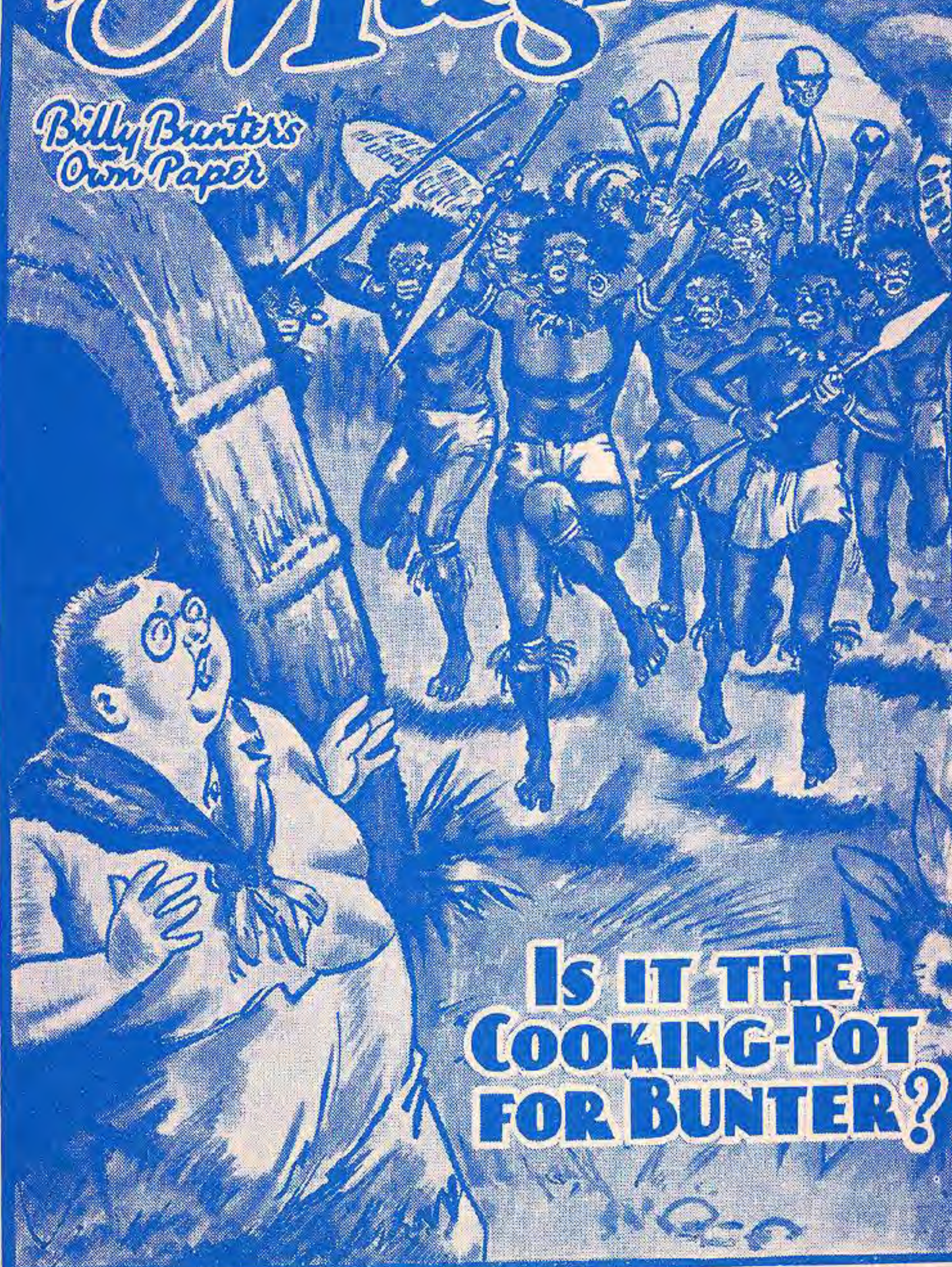


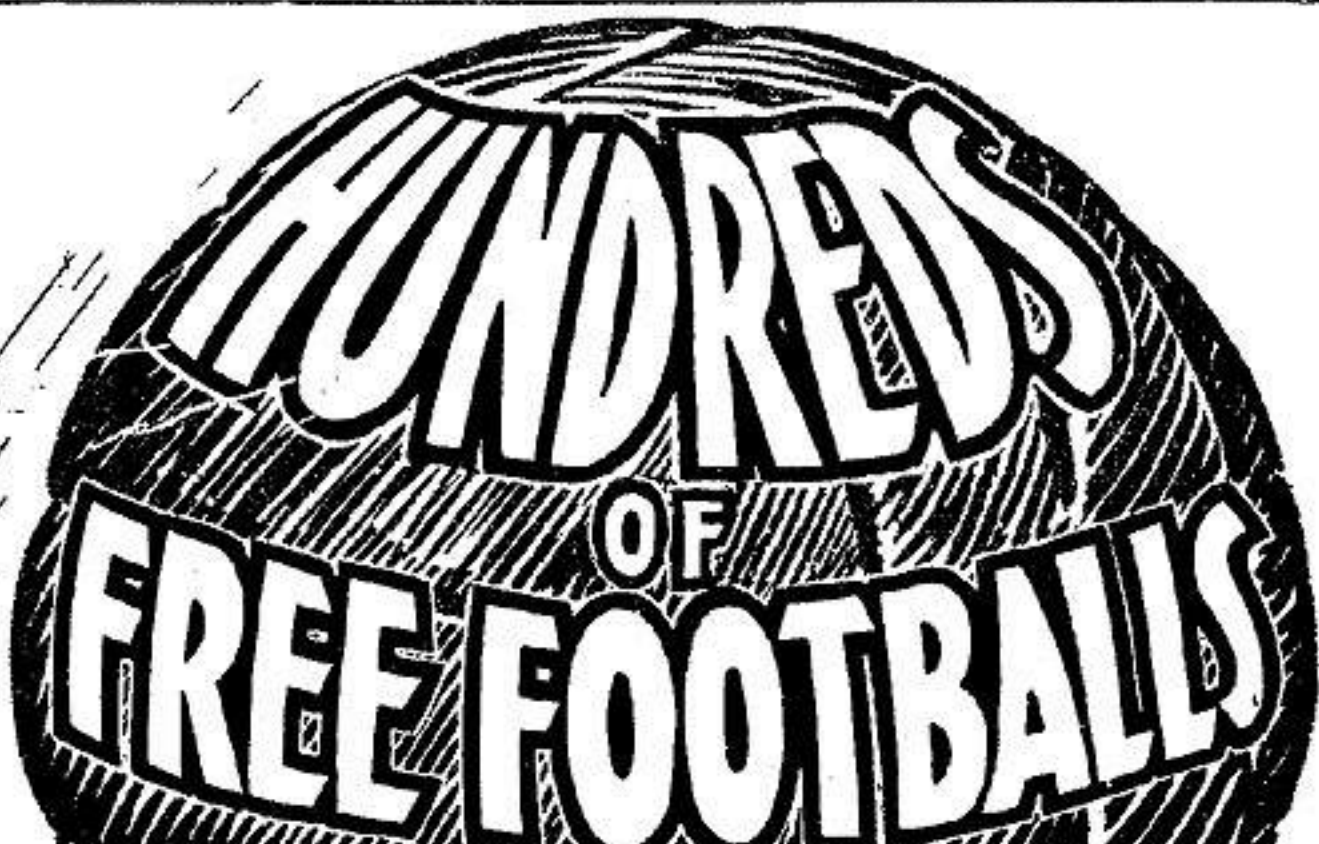
OVER 2,000 PRIZES AWARDED IN OUR GREAT "ARMAMENTS" STAMPS RACE SEE
INSIDE!

The Magnet^{2D}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**IS IT THE
COOKING-POT
FOR BUNTER?**

ARE YOU IN OUR GRAND COLLECTING SCHEME?**SHOOT!**

for Scoring "Goals"
with FOOTER-STAMPS

ARE you collecting FOOTER-STAMPS? They're all the rage, and you really must be in this wonderful scheme! This is what to do: Every week in MAGNET we are giving "Footer-Stamps"—pictures of six different actions on the football field. The object of this great stamp-game being to score as many "goals" as possible in time for the second prize-giving next week, when up to 300 footballs are to be awarded.

★ **TO SCORE A "GOAL"** you must collect a complete set of six stamps (they're numbered 1 to 6), made up of the following movements: **KICK-OFF—DRIBBLE—TACKLE—HEADER—SHOT—GOAL.**

Easy, isn't it? The more stamps you collect the more "goals" you can score. (Note that the "goal" stamp by itself does NOT count as a "goal"; you must get a set of the stamps 1 to 6 each time.)

We give ten more stamps this week. Cut them out and try to score a "goal" with them, then keep all your stamps until you get some more in our next issue.

★ If you want to score some other quick "goals" to swell your total, remember that "Footer-Stamps" are also appearing in "Gem" and "Modern Boy" each week.

Keep at it, pals, because the September contest will close next week, and we shall then ask you how many "goals" you have scored. Up to 300 of the FREE Footballs are going to be awarded then—for readers scoring the highest number of "goals" with "Footer-Stamps" for the month. More footballs will be given in the next month.

Don't send any stamps until we tell you how and where next week, when the closing date will be announced.

RULES: Up to 300 Footballs will be awarded in the September contest to readers declaring and sending in the largest number of "goals" scored with "Footer-Stamps." The Editor may extend or amend the prize list in case of too many ties.

Each "goal" must consist of a set of "Footer-Stamps" Nos. 1 to 6, inclusive. All claims for prizes to be made on the proper coupon (to be given next week.) No allowance made for any coupon or stamps mutilated or lost or delayed in the post or otherwise. No correspondence! No one connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout.

(N.B.—"Footer Stamps" may also be collected from the following papers: GEM, MODERN BOY, BOY'S CINEMA, DETECTIVE WEEKLY, TRIUMPH, WILD WEST WEEKLY, THRILLER, SPORTS BUDGET, and CHAMPION.)

OVERSEAS READERS! You pals who are far away—you're in this great scheme also, and special awards will be given for the best scores from overseas readers. There will be a special closing date for you as well, of course!

TEN MORE
"FOOTER-STAMPS"
TO SAVE!



BIG CHIEF BUNTER! At Greyfriars School Billy Bunter is a mere nobody. Now he's the most important member of Lord Mauleverer's holiday party, bar none!

The CASTAWAYS of CANNIBAL ISLAND!

By FRANK RICHARDS



Harry Wharton & Co. entered the devil-house to find Billy Bunter sitting in his chair of state. On one side of the fat junior were dishes of fruits; on the other, supplies of cooling drinks. Bunter helped himself from them alternately and grinned.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

On The Doormat!

"THAT ass!"

"That chump!"

"That bloated bloater!"

"That fat freak!"

"That podgy, piffling porpoise!"

It was a hot day—fearfully hot! But the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove, seemed to have plenty of energy to expend in slanging.

They were slanging Billy Bunter. But it did not worry Bunter: he could not hear them.

They could hear Bunter! From a little distance came the sound of a deep, rumbling snore!

Billy Bunter was sleeping, in the blazing heat of the tropical day. When Bunter slept, he snored. When he snored, everybody within quite a wide radius was aware of the fact. For a long, long time that deep snore had rumbled on without cessation. Harry Wharton & Co. had the pleasure—or otherwise—of listening to it—and waiting until it pleased William George Bunter to awaken.

Which, judging by their remarks, had an exasperating effect on them.

But it could not be helped!

Billy Bunter, once the most inconsiderable member of the Greyfriars Remove, was a great man these days. As a rule, Billy Bunter's unimportance was unlimited. Now he was the most important member of the Greyfriars party in the South Seas, bar none!

Bunter was the goods. The other fellows were not even "also rans." In comparison with Bunter, they were simply nowhere.

Fellows who had booted him in the Remove passage at Greyfriars could not now venture to wake him up! They could not even approach him! They had to wait his lofty pleasure! They had to hang about till it pleased Billy Bunter to give them attention!

It was an extraordinary state of affairs. It was intensely irritating and exasperating! But there it was—and the Famous Five had to make the best of it. Never had they longed so intensely to boot Bunter! But Bunter was now far beyond the reach of bootings!

Lord Mauleverer, with his usual placidity, was taking it calmly. Mauly seemed urbanely amused. Harry Wharton & Co. were not amused. They were exasperated—and growing more and more exasperated.

Thrill-packed Southern Seas Adventures of HARRY WHARTON & CO., the World-Famous Chums of GREYFRIARS.

Burning sun blazed down on the Pacific Ocean and on the lonely island lost in the immense space of rolling blue water. Many thousands of miles lay between the Greyfriars fellows and home. Hundreds of miles lay between them and Mauly's island of Kalua-alua-lalua, where they had arrived to spend the holidays. Mr. McTab, on Kalua, was vainly awaiting their return from a

trip on the schooner Flamingo. The Flamingo lay at the bottom of the sea, and the Greyfriars party were castaways on an unknown and solitary island, of which they did not even know the name, if it had a name.

The Famous Five stood in a group, outside the largest building—the only large building—in the native village on the island beach. Lord Mauleverer sat in the shade of the high coral foundation on which the building was built, fanning himself gently with a palm leaf. His lordship was taking it calmly. It was Mauly's way to take things calmly.

Probably Mauly would have dozed off in the drowsy heat, had not the conversation of the other fellows kept him awake. But there was a lot of sameness in that conversation. It was all about Bunter—and all frightfully uncomplimentary.

"The howling ass!" said Harry Wharton for the umpteenth time.

"The blithering idiot!" said Bob Cherry.

"The cheeky beast!" growled Johnny Bull.

"The fat, frabjous fathead!" said Frank Nugent.

"The terrific and preposterous toad!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Lord Mauleverer smiled.

"Easy does it, you men!" he murmured. "What's the good of wastin' breath? We've got to wait!"

"Wait for that fat, frabjous, flopshous, foozling fathead, till he chooses to take notice of us!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Yaas! Bite on the jolly old bullet, you know!" yawned Mauly. "Bunter THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,596.

can't help bein a silly idiot! A leopard can't change his spots, or a jolly old Ethiopian his skin, so how can Bunter ever be anythin' but a silly idiot? What?"

Johnny Bull snorted.

He was, perhaps, the least patient member of the Famous Five, and his back was very considerably up.

"Well, I'm not waiting!" he bawled. "Look here, let's clear off and leave the fat chump to see to it, see?"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Better wait!" he said. "Mauly's right—Bunter can't help being a silly idiot and a cheeky ass! But as the matter stands, Bunter's top dog——"

"The fat ass!"

"The cheeky chump!"

"The frabjous cuckoo——"

The chorus recommenced. All the famous Co. had something to say about Billy Bunter, and they all said it, over and over again, with emphasis. And all the time that rumbling snore rolled from the building which had once been the devil-house of the island tribe, the home of O-O-loluo, the shark-god—and which was now the official residence of William George Bunter, the Big Chief!

There was the rub!

Billy Bunter was the Big Chief!

O-O-loluo, the shark-god, had commanded the natives of the island to obey Bunter as their chief—and they were doing exactly that!

The uncultured inhabitants of that solitary island had never even heard of ventriloquism! It never entered one fuzzy head that the awesome voice that proceeded from the jaws of the shark-god was produced by a fat ventriloquist who had often been kicked, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars School, for playing ventriloquial tricks!

At Greyfriars School Billy Bunter's ventriloquism had generally brought him more kicks than ha'pence! But on that savage island of the boundless Pacific it had turned up trumps!

Which was all to the good, if Billy Bunter had been anything but the fat and fatuous ass he was!

But Bunter, of course, was always Bunter—more Bunterish, so to speak, than ever, now that he had power in his fat hands.

The fat Owl's importance had got into his fat head! A few days ago, Bunter had been nobody! Now he was somebody—if not indeed everybody! And one of his chief desires, at present, was to let the other fellows know, quite distinctly, where they got off!

Hence their weary wait at the door—while the Big Chief slept and snored!

On the step of the coral foundation under the building stood Totototo, spear in hand, while Big Chief Bunter slept! Other natives, of whom there were some hundreds, did not venture to approach the building! The Big Chief did not like being disturbed!

"That frabjous, foozling, frumtious freak——" said Bob Cherry.

"That cheeky chump——"

"Look here, you men, you're repeatin' yourselves!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Sit down and take it calmly!"

"I'm fed up with this!" roared Johnny Bull. Between tropical heat, and wrath, and indignation, Johnny's face was crimson. "I'm going to root out that fat foozler."

"Hold on, fathead!" said Harry, hastily.

But Johnny was too angry to hold on. He tramped up the step of the coral platform towards the latticed doorway of the building.

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Immediately Totototo lifted his spear, and presented the point.

"You stop along that place, sar!" said the Kanaka. "Big-feller-Chief no likee wakee."

"Get out of the way, you cheeky nigger!" roared Johnny Bull.

"You no go along place belong Big-feller-Chief!" said Totototo. "You kill-dead close-up, s'pose you go along that place."

The exasperated Johnny made an angry stride forward. The native jerked back his arm, so evidently intending to thrust with the spear that Johnny, angry and excited as he was, jumped back. Really, there was no arguing with a lunging spear in a brawny brown hand.

Johnny's backward jump took him, unintentionally, off the edge of the coral platform. He crashed.

"Oh!" gasped Johnny as he went.

"Ow! Oh gad!" roared Lord Mauleverer, as he landed on the back of his lordship's neck.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

There was a cackle of laughter from Totototo. It was echoed from a score of natives, looking on from a distance.

Johnny Bull rolled off Mauleverer. His lordship sat up, gasping for breath, and rubbing the back of his head.

"You ass!" he gasped. "What did you jump on me for, you fathead?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Johnny Bull scrambled to his feet, his face redder than ever with wrath. He clenched his fists and made a jump back to the coral platform.

His friends grasped him in time, and jerked him away from it.

"Don't play the goat, old chap!" said Harry.

"Look here——" bawled Johnny.

"Chuck it!" said Bob Cherry. "Do you want that nigger to skewer you, you fathead? Chuck it!"

Johnny Bull, breathing fury, chucked it! The Greyfriars castaways were in no position to face trouble with the natives. There was only one rifle in the party, and only one cartridge left in that rifle. Indeed, it was only the fact that Big Chief Bunter had established peace that saved them from attack from the cannibal islanders.

It was a bitter pill to swallow; but the chums of the Remove had to get it down! They waited the lofty and lordly pleasure of Big Chief Bunter—and took it out in slanging!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Big-feller-Chief!

BILLY BUNTER grinned.

He sat up in his chair of state and grinned—an extensive grin that spread from one fat ear to the other.

Bunter was enjoying life these days!

Billy Bunter had always known, personally, that he was one of those fellows who are born to command—a natural leader of men. Nobody had ever acknowledged it before. Now, at last, it was acknowledged—if only by a tribe of benighted cannibals on a Pacific island.

During his days as Big Chief of the island, Bunter had made himself very comfortably at home in the devil-house.

He had been brought there a prisoner with the prospect of taking principal part in a cannibal feast! But he had almost forgotten that now! Matters had changed very much for the better.

Old Tomongo, the devil-doctor, had been kicked out at Bunter's order and banished to the bush. The wood-fire in which he had smoked human heads had been swept away—the heads had

disappeared! The filthy rushes that had covered the floor, stained with blood and smelling of bones, had been cleared off: the devil-house was newly swept and garnished.

Only O-O-loluo, the shark-god, looked the same as before—a huge shark's head carved in wood on human shoulders, mounted on a pedestal of coral blocks.

Bunter did not like the look of O-O-loluo, and would have been glad to get shut of him along with the rest; but O-O-loluo was too valuable to be parted with.

Bunter's amazing power over his subjects rested on the commands which he caused to issue from time to time from the jaws of the shark-god. Whenever Big Chief Bunter had a doubt about giving an order, he made that order come in the form of a command from O-O-loluo—after which, of course, there was no question of possible disobedience.

In the obtuse, superstitious belief of the natives O-O-loluo had unlimited powers. He could make good crops of yams and taro and coconuts if he liked—or he could destroy the harvests if ill-disposed. He could make fishing expeditions fortunate, or he could doom the fishermen to be eaten by sharks. He could give victory over other islanders—or he could doom the tribe to defeat. He could, if provoked, send fire to burn up the insides of unfortunate victims. Every savage on the island courted his favour, and feared his power. When O-O-loluo spoke, his word was law!

And the Greyfriars ventriloquist could make him speak whenever he liked!

So Bunter was not likely to part with him, little as he liked the aspect of his wide-open jaws and glistening eyes. So long as he was on the island Bunter was going to dwell in the devil-house with O-O-loluo at hand to see him through!

The fat junior had forgotten, or almost forgotten, the awful state of funk he had been in when first he entered that devil-house. He was full of confidence now—simply packed with beans!

Having finished his lengthy nap, Bunter turned off his sleeping-mat, and exerted himself to the extent of rolling to his chair of state and disposing his fat limbs therein.

On one side of the chair was a stool bearing dishes of tropical fruits. On the other side was another stool with supplies of cooling drinks. Billy Bunter helped himself from them alternately; and grinned at the sound of an angry murmur of voices outside.

He was quite aware that the castaways were fearfully shirty! He did not mind in the least! In fact the more shirty they were the more Bunter was amused.

Only a few days ago he had been booted for letting down the signal-fire by the stockade on the other side of the island. Now he was monarch of all he surveyed.

Indeed, he was lord of life and death; for there was no doubt that at his command the savages would have swarmed to attack the castaways as they had done under the rule of their former chief.

Not, of course, that Bunter had the remotest idea of ever giving such a command! Bunter was a kind-hearted fellow! He was going to be kind to the castaways—a kind and generous protector! All they had to do was to acknowledge his importance and understand quite clearly where they got off!

He considered it probable that that

long and weary wait outside the devil-house had been a bit of a lesson to them!

However, he was not going to keep them waiting much longer! Bunter could be considerate!

"Totototo!" he squeaked.

The big, brawny islander put his fuzzy head in at the door. That fuzzy head was bowed with great respect to the fat chief! Nobody, looking at Totototo then, would have guessed that, only a week ago, he had captured Bunter in the bush and driven him in at the spear-point with the intention of turning him into "long-pig" at a cannibal feast!

