

"BUNTER, THE BILLIONAIRE!" This Week's Superb COVER-TO-COVER
Story of HARRY WHARTON & Co.

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BUNTER. THE BILLIONAIRE!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Man Who Fled!

LOOK out!" shrieked Harry Wharton. He waved his hand wildly. "Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry hoarsely. "He'll be killed!" panted Nugent. "Look out!" roared Johnny Bull. "Stop!"

The man in the green Daimler did not heed.

Crouched over the wheel, his face white and set, he was driving as if for his life.

Harry Wharton & Co., of the Greyfriars Remove, stared at the motorist in horror, as they shouted and waved.

A minute before, the chums of the Remove had been strolling peacefully along the green, shady lane that ran from the village of Pegg, round by Friardale Wood, to Greyfriars.

Greyfriars School was about to break up for the holidays, and the Famous Five had walked over to Cliff House to say good-bye to Marjorie & Co. Now they were walking back, thinking chiefly of tea, and chatting about the coming vacation.

The frantic honking of a car behind caused them to jump rather suddenly to the roadside.

The car came on almost like a flash of lightning.

The man at the wheel could drive—that was clear. But it was equally clear that he was a stranger in the locality. His driving was reckless, even for a clear and open road. But that little Kentish lane was not clear and open. Hardly a hundred yards on, hidden by a bend, was a gate. That gate was shut

across the lane, to keep cattle from wandering from the unfenced fields. The Greyfriars juniors knew it, but the man in the Daimler evidently did not. And he was heading for the shut gate at about 60 m.p.h.

"Stop!"

"Danger!"

"Brake!"

"Oh, stop!"

"Halt!"

The juniors yelled and shouted together. The man saw them and heard them plainly. But he paid no heed. Unconscious of the obstacle ahead, never dreaming, probably, of gates shut across lanes, he roared on. In utter horror the juniors saw him sweep past and roar on round the bend.

"He'll be killed!" repeated Frank Nugent, white as a sheet.

"Must be mad!" gasped Bob Cherry. "He heard us—"

"The madfulness must be terrific!" exclaimed Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Come on!" panted Wharton.

He sped after the car, his chums racing at his heels. Each instant they expected to hear the terrible crash of the car piling up on the gate. Gate and car would both be smashed to smithereens by such a collision. There did not seem a chance in a thousand of finding the man alive. They ran on desperately to render what aid they could.

Crash!

They heard it as they ran.

A moment more, and they were tearing round the bend of the leafy lane.

But the gate still stood intact! The car was piled on its side on the green, grassy bank beside the lane.

Evidently at the last moment the motorist had seen it, and, unable to

stop, had turned his car up the steep, sloping bank—the only chance of saving his life.

There it had turned turtle.

"Thank goodness he never hit the gate!" panted Wharton. "But—"

"Where is he?"

The car was a wreck. A minute ago it had been a handsome and expensive Daimler, worth a large sum of money. What remained of it was hardly worth the trouble of carting away. The Greyfriars fellows had seen more than one smash, but never had they seen a car so completely wrecked as this.

They stared round for the motorist, in dread that what was left of him was pinned under the wreckage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob, in great relief. "Here he is!"

Two feet were discerned, sticking out of a hawthorn bush. The bush was rustling, as something wriggled in it.

Evidently it was the motorist who was wriggling there. He had been tossed bodily out of the car and pitched head-first into the hawthorns. Only his feet were visible. The chums of the Remove rushed to help him.

Bob Cherry grasped one foot, Harry Wharton the other. They pulled.

There was a panting cry from the man hidden in the tangled hawthorns.

"Let go! Release me! Scoundrel! I am armed! I will defend myself! I will shoot!"

"Great pip!" gasped Bob.

"Mad as a hatter!" ejaculated Wharton.

They dragged, and the man came out of the thorny thicket like a cork from a bottle.

He sprawled in the grass at their feet.

Apparently he was not injured, save

for scratches from the hawthorns. He had a lucky escape.

But, though the danger was over, he was plainly in a state of terror. As he sprawled he was fumbling frantically at a hip-pocket. But his hand was trembling so violently that he was unable to get at the object within. From what he had said, the schoolboys could guess what that object was. And Harry Wharton promptly stooped over him, caught his shaking wrist, and dragged it away from the hip-pocket.

"Mercy!" howled the sprawling man. "You shall have everything—everything! Do not fire!"

"My esteemed lunatic—" gasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Is somebody after him?" exclaimed Johnny Bull, in wonder.

The juniors glanced quickly back down the lane. But there was no one to be seen. It stretched calm and peaceful between shady trees, down to the village of Pegg, with Cliff House School and the sea in sight in the distance.

"Pull yourself together, old bean!" said Bob Cherry. "You're all right now. Your car's gone west, but you're all serene!"

The man sat up.

He blinked at the five schoolboys.

Evidently, in his terror, he had supposed that he was seized by quite different hands. Now, however, he could see that they were schoolboys, and he gave a swift, hunted look down the lane, and panted with relief as he saw that it was clear.

"Oh!" he gasped. "I—I thought—"

He was trying to pull himself together. A faint flush came into his colourless face. Harry Wharton gave him a helping hand, and he staggered to his feet and leaned heavily against a tree, panting for breath.

The juniors regarded him curiously. The man had been driving his car with such recklessness that they would have supposed him to be a man of desperate courage. They realised now that it had been the recklessness of terror. Never had they seen anyone in such a state of funk.

Obviously, he had been fleeing from some danger, real or supposed. As he leaned on the tree, panting, he was trembling from head to foot. It was scarcely possible not to feel contempt for a man so frightened; but at the same time they were rather interested in him, and sympathetic.

He was a plump man, of middle height, with a smooth-shaven, rather sleek face. There was something in his looks that suggested a manservant, possibly a butler. He was dressed expensively; but did not give an impression of being used to it. Indeed, a keen observer might have suspected that he was a valet who had dressed in his master's clothes and taken his master's car out for a joy-ride.

That did not occur to the juniors; but they could see that there was something rather unusual about the sleek man, apart from his extraordinary actions and words.

Before more could be said, however, there was a sound of a distant car coming up the lane, though not yet in sight.

The sleek man started convulsively.

"He is coming!" he panted.

"Who?" exclaimed Wharton.

The man did not answer. He tore himself away from the tree and jumped towards his car. He stopped, staring at the wreckage. If he had hoped that the Daimler would stir again it did not take him long to realise that the car had gone west—and gone for good!

He gave a yelp of terror and a wild glance up and down the lane. He caught Harry Wharton by the arm.

"Don't betray me!" he panted.

"Who—who—" stammered the bewildered captain of the Remove.

"Tell him I have gone the other way!"

"But what—"

Before Wharton could utter another word the sleek man had bolted into the wood and disappeared among the trees.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Man in Pursuit!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stood in the leafy lane, staring the way the man had gone, and then staring at one another in blank astonishment.

A rustle came back from the wood as the unknown man fled; but it quickly died away, and all was silent.

He was gone, leaving the Greyfriars juniors standing by the wreck of the car. For a long moment they stood silent. Up the lane, from the direction the fugitive had come a few minutes ago, sounded the hum of an approaching car.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry at last. "He's gone before we could ask him the name of the game!"

"Is he potty?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Blessed if I don't think he's some escaped lunatic!" said Frank Nugent.

Broke to the wide, as he always is, Billy Bunter's stories about his wealthy, titled relations are taken with a grain of salt. But, amazing to relate, Bunter, the impecunious, suddenly becomes BUNTER, THE BILLIONAIRE!

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"He's not that!" he said. "He's in a blue funk—scared out of his wits by something. He thinks there's somebody after him."

"Who the dickens could be after him?" grunted Johnny Bull. "Unless he's some crook getting away from the police—"

Wharton shook his head again. He was sure that this was not the explanation. Yet how to account for the man's flight and his fear was a mystery. The sleek man had acted like a man in fear of his life! How a man could be fleeing for his life in a law-abiding country like England was rather a deep puzzle. Even when, looking down the lane, they saw a car coming up at great speed, they could not believe that it was pursuit.

It was a small Austin that came whizzing up Pegg Lane, with a long-limbed, slim man lounging at the wheel. Looking at him, the juniors saw a hard, clear-cut face, with high cheekbones, and cold, hard, almost colourless eyes, that looked like slits of ice. The mouth was a hard, straight line, with an unlighted cigar sticking out of one corner.

Fast as the car was going, the driver's icy eyes took in the scene at the roadside at a glance. He spotted the gate ahead, the wrecked car, and the group of schoolboys, and jammed on his brakes. With a scream, the car came to a halt a few yards short of the gate.

The man was out of it with a bound. Taking no notice, for the moment, of the staring juniors, he ran up to the

up-ended Daimler on the bank, and walked round it, staring at it, examining it on all sides.

"I'll tell a man that's the car!" he said aloud.

That expression, which reminded the juniors of Fisher T. Fish of the Remove, revealed that the man was an American.

He shot a swift, searching glance round, evidently in search of the man who had driven the wrecked Daimler. Then he stepped towards the group of juniors, who had drawn away from him a little. His sharp, cold eyes ran over them searchingly.

"Where's that guy?" he asked.

"That which?" asked Bob Cherry coolly.

"The guy that drove that car. I guess you saw the smash—what?"

"We came up a few moments after it happened," said Harry.

"You saw the man?"

"Oh, yes, we saw him!" said the captain of the Remove.

It was clear now, amazing at it was, that this long-limbed fellow was in pursuit of the sleek man. What it could all mean the chums of Greyfriars had not the faintest idea. But they had no intention of helping the man find the fugitive, at least until they knew more.

"Fattish guy, looks like a valet?" asked the stranger. "I guess you saw him. Which way did he go?"

"The whichfulness is terrific, esteemed sir!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The long-limbed man started, and stared at the dusky junior Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's English often caused surprise, when it was heard for the first time.

"Meaning?" he rapped.

"The meanfulness is the same as the sayfulness," answered Hurree Jamset Ram Singh; and the lean American stared at him harder.

"Aw, can it!" he said. He turned to Wharton. "I guess that guy got clear when his auto hit trouble, or he'd be lying around in sight. He'd beat it! Which way did he go?"

"What do you want to know for?" asked the captain of the Greyfriars Remove quietly.

"I guess I'm asking questions, bo, not answering them! You want to spill it, and spill it quick!"

Wharton looked at him coolly and calmly. The long-limbed American was quite well-dressed; but there was something in his look, and something in his manner, that told of the underworld.

Wharton's knowledge of American gangsters was naturally rather limited; but he guessed at once that this fellow belonged to that peculiar fraternity.

"But I don't want to spill it," said Harry calmly. "Consequently, I shan't spill it quick! See?"

The hard brows contracted over the icy slits of eyes.

"You don't want to chew the rag with me! I'm after that guy, and I want him! Which way did he beat it?"

"Find out!" answered Wharton coolly.

The long-limbed man made a stride at him. Wharton did not budge an inch, and his comrades gathered close by him at once. Five fellows were ready to tackle the long-limbed gentleman, if he was keen on trouble. Lean as he was, he looked muscular; but the five of them could certainly have handled him. He stopped.

"Better guess again, Hiram!" said Bob Cherry, with a cheery grin. "Lots of trouble here if you want it!"

"The lotfulness is terrific."

"I guess my name ain't Hiram," said the long-limbed man, staring at Bob.

"You look as if it might be—but make it Josh!" suggested Bob. "I said you'd better guess again, Josh!"

"I'll say you talk too much, big boy!" said the lean man. "If you knew me to home, you wouldn't be so all-fired saucy, I reckon! 'Nuff chin-wag! Where's that guy?"

His lean hand whipped behind him and reappeared with a short, black revolver in it.

The juniors stared at the weapon.

"Now spill it, and spill it quick!" he snapped.

Harry Wharton laughed contemptuously.

"Do you fancy you can frighten us with film stunts?" he asked. "Go and eat coke! Come on, you men; it's time we got in to tea."

"Stand where you are!" roared the lean man savagely.

"Rats to you!"

Harry Wharton turned his back on the man.

That the pistol had been produced simply as a threat he was quite assured; and he was right. Whatever the lean man might be when he was "to home," as he expressed it, certainly he had no use for fireworks in a Kentish lane. He stared angrily and savagely after the schoolboys, but he slipped the revolver back into his hip-pocket.

The Famous Five moved off. But they glanced back and saw the lean man moving to and fro along the grassy bank, scanning the ground.

They could guess that he was looking for "sign," to pick up the way the man from the wrecked car had gone.

