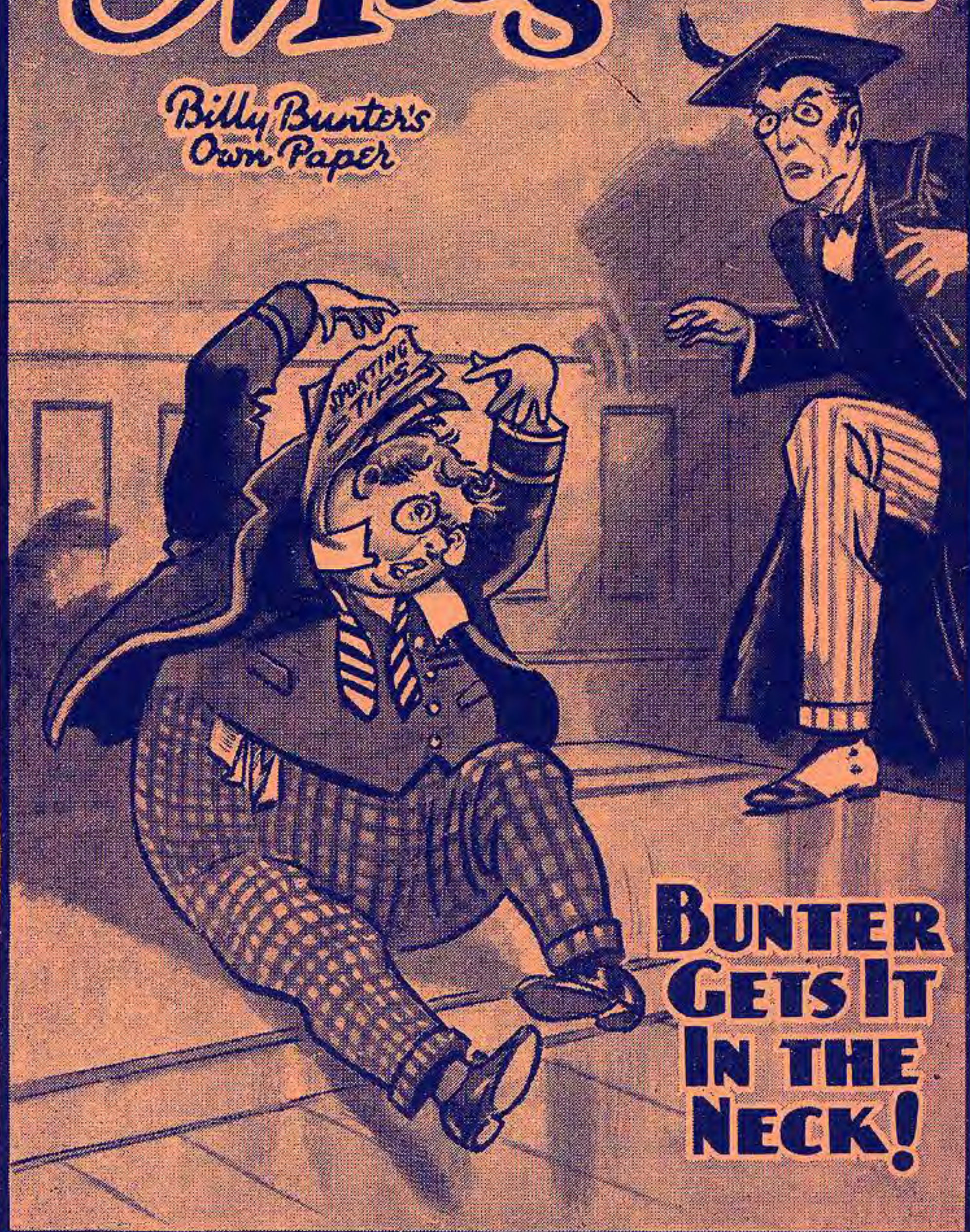


GREAT GREYFRIARS YARN STARRING BUNTER THE PUNTER—INSIDE!

The Magnet²^D

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**BUNTER
GETS IT
IN THE
NECK!**

Interesting Information About Greyfriars By the Man Who Knows—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

A TOUR OF THE SCHOOL.

(1)

You've seen all the sights,
You've sighted the scene,
Up several flights
Of stairs you have been,
All over the school you have travelled
In verses in this magazine.



FAR AWAY and LONG AGO

Now once there lived a man named Mr.
Prout,
Whose head was absolutely full of
hair.
His chief delight was to wander out,
And with his rifle slay the grizzly
bear!
But that was far away and long ago,
He's now as bald as any bag of lard,
And as for shooting—well, his eye's so
slow
He couldn't hit a haystack at a yard!

Now once there lived a slim and slender
youth
Whose name was Henri in his native
France;
His ways were not regarded as uncouth,
He studied English when he had the
chance.
But that was far away and long ago.
His figure now is fat enough for two,
He teaches French, is funnier than a
show,
And now he's simply known as "Old
Mossoo."

Now once there lived a lad of sterling
blood
Who never drank or smoked or took a
tip;
He sailed in Noah's Ark and braved the
Flood—
Yes, William Gosling worked to save
the ship!
But that was far away and long ago.
A pipe and glass he's since been known
to fill.
To tips he's never eager to say "No."
And work makes Gosling absolutely
ill!

A silly old sportsman named Popper
Went shooting one day in a topper,
Which made the birds think
He'd been having a drink,
And they thought it extremely
improper!

Au Revoir.

(2)

Your feet must be tired,
They're certain to be;
A rest is required,
So leave it to me—
We'll sit for a while in the tuckshop,
And then you can pay for my tea!

(3)

You really can't wait?
H'm! Just as I thought!
Well, here is the gate,
A cab has been brought,
And Gosling's expecting a shilling,
And gets? No pounds, nothing, and
naught!

(4)

Now jump in your car
And give us your fin!
Good-bye, Oh revwah,
Pip-pip and chin-chin!
In future, whenever you're passing
You mustn't forget to drop in!
(Next week: THE DAILY ROUND.)

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET GERALD LODER, the unpopular prefect of the Sixth.

L is for LODER—the cad!
Who's almost impossibly bad:
There's hardly a vice, small or large,
Which cannot be laid to his charge;
His genius for being a beast
Is worth a tin medal, at least!
A bully, he makes the fags shriek;
A toady, he'll grease to a beak;



A gambler, he dabbles in bets;
A smoker, he likes cigarettes;
A rake, he plays billiards and nap;
A funk, he's not keen on a scrap;
A slacker, at games he can't shine;
A braggart, he thinks he is fine;
But greatest of all is the fact
That he's never been jolly well sacked!

ANSWER TO PUZZLE

He'll go by boat.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

Quelch has just whopped me for being
slovenly and careless in the hundred
lines I sent in. I'll bind the next lot in
Morocco with gilt edges.

When we chargedh Wun Lung, the
Chinese chump, with putting smoke-
bombs on the Rag fire, he said: "No
savvy!" Had he been Japanese, he
would have apologised.

Fisher T. Fish has started a loan
club. At the moment, he's started
alone.

PUZZLE PAR

Mark Linley wants to go to
Lancashire without touching
Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire,
Northamptonshire, or Lincoln-
shire. How will he manage it?

Answer at foot of column 2.

Tubb of the Third claims to have
found a curious object he's never seen
before. Probably a piece of soap.

A dog bit Loder in Friardale last
Saturday. A statue of the animal will
probably be erected in the quad.

Carne confiscated Skinner's cigarettes
and took them away to burn them. No
doubt he will throw them into his mouth
and set fire to them.

Gosling says he likes to meet a man
with the right spirit. And two glasses,
of course.

Bolsover major won his recent fight
with Snoop, when Snoop's seconds threw
in the towel after the first blow.

Sir Hilton Popper has shot all the
rabbits and pheasants on his estate.
He's now starting on the tadpoles.

If Fisher T. Fish is ever a school-
master, he'll be too jolly mean to give
his scholars lines.

"I'VE GOTTA HOSS!" So says Billy Bunter, the prize porpoise of the Greyfriars Remove. But borrowing the necessary cash and "getting it on" is a problem—until Arthur Carter comes to the rescue. It's the chance Bunter's rascally cousin has long been waiting for!

BILLY BUNTER'S DEAD CERT!



The Famous Five stood and gazed at Billy Bunter, as the fat junior held the sporting paper open in both hands, blinking at it with a fascinated blink!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Special Snip!

"By gum!" said Billy Bunter. Bunter's fat face was excited. His eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

The fat Owl of Greyfriars stood on the Remove landing, leaning on the banisters, with a newspaper open in his hands, and his eyes, and spectacles, glued on the same.

So deeply interested, or rather entranced, was Bunter, by what he was reading in that newspaper, that he was deaf and blind to his surroundings.

Even the fact that it was tea-time had slipped from his fat mind!

"By gum!" he repeated. "What a chance! Oh crikey! What a bit of luck finding this paper in Carne's study! Oh crumbs!"

Five juniors, coming up the Remove staircase, glanced at the fat Owl of the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. glanced a second time—as they noticed that Bunter's paper was of a pink hue, and bore the title, in large letters, "Sporting Tips."

Racing papers were a variety of literature severely discouraged at Greyfriars. In fact, any junior found in possession of such a paper was liable to "six" from a prefect's ash! Any senior, in such circumstances, was due for an interview with his headmaster—likely to be a painful one!

And there was Bunter, with a sporting paper in his fat paws, prominent in the view of anyone that happened to pass!

Several fellows, passing, had glanced at it, and grinned. Beaks and prefects

were not likely to come up to the Remove landing, unless for a special reason. But it was fearfully risky all the same.

Carter, the new fellow in the Remove, had passed and stared blankly at the fat Owl, and hurried down the stairs. Then the Famous Five came up, and, spotting Bunter and his sporting paper, stopped.

They stood and gazed at him. He did not heed them. He held the paper open in both fat hands, and blinked at it with a fascinated blink. He did not know that they were there, till Bob Cherry, stepping forward, took a kick at the pink paper which whipped it out

UPROARIOUSLY FUNNY SCHOOL YARN OF HARRY WHARTON & CO., OF GREYFRIARS.

of Bunter's hands and sent it fluttering on the landing. Then Bunter woke up, as it were.

"Oh! Beast! Who—what—" gasped Bunter. He plunged after the pink paper and grabbed it up. "I say, you fellows—"

"You howling ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What the dickens are you doing with that putrid rag?"

"Like Quelch to see you with it?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Eh? Old Quelch won't be coming up here," said Bunter. "Never mind Quelch! Blow Quelch! I say, you

fellows, have you got a pound you don't want?"

"Likely, isn't it?" remarked Johnny Bull. Greyfriars juniors counted their cash in half-crowns rather than in pounds. And if a fellow had a pound, it was extremely unlikely that he would not want it!

"I mean to say, can you lend me a pound?" asked Bunter eagerly. "It's rather important! In fact, fearfully important."

"Must be frightfully important, for you to stuff at the tuckshop!" agreed Bob Cherry. "But have you really got room for a whole pound's worth of tuck? Not afraid of bursting in the quad?"

"Tain't tuck!" snorted Bunter. "I'm not always thinking of tuck, like you fellows—"

"Oh scissors!"

"Besides, I'll let you have a couple of pounds back for it, if you like, in a day or two!" explained Bunter. "If I have a pound to-day, I shall have six pounds on Thursday—see?"

"Not quite!" said Harry Wharton, staring at the fat Owl. "How are you going to turn one quid into six? Have you become a magician, as well as a fatheaded ventriloquist?"

"It's as easy as falling off a form!" grinned Bunter. "It's in this paper. You put a pound on Crackerjack—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"At five to one! Day after the race you collect six quids! Pretty easy money, what?"

"Great pip!"

"The casiness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "At least, fully, it is preposterously easy to put a

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pound on the esteemed Crackerjack. But it may not be so absurdly easy to collect the six pounds afterwards."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Bunter confidently. "You've only got to find a 'bookie' who pays—Smithy knows one! That's all right!"

"Well, my only hat!" said Bob Cherry blankly. "Are you taking up the Bouncer's jolly old manners and customs, Bunter? Or are you taking Loder of the Sixth as a model? Specially looking for the sack?"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bunter peevishly. "I can tell you, this is a tremendous chance—if only a fellow can get hold of a pound in time, you know. I happen to be short of money at the moment, owing to being disappointed about a postal order. Five pounds would come in jolly useful. Of course, it's not so much to me as it is to you fellows—still, I should be glad to have it. I can tell you, I could do with five quids!"

"And there's no doubt about the five quids?" asked Johnny Bull, with intense sarcasm.

"Oh, no! That's all right! You see, it's a special tip by a man who knows," explained Bunter. "Quick-Eye, of 'Sporting Tips,' gives it as his Special Snip! He knows, you know! He says here that he's been giving winners every day for weeks! Well, that shows, doesn't it?"

"The showfulness is not terrific, my esteemed Bunter!" chuckled Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh. "The absurd Quick-Eye may be talking out of his absurd hat."

"Oh, don't be an ass! He knows," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, Crackerjack is running on Wednesday, and you can get five to one against him to-day. Who's going to lend me a pound?"

"Boot him!" suggested Nugent.

"Better go along to Study No. 4 and boot Smithy!" growled Johnny Bull. "It's Smithy who's set that fat ass the example how to be a blackguard. I dare say that rotten paper is Smithy's."

"Tain't!" hooted Bunter.

"Well, it's not yours!" snorted Johnny. "It cost twopence—and even you are not fool enough to give twopence for it."

"I found it in Carne's study! That beast Carne made me take his books to his study, when he came out of the Sixth after class. This paper happened to be there! I wasn't prying round his study, or anything like that, you know—it's not the sort of thing I should do. The paper wasn't hidden under the cushion in his armchair. I—I happened to see it, and looked at it, and when I saw this bit about Crackerjack, I thought I'd borrow the paper—"

"And Carne's a prefect!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"He wouldn't be a prefect long if the Head heard all this!" said Harry Wharton. "Hand over that rag, Bunter, and I'll shove it in the study fire."

"I'll watch it!" gasped Bunter. "There's lots of tips in this paper! If I got five quids in hand, after backing Crackerjack, I intend to go into it pretty deep—I may clear lots of money by the end of the week. I say, you fellows, who's going to lend me a quid?"

"Don't all speak at once!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows—"

"Look here, Bunter!" said the captain of the Remove. "Smithy plays

the goat in this style, but he has sense enough to look after himself! You haven't! Chuck it, see?"

"Beast!"

"As a warning not to go blagging like Smithy, we'll stuff that paper down the back of your silly neck!" continued Harry Wharton.

"Good egg!" said Bob. "Let's!"

"Look here, you beasts, you leave my paper alone!" roared Bunter, in great indignation. "Bob Cherry, you rotter, leggo that paper—Wharton, you beast, leggo my ears—if you don't leggo my hair, Nugent, I'll hack your shins. Ow! Beasts! Rotters! Yoooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter struggled and wriggled and squirmed frantically in the grasp of five pairs of hands. But he struggled and wriggled and squirmed in vain.

It was, perhaps, improbable that the fat Owl would ever raise the necessary pound, to begin a hectic career as an amateur blackguard. Still, the Famous Five considered it judicious to discourage him from following in the erring footsteps of the Bouncer of Greyfriars. Stuffing that valuable publication "Sporting Tips" down the back of his fat neck seemed a good idea, to begin with—so they crumpled it and stuffed it down!

Then they walked on cheerily into the Remove passage, leaving Billy Bunter spluttering for breath, gurgling with indignation, and making frantic endeavours to extract "Sporting Tips" from the back of his neck!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter in Luck!

"CARTER! What is it, Carter?" Mr. Quelch, master of the Remove, was in conversation with Hacker, master of the Shell, when the new member of his Form came downstairs.

Arthur Carter came over to the two masters, and Mr. Quelch inquired curiously what he wanted. When beaks were deep in chin-wag, they did not like the flow of verbosity to be interrupted.

"Please excuse me, sir!" said Carter, in his meekest manner. "But I think there is a chimney on fire in a Remove study—I thought that I had better let you know, sir."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch. "Quite! Thank you, Carter!"

He nodded to Hacker, and rustled away to the staircase at once. Mr. Hacker went his own way, while Mr. Quelch whisked up the stairs.

Carter stood looking after him, with a faint smile on his face; then, as he turned away, he came face to face with Herbert Vernon-Smith, of the Remove. He coloured a little under the Bouncer's keen, scornful gaze.

"What rotten trick are you playing this time, Carter?" asked Smithy, in very distinct tones.

"Eh? I don't quite catch on!" drawled Carter.

"I heard what you said to Quelch."

"Are you picking up Bunter's way of listening to what doesn't concern you?" sneered Carter.

"You told Quelch that a chimney was on fire in the Remove!" said the Bouncer, unheeding the sneer. "That was a lie, Carter!"

"I said I thought so!" corrected Carter. "There's a lot of smoke coming from somewhere—I saw it from my study window—"

"It was a lie!" said the Bouncer grimly. "What did you want Quelch up in the Remove for? Is he going to

spot some fellow you dislike, up to something?"

"He won't spot you smoking in your study, or jotting down a letter to Bill Lodgey at the Three Fishers, anyhow, as you're down here!" answered Carter; and with that he turned away, and went out into the quad.

The Bouncer cast a dark glance after him, and went up the stairs. He had just come into the House, and he knew that there was no chimney on fire, or he would have seen it from the quad. Plenty of fires were burning at Greyfriars, on a cold, clammy February day, and no doubt there was a good deal of smoke on the wind; and no doubt Mr. Quelch, when he found that nothing was the matter, would suppose that Carter had been mistaken. But Smithy had no doubt whatever that the schemer of the Remove had some personal motive for sending the Form-master up to the studies, and he wondered what it was, as he followed Mr. Quelch up. He was not far behind, when the Form-master stepped on the Remove landing.

On that landing, a fat figure was wriggling and squirming, gurgling and gasping, and making wild clutches at the back of its fat neck!

Mr. Quelch stopped, and stared at it.

A minute earlier, he would have caught Billy Bunter, with "Sporting Tips" wide-open in his fat hands, which would have meant something like a thunderclap for Bunter. Then Smithy would have known, at once, why Arthur Carter had pulled Quelch's leg, and sent him there!

But "Sporting Tips" was now out of sight, owing to the friendly ministrations of the Famous Five—stuffed down Billy Bunter's back, inside his collar. The fat junior's frantic endeavours had not yet extracted it.

"Beasts!" Bunter was howling, as his Form-master stepped on the landing. "Rotters! Cads! Swabs! Come and get this paper out of my neck, you rotters! Urrrgh! I'm all out of breath, you beastly cads! Yurrgh!"

"Bunter!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!" Billy Bunter jumped, at his Form-master's voice, and ceased his antics all of a sudden. "Yes, sir! I didn't see you, sir! Oh crikey!"

"What is the matter with you, Bunter?"

"Oh! Nothing, sir!" gasped Bunter.

Up to that moment, the fat Owl had been boiling with wrath and indignation. Now he was intensely glad that "Sporting Tips" was down his back, instead of in his fat hands!

Backing winners, at five to one, was fearfully attractive, but letting his Form-master catch him with a racing paper had no attraction at all for Bunter!

"Then what are you writhing in that ridiculous manner for, Bunter?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"I—I wasn't, sir—"

"What?"

"I—I—I mean, I—I was doing some—some exercises, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Some—some physical jerks, sir! Exercising the—the muscles, sir—"

"If you tell me one more untruth, Bunter, I shall cane you! Has someone pushed something inside your collar?"

"Oh! No, sir! There's nothing down my back—nothing at all. I wasn't trying to get it out, sir!" groaned Bunter. "Those beasts never shoved a newspaper down my neck, sir! Besides, it was only a—a—a lark."

"I do not approve of such absurd practical jokes!" said Mr. Quelch severely. "Had I witnessed this action, I should have punished such unthinking and boisterous horse-play! However, I

am glad to see that you are not disposed to complain, Bunter."

"Oh! No, sir! Not at all, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Vernon-Smith!" Mr. Quelch glanced round. "Kindly assist Bunter to extract a newspaper which some foolish boys have pushed down inside his collar."

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Smithy.

Billy Bunter blinked almost in anguish at the Remove master, as Vernon-Smith stepped towards him to render first-aid! He was scared out of his fat wits at the bare idea of "Sporting Tips" coming to light under Quelch's gimlet eyes.

To his immense relief, Mr. Quelch turned, and walked up the Remove passage—in quest of that chimney which was on fire!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "Oh crumbs! I say, hook it out, old chap, now—he's gone! Oh lor'!"

The Bounder got hold of the crumpled newspaper, and hooked it out. He jumped as he saw what it was.

"You priceless idiot!" he gasped. "Jolly lucky for you Quelch never saw this! Who shoved it down your back?"

"Wharton and the other beasts—"

"Lucky for you they did! Get it out of sight, fathead, before Quelch comes back!" breathed the Bounder. "Take it to your study and shove it into the fire, you chump!"

Bunter crammed "Sporting Tips" under his tight jacket.

"That's all right," he said. "I say, Smithy, lend me a pound, will you?"

"No!"

"Beast!"

The Bounder laughed, and walked up the passage.

Billy Bunter promptly rolled into Study No. 7 to get "Sporting Tips" safely out of sight, till Mr. Quelch had gone down again.

Mr. Quelch, meanwhile, was looking into study after study, in the Remove passage, after that smoky chimney. He failed to find one. At Study No. 13, which was Bob Cherry's study, he found a numerous tea-party at tea—but no chimney on fire.

Having finished his investigation, Mr. Quelch was relieved to find that there was nothing the matter, though very annoyed with Carter for having made such an error, and given him all that trouble for nothing.

Vernon-Smith, in the passage, watched him depart, at last, with a sarcastic smile. Then the Bounder looked into Study No. 13, where Harry Wharton & Co. were at tea.

"Quelch been here after a smoky chimney?" he asked, with a grin.

"Yes; just gone!" answered Bob Cherry.

"What the dickens put the idea into his head?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Carter!" answered the Bounder.

"Carter pulling his leg?" asked the captain of the Remove. "What a rotten, silly trick!"

"Rotten enough!" agreed the Bounder. "But not so silly as it looks! Quelch very nearly caught Bunter with 'Sporting Tips'! I hear that you fellows shoved it down his back. If you hadn't, Quelch would have been on it."

"The fat ass!" said Harry. "He would have got six—as well as having Quelch's eye on him for the rest of the term."

"Exactly! That was Carter's game—and he nearly got by with it! Nice chap, ain't he?" grinned the Bounder, and he walked away to his own study—leaving the tea-party staring, and Bob Cherry frowning.

"That cur!" muttered Bob. "At it again—"

"Six on the bags would do Bunter good, if he's taking up blagging!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"That's not Carter's business!"

"Well, no!"

"I've a jolly good mind—" Bob half rose.

"Rot!" said Harry. "How the dickens do you know that Carter saw Bunter's idiotic paper at all, or that he sent Quelch up for that reason, if he did? You can't jump on a fellow for nothing. Sit down, fathead!"

Bob gave a grunt! But he sat down.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"SEEN Hobson?" asked Hoskins, of the Shell.

"Blow Hobson!" answered Billy Bunter peevishly.

Claude Hoskins, at the end of the passage that led to the music-room, was looking about him with a rather irritated look.

