

WONDERFUL FREE GIFT — INSIDE!

No. 963. Vol. XXX.

Week Ending July 31st, 1926.

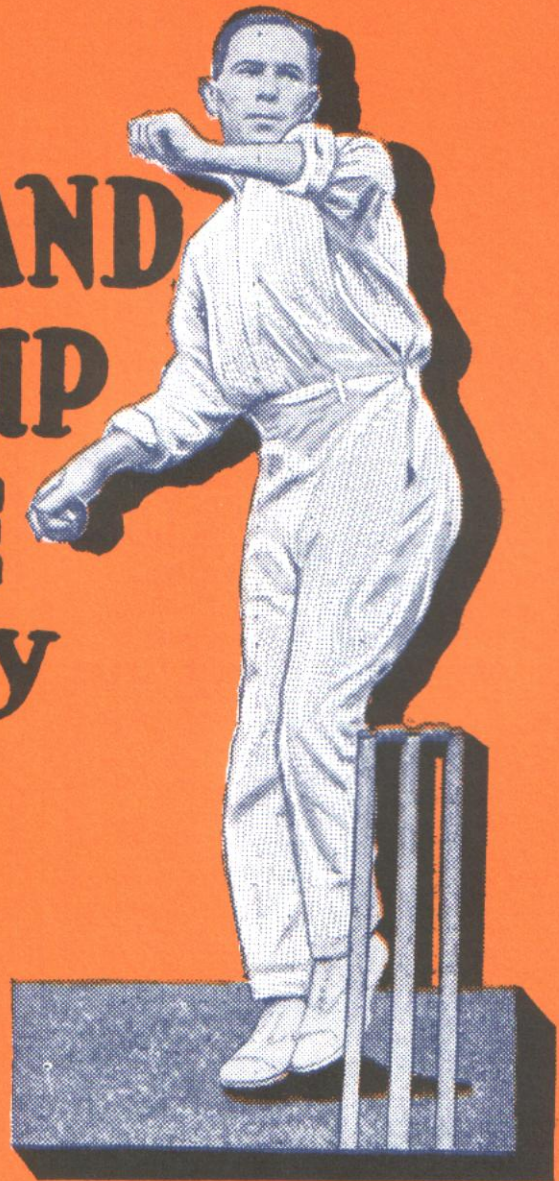
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(AUSTRALIA)

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HOBBS—THE NEXT MAN!

I THINK I might be pardoned for using that headline in the circumstances, for next week's Gorgeous Free Gift in the MAGNET shows the famous Surrey and England bat in one of his favourite scoring attitudes. There's little need for me to boost "old Hobbs" here; his name must be known in pretty well every home in the world where cricket comes under discussion. And the times the camera men have snapped him cannot be very far short of the wondrous total of runs this genius of English cricket has accumulated. Now, our camera man has snapped "old Hobbs" in a happy moment, with the result that the finished Cut-out Stand-up Photo is an exceptionally fine one, and one which MUST be included in your set of famous cricketers. There'll be a rush to secure next week's stunning Free Gift—you scarcely need telling that, for doubtless you know that "good old Hobbs" is taking his benefit this week. That means that his name will be boosted more than ever; his photo, too, will be prominent in all the newspapers. And your little "newspaper" will be well in the running with them all. More than that, the MAGNET will go one better with its ripping Cut-out Stand-up Photo—the MAGNET will lead the way! Don't forget, then, chums, to make absolutely certain of next week's Free Gift Issue, and the only way to do that is to give your newsagent an order in advance.

A YORKSHIRE GIANT!

It's worth mentioning that in this week's bumper issue of our companion paper, the "Popular," there's an exceedingly fine action figure of Percy Holmes, the clever Yorkshire cricketer. It will make a fine addition to your set, chums. Like the MAGNET Free Gifts, this photo of Holmes is Cut-out, and will stand up anywhere. Some idea of what it looks like can be gathered from the small black and white reproduction on page 7 of this issue. One squint at that will be sufficient to send you hot foot to your newsagent's for a copy of this week's "Popular," I'll be bound.

HOW TO STAND THEM UP!

I should like to say a few words about making these gorgeous Free Gifts stand up. It's quite a simple matter, believe me. Hold this week's wonderful photo of A. A. Mailey in your hand. At the extreme left, on the green base, you will see a short vertical black line marked "Cut." Cut along this line from the top DOWNWARDS, taking care not to cut farther than about an eighth of an inch from the bottom of the base. Got that? Good! Now, on the extreme right of the base you will see another short black line marked "Cut." Cut UPWARDS this time, taking care to stop a little short of the top of the base. Now bend the stand back at the dotted lines, and interlock the cuts you have made into one another. You will thus have made a strong stand which will support the figure nicely and firmly.

For Next Monday.

"IN PERILOUS SEAS!"

By Frank Richards.

This is a top-hole story of Harry Wharton & Co., including the one and only Billy Bunter, of course, dealing with their adventurous trip to India. Frank Richards, who has been a globe-trotter in his time, makes one feel absolutely at home as he travels his party away to the mystic East. A great yarn, this, my chums, and I am confident that it will receive an enthusiastic reception.

"CURLEW ISLAND!"

By David Goodwin.

Look out for another grand instalment of this serial, boys, and be prepared for thrills. And don't forget also THE SPECIAL FOUR-PAGE CRICKET SUPPLEMENT, to which the famous Maurice Tate contributes a signed article.

YOUR EDITOR.

OFF TO INDIA! Harry Wharton & Co. look forward keenly enough to their trip to India, undaunted by the danger that besets their path from the moment they leave Greyfriars!

Outward Bound!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Important!

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER of the Remove, came rolling along to the notice-board, with a paper in his fat hand.

Bunter stopped before the board, and blinked at it through his big spectacles.

Five Remove fellows, in flannels, were standing at a little distance, in a cheery group, and they glanced round at Bunter.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and Harry Wharton & Co. were ready for cricket—the last game they were to play on Little Side at Greyfriars for some time to come. Having nothing particular to do for a few minutes, they gave their attention to Bunter.

Bunter, apparently, was going to put up a notice on the board—a rather unusual proceeding on the part of the Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter was nobody in particular; in fact, his unimportance was unlimited. Nobody was interested in Bunter's views on any subject whatever. So it was difficult to surmise what it was that he had to convey to the rest of Greyfriars by the medium of a notice on the board.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "What's this little game, Bunter?"

Bunter blinked round at the Famous Five.

"I'm putting up a notice. I say, you fellows, I hope you're not going out this afternoon."

"Not farther than the cricket-ground," answered Harry Wharton. "We're playing the Shell."

"You'd better put it off."

"Eh?"

"I want all my friends to rally round this afternoon," said Bunter. "It's rather important."

"Important enough to make us cut a cricket match?" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Oh, quite!"

"I don't think!" chuckled Nugent.

"The thoughtfulness is not terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, with a dusky grin.

Bunter sniffed, and proceeded to affix his notice to the board. And the Famous Five strolled up to look at it,

wondering what it might portend. It was quite a remarkable document; remarkable if only for the orthography, which was in Bunter's own peculiar style.

"NOTIS!

A Leeving Sail will be held in Study No. 7 this afternoon, at 3.30 preecisely. Grate bargains at nock-out prices.

"W. G. BUNTER."

Wharton & Co. stared at that document. They were quick enough upon the uptake, as a rule. But Bunter's original mode of spelling rather baffled them for the moment.

A Wonderful Stand-up Cut-out Photo of Australia's Crack Bowler,

A. A. MAILEY,

Free with this Bumper Issue.

"What on earth is a leeving sail?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"A—a what? Oh, a leeving sale? I see."

"You're not leaving, Bunter?"

"Not exactly leaving," said Bunter. "But we're going away before the holidays begin, you know. I'm going to India with Inky, and I'm taking you fellows with me, as you know. We shall be away from Greyfriars a long time. So I'm holding a leeving sale in my study to raise the wind—see?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"A fellow must have some ready money when he's going on a journey half round the world," argued Bunter.

"I was expecting a postal-order—"

"Not really?"

"Yes. But I've been disappointed about that," said the Owl of the Remove. "I've asked my pater to stand me a

handsome remittance, as I sha'n't be home for the summer holidays. But he doesn't seem to see it, somehow. The actual fact is, I'm hard up."

Bunter blinked at the Famous Five very seriously as he made this statement. One might really have supposed, from Bunter's manner, that this was the very first occasion upon which he had found himself in that unpleasant stony state. It was by no means the first occasion. Indeed, it had generally been Bunter's destiny to share the fate of the seed in the parable, which fell in stony places.

"Quite an unusual experience for you!" remarked Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm.

"Exactly!" Sarcasm was a sheer waste on Bunter. "Just that, Bull. So I'm raising the wind by a leeving sale, and I expect all my friends to rally round, see?"

The Famous Five grinned.

"A leeving sale" was not an uncommon occurrence. A fellow leaving school commonly held a sale of his effects before going, and if he happened to be a popular fellow, he was likely to make quite a good thing out of it.

But it was not at all common for a fellow to hold a sale when he was going on a holiday. That original idea was Bunter's own.

It was rather a puzzle, too, what Bunter had to dispose of at his "leeving sale."

His possessions were few in number and small in value. His books were in a dog-eared state, to such an extent that few fellows would have taken them at a gift. His bike was in a condition that would have caused a merchant of old iron to decline it with contempt. His other possessions—if any—were not likely to attract the keenest bargain-hunter. Even Fisher T. Fish, who had the sharpest nose for a bargain at Greyfriars, was not likely to be tempted by anything that Bunter had to offer.

"So I hope you will back me up, you fellows," went on Bunter. "You needn't bother about cricket for once."

"I think we'll bother about it, all the same," said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "Besides, we're going away with Inky, too, you know; so your bargains won't be any use to us."

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"There's such a thing as friendship, and ~~studies~~ by a pal!" said Bunter, with dignity.

"Oh!"

"You can let Toddy captain the side this afternoon, Wharton. I don't want Toddy at my sale. So that will be all right."

"Will it?" grinned Wharton.

"Yes. Lots of the fellows think you take too much on yourself, you know, in the Form games," said Bunter. "As a matter of fact, I agree with them. You may as well stand out of the cricket for once."

"You fat chump!"

"Same with you fellows," said Bunter. "Chuck it for once, and attend my leaving sale. Bring all your spare cash with you. There will be a lot of splendid bargains, and, I expect some active bidding. I rely on you fellows."

And Billy Bunter rolled away, leaving his remarkable notice on the board for all Greyfriars to read—if Greyfriars cared so to do.

The Famous Five stared after him.

"The cheeky ass!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

Peter Todd came along with his bat under his arm.

"You fellows ready?" he asked.

"Nearly time we got along to the ground. Hallo, what's this?"

Peter stared at the notice on the board.

"Only Bunter!" chuckled Bob. "He's asked us to cut the cricket this afternoon and turn up at the sale. I hardly think we shall."

"The silly owl!" said Peter. "All Bunter's rubbish would go for sixpence, and dear at the price. Still, I should be glad to get it out of the study, if anybody is ass enough to take it away. Come on!"

The Remove fellows left the House, and walked down to Little Side, with smiling faces. So far as the cricketers were concerned, Bunter's leaving sale was likely to be passed by like an idle wind, which they regarded not. It remained to be seen what luck he would have with the rest of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

"Sale Now On!"

"GOOD!"

Billy Bunter uttered that ejaculation.

Bunter was at the window of Study No. 7 in the Remove, blinking down into the green quadrangle.

His ejaculation was caused by the sight of Peter Todd walking down to the cricket ground with the Famous Five and Vernon-Smith and several other fellows. Toddy had the honour—or otherwise—of being Bunter's study-mate, on the occasion of his leaving sale. Toddy, obviously, was not one of the fellows whom Bunter wanted to rally round him on this great occasion.

Peter Todd was safe for some hours now, playing cricket against Hobson & Co. of the Shell. Bunter's fat face wore a satisfied smirk as he turned from the study window.

Tom Dutton, his other study-mate, was at the table, writing lines. Bunter eyed him through his big spectacles. For reasons best known to himself, the Owl of the Remove desired to be clear of both his study-mates while his leaving sale was in progress. Dutton was not in the Remove eleven, but he was keen on cricket, and Bunter had hopes that he would go down to Little Side to watch the game.

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"Nearly finished, old chap?" he asked.

Dutton did not answer, or look up. Dutton was deaf, and perhaps he did not hear; at all events, he was busy, and perhaps he did not heed.

Bunter tapped him on the shoulder.

"I say, Dutton—"

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Dutton, as several blots spurted from his pen.

"Look what you've done!"

"Never mind; those lines are only for Wingate, and he never bothers," said Bunter. "The fact is, Dutton, I was going to offer to finish them for you."

"Eh?"

"I'll finish your impot, old chap."

"What's that about a jampot?" asked Dutton irritably. "I don't see any jampot. What do you mean?"

"Impot!" shrieked Bunter. "Not jampot! Impot!"

"Oh!" said Dutton testily. "You needn't shout; I'm not deaf. I can hear you when you don't mumble."

"Oh, my hat! Look here, Dutton, you'd like to see the cricket—"

"Not at all. I'm not keeping wicket, ass—I'm not playing at all. I'm going to watch the game when I've finished these lines."

Bunter breathed hard. Talking to his deaf study-mate was a task that made the Owl of the Remove exert himself considerably, and Bunter did not like exertion. But he returned manfully to the assault.

"If you want to see the game you'd better hurry up. They're starting!" he roared.

"I've got fifty more lines to write."

"I'll write them for you."

"Eh?"

"I'll finish the lines for you!" shrieked Bunter. "I'll make my fist like yours, old chap. I can do it."

Tom Dutton stared at him in amazement. It was not uncommon for one fellow to help another with an impot in the Remove. But it was extremely uncommon for Billy Bunter to make such an offer.

"Mean that?" ejaculated Dutton, in astonishment.

"Certainly, old fellow!"

"No need to bellow. I've told you that I'm not deaf, more than once."

"Oh dear!" gasped Bunter.

"Because a chap's a little hard of hearing chaps think they have to bellow at him," said Dutton indignantly. "I'm not so deaf as you are blind, anyhow. I can see a yard from my nose!"

"Look here, old fellow—"

"There you go again! If you bellow at me I will give you something to bellow for, I can tell you!"

"Leave those lines to me, old chap."

"My cap's down in the lobby."

"Oh crikey!"

"It won't take me a minute to get my cap, if you really mean that you will finish the impot for me," said Dutton. "Do you mean it?"

"Yes—honour bright!"

"I'm not going to see a fight; I'm going to see the cricket."

"Oh dear! Cut off, and leave me to finish those lines!" raved Bunter.

"Well, if you mean it, all right," said Dutton. "You're not such a rank outsider as I supposed, Bunter. All serene. Make your fist as like mine as you can."

And Tom Dutton, leaving his imposition unfinished on the table, gladly quitted Study No. 7, and hurried down to the cricket ground.

Bunter grinned cheerily.

Both his study-mates were gone now, and in Study No. 7 William George Bunter was, for the time, monarch of all he surveyed.

He proceeded to prepare for his leaving sale.

The unfinished imposition was jerked off the table—still unfinished—and shoved on to a chair in a corner. It was extremely probable that Tom Dutton would find it still unfinished when he returned after watching the cricket match to its end. But Bunter had no time to think about a trifle like that. Bunter had enough thinking to do about his own affairs, and he was not accustomed to bestowing much thought upon anyone else's.

On the morrow Harry Wharton & Co. were leaving Greyfriars to begin their journey to the Far East. They were to join Harry's uncle, Colonel Wharton, and proceed to Dover to take the Channel boat, and Bunter was going with the party. Bunter—according to Bunter—was going to Bhanipur with the dusky nabob to protect him from danger. At all events, he was going to escape from lessons before the school broke up for the summer holidays. The Famous Five and Bunter were to pass only one more night at the old school, and they were going early in the morning. Harry Wharton & Co. were glad to put in a final cricket match before they went. Bunter was thinking of much more important matters. He looked to the nabob to stand all his expenses on the trip to India, but a fellow required a little ready cash in his pocket. Many and various were Bunter's devices for raising cash, and he regarded his idea of a "leaving sale" as really a brain-wave.

The fact that he had nothing to sell did not worry him. Now that his two study-mates were safely disposed of for the afternoon there was no reason why a successful sale should not be held in Study No. 7. Bunter was the greatest dunce in the Latin class, which was perhaps the reason why he often failed to realise the distinction between "meum" and "tuum." If Bunter could find purchasers, few articles were likely to be left in Study No. 7 when the sale was over.

Bunter proceeded to stand on the study table the goods with which he hoped to "raise the wind."

On the door of Study No. 7 he had pinned a paper bearing in large letters the inscription:

"SAIL NOW ON!"

Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, was the first to arrive. A crowd of fellows had seen Bunter's notice on the board and grinned over it. Some of them decided to come along to Study No. 7 and see what was on. They were rather interested to learn what Bunter had to dispose of. Fisher T. Fish put a sharp nose into the doorway of Study No. 7.

Bunter gave him a welcoming blink.

"Trot in, Fishy. Lots of bargains going; it's really the chance of a lifetime. You'll be glad to pick up something for half its value—you being an American, you know."

"I guess I'd like to know what you've got to sell," said Fisher T. Fish, with an appraising glance at the goods on the study table. "I never reckoned you had anything worth a Continental red cent."

"You see, I'm making a general clearance," explained Bunter. "I shan't be back at Greyfriars till next term, and then I'm going to ask my pater to stand me a new outfit entirely."

"Can it!" said Fisher T. Fish. "What do you want for the clock?"

"Two pounds."



"I should prefer to let the whole matter drop!" said Bunter, with dignity. Peter Todd gazed at him for a moment; and then he hurled himself at Bunter. The matter did not drop; but Bunter did! He dropped on the floor of the Remove dormitory with a terrific concussion. "Whoop!" Then Toddy got busy with his pillow, whilst Dutton piled in with a slipper.
(See Chapter 5.)

"Make it two shillings!" said Fisher T. Fish derisively.

"Right-ho!" said Bunter unexpectedly. "I'm not going to haggle over money with an old pal like you, Fishy. Take it for two bob."

"Jerusalem crickets!" ejaculated Fishy in astonishment.

Bunter was certainly the most accommodating salesman Fisher T. Fish had ever "struck."

The study clock was worth ten shillings at least. Fishy had no doubt at all of being able to dispose of it, up or down the Remove passage, for something like that sum. He fairly grabbed it, and tossed a two-shilling piece on the table.

"What about this tea-caddy?" asked Bunter. "You can have it for five shillings, Fishy."

"Threepence, more likely."

"Done!" said Bunter.

Fisher T. Fish left the study with a clock under one arm and a tea-caddy under the other, leaving William George Bunter the richer by two shillings and threepence.

Undoubtedly the goods were going dirt cheap at Bunter's leaving sale. But as the clock belonged to Peter Todd, and the tea-caddy to Tom Dutton, Bunter's loss was not great on the transaction.

Skinner of the Remove jostled Fisher T. Fish in the doorway as he went.

"Sale now on, what?" grinned Skinner.

"Yep!"

"What did you give for the clock?"

"Two bob."

"My hat! Is Bunter giving things away?"

Skinner was quite interested. He went into the study, and Snoop and Stott followed him. Bunter blinked at them cheerily.

"Walk up, gentlemen!" said Bunter, in quite the style of an auctioneer.

"Sale now on—wonderful bargains! Who's offering a bob for this Virgil?"

"Fly-leaf's gone," said Snoop, looking at the volume of P. Virgilius Maro.

"I'll make it twopence."

"Done!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I wouldn't mind taking this cushion for my study armchair," said Skinner.

"I'll go as far as eightpence for it."

"Shell out, then," said Bunter. "It's yours, old man. Look at this inkstand—mother-o'-pearl, two ink-bottles, splendid article—it's going for half-a-crown. What about you, Stott?"

"I don't mind," said Stott in surprise.

"It's worth a lot more than that."

"I'm selling my things off cheap," explained Bunter. "My pater's standing me an entirely new outfit next term. I want to make a clearance of the lot. See?"

"I see."

Bolsover major came in with Trevor and Hazeldene, and two or three more of the Remove. Bunter's sale was beginning to get attention now.