"What the dooce does it all mean?" muttered Johnny Bull.

"Goodness knows!"

"He's picked up the trail!" said Bob, with a faint grin.

They saw the man straighten up and stride into the wood. As he went in the direction in which the sleek man had gone, it was fairly certain that he had picked up traces of the latter's footprints in the grass.

He was gone from the schoolboys' sight in a moment more. They stopped at the gate, staring after him, at the shady, silent wood, that had swallowed both pursued and pursuer.

"Well, my hat!" said Frank Nugent.

"He's left his car!"

"Anybody want an Austin?" grinned Bob Cherry. "Chance here!"

"Blessed if I can make it out!" said Harry Wharton. "That man's a crook of some kind. I feel sure of that. But what—"

"The whatfulness is terrific!"

It was all utterly amazing. The green Daimler lay a wreck on the grassy bank of the wood; the little Austin stood where the lean man had left it, the engine still running.

There was no sign of either man reappearing from the wood. The juniors would hardly have been surprised to hear a ringing shot from the dusky depths of the trees. But they heard nothing.

Minute followed minute in deep silence.

"We can't leave this where it is," said Harry at last. "Better tell Quelch; he will know whether to speak to the police or not. Let's get on."

He opened the gate, and the chums of the Remove walked on towards the

distance school. But they were no longer discussing the summer holidays. They could not help thinking of that strange flight and pursuit, and wondering, utterly mystified, what it could all mean.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rather a Problem!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"No," said Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"No," repeated the Bounder.

"You silly ass!" roared Billy Bunter. "You don't know yet what I was going to ask you."

The Bounder grinned, and Tom Redwing laughed. They were sauntering in the quadrangle at Greyfriars when Billy Bunter rolled up. Really it was not necessary to hear what Bunter was going to ask. In any case, the answer was in the negative.

Just before break-up it was extremely probable that Bunter was anxious to get fixed up for the holidays. But it was equally probable that he was looking for some confiding fellow to cash a postal order that he was expecting shortly. So the Bounder answered "No!" without waiting to hear details.

"Look here, Smithy! I was going to ask you—"

"No!" said Vernon-Smith, for the third time.

And he walked on with Redwing, leaving Billy Bunter glaring after him through his big spectacles, with a glare that might almost have cracked the same.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

He blinked round. Lord Mauleverer was strolling at a little distance, and Bunter started for him, calling as he went:

"I say, Mauly—"

"Oh gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

A moment before Lord Mauleverer had been strolling easily and gently as if he found it rather too much trouble to move at all. But at the sight of Bunter in the offing his lazy lordship accelerated.

"Hold on, Mauly!" shouted Bunter.

Instead of holding on, Lord Mauleverer put on speed. He vanished under the elms at a rapid trot.

"Well, of all the silly idiots!" gasped Bunter. "Toddy—I say, Toddy!" Peter Todd came up from the gates, and Bunter howled to him. "Hold on, Toddy!"

"Stony!" answered Peter.

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "Do you think I want to borrow anything off you, you image?"

"Don't you?" asked Peter, in surprise.

"No!" howled Bunter.

"Well, if it's about the hols, old fat bean, ask next door," said Peter.

"It isn't!" roared Bunter.

"Oh!" Peter Todd came to a halt. "Fire away, then!"

"It's pretty sickening that a fellow can't speak to a fellow without a fellow thinking that a fellow wants to borrow something from a fellow!" snorted Bunter wrathfully. "As for the hols, I shouldn't be likely to come home with you, Peter Todd."

"You wouldn't," agreed Peter. "Not if I knew it."

"I might be able to give you a week-end, perhaps."

"I've no use for your napper—thanks!"

"My napper! Who's talking about my napper, you fathead?"

"That's your weak end, isn't it?"

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter. "I've no time to listen to your rotten jokes. Look here! Wharton hasn't come in. I was going to tea in Study No. 1."

"And Wharton never knew?" asked Toddy sympathetically. "Still, if he's got anything like a spread, he might have guessed."

"I think very likely they're staying to tea at Cliff House," said Bunter. "I heard them saying they were going over to say good-bye. They never said anything about tea. If I'd known, I should have gone with them."

"Perhaps that's why they didn't mention it," grinned Toddy.

"Well, a fellow doesn't know what to do," grunted Bunter. "If they've gone to tea with Marjorie, it's no good waiting for them to come in for tea in the study, is it? But if a fellow starts for Cliff House, they may come in while a fellow's gone. You silly ass! What are you gurgling at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter.

Billy Bunter's problem seemed to strike him as rather entertaining.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" snapped Bunter. "I say, Peter, they might have told you whether they're going to tea or not."

The Owl of the Remove blinked anxiously at Toddy.

"They might have," agreed Peter.

"Well, did they?" demanded Bunter.

"Oh, no! Why not come to tea with me, though?" asked Peter. "I'm going to tea with rather a crowd."

"Oh!" Billy Bunter's fat face brightened. This was a solution of the problem. "Is it a tea-party, Peter?"

"That's it!"

"A lot of fellows?"

"Quite a lot."

"I'll come," said Bunter. "Those chaps can go and eat coke! They can't expect me to hang about waiting for them to come in to tea. And I'm jolly well not going to walk over to Cliff House, when they may have left before I get there. Bother 'em! I'll tea with you, Toddy, old fellow."

"Good!" said Toddy. "Come on!"

Peter Todd walked on towards the House. Billy Bunter trotted at his side, his fat, little legs going like clockwork to keep pace with Peter's long, thin ones.

"Whose study is it in, Peter?" he asked.

"Not in a study at all," answered Toddy. "Too many fellows in this tea-party for a study."

Billy Bunter's little round eyes gleamed behind his big, round spectacles. This sounded like a feed of unusual and tremendous extent.

Only occasionally was there a spread in the Greyfriars Remove too extensive for a study. Then it was generally held in the Rag.

A spread in the Rag was just what Bunter enjoyed. But he was rather surprised that such a function could be on without his having heard anything about it. He had the eye of a hawk, and the nose of a bloodhound for a spread. But he had heard nothing of this.

"In the Rag, I suppose?" he asked, as they went in.

"No; not in the Rag."

"Not!" exclaimed Bunter. "Then where?"

"In Hall," said Peter. "This way."

"In Hall," repeated Billy Bunter. "But the school tea's in Hall. Wharrer you mean?"

"That's what I mean," answered

Peter cheerfully, "Quite a large party—every fellow who can't afford tea in his study, in fact. Come on!"

Billy Bunter did not come on. He halted, glaring at Peter Todd as if he could have bitten him.

"You silly idiot!" he howled. "If I want tea in Hall, I don't need you to ask me to it, you blithering ohump! Is this a rotten joke?"

"Not at all. It's a good one—quite good. This is where you laugh," explained Toddy.

Bunter did not laugh; he hooted. "You howling fathead! You blithering idiot! You silly chump! You—"

Peter Todd, without waiting to hear more, went into Hall to the school tea. As he had told Bunter, it was quite a large party. But it was not a party

class; and he was aware that Harold Skinner was given to leg-pulling.

"I say! What was Wharton doing in the Form-room?" he asked.

"Latin," answered Skinner.

"Mean to say he's got a detention?"

"Not that I know of."

"Then what is he doing Latin in the Form-room for?"

"He isn't."

"You silly owl! You said he was!" howled Bunter.

"So he was. So were we all in class with Quelch," said Skinner cheerfully.

"It's a matter of tense, old fat bean! He isn't, but he was. I saw him, so did you."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Snoop.

"You—you—you—" gasped Bunter. He rolled away, leaving Skinner and

the other hand, if they had left, the fat Owl would have his walk for nothing. It was a difficult problem to solve.

But the Owl of the Remove made up his fat mind at last and rolled out of gates. And, a few minutes later, he was going at a trot through the dusky shades of Friardale Wood.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Lively for Bunter!

JARVISH, you double-crossing geck, I've got you!" Billy Bunter gave a startled squeak.

He had left the footpath, and was winding his way through the thick



Harry Wharton & Co. rushed to help the motorist, who had been tossed bodily out of the car and pitched head-first into the hawthorns. Bob Cherry grasped one foot, Harry Wharton the other. There was a panting cry from the motorist as they pulled. "Let go! Release me! Scoundrel! I am armed—I will defend myself—I will shoot!" "Great pip!" gasped Bob. "Mad as a hatter!" ejaculated Wharton.

that Bunter wanted to join. The school tea, which the juniors generally described as doorsteps and dishwater, was not what Billy Bunter wanted. He snorted and rolled away. Peter Todd's little joke had wasted valuable time. Bunter's problem was still unsolved.

"I say, you fellows!" He rolled up to Skinner and Snoop in the quad. "I say, seen anything of Wharton?"

"Lots," answered Skinner. "Too much, in fact."

"I mean—has he come in?"

"Well, I saw him in the Form-room—"

Without waiting for Skinner to finish, Bunter started for the House again, to look into the Form-room. Skinner winked at Snoop, who grinned. But after a few paces the Owl of the Remove turned back. The Form-room was really an improbable place after

Snoop grinning. He rolled down to the gates. William Gosling, the ancient porter of Greyfriars, was adorning the landscape outside his lodge.

"Has Wharton come in, Gosling?" asked Bunter.

"Ain't seed him!" answered Gosling.

Bunter stood in the gateway, blinking out into the road. The Famous Five had not come back from Cliff House. If they were coming back for tea, they were rather late. True, they did not attach so much importance to meals as Billy Bunter did. Still, very likely they were staying for tea with the Cliff House girls. If so, Bunter had still time to barge in by taking the short cut through Friardale Wood and losing no time.

Tea at Cliff House was very attractive. There was always a cake on such occasions—and a good, big cake! On

wood, to get out into Pegg Lane 'at the nearest spot to Cliff House.

Round him the trees and bushes and brambles were thick, and he could not see a yard from his fat little nose; but he knew his way through the wood, and was losing no time.

He heard a rustle in the thickets without heeding it; and then suddenly came that sharp, startling voice, with a nasal twang in it, and a figure came plunging through the brambles towards him.

"Owl!" gasped Bunter.

He stopped, rooted to the ground with surprise and uneasy fear. In a split second the man who had spoken leaped from the thicket in front of him, and, to Bunter's amazement and horror, a small, black revolver glimmered in his hand. His startled eyes,

almost popping through his big spectacles, blinked in terror at the lean, long-limbed man, with a hard, clear-cut face under a slouched hat.

The expression on that hard face was, for the moment, terrifying.

But it changed at once as the lean man beheld Bunter.

Hunting through the wood for the sleek man who had fled from the wrecked Daimler, the gangster had heard Bunter rustling through the thickets, and jumped to the conclusion that he had found his man.

He saw his mistake at once, and the black "gun" disappeared instantly into his hip-pocket.

He stared at Bunter.

Bunter stared at him.

The lean man was angry and irritated. Billy Bunter was frightened almost out of his fat wits.

"Say, you!" snapped the lean man.

"Ow! Keep off!" gasped Bunter. "I say— Oh dear! Ow!"

"I guess you don't want to get the wind up any, fat boy!" said the gangster. "I ain't hurting you! I'm sure looking for a man—a friend of mine. He's in this here wood somewhere! You seen a guy around?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "No! Yes! No! Oh lor'!"

He backed away a step, blinking at the gangster. He longed to dodge away into the thickets and run for it. Who the man was, what he was after, Bunter had not the faintest idea. But a man armed with a revolver was a man that Billy Bunter did not want to meet in the heart of a lonely wood. A gesture from the lean man rooted him again.

"Say, I guess I asked you a question, bo!" said the lean man. "You seen a smooth-faced guy in this here wood?"

"No!" gasped Bunter.

"You seen anybody?"

"Oh! No!"

The icy eyes scanned his fat face suspiciously. But the lean man seemed satisfied that Bunter was telling the truth. He gave him a curt nod.

"I guess you can beat it!" he snapped.

Bunter "beat" it promptly.

He plunged into the bushes and ran. In a thick and tangled wood, running was not an easy matter. Bunter caught his foot in a trailing root and went headlong with a bump.

"Ow! Wow!" howled the fat junior.

He shivered like a fat jelly as he lay gasping for breath.

The lean man had disappeared, but the lean, hard face, the icy eyes, and, above all, the little black gun haunted Bunter's terrified mind. Suppose the man came after him? Suppose he fired that gun and Bunter stopped the bullet? All sorts of horrid suppositions floated through Billy Bunter's fat mind. He scrambled to his feet.

As he did so there was a rustle in the thickets quite close at hand.

