuring 15 inches by 10½ inches, which means that the paper has been practically doubled. The first issue in its new form is now on sale, and in it you will find a truly amazing programme. There are **EIGHT STORIES**, including a splendid war-flying story of the future called: "**WINGS OVER THE PACIFIC!**"; a Biggles story: "**BIGGLES ON THE TREASURE TRAIL!**" by Flying-Officer Johns; Captain Justice's greatest adventure—"**SIEGE OF STATION 'A'!**"; a funny Told-in-the-Tuckshop story: "**THE FLYING BIKE!**"; "**SKYLINE CITY STRAIGHT AHEAD!**" which takes you over the great American freight routes with a giant lorry; the story of the film: "**NON-STOP NEW YORK!**" and a True Adventure dealing with fabulous treasure, called: "**£30,000,000 SECRET!**"

That isn't all, by long chalks! In the centre of the paper is a special supplement called: "**MODERN BOY'S WORLD**," with hints on hobbies and careers, a spot of fun, a special How-It-Works diagram, a chapter from "Sammy" Davis' life of Speed Thrills, and a news feature by Flying-Officer Johns.

A splendid easy-to-win competition with £15 in cash prizes and **THE GREATEST OFFER EVER MADE TO BOYS** is also in No. 1.

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"You seized Quelch?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Eh? No, you ass! I seized the bulldog—that is, the bloodhound—I mean, the mastiff—and—"

"And swung him round your head by his tail and hurled him across Redclyffe Wood?" asked Skinner.

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

"Oh, no! I just seized him and— and held him by sheer strength and courage, you know, while Quelch escaped. That's why I never finished the run. And Quelch—"

"Shut up, you ass; here he comes!" whispered Bob Cherry, as the door of

the Rag opened and Mr. Quelch stepped in.

The Remove master glanced over the room.

"Bunter!" he said.

"Oh! Yes, sir?"

The Removes looked on curiously, Carter with a suppressed grin. The Remove schemer had no doubt that Mr. Quelch had looked in to call Bunter to account for knocking off his hat.

But there was a surprise in store for Carter—and for the rest of the Remove. Mr. Quelch bestowed quite an amiable smile on the fattest member of his Form. He had a parcel in his hand—apparently brought in with him after his walk. He held it out.

"This is for you, Bunter!" he said.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"I am very much obliged to you, Bunter, for what you did at Redclyffe Farm this afternoon," said the Remove master. "I have brought you a small reward—a box of chocolates, Bunter. I believe, my boy, that you had nothing to do with the disrespectful act in Redclyffe Wood, and I feel sure also that it was not you who destroyed the papers from my study yesterday. I have a very much better opinion of you than I had, Bunter."

"Oh, sir!" gasped the fat Owl.

Mr. Quelch left the Rag, leaving the Removes almost gasping.

Bob Cherry, glancing at Carter, chuckled at the expression on his face.

"I say, you fellows," gasped Bunter, "you heard that? Perhaps you believe me now!"

He grabbed open the parcel. It contained a large and handsome box of chocolates. He grabbed off the lid. His remarks were resumed with his mouth full and came a little muffled.

"I say, this is all right! I say, you fellows, have some of these choes—there's lots! Perhaps you believe now that I rescued Quelch from a savage bulldog—I mean, bloodhound—that is, Alsatian! Mind, I never heard the farmer say that he was as tame as a lamb, and wouldn't bite for love or money. I never heard the farmer say anything at all—in fact, he wasn't there—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! It was just pluck—sheer grit!" said Bunter. "Pluck will tell, you know! I say, you fellows, this looks good for my report this term, doesn't it? You could see that Quelch was jolly pleased! I say, these are ripping choes! Have some?"

And the Removes, chuckling, had some.

THE END.

(Once again fortune has favoured the fat Owl! Next week Billy Bunter gets some of his own back on the scheming Carter! You'll learn all about it in: "**A VENTRILOQUIST'S VENGEANCE!**"—next Saturday's spanking fine story of Greyfriars.)

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THE HERO OF THE HOUR!

Last Laughable Instalment of
"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!"

By DICKY NUGENT

"Inspector of the per-
lice to see you, sir!"
Binding, the St. Sam's
page, made that breath-
less announcement, as
he shoved his booted head
into Doctor Birchmall's
study.

The next moment a
man in the uniform of a
perlice-inspector walked
briskly into the room.
He had a hatchet face,
well-chiselled features,
a pair of gimlet eyes and
a voice like a rusty file.