The articles spread out on the table were soon cleared; the prices were so very reasonable that Bunter's customers were quite eager to secure them. Shillings and half-crowns rattled down on the table, and Bunter's fat face was full of satisfaction. Fisher T. Fish came back, and three or four more fellows came along, and two or three of the Fourth, who had heard of a sale going on in the Remove at knock-out prices.

Study No. 7 was soon full; there was little more than standing room now.

"Selling any of the study furniture?" asked Fisher T. Fish. "I can do with an armchair for my study, if you are."

Bunter started a little.

It had not occurred even to his fertile mind to break up the happy home, so to speak, to that extent. But he nodded at once. All was grist that came to the mill of the Owl of the Remove. As he was going to India with the Co., certainly he would have no further use for the study furniture; next term could take care of itself. And the actual proprietorship of the goods was a slight matter in Bunter's estimation. No. 7

was Bunter's study, and perhaps he considered that that circumstance gave him a claim on its contents.

"Certainly!" he answered. "Next term—hurr—I shall be getting a lot of new things from Bunter Court. I've specially asked my pater for a new armchair. How much are you offering, Fishy?"

"Five bob!" said Fisher T. Fish. Undoubtedly the junior from New York had an eye for a bargain. That armchair had cost Tom Dutton three pounds at Mr. Lazarus' second-hand shop in Courtfield.

"Rot!" said Bolsover major. "I'll make it fifteen bob."

"A pound!" said Stott.

Bunter's eyes glistened behind his big spectacles.

So far, his takings had been in six-pences and shillings and half-crowns. Now he was getting into "quids."

"This splendid armchair is going for a pound!" he said. "What offers for this ripping armchair? Now, then!"

"Twenty-five bob!" said Skinner.

"Twenty-six!"

"Twenty-seven!"

"Thirty bob!" exclaimed Bolsover major.

"Going—going!" chirruped Bunter. "Going for thirty bob, this magnificent armchair—going—going—gone! Yours, Bolsover!"

"Good!" said Bolsover major.

Bolsover laid a pound-note and a ten-shilling note on the table.

"Lend me a hand to get this to my study, Fishy," he said.

"I guess I'm staying here."

"Not lending me a hand?" demanded the bully of the Remove.

"Nop!"

Bolsover major grabbed Fisher T. Fish by the collar, and jammed his head against the study door. There was a fiendish yell from Fisher Tarleton Fish.

"Lending me a hand now?" inquired Bolsover major genially.

"Yarooop! Yep!"

And Fisher T. Fish assisted Bolsover major to convey his new purchase from Study No. 7 to Study No. 2.

The sale in Study No. 7 went briskly on. The study table, which was supplied by the school, even Bunter did not venture to offer for sale, but very nearly everything else went. Peter Todd was playing for the Remove, with Harry Wharton & Co., and Tom Dutton watching the game, neither of them dreaming of what was happening in their quarters in the School House. When the sale was over at last the study was in an extremely denuded state, and Billy Bunter blinked round him rather uneasily when his customers were all gone.

Quite a supply of cash jingled in his pocket. So far as that went, all was satisfactory.

But Bunter could not help feeling that there might be trouble when his study-mates came in.

It was obvious—to Bunter at least—that he had to have some ready cash when he was about to start on a long journey. But he did not feel sure that this would be so obvious to Peter and Dutton. It would be just like those selfish fellows to raise objections to Bunter's leaving sale.

In fact, Bunter felt a considerable trepidation as he blinked round the study.

It was practically certain that his study-mates would make a fuss. He felt that that was so.

If the fuss could be staved off till the morrow morning, however, all was well. Bunter would be gone then; and after

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he was gone Peter Todd and Tom Dutton could argue the matter out with the purchasers of their property. It really did not matter how the affair ended—after Bunter was gone from Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter rolled out of the study, placed the key in the outside of the lock, and locked the door. He drew out the key, and went along to the window of the Remove passage, opened it, and dropped the key into the thick ivy outside.

That was the best thing to be done, he considered, in the circumstances. And, having done that, Bunter rolled away to the school shop for a spread. He felt that he had earned it.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter's Treat!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came in cheerily after the cricket.

The Remove had beaten the Shell by a score of runs, so the heroes of the Remove had reason to be cheery and satisfied. Supper in Study No. 1 was the next step, the last study spread the Famous Five were to enjoy at Greyfriars for some time to come. There was no prep that evening for the fellows who were leaving in the morning, and, after supper, they were going to finish their packing. A fat figure adorned the armchair in Study No. 1 when the chums of the Remove came in, and, greatly to their surprise, the study table was laid for supper with quite a stack of good things on view.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "What's this little game? Wherefore this thushness?"

Bunter grinned amiably at the Famous Five.

"My little treat!" he said.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"My spread!" said Bunter.

"Great pip!"

The chums of the Remove could only stare. Bunter was a terrific trencherman at a spread. He always seemed to regard it as his natural right to take the lion's share at any spread in the Remove, but seldom or never had he been known to stand a spread himself.

"My only hat!" ejaculated Johnny Bull. "What ass was it said that the age of miracles was past?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Are you pulling our leg?" demanded Bob Cherry, quite mystified.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Well, the more the merrier," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "We've brought in something for supper, Bunter, and we'll pool supplies."

"Right-ho!" said Bunter. "I've been waiting for you chaps to come in before beginning. I'm pretty sharp-set. I've had nothing since tea except a rabbit-pie and a cake and a few doughnuts."

The juniors sat down cheerily to supper in Study No. 1. Undoubtedly they were surprised. Really this was a new departure on the part of William George Bunter. Quite an ample supply had been laid in by the Owl of the Remove—not less than a pound at least must have been expended by him. And it was rather a puzzle where the pound had come from, as Bunter had been in his usual stony state that morning.

"Did the sale come off, Bunty?" grinned Bob Cherry, as he helped himself to cold chicken.

"Certainly, I've sold off all my things," said Bunter. "I'm rather in funds at the present time."

"My hat! That's where the feed's come from, is it?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Exactly."

"Blessed if I know what you had to sell to raise more than a bob or so," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Well, Bunter's doing the decent thing for once," said Bob. "More power to your giddy old elbow, Bunter! Pass the spuds!"

Peter Todd looked in at the doorway. "Seen Bunter?" he asked. "Oh, here he is! No. 7 seems to be locked up. Where's the key, Bunter?"

"How should I know?" said Bunter, blinking at him.

"Well, some ass has locked up my study and taken away the key," said Toddy. "I want to get in."

"Have supper with us," said Bunter hospitably. "It's my spread."

"Eh?"

"The fact is, I'm standing a spread here because I—I found that somebody had locked up No. 7," said Bunter. "It doesn't matter; sit down here, old chap."

"Do!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Bunter's the founder of this giddy feast, Toddy."

"Well, my hat!" said Toddy.

He sat down to supper. A few minutes later Tom Dutton looked in.

"The study's locked up, Toddy!" he called out.

"I know. Some silly ass has been japing," answered Peter.

"Come on, Dutton," said Bunter.

"My spread. Sit down and wire in, old bean!"

"Yes, do, old chap!" said Bob Cherry.

"Trot in, old chap!" said Wharton.

"What about my lines, Bunter?"

asked Dutton.

Bunter started.

He had completely forgotten that imposition, which he had undertaken to complete for Dutton.

"Your—your lines?" he stammered.

"Yes. Did you finish them?"

"Of—of course."

"Eh! I didn't speak about a horse," said Dutton, staring at him. "I was asking you about my lines."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter's finished the lines for you!"

roared Peter Todd.

"Oh! I see! Where are they, Bunter?"

"I—I took them in to Quelchy for you!" stammered Bunter.

"Eh?"

"Bunter took them for you to Quelchy!" roared Peter.

"But the lines weren't for Quelchy! They were for Wingate!" said Dutton.

"I—I mean Wingate!" gasped Bunter.

"He means Wingate!" roared Peter.

"Oh! All right! Thanks, Bunter!"

"Not at all, old fellow," said Bunter cheerily. "I'd do more than that for a pal. Sit down to supper."

Tom Dutton joined the crowded festive board in Study No. 1. Harry Wharton & Co. regarded Bunter with more and more surprise.

Certainly, the Owl of the Remove seemed to be improving all round. Not only had he stood a handsome spread, but it seemed that he had written another fellow's impot for him. Really, Bunter seemed determined to astonish the fellows who had thought that they knew him so well.

Supper was quite a cheery meal in Study No. 1. After it was over the Famous Five and Bunter proceeded to finish their packing, and Peter Todd

and Tom Dutton, who had their prep to do, proceeded to hunt for the key to Study No. 7. But they found it not, and they had to borrow books in another study, and do their prep with Russell and Ogilvy in No. 3.

Packing over, the Famous Five adjourned to the Rag for a chat till bed-time with the other fellows. Bunter seemed to desire very much to keep under the wing of the Famous Five. Possibly he was a little uneasy lest the details of his leaving sale should become known to his study-mates before dorm. The locked door hid the denuded state of the study from all eyes; but prep once over, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were hunting for the key of their study and the supposed japer who had locked them out.

Billy Bunter's eyes were anxiously on the clock in the Rag.

It was unusual for a Remove fellow to watch the clock anxiously for bed-time. But on this occasion Bunter was very keen to see Wingate of the Sixth arrive to shepherd the Lower Fourth off to their dormitory. The proverb says that what can be done to-day should never be put off till the morrow; but Bunter was deeply anxious that the discovery of what had happened in Study No. 7 should be deferred till the following day.

**THIS RIPPING FIGURE
OF**

P. HOLMES,

The Famous Yorkshire Cricketer—

Jump in and secure this Cut-Out Stand-Up Photo to-day.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Meum or Tuum!

TOM DUTTON put a red and rather excited face into Study No. 10 in the Remove passage. Bolsover major, stretching himself at his ease in his new armchair after prep, stared at him.

It was getting near dorm, and by this time both Toddy and Dutton were in a state of wrath and excitement. Their study was locked against them, the key was gone, and there seemed no clue to what had become of it. All the fellows they had asked professed to know nothing about it. Japes and practical jokes were by no means uncommon in the Greyfriars Remove. But locking up a fellow's study and concealing the key was rather more than a joke, and Toddy and Dutton were fed up with it. They were determined to discover the joker and make an example of him before the Remove retired that night to slumber. So now they were making a round of the Remove passage, looking into every study in turn, to question the occupants thereof. Toddy was taking one side of the passage, Dutton the other, and it was the deaf junior who arrived in No. 10, where Bolsover was taking his ease in his new armchair.

"Was it you?" demanded Dutton. Bolsover major stared at him.

"Was what me, fathead?" he inquired politely.

"Somebody's locked up our study and taken away the key."

Bolsover major chuckled.

"I've heard about that," he said.

"Blessed if I know who did it. Not guilty, old bean!"

Tom Dutton's inquiring glance left Bolsover major, and fixed upon the arm-chair in which Bolsover was sprawling. A look of astonishment came over his face.

"What are you doing with my arm-chair in your study?" he demanded.

"What?"
"That's my arm-chair."
"Rubbish!"

Tom Dutton came into the study. He knew his own property when he saw it. His hearing was defective, but his eyesight was keen enough.

"What the thump do you mean by it?" he exclaimed hotly. "I never lent you that arm-chair, Bolsover."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bolsover major. "I bought it."

"Eh?"
"Bought it, you deaf ass!" roared Bolsover major.



"Gammon! I bought it!" shouted Dutton.

"You! You weren't at the sale at all," said Bolsover major, staring at him. "What do you mean, you fathead? Clear out!"

"Lout yourself," retorted Dutton. "I like that—calling a fellow a lout for asking for his own property."

Bolsover major started. It dawned upon his mind that perhaps Bunter, at his leaving sale, had disposed of articles that belonged to his study-mates. It had not occurred to him before, but now that it did occur to him, it seemed quite probable.

"Mean to say that this was your chair?" he demanded.

"Enough to make a fellow stare," said Dutton, "to see his property in another fellow's study. Hand it over!"

"I gave thirty bob for this chair!" exclaimed Bolsover major excitedly.

"You can settle it with Bunter. The chair's mine, as I bought it."

"You can't have thought it—"

"What?"

"Can't have thought it yours, when it's mine," said Dutton. "I gave three pounds for it last term at old Lazarus'."

You've no right to borrow that chair without permission."

"I didn't borrow it," roared Bolsover major. "I bought it. You can settle it with Bunter."

"Eh! What's Bunter got to do with it?"

"Bunter sold it to me."

"Bunter can't have told you it was your arm-chair, when he knew it was mine. Besides, if he told you, it makes no difference."

"Sold, ass—not told—sold!" shrieked Bolsover major.

"Who's sold?"
"You deaf dummy—"

"Rummy enough, if you come to that—a fellow bagging another fellow's arm-chair," said Dutton, "but I don't want to jaw about it—I want it back in my study."

"It's mine now!" bawled Bolsover. "I paid for this armchair in hard cash, and I'm keeping it. You can settle it with Bunter, I tell you. I gave thirty bob for this chair."

"What?"
"Thirty!"
"Who's dirty?"

"Oh, my hat!" Bolsover major gave it up. He jumped up from the chair, grasped Tom Dutton by the shoulders, and spun him towards the door.

"Leggo!" roared Dutton, in righteous indignation.

"Get out! Let Bunter bring back my thirty bob, and you can have your

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dashed armchair," hooted Bolsover major. "I'm not parting with it for nothing. I jolly well know that."

Tom Dutton struggled. He was a sturdy fellow, though no match for the burly bully of the Remove.

"So it was you locked up my study, after bagging my armchair," he gasped. "That's it, is it? Toddy! Toddy! Lend a hand, Toddy."

"Hallo!" Peter Todd ran up the passage, and stared in at the struggling juniors. "What's the row? Was it Bolsover?"

"Yes!" gasped Dutton. "He's raided our study—he's got my armchair here."

"What!" gasped Peter Todd.

Toddy stared at the armchair. He knew it well enough by sight. In Study No. 7 the armchair was more or less common property, and it was generally appropriated by Billy Bunter. But it actually belonged to Tom Dutton. It was amazing to see it in another fellow's study. Fellows often borrowed crockery and books and common-or-garden chairs, with or without permission, but it was very uncommon for a big armchair to be bagged.

Peter Todd, certainly, would have inquired into the circumstances, but there was no time for inquiry. Bolsover major was exerting himself to hurl Dutton out of the study. It was a time for action, not inquiry. Toddy grasped the bully of the Remove round the neck, and Bolsover went over backwards, and came down with a crash on the floor. He landed there with a terrific concussion, and a still more terrific roar.

"Yarooop!"

"Bump him!" yelled Tom Dutton.

"Leggo!" shrieked Bolsover major.

"I'll smash you—I'll pulverise you—I'll apicafice you—"

Bump!

"Whoooooop!"

Bump!

"Oh, crikey! I—I—I'll—"

"Mustn't rag in Study No. 7," grinned Peter Todd. "We'll let you off with that, Bolsover, if you hand over the key of our study, and help us carry that armchair home again."

"I haven't got the key of your study, you silly ass!" raved Bolsover. "And Bunter sold me that armchair for thirty bob."

Peter jumped.

"Bunter did?"

"Yes!" shrieked Bolsover. "He had a leaving sale—"

"Oh, my hat!"

Peter Todd released Bolsover major. He began to understand. The notice on the board, announcing Bunter's leaving sale, had perplexed Peter. He had wondered what Bunter had to sell before he left Greyfriars. Now he knew!

"B-b-bunter sold you that armchair!" babbled Peter. "But—but it's Dutton's."

"How was I to know?" roared Bolsover. "It was in Bunter's study, wasn't it, and he sold it? I'll smash you!"

Bolsover major struggled to his feet, red with fury. He rushed at Peter Todd, and again he was grasped and bumped on the floor. This time he was not in such a hurry to rise. He sprawled on the study carpet and gasped for breath.

"It was Bunter!" Peter roared in Dutton's ear. "Bunter's been selling our things, and he's locked the study door so that we sha'n't spot him."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Come and look for Bunter."

And the two juniors ran out of Study No. 10, leaving Bolsover major still sprawling on the floor, trying to get his second wind.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Way of the Transgressor!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"I—I say, stand by a fellow, you know," said Bunter, in alarm. "I—I think Toddy's waxy about something."

Bunter's eyes had wandered alternately to the clock in the Rag, and to the door. It was getting near bedtime, but it was not yet quite half-past nine. And suddenly Peter Todd and Tom Dutton had come into the Rag, and from the expressions on their faces Bunter divined at once that they had learned something of the details of his leaving sale. There was no doubt that Peter Todd was "waxy," as Bunter expressed it.

Harry Wharton & Co. glanced at the two juniors, who were glaring round the room in search of Bunter.

"The waxfulness seems to be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "What have you been doing, my esteemed fatheaded Bunter?"

"Nothing," said Bunter. "Besides, I did it for you fellows. I—I wanted to stand you a last spread before we left, you know."

"What?"

"I haven't sold any of their things," said Bunter hastily. "I can see that they think I have—but I haven't, you know. Besides, I'm going to settle up for everything next term."

"Great pip!"

"Here he is!" roared Dutton.

"Collar the fat frog!"

"Ow!" Bunter dodged behind Harry

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Wharton. "Keep 'em off! I haven't sold anything! I didn't do it! I wasn't there at all! If Fishy says I sold him Toddy's clock, he's spoofing! Besides, I'm going to pay for it! Keep off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth's the row?" exclaimed Nugent.

"That fat villain—"

"Oh, really, Peter—"

"That podgy pirate—"

"I—I say—"

"He's been selling the things in our study!" roared Peter Todd. "He's sold Dutton's armchair to Bolsover major for thirty bob—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Fishy's got our clock in his study, and he says he bought it from Bunter. Stott's got my inkstand—"

"Phew!"

"Skinner's got the cushion my aunt sent me! Snoop's got my Virgil!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter in the Rag.

"They say they won't hand the things back without the money!" roared the infuriated Peter. "Bunter's got to square! Come on, you fat toad, and shell out, and we'll skin you afterwards!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Collar him!"

"Shell out, Bunter!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"How can I shell out when I've spent the money?" hooted Bunter. "Besides, I haven't sold the things! It was really a joke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Didn't I stand you a ripping spread with the money?" demanded Bunter hotly. "You might be grateful, at least! Blessed if it isn't enough to make a fellow selfish when he gets this sort of return for his generosity! Yarrooh! Keep him off! I'll settle up every sixpence to-morrow morning, Toddy, if you're going to make a fuss about sordid money! I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Lemme gerrat him!" gasped Peter.

"If you like, I'll telephone to Bunter Court for a special remittance!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Collar him!"

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Cave!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Here's old Wingate!"

Wingate of the Sixth came into the Rag.

"Bed!" he announced. "Is Dutton here? Dutton, you haven't brought me your lines! They're doubled!"

"Eh?"

"Doubled!" snapped the prefect.

"Troubled! What's the trouble?" asked Dutton, staring at him.

"Oh dear! You tell him, Todd," said Wingate. "Now get off to your dormitory, you fags!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Didn't Bunter bring you Dutton's impot, Wingate?"

"No."

"You—you—you fat villain!" gasped Peter.

"Off with you!" said Wingate.

And he shepherded the Remove fellows out of the Rag, and the matter of Bunter had to drop for the present. But the looks of Toddy and Dutton indicated that the matter would be raised again after lights out in the Remove dormitory, and Bunter rolled away to that apartment in dismal spirits. His

leaving sale had been a great success, but after the feast came the reckoning.

The Remove turned in in their dormitory, most of them grinning, and two of them eyeing Bunter with wolfish eyes. Toddy and Dutton were anxious for Wingate to go, so that they could begin on Bunter. Bunter was not at all anxious for that to happen.

"I—I say, Wingate!" he exclaimed, as the captain of Greyfriars was about to turn out the light.

George Wingate looked round.

"Well?"

"Oh, nothing!" gasped Bunter.

"You silly young ass!"

Wingate extinguished the light. Bunter fairly quaked. An appeal to the prefect certainly would have stopped anything like a "rag" in the Remove dormitory after lights out. But it was borne in upon Bunter's fat mind that it might make matters worse instead of better. What view Wingate would take of his leaving sale Bunter did not know, but he felt bitterly that he was certain to be misjudged as usual.