Bunter's podgy heart almost stopped beating.

It was a faint, soft rustle, as if someone were creeping stealthily through the wood, and it was coming towards Bunter.

Was it the gangster coming after him? Was it another ruffian of the same kidney? To Bunter's scared imagination, the dusky wood was peopled with hard-faced men, all with revolvers.

He stood still, his fat heart thumping, listening with intent ears. He could see no one, but someone was coming towards him.

His fat knees knocked together.

Flight was futile in the tangled wood. He blinked round desperately for a hiding-place.

Close to him was a thick, gnarled old elm-tree. Hardly stopping to think, Bunter clambered frantically up the rough trunk.

At any other time he would have found the climb difficult. Now terror urged him on.

Almost in a twinkling the fat junior was in the tree and lying on a thick branch that jutted over the undergrowth, hidden from sight.

He tried to still his gasping breath as he lay there, listening like a frightened rabbit.

The rustle was heard again.

Through the brambles Bunter, peering down with dilated eyes behind his big spectacles, made out a figure.

It was not the long, lean gangster; it was a rather short and plump man, with a smooth, sleek face.

That face was white as chalk and dewed with perspiration.

The sleek man crept almost on tiptoe, parting the bushes cautiously as he moved. There was intense fear in his look and in his movements. Bunter, blinking at him, realised that the sleek man was even more frightened than he was himself—which was saying a great deal.

From that creeping, terrified man, however, there could be nothing to fear. Bunter realised that, and took comfort from it.

This man, whatever he was, was not a dangerous character. He was anything but that.

Obviously, he was not hunting anybody. He looked as if he was being hunted. And Billy Bunter guessed easily enough that he was the man of whom the lean-faced gangster was in search. He was the "smooth-faced guy" whom the lean man had called Jarvis.

Bunter made no sound. He only hoped that the smooth-faced guy would clear off quickly and not draw the gangster in that direction.

But the sleek man did not clear off.

He stopped directly under the branch on which the fat junior was extended and bent his head to listen.

Bunter heard his panting breath. Peering down, he saw the sleek man wiping the perspiration from his brow.

From the encircling wood came a rustling sound. Bunter knew that the lean man was not far away. And that rustle apprised Jarvis of the fact. He trembled so violently that he looked like falling down. Apparently, the same idea came into his mind that had come into Bunter's, for he approached the trunk of the elm, and grasped at it to climb.

Like Bunter, he was hunting cover.

The fat junior glared at him through the foliage. He did not want another refugee in the elm. He had a terrifying vision of the lean man blazing away at the branches with that little black revolver.

But the clambering man was hardly a foot from the ground when a thicket close at hand rustled, and a cool, hard voice spoke quietly:

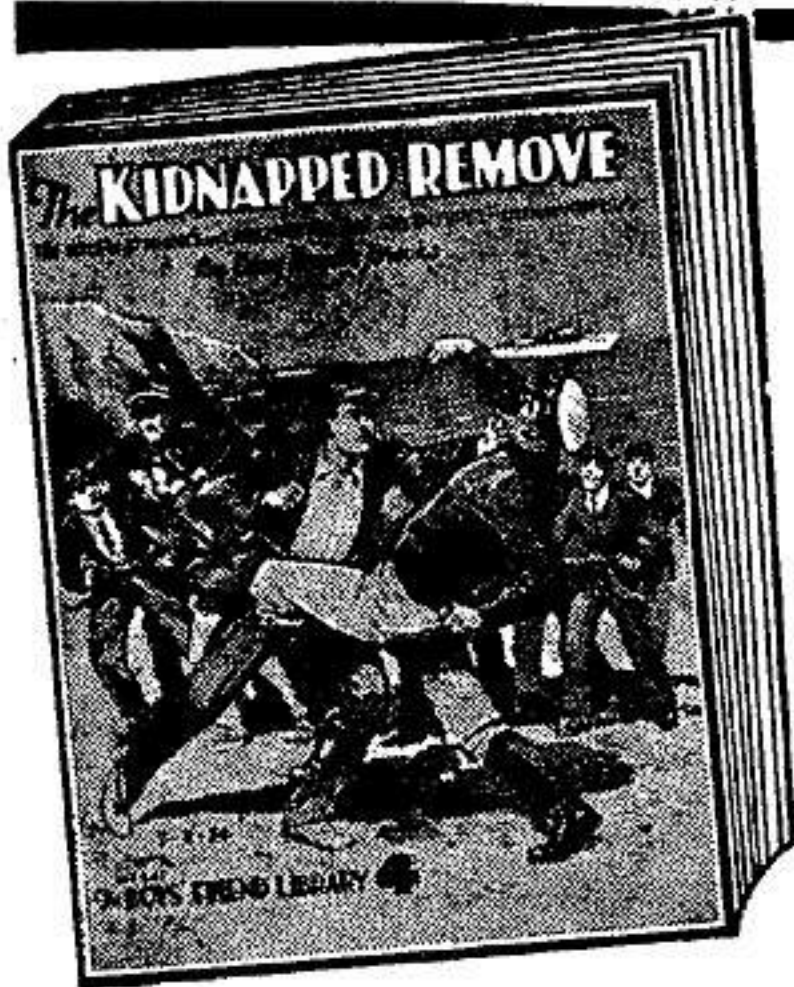
"Forget it, Jarvis!"

There was a yelp of terror from the sleek man. His nerveless hands lost their hold, and he bumped back into the grass at the foot of the tree.

The next moment the lean gangster stepped into view. The black revolver was in his hand again. It was aimed at the man who sprawled, panting, under the elm.

"Get up!"

The sleek man struggled to his feet. He gave a squeal of fear as he looked at the little black barrel.



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“Bronx! Don’t shoot!” he gasped. “I’ll give up everything—everything! D-d-don’t shoot!”

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
One for His Nob!

BILLY BUNTER, extended face down on the elm branch, blinked through the foliage, his little round eyes almost popping through his big round spectacles.

It seemed to Bunter like some horrid nightmare, or like a scene from some lurid American film.

The lean man stood below him, the revolver in his hand, aimed at the trembling Jarvis, his finger on the trigger.

Jarvis backed to the elm trunk and leaned on it for support, otherwise his legs would have refused to support his weight.

His eyes, distended with fear, were fixed on the man with the revolver. His terror was pitiable.

The revolver in the lean hand was steady as a rock. Every second the frightened fat Owl above expected to hear the shot ring out.

But there was no shot. The gangster kept the revolver at a level, scanning the trembling man before him with keen, cold, contemptuous eyes.

“I guess I’ve made the grade, Jarvis!” he said. “I’ve sure got you!”

“D-don’t shoot, Bronx! D-d-don’t shoot!”

The gangster laughed. “What you figure I’ve run you down for?” he asked. “I guess you figured you’d beaten me to it when you lit out of the States. You sure never calculated you’d see me this side of the pond. You reckoned you’d got clear with the biggest fortune ever made out of packed beef in Chicago. Say!”

The wretched man groaned. “It’s you for the long hop, Jarvis! You got anything to say before you hit Jordan?”

“I’ll give up everything—”

“I’ll say you will when I’ve pumped lead into you!” agreed the gangster. “I guess you won’t give it up without that.”

“I swear—”

“Wash it out! You walk away from this gun, and I guess you’ll want to go on being a millionaire—or a billionaire. What? I guess you’ve forgotten already how to brush coats and hats, and tie a gentleman’s tie for him!” The gangster laughed derisively. “You’ve taken a big jump in life, Jarvis, with your double-crossing tricks! I guess you’re going to take a bigger jump now! Did you figure that Tiger Bronx would let you get by with it? Say!”

He made a motion with the revolver. Jarvis fell on his knees.

Evidently he expected the shot to ring out.

Billy Bunter, blinking down from above, had a different impression. Terrified as he was, the fat junior was not so terrified as the man crouching before the deadly weapon. To Bunter’s eyes it was like a scene from a film, and the same sense of unreality impressed him. He was almost sure that the man Bronx had no intention whatever of shooting, but was merely playing on the fears of the wretched man before him. And, indeed, even a gangster who handled his “gun” freely in the great United States might well hesitate to do so in an old-fashioned country where gunmen were hanged for such performances.

“D-d-don’t shoot!” groaned Jarvis. “I—I appeal to you! I will give up

everything—everything! Every dollar, every cent—”

“I guess,” said Bronx slowly, “I’ll give you a chance, Jarvis. I sure ain’t trusting you out of my sight. I got a little car on the road a mile from here—I guess you’ve seen it, as you lit out in such a powerful hurry when you spotted me on the road behind your Daimler. You willing to take a trip with me in that little auto?”

Jarvis groaned. “I—I—I’ll do anything you ask, only—”

“I guess you will when I get you where I want you,” said Tiger Bronx. “You won’t be the first guy that’s been through my hands, and I’ll say I’ve always made ’em sit up and do what was wanted! You got to squeeze up them millions, Jarvis, to the last red cent, or your friends will be looking for your body—and finding it, sure! Gerrup!”

Jarvis tottered up from his knees. “You’ll promise, if I go with you, not to—to—to—” His voice trailed off.

Evidently the fear was in his mind

have been hurt. But he was stopped six feet from the ground by something that interposed.

That was the head of Tiger Bronx! Before either Billy Bunter or the man from Chicago knew what was happening the fat Owl’s tremendous weight crashed on the gangster’s head, and Tiger Bronx went down like a felled ox.

Crash!
“Yaroooh!”
Groan!

Only that one faint groan came from the gangster.

He had crumpled up under the falling fat junior, and his head struck the ground with terrific force as he went down.

Bunter found himself sitting on a stunned and insensible head.

He bounded off it. “Ow! Keep off! It wasn’t me!” shrieked Bunter. “I never—Yaroooh! Oh lor’! Whooop!”

He made a wild bound to escape and crashed into Jarvis. The sleek man went over backwards, with Bunter sprawling over him.

Had the Tiger been still in a state to carry on both of them would have been at his mercy.

But the gangster lay stunned and senseless, his arm doubled under him, the revolver in his hand hidden from sight.

After that one gasping groan not a sound came from him. He lay like a log. Bunter, as he scrambled off Jarvis, blinked round at him in deadly terror, but he saw that the man made no movement and realised that he was incapable of doing so.

“Oh jiminy!” gasped Bunter.

The gangster was insensible. He could see that. But how long he would remain in that fortunate state Bunter did not know. He was not disposed to stay and ascertain. The open spaces appealed to Bunter at that moment as they had never appealed before. Scrambling off the sleek man, he bounded away.

A grasp on his shoulder behind stopped him.

“Leggo!” yelled Bunter frantically.

It was Jarvis who had grasped him.

“Stay a moment!” gasped Jarvis. “Lead me—guide me—take me to some safe place! Quick—before he recovers! Oh, quick! I will reward you—anything you like! I have millions at my command. Only save me!”

“Leggo—”

“Save me!”

“Come on, then!” gasped Bunter, making the best of it, as the terrified man clutched his arm like a limpet with a clutch that would not come off. “I—I’ll shave you—I mean save you—quick!”

He bolted into the thickets, with the sleek man still holding his arm, fearful of letting him go. The rustling of their flight died away in the distance. Both of them were in terror of the gangster reviving and barging in pursuit. But they need not have been so uneasy. It was full ten minutes before Tiger Bronx stirred.

Then he sat up dizzily and clasped his head with both hands, the black revolver dropping unheeded in the grass.

“Ow!” said Mr. Bronx. “Wow! My cabeza! Wow! I guess I’ve got a pain in it, just a few, and then some more! Wow!”

He sat and rocked, with his head in his hands. Whatever might be the mysterious trouble between Tiger Bronx and Mr. Jarvis—in which, apparently, millions, if not billions of dollars were at stake—the gangster was not thinking of it now. That crash of his head

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**Billy Bunter, in fine togs arrayed,
To Remove chaps his clothes he displayed,
Till Mauly drew near
And said: “Why, it’s clear
Bunter’s wearing the clothes I
mislaid!”**

The above winning effort was sent in by Muriel Barton, of “Resthaven,” Milton Avenue, King’s Lynn, Norfolk. Send in your attempts now to “Limericks and Jokes” Editor, c/o MAGNET, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

that if he allowed himself to be kidnapped it might not save his life. Probably he suspected the Tiger of intending to carry out his deadly purpose in a safer place.

“Promise nothing!” snarled the gangster. “I guess—”

He broke off suddenly and stared up at the branch above his head. Billy Bunter, clinging there, flat on the bough, had been as silent as a mouse with the cat at hand till that moment. But it was rather a cramping position, and the fat Owl had inadvertently stirred.