"Name of Cutts—
Inspector Cutts, at your
serviss!" he cried. "I
understand that you
have detained somebody
in connection with the
kidnapping of yung
Bullion."

The Head rubbed his
hands gleefully.

"Right on the wicket,
inspector," he chorlied.
"His name is Lickham
—I. Jolliwell Lickham.
He is the missing junior's
Form-master."

"The dickens he is!"
ejaculated Inspector
Cutts.

"I suspected him
right from the moment
when I heard Bullion
had vanished," grinned
the Head. "You see,
inspector, I have re-
cently found out that,
unknown to me, this
Lickham has at some
time in his career been
hobnobbing with a lot
of low, common tramps."
"Jumping trun-
cheons! Are you
serious?"

"Never more so,
inspector, I assure you!
Just before Bullion dis-
appeared, two villainous-
looking raskals came
to St. Sam's, claim-
ing that they had
come to see Lickham.
I have it on the best
orthority that they
carried out their in-
tention. In fact,
Lickham and his
pals," said the Head,
"with a skornful curl
of his lip, "were
actually seen near the
skool tuckshop with
their heads together
—obviously plotting
the dastardly
crime!"

"My hat!"
"Shortly afterwards,
Bullion was seen walk-
ing towards the tuck-
shop. Shortly after that
the two tramps were
observed leaving St.
Sam's, carrying between
them a sack which ob-
viously contained a
fairly weighty burden."
The Head pawsed and
shrugged: "Need I tell
you, inspector, what was

undoubtedly inside that
sack?"

Inspector Cutts' eyes
gleamed.

"I fanay I can make
a pretty good guess,
Doctor Birchmall," he
rasped. "The sack
contained tuck!"

"Ass!" grunted Doc-
tor Birchmall. "I
don't mean tuck. I
mean yung Bullion."

The inspector started
violently.

"Ha! I see! You
are implying that this
was how they kidnapped
the yungster?"

"Eggsactly!"

The inspector wissled.

"Few! If what you
tell me is correct, sir,
this man Lickham seems
booked for a good long
stretch! Does he konfess
to the crime?"

"Not so far. But
you'll soon be able to
make him konfess if you
put him through the
third degree," said the
Head eagerly. "We
have an eggcellent col-
lection of instruments
of tortcher in the skool
museum if they are of
any use—"

"Thanks for the offer,
but I'm afraid we are
not allowed to use third
degree methods," said
the inspector rowfully.
"I suest that you
conduct me to the pri-
soner and allow me to
talk to him myself."

"With plezzure, in-
specter! This way!"

Doctor Birchmall led
the officer out of his
study and up the stairs
to the punishment-room
where he had incar-
cerated Mr. Lickham.

Outside that dredded
apartment, he dived into
his trowsis pocket and
projooed a key. He
winked slyly at Inspector
Cutts.

"Have your hand-
cuffs ready, inspector,"
he wispered. "We'll
take him by serprize and
render him horsie de
combat before he knows
we've arrived!"
"Good wheeze!"

Silently and stealthily
the Head inserted the
key in the lock; then,
with a swift movement,
he turned it, flung open
the door and bounded
into the room—the in-
specter close at his heels.

An instant later the
two came to a dead stop,
uttering a simultaneous
cry of amazement.

"GONE!"

The bird had flown!
Mr. I. Jolliwell Lickham
had vanished just as
though the floor had
opened and swallowed
him up! But the real
eggsplanation was by no
means so sensational as
this, as the newcomers
could see when they
turned their eyes to the
winder.

Two of the iron bars
that barred the winder
had been removed from
their settings completely!
So any idiot could see
that the prisoner had
escaped by climbing out
of the winder and down
the ivy. Doctor
Birchmall and
the inspector could see it
for themselves.

"Bust it!" hist the
Head. "He has slipped
through our fingers—
and I'm certain that he
was the evil jeenius
behind this kidnapping
stunt! Some people
say he could never have
done it becaws he had
a hart of gold. But,

personally, I am con-
vinced of his guilt."

"Really, this is most
unforchunit," rasped the
inspector.

"With Lickham in our hands
we stood some chance of
finding Bullion. But
now he has escaped I'm
afraid that the question
we shall never be able
to answer is: Where is
Bullion?"

"Here I am!"

It was a youthful
voice from the doorway;
and the meer sound of it
was suffisiant to make
the Head and his visitor
nearly jump out of their
skins.

"What the — who
the —"

"How the — where
the —"

"BULLION!"
shreeked Doctor
Birchmall suddenly.

"It's Bullion—or his
ghost!"