But as the Greyfriars captain was leaving the dormitory, Bunter, only too well aware of what was to follow, squeaked again:

"I—I say, Wingate!"

"Is that you, Bunter?"

"Ow! Yes."

"Well, what is it?"

"You can tell Wingate, you fat villain, if you want to go up before the Head!" breathed Peter Todd.

"Oh dear!"

"What is it, Bunter?" snapped Wingate from the corridor.

"Oh, nothing!"

Wingate grunted, and slammed the door.

Bunter lay in bed and quaked. His last protector was gone, and already he heard the sound of two fellows turning out of bed. A candle glimmered in the dormitory.

"Turn the fat villain out!" growled Peter.

"I—I say, Peter, old chap—"

"I'll give you 'old chap,' you fat rascal!"

"You—you're not going to be a beast, Peter, on my last night at Greyfriars?"

"I jolly well am!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shell out, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"The shellfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed burglarious Bunter!" chuckled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

Bunter sat up in bed.

"Of—of course I shall make every penny good, you fellows! I hope I'm honourable."

"Great Scott!"

"He—he—he hopes he's honourable!" stuttered Bob Cherry. "What a hopeful nature!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's only a matter of time!" gasped Bunter. "I'm rather short of money at the present moment. Give me time!"

"A judge will be giving you time some day, old fat bean, if you keep on like this!" chuckled Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shell out!" hooted Peter Todd.

"You're going to shell out, and then you're going to be scragged! See?"

"Keep off, you beast! I—I'm going to shell out, ain't I?" gasped Bunter. "After the way you've acted, Peter Todd, I refuse to be under any monetary obligation to you!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Turn out and shell out!" grinned Johnny Bull.

Bunter turned dismally out of bed. He went through his pockets, and still more dismally he shelled out. What remained of the proceeds of the leaving sale was duly handed over. Peter Todd, who had a head for figures, went through the matter carefully. He found that there was a deficit of thirty shillings and sixpence. Money, when it was in Bunter's pocket, usually turned a hole there; and riches, which take unto themselves wings and fly away, never flew so fast as when they were in Bunter's possession.

Cherry. "Do you think they have, Bunter?"

"Ow—wow—wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter crawled back into bed. It was quite a long time before his powerful snore echoed through the Remove dormitory. Not for the first time William George Bunter had found that the way of the transgressor was hard.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Off at Last!

"WE'RE off!"

"The off-fulness is——"

"Terrific!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

The car was fairly well filled with the Famous Five and their baggage—and Bunter. Before morning classes commenced at Greyfriars, the chums of the Remove were starting.

Most of the Remove gathered round to give them a send-off; and fellows of other Forms gathered, too. The voyage of Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh to his native land, accompanied by his chums, had excited great interest all through Greyfriars, and many were the envious glances cast at the juniors in the car. The Head had said good-bye majestically to the party, and warned them to be on their good behaviour. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, had shaken hands with them all round with great kindness, and given them some valuable words of advice. Peter Todd—no doubt bucked by the thought that he was not going to see Bunter again for

"Who jolly well saved you from the kidnappers?" demanded Bunter warmly. "Who woke up and gave the alarm the other night, and saved you when they were yanking you out of the Remove dormitory? Who rushed on them like a—like a lion——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" sniffed Bunter.

"Thanks—we will!" chuckled Bob.

"It is true that the esteemed and ludicrous Bunter was useful for once in his ridiculous life," said the nabob.

"Well, a fellow ought to try to be useful, if he can't be ornamental," remarked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"We sha'n't see anything more of the jolly old kidnappers," said Bob Cherry cheerily. "The police very nearly got them, and they've been scared away. And when we get to Bhanipur, Inky, we'll collar that jolly relation of yours, Baji Rao, and give him a Greyfriars bumping."

The nabob grinned.

The car arrived at Courtfield Station, and the juniors turned out for the London express. The party were to join Colonel Wharton in London, where they were to put in a couple of days, and then proceed to Dover for the Continent. A long journey lay ahead of the Greyfriars fellows—the Channel and Paris and Marseilles and the Mediterranean; Suez and the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean; Bombay and the hills and jungles of Northern India, and at last Bhanipur. And they were prepared to enjoy every hour of it.

The juniors had a carriage in the express to themselves, and Harry Wharton cast a glance over the station platform as the train started. His uncle, the colonel, had warned him to be on the look-out as soon as the school was left—though it was, of course, unlikely that any danger could threaten the party on their railway journey to London. But it was quite possible that they would be watched. Nally Das and Kalouth, the kidnappers, were known to the police, and were fairly certain to be keeping out of sight, but it was very probable that Baji Rao had other agents at his command, and quite on the cards that further attempts might be made upon Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh during the journey to India.

Any native of India who had appeared in the offing would have been watched very carefully by the chums of the Remove. But the only dusky face to be discerned in Courtfield Station was Hurree Singh's own.

"I say, you fellows, I hope you had the lunch-basket put in the train," re-

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marked Bunter, as the express glided away.

"What lunch-basket?" grinned Bob.

"I told you distinctly last night that I should expect a lunch-basket on this journey," said Bunter warmly.

"It's only three hours to London, fathhead!" said Nugent.

"I'm not going to starve for three hours!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Bob. "He had only enough for six at brekker, so
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"You fellows had the feed, you know!" groaned Bunter. "I suppose you can lend me thirty bob, Cherry?"

"Something wrong with your supposer, then," said Bob genially. "Suppose again!"

"What about you, Bull?"

"Nothing about me!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Harry, old chap——"

"If you call me 'Harry, old chap,' I'll take my pillow to you!" said the captain of the Remove.

"I—I say, Nugent, you're not such a selfish beast as those chaps——"

"I am!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

"Worse, in fact."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Inky——"

"Nothing doing, my esteemed, rascally Bunter."

"I'm coming with you to India to protect you!" hooted Bunter. "There's such a thing as gratitude, Inky. Look here, you lend me thirty bob, or I jolly well won't come—there!"

"In the esteemed circumstances, nothing would induce me to lend you thirty bob, my worthy Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'll settle up next term, Toddy!" said Bunter desperately. "I—I suppose you can trust me?"

"Trust you?" said Peter dazedly.

"Yes, I hope so. You can charge me interest on the loan if you like—I'm not a fellow to haggle about money," said Bunter. "Nothing mean or sordid about me, I hope!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And now I should prefer to let the whole matter drop," said Bunter, with dignity.

Peter gazed at him for a moment, and then he hurled himself at Bunter.

The matter did not drop.

It was Bunter that dropped.

He dropped on the floor of the Remove dormitory with a terrific concussion.

"Whoop!"

What followed seemed like a nightmare to William George Bunter. Toddy had a pillow, and Dutton a slipper. Both the pillow and the slipper were much the worse for wear when they had finished, while Bunter was feeling quite worn out.

"There!" gasped Peter at last. "I think that will do."

"Ow—wow—wow—wow!"

"Give him a few more!" panted Dutton.

"Ha, ha, ha! Haven't you had thirty bobs' worth yet?" chuckled Bob

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a long, long time, had relented towards the Owl of the Remove, and presented him with a packet of toffee. Bunter's fat face was very bright as he sat in the car. There were to be no more classes for Bunter for a long time—nothing in the shape of work; and that was quite sufficient to irradiate Bunter's face with smiles.

"Good-bye, you chaps!" sang out the Bunder.

"Have a good time!" said Squiff.

"Ta-ta, old tops!"

"Come back safe!" called Hazeldene.

"And don't bring Bunter back if you can help it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The car rolled away, with the Remove fellows waving their hats and cheering.

"Off at last!" said Harry Wharton, glancing back at the school as the car rolled along the Courtfield road. "Lots of things will happen before we see the old Remove passage again."

"Yes, rather!"

Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh's dusky face was grave.

"The happenfulness may be terrific," he remarked. "I am not quitefully sure that I did right in letting my esteemed chums come with me to India. The dangerousness may be great."

"Dow-wow!" said Bob Cherry. "If there's danger, old man, that's just why you want us."

"Me, you mean!" said Bunter, with a sniff.

"My esteemed Bunter——"

I suppose he's getting peckish already. But we stop at Ashford, Bunter."

"Long enough for me to get out and get something to eat?" asked the Owl of the Remove!"

"Long enough for you to get out, anyhow. It doesn't matter if you don't get in again."

"Beast!" said Bob seriously, "I'll lend you a quid—"

Bunter brightened.

"On one condition," added Bob.

"What's that?"

"That you hang on at Ashford long enough to blow it in tuck. Then you'll lose the train, see?"

"Yah!"

Bunter glowered at his comrades over his big spectacles.

"You're beginning already," he said, morosely. "But I can jolly well tell you that if I'm to come to India with you, and protect you, and look after you, and all that, this sort of thing won't do. It hasn't even occurred to you to ask a fellow if he has a few pounds in his pocket."

"That's all right—we know you haven't."

"If a fellow had saved me from being kidnapped, I'd lend him a ten-bob note to get a snack at Ashford," said Bunter.

Hurree Jamset Singh looked at the fat junior, and silently passed him a ten-shilling note. The other fellows looked more inclined to pass him a thick ear; but they refrained.

The express stopped at Ashford, and Bunter rolled out of the carriage at once.

"Don't play the goat, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, warningly. "The train stops here only five minutes."

"Rats!"

With that grateful reply for the warning, Billy Bunter rolled away. Several passengers came along the train, and one stopped at the door Bunter had left open. He was a young man with a heavy aquiline nose, sharp black eyes, and heavy black eyebrows, and looked like a foreigner. He glanced at the juniors, and was about to step in, when Bob Cherry interposed.

"Full up!" he said.

"Comment?" said the stranger.

"A Frenchman," said Wharton.

"Put it in French, Bob."

"Last time we had a holiday in France, the natives didn't seem to understand Remove French," grinned Bob. "But I'll try. Sorry, monsieur, but the carriage is full up—tout complet."

"Voilà, regardez!" said the foreign gentleman, pointing to Bunter's empty seat.

"That place is taken," said Bob. "It belongs to a fat idiot who has jumped out for tuck."

"Plait-il?"

"La place est prise," said Bob, in his best Lower Fourth French.

"Oh, let him come on," said Nugent. "Must be civil to a giddy foreigner. Bunter can stand."

"Oh, all right."

The foreigner was pushing in, and Bob withdrew his intervening arm. The black-browed man sat down in Bunter's place.

Wharton looked at his watch.

Billy Bunter, who generally seemed to expect the universe to be run to suit his sole convenience, possibly expected the train to wait for him. But the express was not likely to wait; and the time was getting close now. Doors were slamming along the train.

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"The fat duffer will miss it," said the captain of the Remove.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!"

A fat figure came bolting along the platform. There was a smear of jam on Bunter's face, his extensive mouth was full, and he had a parcel under his arm. The guard was about to slam the door as he came up.

"Grooh! Hold on!" gasped Bunter. "Lemme in—that's my carriage! Oh, crumbs!"

Bunter plunged in headlong, losing his footing, and rolling among innumerable feet as he landed in the carriage. His paper parcel burst open, and jam tarts were scattered over the carriage floor, and Bunter rolled in them helplessly.

Slam!

The door closed, the whistle rang, and the express moved out of Ashford. And Bunter, panting for breath, sat up in the midst of clinging tarts, amid a howl of laughter from the chums of the Remove.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Spy!

"H A, ha, ha!"

"Oh, dear! Ow!"

"Feel a bit sticky?" asked asked Bob Cherry.

"The stickfulness is terrific."

"Ow! Oh, dear!" gasped Bunter, "Beasts! Why couldn't you help a fellow into the train? Ow! There's something sticking to my neck."

"Only a jam-tart!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Grooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter staggered to his feet. He was sticky and jammy from head to foot—tarts clung to his clothes, and to his hair, and to the back of his neck. Not a single tart had escaped squashing as Bunter rolled on the floor of the carriage.

"Oh, dear!" gasped Bunter. "Nice state I'm in! What are you silly owls cackling at?"

The Famous Five did not explain what they were cackling at. They only cackled.

Bunter proceeded to rub off jam with his handkerchief. The handkerchief was soon a jammy, sticky rag.

"Lend me your hanky, Wharton."

"I don't think."

"Lend me yours, Bob."

"Dear man, what you want is a curry comb," chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter snorted, and gave his jammy attire a last rub with his jammy handkerchief. Then he blinked round for his seat, and for the first time observed that it was taken. The young man with the black brows was sitting in Bunter's corner seat staring out of the window at the pleasant fields and hills of Kent, apparently taking no heed of his travelling companions.

"Look here, you've let a man take my seat!" roared Bunter, in great indignation.

"You shouldn't have got out," said Harry. "He's a foreign chap and doesn't seem to speak English."

"He's not going to have my seat!" shrieked Bunter. "Are you going to give me your seat, Wharton?"

"No fear!"

"Then that silly foreign ass will have to stand. Here, I say you!" exclaimed Bunter, tapping the foreign young man on the shoulder.

The glinting black eyes glanced round at him.

"You've got my seat!" said Bunter.

"Comment?"

"A blinking froggy!" snorted Bunter. "I didn't expect to see any blinking froggies till we were across the channel. Hi! You've got my place—see—you'll have to stand. I want to sit down."

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Cheek!" exclaimed Bunter. "You fellows can help me turn him out of the carriage at the next station."

"I don't think!" grinned Bob.

"Why couldn't he stay in his own carriage?" demanded Bunter, hotly. "What did he want to come along the train and bag my seat for?"

"Eh?"

"What?"

Harry Wharton glanced at the black-browed foreigner, and then at Bunter. He noticed that the man gave a slight start, and it flashed into his mind that the foreigner was not so ignorant of English as he affected to be.

"Do you mean that this man was on this train, and did not get in at Ashford, Bunter?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, you ass. He was in a carriage further on, and I saw him get out when I cut across to the buffet."

"Sure?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I suppose I've got eyes," snorted Bunter. "Why couldn't he keep in his own carriage, if he's travelling on this train? No need to come along and butt into this carriage. Look here, he's jolly well not going to keep my place."

All the Famous Five were looking hard at the foreigner in the corner seat now. The man sat staring from the window as before; but Wharton was quite assured that he had understood all that Bunter had said. And although the man had spoken in French, Wharton doubted very much whether he was a Frenchman. His features were not at all of a Gallic cast; he looked like a Russian. If he had indeed boarded the train at Courtfield, and had taken advantage of the stop at Ashford to come along to the juniors' carriage, his action was, at least, suspicious.

The sight of the Hindu would have put the juniors on their guard at once; and it came into Wharton's mind that if Nally Das was setting a spy on the party, he was likely to employ some rascally European, for that very reason. Certainly, but for what Bunter had observed, the Greyfriars fellows would not have suspected the man in the corner seat.

But they suspected him now.

A stranger to them, and apparently not understanding English, he would have heard all their talk on the way to London, and certainly would have gathered from it a pretty clear idea of the route they were taking to India; and other matters which it was as well to keep from the knowledge of Hurree Singh's enemies.

"You're quite sure, Bunter?" asked Frank Nugent, eyeing the apparently unconscious foreigner.

"I tell you I saw him," said Bunter. "He was two or three carriages along the train, with another man. I heard them talking as I passed. This fellow was getting out to come along the train. Looks to me as if he might be a pickpocket."

"Eh?"

"Well, what does he want butting in here?" said Bunter. "He spotted you lot as a set of greenies, you know, and he's going to bag your watches, I expect."

"You heard him speaking, you say, to another man?" asked Wharton.

"Yes, you ass."

"In French?"

"No, in some crackjaw language, goodness knows what. I shouldn't wonder if it was Hindustani; it sounded like cracking nuts and sneezing."

"My esteemed Bunter—"

"The other man spoke to him by name," said Bunter. "I heard him call him Lazaroff. That's a Russian name, I believe."

The man in the corner seat made a movement.

"The esteemed rascal is a spy, my excellent chums," said Hurrree Jamset Ram Singh, quietly. "They have been watching the school, and they have set a spy to follow us. He understands the esteemed and ludicrous English language as well as we do."

"I'm pretty certain of that," growled Johnny Bull. "Let's jolly well mop him up, as a warning to him."

"Good egg!" said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

He was fairly certain now that the Russian was a spy, and apparently he had an associate on the train.

But it was scarcely possible to handle the man without definite proof: much as he deserved it if he really was a spy in the pay of the gang of Hindu kidnapers.

But at least the Greyfriars party were on their guard now; Lazaroff, if that was his name, was not likely to learn anything of their plans from their conversation now.

"Well, what about my seat?" demanded Bunter.

"Oh, you can stand," said Johnny Bull.

"I'm not going to stand!" roared Bunter.

"I'm jolly well going to have my place. That rotter can stand."

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

Courtesy to the foreign gentleman travelling in England would have made them very considerate to the black-browed man. But the extreme probability that he was a spy of the kidnapers altered the matter. If he had butted into the carriage to spy on the Greyfriars party and listen to their unguarded talk, he was not entitled to any consideration.

Harry Wharton tapped him on the arm, and the man looked round, with a glint in his black eyes.

"You've got this chap's place," said Harry. "You were told that the place was taken. You must shift."

"Comment?"

"I think you understand well enough," said Harry; "but I'll put it in French. Vous avez pris la place de mon ami ici, ce gros garçon. Comprenez?"

The Russian shrugged his shoulders.

"Shitez-vous," said Bob Cherry, in French that certainly would not have earned the approval of Monsieur Charpentier at Greyfriars.

"Plait-il?"

"Bunkez-vous!" explained Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shift him, you chaps," said Bunter, impatiently. "I'm going to sit down. I'm not standing all the way to London for a blinking foreigner. Very likely a filthy Bolshevik."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! We're stopping!" said Bob.

The express stopped.

Lazaroff rose to his feet, opened the

carriage door, and stepped out on the platform.

"Good riddance," said Bob.

Harry Wharton drew the carriage door shut, and then put his head out of the window. His eyes followed the thick-set form of the Russian.

The man did not leave the station.

He hurried along the train, and entered another carriage. He was still on the express as it glided off again Londonwards.

Bunter sat down in his corner seat with a grunt of satisfaction.

"He's still on the train," said Harry. "It's pretty plain that he is a spy, watching us. We're on our guard now, though."

"Thanks to me," said Bunter.

"What?"

"You fellows would never have tumbled it," said the Owl of the Remove. "Jolly lucky for you you've got me along with you, I think. You're not treating me very decently—but rely on me; I'll see you through."

Harry Wharton made no reply to that. Bunter was not a fascinating travelling-companion, but undoubtedly he had come in useful once more. For once, the Owl of the Remove had not proved, as usual, merely a troublesome "passenger."

"Here we are again!" said Bob Cherry, at last, as the express stopped at the London terminus.

The Greyfriars party poured out of the train, and the tall figure and bronzed face of Colonel Wharton came in view, among the crowd on the platform. As the juniors left the station with the colonel, Wharton glanced round; and for a moment he caught

Billy Bunter rolled among the innumerable feet as he landed in the carriage. His paper parcel burst open, and jam tarts were scattered over the carriage floor. The Owl of the Remove rolled in them helplessly. (See Chapter 6.)



sight of the aquiline nose and thick black brows. The next moment Lazaroff had disappeared in the throng.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

On the Channel Boat!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. spent three days in London, making preparations for the journey that lay before them.

During that time, Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh was never out of company of his chums, and seldom away from the keen eye of Colonel Wharton.

Nothing more was seen of the Russian, Lazaroff; but the juniors were aware that Colonel Wharton believed that the party were being watched. The colonel had been told of the incident in the train, and he had no doubt that the juniors had been watched feaving Greyfriars.

"Baji Rao, at Bhanipur, knows that the Jam Bahadur has sent for Hurree Singh to return home," the colonel said, "I have no doubt at all that his agents were watching the school, and that we shall be kept in sight on our way to India, if they can contrive it."

"Then we may have a scrap before we get to Bombay," remarked Bob Cherry, with a warlike look.

The colonel smiled.

"Possibly! At all events, we shall have to be on our guard, and you must all take care that Hurree Singh does not get out of your sight."

"Rely on us, sir."

"We'll watch over him like the giddy apple of our eye," said Johnny Bull.

"Leave it to me," said Bunter.