Totototo was now the most loyal of Big Chief Bunter's subjects! He had reason to be, for the shark-god had promised him enormous reward in shell-money and "piecee gold-money" if he served Bunter faithfully!

Totototo was looking forward to that munificent reward! It was not likely to arrive very soon—about as soon, in fact, as Billy Bunter's own celebrated postal order!

"Yessar!" said Totototo.

"You tell that white feller he come along this place!" said Bunter airily. "Me see um, eye belong me."

"Yessar!"

Totototo stepped out again, went to the edge of the coral platform, and made a gesture to the Greyfriars fellows. His manner was friendly enough; but very different from his respectful manner to Bunter.

In Toto's eyes, the Greyfriars fellows were of no account whatever except from the circumstance that it pleased the Big-feller-Chief to take notice of them! Which was quite a startling change from the former position of the Famous Five and the Owl of the Remove.

"Big Chief likee see you feller!" said Toto carelessly. "You come along this place along see Big-feller-Chief!"

Lord Mauleverer rose to his feet. His lordship was still cheery and placid, tolerantly amused by Bunter's fatuous antics.

"Come on, you men!" yawned Mauly. "His Majesty grants a jolly old royal audience!"

"The cheeky fat freak!" hissed Johnny Bull.

"The pernicious porpoise!" grunted Bob Cherry.

"The preposterous toad!" said Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yaas—but we've had all that!" Mauleverer pointed out. "You fellows will be gettin' a crick in the neck, if you keep on slanging the old fat bean at that rate! Take it smilin'."

"You feller come?" called out Totototo. "Big-feller-Chief no likee wait along common feller."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Come on," he said. "We've got to talk to the fat fool, though goodness knows whether it will be any use! Keep your tempers, you fellows."

And the juniors mounted the coral step and walked into the devil-house, following Totototo. The latter took up his position beside Bunter's chair, his hand on his spear, resting the butt on the coral floor. His brown, tattooed face was cheery and good-tempered; but the juniors did not need telling that he was ready to handle that spear at a word from Big Chief Bunter; Bunter was, undoubtedly, the "goods"; and disagreeable as that fact was, they had to bite on it, as Mauly sagely advised.

Bunter gave them a nod—friendly but lofty.

"I say, you fellows, you can sit down!" he said.

"Can we—really?" breathed Johnny Bull. "Wouldn't it be rather a cheek to sit down in your presence, Bunter?"

This was bitter sarcasm! But it was quite wasted on Bunter.

"That's all right, as I've given you leave," answered the fat Owl, calmly—a reply that seemed to bring Johnny Bull to the verge of choking.

"I've had to keep you fellows waiting!" went on Bunter, blinking at the juniors through his big 'spectacles. "Sorry, and all that—but you can hardly expect to barge in on me just when you choose! You see that?"

"You cheeky chump—" began Bob Cherry.

Bunter raised a fat hand.

"That will do, Cherry!" he said. "No cheek! Do you fancy you're in the Remove passage at Greyfriars?"

"If we were," said Bob, in concentrated tones, "I'd boot you from one

The juniors had had a few samples of it, already. But really, by this time, Billy Bunter seemed in danger of sharing the fate of the frog in the fable, who swelled and swelled and finally burst!

However, the captain of the Greyfriars Remove contrived to keep his temper. Getting away from that solitary island depended on Bunter. But that was not the only consideration. Nobody but Bunter believed that his position as chief of the island tribe was secure.

He had gained that position by trickery, imposing on the benighted ignorance of the savages. So far, all seemed to be going well; but the savages were treacherous and unreliable, and their mood might change. And if that happened, there was only one short brief step for the Big Chief—from the chieftainship to the cooking pots!

Billy Bunter did not realise it in the least; but it was clear enough to the other fellows. For the fatuous fat Owl's own sake, Wharton tried to be as patient as he could.

"We want to get away from this island, Bunter!" he said quietly. "We've been here more than a couple of weeks now, and there's been no sign of a ship. It doesn't seem likely that we shall spot a sail. Now that we're friendly with the natives, we've got a chance of getting clear."

"Blessed if I can see how," said Bunter, blinking at him. "You broke up the raft to build that stockade—not that you need a stockade, with me to protect you. Still, you did! Anyhow, we couldn't go on a raft again! I should refuse to do anything of the kind."

"The natives here have canoes," said Harry. "We can buy a canoe from them, now we're on friendly terms, and stack it with provisions, and take our chance."

"Um!" said Bunter.

"It's a jolly good chance," said Frank Nugent. "Some of the canoes are a good size—and we can take all the grub we need—"

"And suppose it ran out, like it did on the raft?" demanded Bunter.

"We should have to take the risk of that, of course," said Harry. "But we can't stick on this island for ever, if there's a chance of getting away."

Bunter's fat lip curled.

"I dare say you'd like to see me going short of grub again, like I did on that rotten raft!" he said. "I dare say it would amuse you! Not good enough for me, thanks."

"We can get a sailing canoe—it will be very different from the raft," said Harry, patiently.

"Not much good in this calm!" said Bunter. "There hasn't been a breath of wind all the time we've been on the island."

"The calm won't last for ever! We can use paddles while the calm lasts, and put up the sail when it breaks. The natives go hundreds of miles in their canoes—we can do the same."

Bunter shook his head.

Billy Bunter hadn't much in the way of a memory. But he remembered, very plainly and clearly, the horrors of hunger and thirst on the raft, after the sinking of the Flamingo.

The Greyfriars castaways had landed on that cannibal island when they were at almost the last gasp—weak with hunger, parched with thirst. Billy Bunter forgot most things; but he was not likely to forget that.

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5 MORE BIKES

And Over 2,000 Other Prizes Won in the July "Armaments" Race!

Here's more winning news for thousands of "Armaments" Stamp collectors. The July entries have now been checked, and every one of the 2,004 readers who sent in 323 or more Battleship and Tank Stamps has won the prize of his choice, while the following five collectors, whose totals were the largest received, win the FIVE £4 7s. 6d. "HERCULES" BIKES:

E. RICHARDSON, 145a, Hammer-smith Grove, London, W.6.

A. MAISEY, 19, Colthrop Cottages, Thatcham, Berks.

ARTHUR HYDE, Crundalls Farm, Wribbenhall, Bewdley.

R. SCARGILL, 20, Ivy Street, York Road, Leeds, 9.

H. TURNER, 5, Lentmead Road, Downham, Bromley.

All prizes have now been dispatched, and if you have not been successful, remember there's another prize opportunity in our Latest Collecting Scheme—FOOTER-STAMPS—on page 2. You must be in that, too!

end of the passage to the other, you loozling fat frump!"

"That's enough!"

"You fat, frabjous, footling—"

"Totototo!" rapped Bunter.

"Yessar!"

"S'pose that feller Cherry no shut up mouth belong him, you give that feller lawyer-cane along back belong him."

"Yessar!" said Totototo.

Bob Cherry gurgled. He clenched his hands, and his eyes blazed. But, with a great effort, he restrained the desire to rush at Big Chief Bunter and smite him hip and thigh.

Bunter gave him a lofty glance of scorn.

"You keep quiet!" he said. "I've heard enough from you! Now, Wharton, if you've got anything to say, get on with it! I'm afraid I can't spare you very much time! Still, I'll hear what you've got to say! Cut it short!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

HARRY WHARTON breathed hard and deep.

He was aware that Billy Bunter's new and extraordinary position had got into his head.

"Is that what you came here to say?" he demanded.

"That's it! You see—"

"Well, if you want to know what I think, I think you're a silly fool!" said Bunter. "Here we are safe on land, with plenty of grub, of the very best! I have turtle every day—"

"Never mind that—"

"I do mind! Catch me getting to sea in a canoe, and running out of grub, like we did before!" said Bunter. "Mad?"

"Do you want to stay here for ever, old fat bean?" asked Lord Mauleverer, mildly.

"We're pretty well off here, I think!" answered Bunter calmly. "At least, I am—and I'm going to be generous to you fellows! If you choose to stick in my village, I'll have a house put up for you—these niggers can build a house in a day. I'll give orders for you to have plenty of grub. In fact, I shall take you under my protection, and treat you well! What more do you want?"

The Famous Five suppressed their feelings with great difficulty.

Fat patronage from William George Bunter was not easy to bear! But in the peculiar circumstances, it was necessary to be tactful with Bunter.

"I dare say a ship will blow in, sooner or later!" went on Bunter. "You can keep the signal-smoke going! In fact, I order you to."

"You—you—" gurgled Johnny Bull.

"Well, what?" demanded Bunter, blinking at him. "Asking for a spot of lawyer-cane, or what? You won't have to ask twice, Bull!"

"By gum! I'll jolly well—"

"Shut up, Johnny, old man!" said the captain of the *Remove* hastily. "We haven't come here for a row."

"I should say not!" grinned Bunter. "I advise you fellows for your own sakes, to mind your p's and q's. I'm a good-tempered chap—and I intend to be generous to you: but I'm not standing any cheek! Keep that in mind."

"The keepfulness in our esteemed minds will be terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, solemnly.

"If a ship blows in," continued Bunter. "I shall decide whether to leave the island. I certainly should not consent to go on any rotten old craft like Barney Hall's lugger, for instance! But I'll decide about that when we see a ship! We haven't seen one yet."

"You'll decide!" shrieked Johnny Bull.

"Yes, I'll decide!" said Bunter firmly. "You fellows will wait for my orders. Leave it to me to decide."

"It's no good waiting for a ship, Bunter!" said Harry. "It's quite clear that this island is right out of the track of ships. In a canoe—"

"Understand, once for all, that I refuse to leave this island in a canoe!" said Bunter. "That's settled."

"We could get into the track of ships and get picked up—" urged Nugent. "As soon as we sighted a ship—"

"We did sight a ship, when we were on that rotten raft," snapped Bunter, "and it just went on and left us to it."

"That was the *Sea-Cat*, with those brutes Ysabel Dick and Van Dink on it," said Harry. "That wouldn't happen again."

"It might!" said Bunter. "I jolly well know I'm not chancing it! You're not going to starve me as you did before, I know that."

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"But we've got to get away, old fat bean!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"I'm not in a hurry!" answered Bunter, coolly. "I'm all right here! The food here is better than it was on your island, Mauly!"

"Oh, gad!"

"The holidays won't last for ever!" said Bob. "What about getting back to Greyfriars for the new term, Bunter?"

"If you fellows are in a hurry to see old Quelch again, I'm not!" retorted Bunter. "Still, I'll decide, as I said, when we see a ship! You're not getting me off this island in a canoe."

"We can't go without you!" said Harry.

"He, he, he! I fancy not! Precious muck you'd make of it, without me!" grinned Bunter. "You fellows stick where I can look after you."

"I mean we can't go, and leave you here among these savages, you fat ass. Do you think that this state of affairs can last?" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes, rather! I'm all right here! Monarch of all I survey, and all that!" said Bunter, cheerfully. "I'm running this island! They feed from my hand! I can tell you fellows, I'm not in a hurry to chuck it. It's different with you fellows, I dare say—you're nobodies. He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton set his lips. He was very near the end of his patience.

"Will you come away with us, Bunter, now that we've got the chance, or not?" he demanded.

"Not!" said Bunter.

"Then we shall have to go and leave you here!"

"Rats!"

"You fat fool!" roared Wharton, his temper breaking down under the strain. "You blithering fat idiot, haven't you the sense of a bunny rabbit? I tell you—"

"Shut up!" said Bunter. "No cheek! I said no cheek, Wharton! Shut up!"

"You burbling, babbling bloater—"

"Totototo!" roared Bunter.

"Yessar!"

"Turn those fellows out!"

"Yessar!"

The brown man pushed forward, grinning, shoving at the juniors with the butt of his spear. The Greyfriars fellows crowded out of the devil-house—the interview with Big Chief Bunter was over.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Breaking Of The Calm!

"A CH! Ik heb dorst!" grunted Van Dink, licking his dry lips.

Ysabel Dick, the beachcomber of Kalua, gave the Dutchman a glance of scorn and dislike, his lip curling in a sneer.

The fat, brawny, bearded Dutch freebooter sprawled on a mat on the deck of the cutter *Sea-Cat*. He was not the only man on the Lukwe cutter who had "dorst," as he put it, in Dutch. Every man on the *Sea-Cat* was athirst.

"You dog!" said Ysabel Dick. "Do you think you are the only one? Think of the boys you left to perish of thirst on the raft!"

Van Dink answered with a muttered Dutch curse.

Ysabel Dick, turning his glance from the sprawling fat man, looked out over the sea—bright and blue to the blue horizon.

The Pacific was like a pond.

The calm was still holding—it had held for more than two weeks that seemed like two years to the crew of the

Lukwe cutter; and it looked as if it would never break.

But the outcast of Kalua had his eyes on a faint, dark stirring on the smooth sea, and he wondered, with a faint hope, whether it heralded the "catspaw"—the sign of a coming wind.

The *Sea-Cat* lay without motion, as if chained to the Pacific. Day after day of burning sunshine; night after night of breathless heat, she had lain there—helpless to stir, without a breath of wind to shake her canvas.

Peter Parsons, the skipper of the *Sea-Cat*, leaned on the mast, his eyes on the cloudless sky. He searched in vain for a sign of cloud to break the monotony of the burning, aching blue.

Suloo, Kotoo, Nalasu, the three Lukwe boys who formed the crew of the cutter, lolled listlessly about the deck.

All were athirst! Water was running short on the cutter—shorter and shorter; and for days, in the burning tropical heat, they had been on thin rations. Dandy Peter Parsons, the seelawyer of Lukwe, in spotless ducks, looked as clean, and as neat, and as dapper as ever; but his face was hard and drawn, his expression grim and savage and bitter. When he glanced at Van Dink or the man from Ysabel, his look was black.

If the wind did not come, if the rain did not come, it was a grim outlook for the cutter's crew. Either would have saved them—but there was no sign of either—unless that dim line that the beachcomber's eyes were fixed on was the coming catspaw, far away in the north-east.

The hot sun burned down on the becalmed cutter. The deck was hot to the touch. No windjammer could stir in that dead, breathless calm—and Dandy Peter knew only too well that there was no chance of seeing a steamer in those solitary waters. The *Sea-Cat* was more than two hundred miles from the nearest steamer-track. There was no help, unless the wind came—would it come?

Dandy Peter had been becalmed before, like most windjammer skippers in the tropic seas. He had been through longer calms than this. He would have cared little, but for the fact that the water had run low.

He was standing in with Van Dink and Ysabel Dick; but what had looked like a good thing to the unscrupulous Lukwe skipper now looked like bringing him near to destruction.

After passing, and abandoning, the Greyfriars raft, Dandy Peter had changed his course to make Honolulu, long hundreds of miles to the north. For that trip, he had intended to renew his supplies at an island on his new course—and he had run into the calm! That island was still a hundred miles distant; and after more than two weeks of the calm, the water had almost run out—it was now near the finish.

There were other islands that he knew, much nearer, if only the wind came to stir his sails. Uninhabited or savage islands—specks in the boundless Pacific—but water was to be found there, and water was the bitter need. He would have headed in any direction for water—and the fiercest tribe of cannibals would not have stopped him from landing his casks. If only the wind—any wind—would come!

"Ach! Ik heb ergen dorst!" came a parched muttering from the Dutchman sprawling on the mat.

The beachcomber glanced at him again with something like hate. It was strange, perhaps, that the outcast of Kalua, who had schemed and plotted to kidnap Lord Mauleverer and maroon him on a lonely island, was haunted



As Harry Wharton & Co. were about to push off in the canoe, Komoo grasped the gunwale. "You feller stop along this place!" he said. Harry Wharton lifted his rifle. That was enough for the islander. He let go of the canoe at once. "Get going!" said Wharton.

and tormented by the memory of the schoolboys abandoned on the raft.

That they had perished long since, he had no doubt; and it seemed like a judgment to him that the same fate threatened the wretches who had abandoned them on the ocean.

Hardly sixty miles from the spot where the raft had been abandoned to its fate, the Lukwe cutter lay like a log on the sea—and what remained of the water on board could hardly last more than another day. If the calm did not break by then—

Would it break?

Peter Parsons was watching the sky. The Dutchman lay heedless of anything but heat and thirst. The Kanakas lolled listlessly. Only Ysabel Dick's eyes had detected that faint sign far away on the blue horizon.

His eyes fixed on it again. Was it a sign of the coming break in the calm? There was remorse, perhaps repentance, in the heart of the man who had combed the beach on Kalua; but life was dear. If the wind came, he would live—live to turn his back for ever on the South Seas; on burning skies and sun-scorched beaches; live to lay his hands on a fortune that had been bought by crime.

He moved at last towards the sea-lawyer, whose weary eyes still watched the cloudless sky.

"If the wind comes—" he muttered.

Peter Parsons gave him a black look. "No sign of a wind!" he snarled. "You Jonah, you've brought me foul luck. If I had kept on my course, I should have been in port before the calm fell."

The beachcomber sneered.

"If you had picked up the boys from

the raft and kept on your course you would be safe in port!" he said. "I would have saved them, though the boy Mauleverer stood between me and a fortune. If you had listened to me, instead of to that whining scoundrel yonder—"

The Lukwe skipper interrupted him with an oath.

"Take a bight on your jawing tackle!" he snarled. "I'd drop you over the rail to the sharks as soon as look at you! Take care."

Ysabel Dick shrugged his shoulders.

"If the wind comes, will the water hold out to reach the port you would have put in at for supplies?" he asked.

"No!" snarled Peter Parsons.

"Then we are lost?"

"Not if we get a wind, fool! I shall make the nearest land, if we get a wind!" Dandy Peter made a gesture to the west. "There are islands yonder—the nearest of them not forty miles—if we get a wind! I have touched there before—years ago—there is water on the nearest island. If we get a wind—"

The beachcomber nodded slowly.

"Then you can fill your casks, and head for Honolulu?" he said. "If only the wind comes—"

"I begin to believe it will never come!" snarled the Lukwe skipper.

"Look!" said Ysabel Dick.

He pointed to the horizon.

Dandy Peter glanced—and then his eyes became fixed. He leaned on the rail, staring. For a long minute he stared, and then he called to Kotoo to bring the binoculars.

He scanned the sea through the powerful glasses.

Ysabel Dick, watching his face, saw relief and satisfaction dawning there.

Parsons lowered the glasses at last. He looked at the beachcomber, and smiled.

"The wind?" breathed Ysabel Dick.

"The wind!" grinned Dandy Peter.

"In an hour we shall see the catspaws—in another, we shall have sail on the cutter, heading for Koo-koo's island—and water!"

The outcast of Kalua breathed hard and deep.

"Life!" he said. "Life, and not death!"

"Life and fortune!" grinned Parsons. "Fortune for you, my lord, and a share for me!"

The beachcomber did not answer. He leaned on the rail, watching the sea. But he stirred when Peter Parsons rapped an order to Nalasu to serve out water. There was no need now to guard the last precious drops—the wind was coming.

There was stirring on the becalmed cutter.

The Lukwe boys watched the sea with eager eyes. Even the fat Dutchman heaved himself up from the mat.

"Ach, it comes!" said Van Diuk.

Over the smooth water came rippling the catspaws, unmistakable now. The Sea-Cat stirred, and for the first time for many weary days a motion was felt in the heavy, hot air—the first whisper of a breeze that fanned the cheek and murmured in the sails.

The wind was coming. It came! The cutter stirred and moved, and glided through the water to which she had been so long chained. Not northward for the Hawaiian Islands, but for the nearest land and the nearest water—a savage island below the sea-rim in the west, where there were savage cannibals.

bals, but where there was fresh water. Little cared Dandy Peter for the cannibals, or for any other danger that might lie in his path.

The wind had come, and it freshened and freshened. It filled the tall sails of the Sea-Cat. Dandy Peter's face was bright, his eyes sparkling. The Dutchman was grinning with glee; the Lukwe boys sang at the ropes. More and more swiftly the cutter glided, heading for the island where there was fresh water, and where dusky cannibals lurked in the bush, and where, little as they dreamed it, the Greyfriars raft had long since drifted, and the Greyfriars schoolboys had been cast away.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

To Go, Or Not To Go!

"THAT dummy!"
"That chump!"
"That bloated bandersnatch!"
It was bright morning on the lonely island. Harry Wharton & Co. had turned out, to feel, for the first time for long, weary days, a breath of wind on their faces across the lagoon from the sea.

It was some days since their interview with Big Chief Bunter, at the devil-house in the native village.

The castaways had returned to the stockade on the western side of the island, and had not seen Bunter since.

But they had seen plenty of the natives. Every day some of them came over to trade with the castaways, bringing provisions of all kinds to exchange for trinkets and "piecee gold money."

Irritated as they were with Billy

Bunter, the castaways had to admit that they owed a good deal to the fatuous fat Owl.

Since he had been "big-feller-Chief," warfare with the savages had been a thing of the past. The castaways still kept on their guard, but it was fairly clear that so long as Bunter's chiefship lasted the peace would last.

In the infantile way of Kanakas, the natives seemed to have forgotten that they had ever been the enemies of the castaways and had attacked them with the intention of turning them into "long-pig."

All was cheery and friendly now, and trade was quite brisk. The juniors had many things that the simple-minded islanders valued, especially gold and silver coins, and almost anything on the island could have been bought for one bright, yellow, glittering Australian sovereign.

Among other things they had bought a sailing-canoe. A handful of sovereigns were a light price to pay for the means of escaping from the island.

They had picked out a large and well-built sea-going canoe, and the owner thereof had gladly parted with it for a dozen of Lord Mauleverer's golden sovereigns.

To pack that canoe with provisions and take their chance on the sea was now the fixed idea of the Greyfriars castaways. But they felt that they could not go without Bunter—all the more because it really was owing to Bunter's new and extraordinary position on the island that they had the chance of going.

But for Bunter and his ventriloquial trickery they would still have been on fighting terms with the natives. Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo would still have been

chief on the island, and their deadly enemy. It was not easy to keep patient with the fat Owl, but they felt that they could not go and leave him at the mercy of the savages if their childish minds took on a new whim.

So long as the calm lasted the matter was not urgent. All the juniors could handle paddles—they had paddled often enough on the lagoon at Mauly's island of Kalua-alua-lalua. Still, it was worth while to wait for the wind, and at the same time they waited for Bunter to realise that this was a chance not to be lost.