"I'm no ghost, sir!"
larfed Bullion. "I'm
here in the flesh right
enuff—thanks to Mr.
Lickham!"

"WHA-AT?"
"Fakt, sir!" grinned
Jack Jolly, who, with
Merry and Bright and
Fearless, now appeared
behind Bullion. "Mr.
Lickham tracked down
the kidnappers to their
lair and reskewed the
whole lot of us. He
properly gave them
beans, too, didn't he,
you fellows?"

"Yes, rather!"

"But isn't Lickham
the man who was sus-

pecked of doing the
kidnapping himself?"
asked the inspector in
astonishment.

"He may have been
once," said Jack Jolly,
"but not after what we
saw to-day, sir!"

"We—we have evvi-
dently made a garstly
mistake!" stammered
the Head, who hardly
knew whether he was
on his head or his heels.

"But where is Mr.
Lickham now?"

"I know, sir!" wined
another newcomer from
the doorway; and
Toadey minor appeared.

"You know where Mr.
Lickham is, Toadey?"
wrapped out Doctor
Birchmall. "Then
tell what you know at
once!"

"Please, sir, he's in
the woodshed, hiding
amongst the wood!"
wined Toadey minor.

"Come on!" said the
Head.

Nobody, of corse,
dreedmed for a moment
that the Mr. Lickham

who was hiding in the
woodshed was not the
Mr. Lickham who had
reskewed the juniors
from the klutches of the
kidnappers.

Mr. I. Jolliwell Lickham
had preserved
the secret of his
tramp suzzin,
Dusty Lickham,
only too well
for that!

They all
rushed down-
stairs and
across the quad
to the wood-
shed.

Mr. Lickham
was there right
enuff. But he
didn't stay
when he spotted
the crowd. He
furely flew from
the woodshed
and headed for
the gates at top speed!

"Lemree alone! I'm
innersest!" he yelped,
as he tore across the
quad. "I never kid-
napped Bullion!"

They ran him to earth
at last—near Fossil's
lodge by the gates.

prize, when, instead of
seizing him and putting
him in irons as he egg-
spected, his persewers
seized him and lifted
him shoulder-high!

"Hip, hip, hooray!"
they cheered.

"Good old Lickham!"
"B-b-bless my sole!"
stuttered Mr. Lickham,
when they started carry-
ing him back to the
Skool House to the tune
of "See the Conkering
Horo Comes." "I must
be dreedming!"

But it was no dreedm,
as Mr. Lickham realised
in the end. Putting two
and two together and
making five, he came to
the correct conclooision
—that his cuzzin Dusty
had turned up trumps at
last and done something
that was redounding to
his credit!

The scellybrations end-
ed at last. Inspector
Cutts went away empty-
handed, but happy in
the nollidge that Bullion
had been found.

Mr. Lickham, in the privacy
of his study, sank into
an armchair and breath-
ed freely for the first
time for many days.

But he had not been
breething freely for more
than a cupple of seconds
before a tap on the
winder set him gasping
for broth once more!

It was Dusty Lickham
who threw up the sash
and let himself in—and
at the same moment
Jack Jolly & Co. entered

HARRY WHARTON CALLING!

Is the old custom
of sending out roman-
tic cards on Valentine
Day really reviving or
not?

If Greyfriars can be
taken as a reliable
guide, it certainly is!
A distinct softening
of the feelings of many
prominent residents
was noticeable this
year, as Valentine Day
drew near. On in-
quiry I learned that in
each case the resident
affected was either go-
ing to send or had
sent already a berib-
boned card to some
fair damsel whose
charms had smitten
him!

Take Bolsover
major, for instance. I
bumped into him in
the quad wearing a
sweet and soulful sim-
per on his battle-
scarred face. He was
inhaling the fragrance
of a daffodil.

He shyly confessed
that he was on his way
to post a valentine to
one of the young ladies
who show people to
their seats at the
Courtfield Cinema!

Later on I spotted
Bob Cherry sitting ab-
stractedly in the Rag
with a pencil in his
hand and paper on the
table before him.

Blushing violently, he
asked me if I knew a
word to rhyme with
"dimples." He look-
ed awfully reproach-
ful when I suggested
"pinples."

Yes, you've guessed
it! He was compos-
ing a valentine of his
own to send to Mar-
jorie Hazeldene!

Other he-men simi-
larly affected were
Tom Brown, Rake,
and Morgan in the Re-
move, Temple in the
Upper Fourth, and
Robson and Stewart
in the Shell. For a
couple of days these
fellows wandered
about the school look-
ing like lost sheep—
and they all made a
rush for the postman
on Valentine Day!