"Fathead!" murmured Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Probably they will not find it easy to keep us in sight," said the colonel.

"There is no doubt that Baji Rao's emissaries will make every possible attempt to kidnap Hurree Singh before he reaches India. Once he is in his native land he will be safe from them among the guards at the palace of Bhanipur. Any attempt within the borders of Bhanipur would be very effectually dealt with: the Jam Bahadur would not err on the side of leniency. Our business is to get Hurree Singh safe to the care of his uncle the Jam."

"And we'll do it," said Johnny Bull.

"With my esteemed and ludicrous comrades round me I fear nothing!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh cheerfully.

Early one morning the Greyfriars party started for Victoria to take the boat-train to Dover.

The juniors kept their eyes wide open for a black-browed man with an aquiline nose; but the spy, Lazaroff, was not to be seen. It was likely enough, however, that some other shadower, unknown to them by sight, was watching their movements.

The boat express rolled out of the metropolis, with Harry Wharton & Co. comfortably accommodated in the Pullman car.

There was no incident on the way to Dover, and, in spite of the lurking shadow of danger that hung over the party, they were in the highest spirits.

Even Bunter was cheery and contented for once, having provided himself with ample tuck to while away the journey to Dover.

The Owl of the Remove was quite happy and sticky when the party alighted at the harbour and headed for the boat.

"Feeling fit, old fat man?" grinned Bob Cherry, as the juniors moved along with the crowd for the boat.

"Not so bad," admitted Bunter. "I've had enough to eat for once. That cake was jolly good, and the tarts were ripping, and the pie was a corker! I've really had enough."

"Not too much?" asked Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I believe the Channel is rather rough to-day," said Bob, with a chuckle. "By the time we get half-way to Calais, I think you'll have made up your mind that you've had a little too much."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

And the fat face of the Owl of the Remove was very serious as he rolled on to the steamer.

Bunter had crossed the Channel before—and he had not crossed it without trouble.

"I want a deckchair, you fellows," said the Owl of the Remove.

"Better get one, then," suggested Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Chair, sir?" said a man, coming along with several of the desired articles.

"Here!" said Bunter.

The man placed a chair for him. Bunter fumbled in his pocket, after an indignant blink at the Co. Bunter never seemed to consider that he—William George Bunter—ought to be under the necessity of parting with his own cash for any reason whatsoever.

"What's the charge?" he asked.

"Hem! No charge, sir."

"Oh, good!"

Bunter blinked at him.

Apparently he wondered what the man was waiting for, as there was no charge for the deckchair.

"Find it comfortable, sir?" asked the man, with a tone of sarcasm in his voice.

"Quite, thanks!" said Bunter affably.

The man still lingered, and Bunter gave him an inquiring blink.

"I don't want anything else," he said.

"Eh?"

"You needn't wait."

"Oh!"

Harry Wharton slipped a shilling into the man's hand, and the man went his way, after a look at Bunter which seemed to express deep thoughts.

"You fat boulder!" said Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton! I don't think you ought to give people money for nothing, you know," said Bunter. "It's really undermining the independence of the lower classes, you know. But you never did have much principle. I've told you that before, haven't I?"

"Let's have a look round the steamer," said Bob.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, ring off, Bunter!"

"But, I say, I shall want a snack in the luncheon-room before we start," said Bunter. "That's the way to keep off sea-sickness, you know—plenty of grub. I'm always seasick when I'm hungry."

"You must be frightfully hungry, after that gorge in the train!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Well, not exactly, frightfully hungry," said Bunter. "But a little peckish, you know."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Lend me ten bob, Wharton—"

Harry Wharton grinned.

"I'm not going to undermine the independence of the lower classes any more," he answered.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Famous Five strolled away along the steamer, leaving the Owl of

the Remove blinking wrathfully after them.

Bunter snorted and settled down comfortably in his chair. The refreshment-room below tempted him, but he had a strong disinclination to spending his own money. He had so well supplied his inner Bunter in the boat-train that he was able to resist temptation for some time. The party were to lunch at Calais, on the other side of the Channel, and Bunter resolved to hold out, if he could, till Calais was reached.

The syren hooted and the steamer moved out of the harbour.

Bunter idly blinked at the passengers who strolled along the deck or sat about in the chairs. Suddenly he started as he caught sight of a well-known aquiline nose and thick black brows over sharp black eyes.

It was Lazaroff, the Russian, and he passed Bunter without glancing at him.

"That blinking Bolshevik!" muttered Bunter. "He's on the boat—and watching us!"

Bunter glanced round for Colonel Wharton, but the old military gentleman was not to be seen. Harry Wharton & Co. were also out of sight.

It was evidently Bunter's duty to impart to his comrades the fact that Baji Rao's spy was on the Channel boat. But Bunter was too lazy to move. He cheerfully dismissed the circumstance from his mind.

The steamer throbbled out into the sunny Channel.

Bunter, naturally, had no time to waste on thinking about the spy, and the possible danger his presence portended to Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. Bunter was thinking deeply and seriously about his inner Bunter—a most important subject. Already he had recovered—or thought he had—from the feed in the train. He was prepared for more doughty deeds as a trencherman, and had reached the point of deciding to part with his own money for a snack. But he was a little anxious. He had been sick on the Channel before, and he did not want to repeat that unpleasant experience. The important question now was whether a lunch below would be safe from the point of view of mal-de-mer.

Bunter wrinkled his fat brows over that problem.

So far he felt quite well; the sea did not seem to be rough. It looked rougher farther out in the Channel. But so far all was well, and Bunter grew more and more convinced that a lunch was what he really wanted to set him up for the journey.

He decided at last to risk it.

He left the deckchair and rolled down the staircase to the refreshment-room.

Once there, Bunter threw caution to the winds.

For quite a long time he kept a waiter busy, astonishing that gentleman more and more as he proceeded.

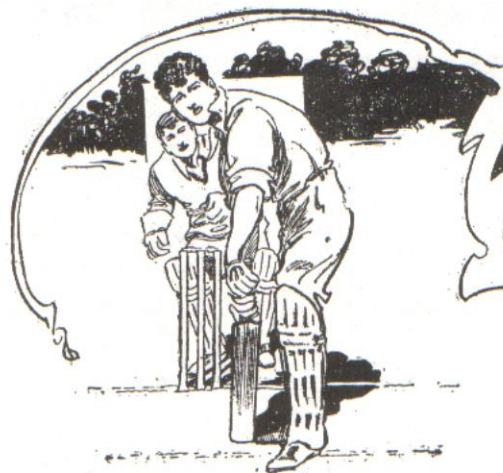
Where he put it all was a puzzle that the steamer waiter was never able to solve. Where he was likely to put it later, when the boat began to roll, was a simpler matter to settle.

Bunter rose at last, with a comfortable feeling of fullness.

He realised that this trip to India was going to be a success. He was getting enough to eat—and all other matters, of course, were of very slight consideration.

He paid his bill—which was not a small one. After the trouble he had given the waiter that gentleman probably expected a liberal gratuity. If so, he was disappointed. Bunter did not

(Continued on page 17.)



Harry Wharton's Cricket Supplement

No. 13 (New Series). Vol. 2.

July 31st, 1926.

No trouble or expense has been spared to make this supplement interesting and informative. In it all phases of cricket will be discussed by writers chosen from the foremost cricket authorities in the land. Readers may, therefore, rely upon the facts, figures, etc., mentioned from week to week in this supplement as being authentic.

HARRY WHARTON, Editor.

Boundary Hits! by "SCORER"

GEORGE COX, the Sussex bowler, has this season taken seventeen wickets in one match, a feat he had never previously accomplished. Seeing that Cox is now fifty-two years old, we can say that in his case age, and not youth, will be served.

According to A. C. MacLaren, every batsman who has really studied the game should know the cause of his dismissal. I generally know the cause of mine, because I hear a rattle immediately behind me, and know that a ball which I meant to hit has hit my wicket instead.

It has been noticed that during the present season Collins, the captain of the Australians, has constantly altered the order of going in. But this doesn't worry our bowlers so much as the order of getting them out.

A protest has been made because members of the Middlesex county club are not allowed to use the writing-room at Lord's. To put this in another way, if members use the writing-pads they will be out l.b.w.

The captain of Glamorgan is Clay, but the county has not stuck in the mud this season to the same extent as previously.

In addition to his pace, Larwood, of Notts, bowls an occasional "in-swing" which often catches the batsman napping. In other words, he swings them in and swings them out.

A certain rather nervous batsman used to put a fat railway timetable inside his shirt in case he got hit. Once he did get hit, and when he came round from the blow he was asked what time he was going home. "I don't know," he replied, "because the ball hit the last train."

Stourbridge, where Worcester play county matches, is said to be getting a bad name for barracking players and umpires. If this goes on the name will surely have to be changed to Sourbridge.

A young county wicket-keeper uses raw steak against his palms inside the gloves to prevent his hands from being bruised, and to enable him to catch better. Thus it may be said that the wicket-keeper's meat is the batsman's poison.

Parker, the Gloucester bowler, has this season dismissed Bowley, of Sussex, four times with five balls. We rather suspect that by this time Bowley's pet name for Parker will be "Nosey."

Geary, the Leicestershire bowler, was hit by an aeroplane propeller during the war. Fortunately, he was "not out."

They are said to possess the heaviest lawn-mower in the world at Nottingham. Possibly they need it to cut the ground after the heaviest rain in the world which they got during the first Test match this season.

The Twelfth Man!

And what his job is.

WHEN an England or an Australian team is chosen it is usual to pick officially a twelfth man, and it may be of interest if I tell about what the twelfth man may do and what he may not do. Strictly speaking, he is nothing more or less than a substitute fielder who is called upon if anything happens to any member of the fielding side. Injuries are not so frequent in the cricket field as on the football pitch, but it does often happen in the course of a match running to three days or even more, that one of the players gets hurt, is taken ill, or, for some other reason, cannot take his place. This is where the twelfth man comes in. He goes out to field.

A HARD AND FAST RULE!

In no circumstances, however, should the twelfth man really be allowed to bat, even if the player for whom he is called upon to act as substitute is so badly hurt that he cannot perform his duty with the bat. Even if an England or Australian player hurt himself in the very first over of a Test match, and was unable to take any further part in the game, the twelfth man would not be allowed to bat. In such a case we could all be very sorry for this twelfth man, because he would have to spend the whole of the time in the field, but would have to go without a knock by way of compensation.

The reason for this is obvious. To allow the twelfth man to bat would create an avenue for all sorts of abuses. A bowler, for instance, might do his bit when the other fellows were at the pitch, but near the end of the innings he might "fake" an injury, and if the twelfth man were allowed to bat his side would gain an unfair advantage. I am not suggesting that any captain would play such a low-down trick, but it is just as well to have a hard and fast rule on this matter to prevent any possibility of argument.

NOT CRICKET!

There have been odd cases in the past where even the rule which permits a substitute in the field has been abused. It is said of a certain fast bowler that he used to make a habit of bowling his hardest for a few overs, and then developing a strain. The twelfth man came out to field, the bowler went to the pavilion, had a shower-bath and a rest, and then came out to bowl again as fresh as ever. However, this sort of thing comes under the heading of that which is "not cricket."

In regard to the first Test match of the present series, a peculiar situation arose, and one which mystified a lot of people. In the chosen team as given out by the selectors, it was stated that Holmes would play if Sutcliffe was not fit, but that Sandham was the twelfth man. Some folk thought that Holmes was really the twelfth man, with Sandham the thirteenth. This was not so, however. Whether Holmes or Sutcliffe played didn't matter; Sandham was the twelfth man in attendance, the player who would have spent the three days in flannels, ready to go on the field if any player of our side had been hurt or been taken ill.

In an England team the twelfth man isn't so badly off, for he gets £22 a match even if he is never called upon at all.



ARTHUR A. MAILEY

The Australian "Googlie" Man,

who forms the subject of this week's amazing Free Gift.

HERE may not be quite so much terror in the "googlie" in these days as there was when it was a type of bowling new to cricket, but Australia still pins a lot of faith to this type of bowling, and that is why they brought two googlie men with them. Arthur A. Mailey is one of them, and he owes his rise to the giddy heights of Test match cricket to the spirit of perseverance which is in him. When he was quite a boy he made up his mind that he would become efficient in the art

of googlie bowling. He practised and practised; went out of his way to watch the masters at close quarters, and has since helped Australia to many a Test match success.

"BOSEY."

A New South Wales man, he was thirty-eight years of age on January 2nd this year. And early in his business career he had a job on Government service. In his spare moments, however, he was always sketching, and one day he decided to give up his rather tedious office job and become a newspaper man, doing cricket caricatures, and incidentally writing the matter to go along with them. Even in choosing his pen-name to sign his sketches he did not forget the man to whom he owed his bowling inspiration—B. J. T. Bosanquet, the man who first bowled this type of ball—for he signs his sketches "Bosey."

A GOOD TEST START!

Arthur Mailey first appeared in State cricket matches in Australia in the

season of 1912-13, and in 1921 he made his debut in Test cricket. In England that season he had a complete "bag" in all matches of 146 victims, and, though at times—like most googlie men—he is apt to be rather expensive, he can be very deadly. The batsmen of Gloucestershire certainly think so, for in 1921 he dismissed the whole ten of that county in one innings. His record as a batsman shows him to be nearly the worst of the present Australian lot, and yet he can step into the breach when required. The England bowlers had evidence of this when they were last in Australia. In the first Test match of that tour Mailey was last man in, joining Taylor.

The pair of them stuck together until they had added 127 runs to the total, thus setting up a new record for a last-wicket partnership in Test matches.

A GOOD SUGGESTION!

Being a writer on the game and an artist as well, he has a lot of novel ideas about the sport. Here is a typical example of his thinking. When, just before the players for the present Australian tour were chosen, a trial match was played, and Mailey suggested that for this trial match the wicket should be watered, in order to give the Australian bowlers a real test under the sort of conditions they were likely to meet in this country. The suggestion was adopted. This one story merely illustrates that Mailey will "think" the men out sooner or later.

Records Made at Manchester!

By
"Student."

A COMMERCIAL traveller of my acquaintance, who often spends nights in the train, once gave me this travelling tip: "When you are travelling at night," he said, "and you put your head out of the window to see where you are, you can always decide that you have not reached Manchester if it is not raining." That, of course, was an exaggeration. It has been known to be fine even at this Cottonopolis; but, all the same, Manchester has a bad reputation for weather, and if it should happen that the Australians strike a bad spell when they are at Old Trafford this week-end they will wish themselves back in their own sunny clime.

THE RAIN WINS!

When we look back over cricket history we find that Manchester has done something to earn its evil reputation in regard to the weather, having set up a record which everybody hopes will stand for all time. A Test match between England and Australia was arranged to be played at the headquarters of the Lancashire County club in 1890. But beyond the arrangement of the match nothing happened, for the rain fell so pitilessly and relentlessly during the three days allotted to the game that it was absolutely impossible to bowl a single ball. There have been Test matches arranged for other grounds at which precious little

cricket has been possible—the first Test of the present season, for instance, was limited to less than an hour—but that 1890 match was the only one in which it was impossible to make a start.

AN AUSTRALIAN HERO!

Perhaps because of the reputation which Manchester has earned for turning on the water-cart, most of the records connected with the ground have been made by bowlers, and at Old Trafford, in 1912, there was accomplished a feat without parallel in Test match cricket. The hero of this feat was the Australian bowler, T. J. Matthews. In that year there was a triangular tournament, in which England, Australia, and South African Test match players took part. The first game, between Australia and South Africa, was played at Manchester. After the "Aussies" had run up a big score, Matthews finished off the South African innings with a hat-trick. These South Africans had to follow on, and in the second innings, played on the same day, Matthews again accomplished the hat-trick.

LOST BAILS!

The average cricket watcher loves to see the wickets and the bails fly, and Old Trafford holds the record for the longest distance a bail has ever travelled in a first-class match when the ball has hit it. Playing for Worcestershire at Manchester in 1911, Burrows sent one of Huddleston's bails flying through the

air a distance of sixty-seven yards six inches. Now, by a strange coincidence, this self-same Burrows had previously sent one of MacLaren's bails flying sixty-four yards six inches on the self-same ground, and, in order to appreciate the real significance of this feat, I should tell you that no other bowler has ever sent a bail as far as either of the two measurements given. So although the air at Manchester may usually be described as a "bit thick," it is evidently not thick enough to prevent a bail travelling a long distance if it is hit in the right way.

THE LUCKY NUMBER!

Another fine bowling performance at Old Trafford was accomplished by Arthur Mold, who in one spell of bowling, in a match between Lancashire and Somerset, secured seven wickets without a single run being scored from his bowling. Another Lancashire bowler, Walter Brearley, also took seventeen wickets in a match at Manchester.

Not many batting records have been made at Old Trafford, but the one and only "Ranji" holds the record of having played the biggest in this country on a first appearance in a Test match. In 1896, at Old Trafford, "Ranji" signalled his choice for England for the first time by scoring 154 not out. So at Old Trafford in the present match both batsmen and bowlers have something to beat.

A NOVEL AWARD!

In previous seasons the men who have played for England in Test matches in this country have been given caps to wear. This season they have been presented with blazers by way of a change. One of our correspondents suggests that for the next series of Test matches the "award" should be a pair of socks to prevent any of our players suffering from "cold feet."

A TEST TEAM *without a Tail!*

How an Ideal English Match-Winning Eleven should be made up.

By **RICHARD TYLDESLEY,**

(The Lancashire and England Bowler.)

WITH a little exaggeration we might divide the cricket lovers of this country at the present time into two classes—and two classes only. There are those whose job it is to select England's team in one class—the important six—and in the other class are those who have no real say in the selection of our teams to beat Australia, but who, nevertheless, do go on selecting the teams. For my part, I am going to resist the temptation to join the big band of amateur team selectors. Looking for trouble was never an occupation of which I was particularly fond. Rather shall I content myself here with talking about an important phase of team selection which is very often ignored—that of getting the right match-winning blend.

LEAVING OUT GOOD MEN!

There are a lot of amateur team selectors who seem to forget absolutely the necessity for blend. They pick several players who, in their view, are the best batsmen; they also pick two or three of the best bowlers. Between these they choose some leading all-rounders, add to the lot a wicket-keeper, and imagine they have got a winning team. It does not necessarily follow, however. Good men must sometimes be left out because there is really no room for them. What you have to consider, after choosing a team, is whether you have got the right blend—whether your team is well suited to all occasions, and especially suited to the job of winning matches in this country.

MEN TO FORCE THE PACE!

It is in this connection that any team which can claim to have the right blend in the country should be chosen with one eye on the fact that there is a limited time given to the Test games in this country. This means that in a match-winning side in England you must have forcing batsmen—fellows who can not only be relied upon to get runs, say, three times out of four, but fellows who will get them quickly.

Yet clearly, and in spite of the necessity for getting on with three-day matches, you don't get the right blend by having seven or eight of the purely forcing type of batsmen.

ROOM FOR THE "STODGY" BATSMAN!

It is not necessary for me to stress the point that the fellows who get runs quickly must, of necessity, take risks, and in taking these risks they are apt to get out. Therefore, included in any team, remembering that blend is essential; you must have what the man in the street would probably call the stodgy batsman—the man who can stop a rot, even the man who can play for a draw if the occasion arises in which

it is necessary for him to do this. Hence, although forcing batsmen are necessary, you cannot afford to have too many of these risk-running type in an England team.

A TAIL WHICH WON'T WAG!

One of the things which has been said repeatedly about English teams in recent times is that, in the batting sense, we have had a lifeless tail—a tail which won't wag. I am not going to be so foolish as to suggest that it isn't very nice for a captain to think that he has eleven batsmen on the side—that the last couple at the wicket are just as likely to add a hundred to the score as they are to be dismissed for ducks. But I am convinced that, so far as



Dick Tyldesley about to bowl.

immediate requirements go, it is possible for England to make too great a sacrifice for the sake of a tail which will wag. It is generally agreed that the Australians now in this country are not quite so deadly in the bowling line as some other teams which they have sent us even in our time. On the other hand, it is also agreed that they compare most favourably with the best batting sides England has ever been called upon to face, partly because they have a tail which is always apt to wag.

WE MUST HAVE TIP-TOP BOWLERS!