Apparently he wanted Hobby, his studymate and pal in the Shell. Hobby was nowhere in the offing.

So, as Bunter was, he inquired of Bunter. Bunter was not in the least interested in either Hobson or Hoskins. Bunter was peeved.

He had reason to be peeved.

It was pretty rotten Bunter thought, for a fellow to be able to pick up five pounds on Wednesday as easily as picking up seashells on the seashore, and to be prevented by the lack of one single solitary pound in hand.

Chances like this did not often come a fellow's way. Horses, as Bunter knew from observation of some sporting fellows in the Lower School at Greyfriars, were fearfully uncertain animals. It was no end of a catch to get an absolutely sure snip—straight from the horse's own mouth, as it were.

Bunter had got it!

"Quick-Eye," of "Sporting Tips," gave Crackerjack as an absolutely certain winner—and "Quick-Eye" knew. At least, Bunter supposed that he did.

Knowing all this, "Quick-Eye" put his knowledge at the service of the public, through the medium of "Sporting Tips," instead of backing Crackerjack himself and making lots of money—which was very generous and self-denying of "Quick-Eye."

Bunter was in search of a quid to put on Crackerjack.

He had a penny!

Even that was a French penny, and had been refused again and again.

Bunter was prepared to plunge on Crackerjack—but plunging with a French penny was impracticable.

The Famous Five had refused to play up. Peter Todd had simply kicked him when he was told of the big idea. Skinner had laughed heartily, apparently greatly tickled by Billy Bunter as a bold, bad plunger on the races—but he had not produced any cash. Nobody to whom Bunter had applied had produced any cash. Often and often had Bunter suffered under a scarcity of that useful article cash—but never had there been such a scarcity as now.

With this deep problem on his fat mind, Billy Bunter was in no mood to be bothered by a fathead in the Shell. He could not borrow a quid of a Shell man. So he snorted a far from courteous reply to Hoskins' inquiry.

"Where the dickens is he?" went on Hoskins, heedless of Bunter's snort. "I told him I was playing my

'Fantasia in B minor' in the music-room after tea. I told him to wait for me here. He's not here."

At which Bunter's fat face relaxed into a grin.

Hobby was Claude's pal—but friendship had its limit. Hobby admired his musical friend immensely; he thought old Claude was fearfully clever to be able to produce all sorts of strange and startling noises on all sorts of instruments. But he did not want to listen to any of them.

If the amateur musician of the Shell was going to play one of his own compositions in the music-room it was a safe bet that James Hobson would get as far from the music-room as the extensive limits of Greyfriars School permitted.

Only Claude Hoskins did not know that—but Claude was surprised and irritated by Hobby's failure to appear.

"Well, I shan't wait for him!" went on Hoskins crossly. "That ass Gwynne of the Sixth wants the music-room in half an hour. I can't keep it when a Sixth Form man wants it. It's rotten, but there you are! I say, like to hear it, Bunter?" added Hoskins with a peculiar mixture of condescension and hopefulness.

Hoskins liked fellows to listen when he played his musical works.

It was not easy to get them to listen in. They would almost as soon have faced Hoskins with a machine-gun as with a musical instrument.

Billy Bunter blinked at Claude Hoskins through his big spectacles with a devastating blink. Life was a troublesome affair enough without Hoskins' music, added as an extra and utterly unnecessary trouble to the rest. The fat Owl was about to make a reply as devastating as his blink, but he paused.

Bunter was not in need of music, but he was in sore need of a pound. He wondered whether it might be possible to "touch" that ass Hoskins for a quid if he put him into a good temper by listening to his tosh.

It was a chance, at least. Hoskins had plenty of pocket-money, most of which he spent on music paper to spoil in his study by writing down his compositions on it. He might have a quid. He might part with it if sufficiently buttered.

"It's rather good," went on Hoskins. "Here and there a bit like Smelowiski; but more modern, of course. I've got a succession of perfect fifths that I'm jolly sure Smelowiski never thought of. Come along, if you'd like to hear it."

"Jolly glad to, old chap!" said Bunter affably. "If there's anything I really like it's first-class music, Hoskins. And yours is really the thing!"

"Eh?" Hoskins gave him quite a pleasant smile. Hitherto he had thought of Bunter, whenever he thought of him at all, as a fat ass. He realised now that appearances were not everything. This remark of Bunter's showed a keen judgment, a fine taste, of which Hoskins had never suspected him before. "My dear chap, come on, then; I'll play the whole thing over to you with pleasure."

Bunter rolled down the passageway after Hoskins.

He could not help feeling some inward misgivings. It would be pretty awful if he had to stand and listen for perhaps half an hour without extracting a quid from Hoskins of the Shell when the period of torment was over.

But he resolved to take the risk. After all, he could stick his fingers in his ears when Hoskins wasn't looking.

Claude Hoskins sailed merrily into the music-room, pitched open the lid of the somewhat battered piano, and plumped on the music stool. He opened his music—which looked to Bunter as if flies, fresh from an inkpot, had been crawling over the paper. He dashed back a curl of hair from his eyes—not that it was anywhere near his eyes, but Hoskins cultivated that artistic curl with great care, and had a way of dashing it back. Then, as it seemed to Bunter, he hit the piano as if he hated it bitterly.

The crash of chords filled the music-room to overflowing. Claude thumped and crashed and banged. Bunter eyed him malevolently through his spectacles. He considered this too thick. He had come there to listen to Hoskins' fantasia—whatever a fantasia was—and he wanted Hoskins to get on with it and get it over. Having waited a few minutes for Hoskins to begin, Bunter ventured to tap him on the shoulder.

Hoskins gave him a far-away look. "I say, never mind about practising now, old chap," suggested Bunter. "Get on with the fantasia—what?"

"You idiot!" said Hoskins.

"Eh?"

"I'm playing the fantasia!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Shut up!" said Hoskins.

Bunter shut up.

He realised that Hoskins was not merely banging on the piano from sheer exuberance of spirits; he was playing his musical composition.

Bunter's mistake was, perhaps, a natural one. To any ear but the composer's it certainly sounded like random banging on the piano.

All that Bunter could do was to stand just behind Hoskins where the pianist could not see him, and press his fat paws tightly over his fat ears.

This took off the edge of it, as it were.

Suddenly, with a terrific crash, Hoskins ceased. He spun round on the music stool, and Bunter whipped his hands away from his ears just in time.

"Splendid, old chap!" he gasped. "I say, that's ripping! I say, Hoskins, there's something I was going to ask you—"

"That's the first movement," said Hoskins.

"Eh?"

"Now I'll play you the second movement."

"Oh crikey!"

Bang! went Hoskins on the piano.

Smack! went Bunter's fat paws to his ears again.

Bang, bang, bang! went Hoskins merrily; and the much-thumped piano roared and thundered and groaned under his vigorous attack. Harder and harder Bunter pressed his fat hands to his ears, but he could not keep it out—and he could only wonder in dismay how long it was going to last.

It ceased, and Hoskins spun round again. This time Bunter did not succeed in getting his hands away from his ears quickly enough. Hoskins spotted them in transit.

"What the dickens are you up to?" demanded Hoskins.

"Oh, I—I was—was scratching my ear!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, Hoskins, that—that's a splendid sonata—"

"Fantasia!" grunted Hoskins.

"I—I mean fantasia! I say, old chap, there was something I was going to ask you—"

"That's all right. If you'd like to hear the variation on the original theme, here you are."

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Thump! Bang! Crash!

Hoskins was going strong again; and Bunter groaned miserably and clapped his hands to his ears, once more. He could not help thinking that he would have earned that pound by the time he borrowed it—if he did borrow it!

But, to Bunter's enormous relief as well as surprise, Hoskins suddenly stopped, before he had tortured the atmosphere for more than five minutes. He grabbed a pencil from his pocket and started jabbing at the music paper.

Apparently he had thought of some improvement in his composition. It seemed, to Bunter in need of a few improvements. Anyhow, he was glad of the rest. Never had silence seemed so golden.

"I—I say, Hoskins—" bleated Bunter.

"Don't interrupt me!"

"But I wanted to ask you—"

"Yes, yes, I'll play it all over again from beginning to end if you like, but don't interrupt me for a minute."

Bunter shuddered at the prospect.

"I say, just listen a minute!" he gasped desperately. "I say, old chap, do you happen to have a pound?"

"Eh? No."

"I—I want you to lend me a pound and—"

"I've only got fourpence, and I want it. Shut up!"

"Oh crikey!"

"I shan't be a minute putting in a bit I've just thought of," said Hoskins. "Wait there. I'll play it over again and—"

"Beast!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"You—you—you—you silly idiot!" shrieked Bunter. "You've driven me deaf with that awful row, and you've only got fourpence. Beast!"

Having thus expressed his gratitude for a musical treat, Billy Bunter rolled to the door.

Hoskins stared after him blankly.

With the door open, Bunter turned to give him a parting glare.

"Beast!" he roared. "Ass! Fat-head! The Head ought to stop you kicking up that fearful row! Yah!"

Bunter rolled out. Hoskins shot from the piano stool, and his foot shot after Bunter as he rolled.

Crash!

There was a yell from Bunter, and, like Iser in the poem, he rolled rapidly. Hoskins slammed the door on him, and went back to the piano.

"Ow! Beast!" gasped Bunter, as he scrambled up. "Ow! Rotter! Oh crikey!"

He glared in wrath at the door of the music-room. But from the other side of that door came an outbreak of sound like an air-raid, mingled with a motor-bus accident! Bunter rolled away. He went minus the hoped-for pound—but it was something to get out of range of Hoskins' music!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Corn in Egypt!

ARTHUR CARTER, by the next morning, was the only fellow in the Remove whom Billy Bunter had not asked to lend him a pound.

The Remove was a numerous Form, and among so many fellows a really determined borrowing campaign ought to have produced some result.

But the result was nil!

Fellows who had a pound, wanted, with a selfishness that disgusted Bunter,

to keep that pound! Once more it was borne in on Bunter's fat mind what a selfish world it was!

Instead of extracting what he wanted from the Remove fellows, Bunter obtained all sorts of things that he did not want.

The Famous Five had stuffed "Sporting Tips" down his back. Peter Todd had booted him. Lord Mauleverer told him that he was a dingy little beast. Mary Linley gave him five minutes of serious talk, for his own good—which Bunter would not have minded so much had Mark lent him the quid as well—which, however, Mark did not do! Skinner, and Snoop, and Stott laughed; Bolsover major roared; Hazeldene chortled. Squiff pulled his fat ear, Tom Brown shied a Latin grammar at him, Ogilvy sat him down in the Remove passage with a bump. Such were the responses of the Remove to Bunter's earnest and urgent request for a quid, that could easily be turned into six.

Turning one quid into six, by means of backing Crackerjack at five to one, seemed to appeal to nobody!

In sheer desperation, Bunter even tried Fisher T. Fish—and Fishy almost fell on his study floor at the bare idea of lending anybody anything! Needless to state, the quid was not forthcoming!

So, in break, on Tuesday morning, Bunter was still quidless, and that golden chance looked like passing him by. Unless he was "on" that day, the chance was gone, as the race was on the morrow.

The amount of tuck to be obtained for five pounds was dazzling to think of; and all that was needed was somebody's quid to begin with! And not a man in the Remove would play up!

Bunter even thought of asking Carter—but he shook his fat head at that hopeless thought.

Carter, of course, ought to have done it. He was Bunter's relation—a distant relation. He knew, of course, that Bunter was in fearful need of a quid. All the Remove knew that. Indeed, by this time, Bunter, as a bold, bad black-guard, was becoming a standing joke in the Form. But, relation as he was, Carter was unlikely to lend Bunter anything but a boot.

Catching sight of him in the quad, in break that morning, Billy Bunter gave him a devastating blink through his big spectacles. Carter was looking at him—and Bunter returned his look, with all the scorn and contempt he could express in his fat features.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter.

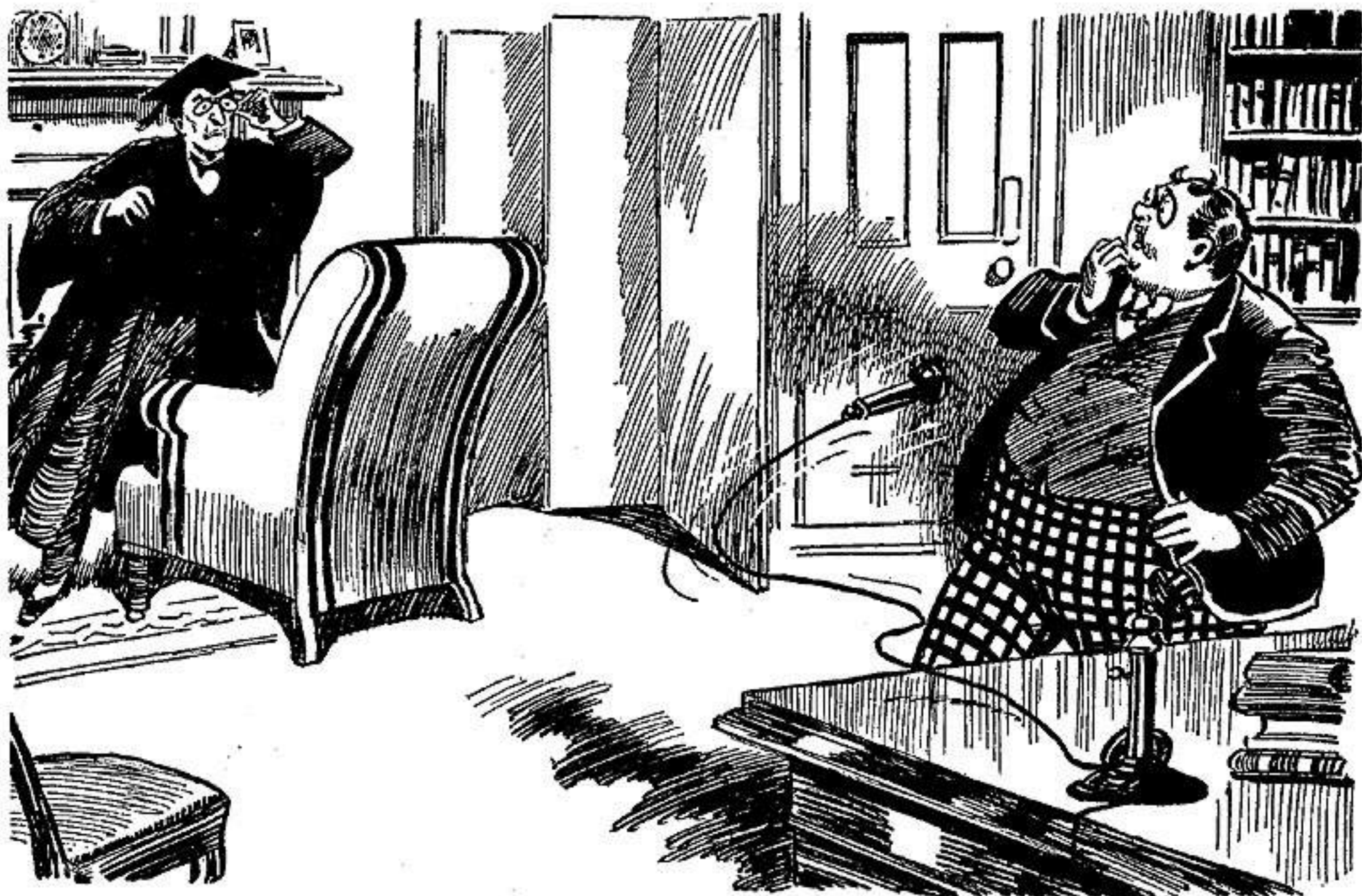
But for the fact that they were rivals for the riches of old Joseph Carter, Bunter's relation might have played up—perhaps!

But, as it was, there was no hope!

Old Joseph Carter had turned down his nephew for getting expelled from St. Olaf's, and the fact that he was considering whether to take up Billy Bunter in his place naturally did not produce harmony between them.

A great deal depended on Bunter's report that term—which Bunter was anxious should be a good one, and Carter equally anxious should be a bad one!

But old Joseph's wealth was far off, dim, and distant; and Bunter, at the moment, would have given his rather doubtful prospects of the same for a quid in hand, to put on Crackerjack! But for that rivalry, he might have extracted it from his relation in the Remove. As even Bunter, hopeful as he was, could not hope to pull that off, he indemnified himself by blinking



In angry amazement, Mr. Hacker rose to his feet and stared across the high back of the armchair. "BUNTER!" "Oh crikey!" gasped the fat Removite, spinning round in terror, the receiver dropping from his fat hand. "Oh jiminy!"

scorn and contempt at Carter, and as Carter came over to him the scorn and contempt intensified. His fat lip curled, and he turned up his little fat nose farther than Nature had intended, though Nature had started it well on the upward way.

"Toothache?" asked Carter.

"Eh?" ejaculated Bunter in surprise. "No."

"What are you making those faces for, then?"

Bunter gazed at him in silent scorn. His lofty, supercilious look of contempt was described by Carter as "making faces."

"I wanted to speak to you," went on Carter.

"Well, don't!" retorted Bunter, disdainfully. "You're not the sort of fellow I want to speak to!"

"But—"

"Keep your distance! Think I don't know why you got Quelch up to the Remove studies yesterday?" sneered Bunter. "Think I don't know why you've played one rotten trick on me after another, since you've been here? Think I don't know that you want to get me a bad report from Quelch this term to dish me with old Joe Carter? Yah!"

"You fat ass—"

"Yah!"

"I've heard—"

"I don't care what you've heard—and I don't want to know! Just keep your distance!"

"I've heard that you've been trying to borrow a quid up and down the Form and—"

"No bizney of yours. I haven't asked you to lend me one, anyhow!" sneered Bunter. "Mind your own business—see?"

"If you really needed one—"

"Yah!"

"I could lend it to you—"

"Eh?"

"I shouldn't mind, if you're really hard pushed for a quid!" said Carter, while Bunter blinked at him in utter astonishment. "After all, we're relations, though we're not friends, and if you're in a hole I don't see why I shouldn't help you out!"

"Gammon!" said Bunter. "You can't pull my leg! Yah!"

"Look here, do you want a quid, or not?" asked Carter impatiently. "If you do, I'll lend you one, and here it is."

To Bunter's intensified amazement, Arthur Carter drew a pound note from his pocket.

The fat Owl gazed at it. He could not believe that Carter was in earnest. Why should a fellow who disliked him intensely, and who was his rival for the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, lend him a pound, when no other fellow in the Form would do anything of the kind?

But when Carter shoved the pound note into his fat paw, even Bunter had to believe it!

"I—I—I say," he gasped. "D-d-do you mean it?"

"That looks as if I do, doesn't it?" asked Carter. "I don't know what you want it for, but if you're hard pushed, there it is!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Only one thing," added Carter, turning back as he was moving away. "I've heard some silly talk that you're backing a horse, or something. I suppose I can take it for granted that there's nothing in it."

"Oh, no—yes!" gasped Bunter.

"What I mean is, I couldn't lend you money for anything of that kind," said Carter. "If it's for anything else, you're more than welcome. See?"

"Oh! It's for anything else!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean, it—it's for some-

thing else! I—I mean, what I really want this quid for is to make a—a—a contribution to—to—to the School Fund for—for—I—I forget what! See?"

"I see!" assented Carter. "That's all right, then! I thought I'd make it clear, that's all. You can settle it later in the term."

"Oh, I'll settle to-morrow, or Thursday, at the latest," said Bunter. "I shall have lots of money then."

"Right-ho!" said Carter. "Any time you like!"

And he walked away, leaving Billy Bunter's fat face irradiated by happy satisfaction.

Bunter blinked and blinked at that pound note before he tucked it away. Really, it seemed too good to be true! It had come like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years. It had dropped like manna on Bunter's fat head. It was a really amazing stroke of luck.

Up and down and round about the Remove had Bunter gone, seeking in vain to borrow that urgent quid. And the only fellow he had not asked—the fellow whom it seemed hopeless to ask—had lent it to him of his own accord! It was amazing, but immensely satisfactory.

Bunter had his quid now. All that was necessary was to get it "on" that wonderful horse, Crackerjack, while there was yet time. Bunter was going to manage that somehow, and he was going to roll in easy money for ever afterwards.

The thing was quite simple. He would win five pounds, and get his stake money back, too, making six pounds, out of which he would repay Carter his quid. That would leave him five pounds to work on as capital; and five pounds, at merely three to one on the next winner, would produce twenty pounds! Twenty pounds, laid out on

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another winner at, say, four to one, would produce one hundred pounds! It was dazzling to think of!

And Bunter realised that he was being quite moderate in his calculations. For there were six-to-one winners, seven-to-one winners; he had even heard of ten-to-one winners. Still, it was safer to be on the moderate side, he felt, in making his calculations. After all, one hundred pounds in, say, a fortnight would not be bad for a chap in the Lower Fourth.

Bunter quite forgot to consider whether there was anything dingy or disgraceful in such transactions. A fellow could not, after all, be expected to think of everything.

Easy money, in larger and larger sums, was enough for Bunter to think of, and he thought of it with ecstatic bliss.

His fat face was wreathed in smiles as he went in to third school with the Remove. He was almost walking on air. Indeed, he rather resembled the classical gentleman in Horace, who was like to strike the stars with his sublime head.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Wants a "Bookie"!

"SMITHY!"

"No!" hooted the Bounder.

"But I say——"

"Clear off, you blithering ass!"

"For goodness' sake, chuck it, Bunter!" said Tom Redwing.

Vernon-Smith and his chum were walking in the quad after dinner when Billy Bunter joined them. Smithy naturally supposed that he was after that quid again; the fat Owl had already tried the Bounder twice, and this looked like a third attempt.

"If you ask me to lend you a quid again," said Vernon-Smith, "I'll boot you as far as the gym and back again! That's a tip!"

"Who's asking you to lend me a quid?" demanded Bunter, with all the dignity of a fellow who already had a quid in his possession. "I'm not!"

Vernon-Smith stared at him, and then grinned.

"Oh, if it's not that, cut on!" he said. "Mind, I mean what I said about booting you to the gym and back!"

"Oh, really, Smithy, I've got a quid!" explained Bunter.

"Whose?" asked Smithy.

"Beast! I mean, a chap lent it to me, old chap! I say, Smithy—— You cut off, Redwing, will you, while I'm talking to Smithy?"

"No!" answered Tom Redwing.

"Oh, really, Redwing—I mean to say, this isn't the sort of thing you want to hear, you being a goody-goody nincompoop, if you don't mind my mentioning it!" explained Bunter.

Tom Redwing laughed.

"I don't mind what rot you talk, fat-head, only I'd rather you'd shut up! Why not shut up?"

"Beast! Well, look here, Smithy, I'm in a bit of a difficulty," said Bunter. "I've got the quid, and I've spotted a winner, but I've got to get on—see? Owing to the silly restrictions here, I can't walk out to the Cross Keys and ask them to put me in touch with a bookmaker. It might lead to a lot of trouble."

"It might," agreed the Bounder—"quite a lot, in fact."

"I don't want to be sacked. They're down on a fellow pretty heavy for that sort of thing," said Bunter, shaking his head.

head seriously. "But you know Bill Lodgey at the Three Fishers, Smithy. He takes bets for you, doesn't he?"

Vernon-Smith looked fixedly at Bunter. The statement was true; Smithy did know a dingy racing man at the Three Fishers, and that dingy racing man did take bets for the "bad hat" of the Remove.