But no word came from Bunter, and after their reception when they had called on the Big-feller-Chief they were not disposed to cross the island to see him again.

They waited in the hope that the fatuous fat Owl would, so to speak, come to his senses.

But if Bunter had any senses he did not seem to come to them. Not a word came from the Big Chief.

Now the matter had to be settled—when the shining lagoon was at last ruffled by the wind, and the long, long calm was at an end.

With the wind came their chance of getting away, and everything was ready; every preparation that could be made for the voyage had been made.

The juniors had explored the reef on their own side of the island in the canoe, and found a place where a light craft could pull out.

The reef passage proper was on the eastern side of the island opposite the native village where Big Chief Bunter now dwelt. But on the western side, where the castaways camped, they found a narrow channel in the reef large enough for a canoe to pass with ease—large enough, perhaps, for a cutter or a lugger, though not for a ship.

This was the way they were going when they went, to avoid going in sight of the swarming native village. Friendly as the natives now were, it was possible that they might have desired to prevent the departure, and the castaways were anxious to avoid trouble, especially as there was only one cartridge left.

"We can't lose this chance!" said Harry Wharton. "If we could collar that fat fool and chuck him into the canoe—"

"We jolly well would if we could!" said Bob. "But—"

"The butfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Yaas," remarked Lord Mauleverer. "It's weird—unnervin', in fact—but there you are! We can't collar Bunter. He could collar us, if he liked, old beans."

"Won't I boot him!" breathed Johnny Bull.

"The bootfulness is a pleasure to come!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "At the present esteemed moment, to go, or not to go—that is the question, as honourable Shakespeare remarks."

"We're going!" growled Johnny Bull.

"What do you think, Mauly?" asked Harry. "It's your party, old man."

"Go," said Mauly. "We can't stick here for ever. If Bunter won't come, he won't. It mayn't be a bad thing, either. If we don't pull through he's better off here. If we do, and get back to Kalua, I'll make Mr. McTab send a steamer to take him off. What?"

"That settles it!" said Harry.

And settled it was. Really it was the only way out of the difficulty, if Billy Bunter did not come to his senses, or hadn't any to come to.

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"We'll give him a last chance," said Mauleverer. "We can send him a note by one of the niggers, and get yes or no out of him."

"Good egg!"

There were several of the natives lounging about the stockade, with baskets of provisions, tapa mats, strings of beads, and other things to sell. It was easy to tip one of them to carry a message to Bunter.

Harry Wharton wrote a note on a leaf of his pocket-book. It was brief, but to the point.

"Fathead,—We're going to-day. Trot along! If you're coming, come back with Komoo, who is bringing this note. We'll wait till he gets back, if not more than three hours. "H.W."

That note was folded and tucked in Komoo's mop of hair, and dispatched. Komoo departed by the bush-paths across the island.

While he was gone the juniors made their final preparations for the voyage. They had four casks and a keg, all of which were filled with fresh water from the stream, and stacked in the canoe. Provisions of all kinds they had in plenty, and coconuts, which would keep, were stacked in large numbers.

All was ready before Komoo reappeared. But the messenger came back at last, and they eyed him eagerly as he emerged from the palms, hoping to see a fat figure roll out after him.

But no fat figure rolled into view. Komoo had returned alone.

"That does it!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"The fat ass may be comin' later," remarked Lord Mauleverer. "Give him a chance, old beans! Komoo will have some sort of an answer from the blitherin' owl, anyhow."

Komoo had an answer; he produced it from his mop of hair. It was Wharton's note, with a reply from Billy Bunter scrawled on the back.

The juniors gathered round to read it, and they read it with deep feelings. It was not what they had hoped for, but it was what they might have expected from William George Bunter.

"Beast!"

"I'm not kumming! Katch me gow-ing to see in a kanoo! But I don't want to be left aloan on this island. You're no use, and you're no ornament, but I don't chews to be left aloan among these niggers. You're not to gow!"

"These are my orders!"

"Sined

"W. G. BUNTER,

"Cheef."

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Sail On The Sea!

"THE cheeky ass!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"The howling fathead!"

Harry Wharton laughed. There was something amusing, as well as irritating, in the bumptiousness of Big Chief Bunter.

"Well, that's that!" he said. "That does it!"

"Let's get going!" said Nugent. "That blithering, blethering cuckoo seems to fancy that his orders will be obeyed; but if it dawns on his fat brain that they won't, he may try to stop us." Snort, from Johnny Bull.

"Don't I wish he would!" he breathed. "I hate to leave this island without kicking Bunter all round it first."

"We don't want a shindy with the niggers, fathead!" said Frank.

"Well, no; but—"

"Come on," said Harry. "The

sooner we're gone, the better. That benighted owl might send a crowd of the Kanakas to stop us—and that would mean a scrap!"

"Yaas, hook it!" said Lord Mauleverer. "We can send for Bunter afterwards, if we pull through. Let's hope that his jolly old kingship will last as long as that!"

The juniors took a last look round the stockade, and went down the beach.

Komoo, staring after them, followed.

"You white feller, no go along canoe!" he exclaimed. "Big-feller-Chief he say you no go along canoe."

"You tell that Big-feller-Chief to go and eat coke!" said Bob; and he stepped into the canoe.

Komoo eyed them very doubtfully. There were three or four other natives at hand, and it was easy to read, in his brown face, that he was considering whether to stop the party by force. The order of the Big-feller-Chief was a much more serious matter to Komoo than to the juniors.

They lost no time in getting on board their canoe. But as they pushed off, Komoo seemed to make up his mind, and he waded into the water and grasped the gunwale.

"You feller stop along this place!" he said. "You stop all sancee Big-feller-Chief he say!"

Harry Wharton lifted the rifle. He had no idea of expending the last cartridge on Komoo; but he was quite ready to knock him down with the butt, if he did not let go the canoe.

But the lifting of the rifle was enough for the islander. He let go and scrambled back on the beach at once.

"Get going!" said Harry.

The juniors grasped the paddles and got going. The canoe shot out over the shining lagoon.

Komoo and the other natives stood watching it. It was probably only the rifle in Wharton's hands that prevented them from making an attempt to stop the departure. Komoo shouted a last warning:

"Big-feller-Chief he plenty mad along you feller, s'pose you no stop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A ripple of merriment floated back. The wrath of the Big-feller-Chief was not likely to worry the chums of the Remove, who had often booted that Big-feller-Chief in the old passage at Greyfriars School!

The canoe, with the paddles flashing swiftly, shot away across the lagoon, and Komoo was left staring.

The juniors paddled along the coral reef to the opening out to sea, and paddled on into the Pacific, through the passage in the reef.

The wind was light and uncertain. But outside the reef they got the sail up and found that the canoe sailed well. They had the compass that had been brought away from the Flamingo, and they knew that to get back to the islands and the track of ships the course should lie roughly to the south-west. But they were chiefly eager to get away from Koo-Koo's island at any price, lest it should please Big Chief Bunter, when he heard of their departure, to dispatch canoes to fetch them back.

Outside the reef the wind was fresher. It came out of the north-west—and it filled the mat-sail of the canoe.

The canoe glided away on the sea that was now ruffled by the wind. The sun burned down with a fierce glare. The weather was still calm, only the wind was coming fresher and fresher. The castaways were glad enough to get away, but they all knew that it was no light matter to put to sea in a canoe, with a voyage of at least some

hundreds of miles before them, before they could hope to arrive at a white man's port.

But in the canoe it was, as Harry had tried to explain to Bunter, a very different proposition from the raft. The canoe, with a wind, could sail fairly swiftly—it was not at the mercy of drifting currents. The juniors could set themselves a course and hope to pull through.

And, far away as safety lay, there was always a chance of sighting a sail at sea, and if they sighted one they were not likely to be abandoned as they had been abandoned by the Lukwe cutter.

Such lengthy trips were often made by the natives in their canoes, from island to island, and, perilous as it undoubtedly was for the schoolboys, it was their only chance of getting away from the solitary island, and a chance not to be lost.

Bob Cherry, standing up in the canoe, looked back at the island—a mass of solid green against the blue sky.

Already it was dropping distant, towards the northern horizon. The signal-smoke no longer rose from the beach near the stockade—the signal-fire had been allowed to die out when the castaways made up their minds to go. The stockade could no longer be seen; the nodding palms were growing dim. And there was no sign of a canoe on the sea, which was a relief. Neither Big Chief Bunter nor the natives seemed to have thought of pursuit.

"Well, we're off!" said Bob cheerily.

"We are—we is!" said Johnny Bull. "And I can't say I'm sorry that we haven't got that fat ass Bunter grouching in the canoe."

"The silly ass ought to have come!" said Harry Wharton. "Still, if we pull through, he can be sent for. If grub runs out, he would be a fearful worry."

"And it would run out in half the time, with Bunter on board!" remarked Bob.

"If he can keep up that game of pulling the niggers' legs till we get through and send for him, it will be all right," said Harry. "If this wind lasts, we ought to be in the track of ships in a few days. And we're not likely to meet another rascal like that villain Parsons of Lukwe."

"Hardly!"

"By gad!" remarked Lord Mauleverer. "I'm jolly glad to get goin', you men! We were lucky to get on that island, and luckier still to get off it again! The fact is, we've had a lot of luck, one way and another."

"The luckfulness has been terrific, my esteemed and idiotic Mauly!" agreed Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yaas, we've really been in luck all round," said Mauly, "exceptin' in one thing—I'm beginnin' to think that I shall never get news of old Brian—and I rather hate the idea of goin' home without pickin' him up."

The Famous Five smiled.

Lord Mauleverer's hope of coming across his missing cousin, Brian Mauleverer, somewhere in the South Seas, had always seemed to them rather nebulous.

Brian Mauleverer had not been heard of for a long time, and all that was known was that he was no longer where he had last been heard of, at Pita, in the Kalua group.

But—though they did not feel inclined to say so—the chums of the Remove were rather of the opinion that it was more like good luck than bad luck for Mauly, if he did not run across the

"bad hat" of the family on that trip to the south.

Brian Mauleverer was a rolling stone who had gathered no moss—a waster who had never been any good to himself or anyone else. It was like old Mauly to have a spot of kindness for the scapegrace of the family, and to be keen to give him a helping hand; but it did not seem probable that help would be of much use to a reckless, self-indulgent spendthrift who had gone to the bad—and stayed there.

"Still, we may hear somethin' of him when we get back to Kalua!" said Mauly hopefully. "I've asked Mr. McTab to keep his ears open for news."

"We're not back at Kalua yet, old bean!" said Bob, laughing. "I wonder how many hundred miles away it is?"

"Oh, we'll pick up a sail sooner or later," said Mauly. "In a few days, at this rate—"

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Bob suddenly.

"What—"

"A sail!" roared Bob.

"Great 'pip!"

The Famous Five fairly bounded up. They stared blankly at the tall sail that glanced on the blue sea coming round the island from the east.

The cannibal island was still in sight, though dropping farther and farther away! From beyond it, standing past the southern reef, came the tall sail of a cutter.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Oh, what luck!"

"Hurrah!"

Five pairs of eyes fairly danced! It really seemed too much luck. For days and days, from the stockade on the island beach, they had watched the sea for a sail or a steamer's smoke—in vain; indeed, they had had very little doubt that Koo-koo's island was too far out of the track of ships ever to be visited, unless possibly by some skipper in want of food or water. They had taken it for granted that they would have to push on in the canoe for a good many days and nights before they could hope to sight a sail.

And here was a sail—before they were out of sight of the cannibal island. No wonder their eyes danced.

"Oh, what luck!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

"Shove the old bus round!" exclaimed Nugent. "Stick up a signal—"

"Hold on!" said Lord Mauleverer quietly.

Mauly was standing and staring at the sail! His face was grave. The other fellows looked at him.

"Ain't you bucked, old man?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What the thump—"

"No!" said Mauly quietly. "Don't shove up a signal, old chaps—and don't shove the old bus round! We want to steer clear of that craft."

"What—why?"

"It's the Sea-Cat!" said Lord Mauleverer.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Chase Of The Canoe!

"A CANOE!" said Dandy Peter.

He gritted his teeth.

"Ach! What does it matter?" grunted Van Dink.

The sea-lawyer of Lukwe did not answer him. He fixed his eyes, scowling, on the canoe, suddenly seen, as the cutter came sweeping round the southern side of the lonely island, giving the reef a wide berth.

Ysabel Dick, standing by his side at

the rail, glanced carelessly at the distant canoe. But he understood, if the slow-witted Dutchman did not, the Lukwe skipper's annoyance. Dandy Peter was prepared for any amount of trouble for the sake of filling his casks, but he was not hunting for trouble with a tribe of savage cannibals. His aim had been to put in at the lonely island and obtain a supply of water, without coming into contact with the natives, if he could—and to get away again, if possible, before his cutter was sighted.

For that reason, he was steering clear of the eastern side where the native village faced the reef channel into the lagoon. There was water on the western side, which was not inhabited by the natives—or, at least, had not been, when he had last visited the island. And he knew the reef passage on that side.

"They're running before the wind!" said the beachcomber. "They won't be giving us trouble, Parsons."

The sea-lawyer gave an angry snarl.

"They've seen us!" he snapped. "If they run back to the island and spread the news, we may have a mob of cannibals watching for us when we put into the lagoon, and land for water."

He scowled at the distant canoe.

"Ach! Thou it is simple!" grunted the Dutchman. "Run them down and sink them—then they will carry no news."

"Hold your tongue, you scoundrel!" muttered the beachcomber. "Would you send a canoe crew to death for so little?"

"Ja, ja—and their whole tribe after them!" said Van Dink coolly. "Ach—I do not place a high value on the lives of niggers."

The outcast of Kalua gave him a look of loathing.

Dandy Peter did not heed him. A strange expression was coming over his face as he stared at the canoe on the distant sea.

"A crew of niggers—" grunted Van Dink.

"They are not niggers in that canoe!" said Dandy Peter. "It's a white crew! By hokéy! Kotoo, the binoculars!"

The sea-lawyer of Lukwe clamped the glasses to his eyes, and focused them on the canoe.

There was utter amazement in his face.

For a long minute he stared, then he lowered the glasses, and turned to Ysabel Dick, with a mocking, sardonic grin on his handsome, wicked face.

"That's a white crew!" he said.

"In a canoe—in these waters!" said the beachcomber. He was surprised, but not specially interested; and he stared at the sea-lawyer of Lukwe, not understanding the look on his face.

"You would have spared the schoolboys on the raft!" grinned Dandy Peter. "Van Dink was for leaving them, and I stood in with him—but you—you would have let the boy live who stood between you and riches."

"I have said so!" snapped the beachcomber. "I would give more than I ever hoped to gain, to see the boy alive and well."

"Fool!" grunted Van Dink.

"You will have your wish!" grinned Dandy Peter. "Take the glasses, and look at that canoe!"

Ysabel Dick gave him a look of angry wonder—then he took the glasses and focused them on the canoe. The next moment, they almost dropped from his hand.

"It is a vision!" he said hoarsely. "It cannot be true—they cannot be alive—it cannot be the schoolboys—"

"Ach! What do you say?" roared the

Dutchman. He snatched the glasses, and looked.

The Lukwe boys stared round, at a volley of Dutch curses.

"They have the lives of a cat!" grinned Dandy Peter. "The whole crew of them—no, one is missing—the fat one! They have lost only one of their number—and it is more than two weeks since we passed them, dying of hunger and thirst on their raft!"

The beachcomber, clutching the rail with his hands, stared. He could not believe what he saw.

That Lord Mauleverer and his friends had perished miserably on the raft, he had had no doubt—he could have not the slightest doubt! It almost seemed to him that these were spectres that had returned to haunt him. He grasped the rail so convulsively that his knuckles showed white.

Dandy Peter rapped an order to his crew.

The cutter fell away from her former course, and swung round for the canoe.

The canoe was standing to the south-west, going before the wind. But in a race it had no chance with the swift cutter.

The Sea-Cat was standing in pursuit, and before long, the canoe crew could be recognised with the naked eye, and it could be seen that they had put out the paddles to help the sail.

Evidently they had recognised the Sea-Cat, and knew what to expect from the craft that carried Van Dink and the man from Ysabel.

"They live!" muttered the beachcomber at last. "I am glad that they live! One is missing—only one among so many! That crime, after all, is not on my soul!"

Dandy Peter laughed.

"And but for the calm that tied us down, we should have made Honolulu by this time, and you would have taken the steamer for home!" he said mockingly. "And the boy lives—lives to return and turn you out of his fortune. You are not my lord yet!"

The beachcomber's face contracted. His feeling of relief had been genuine, when he saw that the schoolboys were living—that they had not perished, as he had believed, on the drifting raft. But that feeling was followed by others quite different.

"Ach! They are at our mercy!" muttered Van Dink. "They did not perish on the raft—neen, neen! But they will perish in that canoe, under the prow of your cutter, my good friend."

"Never!" muttered Ysabel Dick, his face white. "Peter Parsons, you were villain enough to abandon them on the raft—but you will not stand for that! That would be murder!"

"Ach! I tell you—" snarled the Dutchman.

"You do not give orders on this packet, Van Dink!" interrupted Dandy Peter. "That is enough from you."

The Dutchman scowled and cursed.

Dandy Peter, the sea-lawyer of Lukwe, had a wide limit—a very wide one, and he had done dark and desperate deeds in his time. But he had never done such a deed as that proposed by the brutal Dutchman, and he was not likely to begin now.

He had abandoned the castaways on their raft, and left them to take their chance, knowing how little chance they had. But to run down and sink the canoe, and send the schoolboys to death in the deep sea, was a deed of which he was not capable. On board the Sea-Cat, only the brutal Dutchman was capable of such an act.

"They are in our hands!" said the sea-lawyer. "We shall run down the

canoe under the hour! What do you want to do with them, my lord Ysabel Dick?" He grinned mockingly at the outcast of Kalua. "I will stand for no murder, on this craft—not even for the share I am to receive if you take what belongs to the boy yonder. But—"

"Neither would I stand for it for ten times the boy's fortune!" snarled the beachcomber. "It was that brute that scuttled the Flamingo and left them to sink. It was that hound who prevailed on you to abandon them, when we saw them on the raft! I would have saved them—you know it! But I—"

"There is a but!" sneered Parsons.

The outcast of Kalua gave him a savage scowl.

"You know what my plan was—let it be carried out. My purpose will be served if Lord Mauleverer disappears from all who know him; and the others must share his fate, to keep the secret. I should have marooned them on Spanish Reef. Take the canoe in tow—"

"The deep sea is safer!" growled the Dutchman.

"Silence, brute!" hissed the man from Ysabel. "Run down the canoe, Parsons, and take it in tow! As soon as you have filled your casks, make sail for Spanish Reef—"

"Why not this island?" growled the Dutchman. "Leave them here, when we fill the casks—"

"Silence, scoundrel!" snarled Ysabel Dick. "As well leave them to sink in the sea, as leave them on a cannibal island."

Dandy Peter nodded.

"We must have water," he said. "As soon as the water is taken on, we make Spanish Reef. They will be in our hands under the hour."

And the three stood watching as the swift cutter swept closer and closer down on the fleeing canoe.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Overhauled!

"THEY'RE after us," said Bob Cherry.

"The rotters!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"We'll give the brutes a run for their money," said Johnny Bull. "But—"

Harry Wharton's lips set, and he picked up the rifle. His eyes gleamed back at the cutter in chase.

As soon as they had recognised the Sea-Cat, the Greyfriars eastaways had thought only of steering clear—if they could. The canoe ran before the wind, and they had hoped to see the cutter sweep on its way, disregarding them.

That hope very soon had to be dismissed.

The cutter was in chase, swerving from the course that should have taken her round the western side of the island. That could only mean that they had been seen and recognised from the Sea-Cat, and that Peter Parsons intended to run them down. There were four paddles in the canoe, and four of the juniors handled them, getting on a good speed.

But if it was a stern chase, they knew that they had no chance against the cutter. And it was evidently going to be a stern chase.

Looking back, the cutter drew nearer and nearer, they could see faces staring over the side. They recognised, in turn, Dandy Peter Parsons, Ysabel Dick, Van Dink, and the black Lukwe boys.

"The 'rotters!'" repeated Harry. "They left us to die on the raft, as they fancied, but now—"

"What rotten luck, falling in with that cutter again!" muttered Bob. "I should have thought it was hundreds of miles away by this time."

"Not in the calm we've had for weeks—ever since we landed on the island," answered Harry. "That may have stopped them. But it's rotten luck for them to turn up here—the very day we've started."

"Well, I suppose it's not surprising really," said Bob. "This is the first day there's been a wind. We've got it, and they've got it. Blessed if I can guess what they're doing in these parts, though. They can't possibly have had news that we'd landed on Koo-koo's Island."

"No, that's impossible. I can't quite make out what their game is," said Harry. "Leaving us to perish on the raft was one thing, but attacking us is another. That is what they must intend, I suppose, as they're chasing us. We shall resist."

"What-ho!" said Bob emphatically.

"Yaas, we'll give them a bit of a tussle," said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "But this is a rotten business, you fellows. I never knew what I should be landin' you in when I asked you to come on a holiday trip to the jolly old South Seas."

"Sink or swim together, old bean!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Jolly glad we came, seeing what a jolly old hornets' nest you dropped into."

"Yaas, it beats me," said Mauly, rubbing his noble nose. "What does that blighter, Ysabel Dick, stand to gain in

(Continued on next page.)



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marooning me on some dashed island in the Pacific? He can't be in this game for fun. But where does he come in, even if he gets away with it?"

"Ask us another," said Bob.

"I just can't make it out," said Mauly. "There's only one man in the wide world stands to make a hatful if anythin' happens to me, and that's my missin' Cousin Brian. Ysabel Dick has his trouble for his pains, as far as I can see, and that Dutch ruffian, too. But they're both fearfully keen on it. And the worst of it is that you fellows are dragged into it along with me."

"Rot!" said Wharton. "We're glad to be with you, Mauly, as it's turned out."

"The gladfulness is terrific, Mauly."

"Yaas, I know; but I wish you were safe somewhere, all the same," said his lordship ruefully.

The canoe cut through the water, the juniors paddling hard. But they gave up the paddles at last.

The cutter was fast gaining on them, and it was useless to attempt to escape. The labour was futile. They laid in the paddles, and stood watching the Sea-Cat.