Supposing the foregoing conclusions have a solid base, then I put forward these ideas for your consideration. If in an England team there are, say, seven really good batsmen, they ought to get enough runs against the so-called ordinary bowling of the Australians to make us immune from defeat. When our batsmen have got those runs there remains the task of getting the other

fellows out, and I put it to you that, in such circumstances, we can afford to lengthen England's tail by including an extra bowler who has little or no batting pretensions. Thus, although we are all apt to talk about the ideal match-winning side having no tail—or, at least, a tail which will wag furiously—it does not necessarily follow that the blend is wrong because you have a tail.

LEFT-HANDERS TO WORRY!

Most followers of cricket have a very proper appreciation of the advantages of left-handed bowlers, and therefore I need not say a thing about the necessity for such in a team which can rightly claim to have the proper blend. I do not think, however, that we appreciate at the proper worth the value of left-handed batsmen. It is a definite opinion of mine that, other things being equal, a team which was so arranged that, practically speaking, there would always be a left-hander at the wicket would give our opponents more food for thought than any other blend. The left-hander is the man most likely to upset the field; that is agreed. But the left-hander is also the man most likely to upset the bowler who is getting the wickets. A man who is bowling in a most dangerous way so far as right-handed batsmen are concerned may be much less of a proposition to a left-hander. With a left-handed batsman at one end and a right-hander at the other, and the pair of them stealing runs, the bowler has a worrying time as to how to mix his stuff, and the fielders can't be blamed if they get a little bit tired, and consequently less watchful, owing to the repeated calls for a change in their positions. So I suggest that left-handers are a part of the blend, and the wise captain with left-handers in his side will see to it that, as far as possible, his left-handers don't bat the same time.

CHOOSING FOR THE WEATHER!

Another point about team selection in England which is not often thought about is that the change to Saturday starts for Test matches has made the job of the selectors more difficult. Theoretically, in the team which really blends you ought to have bowlers for all sorts of wickets, and there is much to be said for one or two last-minute selections. But he would be a brave man who would predict in this country, from the weather on Saturday morning, the state of the pitch for the rest of the match. Altogether, getting the right blend is a ticklish business, and I am glad that I have only had to talk about it from a theoretical point of view.

Richard Tyldesley

SHORT RUNS!

At Old Trafford, Manchester, they have a motor mower for the pitch, this being the first cricket ground in the country where this kind of mower was used. Another case, evidently, of what Manchester does to-day the rest of the world does to-morrow.

According to Arthur Mailey, the Australian, fingers don't count so much in bowling the "googlie" as body action. Through bowling the "googlie," Mailey has developed the muscles of his right arm and shoulder till they are much bigger than the left. Thus Mailey can be said to be "one-sided" in two senses.

AT THE NETS!

By "County Cricketer."

A New Series of Articles which will tell you how to improve your cricket.

MAKING THE BALL SPIN.

I CONFESS quite readily that when I come to tackle two important aspects of bowling—making the ball swerve, and making it break—I find it extremely difficult to give hints on how these things should be done. I have watched dozens of first-class spin and swerve bowlers, and the more of these sort of bowlers I watch the more convinced am I that it is difficult to teach a young bowler, for the simple reason that practically every first-class bowler—even the men who bowl the same type of ball—do it differently. Either their body action is different, or else they hold the ball differently.

THE KNACK!

What is more, although our first-class bowlers have explained to me in detail how they hold the ball, there are several of them who are mystified about its action when it strikes the pitch. I remember that W. C. Smith, who used to get a lot of wickets for Surrey, once asked W. G. Grace how it was that a particular ball broke smartly from the leg side even though the bowler was not conscious of imparting any spin to the ball at the moment of delivery. This was the extremely wise reply given by the one and only "W. G." "Never mind wondering what causes the ball to break," he said. "Just go on doing it; for if you discover the why and the wherefore you will probably lose the knack."

THE VALUE OF THE SEAM!

Many bowlers, of course, spin the ball deliberately—make it break according to plan. Practically all these spinners do the spinning with the third finger of the bowling hand. And in every case the seam of the ball is used. One good way of making the ball spin is to place the first finger on top of the ball and

along the seam. The third finger is placed underneath the ball, also on the seam. Then, at the moment of delivery, the ball is given a twist.

I should like my readers to take a ball in hand and hold it in the manner I have described. Then try dropping it on the ground—not actually bowling—and imparting the spin. You will see that you can make it break. Having done this, then try the same action in bowling, and I fancy you will find that the ball will break much or little according to the amount of spin you impart to it with the fingers.

One thing I must say in connection with all break bowling. You have all heard of the fellow who can make the ball break "yards." Believe me, this fellow isn't really a bowler. To make a ball break "yards" is quite unnecessary; all that is necessary is to make it break sufficiently for the ball to beat the bat as it turns, or to get the batsman snicking the ball, instead of playing it with the centre of the bat.

Next time I shall wind up the bowling side of our instructive articles with some general hints to the slow and medium-paced bowlers.

GRAND NEW LIMERICK COMPETITION!

"BOUNDARIES"

FIRST PRIZE £2-2-0
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This is a simple, fascinating competition in which everyone can join. All you've got to do is to round off the unfinished verse shown on this page. A point to remember is that your last line must scan with the first two. Don't try and be too clever—a simple but forceful line is what is wanted. An example line is given to help you.

To the sender of the "last line" which, in the Editor's opinion, is the best, will be awarded the useful money prize of £2 2s. To each of the six next best, prizes of 10s. 6d. will be awarded.

DIRECTIONS.

When you have thought out a really good last line, fill in the coupon below, IN INK, taking care to write your name and address clearly, and post it to:

Magnet "Boundaries" No. 4,
Gough House, Gough Square,
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You may send in as many attempts as you like, but all efforts must be written on an entrance form as provided here. It is a distinct condition of entry that the Editor's decision must be accepted as final.

Employees of the proprietors of the MAGNET may not compete.



G. GUNN.

The hero of Notts is George Gunn,
To his credit stands many a run.

Though now an "old stager,"
It's quite safe to wager

Example last line:—

Fresh laurels are yet to be won.

A WORD WITH THE UMPIRE.

REG MCKAY (Leeds).—If in big matches in this country a ball gets so far out of shape that it really should not be used for the allotted 200 runs, another ball may be substituted, but this should not be a new one. It should be as much like the discarded one, so far as amount of use is concerned, as possible. The decision rests with the umpires, to whom appeals as to the state of the ball should be made.

L. Jones (Birmingham).—After a fall of rain the captains of the two teams should decide whether play should be resumed. If they disagree, however, the umpires are then asked to give a decision. This is the explanation of the incident at Nottingham on the first day of the first Test this season.

R. Smithson (Worcester).—It is always difficult to decide the best performance of any bowler, but if we take actual figures, I should say that Root's best bit of bowling was against Gloucester, at Cheltenham, two years ago. In nine balls he took five wickets without having a run scored off him.

W. Crompton (Blackburn).—It is not a "no-ball" if the bowler, in the act of delivering the ball, breaks the wicket, either with his foot or with the awing of his arm.

"Indian" (Oxford).—Duleepsinhji is a nephew of "Ranji," whose real title is the Jam of Nawabnagar. "Duleep" celebrated his 21st birthday on June 13th of this year.

MAGNET "BOUNDARIES" COMPETITION No. 4.

COUPON.

4

I agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and binding.

LAST LINE

Name

Address

Closing Date, Thursday, August 5th.



(Continued from page 12.)

believe in tips. Leaving the waiter with a somewhat peculiar expression on his face, Bunter rolled out of the room and negotiated the stairs to the deck.

And then—
Bunter knew that he had done himself well—very well indeed. Now it was borne in upon his fat mind that he had done himself a little too well.

The boat had begun to rock a little. It was fairly out in the chops of the Channel now.

A strange and eerie feeling came suddenly over Bunter as he reached the top of the steps.

He made a sudden clutch at the rail beside the stair, and held on to it for dear life.

Awful feelings were surging up within him.

Striving desperately to quell the mutiny of the innumerable good things he had stacked away inside, Bunter clung to the rail and groaned.

He struggled hard; but he knew that he was going to be beaten. He was "for" it!

A passenger came out of the sunlight on the deck, to descend the stairs to the dining-room. It was the black-browed Russian Lazaroff.

He glanced at Bunter, clinging to the staircase-rail, and started for a second, and then grinned. It was a heartless grin, for the expression on Billy Bunter's tormented face just then might have moved a heart of stone.

Bunter did not heed him, did not even recognise him. Bunter was fully occupied with the surgings and heavings that were going on within his ample waistcoat. He was feeling as Vesuvius might be supposed to feel on the eve of an eruption.

"Grooogh!"

Bunter gasped, gurgled, and lurched. Doubled up in awful suffering, he lost his hold on the staircase-rail.

"Groogh! Ow! Help!"

Bunter sprawled on the stairs. He threw out his arms wildly to save himself, and clutched at the passing passenger. Lazaroff was a couple of steps below him now, and Bunter sprawled fairly on him, and clasped him round the neck.

Lazaroff uttered a startled ejaculation. He had no time for more.

Bunter's terrific weight, plunging on him suddenly from above, was too much for him.

The Russian lost his footing, and rolled helplessly to the bottom of the stairs in Bunter's frantic embrace. They reached the floor together, in a heap.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Woes of Billy Bunter!

CRASH!

Bump!

"Yaroooop! Groooooogh!"

There was a spluttering howl from Billy Bunter, and a yell from the Russian.

They had landed at the bottom of the stair, sprawling and struggling. Lazaroff was underneath—fortunately for Bunter,

It was not very fortunate for Lazaroff, however.

He was almost raving, as he sprawled under Bunter's weight. A stream of words poured from his lips—most emphatic words, to judge by the tone and by his looks, but luckily in incomprehensible Russian.

A steward and a waiter rushed up. Bunter was seized by two pairs of hands and rolled off the Russian.

Then Lazaroff sat up, gasping for breath, his sallow face black with rage.

"Ow!" spluttered Bunter. "D-d-don't touch me! Groogh! I'm ill! Ow! Ooooooooh!"

Bunter sprawled face down on the floor, in the uttermost depths of misery. He had received two or three knocks in rolling down the stair, but he did not heed them. It was the trouble within that he heeded, and it was absolutely overwhelming.

"There you are, sir," said the steward, helping Lazaroff to his feet.

The Russian gritted his teeth, and turned on Bunter. He drew back his boot, with the evident intention of kicking Bunter, as the fat junior lay helplessly sick on the floor.

The steward jerked him back by the arm.

"Hold on, sir! It was an accident," he said.

Lazaroff was too enraged to heed him. The red was oozing from a cut on his high cheek-bone, and a black bruise was forming on his forehead. He was hurt; there was no doubt about that. A man could not roll down a steep stair, with Bunter's weight on him, without getting hurt. And Lazaroff was evidently determined to take it out of Bunter. He hurled off the detaining grasp of the steward, and closed in on Bunter, with the obvious intention of kicking him savagely as he lay.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry looked down from above. The chums of the Remove had heard the crash of the fall, and looked in to see if an accident had happened. Bob stared at the sight of Bunter sprawling at the bottom of the steps, and the black-browed Russian with his foot raised to kick.

Bob negotiated the stairs at one tremendous bound.

He landed fairly on the Russian, sending him spinning backwards. The man crashed into the steward, and then rolled to the floor.

Bob Cherry staggered back from the shock.

"Back up, you fellows!" he panted. "It's that rotter Lazaroff—the man in the train—and he's going for Bunter."

"What-ho!"

Wharton was down the stairs in a twinkling, and Johnny Bull and Nugent and Hurree Singh rushed after him.

Lazaroff staggered to his feet, and found all the Famous Five of Greyfriars lined up between him and the prostrate Bunter.

His black eyes glistened at them.

"Come on, if you like!" said Harry Wharton contemptuously.

"This way for trouble!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"The troublefulness will be terrific, my esteemed spying rascal!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

A number of people were gathering round the scene now, and the Russian made an effort to control his savage temper.

"The fat fool knocked me down the staircase!" he hissed.

"Oh! You can speak English now!" said Wharton.

Lazaroff bit his lip.

"Serve you jolly well right!" said

Johnny Bull. "It must have been an accident—but serve you right, all the same!"

Lazaroff gritted his teeth, and turned away. He had brought much more attention upon himself than he had intended; and, savagely angry as he was, it was clear to him that he could not deal with the Famous Five of Greyfriars. Indeed, the chums of the Remove were rather anxious to see him try it on; they would have enjoyed handling the spy.

The rascal turned away, muttering curses under his black moustache. He disappeared from sight in a moment or two.

Bunter was still sprawling and groaning. The chums of the Remove gathered round him.

"My hat! He's got it!" said Bob Cherry. "Bad case of mal-de-mer! Have you been stuffing again, Bunter?"

Groan!

"I warned you that you'd overdone it already!"

Groan!

"Help him up on to the deck," said Harry. "The fat duffer will feel better in the open air."

Groan!

"Come on, old fat man!"

"D-d-don't touch me," said Bunter faintly. "I—I'm dying!"

"Fathead!"

"I—I forgive you, Wharton! Lemmo alone! I'm dying! You've treated me like beasts; but I forgive you!"

"You silly owl!"

The Famous Five grasped Bunter, and yanked him to his feet. Bunter's whole weight was thrown upon them, and, sturdily as they were, they had to exert themselves to stand the strain. The steward looked on, grinning. As the juniors propelled the hapless Bunter to the stairs the steward bent down and picked up a pocket-book upon which Bunter had been sprawling.

"Here's the gent's pocket-book, sir."

"You silly ass, Bunter, you've dropped your pocket-book," said Bob.

Groan!

"Take it, fathead!" said Harry, as the steward was holding out the pocket-book to Bunter.

Groan!

"I'll mind it for the silly ass till he pulls round," said Wharton.

"Gimme my pocket-book!" mumbled Bunter.

"Take it, then, you ass!"

"Shove it in my pocket. I'm too weak to move. Groogh!"

"Fathead!"

Wharton took the pocket-book from the steward and pushed it into the fat junior's pocket. Then William George Bunter was propelled up the steps to the deck.

He went, groaning dismally.

Glances were turned on him from all sides as he was assisted out on deck and led away to his chair. But Bunter did not heed them. Bunter was suffering too much to heed anything but his sufferings.

He collapsed into his chair.

"Don't you fellows go away!" he groaned. "Stand by me while I'm dying. I sha'n't last long."

"No such luck!" said Johnny Bull heartlessly.

"Beast!"

"You fat duffer," said Wharton. "You're sick because you've been stuffing. You'll be all right soon."

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"Well, fathead?"

"I'll try to forgive you," said Bunter feebly.

"You silly owl!" roared Bob Cherry.

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"If you forgive us again I'll jolly well bang your head on the deck."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

"Do you want a basin?" asked Nugent.

"Groogh! No."

"Want anything?"

"Go and eat coke!" groaned Bunter. And the chums of the Remove left Bunter to groan while they strolled up and down the deck of the Channel steamer.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Left Behind!

"FRANCE!" said Bob.

"La belle France!" said Nugent.

Bunter sat up a little and took notice. In the sunny distance the white cliffs of Calais were visible across the curling waters.

The Owl of the Remove was feeling better now, and he had ceased to groan. He realised that he was not, after all, dying just yet. The keen sea breeze had revived him; and perhaps the loss of this gargantuan lunch had helped to pull him round.

Colonel Wharton came along the deck. He glanced rather curiously at Bunter's fat, pasty face.

"Have you been sick, Bunter?" he asked.

"Well, a trifle, sir," said Bunter. "Nothing much. I'm a pretty good sailor, you know! A silly duffer biffed into me and made me fall down the cabin stairs. That brought it on."

"Bunter had lunch for six," explained Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

The colonel smiled.

"You will come aft now, my boys," he said. "Passports are examined on the boat, before we land. It is time now."

"Very well, sir!"

The juniors followed Colonel Wharton, Bunter detaching himself with an effort from his deck chair. A crowd was already gathering in a cabin where an official sat at a table examining and stamping passports. The Greyfriars party joined it.

Wharton had already told his uncle that Lazaroff was on the boat, and the colonel glanced round over the crowd waiting with their passports, for the Russian.

The black-browed rascal was soon seen, at a little distance, waiting his turn. He was ahead of the Greyfriars party.

He glanced round at them and shrugged his shoulders as he met the cool, scrutinising stare of Colonel Wharton's keen eyes. Lazaroff was quite aware that the Greyfriars party knew that he was a spy, and that he was shadowing them across the Channel, but the knowledge that his rascally character was known did not disconcert him. The colonel's cool, contemptuous glance brought only a sneer to his sallow face.

"That's the johnny, sir!" said Bob Cherry.

The colonel nodded.

"That's the beast who biffed me over!" said Billy Bunter. "Jolly nearly made me lose my pocket-book, too. I shouldn't have missed it if the steward hadn't picked it up. I hope you tipped the steward, Wharton."

"No, ass!"

"Well, you might have," said Bunter. "I've got all my money in my pocket-book, and it was jolly honest of him."

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"I suppose it would have made him rich for life if he'd stuck to it?" suggested Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Why didn't you tip the man yourself?" asked Nugent.

"Perhaps all Bunter's funds in the pocket-book wouldn't have run to it," suggested Bob. And the juniors chuckled.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Something's up!" said Bob Cherry, the next moment. Lazaroff, who was half a dozen places ahead of the Greyfriars party in the line of passengers pressing on with their passports, had reached the table where the official sat.

He had thrust his hand into his pocket, apparently for his passport, but it came out empty.

A puzzled look came over the Russian's sallow face, and he felt in his other pockets. Still his hands emerged empty.

From where they stood the Greyfriars party watched him curiously. It looked as if the Russian had lost his passport.

If that was the case, his shadowing of the Greyfriars party was likely to come to a sudden termination, for certainly he would never be allowed to land in France without it.

The French official at the table blinked at him over his spectacles impatiently.

Look out for Next Week's Grand Cut-out Stand-up Photo of J. B. HOBBS, Chums!

"Je vous attend, monsieur," he said, and he waved a plump hand to indicate the array of passengers still to be dealt with.

Lazaroff made another desperate dive into his pockets. But there was no result. He began to explain to the official in rapid French, and the official shrugged his shoulders with a sceptical look. It was not his first experience of passengers who had "lost" their passports.

"Attendez, et cherchez!" he said, with an ironical expression, and he waved the Russian back from the table.

"Mais, monsieur—"

"Laissez passer les autres, monsieur."

There was no help for it; the Russian had already kept the other passengers waiting several minutes. He had to step out of the line and allow the others to reach the official at the table. Colonel Wharton and the juniors passed him, and the Russian gave them an evil look as they passed.

They left the cabin by a door on the other side of the deck when they were finished, and Wharton, glancing back, saw the Russian still there, savagely searching through all the recesses of his pockets.

"My hat!" murmured the captain of the Remove. "That's rather luck for us. That fellow has lost his passport."

"If he had one!" said Bob.

"Well, he must have had one to get on the boat at all," said Harry. "If

he were trying to squeeze through without a passport he wouldn't have turned up here, where they are examined, I suppose."

"That's so. Can he get off the boat if he's lost it?"

"No fear!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Then he will have to go back in the boat to Dover."

"He jolly well will if he can't find his passport."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The boat was drawing near to Calais now, and the piers were in sight, crowded with the usual swarm of gazers that greet the entrance of the Channel steamer.

The steamer ranged alongside the quay at last.

The Greyfriars party took their places among the passengers forming up to cross the gangway to the quay, and at a little distance, with a dark scowl on his face, they sighted the Russian, Lazaroff.

He was not in the crowd forming to go ashore. Evidently he had not found his passport, and knew it was useless to attempt to land without it.

Colonel Wharton gave him a very keen and curious glance. That this rascal, employed by Baji Rao's agents to shadow the Greyfriars party, should be guilty of so careless a fault as losing his passport was surprising enough. Yet evidently it had happened. Ever since the examination in the cabin, the man had been searching up and down the steamer with a scowling face, and asking incessant questions of the seamen and the stewards, all in vain. Now he stood with folded arms with black rage in his face, watching the passengers as they went ashore.

The colonel smiled slightly.