But it was not agreeable to the Bounder to find the Peeping Tom of the Lower School so conversant with his affairs. Neither did he like to hear them mentioned in open quad, where anyone might have passed and heard Bunter's squeak.

Redwing, rather uneasy at his chum's look, gave Bunter a push.

"Cut off!" he said curtly.

"Shan't! I'm talking to Smithy! Look here, Smithy, we can get out till school; and I want you to come along with me and give me an introduction to Lodgey—see? You know where to find him, don't you?"

"Oh gad!" said the Bounder.

Secretly and with great caution, the Bounder sometimes saw that racing man with whom he was acquainted. But the idea of walking off to the Three Fishers at a moment's notice with such a comrade in blackguardism as Billy Bunter was enough to make Smithy stare.

"Will you come now?" asked Bunter.

"You see, I've got to get my bet on to-day, as the race is to-morrow. I can't get out in the morning to see Lodgey. It will have to be done to-day, or not at all. You can put a quid on at the same time, if you like; I don't mind letting you have my tip. Why shouldn't you win a fiver, too?" said Bunter generously. "Back Crackerjack, old chap! Put your shirt on him! He's the goods!"

"Listen to the man who knows!" chortled the Bounder.

"Well, it's a sure thing!" said Bunter. "One of 'Quick-Eye's' special snips, you know. He gives lots of winners——"

"How do you know?"

"He says so in 'Sporting Tips,'" explained Bunter.

"Oh crikey!"

"This snip is practically from the horse's mouth!" said Bunter. "You have a fiver on, Smithy, if you've got one! Fancy collecting thirty pounds on Thursday! Easy money—what?"

"Almost too easy!" grinned Smithy.

"Want to get rich quick, Reddy? Take Bunter's tip, and put your socks on Crackerjack!"

"The fat ass!" said Redwing, who was staring at Bunter with a mingling of wonder and disgust. "I suppose Bunter's the kind of idiot those rogues like to get hold of."

"Just the kind!" chuckled Smithy.

"Now, look here, Bunter, if you've really touched some silly ass for a quid, go and blow it in jam tarts, and make sure of it. You're going the right way to lose your quid, and get sacked over and above! That cad Carter would be glad to see you at this game; he would take jolly good care that Quelch heard of it somehow."

"Oh, that's rot!" said Bunter. "Carter isn't such a bad chap in his way. It was Carter lent me the quid."

"Wha-at?"

"Pretty decent of him—what?" said Bunter. "He's a cad and a worm and rotter, and all that, but that was pretty decent."

"You benighted idiot!" said Vernon-Smith. "Haven't you sense enough to see that he's done it just to help you land yourself in trouble?"

"Rot! He asked me specially if I was going to bet with it, and said he

wouldn't lend it to me if I was," said Bunter.

"And it doesn't occur to you that that was to cover up his tracks if it comes out, when you're sacked, that you got the money from him?" asked the Bounder sarcastically.

"Oh, really, Smithy, I wish you wouldn't keep on jawing about Carter when I want you to take me along to see Lodgey!" said Bunter peevishly. "Look here, will you come along to the Three Fishers?"

"No, fathead!"

"Beast! I suppose I had better ask Skinner; I believe Skinner knows him. I'm sure Angel of the Fourth does, I might ask Angel," said Bunter thoughtfully. "You can go and eat coke, Smithy! I suppose you're jealous because you can't spot winners and I can! Yah! Well, you won't get any more sure snips from me, I can tell you!"

"Hold on!" said the Bounder, as Bunter was about to roll off. "On second thoughts, old fat man, I'll take a walk with you before class."

Bunter turned back at once.

"Right-ho!" he said cheerily. "Be a sport, old fellow! Come on!"

"Look here, Smithy——" began Tom Redwing.

"You shut up, Redwing!" interrupted Bunter warmly. "You leave Smithy alone!"

Vernon-Smith closed one eye at Redwing, who stared, and then laughed, as the Bounder walked away with Bunter. Redwing guessed, though Bunter did not, that that walk before class would not terminate at the Three Fishers.

Arthur Carter was lounging near the gates, perhaps keeping an eye on Bunter to see whether he went out.

He glanced very curiously at Smithy and the fat Owl, as they went out together.

Probably, seeing Bunter setting forth in company with the bad hat of the Remove, Carter concluded that all was going well for his peculiar scheme.

It was worth a pound, the young rascal considered, to see the fatuous Owl dish himself completely.

It was for this kind of thing that Carter had been expelled from his last school, and had lost the favour of his rich uncle. Bunter was not likely to replace him in that favour if he was sacked from Greyfriars for the same kind of thing. If Carter had a conscience it was satisfied by the fact that Bunter, judged by his present actions, was no better than himself. Probably, however, his conscience did not trouble him very much.

Having seen Vernon-Smith and Bunter depart, and having noted the direction taken by them, Carter strolled back into the quad, with a sour smile on his face.

Smithy and Bunter walked up the road, Bunter happy and satisfied at the idea of getting his quid on Crackerjack before class, and nothing doubting that he was going to meet that estimable citizen, Bill Lodgey. The Bounder, who knew that Mr. Lodgey was absent at the races, and who had no intention of going anywhere near the Three Fishers, doubted it very much.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bamboozling Bunter!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH halted.

"Here you are!" he said.

"Um!" said Bunter rather doubtfully.

They had stopped in Oak Lane, where

that winding lane was bordered by the high fence of the grounds of the Three Fishers.

A high fence did not appeal very much to Bunter. He was not fond of climbing as an exercise.

Moreover, there was a ditch along the bottom of the fence. There was not much water in it, but there was a good deal of mud, and the mud was sticky, smelly, and unpleasant. A fellow who slipped in climbing the fence was very likely to sit in that ditch—a most disagreeable possibility.

"I say, why not go on to the gate?" asked Bunter. "We can see whether there's anybody about, you know, before we go in."

"Too jolly risky!" said the Bouncer, shaking his head.

"Well, look here, there's another gate on the towpath; let's go round that way."

"Too far; we should never get back in time. I'll give you a bunk up," said the Bouncer. "I'll land you at the top of the fence all right."

"I'd rather go in by the gate."

"Go, then; I'm not stopping you!" "Beast! I mean, give me a bunk up, old chap!"

"Buck up, then. We can't hang about here for ever!" said the Bouncer impatiently.

Billy Bunter managed to get across the narrow ditch without tumbling in. From the ditch there was a narrow grassy slope up to the fence. Bunter got a rather precarious footing on it by holding on to the fence with his fat hands.

(Continued on next page.)

LEARN TO PLAY FOOTBALL!



OUR INTERNATIONAL COACH

CHANGING POSITIONS:

NOW, then, centre-forwards, we must set out to find ways and means of getting rid of that bogy of ours—the opposing centre-half. He has been put there to bottle us up. We mustn't allow him to do so—that's all there is to it.

We may try, as many centre-forwards have tried, to do the job by wandering. The centre-forward's real place is in the centre of the field. But if he cannot get by the middle route to goal, he must find another road. So he wanders about, out to the wings, back towards his own half of the field; anywhere, so long as he keeps the stopper centre-half on the move. The idea is, you see, that the opposing centre-half, who has been given instructions to stick to his man like glue, will follow the centre-forward wherever he goes. If he does this, there will be a gap left down the middle of the field.

That is where the inside-forwards come into this picture. A football team without a centre-forward is not really a football team at all. So when the centre goes wandering about, taking the centre-half with him, someone else must nip in to take the centre-forward's place. And that, of course, requires perfect understanding between the centre-forward and his colleagues.

I have never seen this interchanging of positions done so cleverly as it was done, and I believe is still being done, by Horatio Carter and Bob Gurney of Sunderland. I don't think anyone will argue with me when I say that it was the clever combined play of these two which did more than anything else to win for Sunderland the Championship and the Cup in successive seasons.

Two seasons ago, when Sunderland won the Championship, they scored 109 goals in the season. You might have expected that Bob Gurney, the centre-forward of the side, would have got most of those. But he didn't. Carter, the inside-right, scored the same number of goals as Gurney in that season. The two of them "bagged" 31 each.

The reason was simple. Although he appeared on the programme as centre-forward, Gurney spent no more time in that position than did Carter. They kept changing places, so cleverly and

The hardest worked players in a football team are undoubtedly the inside forwards. Our special sporting contributor explains their various duties in this interesting article.

so quickly, that the opposing centre-half didn't know which one he was supposed to be marking. The result was that they helped one another to score no end of goals.

A BIT OF EVERYTHING!

IN present-day football there is definitely another job which falls to the lot of the inside-forward—to help the centre-forward carry out his task of beating the stopper centre-half. The addition of this extra duty has made the job of the inside man, without doubt, the hardest and most strenuous of all. He must be a bit of everything. Defender, attacker, fine dribbler, able to give good passes, a marksman, and an all-round help to his colleagues.

I once heard Ray Westwood, Bolton Wanderers and England inside-left, and one of the best inside-forwards in the world at the present moment, sum up the inside-forward's job very well. He said that the inside-forward, if he is doing his job well, is a "fetcher, a schemer, and a finisher." Let's pull that to pieces, and see what the man who knows meant by it.

First of all, the inside man must be a fetcher. This means that, if the half-backs are a bit overrun, and can't give much time to feeding their forwards, as I told you they should, the inside-forwards must go back and fetch the ball for themselves, without waiting for it to be sent up to them. To do that they must be strong, as half-backs are, and good tacklers.

After they have gone back to fetch the ball, they must bring it up to their forwards. What do they need to enable them to do this? The ability to run with the ball, and keep it under complete control while they dribble up

field. So far, so good. They have gone back, and have brought the ball up to their other forwards. What now? They must either keep going on themselves, or pass to a colleague. But they can't do any passing until they have first of all drawn opponents out of position by beating one or two players and making other defenders leave their "posts" to come across to tackle them. That means tricks—the schomer part of Westwood's description coming in.

SURPRISING THE DEFENCE!

WE know, don't we, that you can't keep on doing the same thing in football? You must always be introducing something different. When the inside-forward has done his tricks, the defenders will soon get to know his ways if he always passes to a colleague. So sometimes he must go right through on his own, taking the defence by surprise, and doing his share in the goal-scoring line.

Ray Westwood himself is about the best of the lot at this surprise dash through. Watch him, if you get the chance. With the ball at his feet, and the defenders waiting for him to pass, he will suddenly get moving and go right through the whole defence like a streak of lightning. He has everything which enables him to do this. Speed off the mark, a fine body swerve, ball control, and, once through the defence, he can finish with a shot which the goalkeeper sometimes never sees until he turns round to pick the ball out of the net. That's Westwood, that was! You know the sort of business.

Funnily enough, one of the greatest goal-scoring inside-forwards of all time was also a Bolton Wanderers inside-left. Way back in the season of 1920-21, Joe Smith scored 38 goals for the "Trotters," as Bolton Wanderers are called. Harry Clifton, the present Chesterfield inside-right, is going all out to beat that record this season. But I am pretty certain that, when the summer comes, Clifton, and many other inside-forwards, will feel like a good long rest. To be a fetcher, a schemer, and a finisher in football is no weak man's job.

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The more active Bunder joined him there, and proceeded to bunk him up. Bunter was not easy to bunk.

He grabbed at the fence and dragged, and the Bunder heaved from below; but so much weight required a good deal of lifting. Progress was slow.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Wow! You're pinching me, you beast! Ow!"

"Get on with it, fathead!" panted the Bunder. "Do you think I'm a steam crane? Get up!"

"Beast!" gurgled Bunter.

He clambered and the Bunder shoved, and he got his fat paws to the top of the fence. There he clung and hung, with his feet nearly a yard above the earth.

At that point in the proceedings Vernon-Smith ceased his efforts. Instead of bunking Bunter further, he jumped back across the ditch into the lane.

Bunter, hanging on, squeaked at him over a fat shoulder.

"I say, Smithy, you beast, bunk me up! I say—"

"Can't you pull yourself up now?" queried the Bunder.

"No!" howled Bunter.

"I rather fancied you couldn't," agreed Smithy.

"Will you help me up or not?" shrieked Bunter.

"Not," answered Vernon-Smith coolly.

"Why, you—you—you beast!" gasped Bunter. "You can't leave me hanging here like this, you awful rotter!"

"You won't hang long," said Smithy reassuringly. "Your weight's against it, old fat porpoise. You'll drop pretty soon."

"I shall fall into the ditch!" yelled Bunter.

"Exactly."

"Why, you—you—you awful beast!" gurgled the hapless fat sportsman. "Have you been pulling my leg all this time, you awful cad?"

"Have you guessed it? Gum! With a brain like that, Bunter, you oughtn't to be satisfied with spotting winners—you ought to be Prime Minister at least."

"Beast!" yelled Bunter.

"Go it!"

"Rotter!" shrieked Bunter. "Cad!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Give me a bunk up, you swab!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Help me get down, then!"

"You'll get down all right, soon. The law of gravitation will do that much for you!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter made a frantic effort to drag himself up the fence, but he made it in vain.

His fat hands clung to the top, but he had no chance whatever of pulling his weight up and getting an arm over.

All that Bunter could do was to hold on. And it was clear that he could not do that for very long.

It was only a matter of minutes before he would have to let go and drop, and there was no footing on the grassy slope under him; dropping meant going into the muddy ditch.

That was an awful prospect!

Bunter was not quick on the uptake, but he realised now that Smithy had had no intention of getting into touch with the desired bookie. Smithy had been simply pulling his fat leg. Really, Bunter might have guessed that one, for

the Bunder, when he went blagging, was not likely to take such a companion as the fat Owl on such an expedition. Bunter guessed it now, at all events. Smithy had bunked him up there with the intention of leaving him hanging till he dropped—as a warning to him not to play the goat. Certainly, after plumping in the ditch, Bunter was likely to be too busy scraping off mud to have any leisure for thinking about bookies.

He hung on, gasping and spluttering. Vernon-Smith watched him, with a cheerful grin, for a minute or two; then he walked away down the lane towards the school.

He was through with Bunter.

"Smithy!" yelled the fat Owl, as he heard the Bunder's receding footsteps. "I say, Smithy, don't go! You can't leave me here like this, you beast!"

"Good-bye, Bunter!" called back the Bunder.

"Come back, you cad!" roared Bunter. "Come and help me down! I say, old fellow—Oh, you rotter! I say, dear old cad—I mean, dear old chap—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" floated back from the Bunder, and he turned a corner and disappeared.

"Beast!" shrieked Bunter.

Smithy was gone. He was walking back to Greyfriars, laughing—actually laughing—as he went, as if there was something funny in the predicament in which he had left that bold, bad black-guard Bunter!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He clutched desperately at the top of the fence. He made another frantic effort to drag himself up, but it was in vain.

One of his fat hands slipped from its hold. He clutched wildly to get hold again, but could not reach. He hung with one hand.

"Ow! Help!" yelled Bunter. "Oh crikey! Smithy, you beast! Owl! Help! I'm going! Yaroooh!"

The other hand slipped from the fence.

Bunter shot downward.

His feet hit the grassy slope below and slid, and there was a loud and heavy splash as Bunter sat in the ditch.

Splash!

"Gurrrgh!"

He sat and squashed in six inches of soft, slimy, odoriferous mud. The scents stirred up round him were most unpleasant. Slimy mud squashed and splashed over his trousers as he sat. His fat legs almost disappeared in it, and as he wriggled and squirmed the smell stirred up from the mud could almost have been cut with a knife.

"Owl! Owl! Groooogh! Oooooogh!" gurgled Bunter. "Urrrrgh! Wurrgh! Oh dear! Oh crikey! Owl! Ooooooh!"

Crackerjack, and odds of five to one, quite disappeared from Billy Bunter's fat mind. He struggled and wriggled to get out of the ditch, wishing from the bottom of his fat heart that he had never set out as a wild and woolly backer of winners—at least, in company with Smithy!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Muddy!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" "What the dickens—"

"Is that Bunter?"

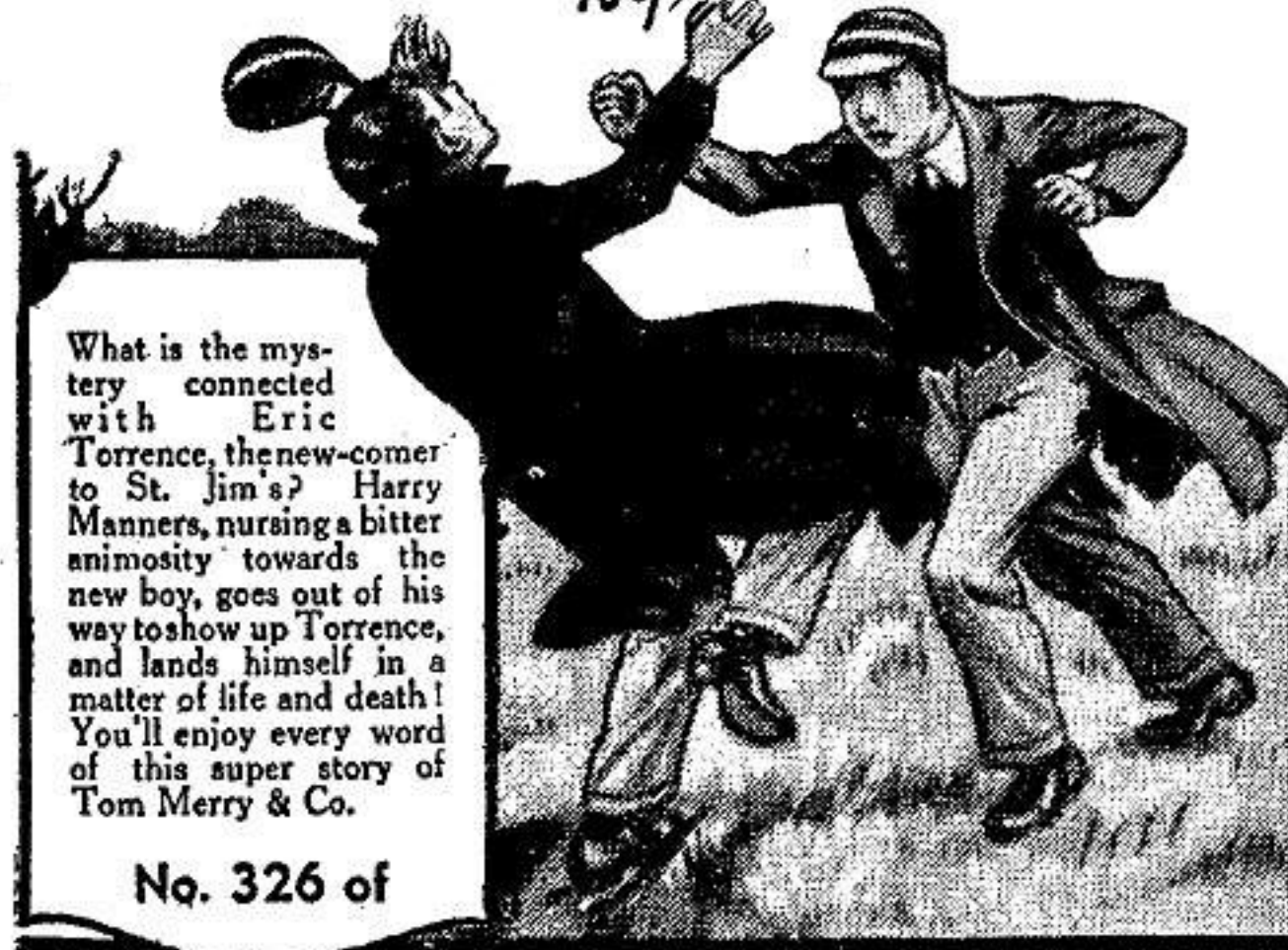
"Taking a mud-bath, old fat man?"

"The mudfulness is terrific."

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By Martin Clifford



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a fat, muddy, gasping figure crawling out of a ditch.

Bob Cherry, leaning his bike against an oak, ran to render aid.

Bunter was in difficulties. He crawled and clambered; but the thick mud stuck to his fat legs, and it did not seem easy to extract them.

Bob Cherry grasped him, and the fat Owl was jerked out, almost like a cork from a bottle.

He sat in the road and spluttered.

"Urrgh! Beast! Trying to pull my arm off, or what?" he gasped. "I think you might help a fellow without pulling his arm off. Urrgh! Oh crikey, look at my bags!"

"How on earth did you get into that ditch?" asked Bob Cherry, quite puzzled. "Did you walk into it?"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass! Think I'd walk into a ditch?" snorted Bunter.

"Well, what were you in it for?" asked Harry Wharton. "Like mud?"

"Beast! It was that brute Smithy!" groaned Bunter. "He did it. Look at the state I'm in! Mud all over my bags! I'm soaked with mud!"

"Smithy shoved you in the ditch?" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Ow! Yes! The rotter! Groogh!"

Bunter staggered to his feet. He was splashed and spotted with mud from head to foot; but his trousers were in a really awful state. Thick, slimy mud caked them all over, and his boots were quite invisible in their coating of mud. Bunter was of the mud-muddy.

"I say, you fellows, I can't walk back to school like this!" he groaned. "I say, I shall have to scrape some of this mud off. All of you help, will you? Get handfuls of grass, and scrape—see?"

The Famous Five looked at him. They were out for a spin before afternoon class—not out on a mud-scraping expedition. On the other hand, Bunter was in an awful state, and evidently required a lot of scraping.

"Oh, we'll all help!" said Bob. "But, look here, Bunter, did Smithy shove you into that ditch? I can't make that out. Why did he?"

"Because he's a rotten cad!" hissed Bunter. "Pulling a fellow's leg. He bunked me up and left me there, the rotter!"

"Bunked you up?" repeated Bob blankly. "On that fence, do you mean? Why the thump did you want to be bunked up on that fence?"

"Oh, never mind that!" said Bunter hastily. "Look here! Get hold of some grass, and rub this mud off."

"All togetherfully!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Many hands make light work go to the well, and save a stitch in time, as the English proverb remarks."

"Hold on!" said Bob quietly. "That's the fence of the Three Fishers. Is that where you were going, Bunter?"

"Find out!" snorted Bunter. "What's the good of standing there and jawing, when I've got to get all this mud off?"

"Smithy wouldn't help that fat idiot go out of bounds, Bob," said Johnny Bull. "He plays the giddy ox himself; but he wouldn't help that blithering chump do the same."

"Of course he wouldn't," said Harry Wharton. "He never did anything of the kind."

"Didn't he?" hooted Bunter. "He jolly well did, the cad! Bunked me up that fence, and left me sticking there, the beast, and walked off, laughing."

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry. He caught

on now. "Pulling your silly leg, I suppose. He knew you couldn't get over without a steam derrick to lift you."

"He left you to drop into the ditch?" ejaculated Nugent.

"Yes, the beast!" groaned Bunter. "Now look at me. I say, you fellows, do scrape off this mud, instead of jawing!"

"So you were going out of bounds?" asked Bob.

"Oh, no; not at all! I—I was—was just climbing that fence to—to look over!" explained Bunter. "Besides, I suppose I can do as I like. You ain't a Sixth Form prefect, Bob Cherry."

"No," said Bob. "I'm not a prefect, nor a mud-scaper, either!" He stepped back to his bicycle. "You fellows coming? I'm going on."