Their minds were grimly made up to resist if they were attacked. Ysabel Dick's intentions were well known to them, and it was clear that the Lukwe skipper was going to back him up in carrying them out. Van Dink, they knew, would have sent them to the bottom of the sea, without mercy and without compunction. But the beach-comber was no such villain as the Dutch freebooter. They had not forgotten that he had wished to pick them up from the raft. He shrank from the last and worst of crimes, but that did not alter the fact that he had planned for them a fate hardly better than death—marooning on a lonely island where they would have no hope of escape or rescue. The cannibal island they had left was preferable to that—if they could have got back to it. But of that there was no chance.

Closer and closer swept the cutter, until she surged within hail of the canoe.

Dandy Peter leaned over and shouted.

"Drop your sail!"

"Rats to you!" shouted back Bob Cherry.

"Heave to!" shouted the Lukwe skipper angrily.

"Go and eat coke!"

The Lukwe skipper's eyes gleamed at the schoolboys.

It mattered little whether the canoe crew took in their sail or not—the cutter was almost upon them now. But they were going to obey no orders from the Sea-Cat.

The canoe was rocking in the wash of the cutter as the Sea-Cat surged closer.

Dandy Peter shortened sail.

The outcast of Kalua looked over the side down at the Greyfriars crew. Van Dink scowled at his elbow.

"Ach! Will you stop?" roared the Dutchman.

Harry Wharton half-raised the rifle.

"I warn you to keep clear of us!" he called out, in a clear and steady voice. "I shall fire, if we are attacked."

"A young gamecock," grinned Dandy Peter. "Put down that rifle, you young fool! Do you want me to run you down and sink you?"

"I've warned you that I shall fire!" answered the captain of the Greyfriars Remove; and his voice was steady.

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"Sheer off, Captain Parsons, or I shall fire on your cutter!"

"By hokey!" said Dandy Peter. He was still grinning, as if amused. "Your lives are not in danger, you young fool! I am going to take your canoe in tow—"

"You are going to do nothing of the kind!" answered Harry Wharton. "Keep your distance! If you run us down, I shall fire into your cutter! And if a man steps on this canoe, I will put a bullet through his body!"

"Will you listen to him?" roared Van Dink, his fat brutal face red with rage. "Sink the canoe, then!"

"Silence, scoundrel!" said the beach-comber. He fixed his eyes on the captain of the Greyfriars Remove. "Put down that rifle, Wharton! It is useless! Not a hair on your heads shall be harmed! It is useless to think of resisting—"

"Useless or not, we shall resist!" answered Harry Wharton coolly. "I will fire on any man who jumps into this canoe! Stand back, Van Dink!"

The juniors almost held their breath. The cutter was right on the canoe now, and the bulky Dutchman was swinging himself on the rail, evidently with the intention of jumping down into the canoe.

"Make fast a rope and tie on, Van Dink!" said Peter Parsons.

"Ach! Ja!" grunted the Dutchman.

"Stand back!" shouted Harry. His eyes blazed over the rifle as the Dutchman prepared to jump, rope in hand, to tie on to the canoe. The canoe was right under the Sea-Cat's rail now, and Van Dink had only to jump to land in it.

Bob Cherry shoved with a palm pole against the cutter's hull, and the canoe rocked suddenly away.

Six or seven feet of water suddenly opened between the canoe and the cutter, and Van Dink stopped himself only just in time from dropping into the Pacific.

"Jump!" snapped Dandy Peter impatiently.

"Ach! Neen! Neen!" gasped Van Dink.

Any other man on the cutter could have jumped, but the bulky Dutchman did not care to make the attempt.

"Kotool!" snapped the sea-lawyer of Lukwe.

"Yessar!"

The black boy ran up the deck.

"Jump along feller canoe, make fast feller rope along that canoe!" rapped Dandy Peter.

"Yessar!"

Taking the rope in a black hand, Kotool jumped, lightly and actively, and landed in the canoe, which rocked wildly under the sudden impact.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Last Shot!

HARRY WHARTON set his teeth, hard.

He had meant every word he uttered. He would have fired on the Dutchman had Van Dink boarded the canoe; but he could not pull trigger on the grinning black boy, carrying out his skipper's order.

But the other fellows were ready to handle Kotool.

The canoe rocked as the Lukwe boy landed in it, and he stumbled. And as he stumbled Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull jumped at him.

"Hands off my nigger!" shouted Peter Parsons from the cutter. "By

hokey, I'll run you down if you handle him!"

Unheeding, the two juniors grasped Kotool.

The Lukwe boy grappled with them. But he grappled in vain. With a vigorous heave, they sent him stumbling over the gunwale, and he splashed headlong into the water.

There was a gasping howl from Kotool as he disappeared under the waves of the Pacific.

He was up again in a moment, spluttering for breath, hanging on to the rope from the cutter. The Sea-Cat surged on, dragging the Lukwe boy on the rope and leaving the canoe rocking in the wash.

Dandy Peter's eyes glittered under knitted brows. He had been amused, at first, by the idea of resistance from a parcel of schoolboys, but his savage temper was rising now.

The Dutchman spluttered oaths. His little, piggy eyes burned with fury from his brutal face. He grasped a capstan bar and brandished it at the crew of the canoe.

The Greyfriars crew watched breathlessly. How the struggle was going to end they did not know, but they knew that they were going to resist to the very end. They were not going to fall into the hands of their enemies, so long as they could strike a blow in their defence.

"Ach! Will you run them down?" roared Van Dink. "Send them to the bottom, I tell you!"

Kotool clambered, dripping, on board the Sea-Cat. The cutter came about and surged down on the canoe again.

"Jump, you Dutch swab!" snarled Dandy Peter.

Van Dink stood ready to jump, the capstan bar in his hand. His brutal face was as savagely ferocious as that of any savage on Koo-koo's island. His intention was plain enough, when he got aboard the canoe—to lay about him with the capstan bar, knocking the schoolboys right and left.

"Look out!" breathed Bob, as the Sea-Cat surged down.

The cutter's rail hung over the canoe, and this time the Dutchman jumped before the juniors had a chance of pushing clear.

He crashed into the canoe, his heavy weight almost capsizing it as he landed there.

Two or three of the juniors stumbled over as the canoe rocked and dipped, and Harry Wharton, stumbling, fell on one knee, the rifle-muzzle pointing skyward.

Before he could recover himself the Dutchman flung himself along the canoe, the capstan bar thrown up to strike.

In a moment more it would have crashed on Wharton, stretching him senseless, probably with a cracked skull, for the ruffian was utterly regardless of the damage he did.

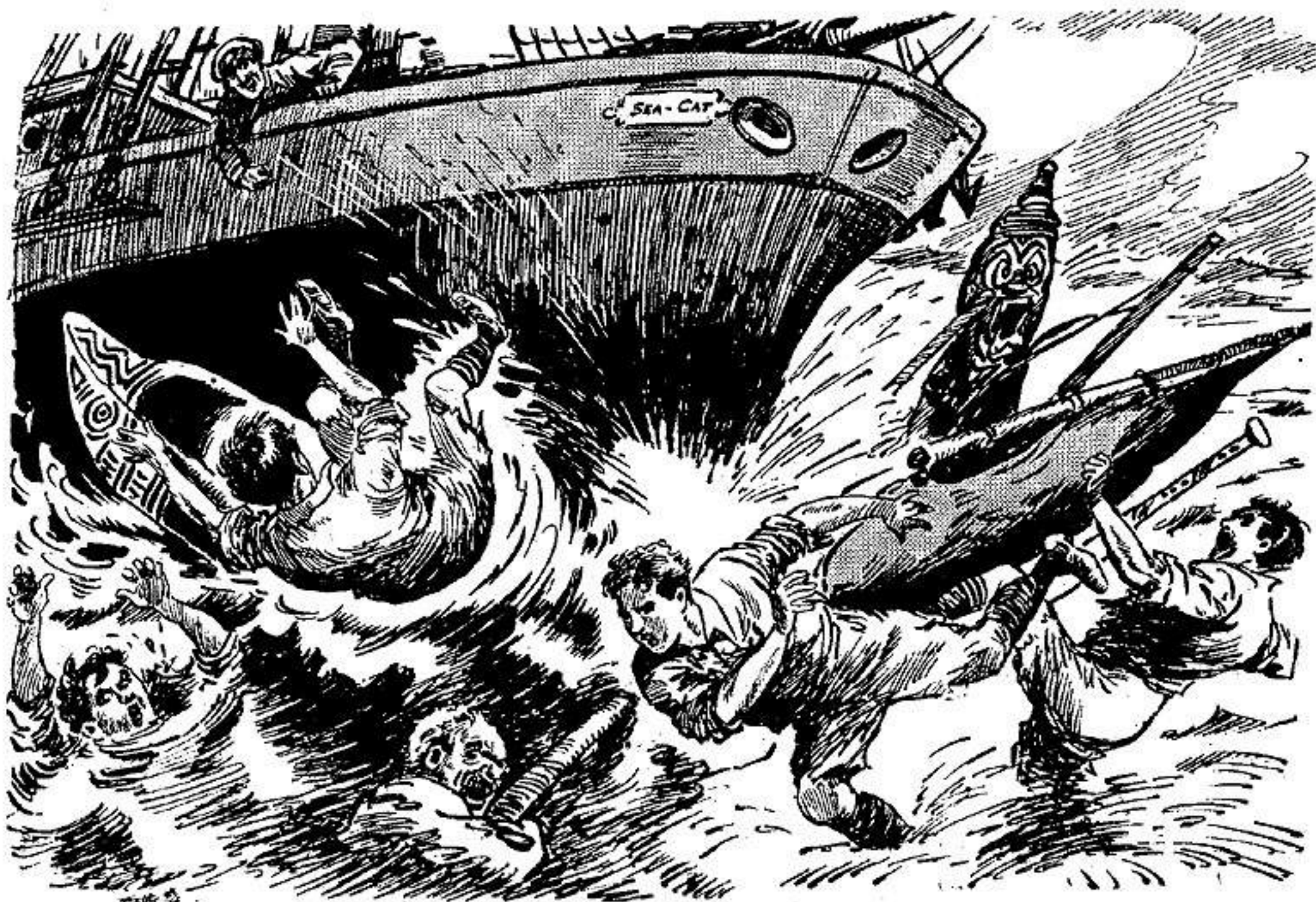
But in that moment the rifle-muzzle jammed on Van Dink's bulky chest, and the rifle roared.

Wharton had no time to get on his feet. He hardly knew whether he pulled the trigger or not. The rifle roared as the muzzle touched the Dutchman, and Van Dink, shot through the body, pitched headlong over the Greyfriars junior, the capstan bar flying from his hand into the sea.

One gasping howl from the Dutchman, then he rolled off Wharton and lay like a log in the canoe.

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet, his face white.

He had fired his last shot—only in time to save his skull from being cracked by the Dutchman's savage



Crash! Right on the canoe swung the Sea-Cat, crashing. The canoe crumpled up, and the Greyfriars juniors went hurtling into the water!

blow. But he shuddered at the sight of the ruffian's bulky body, stretched in the canoe.

But it was only for a moment or two that Van Dink lay still. Sorely wounded as he was, he stirred, and attempted to struggle to his feet. But his brutal strength was sapped by his wound, and he sank back again, groaning.

Dandy Peter stared down blankly from the cutter for a few moments. Then he yelled to the Lukwe crew.

Suloo gave a twist to the tiller.

Crash!

Right on the canoe swung the Sea-Cat, crashing. That was Dandy Peter's answer to the shot that had knocked the Dutchman out.

Under the cutter, the canoe crumpled up.

The mast went by the board, the outrigger broke away, the canoe split and parted, and the Greyfriars crew were left struggling in the water as the Lukwe cutter surged on.

They swam for their lives. The wash of the cutter passed over Harry Wharton's head, but he was up in a moment, close beside the wrecked canoe, and clutching hold.

Within a yard of him a fat, brutal face showed in the water. Van Dink was holding on to the wreck, heeding the juniors now no more than they heeded him.

Wharton did not give him a glance. His eyes searched the sea in intense anxiety for his comrades.

The Sea-Cat was surging on, leaving the wrecked canoe and the juniors astern.

"Frank!" gasped Harry Wharton.

Frank Nugent was close to him, and he caught his collar with one hand, holding on with the other.

"All right!" panted Nugent.

"Hold on, old chap! Bob—Mauly! Where—"

"Here!" spluttered Bob Cherry.

He grasped hold of the wreck and helped Lord Mauleverer to a hold.

All the Greyfriars fellows were good swimmers. Johnny Bull and Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh joined their comrades in a few moments, clutching hold of the floating wreck of the canoe.

"Oh, gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"All here—what?"

"All here, Mauly!"

The six juniors and the Dutchman all clutched hold of the floating wreck. Harry Wharton lifted his head and stared after the Sea-Cat.

The cutter was already hove-to, and the dinghy was pulling towards the wrecked canoe.

"The boat's coming!" breathed Harry.

All the juniors turned their eyes on the approaching dinghy. Whether the Sea-Cat's boat was coming to pick them up, or only to save the Dutchman, they did not know. But they knew that their lives depended on it.

Far away, dim on the horizon, nodded the tall palms of the cannibal island. There was no chance of reaching the island by swimming. The canoe was a smashed wreck, and if the Sea-Cat did not pick them up it was the finish.

Two black boys were pulling the dinghy, and Ysabel Dick was in it, Dandy Peter staring from the cutter. It was a relief to them to see the beachcomber in the boat. Scoundrel as he was, they had little doubt that he would not leave them to perish in the sea.

"You young fools!" The outcast of Kalua spoke as the boat reached the wreck. "You asked for this!" He gave them a scowl and snapped an order to the Lukwe boys. "You feller boy, you get that feller Dussman along boat."

Van Dink, gasping and groaning, was dragged into the dinghy. He sat there in a pool of water. His piggy eyes burned at the schoolboys.

"Back to the cutter!" he muttered hoarsely. "Leave them to drown! Back to the cutter, I tell you!"

"Hold your tongue!" snarled the beachcomber.

"Ach! I tell you—"

"Silence, brute!"

The Dutchman sprawled, muttering Dutch oaths. But he was in no condition to intervene.

Ysabel Dick turned to the juniors again.

"Hang on!" he snapped.

There was no room in the small boat for the half-dozen schoolboys, in addition to the Dutchman and the boat's crew.

Harry Wharton gave one glance to the distant island. If there had been even a remote chance of reaching it he would have preferred to take the canoe. But it was hopeless.

"You will be taken on the Sea-Cat!" went on Ysabel Dick. "You may be thankful that you are dealing with me, and not with that Dutch brute!"

"Ach! Ach! Leave them to drown, fool!" came groaning from the Dutchman. "Look what they have done to me—leave them to drown!"

The beachcomber did not heed him.

"Hang on!" he snapped. "But take warning—if you give trouble, after you are on Parsons' cutter, you will suffer for it! Dandy Peter has a heavy hand. He would think nothing of giving you a taste of the sting-ray tail—or of throwing you overboard if you gave him lip! Take care, and keep your tongues between your teeth!"

The juniors did not answer that. They left the wreck of the canoe, and hung

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on to the dinghy as it pulled back to the Sea-Cat. They had done all that they could, and luck had been against them—and, bitter as it was to be taken as prisoners on board the lawless cutter, it was better than sinking in the deep waters, or swimming till the sharks came.

Ten minutes later they stood in a drenched group on the deck of the Lukwe cutter, under the mocking eyes of Dandy Peter.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Luck!

"O H, gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship's eyes gleamed. The Greyfriars fellows were standing in a rather dismal group. They had wrung the water out of their clothes, as well as they could; and in the hot blaze of the tropical sun were drying.

No one on the Sea-Cat was taking any heed of them.

Van Dink had been taken down into the little cabin and placed in a bunk there. The beachcomber remained with him, giving care to his wound. The freebooter was badly wounded, and he lay helpless in the bunk, a groan from below occasionally reaching the ears of the juniors on deck.

That the ruffian would live, Harry Wharton certainly hoped; but it was, undoubtedly, a relief to the castaways that the brutal freebooter was knocked out and unable to do them further harm.

Dandy Peter, after his mocking glance when they were brought on board, took no further notice of them. He had to get back to the island, which had been left far astern in the chase of the canoe. The Sea-Cat was tacking back to the island, and the skipper and the crew had enough to do without troubling their heads about the prisoners.

Not that the juniors were thinking of giving trouble. They had not needed Ysabel Dick's warning—they were well aware that their lives hung on little more than a thread, on the lawless cutter.

Why the Lukwe skipper was standing in with Ysabel Dick and his brutal associate, they did not know and could not guess. It must have been made worth his while somehow; but they could not imagine how. So long as they remained quiet, and gave no trouble, he was utterly indifferent to them, only anxious, probably, to see the last of them as soon as possible. That would be when they arrived at the lonely reef where they were to be marooned. But a word or a look would be enough to rouse his savage temper; and they had no desire to sample the sting-ray tail.

Not that they had, by any means, given up the hope of escape! But of

that there was, so far, not the slightest hope. For the present, all they could do was to make the best of it, in silence.

They had no doubt, when the cutter got under way again, that Parsons was heading for Spanish Reef, wherever that was, to carry out the plan of his associate, the outcast of Kalua. Of the state of affairs on board the cutter, they, of course, knew nothing; and it naturally did not occur to them that Dandy Peter was in the neighbourhood of Koo-Koo's island, because he had run short of water.

It was Mauleverer who first noticed that the cutter was making for the island.

With the wind coming out of the north-west, and having run far south of the island in pursuit of the canoe, Dandy Peter could only get back to his objective by a series of tacks, a long and laborious business. But Mauly noticed that the tall palms of the island were never out of sight, and it dawned on him, at last, that Peter Parsons was making for the island.

"By gad!" repeated Mauly. "You fellows spot where we're headin'?"

Bob Cherry looked round.

"Haven't the foggiest, Mauly," he answered. "Some happy spot called Spanish Reef, I believe—that beachcombing villain mentioned it long ago on the Flamingo. They seem to be a jolly long time dropping that island."

"They're not droppin' it, old bean!" murmured Mauleverer.

"Eh?"

"They're headin' for it."

"Oh!"

The Famous Five took notice at once. Now that they gave it their attention, they could see that the skipper of the Sea-Cat was making the island they had left, though progress was slow.

"By gum!" said Bob, with a deep breath. "If we get a chance—"

"Not a word for those swabs to hear!" murmured Mauleverer. "They don't know a thing about what's happened on that jolly old island. Not a syllable."

The Famous Five looked at him, and looked at one another.

"By Jove!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"Not a word, old bean!"

"You bet!"

"But what the dickens are they heading there for?" asked Nugent. "I don't know what that island's called, if it has a name at all—but it can't be the spot they called Spanish Reef—"

"Hardly!"

"Well, then, why—"

"I give that one up!" said Mauleverer. "But that's what they're doin'—gettin' to that jolly old island! And if we get a chance to cut—"

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bob, his eyes dancing.

They glanced at Dandy Peter. He was standing by the binnacle, at a distance, his eyes on the sails, snapping orders to the boat-steerer. Ysabel Dick was still below with the Dutchman.

For some reason, unknown to the juniors, the Sea-Cat was making for Koo-koo's island, on the western side, where they had built their stockade.

Of that, their enemies could know nothing—could not know that they had ever landed on that island at all. They could not know, or suspect for a moment, that Billy Bunter was on that island—temporarily "Big Chief" of the native tribe! They were, for their own unknown reasons, taking the prisoners exactly where the prisoners wanted to go, if it had been possible.

"My esteemed hat!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, his dusky eyes shining. "What terrific luck!"

"Mum's the word, though!" breathed Mauleverer. "If they knew how matters stood on that jolly old island—"

"They don't—and they won't!" said Harry Wharton. "If we get a chance of jumping ashore, it's all right for us! Mum's the word!"

The juniors stood watching, with beating hearts.

It was clear now that the Sea-Cat was making for the western side of Koo-koo's island—Dandy Peter picking that side, no doubt, because the savages dwelt on the eastern side. Obviously, it could never occur to his mind that the Greyfriars fellows were well acquainted with that island; still less, that they had friends there. They could not guess why he was going there—but it was quite clear that he was doing so, as fast as the wind would let him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes that beachcombing blighter!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Not a giddy whisper for him to hear!"

Ysabel Dick came on deck.

He glanced first at the island, drawing nearer with every weary tack, then he turned to the group of juniors, who eyed him.

"How is Van Dink?" asked Harry Wharton. "I—I hope—"

"You hope that you have not finished the brute?" asked the beachcomber, with a sneer.

"Yes," answered Harry quietly.

"Then you may be easy in your mind on that score," said the man from Ysabel, in the same sneering tone. "He is hard hit; but the brute is too tough to be killed easily. He will live—to be a millstone round my neck. But he will be on his beam-ends for weeks to come—all the better for you, perhaps. If he were able to lay hands on you, you might never live to reach Spanish Reef."

"Is that Spanish Reef?" asked Bob innocently, pointing towards the palms of Koo-koo's island.

Ysabel Dick stared at him.

"Spanish Reef is two or three hundred miles from here," he answered. "It will be days before we make it. We are putting in at that island for water."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"There is hardly a drop of water left on this cutter," said the beachcomber. "If the calm had lasted a day or two longer—" He shrugged his shoulders. "It seems like Fate!" he went on. "But for the calm, you would never have seen me again—I should be gone from the South Seas for ever. But for the water running out, we should never have made this island and picked you up in your canoe. I could not believe my eyes when I saw you—but, believe it or not as you choose, I was glad to see you alive!"

"Yaas! You've got your limit!" remarked Lord Mauleverer, his eyes curiously on the beachcomber of Kalua. "But you're still stickin' to that maroonin' game, what?"

"You know it!"

"Yaas! But what boats me is, where do you come in?" said Mauleverer. "You're not doing this for your health, I suppose? What's the game?"

Ysabel Dick laughed harshly.

"I shall answer no questions," he said. "If you cannot see what is as clear as the sun at noonday, remain in ignorance; perhaps it is better so."

"But I'm fearfully curious," urged Lord Mauleverer.

The beachcomber's lip curled.

"You were always a fool, Lord Mauleverer, and you will suffer a fool's fate," he said.

"Oh, thanks!" yawned Mauly.