The man was shadowing the party, to keep in touch with them, for the obvious purpose of assisting in another attempt upon Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh when opportunity offered. That scheme was entirely knocked on the head by the fact that he could not leave the steamer, and that when the Channel boat turned back Lazaroff had to go back in it to Dover. Quite unexpectedly the spy was to be thrown off the track.

The Greyfriars party landed, and walked into the Douane, where polite Customs officials chalked their baggage, and they went on into the station.

Bunter blinked round him.

"There's a buffet here," he said.

"We lunch on the train," said the colonel. "This way—our places are booked."

The party were soon in the Paris express, which was waiting in the station. The juniors wore smiling looks as they took their seats. There was something very entertaining in the thought of the shadower chafing and raging on the boat, unable to land, and forced to allow his intended victims to pass out of his sight.

"I wonder what that johnnie is feeling like now?" grinned Bob Cherry, as the train began to move.

"Pleasant, I expect," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was a fortunate accident," said the colonel. "Quite an unexpected stroke of good fortune for us. It may save us a good deal of trouble on our journey through France."

"It's queer, though," said Johnny Bull. "That rotter looks as if he knows his way about, and losing his passport is simply fatheaded."

"It is odd," agreed the colonel.

There was no doubt that it was a

puzzling incident, as well as a fortunate one. It was, indeed, something of a mystery, and, as it happened, it was William George Bunter who was destined to throw light on the mystery. Bunter was feeling in his pockets, to make sure that his possessions were safe, after passing through the crowd on the station platform. He uttered a surprised ejaculation all of a sudden, as he drew a leather pocket-book from his pocket.

"My hat! What's this?"

Wharton glanced at him.

"Your pocket-book, fathead! The one the steward picked up and gave back to you after you fell down the stairs."

"It isn't mine!"

"What?"

Billy Bunter opened the pocket-book and blinked into it. On some of the leaves of the book there were scribbled notes, in a language utterly incomprehensible to Bunter—indeed, the very characters were strange to his eyes.

"That's Russian," said Bob.

A wad of French banknotes were in one compartment of the book. In another was a thick folded document. Bunter unfolded it. Amid the official inscriptions on it appeared the name "Serge Lazaroff."

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

"Great pip!"

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

"It wasn't Bunter who dropped that giddy pocket-book—it was Lazaroff!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

Colonel Wharton stared at the passport. There was no doubt about it—Bunter held in his fat hands the missing passport, for want of which Lazaroff had been unable to leave the steamer.

"By gad!" exclaimed the colonel.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"The steward thought it was Bunter's pocket-book, as he was sprawling on it," he said. "But Lazaroff must have lost it when Bunter rolled him down the stairs. What a game!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter grinned gleefully.

"I fancy I've told you fellows, more than once, that you're lucky to have me along with you," he remarked. "I've jolly well thrown that spy off the track by bagging his passport, what?"

"I don't see that you had much to do with it," said Bob. "You were too sick even to look at the pocket-book when the steward handed it to you."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Still, it was lucky," said Harry. "What are we going to do with the thing now, uncle?"

Bunter glared.

"It's mine—a capture from the enemy," he said. "The passport's no good, but I'm entitled to bag all these French banknotes. They will come in jolly useful."

"Look here, Bunter—"

"Enough said!" snorted Bunter. "I can jolly well tell you—"

"Give it to me!" said Colonel Wharton quietly.

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Give it to me!"

Billy Bunter reluctantly passed the pocket-book to the colonel. From Bunter's point of view, it was a capture from the enemy, which he was entitled to keep; at all events, which he was extremely desirous of keeping. But the colonel did not seem to see eye to eye with Bunter on that point.

Colonel Wharton fastened the pocket-book again, with all its contents safe inside, opened the carriage window, and tossed the pocket-book out. It described a semi-circle in the air, and dropped into a ditch beside the railway track.



Bunter threw out his arms wildly to save himself from falling, and clutched at the passing passenger. Lazaroff uttered a startled ejaculation. Bunter's terrific weight, plunging on him suddenly from above, was too much for him. The Russian lost his footing and rolled helplessly to the bottom of the stairs in Bunter's frantic embrace. Crash! Bump! "Yarooop!" (See Chapter 8.)

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"That's the best thing to do with it," agreed Bob Cherry.

Bunter did not agree. Fortunately, Bunter's opinion did not matter.

"I—I think it's rot!" gasped Bunter.

Colonel Wharton looked at him.

"Utter rot!" said Bunter.

"That will do, Bunter!" said the colonel quietly. And the Owl of the Remove realised that he had better say no more.

But there was a deep frown on William George Bunter's fat face as the train rattled on to Paris, what time the Channel boat was re-crossing the choppy waves of "La Manche," carrying back to Dover the defeated spy.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Asks For It!

PARIS, Dijon, Lyons! Ever southward lay the route of the Greyfriars party, across the fair land of France towards the sunny Mediterranean.

Bunter grouched a good deal at the speed. Bunter would have preferred to rest a week in Paris, a fortnight at

Dijon, and a month at Lyons. Bunter did not like exertion. But Bunter's desires were not heeded, and no time was lost en route.

It was a pleasant journey enough to the Famous Five; all the pleasanter because it was soon clear that the spies of Baji Rao had lost track of them.

That, as Bunter pointed out with great insistence, was due to him. Had he not—unconsciously—bagged Lazaroff's passport, the party would have been shadowed on their journey across France, and trouble might have resulted. Accidentally, perhaps, but undoubtedly, William George Bunter was proving useful on the trip to India. Somewhere on the long railway journey an attempt would have been made on Hurree Singh, had the shadower been still on the track.

"Mayn't see anything more of the rotters at all this side of Bombay," Bob Cherry remarked, as the P.L.M. express rattled on towards Marseilles, the last lap of the land journey.

"I hope not!" said Wharton. "But they know, at least, that we are taking the land route, so there may be somebody waiting and watching for us at Marseilles."

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"The likeliness is terrific," said Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh. "But it is the boon and the blessedness to be rid of the esteemed rotters for a time."

"You owe that to me, you know," said Bunter.

"My esteemed fat Bunter—"

"Well, don't you?" demanded Bunter warmly. "If I hadn't turned that spy back at Calais, they'd have spotted you somewhere along the line, and bagged you. I might not have been able to save you as I did before."

"Very likely not!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"You wouldn't have got as far as this, Inky, without being nobbled, but for me," said Bunter, blinking at the nabob. "The best thing that ever happened to you was my consenting to join the party. I've had to give up a lot of my engagements for the vacation, too. I don't expect thanks. Still, facts are facts."

"Give us a rest!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"I had to turn down Lord Maul-everer's invitation to Mauleverer Towers," said Bunter. "I had to say no to D'Arcy of St. Jim's, who was very anxious to bag me for the holidays. I—"

"Cheese it!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"I'll tell you what," said Bob Cherry, with a wink at his comrades, "it's asking too much of Bunter to give up all these ripping engagements for the hols. We can't expect to bag a fellow for so long a time, when he's so much sought after."

"Glad you can see it," snorted Bunter.

"So my idea is to have a whip-round at Marseilles, and pay his fare home," said Bob. "We'll manage to do the rest of the journey without Bunter to protect us."

"Hear, hear!"

"Good egg!"

"The good-eggfulness is terrific!"

"Consider it done," said Bob. "You can take the next express back, and divide your time between Lord Mauleverer and D'Arcy of St. Jim's. See?"

"It's settled," agreed Harry Wharton. Billy Bunter blinked at the juniors.

"I say, you fellows—"

"That's all right, old fat man," grinned Nugent. "It's settled. We don't want to lose you, but we think you ought to go."

"Of course, I'm not deserting my old pal Inky," said Bunter, shaking his head. "I feel bound to see him through. I regard it as a duty. I'm rather a whale on duty, as you know, and—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Not like some chaps," said Bunter. "You chaps, frinstance, I don't mind making sacrifices for old Inky. It's my way—always thinking of others, and never of myself."

"Fan me, somebody!" murmured Bob Cherry faintly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We shall be in Marseilles soon," said Bunter, apparently desirous of changing the subject. "There's a special sort of grub that Marseilles is famous for—they call it bouillebaisse. I don't quite know what it's like, but I'm going to sample it. We shall have to stay in Marseilles a bit—I want a rest after all this hurrying and scurrying, and in fact, I shall refuse to proceed without one."

"Our places are booked on the steamer for Suez, fathead," said Harry Wharton.

"That's all rot," said Bunter. "I dare say the places can be booked on a later steamer. Anyhow, I'm having a rest at Marseilles. You can tell your uncle so, Wharton, from me."

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"You'd better tell him yourself," said Harry, with a laugh.

"I will, then," said Bunter. "I'm jolly well not going to be rushed off my legs, I can tell you, to please an old codger."

"A what?" demanded Wharton.

"Old codger!" said Bunter cheerfully.

Colonel Wharton, who was smoking his cigar in the train corridor, looked into the carriage as Bunter was speaking. Wharton, who was about to flatten Bunter's hat on his head, dropped his hand. The colonel fixed his eyes on Billy Bunter, who, not having observed the bronzed face in the carriage doorway, rattled on cheerily.

"I said old codger, and I mean old codger. And I want it to be understood, once for all, you fellows, that I'm jolly well not going to be dictated to by an old codger. You needn't make faces at me, Bob Cherry—and you needn't either, Nugent. What the thump are you screwing up your chivvies at a fellow like that for? A blessed old codger—"

"Bunter!"

Billy Bunter's head spun round at the colonel's deep, quiet voice. He blinked at the old gentleman in dismay.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"You were referring to an old codger. I think?" remarked Harry Wharton's uncle, with grim geniality.

"Oh, no!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I meant—"

"Well, what did you mean?" inquired the colonel, while the Famous Five looked on in silence.

"I—I meant—" gasped Bunter. "I—I meant that—that I would be dictated to by an old codger. That is, I—I mean—"

"You do not seem pleased with this journey, Bunter," said Colonel Wharton. "I shall therefore send you home from Marseilles."

"Eh?"

"I will make arrangements for a reliable person to conduct you back to England," said the colonel. "That, I presume, will satisfy you."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "No! You—you see—"

"It will satisfy me, at all events," said the colonel grimly, and he turned away and strolled along the train corridor again.

Bunter blinked at the Famous Five in great dismay.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he gasped. "I—I suppose he doesn't mean it? He knows you can't get on without me."

"I fancy he does mean it, and a jolly good thing, too!" growled Bob Cherry. "You've done it now."

"The donefulness is terrific."

"Oh, lor!" groaned Bunter.

The swank was gone from William George Bunter like the air from a bubble that is burst. He sat with a dismayed fat face while the express rattled on into Marseilles. With all his "gas" on the subject, Bunter did not want to go back—very much he did not want to go back. But there seemed to be no help for it now. The colonel's word was law, and the colonel had decided that William George Bunter was to go home. Bunter's face was quite lugubrious as he walked out of the station with the Greyfriars party—and, in his dismay, he even forgot that the most important thing at Marseilles was to sample the "bouillebaisse." Willy-nilly, he had to leave the Greyfriars party in the lurch at this stage of their journey—and what was really extraordinary was, that the Greyfriars party did not seem to mind it in the very least.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Once More, Bunter!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Can it, old chap."

"Come along, old fat man, but dry up," said Bob Cherry.

The Greyfriars party had dined cheerily after their journey—with the exception of Billy Bunter. Bunter was not cheerful—and he wondered how the other fellows could be cheerful, in the circumstances. They were going to lose him on the morrow, but evidently they did not realise what a loss it would be.

After dinner, the colonel had business on hand in connection with the arrangements for the steamer the next day, and he had given the juniors permission to walk out of the hotel, on the strict condition that they kept together and did not leave the lighted streets. Since the spy had been dropped at Calais, nothing had been seen or heard of the enemy, but it was quite probable that the party were watched for at Marseilles, and that Bajji Rao's emissaries might pick up their trail again at the Mediterranean seaport. Bunter rolled out into the brilliantly-lighted Cannebiere with the Famous Five, but he was not thinking of seeing the sights of the great sea-city which has grown and spread on the site of the ancient Massilia. More than once Bunter had told the juniors that he would jolly well chuck the trip if they didn't jolly well look out. Now he was going to "chuck it," and he did not seem pleased.

"I think you might put in a word for me, Wharton," he grunted, as the juniors strolled cheerily along the Cannebiere, through a buzzing throng of all nations, past lines of lighted cafes.

"You see—"

"Nothing doing," said Harry. "You asked for it."

"Besides, think of old Mauly and D'Arcy of St. Jim's," said Bob Cherry solemnly. "Think how they're yearning to bag you for the hols!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Jolly place, Marseilles!" remarked Frank Nugent. "All sorts of people here. I've heard five languages in the last five minutes."

"You'd better speak to the colonel, Inky," said Bunter. He no longer alluded to Colonel Wharton as an "old codger." "Explain to him that you simply dare not continue the journey without me to protect you."

The nabob grinned.

"The whopperfulness would be terrific," he answered.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Cheese it, Bunter, old fatty!" urged Johnny Bull. "We've got only an hour to see the sights. Ring off!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Cheese it!"

Billy Bunter gave an angry snort. "You can jolly well go and eat coke then!" he said. "I'm fed-up with you! I'm going back to the hotel. I didn't have really enough at dinner, and I'm ready for supper."

"Good!"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on in the jostling crowd, and Bunter gave another angry snort. Even on his last evening with them these rotters did not seem keen on his fascinating company. He swung round to tramp back to the hotel, and cannoned against a man who was coming on behind.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter, staggering back.

The next moment he gave a jump. The man he had cannoned into staggered also; but he recovered himself in a moment, and walked on quickly. Bunter stared after him, his eyes almost



"Look out!" yelled Bunter. "That Hindu, Nally Das—look out! Get inside the cafe!" Bunter grabbed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh by the arm and dragged him from his seat. The warning had come just in time. Harry Wharton & Co. closed round Hurree Singh, and a muscular rough, who had grasped the nabob, received Wharton's clenched fist full in his face. "Back up, Greyfriars!" The next moment the place was in an uproar! (See Chapter 12.)

bulging through his big spectacles. He had recognised the man. It was Nally Das, the Hindu kidnapper, who had so nearly succeeded in kidnapping Hurree Jamset Ram Singh at Greyfriars.

Bunter stared after him. Nally Das, evidently, had been watching for the Greyfriars party at Marseilles, and he was now following the juniors through the crowded Cannibiere. In the swarming, jostling crowd, it was easy for the Hindu to shadow the party without being observed. But for the fact that Bunter had left his companions, and turned back, certainly he would not have become aware of the Hindu's presence; and Harry Wharton & Co. were still quite unaware of it.

"My hat!" murmured Bunter. The Owl of the Remove realised that the presence of the Hindu meant danger to the party. It seemed difficult to suppose that an attack was intended in the swarming Cannibiere; but it was possible, at least. Bunter, with a deep sense of injury upon him, was strongly tempted to continue his way back to the hotel and leave the juniors to take their chance. Supper awaited him at the hotel, and supper was a matter of the first importance. But the Owl of the Remove, after a moment's thought, turned back again, and followed the Hindu.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, jostling in the crowd, unconscious of the dark face that followed. Bunter followed the Hindu, his little round eyes gleaming through his spectacles.

The Famous Five stopped at one of the cafes that lined the street, and sat down at the little chairs round a

marble-topped table for coffee. The Hindu stopped on the edge of the pavement, the constant swarm of people passing and re-passing screening him from his quarry. Bunter backed out of sight behind a big tub of palms, and watched the Hindu curiously. He saw Nally Das' black eyes roving up and down the street, and noticed the Hindu raise his hand, apparently as a signal to someone whom Bunter could not see.

Three or four loiterers stopped and loitered round the spot where the Hindu stood. They were roughly dressed men of the "apache" type. Bunter's heart began to beat faster. A closed motor-car that was proceeding along the street at a snail's pace stopped close to the spot where the Hindu stood in the little group of roughs.

Billy Bunter's fat heart throbbed. From where he stood, hidden by the tub of palms, he saw it all—he saw a sign exchanged between Nally Das and the driver of the closed car; he almost heard the Hindu's hurried whisper to the roughs who were grouped round him. Harry Wharton & Co., chatting cheerily over their coffee at the cafe table on the pavement, were not thinking of danger. But the danger was very near. Nally Das stepped into the car, and the group of roughs moved across the pavement towards the cafe table where the Greyfriars juniors sat. The dark face of Nally Das was framed in the window of the car, his black, glinting eyes watching eagerly.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bunter. As well as if he had read the Hindu's thoughts, Bunter knew what was intended.

A sudden rush and a scuffle—that was the scheme; and while the "row" was going on, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, suddenly grasped by sinewy hands, was to be thrust into the waiting car. The scuffling roughs would probably be arrested by the gendarmes; but no doubt the rascally Hindu had paid them well enough for their services. While the disturbance was going on, the swift car would be tearing away, with the kidnapped nabob inside in the grasp of the kidnapper. And the moment was at hand now—the apaches were about to begin the disturbance with the cheery circle of juniors round the cafe table.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter. The fat junior jumped out from behind the palms and rushed up to the table where the juniors sat.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Look out!" yelled Bunter.

"What—"

"That Hindu Nally Das—look out! Get inside the cafe!" yelled Bunter.

"Look out, Inky! They're after you!"

"My esteemed Bunter—"

Bunter, in his excitement, grabbed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh by the arm and dragged him from his seat.

The juniors were on their feet now, staring round.

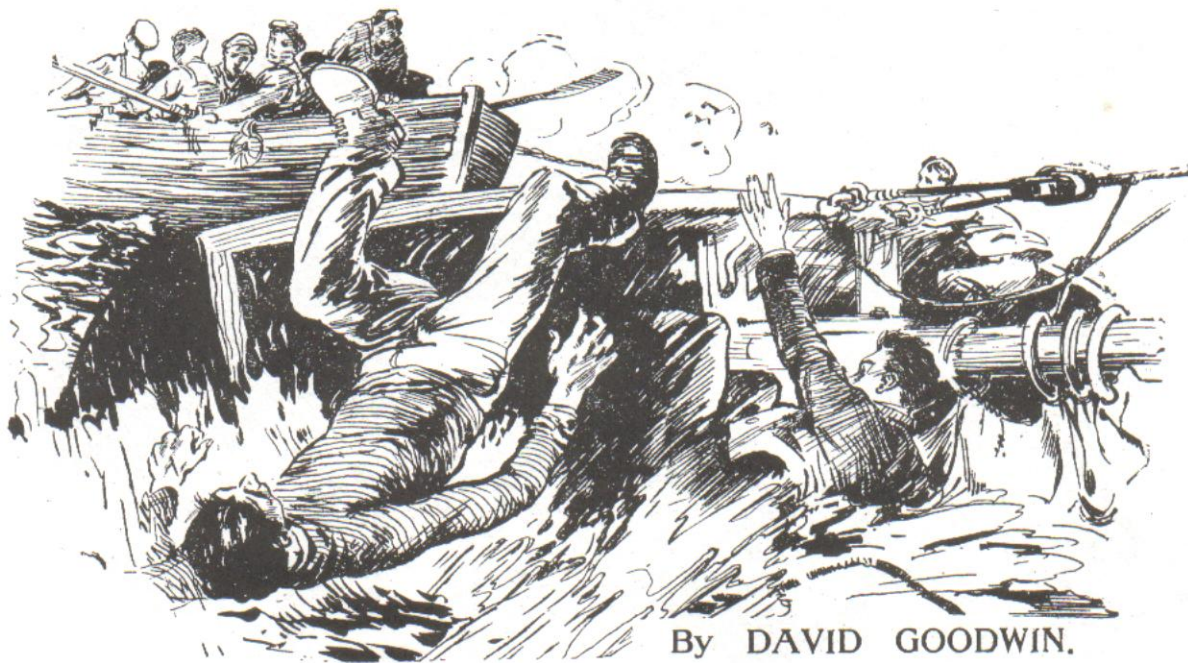
"What the thump— Look out!" roared Johnny Bull, as the Apaches closed in on the party.

But for Bunter's warning, the plan, desperate as it was, would have succeeded. But the warning had come just in time. Harry Wharton & Co. closed

(Continued on page 27.)