"I say, you fellows, don't go!" yelled Bunter. "I say, help me scrape this mud off! I wasn't going out of bounds. You needn't think I was going to see Bill Lodgey, and get my pound on Crackerjack—I wasn't! I don't know Lodgey. In fact, I've never heard the name."

"You fat, frowsy, foozling fathead!" said Johnny Bull. "Serve you jolly well right! I've a jolly good mind to stick you back in that ditch myself! Come on, you men!"

"Beasts!" roared Bunter, as the Famous Five remounted their machines, and rode onward. "I say, you fellows—Oh crikey!"

The cyclists disappeared in a bunch down the lane. If Billy Bunter collected mud on an expedition to see a bookie, Bunter could clean that mud off himself—and he was left to do the same.

The fat junior shook a fat and muddy fist after the cyclists as they went, and set to work mud-scraping.

It was a weary task.

He grabbed handfuls of grass, and scraped at the mud. He scraped and scraped and scraped, and rubbed and rubbed and rubbed.

Mud came off in lumps and chunks and showers. Billy Bunter gasped, and gurgled, and spluttered, breathless with his exertions.

But at long, long last he had cleaned off the worst of the mud, and ceased to scrape. He stood panting for breath.

There was a jingle of bicycle bells in the lane, and again cyclists came into view—three this time.

Bunter blinked round hopefully. He hoped to see Remove fellows of Greyfriars.

Instead of which, he beheld Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Monson of the Highcliffe Fourth.

They stared at him as they rode up; and Bunter gave them a muddy scowl. He had no help to expect from Highcliffians.

"Oh gad!" ejaculated Pon. "What's that?"

"Greyfriars cad!" grinned Monson. "I've heard that they never wash at Greyfriars; but that's the giddy limit!"

"What a specimen!" grinned Gadsby.

The three cyclists stopped and jumped down.

Billy Bunter, eyeing them uneasily, backed away. Ponsonby winked at his friends.

"Been in the ditch, Bunter?" he asked.

"Yes. I say, you fellows, you'd

better hurry. You'll be late for class at Highcliffe," said Bunter anxiously. "It's a long step from here."

"Oh, we've got a few minutes to spare, if you want any help!" said Ponsonby blandly. "I see you've been scraping off mud. Like any help?"

Bunter blinked at him suspiciously. He would have been glad of help to get off a little more of the mud before he rolled back to Greyfriars. But he did not trust the bland Pon. Like the wise old Trojan of ancient times, he feared the Greeks when they offered gifts.

"Oh, no; that's all right!" said the fat Owl hastily. "Don't you trouble. It's all right now."

"No trouble at all," said Ponsonby. "In fact, we're glad to have met you. Ain't we, you fellows?"

"Very!" grinned Gadsby.

"Fearfully!" agreed Monson.

"We're going to help," said Ponsonby. "Can't miss a chance like this of doing a fellow a friendly turn. You seem to have scraped off a lot of mud, Bunter. We'll give you some more to scrape off—what?"

"Hear, hear!" chortled Monson.

"I—I say, keep off, you beasts!" yelled Bunter. "Oh, you rotters! Oh, you Highcliffe cads! Yaroooh!"

Pon & Co., with grinning faces, barged Bunter back into the ditch. He sat in mud once more, squelching.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Pon & Co.

And they remounted their jiggers, and rode on, yelling.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

Once more he struggled and crawled and clambered out of the ditch. Once more he stood in the road, streaming. After all his efforts and exertions, he was as muddy as ever, or a little muddier.

But he was tired of mud scraping. He set out for Greyfriars as he was, squelching mud at every step. It was a muddy, tired, dismal and dreary Owl that trailed in at last at the school gates.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Just Like Quelch!

ARTHUR CARTER eyed his relative, Bunter, very curiously, in class that afternoon. He was wondering whether the fat Owl had succeeded in getting "on."

He knew quite well why Bunter had left the school with Smithy—at least, he could guess accurately enough. But he did not know that Smithy had only been pulling the fat Owl's egregious leg.

He hoped that Bunter was on. Once the obtuse fat junior was involved in racing transactions with a disreputable racing man, the rest of the schemer's task would be easy enough.

Bunter was not the sort of fellow to be able to carry on such a game undetected. But if he had a chance of escaping detection, Carter was ready to put paid to that. He was going to make sure that Bunter was spotted—once he had put his podgy foot in it. But had he?

(Continued on next page.)



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Bunter did not look like a fellow who had carried out a successful transaction. He looked morose and worried. Carter was left in doubt.

The Owl of the Remove was, in fact, deeply worried! Getting on that day meant laying the foundation of a fortune! And he was not on yet—owing to the iniquitous Bunder!

Mr. Quelch was giving his Form some valuable instruction in geography. But Bunter had no mind for geography that afternoon. His Form-master's voice was simply an irritating drone to Bunter's fat ears. His intellect, such as it was, was concentrated on the urgent business of getting on. It would be simply awful if "Quick-Eye's" special snip won that race on Wednesday with Bunter off instead of on!

Geography passed Billy Bunter by like the idle wind which he regarded not. If Mr. Quelch noticed his unusually thoughtful look, and fancied that he was giving unusual attention to the lesson, Mr. Quelch was in error. Bunter did not hear a word of Quelch's geographical instruction.

But all at once the cloud was chased from Bunter's fat brow, and he smiled. He had thought of a way.

Why not phone that man Lodgey?

Smithy, as many fellows knew, had sometimes bagged a master's phone to ring up a racing friend. It was the kind of reckless thing that the Bunder would do just to show fellows what a devil of a fellow he was!

Bunter would have liked to be a devil of a fellow like Smithy—but, on the other hand, he had no liking for risks. In fact, he disliked them extremely.

Calling up a racing man on the phone, at the risk of being caught in the act by a beak, did not appeal to Bunter. But suppose he could contrive it during class, when all the beaks were busy and the prefects in Form with the Head! That seemed a safe proposition.

All that was needed was an excuse for getting out of Form for ten minutes or so. Excuses came easily enough to a fellow who regarded the truth as a stranger with which he had no desire to make acquaintance.

Bunter thought this idea over, and thought that it looked good! It did not take him long to think of an excuse for getting away from the Form-room. Maps were required in that lesson. Bunter slipped his map under his desk out of sight and got going.

"Please, sir, may I fetch my map?"

Mr. Quelch had unrolled a big map of Europe over the blackboard, and was about to point out things which he, if not his Form, considered worthy of note, when Bunter squeaked.

He glanced round at the fat junior.

"Your map, Bunter!" he repeated.

"Yes, sir! I can't see that map from here, sir—I'm short-sighted! Can I fetch my map from my study, sir?"

"Instructions were given for maps to be brought in for this lesson, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch severely.

"I—I forgot, sir!"

"You should not have forgotten, Bunter! You will take a hundred lines for having forgotten your map, and you may look at Cherry's."

"Oh crikey!"

"What? What did you say, Bunter?"

"I—I—I said thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Quelch gave him a grim look and resumed operations with the pointer. Bob shoved his map along so that Bunter could get a view of it. But Bunter did not favour it with a single blink. He was not interested in maps!

This, he thought bitterly, was just

like Quelch! Instead of getting out of the Form-room he had got a hundred lines! For the next ten minutes Billy Bunter sat in bitter and morose reflection.

Then his fat squeak was heard again.

"Please, sir—"

"You are interrupting me, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir, but I left the tap turned on in the Remove passage, sir. May I go and turn it off?"

Mr. Quelch gave him a fixed look.

"You left a tap turned on in the Remove passage, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir!"

"And you have only just remembered it?"

"Ye-e-es, sir!"

"I shall cane you for having left a tap turned on, Bunter! Wharton, kindly go up to the Remove passage and turn off the tap there."

Mr. Quelch stepped towards Bunter, pointer in hand.

Harry Wharton rose to leave the Form-room.

Bunter could have groaned!

"You may hold out your hand, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I—now I—I think of it, sir, I—I never left the tap turned on, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"You did not leave the tap turned on!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"N-n-no, sir."

"Wharton, you may sit down! Bunter, stand up! Bend over that desk, Bunter! I shall cane you severely for this prevarication."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, in dismay.

Quelch had been going to give him one on the palm for having left the tap turned on! Now he was going to hand it out more severely! The hapless fat Owl had made matters worse instead of better!

"Do you hear me, Bunter?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Yes, sir! I—I mean, I did leave the tap turned on!" gasped Bunter.

"You did leave it turned on?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! Full on, running all over the shop, sir!" said Bunter eagerly.

"Shall—shall I hold out my hand, sir?"

Mr. Quelch gazed at him.

"Bunter, stand up! Bend over that desk immediately! I shall cane you with great severity, Bunter, for these repeated prevarications."

"Oh lor!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh! Ow! Wow!" roared Bunter.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Woo-hoop!"

Mr. Quelch returned to the blackboard.

Billy Bunter wriggled with anguish as he sat down again.

Geography resumed its weary way after that interruption. Billy Bunter gave it no more attention than before. But he did not interrupt again. He had quite given up the bright idea of phoning Billy Lodgey during class.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Surprise for Mr. Hacker!

"THAT old ass Hacker—" hissed Hoskins of the Shell.

"Yes, old chap—" murmured Hobson soothingly.

"That old swab—"

"Oh! Yes! But—"

"That—that—that skinny old gargoyle!" said Hoskins. "Does he think I'm going to stand it? Does he?"

"Um!" said Hobson,

Billy Bunter gave the two Shell fellows a blink of annoyance. He had worry enough on his fat mind without two silly asses in the Shell interrupting his reflections with their nonsense.

After class Bunter was in the quad—debating, in the depths of his podgy intellect, that troublesome problem how to get on. It was a settled thing that he had to get on—the only question was how?

That beast Smithy could get on when he liked, but the stars in their courses seemed to be fighting against Bunter, as they fought against Sisera of old.

Still off, Bunter was meditating that problem as he leaned on one of the old Greyfriars elms, when Hobson and Hoskins stopped quite near him.

Hobby was trying to soothe his chum. Hobby was a really devoted pal, and he would have done anything for Hoskins except listen to his music.

Apparently something of an untoward nature had happened in the Shell Form Room that afternoon. Claude Hoskins was deeply incensed against the Acid Drop, as Hacker was called in his Form.

"Taking it away, you know!" breathed Hoskins. "Actually taking it away—taking it away from a fellow."

"Well, if a chap starts writing music in class, old chap—after all, we were doing Latin prose with Hacker—"

"It came suddenly into my head. You know how things flash into a chap's mind!" said Hoskins. "I was never satisfied with that bit in my fantasia—I knew all the time there was something wanted—and then, this afternoon, it flashed into my mind—diminished sevenths, of course—the very thing."

"Oh! Yes! Quite!" Hobson made soothing gestures. Old Claude had the artistic temperament and often required soothing like a baby! "But Hacker, you know—he doesn't understand."

"The vandal!" said Hoskins.

"Yes; but—"

"The Goth!" hissed Hoskins.

"Oh, yes! But—"

"The Philistine!"

"You see, old chap, it was Latin prose, and Hacker doesn't know a thing about extinguished seventeenth—"

"Diminished sevenths, you ass!"

"I—I mean, diminished sevenths! Can't you write it out over again?" asked Hobson. "I—I'll help, if you like."

"Fathead!" said Claude ungratefully. But really, help from a fellow who called diminished sevenths "extinguished seventeenth" was not likely to be of much use to a musician. Hobby could kick a goal with any fellow in the Lower School at Greyfriars; but what he did not know about music would have filled large volumes. He admired his musical chum immensely; but it made his head ache to look at his musical works; while listening to them was beyond the powers of endurance.

"Think I can recall that phrase!" groaned Hoskins. "It flashed into my mind, and I jotted it down—a combination of diminished sevenths with perfect fifths that, I can tell you, would make them sit up and take notice at the Queen's Hall! I'd been at it a quarter of an hour before Hacker spotted me! Of course, I'd forgotten Hacker! I forgot I was in class, really! Then he takes it away! He's taken it to his study."

"Couldn't you make up something else instead?" suggested Hobson helpfully. "I mean to say, it all sounds much the same when it's played, doesn't it?"

"Idiot!" said Hoskins,



"Ow!! Beasts!" There was a loud howl from Billy Bunter, as the sash shut down across his podgy back, pinning him down. Outside the window, he twisted round his head and blinked furiously through his big spectacles. Inside, his fat legs thrashed wildly.

Hobson, discouraged, stood silent. So far as he could see, it did not matter much what old Claude jotted down on the music-paper. Whatever he jotted down, it made an unearthly row when it was played—and Hobby did not see much difference between one unearthly row and another. But he realised that these fine distinctions meant more to old Claude than to him.

"I'm going to have it back!" said Hoskins. "The finest composition of modern times isn't going to stick about Hacker's study, and so I can jolly well tell him!" There was no false modesty about the musical genius of the Greyfriars Shell.

"But, I say——" mumbled Hobson.

"The old Goth is gone out," said Hoskins. "I heard him tell Quelch! He's gone to Courtfield. Ten to one he's left it on his study table."

"But he will miss it!" gasped Hobson. "He will be on your trail, old chap, if he misses it when he comes in."

"Let him!" said Hoskins recklessly. "So long as I get it back safe, never mind Hacker! I'll give him time to get to Courtfield, and then I'm going to nip into his study and bag it!"

"But——" urged Hobby, in dismay.

"That's settled!" said Claude Hoskins. "Let's go down to the gates, and see whether the old Goth is out of sight yet."

Billy Bunter blinked after the two Shell fellows as they went. Bunter was not interested in the disaster to Hoskins' diminished seventh. He did not know what a diminished seventh was, and did not want to know. But he was interested to learn that the master of the Shell had gone to Courtfield. There was a telephone in Hacker's study; and if Hacker was on his way to Courtfield, it was bound to be safe for a fellow to

borrow his phone. This looked as if the problem of getting on was solved!

Bunter rolled away to the House, while Hoskins and Hobby walked down to the gates to see the last of Hacker.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Come and help us punt this ball, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry, who was punting a footer, after class, with a dozen other Remove fellows.

Bunter snorted, and rolled on. He was not likely to waste time punting a footer, with a dazzling vision of vast wealth trembling in the balance!

He rolled into the House, and gave a cautious blink along Masters' Passage. No one was in sight there, and the doors were all closed.

On tiptoe, the fat junior crept past Mr. Quelch's door. Almost without a sound, he reached the Shell beak's study.

Swiftly he opened the door and stepped in, shutting the door after him. A Remove fellow had to be very careful about being seen entering the study of the master of another Form—where, of course, he had no business. Bunter got out of sight from the passage as quickly as possible.

Once safe inside Hacker's study, he breathed more freely. He was safe there for as long as he liked, if Hacker was on his way to Courtfield. It did not occur to Bunter, for the moment, that perhaps Hoskins' information was ill-founded.

Hoskins had heard Hacker tell Quelch that he was going to Courtfield after class. He supposed that he had gone! But that, really, was no proof that Hacker really had gone! Hoskins was seldom to make mistakes! In fact, he seldom made anything else!

Safe in the study with the door shut, Billy Bunter cut straight across to Mr. Hacker's telephone.

He did not even blink round the study first—but had he done so, he would only have observed the high back of the armchair in which Mr. Hacker—as an actual fact—was sitting at the moment!

Hacker, sitting there, and toasting his toes at the fire, was considering whether, after all, he would walk to Courtfield, as the weather seemed to threaten rain.

If he was going, it was more than time he started! Hoskins, indeed, supposed he had started! But he had not yet finally made up his mind that he was going to start at all. It was very cosy in his study. It was very clammy out of doors. In that undecided state, Mr. Hacker was rather startled and extremely surprised and annoyed, to hear his study door open without a knock—and then to hear a fellow cross the study to the telephone!

In angry amazement he rose to his feet and stared across the high back of the armchair.

He stood petrified as he gazed at Billy Bunter.

Bunter, at the phone, had his back partly turned towards Hacker, and, of course, did not see him.

Having no doubt that that study was unoccupied, after what he had heard from Hoskins, Bunter was thinking only of the urgent matter in hand—ringing up the Three Fishers, and getting in touch with Bill Lodgey there!

He lifted the receiver from the hook. A voice came through from the exchange.

"Number, please!"

Billy Bunter never gave that number. There was a sudden roar of wrath in the study.

"Bunter!"

Bunter jumped.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

(Continued on page 16.)

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BILLY BUNTER'S DEAD CERT!



(Continued from page 13.)

He spun round in terror, the receiver dropping from his fat hand. It hung at the end of the cord, while the hapless fat Owl blinked at Mr. Hacker, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles.

"Oh jiminy!" gurgled Bunter.
"How dare you?" roared Mr. Hacker. "Upon my word! The impertinence—the insolence—of Quelch's boys, passes all bounds! I shall take you to your Form-master, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"
"Number, please!" came impatiently from the exchange. "Will you please give the number?"

Mr. Hacker grabbed the receiver and jammed it back on the hooks. Then he grabbed Bunter. He marched Bunter by his collar out of the study, and down the passage, to Mr. Quelch's door.

"Oh crumbs!" came a startled gasp from the corner of the passage!

Claude Hoskins was just coming round that corner when he sighted Hacker and Bunter.

Having failed to spot Hacker from the gates, Claude had taken it for granted that he was well on his way to Courtfield, and was heading for his study, and a confiscated sheet of music there! But at the sight of Hacker, with a fat Removite wriggling in his grip, Claude Hoskins realised that Hacker, after all, hadn't gone—and Claude faded promptly out of the picture.

Billy Bunter would have been glad to do a fade-out, too! But Bunter had no chance of fading out!

Bunter was marched into his Form-master's study. He left it three minutes later—doubled up like a pocket-knife, and uttering sounds of woe! And for quite a long time after that, Billy Bunter forgot all about Crackerjack, and the urgent necessity for getting on!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Looks Into It!

LODER of the Sixth whistled. Walker shrugged his shoulders. Carne looked from one to the other, with a deep wrinkle of worry in his brow.

The three men of the Sixth had met in conclave in Carne's study, after class.

Carne of the Sixth was in difficult waters; and his pals were ready to help him, if they could—but they did not quite see how.

In Carne's armchair, the seat cushion was thrown back. It was a large and heavy flat cushion fitted to the chair; and Carne of the Sixth was in the habit of slipping under it any sort of paper he preferred to keep out of the general view. It was quite a safe hiding-place for such things—and never, till now, had it proved unsafe.

But now—the deep wrinkle of worry in the brow of Carne of the Sixth Form showed that something was amiss.

"That's where it was!" Carne pointed

to the chair. "Under that cushion! I always keep my racing papers there! But—it's gone!"

"Sure you didn't shift it yourself?" asked Walker.

"Of course I didn't!" snapped Carne irritably. "It was there yesterday. I went to the place for it to-day, and it was gone. I—I suppose the maids wouldn't think of spying under that cushion! Trotter wouldn't! But—who can have taken it?"

"Well, a beak wouldn't!" said Loder. "If a beak spotted 'Sporting Tips' in a Sixth Form man's study, that man would go up to the Head so quick it would make his head swim! Can't have been a beak, or you'd be telling Dr. Locke about it, not us, this minute."

"A prefect—" muttered Carne.

"We're prefects! No other pre could or would butt in, except head prefect, and that's Wingate. And Wingate would never dream of poking his nose under a cushion in a chair. Is he that sort?"

"Well, no," said Carne. "I don't like him—but I know that! Gwynne or Sykes or Bancroft—"

"They couldn't butt in! It wasn't a prefect, any more than it was a beak! Some junior—" said Loder.

"Some young scoundrel that you've whopped, perhaps!" suggested Walker. "By gum, if he shows that paper about, and tells where he found it—"

Carne's face was quite pale.

"That's as good as the sack!" he said. "The Head might go easy with another man—never with a pre. He would call it betraying his confidence, and all that sort of bunk."

"We've got to get hold of that paper!" said Loder decisively. "If it comes out that it was found in your study, Carne, you're up for trouble—and you jolly well might never pull through. Look here, do you know of any junior who's been to the study since the last time you saw the paper?"

Carne reflected.

"Bunter!" he said. "I sent Bunter here with my books after class yesterday. I pulled the lazy little beast's ear, as he did not seem willing."

"Bunter! That's that fat little scoundrel in the Remove—always spying and prying!" said Loder. "Just the little swab to nose out a thing that a fellow wanted to keep out of sight."

"But—if he got it yesterday, it's blabbed all over his Form by now—twenty-four hours ago!" said Carne, in a scared voice.

Loder looked grim.

"If Bunter's got a racing paper, Bunter's breaking a very strict rule of this school!" he said. "He will take the consequences. I suppose there's nothing on the paper to show that it was yours?"

"Think I wrote my name, and the number of my study on it?" granted Carne.

"That's all right, then!" Loder rose to his feet. "I've heard a rumour—I needn't mention that it was in this study—that Bunter of the Remove has a racing paper. I'm bound to look into it, as a prefect. If he spins any silly yarns about having found it in a Sixth Form study, the result will be pretty serious for him."

"Oh, my hat!" said Walker.

"I—I'd rather it was kept quiet!" gasped Carne. "I—I can't face the Head and tell lies, Loder. I haven't your nerve."

"Leave it to me," said Loder.

He put Carne's official ashplant under his arm and left the study.

Carne of the sixth was left in an

extremely uneasy mood. He was quite terrified by that mysterious disappearance of a racing paper from his study. Walker of the Sixth was feeling uneasy, too—wondering whether Carne, if he was up for the sack, might blurt out awkward things about other fellows.

But Gerald Loder was quite cool as he made his way to the Remove quarters. Loder had no doubt that he could handle this matter efficiently.

It was near tea-time, and Remove men were gathering in their passage. On the Remove landing Loder came on the new junior, Carter.

"Is Bunter in his study, Carter?" he asked.

"I think so, Loder," answered Carter—and his eyes gleamed as he watched the prefect walk up the passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five were in the passage near Study No. 13, and they all looked at Loder of the Sixth as he came up from the landing.

"What does that Sixth Form rotter want in our passage?" grunted Johnny Bull. "Oh, my hat! Is he after Bunter?"

Loder stopped at the door of Study No. 7.

"Looks as if he's heard something about Crackerjack," said Nugent.

"Poor old Bunter!"

The Famous Five moved along towards Study No. 7. So did a dozen other Remove fellows. Loder had quite an audience as he threw open the door of Bunter's study and stepped in.

Three fellows were in that study—Bunter, Peter Todd, and Tom Dutton. All three looked startled at the sight of a Sixth Form prefect. Such a visit could only portend trouble for some member of the study.

"Bunter!" rapped Loder.

"Ye-e-es, Loder!" stammered the fat Owl, with his eyes and spectacles very uneasily on the bully of the Sixth. "It wasn't me, Loder!"

"What's this I hear about you having a racing paper, or something of the kind, Bunter?" demanded Loder.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

Loder's idea was to startle Bunter into an admission if he had the missing paper. He succeeded perfectly!

Startled dismay and terror were only too clearly depicted on Billy Bunter's fat and fatuous countenance.

"Well?" rapped Loder.

"I—I—I haven't!" gasped Bunter. "Nothing of the kind, Loder! I—I've never seen 'Sporting Tips' in my life!"

"That will do!" said Loder. "Hand it over at once, you dingy young rascal! I don't know whether I ought to take you to your Form-master about this! Hand over that paper this instant!"