Slight as was the movement he made, it caught the keen ear of the gangster, whose head was not more than four feet below him.

The hard, sharp eyes stared up sharply and suspiciously and spotted a glimpse of the fat junior through the foliage.

“Thunder!” ejaculated the gangster. “Who—”

“Oh crikey!” gasped Bunter. He was discovered!

What happened next Bunter hardly knew.

In his startled terror he let go his hold and rolled off the branch. With a breathless squeal, he shot down to the earth.

Had he gone all the way Bunter would

between Billy Bunter's tremendous weight and the hard, unsympathetic earth gave him something else to think of. Oblivious of Bunter and Jarvish, he sat and rocked, with his head in his hands, and groaned deeply and dismally.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Money Talks!

RUN!"

"Oh lor'!"

"Run!"

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter ran. He was as anxious as Mr. Jarvish to put a safe distance between himself and the gangster. But Bunter was no sprinter. And it was a hot afternoon. He gasped for breath; he puffed, and he blew. Perspiration poured down his fat face. It dimmed his big spectacles. It trickled down his neck. Bunter was warm and damp, and tired and breathless, and his fat little legs seemed to be crumpling under him.

But he ran, and ran, with the plump, sleek man still gripping his fat arm. In what direction he was running, Billy Bunter hardly knew till he emerged from the shades of the wood into an open green meadow. Across the fields, in the distance, he could see the grey old tower of Greyfriars School over the tree-tops. In his hurried flight he had turned his back on Cliff House.

But he was not bothering about that. He was not even thinking of tea! He was only thinking that he was fatigued and breathless, and that there was hardly a run left in his fat legs.

"Owl! Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh dear!"

He stopped and spluttered for breath.

"Run!" gasped Jarvish.

"We're all right now!" gurgled Bunter. "Look here, we can get out of sight in that shed! Oh dear!"

In a corner of the meadow was an open shed, a shelter for grazing cattle. Luckily, there were no cattle in the meadow at the moment. Bunter did not like cows. His limited range of vision always made him uncertain whether a cow was not a bull. He gasped his way to the shed, the sleek man still holding his arm, as if fearful of losing his guide. Bunter rolled into the shed, glad to get out of the hot sunshine, and Jarvish released his arm at last.

"Oh lor'!" gurgled Bunter. He mopped his streaming brow.

The sleek man peered from the open side of the shed with uneasy watchful eyes. Evidently he was in dire terror of pursuit.

But there was no sign of pursuit.

"We're safe here!" grunted Bunter.

Bunter was no hero. But he was hardly such a funk as the sleek man obviously was. He had a feeling of contemptuous superiority. It was rather a novelty for Billy Bunter to find himself in company with anyone more funky than himself! Moreover, Bunter was in no special danger. Now that he had time to think, he realised that Bronx did not want him. He wanted Jarvish, and seemed to want him badly; but he did not want anybody else. Absence of danger was exactly the thing to revive Bunter's courage! He mopped his fat brow, and blinked scornfully at the sleek, smooth-faced "guy."

"He—he is not coming!" panted Jarvish.

"Who cares if he does?" retorted Bunter. "I'm jolly well not afraid of him, or his gun either."

"You've saved my life, my lad!" said the sleek man. "You saved my life, by jumping on him from the tree."

Bunter blinked at him.

He was not at all sure that Mr. Jarvish's life had been in danger. And most certainly he had not jumped on the gangster from the tree. He had fallen!

But Billy Bunter was not the man to disclaim any credit that came his way. If this trembling fellow believed that Bunter had saved his life, and that the fat Owl had deliberately jumped down on the gangster for that noble purpose, Bunter was not likely to undeceive him.

He blinked at Jarvish for a moment, then he nodded cheerfully.

"It was the only way!" explained the fat Owl airily. "I don't know whether he was going to shoot—"

"He was—he was!" gasped Jarvish.

"Well, I jolly well stopped him!" said Bunter complacently. "Lot I cared for his gun!"

"What were you doing in the tree? I never dreamed that anyone was there."

Bunter paused a moment.

Having obtained the credit of acting promptly, efficiently, and courageously, he did not want to spoil the effect by admitting that he had clambered into that elm because he had been frightened by a footstep in the wood!

But Billy Bunter was never at a loss for a fib. Fibs, in fact, came more easily to him than facts, from long habit!

"Oh, bird's-nesting!" he answered calmly. "I was—was looking for a nest, when I—I saw you—and—and him! And I thought I'd better barge in, you know. Couldn't hang back when a man was in danger. Not Greyfriars style."

"Greyfriars?" repeated Jarvish. Apparently he had never heard of that celebrated scholastic establishment.

"My school!" explained Bunter. "It's not far away! You can see it if you put your head round the corner of the shed."

Mr. Jarvish did not put his head round the corner of the shed. He seemed to prefer to keep his sleek head out of sight in the interior of the shed!

But he was pulling himself together now. He stood before Bunter, rubbing his sleek, smooth hands together, like the gentleman in the poem who washed his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water.

"He will not find me here!" he breathed. "But—when I go—"

"If you're afraid of the man, why don't you go to the police?" asked Bunter.

"You don't understand!"

"I'll show you the way to the police station if you like."

Mr. Jarvish shook his head.

He did not seem to regard the police force as a useful protection against Tiger Bronx and his little black revolver!

"You don't understand!" he repeated.

"Blessed if I do!" grunted Bunter. "Well, I've got to get off! I haven't had my tea yet."

He finished mopping his brow, and restored an exceedingly damp handkerchief to his pocket.

"Please do not go—"

"Oh rot!" grunted Bunter. "I tell you I haven't had my tea!"

Bunter was not feeling in a good temper.

It was too late now, after so much loss of time, to get to Cliff House. Even if those beasts had stayed there for tea, it was certain that tea would be over by this time.

And it was by no means certain that Bunter could get back to Greyfriars before tea closed down in Hall!

Which would have been awful! The

despised doorsteps and dishwater were his only resource now.

"Stay—stay a moment!" Mr. Jarvish caught at the fat arm again. "I am quite a stranger in this locality—I had driven a great distance before my car was upset. I can remain here till dark, but then—"

"Leggo!" grunted Bunter.

"Are we near a road?"

"Friardale Lane, at the end of this meadow! Leggo! I shall be late for tea if I don't hurry!" exclaimed the exasperated Owl.

"Never mind that—"

"What?" howled Bunter.

"I—I mean—"

"Look here—"

"Will you get me a car? Not now—but after dark? Bring it as near as you can—"

Bunter blinked at him in amazement. After dark the fat Owl of the Remove would be in bed in his dormitory at Greyfriars.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated the astonished Owl. "Of course I can't!"

"He will be hunting for me—and I dare not leave this shed till dark!" pleaded Jarvish.

"Rot!" grunted Bunter. "Catch me breaking bounds after lights out! I don't think! And who's going to pay for the car?"

"I have money—ample money—I will give you all you need, and more. That is no difficulty."

"Oh!" said Bunter, impressed. Money was always a difficulty with Billy Bunter, owing to a series of disappointments about some postal orders he was always expecting, but which never seemed to arrive. He was rather interested in a man to whom money was no difficulty!

He remembered the talk he had heard while hidden in the elm—talk of millions, indeed billions! According to what the gangster had said, this sleek, smooth-faced fellow was a millionaire, if not a billionaire!

He hardly looked it! Certainly his clothes looked rather expensive. But Billy Bunter would never have taken him for a millionaire, much less a billionaire!

Perhaps Mr. Jarvish realised that "money talks." He shoved a hand into his pocket and drew out a note-case.

Billy Bunter's eyes almost popped through his spectacles as the sleek man opened that note-case and revealed the contents.

It was stacked with banknotes and currency notes.

There were dozens of both, and Bunter, with starting eyes, saw that some of the banknotes were of such denominations as £50 and £100, as the sleek man fumbled among them.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Help me, my boy!" said Jarvish. "You shall not lose by it! Pay anything you like for the hire of a car! Take this!"

He had not failed to note the breathless greed in Bunter's amazed fat face.

He took a bunch of pound notes from the case, and, without even counting them, held them out to Bunter.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped the fat Owl.

His fat fingers closed on the wad of notes. There were fifteen or sixteen at least.

Money talks!

It was not easy for Billy Bunter to do as the stranger wished. But Bunter was the man to make every effort to oblige a person who could shell out pound notes in this open-handed fashion.

Evidently the man, though he looked like a manservant, was a millionaire, or a billionaire, as the gangster had said.

Only a millionaire, at least, could



"Help me, my boy!" said Jarvis pleadingly. "I have money—ample money. I will give you all you need, and more! Get me a car! Pay anything you like for the hire of it! Here, take this!" The stranger took a bunch of pound notes from his case, and, without even counting them, held them out to Bunter. "Oh crumbs!" gasped the fat Owl. "I—I'll do anything you jolly well like!"

have afforded to hand over cash to this tune.

"I—I—I say, I—I'll get you the car!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'll do anything!"

"After dark—"

"Yes, yes."

"Not a word to anyone—"

"Not a syllable."

"Bring the car as near as you can, and come here for me—"

"Yes, rather."

"I will give you fifty pounds."

"Oh crikey!"

"You will do it?"

"Won't I just!"

Billy Bunter crammed the currency notes into his pocket. He almost wondered whether he was dreaming! But the crisp rustle of the notes in his fat hand was convincing! It was no dream! It was gorgeous reality!

"Pay for the car and keep what is left!" said the sleek man, watching the greedy, fat face. "And come—"

"What-ho!"

"I can rely on you?"

"I've never let anybody down yet!" said Bunter, with dignity. "You'll see me all right after dark! You bet!"

He rolled out of the shed.

Jarvis did not follow him out. He remained in the darkest corner of the low building close by a pile of rather smelly straw, under which he evidently intended to dodge if he heard the sound of a footstep. Billy Bunter, with a beaming, fat face, walked away as if he were walking on air.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Whence the Wealth?

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" "What's up with Bunter?" Coming into Friardale Lane, on their way to the school, Harry Wharton & Co. sighted

the well-known figure of William George Bunter.

The Famous Five had rather lingered on their homeward way, late as they already were for tea, wondering what had become of the two men who had disappeared into the wood, and whether they would see or hear anything more of them.

But they had seen and heard nothing, and at last they came out into the lane that led from the village of Friardale to Greyfriars School, and in that thoroughfare Bunter appeared in the offing.

And they gazed at him!

He excited their surprise and their interest.

There was some sort of a change in Billy Bunter.

He did not, for the moment, observe the chums of the Remove. They had full leisure to gaze upon him before his eyes and spectacles fell on them.

Bunter was not, as usual, plodding like a tired snail. He was walking with an elastic step, as if fearfully bucked about something. There was an expansive grin on his fat face. It extended almost from one ear to the other—a considerable distance in Bunter's case! His little round eyes shone behind his big, round spectacles. And, as the astonished juniors gazed, Bunter, for a moment, broke into a dancing step, and danced along with the ease and grace of a rhinoceros.

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton blankly. "What on earth has happened to Bunter, you men?"

"Frightfully bucked!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The buckfulness is terrific."

"Has his postal order come at last?" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"Oh crumbs! Look at him!" murmured Frank Nugent.

They looked; they gazed; they stared! Billy Bunter, evidently in a state of great joy, was pirouetting in the middle of the lane, grinning from ear to ear along the whole length of his extensive mouth!

Apparently it was a dance of joy and triumph!

Obviously something had bucked Bunter to a terrific extent!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry suddenly. "What's the name of that game, Bunter?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, startled. He ceased to hop and twirl, and blinked round, staring at the chums of the Remove. "I say, you fellows—"

"What's the jolly old glad tidings?" asked Bob, as the juniors came up to the fat Owl, quite curious to know what had caused this outbreak of irrepressible glee.

"Eh?"

"Come into a fortune?" grinned Bob.

"Oh! Yes!"

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"Not exactly a fortune," said Bunter. "But—" He paused and blinked at the surprised juniors. "The fact is—er—" Bunter paused again, while his fat brain evolved the "fact."

He had promised Mr. Jarvis to say no word about him—not a syllable. He intended to keep that promise. Not merely because a promise ought to be kept, but it suited Bunter to keep this particular pledge.

He was in possession of unaccustomed funds! He was shortly going to be in possession of still greater funds. Certainly he was not going to admit that he had accepted a pecuniary reward from a stranger for a service rendered. He had far more impressive ways than that of accounting for his new wealth.