AFTER THE SUMMING-UP! *The judge's voice dies away into silence; the jurymen ~~also~~ retire; and in the dock stands a youth as innocent of the charge preferred against him as the judge himself! Yet his life hangs in the balance!*

CURLEW ISLAND!



By DAVID GOODWIN.

The Verdict!

THERE was a sudden stir in the court. Cyril Vincent had risen to say his last word for Tommy. His voice rose loud and clear, and he made a splendid speech for the defence.

"I ask you to say that this boy has spoken the truth!" he cried at the finish. "Whoever committed the murder, whoever robbed the safe, it was not Tom Comber.

"The blurred tracks on the floor of the bungalow show that some man—perhaps two men, for a crime like this was not likely to be done single-handed—got in through the window. Joseph Comber was killed while asleep; not by a gunstock, but by some heavy soft implement; possibly a sandbag.

"A sandbag will stun as well as kill. Gentlemen, I don't believe the boy fell asleep, as he thinks he did. He could not have slept all those hours, and he would not have left his boat untied. He says frankly he does not know what happened to him. I suggest to you that he was taken unawares, struck down, and stunned.

"You may say this is unlikely. Is it more likely that this boy committed a clever and cruel murder and robbery?"

"The crime was done, I say, by experienced criminals. What was more easy for them to cover up their tracks? They wanted a scapegoat. Here, by a piece of luck, was the boy ready to their hand. If he disappeared, he was sure to be thought guilty of the murder. They were not after money alone. I ask you to believe the story of the powder as true, for there are proofs of it, and no boy would be likely to make it up. They put a small portion of the stolen money in the boy's pockets and set him adrift, with the result that he now stands in the dock before you, falsely accused!

"I ask you to cast aside the evidence of the witness, Benjamin Foss, as a

tissue of lies! It has no support except his own word. It is, of course, not for me to suggest he had anything to do with the crime—the police have satisfied themselves about that. But consider whether that story told by Foss was not prompted by spite—spite and fear.

"Tom Comber has told his story frankly, honestly, openly. The evidence against him is only circumstantial evidence of the flimsiest kind. There is no proof whatever that he wickedly did Joseph Comber to death, and every reason to believe he did not. I am confident you will acquit him, and allow him to leave the dock with his character triumphantly cleared!"

There was applause from the back benches, where some of Tommy's friends were. Even the jury looked impressed. Tommy himself felt a glow of admiration and gratitude to Cyril Vincent. He believed now that this was the way the crime had been done. He had never thought of it. It was Vincent's idea. The clever young barrister had been to Curlew Island with Mr. Copley and worked it out for himself, and told Tommy of it. But Tommy couldn't swear to it; he did not know. He was still in the dark.

And then, amid silence, the judge "summed up," making his speech to the jury before they settled Tom Comber's fate. He did not take long over this. He went over the evidence skillfully, and explained it to them very fairly, like a man balancing a pair of scales. For in that balance hung Tom Comber's life.

"You have heard the evidence on both sides," he concluded gravely. "You have to say which you believe. If you find it proved that the prisoner killed Joseph Comber you must declare him guilty of murder.

"If you have any doubt, the prisoner must have the benefit of that doubt, and you will find him not guilty.

"Joseph Comber was murdered, and

his house was robbed of money belonging to him. If you believe that the murder was committed by some other person than the prisoner and without his knowledge, but that he afterwards shared in the proceeds of the robbery, then you will find him guilty of theft. But that seems to me very difficult to believe.

"Lastly, if you find that he committed neither the murder nor the theft, and is innocent of both, then you will declare him not guilty and he will be discharged.

"One thing I must tell you. The counsel for the defence has given you a new theory, cleverly thought out, that the murder and theft were committed by some persons unknown, who set the prisoner adrift in a boat with stolen money upon him, and then disappeared and have never been seen or heard of. But he has given you no evidence of that at all. People cannot be either condemned or acquitted by theories.

"Do you believe the prisoner's story that he knew nothing about the murder, but woke up in his boat, miles away, and could not tell where the money came from, part of which he spent in Gravesend? You will consider carefully whether his story and his actions are those of a person who is innocent.

"So I leave you to consider your verdict, with a full sense of the grave responsibility that rests on you."

The judge's deep voice ceased. The foreman of the jury whispered to his companions in the box, and rising, said they wished to retire.

The jury shuffled out of court, to the room where they were to be locked up till they agreed upon Tom Comber's guilt or innocence.

The judge left his seat, and Tommy was marched down a little flight of stairs in the floor of the dock, to a locked waiting-room below. The policeman remained with him.

Tommy sat down on a stool. A numb

sense of despair came over him. He felt now that all hope was gone. During the end of the trial he could feel that everybody in court thought the same. There was only one answer that the jury would give. He knew himself innocent. But innocent people have been condemned before now. In his mind's eye he could see the judge putting on the black cap.

He leaned his arms on the rough wooden table, buried his face in his hands, and waited. The delay grew longer and longer. It seemed to him like a lifetime. Actually it lasted not quite an hour.

Then a bell rang, and Tommy was taken up the stairs into the dock for the last time.

The judge was in his place, the twelve jurymen were filing slowly back into the box, their faces grave and stony.

The clerk of arraigns put the question:

"Members of the jury, do you find the prisoner guilty of murder, or not guilty?"

There was a dead hush in court.

"Not guilty!"

A murmur of excitement broke out. Tommy felt his heart give a great bound. In that moment he realised that Cyril Vincent had saved his life.

"Silence!" cried the ushers. And the clerk's voice was heard again:

"Do you find the prisoner guilty of theft or not guilty?"

"Guilty of theft!"

The words struck on Tommy's ear like an icy chill. His life was saved, but his liberty and his honour were lost.

The jury were not satisfied that murder was proved against Tom Comber, and the doubt saved him. But that he had come by the stolen money dishonestly they all agreed with one voice.

"Prisoner," said the judge, "have you any reason to give why sentence should not be passed on you?"

"I am innocent, m'lord!" was all Tommy could say.

"Thomas Comber," said the judge sternly, "you have been ably defended, and have been acquitted on the graver charge, but of theft you have been found guilty, and with that verdict I agree."

Tommy's senses were swimming. The judge was still speaking, but he did not hear him. The whole court seemed to be going round and round.

"To find a boy of your years convicted before me on such a charge is terrible. But your life is still before you. I sentence you to three years' detention in a reformatory."

Tommy gasped faintly. A reformatory! Three years' imprisonment!

He stared blindly in front of him, seeing nothing but a sea of staring faces, and among them the bearded man with the keen dark eyes still watching him.

Then a policeman touched Tommy on the shoulder, and he disappeared down the stone steps.

The "Billy Rough 'Un!"

"ATTENTION! Silence there, will you? Form two-deep! March!"

The six boys, of whom Tommy Comber was the youngest, huffed into their places on the platform of the little station at the word of command. The train that had brought them had already steamed away.

Tommy did not know where he was or where he was going to, nor did he

care much. He had got past caring about anything.

Once or twice he had wondered who the other five boys were; but, anyway, he did not like the look of them. There was no chance of finding out, for none of the boys had been allowed to talk during the journey. They were all fellow-prisoners.

It seemed rather queer, too, that the big man with the scraggy face and harsh voice, who was looking after the six boys, did not seem at all like a prison warder. He wore the uniform of a petty officer of the Navy and a peaked cap with a little crown and anchor on it. Though rather grim and stern, he did not seem a bad sort of chap. Tommy was rather glad to see anything that looked like a sailor, though he did not believe this fellow was a real one, or surely he wouldn't be in charge of reformatory prisoners. They don't take boys with bad characters into the King's Navy.

As the party marched along the platform, the boy next to Tommy whispered to him:

"Know where we're goin' to, don't you?"

"No," whispered Tommy. "Where?"

"Goin' to the Billy Rough 'Un."

"Billy what?"

"Go on! You heard! You ain't as green as all that!"

Tommy did not know what on earth he was talking about.

"What's it like?" he asked.

"Awful place!" muttered the boy, a big, heavy-faced fellow two years older than Tommy. "I've been there before. I'm for it properly this time now they've copped me again! Wish they'd sent me to quod instead!"

"Go on! The Billy ain't so bad!" said the boy marching just behind him.

"There's worse places, I reckon."

"Maybe you'd sooner be there than at 'ome!" sneered the big fellow.

"Never had no home!" retorted the boy at the back.

"Silence!" shouted the petty officer.

"If I hear another word, I'll have the lot of you in punishment-cells for a fortnight! Luff wheel!"

Tommy shut his lips tight. The threat of punishment-cells did not scare him. He did not suppose they would be any worse than what he had been

WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

TOMMY COMBER, a bright young lad of fifteen, who assists his uncle, JOSEPH COMBER, an experimenter, living on Curlew Island, a desolate stretch of land situated in the Thames estuary. "Nunks," as Tommy affectionately calls his uncle, invents a powerful explosive which he names "Comberite," and which he confidently expects will bring him fame and fortune. Of the latter Tommy is naturally promised a big share. Tommy's only other relation is "CHUFFER," FOSS, a half-cousin, and a rotter of the first water. In a set-to with Chuffer, Tommy proves that he can use his fists to good effect, with the result that Chuffer leaves the island, swearing vengeance. By a stilet that night, Tommy is dreaming of the good times in store, when he is pounced upon by two unknown assailants and stunned. The miscreants then attack the inventor, whom they murder and rob, covering up their tracks by planting some of the stolen cash on Tommy's person. Tommy regains consciousness, but his mind is a blank. He meets DAN RENNETT, an old chum at Gravesend, and the two boys have a merry time. That evening, however, Tommy is arrested, and to his amazement and horror is charged with the murder of his uncle Joseph Comber. He protests his innocence at the ensuing trial, but the damning evidence of Chuffer Foss is almost enough to hang him. Tommy anxiously awaits the verdict of the court. (Now read on.)

through already. For some time past he had been filled with a sort of dumb anger and despair. It seemed to him there was no justice in the world.

It was six weeks already since he had been sentenced at Maidstone Assizes, and all those weeks had been passed in a house of detention. It was a strange place, and Tommy knew it was not the real thing; it was a sort of half-way house that he had to stay in before they sent him to a regular reformatory, where he would work out his three years' sentence.

He had hated the place even more than he expected. It was more like a very strict school than a prison—a school where there were no holidays and where every minute was a misery. When he was not attending class, he was scrubbing floors or peeling potatoes, and when not doing that he was out in a sort of barrack-square with fifty other boys, being drilled and made to do physical exercises. There was no end of drill; he was put through his facings and taught to form fours and march and mark time, with a sergeant who had a voice like the crack of a horse-whip always shouting at him. If he had been in the Army he might have liked it, but as he was only a prisoner it was horrible.

And now came the day when he was fetched away with five companions by the petty officer, and brought to this little one-horse railway-station. Outside, there was a closed motor-van waiting, and the little gang of boys were hustled into this by the petty officer, whom they were told to call Mr. Banks.

After quite a short run the van stopped, and they were ordered out. As he jumped down Tommy smelt a familiar smell—the scent of salt or brackish water, which made him think of Curlew Island again, and gave him a pang of home-sickness.

Then he looked round him, with a gasp of astonishment. Now he knew where he was, and it was the last place he had ever thought of seeing.

Right in front of him was the broad, shining salt river—the good old lower Thames on which he had had such good times. The ebb tide was swirling down towards the sea many miles away. There was no town near by, but bushy meadows sloping down to a muddy foreshore, with a few buildings scattered about. The river was over a mile wide here, and out in midstream the brown-sailed barges and big ocean steamers were passing along. But quite close, lying at anchor near the bank, was another ship so different that she looked as if she belonged to another world.

She was a huge old three-decker wooden battleship, with towering masts and white gun-ports—the sort of ship that Nelson used to sail in. But it was nearly a hundred years since she had set her sails. She floated proudly abreast the shore, moored stem and stern. Her decks were swarming with boys in sailor kit, and even from where he stood Tommy heard the shrill piping of the boatswain's whistle.

"Why, hallo—hallo!" cried Tommy, so surprised that he forgot all about the order for silence. "Is that where we're going, sir—aboard her?"

"Yes, my lad!" said Mr. Banks grimly. "You're going to spend the next three years of your life aboard o' that there ship—unless you get a bit of time knocked off for good behaviour. But from what I see of you, you're more like to do the whole lot, and spend half of it in the cells, with the cane laid

on good an' hard twice a week! Now shut up your trap, an' don't let me have to tell you agen! D'ye hear, ye young rip!" snapped Mr. Banks, whose bark was worse than his bite. "Once aboard the Bellerophon, may the powers have mercy on your hide! Fall in, there!" he roared. "Squad! Atten-shun!"

Tommy sprang into his place. He felt as if he had suddenly awakened up and come to life again.

Of course, this was the Billy Rough 'Un! He knew where he was now. She was the old Bellerophon which lay off Black Point. He had seen her many a time, and remembered hearing she was some sort of a prison, but he had never taken any special notice of her or thought of her by the name the boys gave her.

Curlew Island itself was not very far away. And Gravesend was nearer still—down the next reach of the river. But neither of them were any use to Tommy now.

Rough Company!

AS the six new prisoners marched down to the jetty a boat came off from the old ship, rowed by boys in bluejacket uniforms and commanded by another petty officer.

"Get aboard!" said Mr. Banks to his squad. "Lively now!"

The boys scrambled into the stern sheets of the boat rather clumsily—all except Tommy, who nipped in like a bird. Mr. Banks cocked an eye at him.

"Been in a boat before, have you?" he snapped, as if he were accusing Tommy of a crime.

"Yes, sir," said Tommy.

"Don't say 'Yes, sir.' 'Ay, ay, sir!' is the proper way to answer me."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

The boys who were rowing looked at Tommy with interest, and the one who was pulling the stroke oar stared at him as though he had seen him before. Tommy did not like the look of him much. He was a dark-haired, powerfully-built fellow, with a cast in his eye, and he stuck his tongue in his cheek and answered Tommy's glance with a sort of leering wink.

Tommy took a dislike to him on the spot.

"I'd give you something to make faces about, my buck," he thought, "if I had you alone!"

"Give way, there!" ordered Mr. Banks, and the boat pulled to the Bellerophon, the boys tossing their oars as she came alongside the gangway.

Two minutes later the squad of new prisoners were formed up on the deck of the old ship, and kept there standing to attention for some time.

The whole ship was swarming with boys, all of them at work under the charge of petty-officers; some of them cleaning paint-work, others polishing brass, and up in the bows a sort of school class was being taught by a chaplain.

Presently Tommy and his five companions were marched to a big cabin in the after part of the ship, and brought before the captain.

Captain Maurice was a naval officer, and he commanded the reformatory ship, Bellerophon. He was a fine-looking man, rather stern and hard, but he spoke kindly, and Tommy had an idea that he was not a bad sort. He didn't address them like a schoolmaster or make a speech; he just talked to them and told them what their duties would be, and he said nothing about anything

they had done in the past, though of course he knew what each of them had been sentenced for.

"But mind you this," he said, "no mercy is shown on this ship to any boy who shows slackness or misbehaves. You will obey your officers instantly, and you will carry out all orders at the double. Mr. Banks, take these boys forward and issue them each a kit."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said Petty-Officer Banks! "Squad, right-turn! March!"

The six boys were taken forward to a flat on the lower deck, and here they were given a bluejacket uniform apiece, and ordered to get into them at once. In ten minutes Tommy found himself dressed like a man-of-war's boy. Before he had time to wonder what was going to happen next, eight bells were struck, the bo-sun's whistle piped, and all hands went to dinner on the mess-deck.

After dinner there was a stand-easy, as they called it. Then the boys were split up into groups. The six new boys, however, were taken apart by Mr. Banks, their descriptions entered in a book, and they were each given a number.

"You understand, my lad," said Mr. Banks to Tommy, "you haven't got a name now; your name won't be used. You are Number C 73, an' when that name is called, jump to it quick or you'll suffer!"

Tommy flushed red.

"Ay, ay, sir!" he said.

Losing his name hit him harder than almost anything else. Even a dog has a name.

Presently he found himself in one of the hammock-flats between decks, with a dozen other boys, and no officer was among them. Most of the time on the Bellerophon was filled up with hard work and classes, but they were allowed to mix together and talk for half an hour during the stand-easy after dinner.

It was during the stand-easy that a boy with a fiery red head came up to Tommy.

"Here," he said in a low voice, "you're one o' the new uns, aren't you, mate? What's your name?"

"C 73," said Tommy.

The boy winked at him.

"I see. Don't want your tally to get about, eh? What are you in for?"

"Three years."

The red-headed boy whistled softly.

"Gosh! You must have done something pretty stiff. I've only got twelve months, an' served eight of it. But I didn't mean that. I mean, what did they get you for?"

"Nothing," said Tommy shortly.

But the boy didn't seem offended. He was a tough-looking fellow, but he was evidently good-tempered.

"I get you!" he said, with a nod. "You mean you ain't going to brag about it?"

"Do chaps brag about what they get sent here for?" asked Tommy.

"Some of 'em do," said the red-headed boy. "I ain't one of them. My number's B 80, and my name's Joe Slade. You might be civil to a chap. It's an awful place, this ship, an' I wish I was dead sometimes. So will you before you've been here long. You're fresh now, an' you don't know what it's like. I'll tell you what I am, an' then you can do the same. I'm not bragging about it, either. I had a job, an' I stole some money, but they looked it over and let me off. Then I got another job, and I stole again, with the result they sent me here."

Tommy felt inclined to move away to the other side of the ship. It made him feel sick. He hardly realised yet that every boy on the Bellerophon had done

as much, or something worse. He was hook-nobbing with a thief. Then he looked at the red-headed boy and felt sorry for him.

"What made you do a rotten thing like that?" he asked. "You don't look like that sort of chap."

"Don't I?" said the boy. "Well, it's decent of you to say that. This place is supposed to cure fellows of doing rotten things, but—I don't know. There's such a lot of us. I fancy you can't cure chaps of doing such things; they can only cure themselves. Some of us don't want to."

Tommy paused.

"Ever try going down on your knees and asking for help?" he said quietly.

The boy stared at Tommy in amazement. Before he could answer four or five more fellows came in, headed by the big lout with the cast in his eye, who had pulled the stroke oar in the boat. He came straight up to Tommy.

"Here he is!" he said to the others. "I know you. You're Tom Comber!"

Tommy was astonished. He had never seen the boy till to-day.

"Saw you in a picture paper when I was cleanin' up the bo-sun's cabin the other day," said the other. "Knew your face as soon as you got into the boat. My word, you were lucky! Tell us all about it."

"Lucky? What do you mean?"

"To get off as cheap as you did. I read it in the paper," said the other, whose name was Slesser, and whose number was A 90. "You're the chap who did in the old man down at Curlew Island."

Tommy went white to the lips. Before he knew what he was doing, his fist shot out and Slesser fell flat on his back with a bump that shook the deck.

"Anybody on this ship who says that to me," said Tommy, "will get the same. I don't care whether he's boy or officer!"

Tommy Makes a Friend!

THE others seemed to be paralysed with astonishment. Slesser rose to his knees.

"I'll get you fourteen days' cells for that!" he hissed, glaring at Tommy. "I'll—"

"No, you won't!" said the red-headed boy, stepping forward. "For I'll tell 'em the truth—that you deserved it; and you'll cop it the same as he did! You hear me? I ain't afraid of you, Slesser!"

"Look out!" cried somebody. "Here's the P.O.!"

The whistle sounded, and the cry of "Fall in on the main deck" was heard, and Petty-Officer Banks came in.

"What's this?" he said, as he saw Slesser picking himself up.

The boys sprang to attention, but nobody said a word. Slesser scowled, but was silent. He dared not answer. Mr. Banks looked at him, and then at Tommy, and he seemed to understand.

"Up on deck, all of you, an' fall in!" he said quietly.

Everybody obeyed at the run. They formed up in line, and Tommy expected to be made an example of before the whole crew. He wondered what his punishment would be.

To his astonishment, not a word was said about the affair. Slesser held his tongue, and Mr. Banks took no further notice. The squad of fifty boys was given half an hour's drill instruction, and after that the six newcomers were fallen out. The rest were split up into working parties and sent about their tasks. The new prisoners had no work

for the first day. They had to be shown what their duties were; how to pack and stow their sea-chests, and to learn the routine of the ship. Mr. Banks saw to this.