"So we're stopping at that island for water?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes. Parsons knows a passage in the reef on the western side—a narrow and difficult passage, but sufficient to admit so small a vessel as this with careful sailing, though a ship could not enter. The reef passage for ships is on the other side; but we shall enter on the western side, to keep clear of the savages."

The Greyfriars fellows listened to that with expressionless faces. Ysabel Dick, obviously, had no suspicion that they were acquainted with the island, and could have told him more about it than he could tell them.

The channel he spoke of must be, they knew, the one by which they had left in the canoe. The Sea-Cat was a small packet, but they knew it would be a close fit for her to enter the lagoon by that channel. But as Parsons was heading for it, no doubt it was possible, if not easy.

"Did you say savages?" murmured Bob. "Are there savages on that island, Mr. Ysabel Dick?"

"A tribe of savage cannibals, under a chief named Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo, from what Parsons has told me," answered the beachcomber. "If you have any thought of attempting to escape when we reach that island, I warn you to think better of it; you would walk straight into the cooking-pots of the cannibals. Once you set foot on the beach, I could not save you."

"Thanks for the tip," said Bob gravely. "I'm not looking forward with any real pleasure to Spanish Reef, but I should hate to figure in the menu of a cannibal chief."

"Same here," said Johnny Bull. "The samefulness is terrific," declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. The beachcomber laughed grimly.

"Van Dink would have landed you there," he said. "It is well that you are dealing with me, and not with him. You will be taken to Spanish Reef—where there are, at all events, no savages. I shall leave you all the supplies that I can obtain from Parsons. On this island your lives would not be worth a day's purchase—perhaps not an hour's. Bear that in mind if you are thinking of making fools of yourselves when we enter the lagoon."

He paused a moment.

"Your game is up," he went on. "You have had luck, but this is the end. I never doubted that you had gone down in the Flamingo till I saw you on the raft, and I never doubted that you had perished on the raft—as one of your number seems to have done—till I saw you in that canoe. How you obtained the canoe I cannot guess—"

"Bought it," said Lord Mauleverer lazily. "A dozen Australian quids—and the canoe was ours."

"You are lucky to be still alive if you met with a native crew," said the beachcomber. "Did you think of landing on this island? You were in sight of it when we picked you up."

"We were trying to give it a wide berth," said Bob. "You see, we rather fancied it was an island to turn our backs on if we could."

Which was a perfectly true statement—though the beachcomber was not likely to deduce from it that the juniors had been two or three weeks on that island before they started to give it a wide berth.

"You were wise," said the man from Ysabel. "Your lives would be worth nothing if you landed here. Keep that in mind."

He turned away from the Greyfriars

juniors and went aft and joined Dandy Peter.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

"By gum!" murmured Bob. "By gum!"

They waited and watched eagerly, though carefully concealing their eagerness, as the cutter beat down to the western side of Koo-koo's island.

Under the red sunset, at length the Sea-Cat ran in to the reef.

Dandy Peter stood beside the boat-steerer with a knitted, anxious brow as he coned his cutter into the channel.

He had cause for anxiety; for the juniors, who had made the passage in the canoe, knew how little space there was even for a light vessel like the Lukwe cutter. The beachcomber's face was anxious, too, as he looked at the teeth of coral showing through the water.

Harry Wharton & Co. felt their hearts beat as the cutter glided in. Once there came a scrape as the keel touched bottom, and for a moment they thought that the cutter would heel over and the tall mast go crashing on the reef.

But the Sea-Cat pulled on and glided past the sharp rocks into the lagoon, to the relief of all on board.

Once clear of the reef, the cutter stood across the lagoon, and the anchor was dropped—and the Greyfriars castaways looked once more on the stockade on the beach which they had hoped and expected never to see again.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

In The Lagoon!

PETER PARSONS shut his teeth, scowling.

He stared in surprise and angry exasperation at the beach, at the stockade, and at a dusky face that looked out of it, staring at the cutter.

"The niggers!" he muttered savagely.

"Then they're here!" said Ysabel Dick.

The Greyfriars fellows, at a little distance from them, said nothing. They were not surprised to see the natives, at all events.

They had left Komoo and three or four others staring after them when they had sailed in the canoe four or five hours ago.

Of that, of course, Peter Parsons knew nothing; he did not guess that they had ever been on the island at all.

But the juniors fully expected to see some of the natives there, rooting about the stockade from motives of curiosity, or to pick up anything that the castaways might have left behind them. No doubt they would return across the island to their village at nightfall, but it was hardly sunset as yet.

One brown, tattooed face looked over the fence of the stockade; two or three brown men were loafing in the shade of it; farther along the beach a canoe lay drawn up on the sand.

Six or seven natives in all were in sight, and among them the juniors recognised the familiar face of Komoo staring at them—perhaps supposing that they had, after all, returned on account of the order of the Big-feller-Chief who had forbidden them to leave the island.

All the natives were on the alert at the sight of a white man's ship in the lagoon—a very unaccustomed sight, especially on that side of the island—and startled, black eyes fixed on the cutter as it glided to its anchorage and the anchor dropped in the clear water.

Probably not once in a year did a

ship touch at that lonely island, and then only because some skipper was hard pressed for water.

There was keen excitement in every brown face on the beach. Two or three of the natives immediately cut away through the palms with the obvious intention of carrying the news across the island to the rest of the tribe.

Had Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo still been chief of the island tribe, as he had been a week ago, there was no doubt that some attempt would have been made to "cut out" the cutter as she lay in the lagoon. Such a prize would have been an immense booty for the savages, and would have spurred them on to an attack, even in face of the white man's firearms.

Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo was no longer on the island, and the new chief—Big Chief Bunter—was certainly not likely to go in for warfare if he could help it.

But it was quite possible—indeed, very probable—that the thirst for plunder would excite the natives to the attack, in which case the Big Chief would be in rather an awkward position, unless the cutter got out of the lagoon before the savages could arrive in force.

Ysabel Dick had warned the castaways that it was death to set foot on the beach, and, so far as he could know, the sight of the staring savages there confirmed the warning.

But as the matter actually stood there was no danger for the castaways, but it was quite likely that there was danger for the cutter and its crew. That, in all probability, depended on whether Peter Parsons could get his casks filled and make sail again before the horde of natives had time to arrive on the scene. Had the western side of the island been deserted, as he had expected, he would have had ample time. Now he had none to lose. Beside the natives who were in sight on the beach several more fuzzy heads and brown faces were soon to be seen looking from the palms.

Most of them, no doubt, had come on foot by the bush paths, as there was only one canoe to be seen lying on the sand. But there were probably a dozen of the islanders staring at the cutter and exchanging excited signs with one another. And the skipper of the Sea-Cat did not need telling that those who had disappeared from sight when the cutter anchored had scuttled off to carry the news.

In a very short time every brown man on the lonely island was likely to know that a white man's ship had put into the lagoon.

Dandy Peter scowled blackly at the natives on the beach.

He had not expected to see natives on that side of the island; and the sight of them was alarming.

"The niggers!" repeated Ysabel Dick. "From what you told me, they live on the other side of the island."

"Ay, ay!" grunted the sea-lawyer. "The reef passage is on the eastern side, and their village faces it across the lagoon. But it is three years since I touched here last—I know nothing of what may have happened since."

He made a gesture towards the stockade. At a glance, it could be seen that it had not been built by natives.

"White men have been here!" he said. "Gone to the cooking-pots, I reckon—but that was put up by white men, you can see that."

Bob Cherry closed one eye at his comrades.

Parsons was not looking at them; or, indeed, remembering their existence, at THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,596.

that moment. Certainly it never occurred to him that the white men who had built that stockade were now standing on his own deck!

"I reckoned I'd find this side clear of the swabs," he went on. "But I could not bank on it—we had to take the chance! If white men have been here, that may be what has brought them round the island. Anyhow, we've got to have the water, niggers or no niggers!"

"The sooner we get it on board the better!" said the man from Ysabel. "A few trips in the dinghy before there's a crowd of them here—"

Parsons nodded and stepped down into the cabin. He came back with a couple of rifles, one of which he handed to Ysabel Dick.

The dinghy, which was towed astern the cutter, was pulled alongside, water-casks tumbled into it, and Kotoo and Nalasu took the oars.

"Get in!" said Parsons. "They'll keep clear of your rifle, unless we get a crowd here—and I shall cover you from the cutter."

Dandy Peter had hoped to take in water and pull out of the lagoon unseen and unnoticed by the natives on the island, and without trouble with them. But it was not the first time that he had filled his casks on a hostile beach; and, in any case, he had no choice in the matter. The Lukwe cutter could not sail without water. Water was not merely short; the last drop had been consumed while the cutter was bearing down on the island, and every throat on board was dry. Whatever the risk, he had to take it.

But with a white man with a rifle landing with the casks, and another watching from the cutter, ready to sweep the beach with bullets, the risk was not great—unless the savages arrived in great force.

No time was lost, however.

Ysabel Dick stepped into the dinghy, the rifle under his arm, and the Lukwe boys pulled swiftly for the stream that flowed into the lagoon by the stockade.

Dandy Peter and Suloo remained on board, as did the Greyfriars juniors—the latter quite unheeded now.

That they might attempt to escape by swimming to the beach, in sight of the prowling cannibals, neither Dandy Peter nor the man from Ysabel was likely to guess—knowing nothing of the real state of affairs on the island.

But that, of course, was what was in the minds of the Greyfriars fellows. Ysabel Dick had noticed that one member of the schoolboy party was missing; but he could only take it for granted that the missing one had succumbed to the privations on the raft. He was little likely to dream of what had actually happened to Billy Bunter!

To his mind it was certain destruction for the juniors to land on the beach of that cannibal island. But to the Greyfriars fellows, it was escape and safety if they could land, and reach the village where Big Chief Bunter held sway! Little as the beachcomber dreamed it, the necessity for putting in at the island for water had given the castaways a chance for which they could hardly have ventured to hope.

Dandy Peter, standing by the rail with the rifle under his arm, watched the boat, with gleaming eyes under a knitted brow, as it pulled away from the Sea-Cat.

The natives from the shore watched it with excited faces; but as it grounded on the sand, and Ysabel Dick stepped ashore, rifle in hand, they backed away into the palms.

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The casks were immediately landed and rolled to the stream.

Ysabel Dick stood on guard, rifle in hand, while the Lukwe boys filled them. Dandy Peter watched from the cutter, ready to fire at a sign of hostility.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

"Now's our chance!" breathed Bob.

Harry Wharton nodded.

The cutter was anchored as close in as the water allowed. Hardly sixty feet separated the Sea-Cat from the shelving sand.

Dandy Peter did not give them a look. He had not the remotest suspicion that they intended or desired to swim ashore, under the eyes of the lurking savages in the palms. Probably he would not have cared, if they chose to rush on destruction, as he would have regarded it. Indeed, Van Dink, if he had had his way, would have landed them on that very beach!

"Ready!" whispered Bob.

"Yaas, old bean! Get goin'!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

Harry Wharton cast a last glance towards Parsons. His back was to them as he watched the beach where the Lukwe boys were filling the casks. Suloo stood by his side, also watching the beach over the starboard rail.

The six juniors slipped over the port rail, hung on for a moment, then dropped.

The next moment they were swimming past the stern of the cutter, and heading for the beach—at a distance from the spot where the boat's crew had landed. And Dandy Peter, glancing round at the sound of a splash, stared blankly as he saw that the Greyfriars castaways were no longer on the deck of the Sea-Cat.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

What About It?

HARRY WHARTON & CO. swam hard.

In a direct line, the shelving beach was only thirty yards distant. But they had struck off to reach a point farther along the shore, clear of the landing-party.

Ysabel Dick, watching the lurking, dusky figures under the palms as the Lukwe boys rolled the casks into the dinghy, did not even glance towards the cutter or the lagoon, and remained in ignorance of the castaways' sudden action.

Dandy Peter, from the cutter, stared after them in blank astonishment.

"You young fools!" he shouted. "Come back! Do you hear?"

The swimmers heard—but they did not heed! They swam steadily on, as fast as they could cleave the shining water of the lagoon.

The Lukwe skipper stared—and shrugged his shoulders. He had no means of pursuing the swimmers until the dinghy came back—and it had not yet left the beach. If they chose to land in the very clutches of the watching savages, it was their own look-out!

"My word!" murmured Suloo, staring at the swimmers. "That white feller go makee kai-kai along island feller."

Peter Parsons had no more doubt of that than his boat-steerer. He was amazed by what seemed, to him, the reckless foolhardiness of the schoolboys, in swimming off to the beach, under the very eyes of the savages.

Unarmed, at the very mercy of the savages as soon as they dragged themselves ashore, he had no doubt that in a few minutes he would see them grasped by savage hands and dragged

away into the bush. Never for a moment had he dreamed that they would make such an attempt, which could only end in their destruction—so far, at all events, as the Lukwe skipper could see!

The juniors swam their hardest. Bob Cherry, in the lead, cleaved the water with vigorous strokes. His comrades followed him fast.

In a very few minutes Bob felt the sand under his feet, and tramped up the shore, shaking the dripping water rather like a Newfoundland dog.

"Here we are, here we are, here we are again!" gasped Bob, grinning back at his comrades as they dragged themselves from the water.

Harry Wharton shot a swift glance along the beach.

They had landed a good hundred yards from the spot where the dinghy lay, with Kotoo and Nalasu rolling the filled casks into it.

Wharton could not see Ysabel Dick; the stockade interposed between the juniors and the beachcomber.

But, as his glance turned back on the cutter, he saw Peter Parsons and Suloo staring.

"Come on!" said Harry.

The beachcomber did not know that they had left the cutter. Whether he would attempt to recapture them when he discovered it, they did not know; but they were not going to give him a chance.

Hardly waiting to draw breath after that rapid swim, they ran up the beach towards the palms.

They heard a shout from the cutter. Peter Parsons was shouting—but they were too distant to catch his words. Probably the Lukwe skipper was shouting a last warning to them, that they were running into the hands of the cannibals!

That, in point of fact, was exactly what they were doing—though not, as Dandy Peter naturally supposed, with the cooking-pots for their destination—not, at all events, so long as Big Chief Bunter reigned on the cannibal island.

In a couple of minutes they were in the palms—out of sight of eyes from the cutter.

Dandy Peter gave another shrug as they disappeared from his sight. Not for a moment did he doubt that his were the last white man's eyes that would ever see them alive!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" gasped Bob, as a brown figure in a loin-cloth appeared among the palms, and a tattooed face grinned at the juniors.

It was Komoo; who had watched them land and race up the beach.

"You comey back along this place, all samee. Big-feller-Chief he say!" grinned Komoo.

"Eh? Oh, yes!" gasped Bob. "Here we are again, old coffee-bean—all samee Big-feller-Chief he say!"

The juniors chuckled breathlessly. The order of Big Chief Bunter would hardly have caused their return to the island; but Komoo was welcome to think what he liked on that subject.

"Big-feller-Chief no likee, you go along sea along canoe!" said Komoo. "You comey back along ship belong white feller! What place that feller canoe he stop?"

"That feller canoe walk along bottom sea!" answered Bob. "What place that Big-feller-Chief he stop?"

"He stop along house belong him," answered Komoo.

Bob glanced round at his friends.

"Are we going to butt in on his nibs, or stick here?" he asked. "I dare say that big-feller-blithering-Owl would be glad to see us—"



Dandy Peter's eyes suddenly fell on Komoo, who was rolling mass after mass of coral into the channel, to come to rest on top of the sunken canoe. "Who'd have dreamed of it in a nigger?" snarled the Lukwe skipper. "If the channel's blocked, we're trapped!"

"Bother him!" granted Johnny Bull. "We're all right here! We can get back to our stockade when that cutter's gone."

"Right as rain!" said Frank Nugent. "They won't hang on any longer than they can help—they're not at peace with the natives as we are—they don't know anything about Big Chief Bunter."

"That's so!" agreed Harry Wharton. "I don't suppose that ruffian Parsons cares a boiled bean whether we're left here or not—and if Ysabel Dick gets after us here, we can keep clear of him easily enough. He's not likely to leave the beach, with natives in the bush."

"Hardly!" agreed Bob.

"The waitfulness and the watchfulness is the proper caper!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and disgusting Parsons will sail as soon as he can—"

"No doubt about that!" said Harry. "We shall see the last of the cutter in an hour at the most, I think. We can get back to the stockade when they're clear."

"And carry on as usual!" chuckled Bob. "Then we'll get hold of another canoe and make another start—tomorrow, what?"

"What-ho!"

The Famous Five were in a mood of keen satisfaction as they wrung the water from their clothes, under the palms.

Had their enemies known, had they the faintest suspicion that the castaways were on friendly terms with the natives of the island, and had in fact obtained the canoe from them, certainly they would have been given no chance of getting ashore. Probably Parsons did not guess the truth yet; but they cared little if he did. They were out of his power now, and had nothing to fear either from him or the beachcomber.

Neither of them, it was fairly certain, would venture into the bush; the precautions they had taken in landing the water-casks, showed that much. It was, in fact, certain that Peter Parsons would pull out of the lagoon as soon as he had the water on board, leaving them to their fate. That, as it happened, was exactly what they wanted!

Lord Mauleverer took no part in the discussion.

Maully, standing under the palms, was looking back, through an opening of the trees, at the lagoon and the anchored cutter.

The juniors, in the palms, were out of sight from the Sea-Cat; but they could see the cutter, through the palms.

There was a deep wrinkle of thought in Lord Mauleverer's noble brow. He could see the dinghy pulling back to the cutter, with two filled casks on board. The boat was so small, that several trips were required, before all the casks were filled.

Bob Cherry gave the schoolboy earl a smack on the shoulder.

Maully came out of his meditations, whatever they were, with a howl.

"Ow! What the dooce—"

"Penny for 'em, old bean!" grinned Bob. "Wherefore that jolly old wrinkle in your aristocratic brow? What have you got in your old noddle?"

"Ow! Look here, you men, I've been thinkin'—"

"Any result?" grinned Bob.

"Yaas! That ruffian Parsons sank our canoe—piracy on the high seas, what? One good turn deserves another—same with a bad turn! He's sunk our craft—what about borrowin' his?"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

The Famous Five fairly blinked at Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship smiled.

"Well, what about it?" he asked.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Big Chief Bunter On The War path!

BILLY BUNTER sat up and blinked through his spectacles, with a twinge of uneasiness.

He looked out of the wide doorway of the devil-house in the native village—and did not like what he saw.

A crowd of natives had gathered. Two or three brown figures in loin-cloths had come from the direction of the bush, breathless with running; and the rest were listening eagerly to what they had to say.

Totototo was brandishing a spear as he listened—and others of the natives were displaying weapons, and excitement was growing in all the brown, tattooed faces.

Big Chief Bunter did not like the look of it.

What was the cause of the excitement, he did not know. But it looked like a coming outbreak on the part of the natives—reminding Bunter very disagreeably of what they had been like in the first days on Koo-koo's island.

The Famous Five had warned Bunter that his peculiar position on the island could not last—a warning that the fat Owl had passed utterly unheeded. He rather wished that he had heeded it now.

It had given him rather a jolt when he learned that the juniors were gone in the canoe. Big Chief as he was, with the benighted savages feeding from his fat hand, Bunter did not relish the idea of being left alone on the lonely island with the cannibals.

Hence his lordly order to the casta-

ways not to go—which, from Billy Bunter's point of view, they ought to have obeyed without question, as they were nobodies and Bunter was not only somebody, but practically everybody!

They had gone, all the same, just as if William George Bunter was not a big chief at all, but merely a fat and fatuous ass whom they disregarded!

It was very annoying to the Big Chief—and it made him a little uneasy, too! Now, at the signs of an outbreak among the savages, he was more than a little uneasy.

True, he could make the shark-god speak, at any time; and, hitherto, the natives had hearkened to the voice of O-O-loluo with slavish awe and obedience. But if that resource failed him—

At the thought of that Bunter felt his fat flesh creep. Even in Europe, it is said to be only a single step from the throne to the scaffold! On Koo-koo's island it was a very short step from the chiefship to the cooking-pots, if the natives got their backs up. And even the short-sighted Owl of the Remove could see that great excitement was growing.

Suddenly, with a hubbub of voices, the crowd turned towards the devil-house and came crowding along, Totototo in the lead.

Bunter's fat heart quaked.

At that moment, the Big Chief would have been glad to scuttle like a small rabbit, and hide himself in the deepest recess of the bush.

Fifty or sixty savages were coming, in a body, led by Totototo, brandishing his spear. Toto had been his faithful guard—still in the happy anticipation of the munificent rewards promised him by the shark-god! But his look was terrifying now to the fat Owl of Greyfriars.

But, to his immense relief, the crowd stopped on the coral platform outside the doorway, and Toto advanced in front of them, lowering his spear. He bowed his fuzzy head to the Big Chief!

It was not—so far at least—an outbreak directed against the Big Chief; O-O-loluo's protection still held good! But something was up, that was very plain.

Bunter gave a little fat cough—ready to weigh in with ventriloquism, if O-O-loluo was required to speak again!

"White feller ship he come, sar!" said Totototo.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He understood now what had excited the natives. It was a rare event!

The fat Owl turned his spectacles towards the lagoon, visible from the doorway of the devil-house, stretching wide and blue towards the reef.

There were canoes in the lagoon, but no sign of a ship! Bunter knew that the reef passage was on this side of the island, where a ship, if it came, had to enter, if it entered the lagoon at all. There was one other channel in the circling reef, large enough for canoes or for small craft of light draught, but only the one passage for a ship.

From what Totototo stated, Bunter expected to see a ship in the lagoon: but no ship was to be seen. Neither in the lagoon, nor on the open sea beyond the barrier reef, was there a sign of a sail!

He blinked at Toto again.

"No see feller ship, eye belong me," he said.

"He no stop along this place, sar!" explained Totototo. "He stop along lagoon other side this feller island, sar."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

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He knew now why the breathless runners had come scuttling through the bush. He knew, too, that the ship must be a small vessel, or it could not have entered the lagoon on the western side. Still, Bunter was glad to hear that a white man's ship had arrived.

The fat Owl was not willing to leave the island in a canoe and risk the horrors of the raft over again. But he was willing to leave in a white man's ship; especially now that the other fellows were gone and he was left alone among the cannibals.