"There's a whopper coming!" remarked Johnny Bull, with a grin. "I can see it in his eye! He's making it up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Bull!" Bunter blinked at Johnny disdainfully. "I say, you fellows, the fact is—is—the fact is, I mentioned to you, I believe, that I was expecting a postal order!"

"I believe you did!" grinned Bob.

"The believableness is terrific."

"I seem to have heard something of the sort!" chuckled Nugent.

"Well, it's come, that's all!" said Bunter. "Rather a decent remittance from one of my titled relations."

"I knew he was making up a whopper!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Look here!"

Bunter shoved a fat hand into his pocket. He drew it out again full of currency notes.

"Look!" he said contemptuously. "Seeing is believing, I suppose."

The juniors looked at the wad of pound notes! They stared! They blinked! They could hardly believe their eyes.

There were fellows in the Remove who could produce occasionally a fistful of currency notes, such as the Bounder or Lord Mauleverer or Monty Newland. But such fellows, naturally, were rare. And Billy Bunter was not one of them. If Billy Bunter was ever in possession of a single pound note it was a day, so to speak, to be marked with a white stone! Now he was in possession of more than a dozen! Only that afternoon Bunter had been making vain attempts up and down the Remove to borrow half-a-crown on the strength of an expected postal order! And now—

The desire to show off, to prove that he really had lots and lots of money was much too strong for Bunter to resist—if he had thought of resisting it!

With a fat grin, he flourished that fistful of Treasury notes under the astonished eyes of the five.

"Look at that!" he sneered.

"Is that real money?" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Eh? You silly ass, of course it is!" hooted Bunter. "Think I made it myself?"

"Then whose is it?"

Bunter disdained to answer that question. He shoved the wad of notes back into his pocket, and looked at Johnny Bull! He looked first at his feet, allowing his scornful gaze to rise slowly to his face—then to sink again to his feet—then to rise again to his surprised countenance. This was what Bunter called looking a fellow up and down, and he was persuaded that it had a withering and crushing effect on the victim.

Johnny Bull, however, did not look either withered or crushed. He only stared.

"What are you making those funny faces for?" he asked.

Bunter snorted!

Turning on his heel, he walked on towards the school.

The Famous Five stared after him. Then they followed him. They were not only surprised. They were rather uneasy.

"Look here, Bunter—" began Harry Wharton.

"Rats to you!" said Bunter over his fat shoulder.

"Where did you get all that money?"

"All that money!" mimicked Bunter. "It's only sixteen pounds! I dare say it seems a lot to you! You're poor."

"Well, sixteen pounds does seem rather a lot of money to me," said the captain of the Remove.

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"It would!" sneered Bunter.

"Did you find it somewhere?"

"You silly ass!"

"You fat chump!" exclaimed Wharton impatiently, "you've got into trouble before for fancying that findings were keepings! A fellow who finds money isn't allowed to keep it! The police call it stealing!"

"I never found it, you fathead!" snorted Bunter.

"Then where did you get it?"

"Oh, my postal order came," said Bunter carelessly.

"A postal order for sixteen pounds!" roared Bob Cherry.

"I—I mean a cheque!" said Bunter hastily. "Being too much to send in a postal order, my pater made it a cheque, see?"

"Not much difference between a postal order and a cheque!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically. "And you've just cashed the cheque?"

"That's it!"

"After the bank was closed?"

"Eh?"

"You knocked them up, I suppose?" asked Johnny, with intensified sarcasm.

"I—I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton quietly. "There's no bank nearer than Courtfield, and you weren't coming from Courtfield when we saw you. And the bank was closed there before we came out of class this afternoon, anyhow."

"I—I mean, it—it wasn't exactly a cheque!" stammered Bunter. "What I meant to say was, I've had a registered letter. Being too much to send in a postal order, and—the bank being closed after class, my pater put it in a registered letter, see?"

"Oh, great pip!"

"Not that it's any bizney of yours," said Bunter independently. "Sixteen pounds isn't so much to me as it is to you fellows! You'd jump for joy if you got a tip of a fiver! What's a fiver to me?"

"You blithering idiot," said Harry. "You haven't had a registered letter. The post was in before we went over to Cliff House."

"And you were rooting after a letter, and there wasn't one for you," said Johnny Bull.

"Oh! I—I mean—" Bunter stammered. "I'd forgotten—I mean—that is to say, it wasn't exactly a registered letter. The fact is—"

"Let's hear the facts!" grinned Bob.

"I mean the latest facts!"

"The fact is, my uncle—"

"Your uncle?"

"Yes, my uncle sent his valet down with the money—"

"Not your pater?" gasped Wharton.

"Oh! I—I mean my pater! He sent his butler down specially with the money."

"His butler?" gurgled Bob.

"I mean his valet! I mean my valet!"

"Your valet?" roared the Famous Five.

Greyfriars fellows had heard much of the glories of Bunter Court. But they had not heard before that Billy Bunter had a valet at home when he was at that gorgeous residence. Even the wealthy Bounder did not have a valet of his own! Lord Mauleverer was the only fellow in the Remove, in fact, who had a "man."

"My valet!" said Bunter firmly. "We live rather in style at Bunter Court, you know! You fellows would hardly understand, living in the poor way you do at your humble homes."

"Oh crikey!"

"That's how it was," said Bunter,

warming to the work, as it were. What the fat Owl lacked in veracity, he made up in imagination. "Swank" was second nature to Bunter.

Hitherto, the glories of Bunter Court had seemed a little doubtful—more than a little doubtful; for it was a remarkable fact that none of the immense wealth of that great establishment ever got so far as Greyfriars.

Now, however, Bunter was in possession of wealth! He had sixteen pounds, and if the sleek gentleman kept his word, he was going to have fifty more!

With such sums in hand to prove his statements, Bunter saw no reason why he should not spread himself a little.

So he "spread!"

"It's no bizney of yours, but I don't mind telling you," said Bunter, blinking at the astounded juniors. "I mentioned to my pater that I should want some cash, and he sent my man Pilkington down with it."

"Your—your man Pilkington!" stammered Bob.

"Yes! That's all!"

Bunter rolled on towards the gates of the school, now in sight. Harry Wharton & Co. looked after him and looked at one another.

"What has that blithering idiot been up to?" asked Harry blankly.

"Pinching!" said Johnny Bull.

"He must have found the money somewhere—"

"The howling ass!"

"He will get into trouble over this!" said the captain of the Remove. "The money can't be his own or he would tell the truth about it. If he's picked up somebody's purse, he will have to take it to Quelch, to be sent to the police station."

He ran after Bunter, and caught him at the gates. He grabbed the fat Owl by the shoulder.

"Bunter—"

"Leggo!" growled Bunter. "I haven't had my tea yet!"

"Where did you get that money?"

"I've told you! Can't you take a fellow's word?" exclaimed Bunter angrily. "My valet—"

"You howling ass!"

"My man, Walsingham, brought it this afternoon—"

"Walsingham?"

"Yes! Now lemme alone."

Billy Bunter jerked his fat shoulder away, and bolted into the quad. He headed at once for the school shop! With money to spend, that was Billy Bunter's inevitable destination.

Wharton could only stare. Certainly, he could hardly take a fellow's word, as Bunter expressed it. He was not likely to believe that that sum of money had arrived in the shape of a postal order, a cheque, a registered letter, and hard cash carried by a valet named Pilkington and also Walsingham! Without being of a suspicious or distrustful nature, he felt that that was asking rather too much of any fellow's credulity!

Still, as Bunter had said, it was no business of his; and having done all he could, he had to leave the fat Owl to his own devices.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Spread!

"MY treat!" said Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Now tell us another funny story!" suggested the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"
 "Where's Mauly?" asked Skinner, looking round the tuckshop. "If Bunter's going to stand treat, Mauly will be wanted."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 There were a good many fellows in Mrs. Mimble's little shop, in the corner behind the elms when Bunter rolled in. It was too late for tea in Hall; but Bunter, in possession of cash, regarded tea in Hall with ineffable disdain.

Bunter was going to give an order in the school shop that would make Mrs. Mimble open her eyes wide.

When Bunter had money he was the fellow to make it fly. And on the rare occasions when he had a supply of cash, Bunter was a liberal and open-handed fellow. He liked to feed himself, and he liked to see other fellows feed.

Had Bunter been a wealthy fellow, like Mauly or Smithy, he would have been a wonderfully good customer at the tuckshop; and not only he, but every fellow who took the trouble to be civil to him, would have lived on the fat of the land.

There was really nothing mean about Bunter. Fisher T. Fish liked money simply because it was money and loved to hoard it and count it and gloat over it. Bunter liked it only because of what it would buy, chiefly in the edible line. Bunter always considered himself entitled to barge in at anybody's spread. But it had to be admitted that, if Bunter had more than he could park, he was ready and willing to whack out the superfluity. Now, rolling in money for once, he was prepared to stand general treat.

But it was seldom, very seldom, that Bunter had anything left over. It was not uncommon for him to offer a "treat." But an unsuspecting fellow who accepted the generous offer was likely to be left with a bill to foot. So when the fat Owl announced to a crowd of a dozen fellows that it was his treat, there was a general chuckle. The Remove fellows knew Bunter's treats! They had been there before, as it were!

"Mauly's not here!" grinned Squiff. "So there's nothing doing!"

"Oh, really, Field—"
 Bunter blinked round indignantly. "I say, you fellows, I've said it's my treat! Order anything you jolly well like, and leave it to me."

"Hear, hear!" chortled the Bounder. "And then you'll suddenly find that you've left your money in your study!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Beast!"

Bunter rolled up to the counter. There he planted his fat form on a high stool. He drew a dish of jam tarts towards him for a beginning.

Mrs. Mimble was serving Temple of the Fourth. But she had an eye on Bunter. It was necessary to keep an eye on Bunter when foodstuffs were in the offing.

"Don't touch those tarts, Master Bunter!" snapped Mrs. Mimble.

"Oh, really, ma'am—"

"Leave them alone at once!"

"Can't I buy jam tarts if I like?" hooted Bunter.

"Yes, if you pay for them!" said Mrs. Mimble, with asperity. "But I have told you before, many times, that I will not give you credit, Master Bunter!"

"Who wants credit?" snorted Bunter. "Look there!"

He threw a couple of pound notes on the counter.

"Oh!" ejaculated Mrs. Mimble.

She picked up the currency notes. She put on her glasses to look at them. Really, she seemed to have a doubt whether they were genuine. Seldom

did the Owl of the Remove throw money about in this style.

However, the notes were obviously genuine. Somewhat impressed, the good dame dismissed asperity from her manner.

"What can I get for you, Master Bunter?" she asked.

Gobble, gobble!

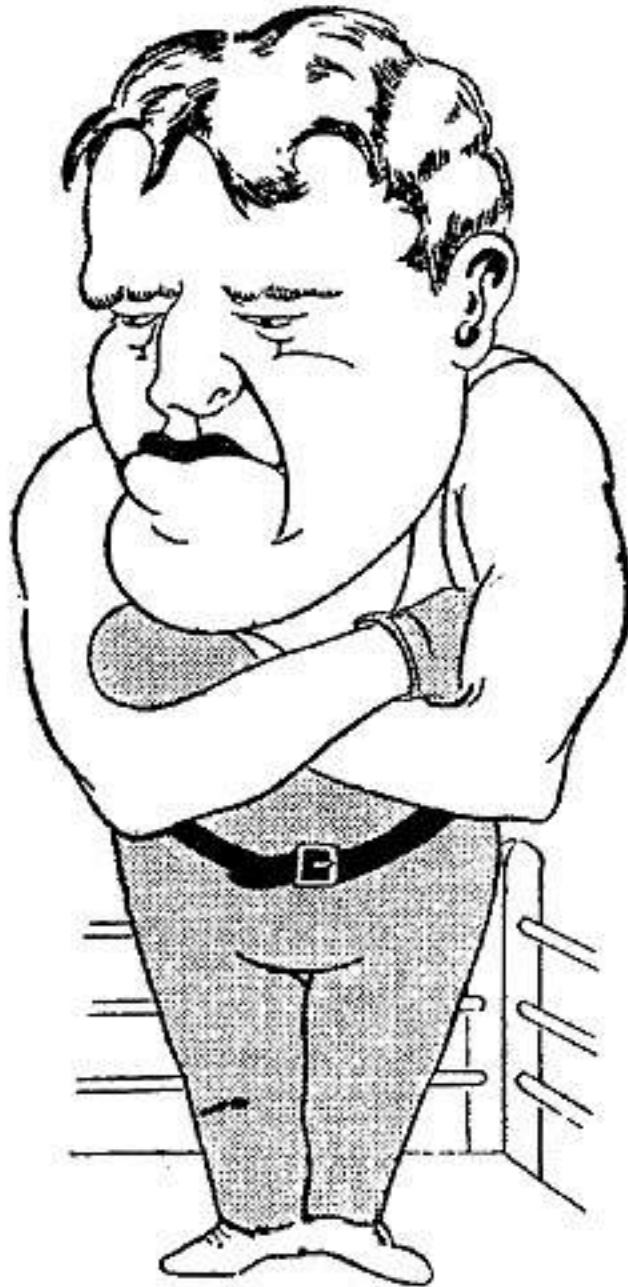
Bunter did not reply for a moment. His mouth was full of jam tart. But he bolted the tart, like an oyster, and gasped out an order. It was a large order! While Mrs. Mimble was giving

GREYFRIARS CARTOONS.