An hour later Tommy found himself alone again with the red-headed boy, who had been told off to show him how to clean and fill lamps in the lamp-room.

"My eye! You were lucky!" said Tommy's companion. "If it'd been anybody but old Banks you'd have been for it, my lad. I'm glad you knocked that swab Slessor out. You've got a rare punch. But what did you do it for?"

"Well," said Tommy, "you've been decent to me, and I'll tell you something I sha'n't tell to anyone else, and I don't want to hear any more about it. I was sent here for nothing at all. They've given me three years for a theft I didn't do and never dreamed of doing. They found me guilty, an' I wasn't guilty. And I won't hear anybody tell me I'm guilty either. That's all."

"D'you expect me to believe that?" said his companion angrily.

Tommy reddened up to the ears. "Believe it or don't believe it, just as you choose!" he said, and Joe Slade turned away contemptuously.

He didn't speak to Tommy again for the rest of the evening. Neither did any one else, for no talking was allowed except during the "stand-easy" times.

At seven o'clock all hands were mustered on the upper deck for the ceremony of hauling down the flag at sunset. The ship's bugler blew the long sunset call, and the clear notes echoed across the wide river as the Union Jack flying from the poop-staff fluttered slowly down, inch by inch. Afterwards the chaplain read prayers and held a short service. This brought Tommy the first comfort he had had since he left the detention-house. It lifted his heart up for awhile. But when the bos'un's whistle blew and the order came, "Sling hammocks!" he was feeling desperately miserable again.

"Lights out!" came at last; and the between-decks was plunged in darkness as black as the tomb.

Tommy could not sleep. He lay awake an hour or more in the darkness, listening to the snores of his companions. He felt that he hated these fellows who were thieves and who—some of them at any rate—seemed to be proud of it. He felt that they hated him. He tried to take his thoughts off the whole affair and turn his mind back to Curlew Island and the good times he had had there. Poor old Nunks. And then; in an attempt to get off to sleep, he went over the receipt for Comberite Powder in his head, repeating it under his breath.

He had got it all right! He had not forgotten a word or figure of it. And he knew he never would forget it.

It was pretty rough to be shut up here for years among chaps like these, and treated like a dog, when he held such a secret as that! They deserved what they got, but he didn't. Chuffer ought to be here instead of him. Chuffer was just such a chap as Slessor—birds of a feather. And Slade. Joe Slade was as bad as the worst. He was a sulky brute, besides being a thief. And he had as good as told Tommy he was a liar.

As he lay awake, Tommy heard a whisper from the hammock next him.

"Hi, Tom! Tom Comber!"

"Yes?" said Tommy.

"Is that straight, what you told me? About being here for nothing at all?"

"Yes; it's true!"

There was a pause.

"Well, if you say it's so, I believe you. Chaps do get lagged for nothing, sometimes. Dunno why I believe you—but I do! It's awful rough on a fellow, a thing like that. I'm sorry I said what I did—"

"That's all right, old chap!" said Tommy.

"We might be pals—if you don't mind?"

"Rather! Glad enough to have a pal!"

"It's different with me, you see," said Joe Slade. "I was a thief, and I got copped. It's a rotten thing to do—stealing, not getting copped, I mean. But I never had much chance—" He hesitated. "When I come out, I'm going straight, I swear I will. An' I'll remember what you told me, too. Sure you don't mind being pals with a bird like me? Here's my fist sticking out over the side of the hammock, if you feel like taking it."

Tommy reached out and gripped Joe's hand.

"Pals," he said, "an' we'll both go straight."

"That's right," said Joe. "You've got a mighty hard fist."

"Have I?" said Tommy. "It's always open to my friends an' shut to a bully, anyway. I say, what are you

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YOUR EDITOR.

going to do when you come out? Got any money?"

"No," said Joe. "No money, an' no folks!" He told Tommy something about his life, how he had got in with a tough gang down at the docks. "They'll want me back," he said. "I'll give 'em a miss, if I can. But they'll be after me. It's hard to cut that sort of thing out. They like anybody who's been in prison."

Tommy thought for a moment.

"Tell you what," he said, "you look out for me when I come out, an' I'll give you a leg up. I'd like to. What are you keen on? Cars and motor-engines? How about gettin' trained for that?"

"Fine! But there's not much chance in that line for me. Training costs money. Haven't got a bob and never shall have."

"I'll put up the money—all you want," said Tommy. "I shall have plenty."

"You?" exclaimed Slade astonished. "What, are your folks rich people then?"

"Never you mind. I shall be rich myself. Rich enough to buy the old Billy Rough 'Un an' give her away with a pound of tea," said Tommy confidently. "But keep your head shut about it. I'll see you through, mate!"

"You're a good chap," said Joe

huskily. "Whether you're rich or broke, I'll stand by you. If ever I can do you a good turn while you're on this ship, I will."

He little guessed how soon his words were to come true. The boys said no more, for just then the petty-officer of the watch came through to see that all was well and that nobody was talking.

Tommy waited till the officer's footsteps had died away, and then laughed to himself, rather grimly. He knew he was right. He was a prisoner—a convict. But Captain Maurice himself was a poor man compared with Tommy. The secret of Comberite Powder was his, and he might be free sooner than any of them expected.

Chuffer Laughs Too Soon!

"J O E, I can't stand it!" said Tommy. "I've got to the limit. It's gettin' worse every day; I think I shall go mad unless something happens to get me out of this!"

"Go steady, old son," said Joe Slade, taking him warningly by the arm. "There ain't anything you can do. We all get like this sometimes. You'll get over it."

"I sha'n't get over it!" said Tommy desperately. "Here's three weeks gone. And I've got close on three years to come!"

The two chums—for they had become chums now—were standing together in the alley-way near the lamp-room. They had a few minutes together by themselves—which did not often happen, until the whistle blew for manning the boats.

Joe was feeling anxious about his friend. He had seen fellows get into this sort of state before, especially during their first month or two on the Bellerophon. Tommy was feeling desperate. He had just finished six days punishment-cells and double duty.

"You know the ropes here better than I do," said Tommy, under his breath. "Do you think there's any chance of a chap escaping, if he made a dash for it?"

"Absolutely no earthly!" said Joe. "Don't you try it. Why, look at the blessed ship! The upper deck is netted round so that nobody can get overboard. She lies right out in the Channel, the tides run like a mill-race. It's ten to one a chap would be drowned before he could get ashore, swimmin' in his clothes; even if he wasn't seen. If he did get to land, what chance has he? He's in uniform, and all the police would be after him. One of us did try it a year ago. He was lucky; he got a port open at night, and pinched a dinghy—went away down river and landed. They'll take care that nothing like that ever happens again. They caught him next mornin' and brought him back."

"What did they do to him?" muttered Tommy.

"Same as they'd do to you; hunt you down like a fox, and get you aboard again. You'd be ten times worse off. Get a bashing, most likely, to start with. Cells and extra duty till all's blue. And lose all your marks an' your remission of sentence. Know what that is? You've three years, an' if you keep out o' trouble they'll mark you for good conduct, an' let you out in a little over two. Try a bolt and you get your full three years, and everything else on top of it. Don't be a fool! You'd have no clothes, no money, no food—you'd starve till they copped you."

"I'm past caring what happens to me. Tell me, if you saw a dog's chance of it, wouldn't you try?"

"I dare say I would. And more fool me!" admitted Joe.

Tommy knew he was right. It was no good thinking about it, but he could not help himself. He took his imprisonment much more hard than anyone else on the ship. To some of the boys the Bellerophon was not such a bad place; they hardly seemed to mind it. To Tommy it was torture.

He remembered every hour the old free life on Curlew Island, with his boat and his gun and fishing-lines, and the trips to footer matches in London. He was like a seagull—the wildest creature on the Thames mouth, and most free—caught and shut up in a cage, or penned in a back yard with its wings clipped. But the thing that hurt him worst was the knowledge that he was innocent. If he had earned the punishment, perhaps he could have put up with it.

Things had been going badly with him lately, too. He was no longer under Mr. Banks. Petty-officer Kellman, a much harsher man, had charge

of Tommy's section now, and was always down on him.

"No good grouching," said Joe Slade. "There goes the whistle. Hurry, or you'll cop it again!"

They ran up on deck, where the boys were falling in for parade, and presently the order was shouted.

"Number four crew! Man the whaler!"

Six boys, with Tommy at their head, ran to the boat-boom, which stuck out from the starboard side, and shinned down the ropes into the long, double-ended whaleboat, which was floating below. The only job that Tommy did not dislike was manning the whaleboat. He belonged to her crew. They had found he was much better at rowing than most of the boys, and he had been promoted to stroke-oar of the boat. Joe Slade was pretty good, too, and pulled the bow oar. The whaleboat was smart and fast, and Tommy was glad to be in her instead of in one of the big, clumsy rowing-cutters that carried a crew of thirty boys. The only drawback was that Mr. Kellman was captain of the whaler, and it was rather a galley-slave's sort of job, anyhow. But it was

good to get away from the Bellerophon and be moving over the water.

"Out oars! Give way!" shouted Kellman. "Put your backs into it, ye lazy young lubbers!"

The boys pulled away, right across the mile-wide river. Kellman found fault with his crew all the time, but that was nothing new. Tommy looked wistfully at the ships and barges that passed, bound for distant ports, and wished he were on one of them. Presently he heard the loud throbbing of a petrol engine, and a strange-looking vessel came down towards them.

It was a powerful motor-launch, ploughing along down river at sixteen miles an hour, throwing up a big cushion of foam on either side of its bow. There were three men in it, and as it passed within a dozen yards, Tommy saw one of them, a tall man with a pointed beard, look hard at him, and then turn and say something to a companion beside him. They both looked at Tommy as they sped by.

The motor-boat passed so close that the whaler was left plunging and tossing in the wash that the powerful craft had kicked up.

"Hallo!" thought Tommy. "Where have I seen that fellow before?"

Then a flash of remembrance came to him. He could not mistake that face with the brown, pointed beard. It was the man he had seen in the gallery of the Assize Court at Maidstone, and who had seemed to take such an interest in Tommy when he was being tried for murder. He was only one of a hundred people in court that day, but his face had stuck in Tommy's memory.

It was strange to see him here now, careering down the river in that powerful sixteen-knot motor-boat. It couldn't mean anything, of course—it was just an odd chance. And yet it was sure that he had recognised Tommy, just as Tommy had recognised him.

Tommy was so interested that he forgot where he was, and sat staring after the swift craft as it raced away towards Gravesend, till Kellman's voice recalled him to himself.

"Stroke oar! What are you gaping at, you young lubber? Eyes in the boat! Give way, there!"

Tommy set the stroke, and away they pulled again. The motor-boat was already out of sight round Long Point, but he could not help thinking about the man with the pointed beard, though he could not matter in any way to Tommy. It is strange how little things like that fill the mind of a prisoner, who has so little to think about except his own troubles. It was like something bobbing up again suddenly out of Tommy's past life; the life before he was shut up in the Bellerophon.

"By gum, if I were only aboard a craft like that," muttered Tommy to himself. "Wouldn't I be away out of this, quick an' lively! I'd give 'em leave to catch me if they could."

The whaleboat pulled right across towards the Kent shore. And less than half an hour later another strange thing happened. It was a day of surprises.

A small, open sailing-boat was coming down the river, not very far from the bank, sailing very slowly, for there was hardly any wind, and the weather was hazy. The boat was steering rather a crooked course, and a good deal of noise came from her. There was a crew of three aboard; they were singing, and

(Continued on page 28.)

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OUTWARD BOUND!

(Continued from page 21.)

round Hurree Jamet Ram Singh, and a muscular rough, who had grasped the nabob, received Wharton's clenched fist full in his face, and released his hold and rolled among the cafe chairs.

"Look out!"

"Back up, Greyfriars!"

"Look after Inky!" panted Wharton.

There was a roar of voices, a trampling of feet. Men and women at the other tables along the front of the cafe jumped up, staring, exclaiming, gesticulating. Two or three gendarmes came pushing through the excited crowd. The Greyfriars juniors, hardly knowing what was happening, found themselves fighting a gang of roughs, amid overturned chairs and crashing crockery. The wildest excitement reigned; but the juniors were round Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and they backed into the open doorway of the cafe with the nabob.

In the window of the waiting car the dark face of Nally Das stared out, convulsed with rage. Only for a moment, then he signalled to the chauffeur, and the car dashed away at a reckless speed along the Cannebiere. The kidnapper realised that his scheme had failed, and he was thinking now only of escape.

"Gendarmes! Les gendarmes! Au secours!" a score of voices were shouting.

But the police were on the scene now, and the Apaches had short shrift. Two of them were dragged away, struggling, in the grasp of the gendarmes; the others dodged away in the crowd and escaped. Inside the cafe, Harry Wharton & Co. were safe. Billy Bunter, who had been jostled and shoved till he hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels, panted frantically for breath.

"I—I say, you fellows— Groooh! Ooooh! I'm winded! I say— Groooh! Oh dear! Ooogh!"

"Let's get out of this!" said Bob Cherry. "The sooner we're back at the hotel the better!"

"What-ho! Come on!"

The Greyfriars juniors pushed a way through the excited, jostling crowd, and hurried away along the Cannebiere. After what had happened they had had enough of seeing the sights of Marseilles. Without losing a moment they hurried back to the hotel, where Colonel Wharton met them as they came in.

"What has happened?" asked the colonel.

"A row with a gang of roughs," said Harry ruefully. "Inky's had a jolly narrow escape."

"But what—"

"You'd better ask me," said Bunter.

The colonel looked at him.

"Bunter warned us," said Bob Cherry.

"We were suddenly rushed by a gang of roughs in the Cannebiere, and I caught sight of a Hindu blinking out of the window of a car—"

"It was Nally Das," said Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was swelling with importance now. "If I hadn't jolly well spotted him, he would have had Inky in that car, and you fellows wouldn't have seen him again."

"We were taken by surprise," confessed Wharton. "Who'd have expected such a thing in a crowded street?"

"They are desperate men," said the colonel quietly. He fixed his keen eyes on the Owl of the Remove. "Tell me exactly what occurred, Bunter."

Billy Bunter proceeded to explain. The colonel listened in silence, the juniors staring at Bunter. Once more the Owl of the Remove had saved the situation. There was no doubt about that—at least of all, in Bunter's mind. He swelled with importance as he told his tale till he really seemed in danger of sharing the fate of the frog in the fable.

"And I'd like to know," he concluded. "what would have happened to Inky if I hadn't been there?"

Bunter paused, like Brutus, for a reply.

"My esteemed Bunter!" murmured the nabob.

"Where would you be?" demanded Bunter.

"The thankfulness of my esteemed and ridiculous self is terrific, my esteemed and fatheaded Bunter!"

Colonel Wharton looked at the fat junior curiously.

"Certainly, Bunter seems to have saved the situation," he said. "I should not have allowed you boys to go out of my presence, and but for Bunter the result might have been serious."

"Oh, don't mench!" said Bunter airily. "I came along to protect Inky. I'm doing it, that's all."

The colonel paused for a moment. Certainly Bunter had proved very useful, and perhaps it was ungrateful on the part of the Co. to desire to kick him at that moment. Possibly the colonel shared that desire. If so, he fortunately did not yield to it.

"It appears that your intervention saved Hurree Singh, Bunter," he said. "It would certainly seem so."

Sniff from Bunter.

"No seeming about it," he said; "it did! The right man in the right place, and all that—as per usual!"

Colonel Wharton drew a deep breath.

"After what has occurred, Bunter, you may, if you wish, continue the journey to India with us," he said.

Bunter smirked.

"You mean, I can't be spared from the party?" he said. "That's all right! I understand. I'll come!"

"I do not mean anything of the kind!" said the colonel grimly. "I mean that I will allow you to continue the journey, in spite of your impudence, as a reward for the service you have rendered!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. And the juniors grinned. "If—if you really put it like that, I shall have to consider—"

"Very well!"

"I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?"

"I—I—I mean, I'll come!" gasped Bunter.

And when the steamer for Suez throbbed out of the harbour on the following day, William George Bunter was one of the party who stood on the deck and watched the towers and roofs of Marseilles sink into the sunlit waves behind.

THE END.

(Look out for the next yarn in this splendid series, entitled: "LV PERILOUS SEAS!" By Frank Richards. It's a top hole story, chums!)

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CURLEW ISLAND!

(Continued from page 26.)

not making much of a job of it, either, for even the seagulls sheered off and kept out of the way. The steersman stopped singing now and then to drink something out of a bottle, and he did not seem to mind in the least where his boat was going. They came sailing and drifting right across the course of the whaleboat.

"Where are the fools coming to?" shouted Kellman. "They'll be foul of us if they ain't careful. Stop pulling, lads! Rest on your oars."

The boys of the Bellerophon raised their oar-blades clear of the water and held them steady, while Kellman shifted his helm to keep out of the sailing-boat's way. Tommy glanced at the craft as she came by. The three youths in her were grinning and jeering at the whale-boat's crew of blue-clad boys.

"There's a boat-load o' rotten stuff!" said one of the three. "Take 'em home and larrup 'em!"

Suddenly the steersman stood up excitedly, and pointed at the whale-boat.

"By jiminy, look there!" he said. "There's young Tommy Comber!"

Tommy caught his eye, and flashed red. It was Chuffer Foss!

"Look at him!" jeered Chuffer, whose voice was thick and husky. "Sam! Jimmy! Look at the kid convict! Haw, haw, haw! Look at him in his little blue jacket! Who got three years, eh? Three years—he ought to ha' been hanged!"

Chuffer's words, and the sound of his jeering voice, and the sight of his big, squabby face, drove Tommy nearly mad. He saw red.

Suddenly he dug his oar into the water, pulling with all his might, and swung the whaler's bow sharply to starboard. She was still gliding along with plenty of speed on, and he turned her straight for the sailing-boat.

"What are you doing?" cried Kellman sharply, and put his helm over hastily. But it was too late.

Crack!

The whaler hit the sailing-boat right amidships with a shock that sent two of her crew sprawling on the bottom-boards; at the same moment there was a wild yell, and Chuffer fell backwards against the gunwale—his heels flew up in the air, and he went overboard with a sousing plunge.

The boys of the Bellerophon gave a roar of laughter. But Mr. Kellman went perfectly frantic. He roared out orders as the two boats swung apart, and just then Chuffer bobbed up again, spluttering and gasping, floundering like a porpoise.

His two companions managed to grab hold of him; and began to haul him aboard as if he were a water-logged sack of potatoes, bumping his head against the side in their excitement.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the boys of the Bellerophon.

"Silence!" howled Mr. Kellman. "Give way there, starboard oars! How dare you, you young swabs!"

It was not often the boys of the Bellerophon had anything to laugh at, but they laughed so much now that they could hardly row. The oars were plunging about like the sails of a windmill. Mr. Kellman was frantic. He was responsible, and he wanted to get away from the other boat as quickly as possible. There was nothing else for him to do; Chuffer had already been hauled

aboard, and now he was standing up in the stern, streaming water like a retriever dog, shaking his fist at the whaler and howling threats.

"I'll report you!" he shouted at Kellman. "I'll have the law o' you! That young beggar tried to drown me! He wants to murder me! He said he would. He said so at Maidstone when they tried him—everybody heard him! He's a murderer!"

Mr. Kellman paid no attention to Chuffer at all. He made the boys pull as hard as they could, back towards the Bellerophon. He was in a white-hot fury; and he vented his rage on Tommy, as was only natural.

"Every boy in this boat goes before the captain as soon as we're alongside!" he cried. "And as for you, C.75, you're under arrest! You hear me?"

The boys quieted down and began to pull steadily, though now and then one of them gave a stifled snort of laughter. Tommy said nothing. He knew he was "for it," as they say on the Bellerophon. Likely enough he would get twenty with the cane, for a start, besides punishment drill—months of it, most likely—and goodness knows what on top of it.

But that didn't worry him; he hardly thought about it. The sight of Chuffer sousing over the side, like that, did him more good than anything for months past. It warmed him up—he was glowing all over. Whatever they did to him, it was worth it.

(Young Tommy Comber is not the type of fellow to knuckle down to the iron discipline of a reformatory ship without a struggle! Look out for another thrilling instalment of this powerful serial next week, chums!)



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