At the same time, he was not wholly willing to give up his chief-ship—if it was going to last!

A few minutes ago, watching the excited mob of natives, he would gladly have got away on any imaginable terms. But he was reassured now.

"Little feller ship, sar, stop along lagoon!" said Totototo. "Big-feller-Chief come along us feller, sar?"

"What-ho!" answered Bunter cheerfully. "I mean, this feller come along you, along see feller ship, eye belong him."

He heaved himself to his feet.

There was a grin of satisfaction on Totototo's brown face, reflected on the crowd of other faces.

"You bring feller chair belong me, along this place!" ordered Bunter. "Me go plenty too quick, along see that feller ship."

Since he had been a big chief, Billy Bunter had almost given up walking as a means of locomotion. He was carried in a chair slung between two poles, on the shoulders of four brawny Kanakas.

Bunter had never liked exertion, and now that he was monarch of all he surveyed, he saw no reason for exerting himself—and he didn't.

The chair was brought instantly, and the fat junior sat in it, on cushions stuffed with feathers.

Sprawling elegantly in the chair of state, he was carried away from the devil-house—little dreaming, at the moment, that he was leaving it for good and that he had looked his last on O-O-loluo, the shark-god!

Billy Bunter's fat brain was not quick on the up-take.

The arrival of a white man's ship was a welcome event to him: and he was looking at the matter entirely from his own point of view! That it caused great excitement among the natives, he could see: but it did not occur to him, at the moment, what was passing in that swarm of fuzzy brains.

He was going across the island to the western lagoon, to look at the white man's ship there, and decide for himself whether he would leave the island in it, or carry on as Big-feller-Chief!

A good deal depended on the sort of ship it was, and whether the grub on board was likely to be good!

It was like Bunter to concentrate his fat thoughts entirely on himself; regardless of less important persons.

On the whole, he thought he would go in that ship, as the other fellows had left him on his own. Still, he was unwilling to part with his chief-ship. Anyhow, it was for him to decide, and he could take his time about it.

In that happy and satisfied frame of mind, the fat junior sprawled in the chair and was carried through the palms and along the bush paths.

It was not till he was on the bush that he noticed that a whole swarm of natives followed on behind. He lifted a fat head, and blinked back at them—and then blinked at Totototo, who was striding beside him.

"What name all feller come along bush?" he asked.

Toto stared at him.

"All feller come, along white feller ship stop along lagoon!" he answered. "This feller come leg belong him, other feller come canoe belong him—all feller come."

Totototo grinned with happy anticipation.

"Little feller ship," he said. "Us feller plenty too much strong along feller belong little feller ship! Plenty good thing stop along that ship, belong white feller! Belong us feller, along kill-dead white feller."

"Eh?" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at Totototo in horror.

"Kill-dead white feller plenty too quick!" said Totototo, with relish. "Plenty canoe come along lagoon, sar! Makee head belong that feller smoke along wood fire, sar."

"Wha-a-t?"

"Makee big feller feast along long-pig!" said Toto. "Big Chief likee long-pig! Plenty long-pig stop, along kill-dead white feller."

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter sank back on his feather cushions, almost overcome. It dawned on his fat brain now.

In the time of Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo, the chief would have been as fiercely eager as any other savage there to attack and plunder a white man's ship: massacre the crew, and smoke their heads as trophies in the wood fires.

The benighted islanders expected the same of their new chief.

Bunter realised it with horror.

Under the influence of O-O-loluo, they had taken him for their chief. They expected him to play a chief's part.

Bunter had expected nothing of the kind—foreseen nothing of the kind. So far as he had thought of the possible coming of a ship at all, he had thought of it wholly and solely in connection with the rescue of his fat and important self. Now he had to think of it from the point of view of his subjects.

"Oh crikey!" moaned Bunter.

The whole tribe was swarming across the island, or going round in their canoes to attack the white man's ship! Bunter understood it now. And the Big-feller-Chief was expected to take the lead. Probably he would be expected to share in the cannibal feast that would follow!

Billy Bunter moaned!

From the bottom of his fat heart, he wished that he was anywhere but on that dreadful island, and anything but a Big-feller-Chief!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Big Idea!

"WHAT about it?" repeated Lord Mauleverer.

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at his lordship.

"What about it?" stuttered Bob Cherry.

"Yaas!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Lord Mauleverer, as he watched the anchored cutter from the palms, had been thinking! This was the result—a result that almost took away the breath of the Famous Five. They just gazed at him.

"Surprised you?" asked Mauly.

"Just a few!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"The surprisefulness is terrific!"

"Well, look how the matter stands," argued Mauleverer. "That piratical

skunk sank our canoe, and bagged us as prisoners, to maroon us somewhere! That puts him out of court! If we can get the upper hand, and bag his ship to get away from this salubrious spot, we're justified—"

"Oh, that's all right!" gasped Bob. "We're justified all right—needn't bother about that! Think he'll let us!"

"Yaas, if he can't help it!"

"But how—what the dickens—my dear chap—"

"Gone to sleep and dreaming, Mauly?"

Lord Mauleverer smiled. "That Lukwe scoundrel, on that cutter, thinks we've run into the jaws of the cannibals!" he said. "Neither he, nor the other rotter when he hears, will fancy that we shall never be seen alive again. But, as the matter stands, we're all right: and we've got a pull with the Big Chief of this jolly old island—what?"

"That frumpious ass Bunter—" said Johnny Bull.

"Exactly! I'm not denyin' that Bunter is a silly ass, and an irritatin' fathead, and a blitherin' idiot, and—no good runnin' through the list. But he's Big Chief: and the jolly old niggers will take their marchin' orders from him—so long as it lasts! The fact that dear old Komoo isn't stickin' his spear into us, shows that it's still lastin', what?"

"Oh quite!" Harry Wharton laughed. "But—"

"Word to Bunter—and we get a tremendous big force to deal with those rotters, what?" said Lord Mauleverer. "Parsons has asked for it, by playin' the jolly old pirate—why shouldn't he have what he's asked for?"

"By all means! But—"

"It means treatin' Bunter like a Big Chief, instead of a little ass! Never mind that—he is, at the moment, a Big Chief—why shouldn't we admit it? And if we get hold of that cutter, we can save him as well as ourselves."

"But we can't!" howled Bob.

"Think not?"

"Well, how?" demanded Bob. "That villain Parsons would pot us with his rifle as soon as he'd pot a nigger, if we tried to collar his cutter."

"Yaas! We risk that, of course!" yawned Mauleverer. "Not so risky as stickin' on a cannibal island, or puttin' to sea in a canoe! We shall be in pretty strong force, you know, if the Big Chief rallies round."

"My dear chap," said Harry, "do you fancy that Parsons will stick in the lagoon to be attacked by a swarm of savages? He's filling his casks as fast as he can—but he won't stay to finish filling them if the niggers turn up in force. He will pull out long before they can get at him—from across the island."

"Think so?"

"Well, don't you, you ass?" demanded Bob Cherry. "Think he will stick in the lagoon to scrap with twenty or thirty canoes packed with cannibals?"

"Yaas—if he can't get out."

"I suppose he can get out as easily as he got in!" said Nugent.

"Well, that's the question, can he?" said Lord Mauleverer. "That channel in the reef on this side was a close fit for the cutter comin' in. There's a channel for ships on the other side, but he can't make that without going through the enemy's fleet—what?"

"I know that; and it can just scrape out again, can't it?"

"Well, that depends!" said Lord Mauleverer. "My idea is that it can't—if I can persuade our friend Komoo to sink a canoe in the channel!"

"What?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Look at it!" urged Mauleverer. "It was a close fit comin' in—I felt a scrape on the coral. There was just room for the Sea-Cat to wedge through. Anythin' blockin' that channel, and she's a prisoner in the lagoon."

"Oh, gum!" said Bob.

His eyes danced.

All the juniors remembered how closely the cutter had scraped in at the narrow channel in the reef. Even a few coral rocks, probably, would have blocked it sufficiently to bar the way. A sunken canoe would do it beyond doubt. That was what Mauly had been thinking of!

"My only summer hat!" said Johnny Bull. "Why, if Parsons couldn't get out, we've got his cutter—if that fat fool stands by us with the niggers."

"Yaas! All it needs is time for the jolly old Big Chief to rally round!" said Lord Mauleverer. "There's a canoe on the beach—and here's Komoo! What about puttin' it to him?"

"Go it!" chuckled Bob.

Komoo was watching the castaways, doubtless keeping an eye on them, now that they had returned, to see that they did not disregard Big Chief's orders again!

Lord Mauleverer ambled across to him, and the brown man gave him an inquiring look.

"You feller Komoo, you likee plenty piecee gold money?" asked Mauleverer.

"Me likee plenty too much, sar!" answered Komoo. "Me savvy you got plenty piecee gold money, sar. S'pose Big-feller-Chief no say you taboo along spear belong me, me makee you go finish, close-up, takee that feller piecee gold money."

"Oh gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

Komoo grinned cheerfully.

"Me friend along you, sar, all samee Big-feller-Chief he say!" he added. "No makee go finish!"

"Thanks aw'fly!" gasped Mauleverer. "I should hate to go finish along spear belong you, my brown friend. But to come back to the subject, you likee piecee gold money stop along you."

"Yessar, likee too much."

"Us feller no likee white feller ship go along sea!" said Lord Mauleverer. "S'pose feller canoe stop along passage along reef, no can! You savvy?"

Komoo rubbed his brown nose in thought. This required thinking out by the simple, savage mind. Komoo was, in point of fact, expecting the arrival of his tribesmen across the island to make an attempt on the cutter in the lagoon. But the device of blocking the passage in the reef to prevent the escape of the cutter

before the tribe arrived had not occurred to his thick skull. And it took him a full minute to get it clear after Mauleverer had suggested it.

Then he showed all his teeth—a magnificent set—in a gleeful grin when he understood.

"My word!" said Komoo. "Brain belong white feller walk about too much! White feller too much savvy."

"You sinkee feller canoe, along passage along reef, me givee two-five piecee gold money!" said Mauleverer.

Komoo's grin widened. Now that Mauly had put the idea into his fuzzy head, he would probably have carried it out unrewarded. But ten pieces of gold money settled the matter beyond question or doubt. Probably Komoo would have been prepared to kai-kai a fellow-tribesman for less than that!

"Me makee all samee you say, sar!" he grinned. "Oh, yessar! Me likee too much two-five piecee gold money he stop along me."

"Sink the canoe in the channel, and chuck in some blocks of coral, what?" said Lord Mauleverer. "Makee sinkee feller canoe, makee big-feller coral stop along that canoe—savvy?"

"Me savvy, sar!"

There was a delay of a few minutes while Komoo tested, with his teeth, each of the Australian sovereigns that Mauly cheerfully handed over to him. Then he packed them away in his mop of hair, and cut away through the palms to the beach.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Trapped!

"FELLER canoe stop along lagoon, sar!" said Suloo.

Dandy Peter glanced round carelessly.

(Continued on next page.)



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With or without completing the filling of the casks, he was ready to swing up the anchor and cut and run at a sign of a hostile fleet of canoes coming round the island. But he knew that there was no danger of that as yet. News had been carried across the island, but it could hardly have reached the native village on the other side—and, when it did, it would take time for the savages to get into action.

That danger was distant; the near danger was some attempt to rush the water party by the natives in the bush; and for that he was watching like a hawk, ready to spray the beach with bullets from his magazine-rifle.

As Suloo pointed out a solitary canoe with his black finger, Parsons gave it only a careless glance, and did not look again.

There was nothing to fear from a single canoe with a single man in it.

He had noticed the canoe lying on the sand when he anchored, some distance along the shore from the stockade. Now a brown savage had pushed off in it and was paddling swiftly across the wide lagoon towards the reef—but coming nowhere near the Sea-Cat.

It mattered nothing to Parsons if a savage paddled out to the reef, so long as he kept clear of the cutter. And that Komoo was doing—he had no desire to bring himself under the fire of the white man's rifle.

The canoe shot away almost like an arrow, and, keeping clear of the anchored cutter in a wide curve, shot on to the reef passage.

Dandy Peter, so far as he heeded it at all, supposed that the canoe was running out to sea; and cared nothing whether it did or not.

His gaze returned to Ysabel Dick, standing by the stockade on the beach on the bank of the stream.

Twice the Lukwe boys had ferried across with the dinghy, each time bringing two filled casks, and taking back two empty ones to fill. Ysabel Dick remained on the beach, rifle in hand, and watchful for natives. There were a dozen casks to fill—which meant six trips in the little dinghy, of which two had now been made.

In case of danger, Dandy Peter was ready to pull out, and make the best of what he had. But there was, so far as he knew, no danger so far—and he had time to take on a full supply. Two casks were now being filled, and for the third time, Kotoo and Nalasu rowed back to the cutter, and they were swung on board, and exchanged for two more empty ones.

Ysabel Dick, on the beach, was still unaware of the fact that the Greyfriars juniors had swum off from the cutter. Peter Parsons had almost dismissed it from his mind.

He had not the slightest doubt that they had gone to their deaths—but they had gone of their own accord, and that was that! Had they come scuttling back to the cutter with savages in pursuit, he would have covered their retreat with his rifle. But he had not the slightest idea or intention of making any effort to get them back—it was, in fact, impossible, if he had wished it: for not for his life would he have dared venture into the bush where the tattooed cannibals were lurking.

For a fourth time the dinghy crossed and re-crossed.

Dandy Peter, keeping his look-out on the beach, did not even glance again after the canoe that had shot into the reef passage.

He was blissfully ignorant of the fact that Komoo, having paddled the long

canoe into the narrow, tortuous passage through the coral, had capsized it there, sinking it in the narrowest and shallowest part of the channel—the spot where the cutter's keel had scraped coming in.

Once the canoe was sunk there, even another canoe would have found difficulty in threading a way over it; for the Sea-Cat it was an impossibility. Although he did not yet know it, Peter Parsons was a prisoner in the lagoon.

Komoo had scrambled on the reef. But he was not finished yet. Here and there, on the rugged reef, were jagged masses of coral that had broken loose in the tides. Komoo was rolling them, one after another, to pile on the sunken canoe.

The dinghy made its fifth trip, under Dandy Peter's watchful eyes. Five or six tattooed faces were still peering from the palms, but none of the natives ventured under fire of the rifles. No doubt it would be a different story when a whole swarm of savages arrived on the scene; but by that time the Sea-Cat was going to be out of the lagoon, on the seaward side of the barrier reef—at least, Dandy Peter had no doubt that it was. They could come swarming across the island by the bush paths or round the island in their canoes—but they would find him standing out to sea.

Still, he was anxious to be gone, and he was glad when the dinghy went on its last trip and the breathless, sweating Lukwe boys rolled the last two casks to the stream and filled them.

The casks were rolled back to the boat and heaved on board, and this time Ysabel Dick stepped into the dinghy to return to the cutter.

Dandy Peter dropped his rifle-butt to the deck, with a breath of relief. He had reckoned that he had time, and he had had ample. There was no sign or sound, so far, of the savage horde arriving or of a fleet of war-canoes coming round the circling shore.

The last casks were heaved on board, and Ysabel Dick stepped on after them. He was glad enough to get back on the cutter. He had been less than an hour on the beach, but every minute had been an anxious one.

"All clear!" said Parsons, with a nod.

"I reckon the sooner we pull out the better," said the beachcomber. Then, as he saw that the schoolboys were no longer on the cutter's deck, he stared blankly. "Where are the boys?"

Parsons shrugged his shoulders.

"Gone!" he answered.

The beachcomber's eyes blazed.

"You——" he began.

"Fool!" snarled Dandy Peter. "They slipped into the water when my back was turned and swam to the beach."

Ysabel Dick's eyes swept round to the beach. Nothing was to be seen of the Greyfriars juniors, though several tattooed faces could be seen, watching from the palms. His face whitened.

"You could have stopped them," he muttered huskily.

"Only by firing on them as they went. Did you want me to do that?" sneered Parsons. "They were warned—I heard you warn them—and they could see the savages with their own eyes! I knew no more than you did, that they would be mad enough to run into the hands of the cannibals. I cannot understand it now—it was sheer madness! They ran up the beach into the palms when they landed; the niggers must have got them at once."

The beachcomber stood staring.

The thick palm groves ashore had swallowed the castaways from sight; obviously, if the natives were hostile, they had fallen into savage hands. And that the natives were hostile he could

not doubt. He stood breathing hard. They had gone to their death—he was assured of that; already they had been speared, unless they were taken alive, to be kept for the feast of long-pig. In either case, they were beyond the reach of help.

"The mad fools!" muttered the beachcomber. "To rush on death—certain death—they must have been out of their senses! At Spanish Reef they would have been safe—you heard me tell them——"

Parsons gave another shrug.

"You are through with them now," he said. "It was not your doing—or mine! And the sooner we're out of this the better."

Ysabel Dick clenched his hands. But he nodded.

"Van Dink would have landed them here," said Dandy Peter. "They have chosen to land themselves! Up hook!"

"We cannot save them," muttered the beachcomber.

Parsons laughed.

"We cannot save ourselves if we hang on here till the natives gather in force," he answered. "The hook comes up now!"

The anchor swung away from the coral. It was then, and not till then, that Dandy Peter's eyes fell on the figure on the reef.

Komoo was rolling his twelfth mass of coral into the channel, to come to rest on top of the sunken canoe.

Peter Parsons stared at him, not understanding for a moment; then, as he saw that the native was on the reef, with no sign of his canoe, the truth rushed on his mind.

Hardy and reckless as was the sea-lawyer of Lukwe, the colour wavered in his cheek.

He grasped his rifle, threw it to his shoulder, and fired at the islander on the reef. The report of the rifle rolled across the lagoon.

But the cutter was anchored close in to the beach of the island, and the lagoon was wide. The distance to the barrier reef was too great for effective shooting.

The bullet missed Komoo by yards. But at the sound of the shot the brown man gave a bound, staring round towards the cutter.

Then, as another shot rang from the Sea-Cat, he ran swiftly along the reef, leaping from rock to rock in rapid flight.

Dandy Peter fired a third shot as he fled; but Komoo was untouched, as he ran and dodged on the rugged, circling reef, till, far out of range from the Sea-Cat, he plunged into the lagoon, to swim back to the island.

Dandy Peter spat out oath after oath, while Ysabel Dick eyed him in amazed inquiry.

"What——" exclaimed the beachcomber.

"Are you blind?" snarled Dandy Peter. "Did you not see that nigger on the reef? Where is his canoe?"

"Had he a canoe?"

"He had!" The Lukwe skipper ground his teeth with rage. "Who'd have dreamed of it—in a nigger—a thick-skulled Kanaka? Cannot you see, fool, he has sunk his canoe in the channel——"

"Oh!" breathed Ysabel Dick.

"If it's blocked we're trapped—trapped!"—the sea-lawyer clenched his fists—"trapped!"

"The other channel—round the island——"

"Through a fleet of canoes—and hundreds of niggers!" snarled Dandy Peter. "Talk sense! They're coming round the island already—hundreds,



Under the nodding palms on the beach Dandy Peters was able to pick out white faces among brown. "By hokey!" he breathed, turning to Ysabel Dick. "Look, you fool! Lord Mauleverer is not dead! There he stands—he and his friends! By some devil's luck they have made friends with the natives of the island!"

most likely! Sink or swim, we've got to make that passage."

And, with a desperate face, the Lukwe skipper shouted to his crew, and the Sea-Cat stood across the lagoon—for the blocked channel!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Up to Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

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

"Bunter, old fat bean!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the Famous Five. He blinked at them in great astonishment—mingled with relief. He had not expected to see them, but he was undoubtedly glad to do so!

The last news he had had of the castaways was that they had left the island in a canoe, long hours since, and up to this moment he had had no idea that they had returned. And here they were!

Emerging from the bush path, the fat Owl sighted the juniors under the palms, and seldom, or never, had he been so glad to see them.

"Halt!" rapped Bunter. "I mean to say, you feller, stop along this place."

Totototo came to an immediate halt and waved his spear as a sign to the following horde. They surged to a disorderly halt.

But there were grunts and howls and even snarls from the savages. They were obeying the Big Chief—but reluctantly and impatiently. They wanted to get on to the lagoon—and the plunder of the white man's ship, if it were still there.

"What name we stop along this place, sar?" asked Totototo.

"You stop along this place along me

say stop along this place!" snapped Bunter. "You no do all samee me say, O-O-loluo send big fire burn up inside belong you, all samee he say voice belong him."

The fat chief was recovering himself. He realised that, in the present state of excitement, his chiefship trembled in the balance if he opposed the savage intentions of the tribesmen. Still, he was Big-feller-Chief, and the name of O-O-loluo was very potent. Totototo himself had heard the voice of the shark-god giving commands, and certainly had never dreamed that that voice proceeded from a fat ventriloquist. He had no doubt of O-O-loluo's power and will to send a fire to burn up his inside—and he did not, naturally, like the idea of such an internal combustion! Still, he looked very discontented as he stood at a halt.

Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round Bunter's chair of state, which came to a rest on the earth, the bearers stepping back.

"I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

"Here we are again, old fat bean—I mean, your podgy highness!" grinned Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We were coming across the island to see you, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "But as you're here—"

"Yaas; joinin' the ranks of your jolly old loyal subjects!" chuckled Lord Mauleverer. "What?"

"I—I say, you fellows, is there a ship in the lagoon?" gasped Bunter.

"Not exactly a ship—a cutter," answered Bob.

"Oh lor'! It ain't gone yet?"

"No fear!"

"Oh crikey!"

Big Chief Bunter had nourished a hope that the white man's ship might

have pulled out, before he arrived with his savage army—as, indeed, it certainly would have done, but for Mauly's big idea, carried out by Komoo.

"We've got something to say to you, Bunter!" said Harry. "Send your men on, while we tell you—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"And lose no time, fathead!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Buck up, ass!"

Billy Bunter did not buck up. He blinked at the Famous Five, with a lofty and disdainful blink.

His chiefship on the cannibal island was taking an unexpected and troublesome turn. But he was Big-feller-Chief—and if these cheeky sweeps had forgotten the fact, he was prepared to remind them of the same.

"Are you fellows giving me orders?" he asked, with dignity.

"Look here—"

"If you are, you'd better shut up! Haven't I explained already that I've no use for cheek?" said Bunter calmly.