No. 11.—PERCY BOLSOVER.

(The Bully of the Remove Form.)

Our lightning artist is getting better and better every week, what? We don't know what Battling Bolsover himself will think of this cartoon, but we've got a very good idea!



Here's a man of mighty muscles,
 Victor of a thousand scraps!
 (But, of course, these thousand tussles
 Were with Third Form chaps!)

Bolsover, the heavy bully,
 Has, of late, grown rather tame.
 But at one time Bolsy fully
 Earned his rotten name.

attention to it, Bunter gave his attention to the dish of tarts. A dozen or so tarts were merely a light hors-d'oeuvre to Billy Bunter!

The other fellows looked at him. Skinner rather repented his little joke. This looked like the genuine thing!

"My only hat!" said Vernon-Smith. "Has your jolly old postal order come, Fatty?"

"Eh? Yes!" Bunter, jammy and sticky and happy, blinked round. "I say, you fellows, I mean it! Pile in, anybody who likes."

"Rolling in it, what?" asked Squiff, staring.

"Oh! Yes! Pile in!"

"Well, that's jolly decent of you, Bunter, old man," said Skinner cordially. "I don't mind if I do."

"Same here!" grinned Snoop.

"Well, it's about time Bunter stood a spread!" remarked Hazeldene, and he began to help himself.

"High time!" said Stott. "I'll have that cake, Mrs. Mimble."

"Cream puffs for me!" said Wibley.

"Mine's chocolate eclairs," said Micky Desmond, "and more power to yere elbow, Bunter darling!"

Mrs. Mimble was kept quite busy for a time. But she was not too busy to keep a running account, with a stump of pencil, on a sheet of wrapping-paper! She knew her Bunter!

"That will be two pounds!" said Mrs. Mimble suddenly.

"Alas!" sighed the Bounder. "And I haven't started."

"That's all right, Smithy," said Bunter. "Anything you like, old chap! Leave it to me. Let me know when it tots up to five quids, ma'am!"

"Oh, Christopher Columbus!" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Hem!" said Mrs. Mimble.

Bunter understood that "Hem!" With a disdainful snort, he jerked three more pound notes from his pocket, and threw them down.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Mimble. And her own jam and honey were not sweeter than her manner to William George Bunter now.

A five-pound feed was rather a record in the Greyfriars tuckshop! Billy Bunter, for once, was a popular customer there!

"Do I sleep, do I dream, do I wonder and doubt, are things what they seem, or are visions about?" quoted Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Bunter!"

"Where on earth did he get it from?" asked Vernon-Smith, in wonder. The Bounder, wealthy as he was, never stood five-pound feeds, and perhaps he was not quite pleased at being, as it were, out-swanked. "Have you been holding up a bank, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"I wonder if Mauly's lost his note-case!" remarked Smithy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter indignantly. "Think nobody's got any money but you? I've a jolly good mind to punch your nose!"

"Well, what does it mean, anyhow?" demanded the Bounder. "A few hours ago you were trying to stick me for half-a-crown. Now you're chucking pound notes right and left!"

"I've had a remittance—"

"You haven't!" said the Bounder coolly. "There was nothing for you when the post came in!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Peter Todd. "I say, Bunter—" He remembered Bunter's problem of not much more than an hour ago. Obviously it was since then that the fat junior had come into possession of so much cash that he could afford to throw away five pounds in the tuckshop. It was undoubtedly very remarkable.

"It's all right, you ass!" grunted Bunter. "My valet—"

"Your whatter?"

"My man Partington—"

"Your man Partington!" repeated Peter dazedly.

"Yes. I've told you before that I have a valet at home, when I'm home for the holidays—"

"You've told me so, certainly!" gasped Peter.

"You never believed me!" said Bunter accusingly.

"I jolly well didn't!" agreed Peter.

"Well, perhaps you'll believe me now!" sneered Bunter. "Partington came down this afternoon with some cash for me. And—and here it is."

Peter blinked! He did not believe that Bunter had a "man" at home, like Mauly, and he had never heard of Partington! But, as Bunter said, there it was! There was the cash! If seeing was believing, that settled it!

"Well, my only summer bonnet!" said Peter.

"Pile in, you fellows!" said Bunter. "Don't spare the grub! You needn't worry about keeping it down to five pounds, Mrs. Mible! I don't care what it runs to! I mean it, you fellows! Dash it all," said Bunter recklessly, "why shouldn't a fellow spend money when he's got lots?"

"Bravo!" said Skinner.

"Good old Bunter!" said Snoop.

"Good old fat man!" said Bolsover major. "You shut up, Smithy—you're not the only pebble on the beach, I can jolly well tell you!"

It was a great and glorious feed! It was a record—in fact, it broke all records! Fellows, far and wide, heard of what was going on, and came in to join up. Not only Removites, but fellows of other Forms, honoured Bunter with their company, and their loyal support in getting rid of the foodstuffs. Seldom had Mrs. Mible's little establishment been so swarmed. Most of the fellows had had their tea. But most of them were prepared to have another—some were willing to pack away two or three!

Hobson came in with a bunch of Shell fellows. Five or six of the Fourth rallied round Bunter. Fags of the Third and Second barged in for what they could get. Bunter ate steadily all the time. But the time came when even Billy Bunter could pack away no more. He was breathing very hard when he had finished. And when Mrs. Mible announced, in an awed voice, that the total for that tremendous spread came to seven pounds, fifteen shillings and ninepence, there was quite a hush in the crowded tuckshop. But Billy Bunter paid up carelessly, told Mrs. Mible to give the change to her little boy, and rolled out—jammy, sticky, and feeling in the mood of the classical gentleman of old, who was like to strike the stars with his sublime head.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Bunter in the Spotlight!

BILLY BUNTER was the cynosure of all eyes in the Greyfriars Remove that evening.

In Study No. 7 at prep, Peter Todd eyed him with great curiosity and some uneasiness. When he rolled down the passage after prep, every fellow there eyed him. In the Rag, where most of the Remove gathered for the interval between prep and dorm, all eyes were on him. Generally, the unimportance of Bunter was unlimited. Now he seemed, all of a sudden, to have captured all the limelight that was going.

That tremendous and expensive spread in the tuckshop was not his only surprising exploit. Hearing that Bunter had cash, Fisher T. Fish hunted him out, with a claim for a shilling which, he guessed and reckoned, Bunter had owed him for whole terms. Bunter, with disdain, paid the shilling. Encouraged by that

amazing incident—for it was seldom indeed that Billy Bunter was known to square—several other fellows remembered ancient loans, and put in a claim for the same, and they were promptly liquidated.

That, as it were, put the lid on! Micky Desmond gazed at a half-crown which he had never expected to see again, as if it were the ghost of a half-crown! Wibley declared that he was going to keep the eighteenpence, just repaid by Bunter, under a glass case! Fellows wondered almost dizzily whether, after all, Bunter Court was a real place, with a local habitation and a name! They even wondered whether Bunter's "man" was real! For unless Bunter's man had brought all that cash from Bunter Court, as the fat Owl declared, whence had it been derived?

Bunter rolled into the Rag, with his fat little nose in the air, quite conscious of the sensation he had made, and fully enjoying it.

Limelight did not often come his way—and he enjoyed it all the more on that account.

Indeed, under the influence of his remarkable imagination, Bunter himself almost believed in the yarn he was spinning.

Like an actor who "saw" himself in a part, Bunter played the role of a wealthy fellow who had only to drop a line home, for his "man" to be sent down with a munificent supply of cash.

Certainly, there was one little difficulty. Billy Bunter belonged to the class of persons who, proverbially, should have good memories. And he had rather a bad one.

He was never at a loss for a fib; but for that very reason he hardly ever made his fibs fit together. He told too many to be able to keep them all in mind.

And fellows who were willing to believe that Bunter had a valet, could hardly believe that that valet's name was Pilkington, Walsingham, and Partington! It would really have been more judicious for Bunter to give his "man" one name, and stick to it! But that would have meant taking thought—and thinking was not in Bunter's line.

That Bunter was lying—as usual—few fellows could doubt. But there was no doubt about the cash!

Bunter had the cash! He could hardly have pinched it! It was unlikely that he could have found it! But he had it!

It was, however, growing smaller by degrees, and beautifully less! Half the supply had gone in the tuckshop. Quite a lot more had gone in liquidating ancient debts.

Bunter suddenly found that he had only two pounds left, and remembered that he had to pay the hire on the car he was to take along to the lane by Giles' meadow that night. Not that it mattered, for, if Mr. Jarvish was as good as his word, he was going to roll in still larger supplies of money soon. But for the moment he realised that he had to be a little careful. So when, in the Rag, Vernon-Smith came up to him, and held out a hand, with a request that the fat Owl should place thirty shillings therein, Bunter blinked at him and shook his head.

"You've had thirty bob from me this term!" said the Bounder. "I never expected to see it again; but if you're squaring other fellows, I'm not goin' to be left out, see?"

"Remind me to-morrow!" said Bunter haughtily. "I can settle up

your measly thirty bob out of fifty pounds, I hope."

"Oh gad! You're goin' to have fifty pounds to-morrow!" yelled Smithy.

"Certainly!" answered Bunter calmly.

"And where are you going to get it?" asked Tom Redwing, with a smile.

"Where I got the last," answered Bunter—which, if the sleek man was as good as his word, was true enough.

"Your man bringing it down in a lorry?" asked Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter, blinking round at a crowd of surprised and grinning faces through his big spectacles. "I've let them know at home that I shall want some money for the vac. They're sending me some. That's all about it."

"We'll all line up and see it handed over!" grinned Hazeldene.

"The seefulness will probably not be terrific."

"The fact is, Jerningham will not be coming to the school," said Bunter hastily. "I shall meet him at—at the station."

"Jerningham!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Yes, my man Jerningham—"

"Not Pilkington?" howled Bob.

"Or Walsingham?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Or Partington?" roared Peter Todd.

"How many valets have you got, Bunter?" asked Nugent. "Do you keep a whole army of them at Bunter Court?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I mean—" stammered Bunter.

"Well, what do you mean?" asked Smithy.

"I—I mean, I never remember the names of menials," explained Bunter. "You see, we have so many at Bunter Court—"

"I don't think!"

"Well, you'll jolly well see!" sniffed Bunter. "I may let Walsingham—I mean, Partington—that is to say, Jerningham—come along to the school and let you see him! Perhaps!"

"The perhapsfulness is preposterous!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah!" retorted Bunter.

Wingate of the Sixth looked into the Rag. That was the signal for "dorm." Billy Bunter's fat face was a little worried as he marched off to the Remove dormitory with the Form.

After the feast came the reckoning! He had "blued" most of Mr. Jarvish's generous supply of cash. It yet remained to perform the service for which that cash had been handed over.

The more Bunter thought of the prospect the less he liked it!