"I—I haven't got it!" gasped Bunter. "You can ask Toddy—he knows! He saw it—"

"Shut up, you fat ass!" hissed Peter.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"I'm waiting for that paper, Bunter!" said Loder. "If you keep me waiting, I shall call Mr. Quelch up!"

"But—but I haven't got it!" wailed Bunter. "I never had it, Loder, and it ain't hidden behind the books on the shelf—"

"He, he, he!" came from the passage.

Loder slipped the ash down into his hand. He was sure now, and fully

entitled to exercise his authority as a prefect!

Whop!

"Wow!" roared Bunter.

"Will you hand over that paper?"

"Ow! No! Yes! All right! I say, Loder, I—I only found it! I—I did, really! I—I'll tell you where I found it—"

Whop!

"Yaroop!"

Bunter made a dive for the book-shelf and dragged "Sporting Tips" into view from its hiding-place behind the books there.

Loder took it from him, glanced at it, and slipped it into his pocket.

"Anything more of this kind here?" he demanded.

"Ow! No!" groaned Bunter.

"I shall keep an eye on this study!" said Loder. "This sort of thing in a junior Form—by gad! Bunter, bend over that chair!"

"Oh crikey!"

Six times Loder's ash rose and fell, amid loud howls from Bunter. Then Gerald Loder tucked the ash under his arm again and walked away.

Billy Bunter wriggled and groaned. Twice that day had Quelch whopped him for his sins—and now he had captured a third swiping from Loder of the Sixth!

Lightning, it is said, never strikes twice in the same place; but whoppings, unfortunately, did. And Billy Bunter was feeling very much hurt! He wriggled and writhed.

"Who wouldn't be a sportsman?" asked Skinner, in the passage.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Wow! I say, you fellows—wow! I say, what beast sneaked to a pre about that—wow—paper? Wow!"

"Perhaps Carne missed it!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Feeling bad, Bunter?"

"Ow! Yes!"

"Serve you jolly well right!"

"Beast!"

In Bunter's study there was tribulation and woe! But in Carne's, in the Sixth, there was satisfaction, at all events! That was no comfort to Bunter! Bunter wriggled, and could not be comforted—and almost wished that he had never started on the career of a bold, bad blagger at all!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

No Exit!

"THAT you have wronged me, doth appear in this!"

That surprising statement greeted Billy Bunter's fat ears as he toiled up the box-room staircase a couple of hours later.

It was the voice of William Wibley, of the Remove, that proceeded from the half-open door of the Remove box-room.

Billy Bunter breathed hard and deep.

Nobody, he had supposed, would be in the box-room. Instead of which several fellows were there, the light was on, and William Wibley's voice was rolling out Shakespearian lines.

Bunter reached the landing and blinked in, his eyes gleaming with wrath behind his spectacles.

It was past lock-up, after which no fellow could leave the House, except by special leave from a master.

Bunter had to leave the House if he was going to see Bill Lodgey; but he could not, of course, ask leave from a master to pay a visit to a disreputable bookmaker at a disreputable "pub."

Bunter was not bright; but he was bright enough to realise that.

He had to get out surreptitiously, if at all. The box-room window was the easiest way, well known in the Remove.

The fat sportsman had intended to cut out of gates after tea and get back before lock-up. But that licking from Loder had put paid to the idea. By the time Bunter had recovered from that severe whopping sufficiently to give his attention to the urgent business of getting on, it was too late, and he dared not risk being missed at call-over. After call-over came lock-up; and Bunter had either to break bounds in secret or else give up the whole idea of backing Crackerjack with Carter's quid, and thereby losing the chance of a life-time!

Bunter was not going to lose the chance of a life-time if he could help it. So here he was—with designs on the box-room window!

Unfortunately, there also was Wibley of the Remove, spouting Shakespeare. There also were five or six other Removites.

It was, apparently, a rehearsal. Wibley, the great chief of the Remove Dramatic Society, was getting ambitious—he was going to give "Julius Caesar." Rehearsals were often difficult matters. In the Rag, fellows persisted in talking instead of sitting round like silent owls, as, of course, they ought to have done when Wib had a theatrical stunt on—in Wib's opinion, at least. There was not much room in a study; besides, fellows would barge into a study. How could fellows rehearse in Wib's study when Morgan might begin playing his flute, or Mick Desmond demand, in loud and vociferous tones:

"Have ye seen me Virgil? Where the jooce is that Virgil?"

Wibley had selected the box-room—convenient for a rehearsal, though inconvenient at the moment for Bunter.

"You have condemned and notes Lucius Pella for taking bribes here of the Sardians!" continued Wibley, who was, apparently, taking the part of Cassius in the play. "Where in my letters, praying on his side, because I knew the man, were slighted off?"

"You banged yourself to fight in such a corpse," answered Russell, who seemed to be Brutus, taking a squint at a rather tattered and indecipherable script.

Yell from Wibley!

"Get it right, fathead! What do you mean?"

Russell took another squint.

"You banged yourself to write in such a scrape," he amended.

"Idiot!" yelled Wibley.

"Here, I say," broke in Ogilvy, "that ain't in Shakespeare! You've got it wrong yourself, Wib!"

"Dummy!" roared Wibley.

"That ain't, either!" said Squiff. "Dash it all, Wibley, you might get your own lines right when you're taking the rehearsal and ragging fellows for forgetting their lines!"

"I've got my lines right!" roared Wibley.

"Well, there isn't either 'idiot' or 'dummy' in my copy," said Squiff.

"What Cassius says next is: 'As such a time—'"

"I was talking to Russell, ass! You wronged yourself to write in such a cause, you ass!" roared Wibley.

"Eh—I haven't written anything!" said Russell. "What cause do you mean?"

"Fathead! Ass! That's Brutus' line!" raved Wibley.

"Oh! Is it?" said Russell, with another squint at his script. "Oh, all

right! You wronged yourself to write in such a cause. You're sure it isn't scrape, Wibley?"

"Idiot!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get out, Bunter!" hooted Wibley. "You're not in this! Don't interrupt! Look here, get out! Shut that door!"

"Yes; get out, old fat man!" said Bob Cherry, who was sitting on Lord Mauleverer's big trunk, waiting till wanted. "Shut the door after you!"

"I say, you fellows, Quelch is coming up here!" said Bunter. "He's seen a light in the box-room, I think! You'd better clear!"

"Quelch can come up, if he likes, fat-head! No harm in rehearsing 'Julius Caesar' in a box-room," answered Bob.

"I—I—I mean, he—he—he said there's a lot of row going on here," said Bunter. "He's bringing up his cane."

"If Quelch interrupts us, I'll jolly well shy 'Julius Caesar' at him!" exclaimed the exasperated Wibley. "Shut up, Bunter! Now, then, Russell!"

"You wronged yourself to write in such a scrape—I mean, cause," said Brutus.

"At such a time as this, it is not meet—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" shrieked Wibley.

"I say, I—I believe I can hear Quelch coming! He's in a fearful temper!" urged Bunter. "I—I came up specially to give you the tip."

"Shut up! At such a time as this, it is not meet—"

Wibley carried on with Cassius' speech regardless of Bunter. Bunter eyed him with an exasperated blink.

It was true that it was no business of the amateur theatrical performers if Bunter broke House bounds after lock-up. They had no right to stop him if he chose to crawl out of the box-room window and clamber down from the leads. But it was quite possible that they might, all the same—especially Bob Cherry, who was very likely to think it up to him to save the fat Owl from hunting for trouble. Bunter did not want to risk being stopped; this was almost his last chance of getting on. He could not get out in prep, and after prep came dorm.

"I say, Bob—" he recommenced.

"Shut up, old chap!"

"But, I say, Wharton asked me to tell you he wanted you in the study—"

"Tell him I'm busy!"

"I think it's rather important, old chap. I—I think he—he's fallen down and broken his leg—"

"Wha-at?"

"I'd go, old chap, if I were you!" said Bunter, eyeing Bob eagerly. "He—he was groaning in awful agony—"

Bob Cherry rose from Lord Mauleverer's trunk.

Bunter's fat face brightened. Once that beast was off the scene, he could risk it; Bob was the likeliest one to stop him in transit.

Bob came towards the box-room door. There, to Bunter's surprise and annoyance, he grasped the fat Owl by the neck.

"I don't know why you've come up here telling crammers, old fat porpoise!" said Bob. "But if you think it's funny, I don't! Take that!"

Tap!

"Yooooop!" roared Bunter, as his head tapped on the door.

"And that!"

Tap!

"Yow-wooop!"

"And now buzz off before I boot you down the stairs!" said Bob cheerfully.

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He rolled Bunter out on the landing and slammed the box-room door on him. The fat Owl, gurgling with wrath, stooped to the keyhole, and yelled through it:

"Beast!"

Then he rolled away.

Wibley & Co. carried on with "Julius Cæsar," evidently booked in that box-room till prep. There was no way out for Bunter.

Already that day it had seemed as if the stars in their courses were fighting against Bunter getting that quid on Crackerjack. Now, clearly, they were up to the same game again. The fat sportsman began to wonder whether he ever would get that quid on Crackerjack.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

In or Out?

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the Rag. After lock-up a good many of the Remove were there, among them the members of the famous Co. who were not attending the box-room rehearsal. Carter was there, and he was still in doubt as to whether his intended victim had got in touch with a bookie. He gave the fat junior a very penetrating look as he rolled in.

It was dark outside, and the light, of course, was on in the Rag.

Bunter rolled across to the windows.

The Rag had windows on the quadrangle. It was rather a long drop for a fellow like Bunter; still, it was practicable. Only it was rather awkward for a sportsman to break House bounds under the eyes of two or three dozen other fellows. Nobody was likely to call the attention of a master or a prefect; still, it was injudicious. But Bunter was—or thought he was—equal to that little difficulty. He pulled the curtain aside, opened the window, and blinked out into the dusky quad.

"Shut that window, fathead!" called out Bolsover major. "There's a beastly draught!"

Bunter did not heed. He blinked round at the Co.

"Help a chap out!" he said. "I've left my Latin grammar on the seat under the elms, where I was mugging it up after class. I shall want it in prep."

"Ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Ask Quelch for leave to go out and get it!"

"I don't want to see Quelch. He whopped me this afternoon through Hacker making out that I went to his study. I can cut across and get it all right," said Bunter. "We've got Virgil in prep to-night, so I shall want my *Æneid*."

"Your *Æneid*!" said Harry, staring. "Have you left that out in the quad as well as your Latin grammar?"

"I—I mean, my Latin grammar!" amended Bunter hastily. "You might help a fellow down, Wharton. It's rather a drop."

"Fathead! Ask Quelch, and go out at the door."

"I'm not going to ask Quelch! He mightn't believe me," explained Bunter. "He's doubted my word before, as you know."

"What does that silly owl want to go out into the quad for?" asked Johnny Bull, staring at Bunter.

"Haven't I just told you?" demanded Bunter. "I've got to get my Algebra. I left it on the seat—I mean, my Virgil—that is, my Latin grammar. I want it in prep presently."

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"Shall I cut out and get it for you?" asked Johnny sarcastically.

Had Bunter really left a book out of the House he would certainly have jumped at that offer. Now he did not jump.

"Oh, you'd never find it!" he said. "You're rather an ass, old chap—thanks all the same! Lend me a hand out of this window, Nugent."

"I'll lend you some school-books instead," suggested Nugent, with a grin.

"Oh, I'd rather have my own books, old chap! I don't believe in borrowing books—or borrowing at all, if you come to that. Neither a borrower nor a lender be, you know, as Spokeshave says—I mean Shakespeare. Inky, old chap, give me a hand out of this window, will you?"

"The answer is in the absurd negative, my idiotic Bunter!"

"Beast! I say, Smithy——"

"Go and eat coke!" said the Bounder, without looking round.

"Rotter! I say, Redwing——"

"Fathead!"

"Toddy, old man——"

"You're not going out, you howling ass!" said Peter Todd. "It's a whopping for breaking House bounds. Haven't you had enough whoppings for one day?"

"Well, you see, I've got to get my geometry book——"

"What a collection of books Bunter's left out in the quad!" remarked Skinner. "A whole school outfit!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean my Algebra—that is, my Latin Virgil—grammar! Well, if you cads won't lend a fellow a hand, I can manage without. Keep that door shut."

"You fat chump!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "Stay where you are."

"Yah!" retorted Bunter. He put his head out of the window, and blinked into the February dusk. "I say, one of you might help a fellow!"

"Nobody's going to do anything of the kind, fathead!"

Carter came towards the window.

"I don't see why Bunter shouldn't fetch his book in, if he chooses," he said.

"I'll help you out, if you like, Bunter."

"Oh, thanks!" said Bunter, in surprise.

This was the second time that day that Carter had unexpectedly come to the rescue. Bunter began to think that he had rather misjudged Arthur Carter. This, Bunter thought, was jolly good-natured of him!

Other fellows did not get that impression, however. Harry Wharton & Co. gave Carter rather grim looks. Wharton came over to the window.

"What do you mean by that, Carter?" he asked very quietly.

"I mean what I say," answered Carter. "If Bunter wants his book for prep, why shouldn't he fetch it in?"

"Yes, rather!" said Bunter. "Lend me a hand, old chap!"

"You know that Bunter is lying, the same as we do," said Harry Wharton unceremoniously. "I don't know why he wants to break bounds, but he's not left a book in the quad, and he's not going after it, and you know it."

"I don't know it. I don't see why you should set Bunter down as a liar every time he opens his mouth," said Carter coolly. "He says he has left a book out, and I suppose he knows what he's talking about. I'm going to help him out. Still, we may as well have it clear." He turned to Bunter. "You've really left a school-book out in the quad, Bunter?"

"Yes, rather! Certainly!" answered Bunter, promptly.

"Well, it's against the rules to go out in lock-ups, but Quelch wouldn't make much fuss about a fellow going out for a school-book. I shall certainly help you out if you want to go."

"Thanks, old chap!"

Vernon-Smith looked round.

"You fat frump!" he said. "Carter knows you're going out to hunt for trouble, and he's going to help you all he can."

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

Harry Wharton set his lips. It was clear to every fellow in the Rag that Bunter was, as usual, prevaricating, and he could not believe that it was not as clear to Carter as to everyone else. Remembering Bunter's attempt to get in at the Three Fishers that day, Wharton could make a guess at his real intentions, and he strongly suspected that Carter could, also. At all events, he was not going to let the obtuse fat Owl get on with it.

Carter helped the fat junior into the window. As Bunter sprawled there, with his fat head outside, and his fat legs still inside, Harry Wharton grasped Carter by the shoulder and spun him away.

Then he grasped the window-sash and shut it down.

There was a loud howl from Bunter.

As he was half out of the window, the sash shut down across his podgy back and pinned him there.

Outside the window he twisted round his head, and blinked furiously through his big spectacles. Inside, his fat legs thrashed wildly.

There was a roar of laughter in the Rag.

Carter staggered three or four paces away. Then he recovered himself and came back towards the window with a red and angry face.

"You cheeky cad!" he panted.

"Stand back!" said the captain of the Remove quietly. "If you lay a finger on that sash, Carter, I'll knock you spinning!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Johnny Bull.

Carter clenched his hands.

"What are you meddling for?" he exclaimed. "What business is it of yours if Bunter goes out to fetch a book?"

"Oh, shut up!" said Harry unceremoniously. "You're not landing that fat fool in trouble this time, Carter! Stand back, if you don't want a scrap on your hands!"

Carter, for a moment, looked like springing at the captain of the Remove; but he thought better of it, and stood back, with a shrug of the shoulders. He did not want a scrap with the captain of the Form; neither would it have been of any use to him, for the other members of the Co. were ready to see that he did not let Bunter out.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter was struggling and kicking frantically. His infuriated voice was heard from without.

"Beast! Lemme go! I say, you fellows, make him open that sash!—I say, I've got to fetch my Crackerjack—I mean, my Latin Algebra—that is, my grammar! Will you let me out of this, you awful beast?"

"Will you come in if I lift the sash, fathead?" inquired Wharton.

"No!" yelled Bunter.

"Hand me that cushion, Mauly!"

"Yaas, old bean!" Lord Mauleverer handed over the cushion from his arm-chair.

Wharton swung it in the air.

"Coming in, Bunter?"

"Beast! No! Rotter! No!"

Whop!



"Hullo, what are you going to do with that rope?" asked Peter Todd, genially, as he looked into the study. "How many necks have you got, Bunter?" "Eh? One, you ass! Wharrer you mean?" "I mean, you'd better not break it—you'll want it later!" explained Peter.

The cushion descended, hard and heavy. The yell that emanated from William George Bunter rang across the quad.

"Yaroooh! Owl! Yow! Stop it, Wharton, you beast! I say, Carter, make him stop it! Wow!"

"Coming in, old fat man?"

"Yaroooh! No! Beast! Owl!"

Whop!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Like to come in?"

"Owl! Wow! Yes, if you like!" howled Bunter. Two whops from the cushion seemed to be enough for Bunter. "Open that window, you beast! I'll come in! I—I want to come in."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Well, if you want to come in I'll let you in!" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The captain of the Remove pushed up the sash.

Bunter, whose word was not often his bond, made a wild effort to wriggle out as soon as he was released from the pressure of the sash.

But as Frank Nugent grasped one fat leg, and Johnny Bull the other, he had no chance of wriggling out. He had to wriggle in. He landed on the floor of the Rag with a bump and a howl, and Harry Wharton closed the window.

Bunter sat on the floor and roared.

"Owl! Beast! I'll jolly well get that quid on Crackerjack, all the same, and blow the lot of you! Beasts! Owl!"

"What about booting him?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Good egg! Go it!"

Billy Bunter did not stay to be booted. He jumped away and scuttled out of the Rag, and the hour of prep found Bunter still within the walls of the House, and the quid as far as ever from getting on Crackerjack.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Roped In!

"PREP!" said Bunter bitterly.

He blinked morosely at the books on the table in Study No. 7, and at Peter Todd and Tom Dutton, who were sitting down to prep.

No fellow in the Remove, probably, really liked prep, but it was one of the things that had to be done. Toddy and Dutton were getting on with it. Bunter had no idea or intention of getting on with it. Much more important matters than prep occupied his fat mind.

Bunter was getting quite desperate. Somehow, anyhow, he had to get that quid on Crackerjack before it was too late.

He had no doubt that Bill Lodgey would take him on, once he got into touch with that frowsy gentleman. On that point, Bunter was right. He was, in fact, exactly the "mug" that Bill Lodgey liked to meet. Mr. Lodgey would have had no objection whatever to annexing Bunter's quid.

But the difficulties in the way of getting in touch with Mr. Lodgey seemed insuperable. They were enough to discourage any fellow, except a fellow who saw before him a dazzling vision of wealth—easy money to be had for the trouble of picking it up. Bunter was not going to lose a fortune, simply because a lot of meddling fellows butted into his private affairs. Not Bunter.

Everybody seemed to be against Bunter—even the Bounder, who dabbled in bets and gee-gees himself. From only one fellow, in fact, had he received any help or sympathy—and that fellow was his rival, Carter. Which really might have enlightened Bunter, had he possessed the intellectual faculties of the average rabbit.

But the average rabbit was an intellectual prodigy, compared with the fat ornament of the Greyfriars Remove.

Bunter was as determined as ever. He did not touch his prep; he did not even think of it, except to dismiss the subject with a sniff of scorn.

Prep—at such a time as this! Nero fiddling, while Rome burned, was nothing to it.

Peter and Dutton worked, while Bunter sat in the armchair, and glowered over his big spectacles.

He was anxious for prep to be over. Plans had formed in Bunter's fat brain; but to carry them out, he had to have the study to himself.

"You'll get into a row with Quelch," Peter Todd warned him, when prep was half through.

"Blow Quelch!" snorted Bunter.

"Who cares for Quelch?"

"If he puts you on con——"

"Blow con!"

Bunter apparently was bent on understudying the schoolboy in the song, who "scamped his prep, and who skewed his con, whenever his Form beak put him on."

"Didn't you tell me you wanted to get a good report this term?" asked Peter.

"Eh? Yes."

"Is this how you're setting about getting it?"

"Oh, rats!"

Peter gave a shrug and resumed work. Presently he stooped and glanced under the table. Several times his foot kicked against something there, and he wondered what it was.

He stared at a coil of rope.

"What the dickens——" he ejaculated.

Bunter sat up.

"Here, you leave that alone!" he exclaimed.

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"You blithering Owl!" exclaimed Peter. "What have you sneaked that rope into the study for?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "In—fact, I—I didn't bring it here. I never got it out of the Fifth Form box-room, Peter. I—I wonder how it got in the study really."

Peter Todd gave him a fixed look, and then resumed prep, without further remark, much to Bunter's relief.

Prep was over at last—to Bunter's further relief. And he was glad to see that Toddy prepared to leave the study at once. He had dreaded that the beast might hang about.

"Come on, Dutton!" said Peter. "Coming down to the Rag?"

The deaf junior glanced round the study.

"What bag?" he asked. "I can't see a bag. What do you want a bag for?"

"Rag!" roared Peter.

"Rag? A bag for rag? What do you mean, Toddy? You're not collecting rags, I suppose?" asked Dutton, in astonishment.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Plums! If you want a bag for plums, there's a paper bag in the cupboard, if that's what you mean. Where are the plums?"

Without answering that question, Peter took his deaf pal by the arm, and led him out of the study.

Bunter grinned with satisfaction when the door closed on them.

He got busy at once.

There was not much time, between prep and dorm, for an expedition out of bounds. But it was now or never. The fat junior dragged the coil of rope out from under the table. It was quite a long rope. He had made a collection of box cords in the Fifth Form box-room, and joined them together with uncommon industry. He had doubled them and trebled them, to make sure that they would bear his weight.

Now he fastened one end to a leg of the armchair, with a multiplicity of knots to make sure of it.

The other end he carried to the study window.

Descending from a study window, by means of a rope, was not an exploit that appealed to Bunter. But it was a case of any port in a storm. This was his last chance of getting on Crackerjack, unless he broke dormitory bounds after lights out—a very desperate resource. Bunter had thought it out, laid his plans, and made up his fat mind. Now he was going to do it—at least, he thought that he was.

Unfortunately, as he put a fat hand on the window to open it, the study door reopened, and Peter Todd looked in.

"Hallo! What are you going to do with that rope?" asked Peter genially.

Bunter blinked at him with a deadly blink.

"Beast, I thought you'd gone down to—"

"I sort of fancied you would," agreed Peter. "How many necks have you got, Bunter?"

"Eh? One, you ass! Wharrer you mean?"

"I mean, you'd better not break it. You'll want it later," explained Peter.

"Oh, don't be an ass! I say, is that Wharton calling you?"

"I don't seem to hear him."

"I think I'd go and see, Peter. I—I think he wants to speak to you about the football."

"What are you doing with that rope?"

"Oh, nothing!"

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"Not thinking of sliding down it from the window?"

"Oh, no; nothing of the kind! I'm not going to get out of the window, Toddy."

"Right in one; you're not," assented Peter. "I'm going to see that you don't, old fat ass!"

Peter Todd grabbed the rope; then he grabbed Bunter.

"Hands off, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here—Ow! If you bump me over on the floor, you rotter, I'll—Yaroo!"

Bump!

Bunter landed on the study floor.