"You blithering owl—"

"That's enough from you, Bull!"

"By gum—I—"

"Shut up, Johnny, old man!" said Bob hastily.

It was no time for the Famous Five to tell Billy Bunter what they thought of him. They had planned the capture of the cutter, and the capture depended on support from the Big Chief. If they succeeded, they were going to save Bunter, as well as themselves—and irritating ass as he was, they were anxious to save him.

Moreover, the Big Chief was boss of the show, so to speak, more than ever now; for the juniors were quite un-

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armed, and surrounded by a mob of savages.

Bunter's subjects were showing signs of hostility towards them—ferocious as were their intentions towards the cutter and its crew.

They were still "friends belong Big-feller-Chief," but that was the only circumstance that saved them from lunging spears!

Bunter, obviously, was a man to be treated with tact—in these peculiar and extraordinary circumstances.

Johnny Bull had no tact to spare for him, so he grunted and was silent. His friends felt more disposed to kick Bunter than to treat him with tact! Fortunately, Lord Mauleverer had tact and urbanity sufficient for the occasion. His lordship was more amused than irritated by the fat Owl's antics.

"Leave it to me, you men!" murmured Mauly. "Bunter, old bean, may a fellow make a suggestion?"

"Oh, certainly!" said the Big Chief. "But if you fancy that you're going to give me orders—"

"Not the teeniest-weeniest!" said Mauleverer amiably.

"Well, carry on, then!" said Bunter graciously.

"Suppose you send your jolly army ahead while we have a little pow-wow!" suggested Mauleverer. "They seem rather eager to get on."

"Oh, all right! Totototo, you goy along lagoon, stop along beach, along me come!" said the Big Chief. "You tell feller along canoe stop along me come."

"Yessar!" said Totototo.

Toto, evidently glad to get forward, marched on, followed by the rest of the islanders. Billy Bunter was left with the castaways.

"I say, you fellows, you're sure that ship's still in the lagoon?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"Yes, rather."

"They can't get at it till the canoes come round," said Bunter. "Oh crikey! I was going to have a look at it, you know, and decide whether I'd get off the island in it, but those beasts—oh lor'! I shall have to stop them, somehow; but—oh crikey!"

"They're on the warpath?" asked Bob. "They looked rather like it."

"The beasts went to bag the ship, and kai-kai the crew!" gasped Bunter. "Of course, they'll do as I tell them, but—but—"

Evidently the fat chief realised that there was a "but."

"You'll have to keep them in hand, old fat man!" said Lord Mauleverer. "But that's what we want, Bunter—you see, we've got a nigger to block up the channel in the reef, to keep that cutter in the lagoon, and we want you to help to collar it. It's Parson's cutter—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "That beast—the brute who left us on the raft! Not much good if I'd asked him to take me off the island, then!"

"Not a lot!" grinned Mauleverer. "He sank our canoe at sea, old bean, and we're going to bag his cutter in exchange—with your help. See?"

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"If we get hold of that cutter, we can sail away," said Mauleverer. "Nothing like bein' on the raft, old bean, or in a canoe, either! We can sail right back to Kalua and jolly old McTab!"

"Oh!" repeated Bunter.

"All we want is you to back us up with your jolly old army and fleet!" smiled Lord Mauleverer.

"Of course, I shall do that!" said Bunter. "The fact is, I shan't be sorry to get away, as—as it turns out! But—"

"Yaas?"

"I'll take the matter in hand! But I want you fellows to understand, first and last, that I'm taking it in hand, and that I've got no use for cheek or insubordination!" said Bunter firmly. "That's got to be understood, and understood quite clearly."

Johnny Bull opened his lips—and closed them again. The Co. stood silent. Big Chief Bunter was indispensable to the success of Maule's plan, and Big Chief Bunter had to be given his head—fat as it was! The Famous Five manfully suppressed their feelings.

"Yaas!" said Lord Mauleverer, with cheerful urbanity. "Take it in hand, old bean—and put it through!"

Billy Bunter honoured him with a gracious nod.

"Leave it to me!" he said.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

No Escape!

BUMP!

Peter Parsons rapped out a fierce oath.

The Sea-Cat was in the narrow, tortuous reef passage. The Lukwe skipper, with a set, desperate face, had taken the chance—and it was the only chance. The cutter stood across the lagoon, and entered the passage, so narrow and close, that the rocks almost scraped her hull on either side. Ahead lay the sunken canoe, piled with coral rocks—and whether it blocked the passage or whether it could be scraped over, Dandy Peter did not know until he reached it—but he did know that he had to take the chance.

To sail round the island, and attempt to get out by the larger passage on the eastern side, was to ask for destruction. It meant heading into a swarm of savage enemies.

Already, in the distance, canoes could be sighted, coming round both sides of the island. They were still far distant, and had no chance of overhauling the cutter, if she made the passage in the reef. Once on the open Pacific, Dandy Peter would have laughed at pursuit.

All depended on whether the Sea-Cat could push through the channel blocked by the sunken canoe. Dandy Peter had no choice—but to take the chance, desperate as it was; for the alternative was to encounter the swarm of canoes in the lagoon, backed up by the horde of natives on shore—and that was the finish.

But reckless and hardy as he was, the sea-lawyer's heart beat fast as his cutter entered the passage.

Ysabel Dick stood with set lips. The three Lukwe boys stood with grim black faces. Below, the Dutchman groaned in his bunk, the only man on board who did not know that life or death trembled in the balance, to be decided in the next few minutes.

Bump—and the cutter trembled fore and aft! She had reached the obstruction in the channel, and the keel thudded on it. For a second longer, perhaps, Dandy Peter hoped that she would pull clear. But it was only for one second. Then he knew that he was hopelessly trapped.

The Sea-Cat bumped, and thudded, and shivered, and lost way. She receded from the obstruction, and her hull scraped along the rocks at the side of the channel.

Dandy Peter spat out a bitter oath.

There was no passage—till the channel was cleared! Had the cutter been going fast, she would have piled up. As it was, she bumped and receded, jolting on the rocks that scraped along her hull.

The sea-lawyer's curse was echoed by another from the beachcomber. He knew now, as well as Dandy Peter, that all was lost.

"The game's up!" breathed the man from Ysabel.

The Lukwe boys did not speak. Their eyes were turned on the crowd of canoes gathering in the lagoon from both sides of the island. There were twenty canoes to be seen, though still distant; but distant as they were, it could be seen that they were packed with savages. And on the island beach, another swarm was visible.

Dandy Peter picked up his rifle.

"Is there a chance?" muttered the beachcomber.

HURRAH for the HOLIDAY ANNUAL!



Billy Bunter knows what's good! In the Greyfriars HOLIDAY ANNUAL you will meet Bunter with Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, and favourite characters from St. Jim's and Rookwood Schools. The Greyfriars HOLIDAY ANNUAL also features grand stories of mystery and adventure; it's going to delight everyone who gets it! 232 pages.

FIVE SHILLINGS, OF NEWSAGENTS & BOOKSELLERS



"A dog's chance!" answered Parsons coolly. "Just a chance of standing them off with the rifles—for a time, at least. They don't like firearms at close quarters. But—"

"But what?" muttered Ysabel Dick. The sea-lawyer shrugged his shoulders.

"You may as well make up your mind to the cooking-pots!" he answered. "They don't often get a chance like this—of cutting out a white man's ship! My niggers will take to the water as soon as the attack comes—Van Dink cannot stir a limb—it's us two against hundreds. Shooting won't stop them, with the plunder of a ship in prospect."

He gave a savage laugh. "We'll send some of them to feed the sharks. But if we stand them off, they'll come on again after dark. And it will be dark under the hour."

"This is the end!" muttered the beachcomber. "The boy is dead, by no fault of mine—his fortune's mine to take—and I die here like a dog! This is the end."

Dandy Peter did not answer him. The Sea-Cat, on the tide, drifted back into the lagoon. The Lukwe skipper's eyes were fixed on the beach, by the stockade, now swarming with savages. The canoes were gathering there, and many of the savages on shore were swarming into them.

A strange look came over the sea-lawyer's face as he looked. He stared, and stared harder, in amazement. Under the nodding palms, he was able now, to pick out white faces among brown.

"By hokey!" breathed Dandy Peter. He turned to the man from Ysabel. "Look—look, you fool—the boy is not dead—there he stands!"

"Are you mad? What—"

"He stands there!" said Dandy Peter, grinding the words between his teeth. "He and his friends! That is why they swam ashore—they were not running on certain death as we fancied—they stand there—"

The beachcomber stared at him, and then fixed his eyes on the island shore. In stupefied amazement, he picked out the faces of the schoolboys—who, he had never doubted, had long ago been seized by the cannibals. Distant as they were, he could have no doubt of their identity—and, to his further and utter amazement, he glimpsed among them a fat face with a big pair of spectacles—the missing member of the party, who had not been in the canoe, and who, as he had supposed, must have perished on the raft.

It was amazing to see Lord Mauleverer and his friends among the natives, obviously not prisoners, but free as air. It was still more amazing to see Billy Bunter with them.

The beachcomber stared with bulging eyes.

"In Satan's name, what does this mean?" he panted.

"What does it mean?" snarled Dandy Peter. "It means that, by some devil's luck, they are friends with the natives of this island—it means that when they swam ashore, they were going to friends and not to foes—it means that they will live, while we go to the cooking-pots! This is what it means, my lord beachcomber!"

The man from Ysabel could only stare.

But the rage died out of Dandy Peter's face as he continued to watch the beach.

Amazing as it was, inexplicable as it was, he could see that the Greyfriars castaways were free among the cannibals—that they moved about as they

liked, and that the savages showed them no hostility. That they could, or would, take part in a massacre on the cutter was impossible—enemies as the cutter's crew were, it was certain that the castaways would strain every nerve to save them from the cooking-pots. Dandy Peter realised that very quickly.

The sight of them on shore, the feeling that he had been tricked, had enraged him—but he was quick to realise what it might mean to him.

"By hokey!" he breathed. "By hokey! A chance—a chance at least! They will never stand for it—"

The beachcomber looked at him. "What do you mean?" he muttered. "They are in with the natives, you can see that—they have us where they want us now—"

"Fool! Do you think those schoolboys would stand for massacre and the cooking-pots? They will stand between us and those black fiends if they can—we may owe them our lives."

Ysabel Dick started as if he had been stung.

"You would take anything at their hands, after what we have done—"

he panted.

Dandy Peter laughed.

"I would go on my knees to my worst enemy, to steer clear of the cooking-pots!" he retorted. "Talk sense!"

The beachcomber set his teeth hard.

Dandy Peter watched the crowded beach, and there was hope in his face now as he watched. And, as he watched, a single canoe put out from the beach and paddled towards the cutter.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Big Chief Commands!

"SHUT up!"

"Look here—"

"I said shut up!" said Billy Bunter calmly.

Harry Wharton & Co. seemed to find some little difficulty in breathing. Johnny Bull gasped, almost like a fish out of water.

But they shut up!

Really, there was nothing else to be done! Bunter, the Big Chief, had spoken! And the word of Bunter, the Big Chief, was law—peculiar, extraordinary, and frightfully exasperating as that was!

Billy Bunter gave them a severe blink through his big spectacles.

He had explained, more than once, that he had no use for cheeky back-chat! Really, it seemed to Bunter, these fellows needed a lot of telling where they got off! Still, Bunter was the man to make it plain to them!

"I'm handling this," went on the fat Owl, "and I don't want any argument! Not at all! All I want from you fellows is to do as you're told!"

Johnny Bull's foot made an almost convulsive movement. But he jammed it on the earth again. It was no time to jam it on Billy Bunter.

"You've disobeyed orders already!" went on Bunter. "I sent you orders by that nigger Komoo not to leave the island! Do you call that respectful?"

"Oh!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Do we? Oh!"

"Well, do you?" demanded Bunter. "Mind, no more of it! I shall decide, after thinking the matter over, whether we leave this island or not. I'm not in any need of advice on the subject. You fellows will wait till I decide—and, mind, if there's any further sneaking off without my permission, I shall come down heavy! Hard and heavy!" said Bunter grimly. "Mind that! I'm not

anxious to order you a spot of lawyer-cane all round, but if I'm driven to it, look out!"

"My esteemed idiotic Bunter—" gasped Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"I said shut up!"

"Oh! Ah! Um!"

Lord Mauleverer was smiling gently. He did not speak—he regarded William George Bunter with that urbane, tolerant smile.

No doubt the Famous Five lacked Mauly's cheerful urbanity. If Mauly was amused, they were not—far from it, in fact.

However, they shut up, which was what the Big Chief wanted.

"You'll leave this to me," went on Bunter. "I'm master here, I hope. I don't mind listening to suggestions. But, once and for all, I want no cheek—no backchat! Just shut up!"

The Famous Five stood as silent as graven images! Their feelings were deep, but they suppressed the same.

Bunter blinked round at the cutter in the lagoon. Then he blinked at his brown-skinned subjects.

Totototo and the rest were waiting for the Big Chief's orders.

Had Bunter ordered them to clear off and leave the white man's ship alone, it was probable that his authority would have been strained to breaking point—even though it was backed up by the commands of O-O-loluo! They had turned out Koo-koo-kooloo-kululo, and made Bunter chief in his place; but they expected, of course, the new chief to lead them as the old chief would have done.

However, Big Chief Bunter had no idea of straining their allegiance to that extent. He had been dismayed, and indeed terrified, when his ferocious subjects marched him off on the war-path. But Richard was himself again now, so to speak. Bunter was full of beans.

The discovery that the "white feller ship" was Peter Parson's cutter put a different complexion on the matter. The Big Chief had been graciously pleased to adopt Mauly's scheme of collaring that cutter to get away from the island.

He was quite keen to give the Lukwe skipper something back for having abandoned him on the raft long weeks ago. And he was still more keen to have a craft at his disposal to get away from the island, if he liked!

He had not decided yet to go! He was going to settle that when he jolly well chose—without any advice or cheeky back-chat from other fellows.

There were about a hundred of the natives on the spot now—some on the beach, others crowding in the canoes. The canoes had all gathered by the beach ready for the attack, as soon as the Big Chief gave the expected order.

Possibly the simple savages expected their Big Chief to lead the attack, spear in hand! If so, they were likely to be a little disappointed in their Big Chief!

"Totototo!" rapped Bunter.

"Yassar!" said Totototo.

He was ready for orders. But the Big Chief paused before he proceeded to give the same. He blinked at the cutter again and seemed to hesitate.

Harry Wharton opened his lips, but closed them again. There was a deep growl from Johnny Bull.

"Look here—"

"Shut up, Bull!"

"You fat, frumpious—"

"Didn't you hear me say 'Shut up'?"

"Cheese it, Johnny, old man!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "It's all cut

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and dried. Give him his jolly old head!"

Billy Bunter gave the Famous Five a stern blink. However, they said nothing, even Johnny Bull suppressing his feelings. The Big Chief turned to the waiting Totototo again.

"You take this feller along cutter, along lagoon!" he said. "No wantee that white feller shoot along gun, you savvy? Me makee that white feller lay down gun belong him."

Totototo grinned.

"Yessar! Me savvy too much!"

Totototo & Co., as a matter of fact, were not fearfully keen on facing rifle-fire from the cutter. They had not been keen on facing even a single rifle at the time the castaways had landed on the island and built the stockade.

Undoubtedly they would have faced it rather than have allowed the Sea-Cat to escape. So rich a prize was not getting away if they could prevent it—as they easily could now that the cutter was trapped in the lagoon.

But if the crew could be induced to lay down their arms at the order of the Big Chief, that suited Totototo & Co. admirably. They had their own ideas of what would happen afterwards—not in accordance, perhaps, with Big Chief Bunter's!

Toto stepped into a canoe.

Bunter waved a fat hand at the juniors.

"Get in!" he commanded.

Johnny Bull breathed hard and deep, but he did not speak. It was, as Mauly had said, all cut and dried, and the egregious Big Chief had to be made use of in the peculiar circumstances. But orders from Billy Bunter were hard to swallow. But Johnny once more suppressed his feelings and followed his comrades into the canoe, where they took up the paddles.

Bunter rolled in last.

With one foot in the canoe and one on the sand, the Big Chief paused again, as if smitten with hesitation once more. But Lord Mauleverer took a fat arm and helped him in.

Bunter plumped in, and the canoe rocked.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he squeaked.

"Washy-washy along cutter, you feller Totototo!" said Harry.

"You can chuck that, Wharton! I'm giving orders here!" rapped the Big Chief. "The fact is, I think that perhaps I'd better stop on the beach. I don't funk going on that cutter, of course. I'm not afraid of a fat Dutchman and a rotten beachcomber, if you fellows are! But—"

The canoe shot away from the beach. Six paddles flashed in the water.

"Do you fellows hear me?" roared Bunter.

"Oh, shut up, you fat idiot!" hooted Johnny Bull. "We're going out to the cutter, whether you funk it or not, you funky fat freak!"

"Why, you cheeky 'beast!" gasped Bunter. "I'll jolly well—"

"All serene, old fat man!" said Lord Mauleverer soothingly. "If you don't dry up, Bull, old bean, I'll punch your nose!"

Snort from Johnny Bull.

However, he dried up.

The paddles were flashing in the water, and the canoe was already a distance from the beach.

Billy Bunter made up his fat mind to it, and the canoe glided down swiftly on the Sea-Cat.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

All Aboard!

YSABEL DICK eyed the canoe and its crew in grim silence, the Lukwe boys with curious eyes.

Dandy Peter, his rifle under his arm, stepped to the rail.

The cutter was under way; but the canoe glided alongside, and Totototo held on.

Lord Mauleverer stood up in the canoe and saluted the Lukwe skipper politely.

"You won't want that rifle, Mr. Parsons," he said cheerfully. "No one in this canoe is armed, as I dare say you can see for yourself."

"What's this game?" grunted Parsons.

"We've come to take possession!" explained Lord Mauleverer.

"Guess again!" sneered Dandy Peter.

"I thought you had gone to the cooking-pots when you got ashore. Have you got some sort of a pull with the niggers, or what?"

"Yaas. No end of a pull," assented Lord Mauleverer. "May I step on board? Thanks!"

Dandy Peter gave him a hand up the side. The other fellows remained in the canoe while Mauly stepped on the deck of the cutter. One of them, at least, was very willing to remain there. The Big Chief did not like the look of the rifle under Dandy Peter's arm.

Lord Mauleverer took not the slightest notice of Ysabel Dick, who eyed him in silence. He stepped across the deck, and Parsons, understanding at once that he wished to speak out of the hearing of the native in the canoe, followed him across.

"Well?" grunted the Lukwe skipper.

Lord Mauleverer smiled.

"We've got you in a cleft stick!" he said. "I'm here to make terms! If you look at that mob yonder, you'll see exactly how much chance you've got in a scrap!"

"I can see that," said Parsons quietly. "If you can keep that crew off my cutter, you can name your own terms. You know that."

"Yaas. What we want is to get off this island. We're goin' to take possession of your cutter, and you're goin' to hand over that rifle and any other fire-arms that may be on board, so that we can keep possession as long as it suits us. We're not lookin' for another chance of bein' marooned on Spanish Reef, wherever that is, as I dare say you can guess, without my tellin' you."

Dandy Peter grinned.

"If you can get us out of this lagoon without an attack from that crew of cannibals—" he said.

"That's the big idea," drawled Lord Mauleverer. "We've got the Big Chief in our pocket, but I fancy the natives would cut up rusty as soon as they learned that there was to be no kai-kai. They've got a horrid taste here for what they call long-pig, and for smokin' heads in the wood fires—nasty habit! I want to keep you clear of that."

"Got on with it!" grunted Dandy Peter.

"We take possession of the cutter, and you hand over your arms. We sail the cutter round to the village on the other side. The jolly old niggers will fancy it's their prize—and we shall let them fancy that much till we get safe round the island. You get me?"

Dandy Peter's eyes gleamed.

"The reef passage is on the other side," he said. "If I could make it, clear of the canoes—"

"Exactly! But you'll make it with this little party top-dogs on the cutter," said Lord Mauleverer. "We're not runnin' any risks of Spanish Reef. With luck we shall all get clear together."

"And then—"

"Then you'll sail us in the cutter as far as Pita, which is in touch with Kahua-alua-lalua. After that you can have your cutter back, and we'll call it a day."

Dandy Peter looked at the schoolboy earl, his eyes gleaming. The offer was too good a one to refuse; the sea-lawyer knew as well as Mauleverer could have told him that it was the only way out of the cannibals' cooking-pots. But once clear of the reef, clear of the island—Dandy Peter was not the man to hesitate at much if he saw a chance of getting the upper hand again.

Mauleverer smiled. He knew what that glimmer in the sea-lawyer's eyes meant; he could read the treacherous thoughts like an open book.

"Is it a go?" he asked.

"Ay, ay! Have I got any choice?" grunted Parsons.

"None, so far as I can see," assented Lord Mauleverer. "It's that or a scrap with the natives; and we couldn't hold them back, if we wanted to, except by pulling their jolly old brown legs and letting them fancy the cutter's theirs. They're going on fancying that till we get round the island, clear of the canoes, and make for the open sea. Shall I call my friends on board?"

"Ay, ay!"

"All aboard, you fellows!" called out Lord Mauleverer.

The Famous Five clambered on the cutter.

Billy Bunter blinked up at them.

"I say, you fellows—" he squeaked.

"Come on, Bunter!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Lend him a hand, you chaps! All serene, Bunter! The cutter's ours!"

"Mine, you mean!" yapped Bunter.

Mauly chuckled.

"My mistake—yours!" he agreed. "Come on!"

With the assistance of the Famous Five, Billy Bunter heaved his weight on board the cutter.

Lord Mauleverer lifted the rifle from under Dandy Peter's arm and handed it to Harry Wharton. Ysabel Dick, without a word, handed over his rifle to Bob Cherry, and tramped down in silence into the little cabin, where the Dutchman lay groaning in the bunk. Dandy Peter followed him down.

"By gum!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"This looks like a Greyfriars win, you fellows! If we get clear of the niggers, now—"

"Bunter's going to see us clear of them!" smiled Lord Mauleverer. "This is where you come in, old fat pippin—I mean mighty chief!"