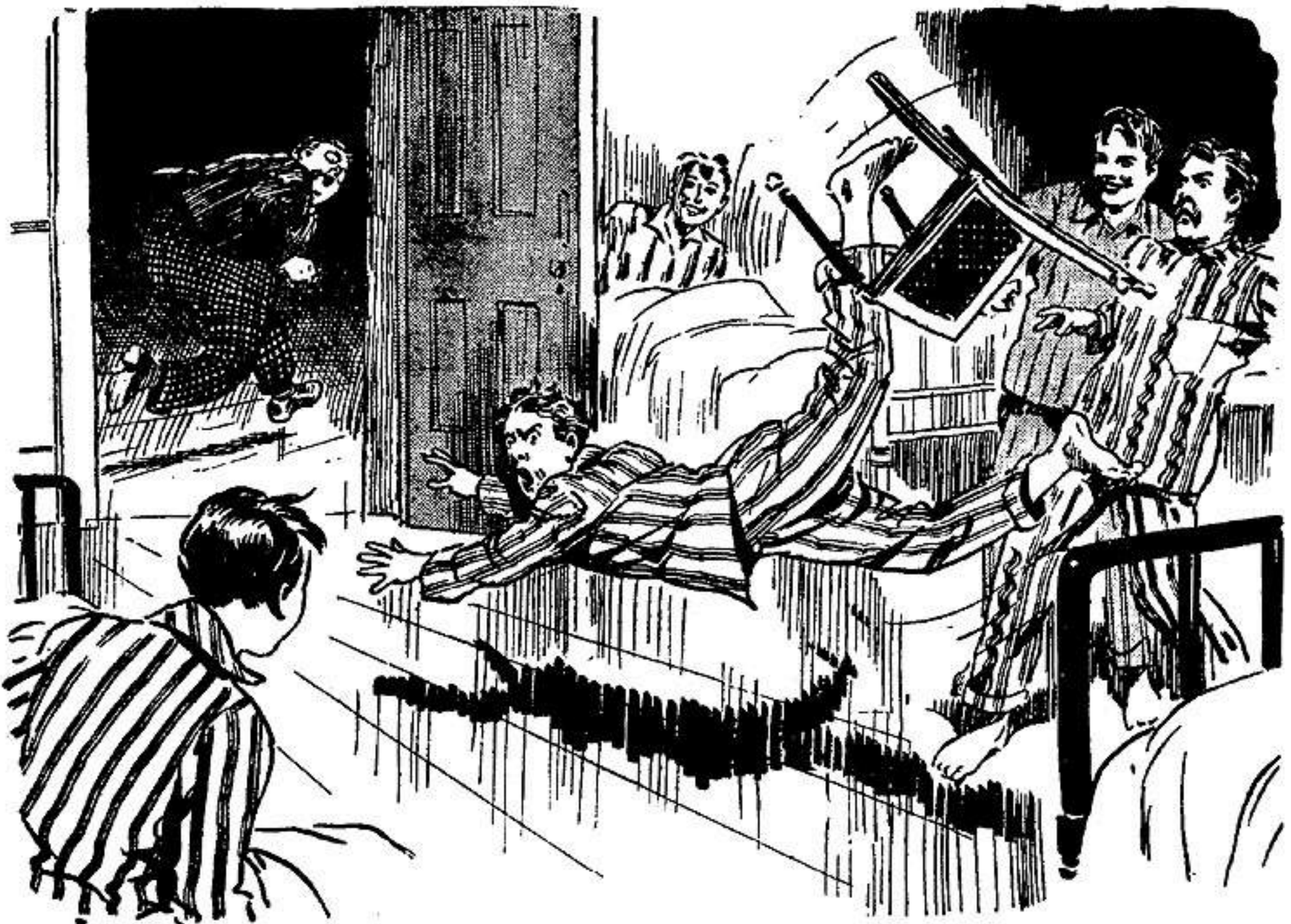
In the first place he was a sound sleeper—the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus had nothing on Bunter in that line! He was not at all sure that he would remain awake, or wake up again if he once dropped off to sleep.

In the second place, it was an exceedingly risky business to break school bounds after lights out, and meant a flogging if he was caught.

In the third place, he had to walk to Courtfield to get a car for Mr. Jarvish—and a walk across a dark common was not attractive.

Altogether Bunter did not like the idea at all.

It is even possible that he might have let the hapless Mr. Jarvish down, but for one important consideration.



As Bunter heard the chums of the Remove scrambling out of bed, he made a leap for the dormitory door. "Bag him!" cried Wharton, leading the rush. In the gloom, Wharton did not observe the overturned chair that lay in his way. But he felt it—when his legs came in contact with it. "Whoop!" he howled, as he took a header over it, and came down on his hands and knees.

That consideration was the promised fifty pounds!

Such a sum, for such a service, was not only munificent—it was extravagantly magnificent! Only the fact that Mr. Jarvish was in a state of hopeless funk, and the other fact that he seemed to have more money than he knew what to do with, accounted for such a promised reward.

Bunter did not like the idea; but he made up his fat mind to it! Fifty pounds was not to be picked up every day!

And when he showed off such a sum as fifty pounds, even the most hardened doubting Thomas in the Remove would have to believe in the unlimited wealth of Bunter Court! That prospect, at least, was attractive!

Billy Bunter turned in with the rest; but as he intended shortly to turn out again, he did not take the trouble to undress.

A fellow who went to bed with his clothes on could hardly fail to excite remark—even if Bunter had not been the cynosure of all eyes already!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's that game, Bunter?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Going to bed in your clobber?"

"Oh, shut up!" exclaimed Bunter angrily. "If Wingate hears you—"

Wingate was in the passage outside, talking to Gwynne of the Sixth, while the Remove turned in. Certainly, the prefect would have wanted to know the reason if he had been aware that a junior was going to bed with his clothes on.

"But what—?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Shut up, I tell you!"

"Is the fat idiot going to get up again?" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Got

any stunt in your silly head about breaking bounds, Bunter?"

"Oh, no! Certainly not!" said Bunter hastily. "Catch me walking to Courtfield in the middle of the night!"

"You're going to Courtfield?" gasped Peter.

"No!" howled Bunter. "I've just said I'm not! I say, you fellows, do shut up; Wingate will be nosing in in a minute!"

Bunter drew the bedclothes carefully over him, to conceal the fact that he was still fully dressed, even to his shoes. There was nothing suspicious to meet Wingate's eye when he came in to put the lights out. Nobody, certainly, wanted to give Bunter away to a prefect, whatever his mysterious intentions might be. But every fellow in the dormitory was surprised and interested.

Wingate put out the light, closed the door, and went. The door had hardly closed on him when a dozen voices addressed Bunter.

Snore!

That was the fat Owl's only answer.

Bunter considered it judicious to affect slumber. He snored!

"Bunter, you ass—"

"Bunter, you fathead—"

"What's the little game, Bunter?"

Snore!

"Look here, Bunter—"

Snore!

The Removites had to give it up. A little later Billy Bunter's affected snore changed into the genuine article. Forgetful of the hapless Jarvish skulking in Mr. Giles' cowshed and waiting for the promised car, forgetful even of the fifty pounds' reward, Billy Bunter slept and snored.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Breaker of Bounds!

BOOM! The last stroke of twelve came through the silence of the summer night.

Billy Bunter's eyes opened. He blinked in the darkness of the dormitory.

Generally Bunter, once asleep, was safe till rising-bell. Certainly the boom of the hour from the clock-tower had never awakened him. Perhaps the fact that he was sleeping in his clothes made him more restless than usual. Perhaps it was a vivid dream in which he was being chased up and down woodland paths by innumerable hard-faced gangsters, all of them armed with black revolvers—a dream made all the more vivid by the remarkable cargo of food-stuffs he had packed away. That cargo was so large and so varied that many of the items did not agree with other items.

Anyhow, Bunter awoke at midnight. He blinked round him, shivering. His dreams had been peopled by ferocious gangsters, and he almost expected to see the face of Tiger Bronx staring at him from the shadows.

"Oh lor'!" murmured Bunter.

He did not know how late it was, but he felt that it was later than half-past ten—the time at which he had intended to turn out.

He sat up.

Never had he felt less inclined to turn out of bed. It was a fine, starry, summer's night. There was a bright,

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.



BUNTER. BILLIONAIRE!

(Continued from page 13.)

glimmering of starlight at the high windows of the dormitory. But the fineness of the night did not tempt Bunter out. He did not want to get up. Very much indeed he did not want to get up. He had promised to get a car after dark, and take it along to Giles' meadow. But—

After all, had the sleek man stayed there all this time? It was almost unimaginable that any man, in howsoever blue a funk, could have stuck it in a cowshed all those hours, afraid to stir out. Suppose he had cleared off, and Bunter had only his trouble for his pains? There would be no fifty pounds, in that case. Looking at it from that point of view, Billy Bunter was powerfully tempted to lay his fat head on the pillow again, and sink back into the embrace of Morpheus.

But he manfully resisted that temptation. Even to Billy Bunter a promise amounted to something.

And, though his desire to remain in bed made him argue that Jarvis had probably cleared off, he felt that it was not so. He remembered the sleek man's horrid terror of the gangster. Whatever the mysterious explanation might be, it was clear that Jarvis did not believe that the police could protect him, and trusted only in flight and hiding.

At the bottom of his fat heart Billy Bunter had not the slightest doubt that the wretched man was still skulking in the cowshed waiting to be fetched away in a car. Once inside a car he could show a clean pair of heels to the man who was hunting him. But he dared not leave his hiding-place in quest of a car. He relied on Bunter, and his promised reward for help was princely. Bunter suppressed a groan, and dragged himself out of bed. It had to be.

It was Bunter's intention to move quietly and stealthily, and get out without awakening any of the Removites. He did not want to be asked questions. But between intention and the carrying out thereof there was a great gulf fixed.

Bunter's first proceeding was to bump into a bed; his next to knock over a chair. He was not a cat to see in the dark, so perhaps it was natural that he should catch his foot in the overturned chair, and land on the floor of the dormitory with a heavy bump. And a fellow who bumped suddenly and unexpectedly on a hard floor could hardly be expected not to notify the same with a startled howl. Bunter's startled howl awoke all the echoes of the Remove dormitory.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a sleepy voice from Bob Cherry's bed.

"Is that Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton, sitting up, and peering round in the dimness.

Bunter scrambled to his feet.

"Oh, no!" he gasped. "I'm not up!"

"You fat Owl! What are you doing out of bed?"

"Nothing, old chap. I'm not out of bed. I'm fast asleep."

"Wha-a-t!"

"I—I mean, I'm just going off to sleep, if you fellows will keep quiet. I wish you wouldn't make such a row, gabbling like a lot of jackdaws at this time of night."

"Is that howling ass going to break bounds?" asked Herbert Vernon-Smith, staring at Bunter in the gloom.

He could just make out the fat figure, and it was obvious that Bunter was not in bed.

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"That's why he kept his clobber on," said Bob Cherry. "Bunter, you silly ass, get back to bed!"

"Shan't! I mean, I'm not out of bed."

"I can see you, you blithering Owl!" hooted Bob.

"Well, mind your own bizney!" said Bunter. "I suppose I can break out if I like. Besides, I'm not breaking out. I'm not going to Courtfield. I'm not going out at all. I haven't an appointment with anybody, or anything of that kind. How could I have? You fellows shut up and go to sleep, before you wake up Quelch or some beastly prefect."

"Look here, Bunter!" said Harry Wharton. "Have a little sense, old fat man. You'll get spotted, and get into a fearful row."

"Up before the Head in the mornin'," grinned the Bounder. "Gosling sent for to hoist you——"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Two dozen from the beak's birch."

"Oh lor'!"

"Better go back to bed," chuckled Nugent.

"I—I—I—— I'd rather go back to bed," gasped Bunter. The vision of being "up before the Head" in the morning was terrifying to the fat Owl. "But, you see, I c-c-can't."

"Why can't you?" demanded Wharton.

"Well, a promise is a promise," said Bunter.

That answer caused half a dozen fellows to sit up in bed and peer at the fat Owl in the dim dormitory.

"You've promised somebody to go out to-night?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh, no!" stammered Bunter, realising that he was saying too much. "Not at all. Nothing of the kind, you know."

"Who was it?" asked Harry.

"Nobody, old chap! Nobody at all!"

"Anybody we know?" chuckled the Bounder.

Bunter's denials had, as was usually the case, an effect contrary to that intended. It was fairly clear that he was "mixed up" with somebody outside the school, and that that was the cause of this mysterious excursion out of bounds.

"No," gasped Bunter. "You don't know him, Smithy. I never saw him before to-day myself. I mean, of course, there's nobody. I've never seen anybody at all."

"You're going out to meet some stranger you never saw before to-day?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"No!" howled Bunter. "I'm not going out at all, and I've never seen a stranger in my life."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I mean, I've never seen that man, never seen him at all, and never even heard the name of—of——" Bunter stopped just in time.

"Of what?"

"Nothing, old chap. I wish you'd

shut up and leave a fellow alone, and let a fellow go to sleep. Besides, a promise is a promise. I hope I'm not the fellow to let a man down—especially when I'm going to save his life."

"To—to—to—save his life?" stammered Wharton.

"Yes—I mean, no! I don't believe that lanky American would have shot him. It was only gammon—just frightening the silly rabbit. Not that I saw him, you know. I know nothing whatever about it."