Imagine their ex-

citement when they
found that there were
about half a dozen
valentines for each of
them. But excite-
ment soon changed to
rage when they found
out what sort of valen-
tines they were.

It seemed that Skin-
ner and a number of
other humorists had
seized the opportunity
to send off a few home-
made valentines of
their own. And, al-
though I have not
been able to secure a
specimen to prove my
point, I can assure you
that they were not at
all complimentary!

It is seem to have
done some good, any-
way. The chaps who
were afflicted with the
disease have become
quite spry since
they opened their
Valentine Day post.

So, although this
year's Valentine Day
has broken all records,
I fancy it may prove a
bit of a frost in the
future.

Meet you again next
week, chums!

HARRY WHARTON.

No. 280.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

February 19th, 1938.

The GREYFRIARS HERALD



STOP THESE SLANDERS!

Roars GERALD LODER

I am a kind-hearted sort of chap, usually. (Great
pip!—Ed.) It takes a lot to upset me. I am very
patient and forgiving at that. (Ye gods!—Ed.)
But there is a limit to my patience, and I am going
to say here and now that this week the limit has
been reached. Cruel and malicious slanders have
been uttered about my private life—chiefly by mem-
bers of the Remove Form. If these slanders are
repeated, my patience and kindness will at last come
to an end, and whatever little worm it is that
slanders me will be torn to pieces and strown all
over the Sixth Form passage. So get that!

The tale that these tattling tongues have
told is one which will be treated with the
contempt it deserves by those who know
my blameless character. (Phew! Fan me,
somebody!—Ed.) Briefly, it is that I
visited a low tavern called the Peal o' Bells
in Courtfield, played cards with some very
common fellows, and cheated (cheated, mark
you! Me!) and finally got thrown out on
my neck.

Admittedly, I did go to Courtfield; but
as for the Peal o' Bells, periah the thought!
The place to which I actually went was a
milk bar.

As I sat down, quietly sipping my glass of
milk, some quite refined fellows who were
there asked me if I'd join them in a noughts-
and-crosses tournament. With my custom-
ary politeness, I smilingly accepted and we
played.

There was, I admit, a slight difference of
opinion afterwards as to the rules of the game,
and when we left the milk bar I was in a
slight huff. But, of course, the suggestion
that I was thrown out is simply absurd. I
may have flicked one of the fellows lightly
on the tip of the nose and he and his friends
may have sniffed audibly and made restrained
gestures of disapproval at me.

But nothing more than that!

These are the facts about the trivial incident
on which slanderous tongues have based their
ridiculous tales about me.

Now that I have revealed the entire truth
about it, I hope that the slanderers will hide
their diminished heads in shame and for ever
hold their peace!

(What a hope! As we go to press news
reaches us that Loder has been up on the
carpet before the Head and received a dress-
ing-down and a month's "gating." If our
readers believe the Head gave Loder all that
for getting involved in a noughts-and-crosses
argument in a milk bar, they can do so. We
know what we think about it ourselves!—Ed.)

HE LET THE SIDE DOWN!

Gatty, of the Second, is in disgrace in the
Lower School.

We understand that he washed his hands
before his Form-master gave him the order.

MY FORM IS THE BEST AT GREYFRIARS!

By H. H. LOCKE, Esq., D.D., M.A.

As headmaster of Greyfriars,
I suppose I should preserve a
feeling of complete impartiality
towards the various Forms in
the school. I trust, therefore,
that my readers will not regard
it as a weakness on my part
when I confess that the Form
which I usually teach—namely,
the Sixth—is, in my opinion,
the best Form at Greyfriars.

I have read with great inter-
est the articles which have pre-
ceded mine, and it is gratifying
to me to know that each Form-
master has so staunchly advo-
cated the claims of his own

The Sixth Form over which
I preside at present is a Form
of which any schoolmaster
might be proud.

Wingate is an ideal head boy,
possessing great strength of
character and exercising a fine
influence over the entire school.
He is, in addition, a great
classical scholar—which en-
hances him considerably in my
eyes!

Faulkner, Wynne, Hammers-
ley and North support him
nobly, as do most of the Sixth.
And, though there are one or
two weaklings who seek to
make up for their lack of
character by apeing the less
desirable habits of grown-ups,
they are in a negligible minority.

So I feel that I am justified
in considering that the Sixth
is the best Form at Greyfriars—
and I hope that it will always
be the same!

THE END.