Peter cheerfully looped the rope round him, and tied a knot. Bunter's fat arms were pinned down to his podgy sides. Then Peter wound the rest of the rope round the armchair, and knotted it again.

"That all right?" he asked.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

"I'll give you a look in before dorm," said Peter. "Au revoir, you bold, bad blithering bloater!"

"Don't you leave me tied up like this, you beast!" yelled Bunter, wriggling wildly in the rope. "I say, Toddy—I say, you rotten brute—I say, old chap—dear old beast—I mean dear old chap—Oh crikey!"

Slam!

The study door closed after Peter Todd.

Bunter was left to wriggle.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

In the Silly Night!

WINGATE of the Sixth saw lights out for the Remove that night.

Probably he noticed a good many smiling faces in the dormitory. Among them, however, was one that was not smiling.

Billy Bunter's fat face was morose and grim.

By that time all the Remove knew that Bunter had, somehow or other, got hold of the necessary quid, and was frantically eager to get it on that wonderful horse, Crackerjack, who was going to win at five to one—perhaps! It was quite a joke in the Remove by this time.

The case of a fellow who was taking up blagging, and begging earnestly for the sack, had its serious aspects. But it was rather difficult to take Bunter, the blackguard, seriously. His fatuous essay in blackguardism struck the Remove fellows chiefly as funny.

Now that it was bed-time, and the Lower Fourth shepherded off to their dormitory, most of the fellows considered that Bunter was safe.

Even if he thought of taking the desperate step of breaking bounds after lights out, he was not likely to get on with it. Once his fat head was on the pillow, Bunter was booked till morning. There were some things that Bunter could do really well. He could eat more than any other fellow at Greyfriars. He could talk the hind-leg off a mule. And he could sleep in a way that left Rip Van Winkle merely an also ran. In that line the Seven sleepers of Ephesus had nothing on Bunter. Whatever plans Bunter might make for that night, it was fairly certain that Morpheus would get the upper hand, and that the fat Owl would not stir again, when once slumber's chain had bound him.

That it was his intention to get up, after going to bed, the juniors soon had evidence, though fortunately for Bunter, Wingate did not suspect it.

"Bunter!" rapped out the prefect suddenly.

"Eh? Yes, Wingate." Bunter, about to clamber into bed, blinked round at the captain of Greyfriars.

"You frowsy little slacker, what the dickens do you mean by going to bed with your socks on?" demanded Wingate.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

And there was a general grin up and down the Remove dormitory.

Bunter, evidently, had left his socks on to save the trouble of putting them on when he turned out in the night. That was evident to the Remove, but to Wingate it appeared only a specimen of Bunter's lazy slackness.

"I—I—It—it's c-c-cold, Wingate!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I've kept them on to—to keep my feet warm, you know."

"Cold?" asked Wingate. He slipped his ashplant into his hand. "Like me to warm you?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "N-n-no!"

He discarded the socks, and crawled into bed.

Wingate put out the lights, and the Remove were left to slumber.

Instead of slumbering, however, most of the juniors chuckled. Obviously, Bunter intended to break bounds that night. Equally obviously, he would be fast asleep when the time came! Wherefore did the juniors chuckle.

"Like me to call you, Bunter!" asked Skinner. "About midnight—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give Bill Lodgey my kind regards!" chortled the Bounder. "Put something on for me, won't you, Bunter?"

"I—I say, you fellows, I'm not going to break bounds to-night!" squeaked Bunter. "Don't any of you fellows stay awake."

"You're not, old fat man!" chuckled Peter Todd. "If I thought you were, old porpoise, I'd tie you up again."

"Beast!"

"This is Bunter's way of getting a good report from Quelch for the term," remarked Hazeldene. "Quelch is sure to give him a jolly good one if he catches him out of dorm to-night."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, he won't be rough on a sleep-walker," said Smithy, "and Bunter won't go, unless he walks in his sleep!"

"I'm not going, you fellows—really, you know! I'm going to sleep! I don't suppose I shall open my eyes till rising-bell."

"Even Bunter tells the truth sometimes, by accident!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Snore!

"Gone to sleep, Bunter?" called out Nugent.

"Yes, old chap—fast asleep!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, don't keep on cackling, when a fellow's asleep—"

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

Snore!

Billy Bunter, with great astuteness, affected to go to sleep. He snored and snored! He could see that his intention was quite well known to all the Form, though he could not guess how they knew! But they did know, and it would be just like some of the beasts to stay awake and stop him when he started on the wild and woolly razzle! So he proceeded to convince them that he was fast asleep!

For about five minutes Bunter, wakeful, made sounds of snoring. Then the snore became genuine. Bunter had dropped off!

With his eyes shut and his mouth open, the fat Owl of the Remove slept and snored.

"Bunter!" called out Harry Wharton.

Snore!

"Like a doughnut?"

Snore!

Evidently, Bunter was really asleep this time!

Once asleep, he was safe till rising-bell. Other fellows went to sleep, and at ten o'clock only one member of the Form was awake.

That one was Arthur Carter!

Carter, of course, knew Bunter's plans for the night, as well as the rest. From that circumstance, he knew that Bunter had not yet made the plunge that he was so anxious for Bunter to make. He knew, too, that now Bunter was asleep nothing but the rising-bell was likely to awaken him—if even the rising-bell did. Billy Bunter often snored on while the rising-bell clanged, till roused out by a friendly boot or a wet sponge.

Carter lay awake, thinking it over. For another hour he waited. When half-past ten chimed, the chime was followed by Bunter's steady snore. Carter sat up in bed as eleven drew nigh.

In the glimmer of starlight from the high windows he could dimly make out the other beds—from one of which proceeded the unending melody of Billy Bunter's snore!

He reached out, and picked up a slipper. Taking careful aim, he whizzed it across to Bunter's bed.

It dropped fairly on a little fat nose!

Smack!

Bunter's snore was suddenly changed into a startled squeak! Even Bunter awakened at a slipper smacking on his nose!

"Ooooooh!" squeaked Bunter.

His eyes opened, and he blinked round him in the gloom. Carter's head was on his pillow again, and he made no sound.

"Oooogh!" repeated Bunter. "What—ooogh!"

He sat up.

The slipper had slipped off, after smacking on his nose. Bunter did not know what had awakened him, but he had a pain in his nose, and he rubbed it. And he was awake!

With wakefulness came recollection. He realised that while fully intending to remain awake, he had dropped off to sleep! By sheer luck he had awakened. He crawled out of bed.

There was a gleam of light. Bunter had borrowed Toddy's electric flash-lamp from the study, all ready. By its beam he looked at his watch! The watch had stopped. Bunter breathed hard.

He knew that it must be late. He had intended to turn out at half-past ten, which was late enough to be safe, but not too late to catch Mr. Lodgey at the Three Fishers. He realised now that it was later than that. And as he stood shivering by his bed he heard eleven chimes, one after another, through the stilly night. It was eleven o'clock!

Evidently, he had no time to lose.

With infinite caution Bunter dressed himself in the dark. There was no sound in the dormitory but that of steady breathing and a whisper of the wind in the old trees in the quad. The Remove were fast asleep—and Bunter was very careful not to awaken them.

Dressed at last, the fat Owl groped his way, slowly and cautiously, to the door, little dreaming that a wakeful ear was listening for the slightest sound.

That ear caught the sound of a door opening and closing.

Carter grinned in the darkness.

Bunter was gone!

Carter had succeeded perfectly. It had only been necessary to waken the fat Owl—and he had awakened him! The rest could safely be left to Bunter himself!

That unspeakable ass was going out of bounds, at eleven o'clock at night! Had Bunter desired to play Carter's game for him he could not have played it better!

One thing was needed now—the discovery, by Mr. Quelch, that Bunter's bed was empty in the Remove dormitory!

Carter smiled into the darkness.

Bunter, coming back from his night-prowl, would find his Form-master waiting for him! Whether he lied, or whether he owned up, there was no doubt that Quelch would learn where he had been, and why. It was, in all probability, the sack for Bunter—at the very least, it was a Head's flogging, and a report, that term, that would knock into small pieces any chance he had of getting into the good graces of old Joseph Carter! And the schemer of the Remove grinned into the darkness as he slipped out of bed and crept to the door—after Bunter!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Three in the Dark!

"I—I wouldn't!" murmured Hobson of the Shell.

Claude Hoskins sniffed.

"Perhaps you wouldn't!" he said. "But I jolly well would—and I jolly well shall!"

"But suppose Hacker's up—"

"He goes to roost at half-past ten, like clockwork. That's why I've waited till eleven."

"Some of the other beaks may be up and—"

"I'm chancing that!"

"It means an awful row if you're copped, old man!" said Hobson, with almost tearful earnestness. He was sitting up in bed, in the Shell dormitory, peering at his chum, who was tucking pyjamas into trousers. "Hacker will miss that sheet of music from his study, in the morning, even if you get it—"

"Let him! It's mine, ain't it?"

"Yes, but—"

"I'd have had it this afternoon if the old goat had gone to Courtfield, as he told Quelch he would! Of course, he had to change his mind, and stick frowsting in his study! That's the sort of unreliable old fossil he is! But he's

not keeping my music, I know that! He's capable of pinching it, I believe, if he understood its value!"

Hoskins buckled his braces.

"Everybody's in bed now," he said. "It's safe as houses. Anyhow, I'm going. Catch me letting him keep my music!"

Claude Hoskins was grimly determined. He had spent quite a long time that afternoon—in class, before Mr. Hacker's eye fell on him—in scribbling down that remarkable combination of perfect fifths and diminished sevenths, which he had no doubt was one of the most remarkable things in modern music—as perhaps it was. To recall the exact phrasing of those marvellous bars was impossible; he had to get his copy back, or the masterpiece was in danger of being lost to Hoskins—and lost to the world!

It was worth a little risk—in fact, it was worth a lot! A lot or a little, Claude was going to risk it.

"But, I say—" murmured Hobby feebly. "Suppose Hacker—"

"I'm going."

And Hoskins went.

James Hobson was left in a state of dismay—the only fellow awake in the Shell, but too alarmed for his chum to think of going to sleep again.

Really it was a rather serious matter for any fellow to break dorm bounds at eleven at night and go down to root in a master's study for an article that had been confiscated by that master.

And really, Hobby could not help thinking old Hacker—Acid Drop, as he was—was not fearfully to blame for having taken away the music Claude had written down in class when he was supposed to be doing Latin prose.

(Continued on next page.)



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Hacker was not an amiable Form-master, but even an amiable beak might have jibbed at that and come down rather heavy.

It was certain that he would be awfully exasperated if he found that the confiscated paper had been taken from his study. He would know at once, of course, that Hoskins had snooped it. In all Greyfriars, Hoskins was the only fellow who attached any value to that arrangement of perfect fifths and diminished sevenths.

On the other hand, it was quite possible—indeed, probable—that Hacker had thrown it into his study fire or his wastepaper-basket. Hobby could not help hoping that he had done one or the other; for, in either case, he would not then miss it and get on old Claude's track in the morning.

Hobby was anxious for his chum; but Hoskins was too keen on recovering his musical composition to be anxious for himself. Still, he was very quiet and very cautious as he stole away from the Shell dormitory.

Late as it was, some of the masters might still be up, though there was no doubt that Hacker would have gone to bed. Some of the Sixth might still be up, in their studies, though that was unlikely.

Hoskins did not want to be "copped," as Hobby expressed it. He did not want whoppings, lines, or detention. All he wanted was that spot of marvellous music—merely that, and nothing more. "Copped" out of his dormitory, he was not likely to get hold of it, so he was cautious and doubly cautious.

Creeping across the big landing towards the stairs, Claude Hoskins stopped suddenly, his heart beating.

The darkness was almost like pitch. He could see nothing; but he could hear—indeed, his ears were very much on the alert. And he heard a sound.

It seemed to him like the sound of a stealthy, shuffling footfall coming out of one of the many passages that opened from that extensive landing, all the dormitories being on the same floor.

He listened, with quickening heart-beats, for a repetition of the sound. If some beak were prowling about—

Again came the sound—soft, stealthy, and cautious; but to his intent ears unmistakably that of a cautious footfall.

He stared in the darkness in the direction of that sound.

A sudden gleam of light nearly blinded him. He blinked. The next moment the light was gone again.

Hoskins knew what that meant. Someone coming along in the dark had turned on a flashlamp for a second to pick his way.

Who the dickens was it?

Some young rotter going out of bounds, perhaps. Vernon-Smith of the Remove, or Angel of the Fourth, or Price of the Fifth? Or was it a master, or a prefect, prowling? Beaks and prefects did prow! at times. Sometimes a master would come up to give a dormitory the once-over. Hacker had been known to prowl when suspicious that some dormitory raid or pillow-fight was scheduled to take place after lights-out. Suppose it was Hacker? Or that gimlet-eyed blighter old Quelch?

Hoskins felt extremely uneasy.

But his cue was silence and cover; and he backed silently across the landing to the banisters and crouched there to give the unknown one plenty of space to pass on to the stairs.

Faint footfalls came in the silence; THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,568.

then he heard a grunt. He started as he heard that.

It was wildly impossible that a pig could have got loose in the House and started wandering about in the middle of the night, but it sounded awfully like it.

But really it couldn't be that. Besides, a wandering pig could not have turned on a flashlamp.

Flash came again. It was nowhere near Hoskins, but he crouched low against the banisters and watched. Whoever it was that was crossing the big landing to the stairs had turned on the beam of the flashlamp again to see his way.

There was an answering flash to the flash of the light; it came from a pair of big spectacles perched on a little fat nose.

The light was shut off again; but Hoskins knew who it was now—that fat ass Bunter of the Remove!

Why on earth Bunter of the Remove was wandering out of his dormitory at that hour was a mystery to Hoskins, but it did not interest him; he only hoped that the fat chump would not kick up a row and wake somebody while he—Hoskins—was on the track of the musical masterpiece.

Another glimmer came—this time from the staircase. Bunter was creeping down the stairs. Hoskins watched over the banisters in the darkness.

A gleam again—from the lower landing. Apparently Bunter was heading for the Remove, for he did not approach the lower stairs. Anyhow, Hoskins was done with him. Bunter had gone up the Remove passage.

He crept away from the banisters and approached the staircase. Bunter was off the scent—if Bunter mattered. Hoskins reached the stairs—and there, with a sudden heart-beat as before, he halted again.

There was a stealthy step in the darkness behind him—at least, Claude Hoskins was sure that there was.

He spun round and stared breathlessly. Was some other fellow out of his dormitory as well as Bunter? Or was it a beak this time? Perhaps a beak after Bunter. Hoskins panted a little as he tried to penetrate the gloom with his startled eyes. Possibly his panting reached ears as intent as his own. At all events, there was no further sound from the landing.

For a long minute Hoskins stood listening; but all was still, and he concluded at last that he must have been mistaken. Mistaken or not, he was going down to Hacker's study after that musical masterpiece.

And, stepping stealthily on the stairs, he went.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tracked!

ARTHUR CARTER stood silent, listening, his ears intently on the strain.

He hardly breathed as he stood and strained his sharp ears.

He was not many minutes behind Bunter.

Silently and stealthily he had followed the fat junior from the Remove dormitory. He had to make sure that Bunter was actually out of the House before he caused Quelch to turn out and come on the scene.

That Bunter had left the Remove dormitory with the intention of "breaking out" and getting away to see the much-desired bookie, Carter had no doubt. All the Remove knew Bunter's

game, and Carter as well as anyone else. Still, he had to be sure.

Bunter was not, in ordinary circumstances, given to breaking out. But he had been known more than once to pay a nocturnal visit to a study where some fellow had left a cake or a bag of doughnuts; it was even rumoured in the Remove that Bunter had burgled the larder in his time.

That, indeed, was much more like Bunter than breaking out at night to see a racing man.

Carter did not want to take the serious step of rousing Mr. Quelch and bringing him on the scene only to find that the fat Owl was guzzling a cake in Smithy's study or a bag of jam tarts in Bob Cherry's study.

It was easy enough to follow the fat Owl, watch him leave the House—if he did so—and then proceed to the awakening of Quelch. Pitching a chair or something down the stairs would infallibly bring Quelch on the scene, whether he had gone to bed or not; and it would leave no clue to Carter's hand in the matter, as he would be back in the dormitory, in bed, before Quelch arrived on the spot. But first of all he had to make sure that Bunter was outside the House.

That there was another fellow from another Form abroad in the hours of darkness, naturally did not occur to Carter.

He was certainly not thinking of Hoskins of the Shell—whom he hardly knew, and of whose missing musical masterpiece he knew nothing whatever.

When he heard a soft and stealthy footfall on the landing he had not the slightest doubt that it was Bunter's.

Whose else could it be, creeping in the darkness?

Carter stopped. He heard a panting breath from the gloom and knew that an unseen fellow had turned at the top of the staircase and was listening.

He hardly ventured to breathe! He had no doubt—he never dreamed of doubting—that this was Bunter; and if Bunter took the alarm, the game was up—the fat junior would scuttle back to his dormitory like a fat rabbit to its burrow.

For a long minute Carter stood, anxious.

Then, to his relief, he heard faint sounds from the stairs, which showed that the fellow ahead of him was going down!

All was well!

With redoubled caution he followed.

Feeling his way by the polished oak banisters, he trod on tiptoe, careful not to make the slightest sound.

But the fellow ahead of him was not quite so cautious. Relieved of his apprehensions, Claude Hoskins was pushing on his way; cautious, but not so cautious as the young rascal who was tracking him in the belief that he was Bunter.

On the lower landing Carter stopped again, listening intently! He rather expected Bunter to make for the Remove passage, and the box-room there, with its convenient window on the leads! As, in fact, Billy Bunter had actually done, hardly two minutes before!

But the fellow ahead of Carter did not do so! Hoskins had no business in the Remove passage!

Carter, to his surprise, picked up sounds which showed that the fellow ahead was descending the lower staircase.

Although, at that hour, everybody, or nearly everybody, was in bed, this was more risky than breaking out by an upper window. Carter wondered,



"A boy of your Form, Quelch!" said Mr. Hacker, in his most acid tones. "Perhaps you will ascertain why he is here—and has, apparently, been here all night!" Mr. Quelch stared at Carter like a man in a dream. "Carter!" he rapped. The junior slept on.

savagely, whether Bunter was, after all, heading for the pantry—in which case he had all his trouble for nothing! He wanted his rival for riches snaffled, but for something rather more serious than bagging a pie from the pantry.

He followed on cautiously, as before. Likely enough—he hoped, at least—the fat ass intended to climb out of a ground-floor window, or unfasten some back door—or perhaps sneak out by way of the Sixth Form lobby! Anyhow, he was going to track him, wherever he went!

At the foot of the big staircase he paused to listen again. He could see nothing—not a glimpse of the fellow he was tracking; but again he heard faint and stealthy sounds! To his amazement he realised that the breaker of bounds was heading for Masters' Passage.

It was true that there was a door on the quad, at the end of that passage. But it was fearfully risky to use it, if a beak happened to be up! Still, Bunter might prefer that risk to that of clambering out of a window! Bunter was no whale on climbing!

There was no gleam of light in Masters' Passage—not a single, solitary gleam from under any door. Neither was there a sound, nor a glimmer of light from the Common-room. Evidently all the masters had gone to bed.

Carter caught another stealthy footfall, and another! Then they stopped—nowhere near the outer door at the passage's end. The unseen one had stopped at a master's study!

Carter heard a door handle turn. In renewed amazement he realised that the breaker of bounds was entering a beak's study!

Evidently—to Carter—Bunter's game was to drop from a master's study window to the quad—quite an easy mode of egress, if a fellow had the

nerve to use a master's study as a way out!

A door opened quietly, and shut as quietly! The breaker of bounds had gone into a study!

It was Mr. Hacker's study that he had entered.

Outside that door, Carter stood still—waiting!

Still in the firm and fixed belief that he had been tracking Bunter, he had no doubt that, in those moments, the fat Owl was clambering out of Hacker's window—and he gave him time to get on with it, and get through.

Listening intently, he could hear no sound of an opening window. Either Bunter was very stealthy and cautious, or he was already gone! But Carter was in no haste. He gave his victim plenty of time. He allowed five long minutes to elapse.

Then, and not till then, he put his hand to the door-handle, turned it, and opened the door of Hacker's study.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hoskins Knows How!

CLAUDE HOSKINS shut off his electric-torch.

He shut it off promptly.

The sound of the door-handle stirring was enough for Hoskins!

Instantly the study was dark.

There had only been a tiny gleam of light from a tiny pocket-torch in Hoskins' hand—but sufficient for him to search among the books and papers on Mr. Hacker's table for that priceless sheet of music.

Quite reassured, and nothing doubting that he was the only fellow up, apart from the fat Removite who had gone up the Remove passage, Hoskins had

arrived in his beak's study, shut the door after him, and started looking for that sheet of music-paper, on which were written symbols that looked like mad ants and insane centipedes, but were really crotchets and quavers, semi-quavers and demi-semi-quavers, sharps and flats, perfect fifths and diminished sevenths, and other things of a like musical nature.

He had brought the tiny torch with him, and he flashed it over the table—hoping that it would reveal that musical masterpiece.

But it did not!

There were Latin papers, there were all sorts of exercises, there were books, there were some newspapers—but there was nothing that looked like a procession of mad ants and insane centipedes!

Hoskins' music was not there!

That Hacker would be Vandal enough, Goth enough, Philistine enough, to destroy that priceless work, hardly occurred to Hoskins. Confiscated articles were generally handed back at the end of the term, if of any value.

Unfortunately, Horace Hacker did not know that Hoskins' musical works were of any value. He never even suspected that!

Never for a moment had it occurred to him that he had in his Form a greater musician than Beethoven, Handel, or Mozart. Never had he dreamed that a fellow in the Shell out-Wagnered Wagner, and out Korsakoffed Korsakoff!

Sad to relate, Hacker regarded that amazing contraption of perfect fifths and diminished sevenths as rubbish, and, as rubbish, he had chucked it into his wastepaper-basket!

Hoskins could have found it in a minute, by looking into the place which

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any other Greyfriars fellow could have told him was the proper place for it!

But Hoskins never thought of the wastepaper-basket.

He rooted anxiously over the table, silently and cautiously, but very thoroughly, and at the end of four or five minutes he had to realise that the masterpiece was not there!

Where had that unspeakable swab Hacker put it?

Locked it up in a drawer, perhaps! Desperate thoughts of smashing open a locked drawer flitted through Claude Hoskins' mind.

But they vanished suddenly at a sound from the door; Promptly he shut off the torch! He stood breathless.

The door was opening!

He was caught!

But was he?

Hoskins acted promptly.

Even as the door opened he ducked and dodged under the table.

Under the table he was out of sight, if the light came on—and he was, had he only known it, in close proximity to the missing masterpiece, for his elbow touched the wastepaper-basket as he crouched!

He tried to still his breathing!

If Hacker caught him there—

He had no doubt, of course, that it was Hacker! Who but Hacker would be coming to Hacker's study, between eleven o'clock and midnight? Why the master of the Shell had come down he could not guess; but he had not a vestige of doubt that it was Hacker!

He waited for the light to flash on!

But it did not come!

It was too dark in the study to see anything. For what mysterious reason Hacker entered without turning on the light had Hoskins guessing—but he was glad of it!

The draught along the floor told him that the door was still open. He heard a faint sound of soft footsteps crossing to the window. At the window was a pale gleam of starlight, between curtains partly drawn.