Billy Bunter blinked round the Sea-Cat with considerable satisfaction. Parsons and the beachcomber were below, disarmed, the rifles were in the hands of the Greyfriars fellows, the Lukwe boys stood with scared, black faces. Totototo's fuzzy head looked over the rail from the canoe, the brown face grinning with glee. From the beach the swarm of natives were watching, but remaining where they were, as the Big Chief had ordered.

"I say, you fellows, we've got the cutter!" grinned Bunter.

"The gotfulness is terrific, my esteemed fat chief!"

(Continued on page 28.)

WHO SAYS A SPOT OF FOOT-SLOGGING with—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

ALL ROUND GREYFRIARS—FRIARDALE (3) The Station

(With heartfelt apologies to Tennyson's famous "Mariana.")

(1)

With blackest moss, the eans of milk
Are thickly crusted one and all,

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Tree-Dwellers!



Across the field of Farmer Brown
A public footpath goes,
A right of way to Courtfield Town,
As everybody knows;
But Farmer Brown, I'm sad to say,
Refuses us this right of way!

He often comes up here to make
A protest full of wrath,
The Head points out it's his mistake
To close a public path.
So now he's started keeping in
That field a bull named Benjamin.

Now, Benjamin is rather large,
And very, very strong,
Whenever he begins to charge
We do not stay for long.
In fact, we always run like smoke
And climb the only tree—an oak!

I climbed that tree one day, and found
Some others there as well,
For Quelch and Prout were sitting
round.

With Hobson of the Shell,
How Prout got up I can't conceive—
The bull had helped him, I believe!

"This is unparalleled!" said Prout,
And Quelch murmured "Quite!"
And then we heard a hearty shout,
And Wingate came in sight.
He climbed the oak-tree, breathing
hard,
And beat the bull by half a yard!

Then Coker, Greene, and Johnny Bull
Swarmed quickly up the tree,
Which now was loaded, brimming full
With packed humanity;
While underneath us Benjamin
Looked up with his lop-sided grin.

Then suddenly the sturdy oak
Gave way beneath the strain,
And Prout fell off a branch, which broke,
To drop on Benjy's brain!
We walked away unharmed, for Prout
Had laid the wretched Benjy out!

And spiders spin their webs of silk
Across the sleepy booking-hall!
The ancient slot-machines are weird,
They all were broken years before,
And there's a deep and solemn snore
Proceeding from the porter's beard.
The passengers are sad and
dreary,
"It cometh not!" they've said,
And murmur: "We are all
a-weary
And would that we were dead!"

(2)

The local train is always late,
It's now been overdue for weeks,
The stationmaster mourns its fate
With teardrops running down his
cheeks!
The bookstall man is on the "Dole";
The signaller has left his shack,
And now grows turnips in the track
And leans upon the signal-pole!
Well, maybe that's exaggerated,
But I can still recall with pain
The many weary hours I've waited
At Friardale Station for a train.

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

GEORGE TUBB,

Captain of the Third Form Fags.

T is for TUBBY of the Third,
Who washed his face once, so I heard;
A rumour I could not believe
Until I happened to receive
Authentic evidence to make



Quite certain it was no mistake.
Not only were his features clean,
He did his hair with brilliantine,
And with some sandpaper he scrubbed
His neck until he nearly blubbed.
Why he committed such an act
Is hardly clear, unless attacked,
By some insane desire to shed
The inkstains on his face and head.
But those who saw him clearly think
He's better-looking with the ink!

ANSWER to PUZZLE

HEAT, HEAD, HEID, HOLD,
COLD.—GLASS, CLASS, CLAPS,
CHAPS, CHIPS, CHINS, CHINA.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

Fisher T. Fish boasts that he has
"never been left." We rather think he
has never been right.

Quelch says that generosity is a
virtue, but to give lavishly is wrong.—
Especially lines!

Angel of the Fourth almost told the
truth when he was found using Capper's
telephone. He said he was phoning his
bootmaker!

A new ointment is guaranteed to
remove all unsightly disfigurements.
Bolsover major was seen to be rubbing
some on his face. (Ow-wow!)

Smithy is often in danger of the sack,
and at these times it is sad to see poor
Joey Banks, of the Three Fishers, who
would be faced with financial ruin.

A Courtfield chiropodist (or foot
specialist) offers to examine Greyfriars
fellows at the rate of 2s. a foot.—No
reduction on taking a yard!

It is quite simple to tell the difference
between Temple of the Fourth and a
tailor's dummy by the more intelligent
expression in the dummy's eyes.

PUZZLE PAR

Can you change HEAT into
COLD and GLASS into CHINA
by altering one letter at a time
and making a new word with
each step?

Answer at foot of column 2.

RANDOM RIDDLES

What do you often hold, but seldom
touch?—Your tongue!

When is it hard to take a watch from
your pocket?—When it's ticking there.

Why is a horse strange?—Because it
can eat without a bit in its mouth.

When is a ship affectionate?—When
it hugs the shore.

Fisher T. Fish had to pay three
guineas for a new pair of glasses
recently. Now he has a "pano" in each
eye.

"I mean," amended Bunter, "I've got it!"

"You fat ass——" began Johnny Bull. "Shut up, Bull!"

"Jolly old Toto's waiting for orders," murmured Mauleverer. "You're the man to give orders, Bunter. No good us small fry tryin' it on. Tell them to leave the canoes where they are, and go back on foot, while you take the cutter round the island to the village! They'll find it there when they get across—perhaps! Think you can get by with it, old bean?"

Big Chief Bunter pulled himself together.

"My subjects will obey my orders, Mauly," he said, with dignity. "You seem to forget that I'm chief here!"

"Oh! Yaas! My mistake!" gasped Mauly.

"Makee all feller comey along this ship, sar?" asked Totototo, looking to the Big Chief for orders.

"Oh, no!" said Bunter. "Me takee this feller ship along place belong me, other side feller island, you savvy! All you feller go back along that place, along run-way along bush! Feller canoe stop along beach."

Totototo stared at him.

"What name feller canoe no comey along feller ship?" he asked.

The juniors almost held their breath. If the natives once got a footing on the cutter they doubted very much whether the Big Chief would be able to keep them in check.

Bunter doubted it, too! All depended on leaving the canoes behind and getting a clear run to the reef passage on the eastern reef.

"No likee canoe comey along ship!" snapped Big Chief Bunter. "Canoe stop along beach, all you feller go back along bush. Along you go back, you see this feller ship, eye belong you, stop along place belong me, other side feller island. When you see feller ship along that place all you feller comey on ship!"

"Yessar!" said Totototo obediently.

He dropped back into the canoe and paddled to the beach.

The juniors watched him join the crowd of natives there.

In a few minutes, to their immense relief, the whole mob were marching off through the palms, to return across the island by the run-ways through the bush, leaving the canoes beached. They went at a quick trot, in happy anticipation of finding the captured ship at their village on the eastern side, sailed there by the Big Chief—an anticipation which was not destined to be realised.

Billy Bunter grinned complacently.

"I've got them feeding from my hand, you fellows," he remarked.

"Look here, I'm not so jolly certain, after all, that I shall leave this island. I've got my niggers in hand! Of course, I shouldn't allow any kai-kai, or long-pig, or anything of that kind. I can manage them all right, I fancy. I'm not at all sure I shall put to sea, after all. Still, I shall think about it!"

At which the juniors grinned.

Big Chief Bunter was putting to sea just as fast as the cutter could get there, before the natives, on foot, got across the island. Whether the Big Chief was at all sure or not, that was what the Big Chief was going to do! The reign of Big Chief Bunter was at an end.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Once More Upon The Waters!

LORD Mauleverer stepped to the hatchway.

"Keep those rifles handy!" he murmured.

"You bet!" said Bob Cherry.

"Parsons!" called Mauleverer.

Peter Parsons came on deck. He gave a swift glance to the deserted shore and the beached canoes, and drew a deep, deep breath. Two rifle-muzzles jammed at his ribs, but he did not heed them, as his eyes searched the shore for the savages. But the savages were already out of sight.

"All clear!" said Lord Mauleverer amiably. "Mind if we go through your pockets for a gun, Mr. Parsons? I hate to seem distrustful, but—oh, here it is! Thanks!"

Mauleverer drew the sea-lawyer's revolver from his hip-pocket and placed it in his own.

"Get going, Parsons!" he said politely. "You'll sail your cutter. I'm sure you'll make a better hand at it than I should! No time to lose; this lagoon isn't really healthy!"

Peter Parsons grimped faintly and rapped out orders to the Lukwe boys.

Under the deepening sunset the cutter ran under full sail. As she tacked round the island, Wharton and Bob Cherry went below to search the beachcomber for possibly hidden weapons and to make a search of the cutter for any others that might be on board. They did not need telling that once safe out of the lagoon they had to be on their guard against treachery.

Ysabel Dick was left in the cabin, with the Dutchman, who was only half conscious, when the juniors returned to the deck. The beachcomber did not utter a single word. What his thoughts

BETTER THAN EVER!

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Usual Price 5/-

were the juniors did not know, and cared little. After all the harm he had done them, he owed his life to them. Perhaps that was what the outcast of Kalua was thinking of! They left him to his thoughts, whatever they were!

Dandy Peter, standing beside the boat steerer, was giving all his attention to sailing the cutter. There was plenty of sea room in the wide lagoon, and the Sea-Cat tacked swiftly round the island. As she ran into the eastern lagoon, the juniors' eyes were rather anxiously on the shore.

They could see the native village and the devil-house, but only a few natives were to be seen. Totototo and the rest had not yet arrived across the island. Without the canoes they could not have chased the cutter. Still, the juniors were glad to get clear before they turned up.

Their hearts were beating as the cutter made the passage in the eastern reef. Beyond rolled the Pacific, red in the sunset. The reef passage was very different from the narrow channel on the other side, and the Sea-Cat made it under full sail.

"By Jove, we're well out of that!" said Harry Wharton, as the reef dropped behind. "You're a jolly old genius, Mauly. We owe it all to you."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"We were lucky to get on that island from the raft," said Harry. "But we're luckier to get off it."

"That's all very well," said Bunter. "I wonder what the grub's like on

this cutter? I dare say you fellows haven't thought about that?" he added sarcastically.

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

The cutter was running swiftly out to sea. The reef was sinking astern, the palms on the island standing black against the sunset. By that time, no doubt, Totototo & Co. had arrived at the village, and were wondering what had become of the cutter, and of their Big Chief, and the long-pig to which they had been happily looking forward. They were never likely to see their Big Chief again; but even yet it did not seem to have dawned on Billy Bunter's fat brain that he had fallen from his high estate, and great was the fall thereof.

He blinked angrily at the chuckling juniors.

Harry Wharton & Co were in happy mood. The sight of the cannibal island sinking to the sea astern was sheer joy to them. They were homeward bound to Kalua. In a few days they would arrive at Mauly's island, and relieve the anxiety of Mr. McTab. The rest of their holiday in the South Seas was going to be jolly. In that happy mood they were prepared to forget all the fatuous fatheadedness of William George Bunter—if Bunter would let them.

Bunter didn't.

"I think I told you," said Bunter, "that I don't want any cheek."

"I think you did," agreed Bob Cherry. "Don't tell us any more!"

"Don't be cheeky, Cherry!"

"You fat ass——" roared Bob.

"And shut up!"

"Wha-at?"

"Shut up!" said Bunter. "You've got too much to say! I don't like it! Shut up—see?"

"You fat, frabjous, frumpious, footling, foozling freak——" began Johnny Bull, in a deep, growling voice.

"I said shut up, Bull!"

"You blithering, blethering, blather-ing, bloated bloater——"

"I said shut up!" roared Bunter.

Johnny Bull shut up, in order to proceed from words to actions.

He grabbed the fat Owl of the Remove by the collar, and slewed him round.

Thud!

A boot landed, good and hard, on the tightest trousers in the Southern Hemisphere.

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter rolled and roared.

"There!" gasped Johnny Bull. "I feel better now!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter. "Why, you cheeky beast—ow! I'll jolly well—wow! Ow! I'll—wow! Oooh! Wow!"

"Want another?" hooted Johnny.

"Ow! Keep off, you beast!"

"If you don't, shut up!"

Billy Bunter gave him a blink, and shut up. His eyes, and his very spectacles, gleamed with wrath. But he shut up. It was borne in at last on the fat and fatuous brain of Big Chief Bunter that he was no longer a big chief, able to throw his extensive weight about to any extent, but just Billy Bunter, to be kicked if he was cheeky—merely that, and nothing more. And he shut up.

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's tip-top school-adventure yarn, entitled: "THE MAN BEHIND THE SCENES!" It's a smasher!)

WAKE UP, YAWNINGTON!

The mere thought of fitness gives Yawnington a fit in this week's sparkling instalment of "THE SLACKER OF ST. 'SAM'S!"

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle!
"Rising-bell, you fellows!" cried Jack Jolly, as the solemn clanger of the grate bell of St. Sam's penny-trated the Fourth Form dormitory. "Make a move, Merry! Bestir yourself, Bright! Flutter forth, Fearless!"
"Merry and Bright and Fearless sat up in bed, rubbing their eyes."
"Why the hurry, old chap?" asked Fearless.

"Because we've got to take Yawnington for a run round the quad, of course!" was the Fourth Form kaptin's reply. "To-day's the day when we put that slacker on the road to fizzical fitness!"
"Oh crums, yes!" grinned Fearless. "Tumble out, you fellows!"

The heroes of the Fourth tumbled out. Jolly's reminder of their promise to the Head to make Yawnington fit was quite enough to get them on the move.

Doctor Birchmell was simply determined to put Yawny's grate-grandfather, Sir Frederick Funguss, in a sweeter mood again. Sir Frederick's discovery that his yung relative was not worth his salt had turned the peppery old baronet as sour as vinegar. Jack Jolly & Co. were as keen as mustard to make Yawny fit and thus earn Sir Frederick's condiments.

As soon as they had dressed themselves, they gathered in a grinning group round Yawnington's bed.

"Wake up, Yawnington!" yelled Jack Jolly. "Time for a sprint round the quad before brekker!"

Snore! was the only answer forthcoming from the slacker of the Fourth.

Jolly winked at his chums. "Yank him out, you fellows!" he cried.

Fearless and Merry and Bright needed no second bidding! They seized Yawny's bedclothes and pulled them off the bed; and, after that, they seized Yawny himself.

Crash! Bang! Wallop!
"Yarooooo! Oh, gad! Ow-ow!"

The slacker of the Fourth woke up with a yell, as he hit the floor of the dorm. He sat up and rubbed his

eyes and blinked sleepily at the cheery quartette who had interrupted his final forty winks. And then, to the Co.'s disgust, he fell back and calmly went to sleep again on the floor!

Snore!
"It's no use using kid-glove methods with Yawny!" declared Jolly. "The only thing for him is the mailed fist. Lend a hand, you fellows!"

Fearless and Merry and Bright willingly lent a hand. They grabbed Yawny by his hands and feet and yanked him on to the bed again. They ruffled his hair, pulled his ears, tweaked his nose and tickled his toes. Yawnington really came to life at last!

"Yaw-aw-aw!" he yawned. "Leave a fellow alone, you men! What's the dashed idea?"

"The idea is that you're going to get dressed and come out with us!" said Jolly sternly. "We're going to make you fit. And the first thing we're going to do towards it is to take you for a sprint round the quad!"

A shudder of sheer horror seized the slacker of the Fourth.

"Impossible, dear man!" he cried. "Anythin' so frightfully energetic as that would upset me for a month."

Besides, I've done a sprint round the quad already!"

"What! To-day?"

"Nunno, dear man. When I was a kid in the Second!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The larfter of the Fourth stung Jack Jolly &



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YOU GUYS ARE GETTING THE GOODS!

Howza, buddies! Fisher T. Fish hollering—still Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald," despite the skull-duggery of a whole bunch of would-be's who figure they can horn in just when I got the paper going good!

The new term is just starting at Greyfriars and most of the guys have hit the school again. Will you believe me, buddies, when I tell you that a good half of them have come back with the fixed idea of museling in on the job that I've made my own!

I guess there ain't no false modesty about F. T. F. No, sree! Any guy that reckons I'm apologising for the way I've run this paper during the vacation has got another guess coming. I'll say!

Fact is, folks, the "Greyfriars Herald" had a swell break the day I moseyed into the editorial sanctum. I gave it just that little bit of zip it never had in Wharton's day, and then some. Any guy that figures I'm handing over the reins of office to the first galoot that allows he can do better is just plain scats.

And while I'm about it, let me say that the same goes for Wharton, too—big shot or not! He and his bunch will be home soon, and you can betcha sweet life he'll breeze in just the way he does, thank me briefly for keeping his seat warm, and then grab the whole caboodle again—in increased circulation and all!

But shall I be standing for that, folks! Doggone my cats, I'll say not! I guess I'm gonna tell Big-Shot Wharton who's who and what's what and just where he gets off, this journey. Take it from me, buddies, there's no flies on Fisher T. Fish!

"Listen, snooper!" I shall say. "You ran the 'Greyfriars Herald,' and it was a flop. I ran it, and it was a hit. If you figure I'm snapping out of it just on account of you being back, you surely must be goofy! Beat it! Scram!"

And if that guy starts to argue about it, I guess I'll grab him by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the pants and run him out—pronto!

Have I got you all behind me, fans? I'll say I have! Watch out, then, bozos, and I guess you'll see what you will see!

So long, buddies!

FISHER T. FISH.

REMOVITES HIT HIGH SPOTS IN SAWDUST RING!

Wibley's Circus A Riot

Wibley's Circus, which has been rehearsing since last Christmas at odd intervals (when Wib. happened to think about it, or when the fellows happened to feel like a change!) staged its first show last week in a marquee in the grounds of Mr. Vernon-Smith's country house.

Smithy's pater had thrown open the grounds to the public in the cause of charity, and there were numerous amusements and side-shows. We are glad to be able to tell you that Wibley's Circus was easily the most popular show of the day. Five performances were given and each was received with wild enthusiasm.

Wibley deserves full marks for a show that is entirely different from anything previously attempted by Greyfriars

men. It was all "cod" from start to finish—from the "Bucking Bronco" in the first act to "Toothy, the Man-eating Tiger" in the last—and it really was hilariously funny.

Wibley, in top hat and riding breeches, acted the ring-master to perfection. His pompous and bombastic introduction to the various turns, delivered with awful solemnity, struck just the right note of absurdity and had the audience yelling with laughter before the

a funny site that the Co. simply couldn't keep back their larfter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Sorry, sir, and all that, but—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—" roared Doctor Birchmell, feverishly.

Words failed him. He clenched his bony fists and did a wild and watery war-dance for a second or two. Then he turned and fled, leaving a trail of wetness behind him.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jack Jolly. "Yawny woke up at the wrong moment, then, and no mistake! Now let's give him the ducking he missed!"

But Yawnington had taken advantage of the interval and made himself scarce; and when the Co. returned to the dorm. five minutes later, it was to find him back in bed again, sleeping the sleep of the unjust!

"Well, if that ain't the giddy limit, chaps, I don't know what is!" said Jack Jolly. "We'll let the slacker stop where he is for the present, anyway."

Jack Jolly & Co. left him there. For the time being, anyway, they had had enough of trying to make Yawnington fit!

(Another rib-tickling instalment in Dicky Nugent's best vein next week.)



DON'T BE A GREENHORN, BUDDIES!

Says TOM BROWN

The great thing to remember if you are a new kid at Greyfriars is not to be overawed. Show old hands right from the start that you've a personality of your own. Teach them to respect you!

When you meet Temple, of the Upper Fourth, poke out your tongue at him. That will put a stopper on him, for a start!

If somebody points out Hobson, run up and give that self-opinionated Shellfish a jolly good kick. It's just the thing he needs to give his lordly ways a jolting.

Blundell, of the Fifth, is another chap who wants handling firmly. Knock his hat off when you see him. The shock will certainly take him down a peg or two, if not more than that!

Wingate is the captain of the school. As soon as you meet him, burst out laughing and pass a few critical remarks

about his ears. They stand out rather a long way from his head and he's a little self-conscious about them. He'll respect you for spotting his weakness.

With the Head and the masters, I do not advise anything violent. More subtle methods are called for with them. Eye them up and down with cold disdain and turn away with a shrug. The effect on them will surprise you.

But let me warn you, in conclusion, not to try any of these tricks on the Remove. When you meet a Remove man, take off your cap and do as you're told—and don't attempt back answers. If you're unwise enough to cheek a Remove man, you'll be ragged, scragged, hung, drawn, and quartered and strewn in little pieces down the Remove stairs!

Don't thank me for giving you these invaluable tips. You're welcome!

(And anyone else is welcome to do what Brown advises! The "Greyfriars Herald" will send a wreath!—Ed.)

CLARA TREVLIN TELLS COKER WHERE HE GETS OFF . . . in this week's uncensored letter

Dear Coker,—I really must write and thank you for your kindness in seeing Marjorie, Hazeldene, and myself safely to Cliff House on the first day of term. I should have thanked you at the time, of course, but unfortunately I was temporarily speechless.

As the school bus was due to collect us from Courtfield Station at any moment, it would not have occurred to many boys that we needed any help.

The ordinary, humdrum, unimaginative fellow would probably have considered we were quite capable of getting along all right on our own. But you, with your original outlook, realised at once that a journey from Courtfield to Cliff House in the school bus on a September afternoon is a perilous project, demanding a taxi and the protection of a muscular Fifth-Former like yourself at the very least.

Marjorie and I keenly appreciate the self-sacrificing spirit in which you turfed Potter and Greene out of the taxi and left them with their luggage to wait till you got back.

It was nice of you, too, to relieve the porter of the job of putting our luggage on the taxi. Porters are so awfully rough, aren't they, and there's no telling how this particular one might have knocked our goods about. Thanks to the careful way in which you handled them, however, the only damage sustained was three broken locks and a couple of smashed lids.

I must not forget to thank you, either, for your

bright and entertaining conversation. Girls talk about such silly, footling rot on their own, as you so delicately remarked, and it was an experience we do not often have to hear a boy with a brain like yours talking about himself for half an hour without stopping. Thank you, Coker!

All we hope is that we haven't trodden on your friends' corns. Please don't worry about treading on ours in getting out of the taxi—we don't suffer from them. We carried away with us as souvenirs nothing worse than crushed toes.

Again thank you, dear Coker.

Yours very truly,
CLARA TREVLIN.