That glimmer was blocked by a form that stood and looked out of the window! Hoskins could discern that much.

He was lost in amazement!

Why Hacker came down at that hour, entered his study in the dark, and then stood staring out from the window into the quad was a mystery that no fellow could be expected to penetrate.

But there it was—amazing as it was, it was happening; and it gave Hoskins a chance to escape.

The figure at the window obviously did not know that he was in the study! If he stayed there without turning on the light for a few moments all was O.K. for Hoskins!

Silently Hoskins crept out from under the table and reached the open door. He was not thinking of further search for the missing music now, he was thinking only of getting away safe from Hacker.

In a matter of seconds he was in the doorway. The figure at the window had not stirred. He was quite unconscious of Claude Hoskins!

That was plain to Hoskins!

And—at the doorway—Claude stopped. His eyes gleamed. That swab Hacker had confiscated his priceless music—and shoved it somewhere where he could not find it! That swab Hacker had come down in the middle of the night and stopped his search for the missing music! That swab Hacker was going to be made to sit up for the same—as easy as falling off a form! Hoskins knew how!

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With great care and stealth Hoskins extracted the key from the inside of the door. He made no sound.

Equally soundlessly he inserted it in the outside of the lock!

Then suddenly he drew the door shut from the passage side and turned the key, with a sharp click!

He did not care if Hacker heard him now! Hacker could not see through a locked oak door!

From within the study came a startled exclamation!

Hoskins did not stay to listen to it!

He cut away!

A fellow who had locked his beak in his study could not get off the scene too quickly! Hoskins got off it very quickly indeed! He almost raced!

In about a minute he was back in the Shell dormitory!

Hobby's voice came from the gloom.

"That you, Claude?"

"It's me!" breathed Hoskins. He was tearing off trousers in great haste.

"Got it?"

"No! But I got Hacker!"

"Hacker?" gasped Hobson.

"The old goat came down, and never turned on the light—goodness knows why! He never saw me! I got out and locked him in!"

"Oh crikey!"

"He can rouse the House, or stay there till morning—blow him!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Claude Hoskins tumbled into bed.

"Oh jiminy!" said Hobson.

He was alarmed! Hoskins was amused! Neither of them dreamed that Mr. Hacker was fast asleep in bed, as he had been for the last hour—and that Arthur Carter of the Remove, locked in Hacker's study, was wondering dizzily who had locked him in, and why!

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bolster for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER breathed hard and deep.

He almost snorted with fury.

Bunter was at the door of the Remove box-room.

His plans were cut and dried. The rehearsal party had stopped him from using that mode of exit early in the evening. But the rehearsers were all fast asleep in the Remove dormitory now. There was nobody to stop Bunter!

All he had to do was to get into that box-room, clamber out of the window on to the leads, slide down the rain-pipe, and that would be that!

Why the box-room door did not open readily, as usual, to his fat hand Bunter did not realise at first. But he knew that it did not open! Then it dawned on him that the box-room was locked and the key gone.

He breathed fury.

That beast Bob Cherry had done this, of course! That beast had guessed why Bunter had interrupted the rehearsals of "Julius Caesar" in the box-room. Bunter saw it all! The rehearsers were gone—but unfortunately one of them had locked the box-room door and taken away the key, lest the fat Owl should seek egress that way after the rehearsal.

"Beast!" hissed Bunter.

There was no way out by way of the Remove box-room for the sportive Owl of the Remove!

With deep feelings, the fat junior tramped down the box-room stair again into the Remove passage.

He had to find some other way out! He disliked the idea of going farther downstairs, but there was no choice in

the matter now! The door of the Sixth Form lobby was his next resource.

Breathing wrath, the fat Owl crept away down the Remove passage again to the landing at the end.

He had almost reached the lower staircase when a sudden alarming sound startled his fat ears—the sound of somebody running up the stairs in the dark!

Bunter jumped.

He almost squeaked aloud in his surprise and alarm!

In the darkness he could see nothing, but he could hear distinctly the hurried footfalls on the stairs.

Of the proceedings of Hoskins and Carter that eventful night Bunter, of course, knew nothing! He had not the remotest idea that any fellow but himself was up!

That Carter had tracked Hoskins to Hacker's study in mistake for Bunter, that Hoskins had locked him in in mistake for Hacker, and that Hoskins was cutting back to his dormitory with more speed than caution, after that exploit, the fat Owl naturally could not guess.

All Bunter knew was that somebody was running up the lower stairs in the dark directly towards him.

Visions of frowning beaks, of Sixth Form prefects on the prowl for breakers of bounds, danced before Bunter's terrified mind.

He turned and fled.

He cut across the landing to the upper stairs and bolted up those stairs like a frightened rabbit.

On the dormitory landing he paused a second to listen. The footfalls were following him, coming up the upper staircase.

He bolted on.

Breathless, scared out of his fat wits in terror of feeling an official hand grasping his fat shoulder, Bunter scudded into the passage leading to the Remove dormitory.

The footfalls behind him followed no farther. They died away in the direction of the Shell dormitory! Hoskins had got home!

By the time Hoskins reached the Shell dorm Bunter reached the Remove dorm. He grabbed open the door and scuttled in.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter when he was safe inside, and he shut the door and cut across to his bed.

Bump!

Yell!

Bunter bumped into the bedstead in the dark. He stumbled and sat down. His startled howl echoed along the Remove dormitory.

Five or six fellows awoke! Three or four voices became audible.

"Who's that?"

"What's that row?"

"Is that Bunter?"

"That fat chump—"

Peter Todd sat up in bed, groped for a matchbox, and struck a match. The flicker revealed a fat, startled face and a pair of gleaming spectacles.

"Bunter!" howled Peter.

"Bunter, you blithering Owl!" hooted Bob Cherry.

"He woke up, after all!" chuckled the Bouncer. "How the dooce did he wake up? Has there been a thunder-clap?"

"By gum, I'll boot him all round the dorm!" exclaimed Peter.

"I—I say, you fellows, quiet!" gasped Bunter. "For goodness' sake quiet! They're after me! Oh crumbs!"

"Who's after you, you Owl?"

"A prefect, I think—it might be Quelch! He nearly got me on the stairs! Oh crumbs! He may be here any minute!" gasped Bunter.

Bunter kicked off his shoes. Without

waiting to remove anything else he plunged headlong into bed and drew the bedclothes over him. He was in terror every moment of the dormitory door opening, to reveal the sternly inquiring countenance of Mr. Quelch.

"Have you been out?" demanded Peter.

"Nunno! I—I couldn't get the box-room door open!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If it was you, Cherry, you beast—"

"Right on the nail, old fat man!" chuckled Bob.

"I say, Peter, put that light out, you idiot!" gasped Bunter, as Toddy ignited a candle-end. "I tell you they may be here any minute! I was chased up the stairs and across the landing!"

"Can't hear anybody coming!" said Smithy.

"He was after me! He must have spotted me somehow in the dark! I tell you he chased me up the stairs and across the landing! I—I think he missed me there and cut on towards the Shell dorm!" But if he comes here—"

"If he comes here he will see me bolstering you for breaking bounds after lights out!" said Peter Todd, getting out of bed.

"Beast! Will you be quiet?" hissed Bunter. "I shall be taken up before the Head if I'm spotted!"

"Well, why shouldn't you be?"

"Beast!"

Peter Todd picked up the bolster from his bed. He stepped towards Bunter, with the bolster in both hands.

The fat junior blinked at him in mingled wrath and apprehension. He did not want the bolster—and still less did he want to be spotted, if the prowler of the night came to the Remove dormitory looking for the breaker of bounds!

But as there was no sound outside the dormitory, it was evident that nobody was coming to the other fellows, and Peter got on with the good work!

Swipe!

"Ow! Oh, you beast—"

Swipe!

"Yaroooh!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

Peter had a heavy hand with a bolster! He swiped hard, and he swiped fast.

Billy Bunter wriggled and howled under his blankets, as the swipes descended.

"Leave off! Gerraway! Oh, you rotter! I'll punch your head, Toddy! Wow! Oh crikey! Will you stop it? Beast! Oh crumbs! Ow!"

"Give him a few more for me, Toddy!" called out Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows—wow! Ow! Wow!" roared Bunter.

Swipe, swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Oh! Ow! ow! Ooooooh!" howled Bunter.

"There!" gasped Toddy. "Feel like breaking bounds again, old fat ass? Feel like going on the tiles now? What?"

"Wow! Beast! Oh scissors!"

Peter ceased swiping at last. He was rather breathless, and a little tired. Bunter was more than a little tired.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed the Bounder suddenly. "That fat ass wasn't the only man up! Look!"

"Carter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Great pip!"

"Carter's gone!"

The Bounder had been the first to notice Carter's empty bed, in the flicker of the candle-light! But a dozen pairs of eyes were turned on it now. The Remove fellows stared at the empty bed. Carter was not in the dormitory. The bedclothes lay turned back, as he

had left them when he jumped out, to follow Bunter.

The Bounder chuckled.

"If a beak comes up here after Bunter, Carter's game is up!" he said. "You'd better be fast asleep if a beak blows in, Bunter."

"Ow! Wow! Yow!"

Peter blew out the candle and got back into bed.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Schemer's Luck!

ARTHUR CARTER stood in Mr. Hacker's study in the dark in a state of mingled rage and terror and astonishment that was quite unenviable.

Never had a young rascal been taken so completely by surprise.

He had not doubted for a moment that Bunter had got out by way of Hacker's study window. For what other reason could the breaker of bounds have come to Hacker's study at all?

Looking from the window into the starlit quad, he had had not the remotest suspicion that anyone was in the study with him.

Only the sudden shutting of the door and the clicking of the key in the outside of the lock apprised him of that fact—after the unseen one was gone!

He stood in dismay and rage.

Turning the door-handle only proved beyond doubt that the door was locked on the outside. He was a prisoner in Hacker's study.

Who had done this?

Bunter, of course! It could only have been Bunter—so far as Carter could see! The fat Owl had known that he was followed, and had deliberately trapped Carter in that study! It was the only explanation he could think of!

He stepped to the window again, and groped over the fastening. Then he was sure! The window was fastened on the inside! Nobody could have fastened the window on the inside after getting out. Bunter, therefore, had not, after all, got out of that window! He had been hiding in the study—to catch Carter! Carter had no doubt of it, after thinking it over for a few minutes. It seemed clear enough!

And where was Bunter now?

Gone out to see his bookie, or gone back to bed? He was hardly likely to go out, if he knew that Carter was up and after him. More likely gone back to bed!

A more pressing question was, what was Carter himself going to do?

He was a prisoner in the study! He would not be released until somebody opened the study door in the morning—unless he banged on the door, and woke up somebody to come and let him out sooner!

Had he been sure that Bunter was out of the House, Carter might have ventured on that desperate step. Whatever the outcome to himself, the breaker of bounds would have been spotted.

But he was not sure—in fact, he thought it very unlikely. Bunter must know that there was a risk, at least, of Carter making a row in Hacker's study, and waking up a beak! In such circumstances, even the fatuous Owl would never venture to carry on! No—he had gone back to bed! As, indeed, the fat Owl had done, though for different reasons from those imagined by Carter.

What was he going to do?

Bunter was safe—if he was back in the dormitory, there was no evidence that he had ever left it at all. Carter could not even say for certain that it was Bunter who had locked him in that study! He had seen no one!

For long minute after minute, the hapless schemer of the Remove thought it over and over.

The only conclusion to which he could come was that he could do nothing!

He was locked in that study; and he had to stay there. There was no way of egress but the window, which would only let him out of the House, and make matters worse.

He had to stay where he was! There was, perhaps, a remote chance of slipping out unseen, when someone unlocked the door in the morning! Remote as that chance was, it was all that was left to Carter.

In a state of bitter rage and fury, he had to make up his mind to it! He threw himself, at last, into Mr. Hacker's armchair—to sleep, if he could!

But it was not easy to sleep in the circumstances. What was he going to say when he was caught in the morning?

That he had spied on Bunter, and followed him, in the hope of betraying him? That was not exactly a story that any fellow could tell—especially as the fat Owl would promptly deny having left the dormitory at all!

Carter thought it over and over. The truth was useless to him, and he could not think of an untruth that would sound plausible.

He was still thinking it over, savagely and dismally, when midnight boomed out over Greyfriars. It was futile to keep on thinking over a problem that had no solution, and he shut his eyes and tried to sleep. But he was too alarmed and disturbed for slumber. After what seemed like a century to the wretched young rascal, he heard the stroke of one.

Then, at last, he nodded off.

Once asleep, he remained asleep. Hour after hour chimed from the clock-tower, unheard and unheeded.

The grey February dawn crept over the school at last; and another sound woke the echoes of Greyfriars; the clang of the rising-bell!

Carter did not hear it.

A fellow who had not gone to sleep till one o'clock in the morning was not easy to wake. He slept on.

The rising-bell ceased—unheard by Carter; and he did not hear the sounds of opening doors, and footsteps, and voices. Fast asleep in Mr. Hacker's armchair, he heard nothing. In the Remove dormitory, fellows turned out, and saw, with amazement, that Carter's bed was still empty—that Carter had been absent from the dormitory all night! Where he was, and what he was up to, they could not guess—and certainly did not dream of guessing that he was asleep in a Form-master's study.

Carter slept on—and did not wake at the sound of a surprised exclamation outside the door, and the click of a key in the lock.

Mr. Hacker had come down to his study, and was naturally surprised to find it locked on the outside.

Unlocking the door, and opening it, Mr. Hacker stepped in—and gave a jump, almost clear of the floor, in his astonishment at what he saw!

He stood almost petrified at the sight of a Remove junior in his armchair, half-dressed, and fast asleep!

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Hacker. Really, he could hardly believe his eyes!

He made a step towards Carter—then, pausing, he walked out of the study, returning a couple of minutes later with Mr. Quelch.

"A boy of your Form, Quelch!" said the Acid Drop, in his most acid tones.

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"Perhaps you will ascertain why he is here—he has, apparently, been here all night!"

Mr. Quelch stared at Carter like a man in a dream! Never had he been so astonished. And he was quite as angry as astonished.

"Carter!" he rapped.

Carter slept on.

The Remove master stepped to him, grasped him by the shoulder, and shook him vigorously.

Carter's eyes opened, and he stared round him.

"Oh!" he gasped.

He stood before the two masters, crimson.

"What does this mean, Carter?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly. "Why are you out of your dormitory? Mr. Hacker informs me that he found his study door locked, and you here. Explain yourself at once!"

"I—I—I—" gasped Carter.

"What have you done in my study?" asked Mr. Hacker bitterly. "What rascally prank have you played here, Carter?"

"Oh, nothing!" stammered Carter.

"I—I—I was locked in, sir!"

"I am aware that you were locked in, as I found you so," answered Mr. Hacker. "I require to know why you were here at all."

"Explain yourself at once, Carter!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I woke up in the night, sir!" stammered Carter. "I—I heard a noise, and came down to see—"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Hacker.

"If that is true, Carter, you should have done nothing of the kind," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "But someone else must have turned the key on you. Who was it?"

"I—I never saw anybody, sir. I—I heard a noise, and—and came down, and then suddenly the door was locked—"

"An utterly absurd story!" said Mr. Hacker. "Presumably you came here with others to play some reprehensible prank, and your associates played this trick on you. Is that the truth?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—"

"I leave you to deal with this boy, Mr. Quelch," said Mr. Hacker stiffly.

"I shall deal with this boy as he deserves, Mr. Hacker," answered the Remove master, with equal stiffness. "Follow me to my study, Carter!"

Carter almost limped after his Form-master to his study. In that apartment Mr. Quelch selected a cane.

"For what reason you left your dormitory during the night, Carter, I do not know," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "Your explanation is scarcely credible; but even if true, it does not alter the fact that you have broken dormitory bounds after lights-out, which is a very serious matter. I shall cane you very severely, Carter. Bend over that chair!"

The Remove did not see Carter again till prayers. Then they saw him wriggling like an eel.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Sticking Like Glue!

BILLY BUNTER was in the worst temper ever that morning.

Carter gave him black and bitter looks, which the fat Owl did not even notice in his preoccupation. Morning classes were a dismal and dreary worry to Bunter.

Owing to the mishaps of the night, the fat sportsman had not, after all, got out, and morning found him as far as ever from being on that wonderful horse, Crackerjack.

There was trouble with Quelch, too. Bunter was put on con, which, he reflected bitterly, was just his luck. Having been too busy about sporting matters the previous evening to have any time for prep, Bunter's construe was even worse than usual. It was always the worst in the Remove, but on this occasion even Sammy Bunter of the Second Form might have blushed for it.

Quelch, fortunately, did not know that Bunter had neglected prep in favour of racing matters. But he knew that Bunter had done no prep, and he rewarded him for the same with two hundred lines.

All this was very discouraging to a sportsman. In break Bunter was strongly tempted to chuck up the whole thing, and expend Carter's quid on tuck.

The temptation was strong, and it was not the kind of temptation that Bunter was accustomed to resist. But, wonderful to relate, he resisted it. Only a few more hours, and—if he succeeded in getting on—that quid would be turned into six quids—the beginning of a stream of quids and quids and quids, and then more and more quids! Really it was worth waiting for.

Bunter resolved to wait. There was, after all, yet time. Crackerjack was going to run in the two-thirty. Any time up to half-past two a sportsman could get on. It was a half-holiday that afternoon. A fellow could get out on a bike immediately after dinner. It was the last, last chance, but the game was not up yet!

The fat Owl settled his plans during third school.

After dinner Billy Bunter strolled into the quad in a careless, casual sort of way—a way so very careless, and so very casual, that it would have excited suspicion, even if he had not been suspected already.

The Famous Five, with grinning faces, strolled in the quad also, and, intensely to Bunter's annoyance, wherever he strolled, they strolled.

He walked under the elms, and they walked under the elms. He went to the school library, and they went to the school library. He rolled into the gym, and they walked after him. He went down to the gates, and down to the gates they went in his wake. He repaired to Big Side, where Wingate and his merry men were at games practice. The Famous Five displayed an equal interest in Sixth Form Soccer. He joined a group in the quad who were listening to Coker of the Fifth saying uncomplimentary things about his Form-master, Prout. Harry Wharton & Co. lent an ear to Coker just as long as Bunter did. Finally, the enraged and exasperated Owl rolled down to the bike-shed, and the bike-shed proved equally attractive to the Famous Five.

Then Bunter resorted to strategy. He could see that they suspected him and were watching him. Even Bunter could see what was as plain as the sun at noonday. Still, he was the fellow for strategy!

"I say, you fellows, come over to Cliff House with me?" asked Bunter casually.

"Just the thing!" agreed Bob Cherry.

"We've got footer practice later, but lots of time for a spin first."

"I say, though, I'd stick to footer practice if I were you," said Bunter eagerly. "You want to be in form for the Rookwood match, you know. Why not go down to games practice now?"

"And miss the pleasure of a spin with you?" asked Johnny Bull. "No fear!"

Bunter breathed hard.

"My tyre's punctured," he remarked. "I shall have to go and ask some fellow to lend me a jigger. You fellows get your machines out while I'm gone."

"Oh, borrow Carter's!" said Bob. "I hear that he lent you a quid, and I'm sure he would be equally pleased to lend you a jigger for the same reason."

"I shall have to ask Carter. I—I shall have to go and look for him."

"All right, we'll help you look for him."

"Don't trouble—"

"No trouble at all, old chap!"

Billy Bunter rolled out of the bike-shed with feelings that could hardly have been expressed in words. His only hope now was to dodge those brutes after starting on the spin. Strategy might yet do it.

Carter was found in the quad.

"I say, Carter—"

"Get out, you fat rotter!" snarled Carter.

"Eh? What's up?" asked Bunter. "I say, will you lend me your bike?"

Carter's expression changed. He did not need telling why Bunter wanted a bike.

"Oh, all right," he answered; "you can have it if you like!"

Billy Bunter blinked round at the Famous Five. They were grouped at a little distance while he spoke to Carter. But they were not looking at him; they were looking towards the football ground. If this was a chance, Bunter was not going to lose it. He scuttled back to the bike-shed as fast as his fat little legs could go.

There he took Carter's machine from the stand and wheeled it out. He gave an eager blink round through his big spectacles. Had those beasts forgotten him? It looked like it, for they were not on hand. Swiftly Bunter ran the jigger out, mounted, and pedalled away up the Courtfield road.

This was an unexpected stroke of luck! Really, it seemed too good to be true!

Alas! It was!

Five minutes later there was a merry jingle of bikes behind Bunter.

The Famous Five came up with a rush. They smiled cheerily on Bunter.

"Nearly missed you, old man," said Bob. "Why did you start without us after asking us to ride over to Cliff House with you?"

Bunter did not answer that question. As he was riding with his back to the direction of Cliff House School, and as the Famous Five had come after him, it was evidently not in that direction that they had thought of seeking him. They knew his intended destination as well as Bunter did. Indeed, he doubted whether they had really lost sight of him at all, as he had so happily supposed.

"Going the long way round, Bunter?" asked Johnny Bull affably. "We shall have to go through Oak Lane and down the towpath to get to Cliff House this way."

"A good spin while we're about it," said Frank Nugent. "We'll race you, if you like, Bunter, only we don't want a start."

Billy Bunter breathed fury as he turned into Oak Lane. On that lane were the gate and the fence of the Three Fishers. Bunter was heading for the gate; he had had enough of the fence already. But how he was to shake off those sticky beasts was a mystery.

"I—I say, you fellows, I'll race you, if you like," said Bunter suddenly, as the gate came into view. "I'll beat you to—Cliff House! Put it on!"

"Right-ho!"

Five cheery cyclists shot on—and one fat rider slowed down. Once more Bunter could hardly believe in his good luck. They shot onward past the gate of the Three Fishers.

Bunter slowed, and jumped off at that gate.

Then, with lightning speed, five cyclists whirled round and came whizzing back. They circled round Bunter and dismounted.

"Stopping for a rest, old fat man?" asked Bob.

"I—I—I got a—a puncture!" gasped Bunter. "You fellows keep on; I—I'll overtake you when—when I've mended it."

"My dear old bean, I'll mend it for you!" said Bob Cherry. "I'm rather a dab at mending punctures. Where is it? The tyres seem quite hard."

"Oh, I—I thought it was a puncture, but—but it isn't!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'll get on again. You fellows start."

"Oh, we'll wait for you!" said Harry Wharton.

"The waitfulness will be an esteemed pleasure!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Take your own time, my absurd and idiotic Bunter!"

And the Famous Five leaned on their jiggers and smiled at Bunter. He did not smile back. He glared.

"Look here, you beasts, you mind your own business!" yelled Bunter, giving up strategy at last as a bad job. "I don't want your company! Understand that? I'm fed-up with you! Get out, and leave a fellow alone!"

"You don't want our company?" asked Bob.

"No, I don't!"

"What a coincidence! We don't want yours, either!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we're sticking to you, all the same, old fat porpoise," grinned Bob—"sticking to you like glue till half-past two!"

"You'll be glad of it later!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "It's really horrid to be sacked, Bunter."

"The gladfulness will be terrific."

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here, I'm going in here, and you're jolly well not going to stop me—see?"

"Well, you may be right," remarked Bob, "but I've got quite a different opinion myself! My idea is that you're not. In fact, I think that if you don't get away from that gate, I'm going to boot you—like that!"

"Yarnoo!"

"I'll do the same," said Johnny Bull, "like that!"

"Yoo-hoop!"

"What about sitting him in the ditch again?" asked Nugent. "That did the trick all right when Smithy did it!"

"Good egg! Bag him!"

"Collar him!"

Billy Bunter rushed Carter's bike back into the middle of the lane, and remounted in hot haste. He did not want to sit in that ditch again. His experience in that ditch was one that no fellow could possibly want to repeat. He shot away on the bike.

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

H ALLO, everybody! Your Editor calling!

I feel that it is up to me this week, chums, to make some apology for having left out my little Chat this last week or two. Although I say it myself, I never realised this particular feature was so popular as it apparently is. As you know, I try to please everybody, and accordingly I have introduced new features, such as the "Greyfriars Guide," and the special Football Article, both of which seem to meet with everybody's approval. Well, as the saying is, one can't get a quart into a pint pot! Accordingly, something had to be "dropped" temporarily, to make room for the new features, and I decided that it would have to be my Chat. The result is, that I am in the black books of some of my readers. I therefore bow my head in humble apology, chums, for the omission. So much for that.

As well as receiving many letters, I very often get rung up on the phone. Only this morning a certain reader phoned me up to tell me that he disagreed with the answer to the puzzle that appeared in the "Greyfriars Guide"—issue of the MAGNET dated January 22nd, 1938—and which read as follows: "Two trains run from Courtfield to London and back each day. The first goes up at 60 m.p.h., and back at 30 m.p.h. The second does 45 m.p.h. in each direction. Which gets back first?" The answer was: "The second train would arrive first. Its average speed is 45 m.p.h., while the other train's is 40 m.p.h." For my chum's benefit, I will prove the correctness of the answer. Suppose, for instance, that the distance from Courtfield to London is 60 miles, the first train would take

one hour to do the outward journey, and two hours—travelling at 30 m.p.h.—to do the return journey, making three hours in all. 120 miles in three hours is therefore 40 m.p.h.—a slower speed than the second train, which travels at 45 m.p.h. in both directions. Got it now, chum?

Did you notice the chap with football on page 21? It only took 61 Bournville Cocoa Coupons to secure it, and it is full size and just the very thing you are requiring for match practice. There are lots of other gifts obtainable, too, and you can learn all about them in the 44-page Book of Gifts offered in return for the coupon in the Bournville advertisement. If you read carefully you will find that there is also a Free coupon included with the book.

Now for next Saturday's super story of Greyfriars.

"CARTER TAKES THE COUNT!"

By Frank Richards.

With all his cunning, Arthur Carter has failed, so far, to black Billy Bunter's character and redeem his own. But he's not given up hope, by any means! Next week, he plays the most despicable trick imaginable. Fortunately, however, just when it looks like being all UP for Bunter—No, to say more would give away the plot entirely, and this I don't want to do. Wait until next Saturday, chums, when you can read and enjoy this spanking fine story of Harry Wharton & Co.

YOUR EDITOR.

"After him!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Tally-ho!" yelled Bob.

There was a clatter of bikes behind Bunter. Puffing and blowing, the fat Owl put on desperate speed. He shot out of the lane into the Courtfield road again and whizzed on to the school. After him careered the Famous Five.

Arthur Carter, at the school gates, was looking up the road, wondering whether Bunter had at last got away with it and crossed the Rubicon, so to speak. He stared at the sight of the fat junior in frantic flight, with five laughing cyclists whizzing after him.

He gritted his teeth as he watched them coming. Only too clearly, Bunter had not got away with it. He was not yet on, and not likely to be on. The chums of the Remove had seen to that!

Many and various had been Billy Bunter's attempts to get going on the attractive career of an amateur black-guard. Every one of them had been nipped in the bud. Carter had given him all the help he wanted—in vain. There was going to be no blagging for Bunter.

It was a tired, breathless, and perspiring fat Owl that rolled into the bike-

shed and let Carter's jigger run where it liked there. The look that Billy Bunter gave the Famous Five as they followed him in was really blood-curdling.

Quite uncurdled, they smiled at him.

"Ripping race!" said Bob Cherry heartily. "I never thought you could put it on like that, Bunter!"

"Beast!"

"Coming down for a spot of games practice now?" asked Nugent.

"Rotter!"

"Taking a rest?" asked Harry Wharton. "All right! We'll sit down, too!"

"Swab!"

"Anything the matter, Bunter?" asked Johnny Bull. "You seem shirty about something!"

"Yah!"

Half-past two chimed from the clock-tower. Billy Bunter groaned.

The game was up. Crackerjack was running now. It was too late for a sportsman to get on. After all his efforts, Billy Bunter was still off. Carter's quid was still in his pocket, but the dazzling vision of boundless

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wealth had vanished—gone like a mirage, as, in fact, it was.

Billy Bunter groaned dismally. And the chums of the Remove, heartlessly unsympathetic, went down to games practice and left him to groan.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

The Founder of the Feast!

"ALSO ran?"
"Yes!"
"Not Crackerjack?"
"Yes!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Billy Bunter gave quite a jump.

Bunter, at the moment, was outside a study door in the Sixth Form passage. He was stooping outside that door; with his fat ear very near the keyhole.

Eavesdropping in the Sixth was rather a risky business. Even the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars would hardly have run the risk; but for a very important and urgent reason. Bunter was going into that study—but he wanted to make sure whether Carne of the Sixth was, at home first! If Carne of the Sixth was at home, Bunter's visit had to be postponed.

Bitter as Bunter's disappointment was at not getting on, he had rallied. For a long, long time that afternoon, the fat Owl had mourned, like Rachel, and could find no comfort. But he had thought it over now! Obviously—to Bunter—having lost one chance, the best thing that he could do was to look for another. A squint at Carne's racing paper would do the trick!

That prophetic genius, "Quick-Eye," could scarcely have exhausted his prophetic gifts on one tip. Probably there were others, just as good, for races at a later date! A squint at "Sporting Tips" would ascertain that fact! If the paper was in the study, and Carne of the Sixth was out of it, Bunter was going to get that squint—and act accordingly. He had manfully resisted the lure of the tuck-shop, and the quid was still in his pocket.

So he stooped and pressed a fat ear to the keyhole, to find out whether anybody was in the study—and the sound of voices within apprised him that there was! And what they were saying glued that fat ear to the keyhole! They were talking about Bunter's own selected winner, Crackerjack!

"But look here, Loder," went on Carne's voice, "are you sure? That man 'Quick-Eye' in 'Sporting Tips' ain't bad! He gave Crackerjack as a Special Snip! Dash it all, I put ten bob on him both ways!"

"My dear chap, here it is in the evening paper!" drawled Loder. "I've never thought much of that tipster 'Quick-Eye'—too jolly cocksure for me! I got the paper at Courtfield, to see. Here you are—Bonny Boy, Trawler, Spoofer's Pride, the first three—six more ran—one of them Crackerjack!"

"Also ran! My hat!"

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Bunter.

He waited to hear no more!

The study was not empty; but if it had been, it would not have attracted Bunter now! He no longer desired a squint at Carne's sporting paper!

Bunter had had no doubt that Crackerjack was going to win! Had not "Quick-Eye," the expert tipster, said so? Instead of which, he had lost! He figured among the "also runs." "Quick-Eye," evidently, was not so quick-eyed as he supposed—he had got it wrong, as racing experts so often do!

Bunter rolled away down the passage. He had heard enough—more than enough! In his inside pocket was a quid, which he had not succeeded in getting on Crackerjack! Had he succeeded, that quid would not, as Bunter had fondly hoped, have produced quids and quids and quids and quids! It would have been gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream! Instead of laying the foundation of a fortune, the fat sportsman of the Remove would only have chucked away a pound, with the risk of getting sacked over and above!

Billy Bunter had had a lot of disappointments and discouragements, and he had rallied round from all of them! But he did not rally from this!

Even on Bunter's remarkable intelligence, it dawned that a racing tipster was not a reliable guide to fortune!

If the stars in their courses had fought against Bunter getting that quid on Crackerjack, they had done him a good turn—for he still had the quid, which certainly he would not have had if he had got it on Crackerjack!

That was a comfort!

There was, so to speak, balm in Gilead! Bunter was not going to make a fortune—and Carter was not going to see him sacked for blagging—but he still had a quid; and no longer had any reason for resisting the lure of the tuck-shop!

To that attractive establishment Bunter immediately bent his steps!

It was tea-time, and the Famous Five had come in, after games practice, for supplies for tea. They smiled as Bunter rolled in. They smiled still more when

the Owl produced a pound note, and proceeded to order foodstuffs in quite a reckless way. Bunter's pound notes were limited in number—limited, in fact, to the one he had borrowed from his kind relation, Carter! So this looked as if the fat sportsman had abandoned blagging in favour of guzzling!

Carter was in the tuckshop, and he, too, looked at Bunter—but without smiling! What he saw did not make him disposed to smile!

His pound note was going, but not, evidently, on the races! The net outcome of his scheming was, that he was standing the fat Owl a free feed—with his whopping from Quelch thrown in as a make-weight! Carter did not feel in the least like smiling!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, old fat man!" chorled Bob Cherry. "Blowing it on tuck after all?"

Bunter blinked round at the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, have some of these tarts!" he said hospitably. "I've got lots! I've got a whole quid, you know! I say, that senior man Carne is a silly ass, to take any notice of what those rotten racing tipsters say in those rotten racing papers! I've just heard that his horse has lost! He, he, he! Some fellows are awful fools, ain't they?"

"They are!" grinned Bob. "They is! Especially when they're named Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Catch me playing the fool like that!" said Bunter. "Too much sense, I hope! Besides, it's not the thing—it's not done, you know! My advice to you fellows is, to steer quite clear of that sort of thing! You'll only lose your money, you can take it from me."

"Oh, my hat!"

"But have some of these tarts!" said the fat Owl. "I've got lots! Do have some! They're good, I can tell you."

"Shove one over to Carter!" grinned Bob. "Let Carter have a whack! He's the founder of the feast, you know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, Carter, have a tart?"

But Arthur Carter did not answer, and he did not stay for a tart! He left the tuckshop, scowling—leaving the Famous Five chuckling, and Billy Bunter scoffing jam tarts.

THE END

(The next yarn in this grand series is better than ever. Note the title: "CARTER TAKES THE COUNT!" Order your copy of the MAGNET to-day, chums!)

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HELPING THE HEAD!

Another Rollicking Instalment of
"THE HUNTING HEADMASTER!"

By DICKY NUGENT

On the morning after the comical incident in the jim, Jack Jolly & Co. duly kept their promise to give the Head a real lesson in riding on a real, live horse.

On the previous day, Doctor Birchmell had been all at sixes and sevens; but now he was dressed-up to the nines. He wore white riding-breeches, top-boots, and his usual scholastic gown. He had evidently decided to save up his topper for the day of the hunt, for he still wore his workaday mortar-board.

Altogether, he looked a bit of a freak. But, as Frank Fearless remarked, he had never looked anything else, so there was nothing surprising about that!

The chums of the Fourth fancied they could detect a slite air of anxiety about him, as they walked down the lane with him to Muggleton, and when they reached Jobbs' Livery Stables, where they were hiring the horse, their suspicions became a certainty. The Head had one horse after another brought to him before he could find one that was docile enough. A meek swish of the tail was sufficient to scare him.

"Take this ferocious beast away!" he cried, time after time. "I want a horse that is really

quiet and inoffensive—not a fiery, untamed steed like this!"

Mr. Jobbs, the owner of the livery stables, began to turn quite sarcastic.

"If you want something really docile to ride on, sir," he said, "why not give up the idea of a horse and hire a sheep instead?"

"Bah!" retorted Doctor Birchmell; and Mr. Jobbs shrugged and walked off to fetch yet another of his mounts.

At last, however, the Head found one to his liking. It was an old cabhorse with neck neeze and bony ribs, and Jack Jolly & Co. sniffed indignantly when they saw it. But the Head gave a whinny of pleasure.

"Aha! This is the mare I've been waiting for!" he cried. "I can tell at a glance that she'll obey every order from the saddle—and at the same time there's a touch of class about her that makes a strong appeal to a shrewd judge of horsemanship like myself."

"True enough, sir," grinned Mr. Jobbs. "That's exactly what the catmeat man remarked about her this morning!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, rats!" grunted the Head. And he stalked out of the stables in high dudgeon, the

grinning Fourth Formers following him, leading the cabhorse with them. They adjured to a field near the stables before Doctor Birchmell venerated to mount his hired steed.

As they did so, a St. Sam's junior, who had been waiting behind a tree at the side of the road, joined stealthily in the procession. If Jack Jolly & Co. had turned



round, they would have reckoned Snarler; but they failed to do so, and Snarler manfully drew near them without being noticed.

There was a gloating grin on the face of the cadd of the Fourth—and a mysterious-looking tin in his hand.

HARRY WHARTON CALLING!

The first bouts in the Great Remove Boxing Championship have been fought, and in another column Vernon-Smith gives you a brief account of them and explains the present position. Next week, if things go according to programme, the air will be cleared considerably and we shall know who's who and what's what and be able perhaps to make a shrewd guess at the name of the probable champion.

Meanwhile, another topic is beginning to loom in sporting discussions at Greyfriars—the annual cross-country run. This hardy annual is run as an open handicap and as the handicapping is done by that keen judge of athletics, Mr. Lascelles, every entrant from the loftiest senior down to the

earthly against North and (3) that Coker is going all out for the event. About the first two I am unable to give an authoritative opinion, but Coker strikes me as a very probable winner if he can reproduce the form I saw him display near Friardale this week.

He happened to steer his motor-bike by accident through an open gateway into a farmyard crowded with chickens and the farmer came after him with a shotgun. Coker left his machine temporarily where it had crashed in the farmyard, and I don't think I am exaggerating when I tell you that he streaked out of that farmyard at a good thirty miles an hour!

But perhaps he will be unable to achieve that dizzy speed on the day of the race! More Greyfriars tit-bits next week, chums! —HARRY WHARTON.

"Ha, ha!" chuckled Snarler to himself. "Wouldn't the Head be wild if he knew that this tin of itching-powder was going to be emptied on his horse's back just underneath the saddle? I only hope nobody looks round before I do the despatch deed!"

The cadd of the Fourth was carrying out the threat he had made to have his own back on the

face, Snarler peered out from the hedge.

Jack Jolly & Co. were holding the horse, ready for the Head to mount it. Jolly himself was holding its head and Fearless held its tail, while Merry and Bright each had one stirrup. As Snarler watched, he saw Doctor Birchmell put one foot into Merry's stirrup and swing himself up into the saddle. He manfully it very well, too, except that he swung his free leg rather wide and caught Bright a nasty biff on the chin with his foot.

Clonk! "Yaroooo!" shrieked Bright, dropping his stirrup and dancing about like a cat on hot bricks.

"Bright, you really should be more careful!" cried the Head. "Fancy dropping the stirrup just when I wanted it! Why, you mite have made me hurt myself!"

"I suggest that you stop your song and dance act at once," said the Head severely. "Then perhaps we can get on with the washing—or, as the vulgar mite put it, proceed with our equestrian rehearsal!"

"Shall I load the mare, sir?" asked Jolly. "Thanks, if you will, Jolly! I must say that this mare is just the animal to give confidence to one who has been too long absent from the saddle. She is as steady as a rock and—Ow! Wow! What the merry dickens!"

Doctor Birchmell broke off with a gasp of dismay. The mare, which had seemed as steady as a rock when he had started talking, had become as wobbly as a jelly by the time he finished! Its back started rippling like a corkscrew, its legs shook like aspirin leaves and its head began to go round in circles.

Snarler's itching-powder had begun to do its deadly work! But the Head and his helpers, of course, knew nothing of this. The only thing they could think was

that the mare was going to have a fit.

"You'd better dismount, sir, while you're safe!" cried Jack Jolly. But that was more easily said than done. Before the Head could take even one foot out of the stirrup, the maddened mare had broken away from the chums of the Fourth. Then it started doing stunts that would have made it impossible for the cleverest circus rider to dismount in safety—let alone a meek novice like the Head.

First it ran round in circles, trying to catch its own tail. Then it galloped up and down with its back wobbling wildly in all directions. Then it stopped and stood on three legs and made frantic efforts to scratch its back with the fourth.

Frenzied howls of fear rang out from the Head, as he was carried through this weird and wonderful performance.

"Help! Reskew! Save me!" he shrieked. But it was rather a tall order to save a man from a mount that was careering round in this freakish fashion. Jack Jolly & Co. soon found that the task was beyond them.

Fortunately, the problem was eventually solved by the horse itself. It suddenly reared up on its hind legs and started spinning round like a top, and the Head, after clinging to its neck for a few turns, was flung off at a tangent and landed in a heap on the turf!

Bum! "Ow-ow-ow-ow!" "Hut, sir!" asked Jack Jolly, as he and his pals raced to the rescue.

"Ow! Yes! Groooo!" I've sprained my spine and bruised my brane-box and shattered my shoulder and fractured my foot and—Ow! Here comes that beastly animal again!"

And the Head jumped to his feet and scurried out of the way of the oncoming mare with remarkable agility for one who was suffering from all those injuries.

The Head wore a very worried frown, as he watched the frantick antics of the animal he had tried to ride.

"It's a beastly nuisance!" he groaned. "I simply must turn out with the County Hunt if it can possibly be managed. Yet how am I to do so if I can't ride?" Jack Jolly gave a sudden wissle.

"I've got a brane-wave, sir! Suppose I turn up instead of you!" "Wh-a-a-at?"

"I can easily do it, sir," said the kaptin of the Fourth eagerly. "I can put on a false beard and paint a lot of wrinkles on my face and build up my nose with putty. It's the easiest thing in the world to imitate a funny face like yours, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Merry and Bright and Fearless.

Doctor Birchmell turned red. "If you're trying to be funny, Jolly—"

"Not a bit of it, sir!" said Jolly cheerfully. "I can dress myself up

so that you and I will look as like as two peas. Mounted on horseback, nobody will twig that I'm not the right height. And after the hunt, of course, I can slip away and you can join the party instead—just as though you've been with them all the time!"

The Head's eyes gleamed. "By Jove! That's rather a ripping wheeze, Jolly, when you put it like that! Do you really think you can manly it?"

"Certain, sir!" "Then it's a go!" "Mum's the word, boys! Now we'll go back and tell Mr. Jobbs about the peculiar behaviour of his horse."

Doctor Birchmell led the way back to the stables, grinning happily once more.

And as he and his helpers marched away, Snarler, who had heard every word, grinned even more happily in his hiding-place behind the hedge.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he chortled. "Now that I know the old fogey's next move, I'm going to take a hand in it. This is going to be the joke of the term by the time I've finished! Ha, ha, ha!"

And Snarler returned to St. Sam's, farly hugging himself!

(Look out for more fun and frolic in next week's sparkling instalment!)

HE MUST HAVE LOST THE THREAD!

Before visiting the Sixth Form Debating Society recently, we were told that Gwynne had a remarkable gift for stringing words together.

So we were hardly surprised to find that he soon got himself tied up in knots.

GOSSIP FROM THE PREFECTS' ROOM

The prefects are to discuss a resolution "That the asphalt should be abolished."

The rumour that Loder will propose an addendum "...and replaced by the cat-o'-nine-tails" is stated to be premature.

Mind you, there was about as much science in it as there would be in a boxing-match between a couple of wild elephants, but those who enjoy a good stand-up scrap with plenty of hard slogging and no quarter given, had a treat.

Bulstrode, who displayed odd flashes of skill, beat his weightier opponent on points.

Squiff and Brown were next in the ring, and their display was just as refined as their predecessors' had been rough. Brown got the verdict, but it must have been by a very narrow margin of points.

Penfold and Delarey followed, and soon waded in on whirlwind lines. This was a rattling good fight, with science and hard-hitting both featured prominently, and both boxers out for blood.

At the end of the second round, they floored each other simultaneously and honours were even. But Penfold took command in the third session and started punishing the Afrikaner so severely that Larry stepped in and stopped the fight, awarding the palm to Penfold.

The first knock-out of the evening was delivered by

necessary. If it had not been given, the crowd would have been on their feet and yelling in the first minute!

COMPETITION BOUTS ALL THRILLS NO FRILLS!

Says H. VERNON-SMITH

If anyone tells you that I went to watch the preliminary bouts for the Remove boxing championship, wearing a hard, cynical grin, and came away dancing with enthusiasm and with my face illuminated with a new-born respect for young boxers, don't believe 'em—because I'm not that kind of a guy!

But if I did happen to be that kind of a guy, I assure you with my hand over my heart that nothing I have seen since I came to Greyfriars would have worked that change in me more effectively.

The fact is, my dear sportsmen, those preliminary bouts were an eye-opener to all those among the spectators who know anything about the glove game. In brief, it was a case of all thrills and no frills!

Before the evening started with the first 3-round scrap between Bolsover major and Bulstrode, Larry Lascelles

warned the crowd that no applause was allowed except at the end of each round, and the warning proved very

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GREYFRIARS FROM FRESH ANGLES

2. My Greyfriars Patients.

By DR. PILLBURY

The Greyfriars known to me is a particularly human school, made up of all sorts and conditions of boys.

There are some who want to go straight into the sanatorium for a finger-ache, and others who have to be carried in under violent protest even if they are dangerously ill!

Let me say this about them at once: a fitter crowd of youngsters I can never hope to find anywhere! The powers that be at Greyfriars believe in every boy getting his due share of fresh air and healthy exercise, and the result is a very high standard of general fitness.

Of course, there are exceptions. One young fellow named Bunter attains a very low standard of general fitness, but makes up for it by reaching a most exceptionally high standard of general FATNESS. Perhaps this is why I see more of him than of any other boy in the school. Bunter is apt to be taken ill at regular intervals. Incidentally, those intervals usually coincide with examinations!

On one occasion when I was called in to attend Bunter, I found him with a face that was deadly white and a tongue that was covered in spots. Only after a lengthy examination did I discover that the white on his face was French chalk, and that the spots on his tongue were splashes of paint!

But Bunter is a law unto himself, and there is nobody else like him in the school—luckily for Greyfriars!

Most of my calls at the school arise out of minor accidents on the playing fields or occurring in the course of some foolhardy prank or jape. How many times I have had to attend boys for broken bones or fractures following on a ride down the banisters or a climb up the School House wall to a dormitory I really cannot say. Hundreds at least, I imagine!

A high-spirited crowd, these Greyfriars boys, I assure you. And I would not have them otherwise!

Russell, the victim being Peter Todd. I am told that Todd hit the boards so hard that the impact dislodged several bricks from one of the School House chimneys. This is what is commonly known as baloney, but it was certainly a genuine knock-out.

Redwing and Linley followed and gave a fine clean-out display of the noble art. They were so close together on points at the finish that Larry took the unusual step of declaring them both winners, and passing them on to the next stage.

Cherry and Wharton received byes in the first stage, and the only fight left was that between Johnny Bull and your humble. Modesty forbids that I should describe in graphic detail what I did to Bull. I won by a knock-out in the second round, and we'll leave it at that.

So now we are left with the following: Cherry, Wharton, Russell, Brown, Bulstrode, Redwing, Penfold, Linley, and myself.

Who will be the winner out of this little lot?

I'll give you one guess as to what I think myself!