Harry Wharton & Co. scrambled out of bed as if moved by the same spring.

The description of a "lanky American" at once brought to their minds the long, lean gangster who had gone into Friardale Wood hunting the sleek man from the wrecked Daimler, and the mention of shooting recalled the little black revolver they had seen in his hand.

If Billy Bunter, by some mysterious chance, was mixed up with that lawless character, bed was the place for Bunter—not out of doors at midnight. And the Famous Five were prepared to collar him and jam him into bed, and sit on him, if necessary, to keep him there, for his own sake.

But Billy Bunter was wary.

As he heard the chums of the Remove scrambling out he ceased to exercise his fat chin, and ran for the door.

"Bag him!" exclaimed Wharton.

He rushed after Bunter.

Unfortunately, the overturned chair lay in his way. He did not observe it in the gloom. But he felt it when his legs came in contact with it! He felt it quite severely. He gave a howl as he took a header over it, and came down on his hands and knees.

"Whooop!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What—Yaroooh!" roared Bob Cherry, as he stumbled over Wharton and measured his length.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh, luckily, dodged round the fallen two, and darted after Bunter to the door.

Bunter had it open when the Nabob of Bhanipur reached him and grabbed him by a fat shoulder.

"Leggo!" panted Bunter.

"My esteemed and idiotic Bunter——"

Bang!

Bunter was desperate!

He hit out!

A fat fist landed on a dusky nose, with all Bunter's weight behind it. Hurree Janset Ram Singh spun over as if he had been shot.

There was a crash as he landed on his back.

Bunter darted through the doorway, and, without even stopping to shut the door, bolted down the passage.

"Ow! Wow! My esteemed nose!" gasped Hurree Janset Ram Singh, sitting up dazedly. "Ow! Wow! Yow!"

"Where is he?" howled Johnny Bull.

"Gone!" said Nugent.

"I'll smash him!" gasped Harry Wharton. "I've barked my shins on something—a chair, or something!"

"I've jammed my elbow into something!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Ow! Wow!"

"It was my neck, you ass! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the row of beds, where nearly all the Remove were now sitting up.

The captain of the Remove went to the door. He stared out into the darkness of the passage. Bunter was gone! It was for Bunter's own sake, to keep him out of trouble, that Wharton had turned out of bed. But at the moment his chief desire was to punch the fat and

fatuous Owl—hard! But the dark passages had swallowed Bunter, and he was out of reach of a punch.

Harry Wharton & Co. could only go back to bed and leave him to it!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Wild Night for Bunter!

HONK!

Billy Bunter jumped.

He was plugging along the Courtfield road, under the summer stars, when he heard the honk of a car behind him. He jumped to the roadside with the activity of a kangaroo.

Standing by the edge of the road, he blinked at the car through his big spectacles. If it was a taxi returning late to Courtfield, it was exactly what Bunter wanted, and he hoped that it was.

Bunter had got out of the House by way of the window of the Remove box-room and the leads. He had got out of the school precincts over the Cloister wall.

At so late an hour all Greyfriars was

fast asleep; the last light was out, the last door had closed. That made it all the safer for Bunter, and he had gained the open spaces safely.

Now he had to walk to Courtfield—an unattractive proposition—by a lonely road over a common. He would have given a good deal to pick up a car without negotiating that long walk first, and he blinked eagerly at the little brown automobile that came up behind him.

"Hi!" shouted Bunter.

The car braked at once.

Whether it was a taxi or not, Bunter could not see; he could only make out that it was a small, dark car.

He emerged into the gleam of the lights as it stopped.

"I say, I want a taxi—" began Bunter.

"That fat guy!" came a startled exclamation from the shadowy figure that drove the car.

Bunter broke off!

He knew that voice!

The man driving the little brown Austin was the gangster of Friardale Wood—the long, lean man who had

threatened Mr. Jarvis with the black revolver!

"Oooooogh!" gasped Bunter.

He made a frantic backward jump and vanished out of the light.

"Say, you stop!" came the sharp, nasal voice. "I guess—"

Bunter was not likely to stop.

He flew!

The man evidently had recognised him.

He was hardly likely to guess that Bunter was abroad at that hour of the night on account of Jarvis. But it was clear that he was still in the neighbourhood, hunting for the sleek man. Plainly, Jarvis's fears were not unfounded. Possibly he fancied that Bunter knew something of Jarvis's whereabouts, and wanted to question him.

But he had no chance of that!

If he alighted from the car he was too late to grab Bunter! Bunter was bolting across the dark common like a frightened rabbit.

He vanished into the night.

Catching his foot in a bush in the gloom, the Owl of the Remove rolled

(Continued on next page.)



The UMPIRE SAYS

Is cricket becoming a dangerous game? "Not in the general sense," says "Umpire," "but—" Anyway, read what "our man of knowledge" has to say on the matter, chums.

"CROCKED" PLAYERS!

IS cricket becoming a dangerous game? Such is the intriguing question a MAGNET reader asks me to discuss this week, and I hope it will prove an interesting one. This reader has noticed that, so far as first-class cricket is concerned, this has been a most notable season in relation to "crocked" players.

This and that player has been unable to play for his county or for his country because he has been unfit. At one stage in the Test match at Manchester the Australians had no fewer than three substitutes in the field. That Australian case was due to illness, as far as two of the players were concerned. At the same time there has been something like an epidemic of injured or unfit players this season. Hence my reader's question is a perfectly natural one.

I think the answer is a natural one, too. It will have been noticed that most of the casualties of this first-class cricket season have been among the bowlers, and particularly among those bowlers who put a considerable amount of energy into their bowling. For this state of affairs the dry summer, and the subsequent hard wickets, are almost entirely to blame.

The harder the wicket, the more likely is the fast bowler to hurt himself—to pull or tear his muscles, or to strain some part of his foot. Coming down hard on the feet, ball after ball, on a pitch like concrete, is sure to lead to trouble, unless the bowler is particularly strong.

I have often thought that cricketers should give almost as much attention to training for cricket as footballers do to training for football. That is a subject which I need not discuss this week,

however, except to say that the people responsible for the England team have realised that the fitness of a player must not just be left to luck. An expert masseur has been in constant attendance on the England team during this season.

SPORTSMANSHIP!

THE perils which the fast bowler has to try to dodge were illustrated during the third Test match at Old Trafford. You will remember that G. O. Allen bowled four no-balls and three wides in one "record" over. The real reason for this was that Allen was trying, as he delivered the ball, to dodge the footholes in the ground made by the bowlers of the other side. A fast bowler getting his foot in one of those holes is likely to do himself considerable damage.

It is these holes, and the hard grounds, which are responsible for most of the injuries of this season. The game is not really getting more dangerous in the general sense. I might add, however, that many batsmen get hit because they are not quick enough in their feet movement when making their strokes. The feet movements play a big part in the making of the successful batsman.

Turning to another topic, a cricket playing reader is a bit upset because an accusation was made against him to the effect that he was not a good sport. The circumstances, as told to me, are on these lines. My friend, when batting, nicked a ball low towards a slip fielder. That fielder caught the ball so near the ground that the young batsman was not sure whether the ball had touched the ground first. The batsman stood still in his crease and awaited the umpire's decision as to whether he was out.

I must say that this was quite a proper

thing to do, and any suggestion of bad sportsmanship was unjustified.

If the batsman is in any doubt as to whether he has been caught, then he is entitled to wait for the decision of the umpire.

If my friend had walked out of his crease he would have rendered himself liable to be run-out even though he had not been out caught. The fielder knows, better than anybody, whether the ball has touched the ground before it reaches him, and the fielder who picked the ball off the ground and threw it up as if he had made a good catch, would be guilty of bad sportsmanship.

PLAYING THE GAME!

ICAN assure you that even in first-class cricket the word of the fielder is often accepted by the batsman. Only recently a case came under my notice where a batsman wasn't sure whether he had been properly caught out. Instead of turning to the umpire, the batsman said to the fielder:

"Did you catch it all right?" The fielder replied in the affirmative, and the batsman walked out without further ado. When he got to the pavilion somebody suggested to him that he wasn't out.

"Oh, yes, I was," he said, "and I made sure by asking the fellow who caught the ball. He said it was a catch, and if he said so I know it was."

That is the spirit in which even first-class cricket is played, and the spirit in which it should be played.

A Romford reader raises a point which may interest many others. He wants to know whether he can change his type of bowling from over-hand to under-hand, as he wills. The reply to that question is that a bowler may thus change his style of delivery, even in the middle of an over.

Before he makes the change, however, it is expected that he will acquaint the batsman or the umpire of his intention and thus give the batsman an opportunity of taking a new guard.

The same remark applies to a change from round the wicket to over the wicket. If the bowler changed thus without informing the batsman then the batsman would be entitled to draw away from the ball.

"UMPIRE."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.

down a slope, and landed in a bed of ferns.

There he lay gasping.

He did not know whether the lean man came after him. He saw nothing of him. He lay, gasping, in the ferns for a good quarter of an hour before he ventured to rise to his feet and peer round him with scared eyes through his big spectacles.

A twinkling rear light was disappearing in the distance. The little Austin was gone. Tiger Bronx had gone on towards Courtfield.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

He limped back to the road.

The gangster was gone—ahead of him on the Courtfield road. Bunter blinked after the vanished car.

The fat Owl stood irresolute.

He knew now, beyond a doubt, that the man from Chicago was still in the vicinity, hunting for Jarvish. Having failed to find him, he was, apparently, scouring the roads and lanes in the little Austin in the hope of picking up the fugitive.

Bunter longed and yearned to be safe back in bed in the Remove dormitory! He had not bargained for this!

But after long hesitation he tramped on towards Courtfield again. The man was gone in his car; another meeting seemed improbable.

The weary fat Owl had covered about half a mile more when the lights of a car came flashing towards him from the town.

This time Bunter did not think of hailing the car in the hope that it might be a taxi! He jumped out of the road into a thicket, and waited for the coming car to pass.

And a few moments later he was deeply thankful that he had done so. For the car that passed him was the little brown Austin coming back from Courtfield; and in the starlight he had a glimpse of the long, lean man lounging over the wheel!

His fat heart thumped as he watched. But the car sped on, and disappeared in the direction of Greyfriars.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter.

He limped out of the thicket, and resumed his way to Courtfield. He was having rather a wild night! He began to feel that he would have earned that fifty pounds by the time he fingered it.

Luckily he saw no more of the Austin and its terrifying driver. He plodded into Courtfield at last, and arrived at the railway station. The last train was in and the station was closing. A taxi-driver who had waited late in the hope of picking up a fare was turning empty away. Bunter waved to him.

"Taxi, sir?"

"Yes!" gasped Bunter, and he bolted in.

"Where, sir?"

"Friardale Lane—stop at Giles' meadow before you get to the village."

The man blinked at him.

He could see that Bunter was a schoolboy; and probably he was surprised that a schoolboy, after midnight, wanted a taxi to land him at a meadow near a village!

However, that was no business of his, and he wanted a fare!

"Yessir! Don't know the medder; but p'r'aps you'll point it out."

"Yes, yes!" gasped Bunter.

The taxi buzzed away down the High Street. When it got out of Courtfield, on the road across the common, Billy Bunter blinked anxiously on either side, in dread of spotting the brown Austin.

But the road was clear. The taxi sped on swiftly, and passed the gates of Greyfriars School.

Bunter gave the grey old tower, dark in the starlight, a blink as he passed.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.

He could not help wondering what his Form-master, Mr. Quelch, would have thought, could he have known that a member of his Form was buzzing past the school gates in a taxi between twelve and one in the morning!

Fortunately, Mr. Quelch was not likely to dream of anything of the sort!

Greyfriars dropped behind, and the taxi ran on towards the village of Friardale. Giles' meadow was hardly half-way from the school to the village. Bunter was near his journey's end.

At that hour there was no traffic in Friardale Lane. And there was no sign of the brown Austin. If Tiger Bronx was still on the hunt, he was hunting elsewhere.

"Stop!" squeaked Bunter.

The taxi stopped at the hedge by the meadow.

Bunter scrambled out! He blinked up and down the lane, but the coast was clear.

The taximan eyed him curiously and a little suspiciously. It was so very odd for a fare to alight at a meadow, that perhaps the taximan suspected an attempt at "bilking."

"Wait here!" said Bunter.

"Wait?" repeated the Courtfield man.

"Yes, I'm going to fetch somebody."

"Oh!" said the taximan. "Sure you're coming back?" There was an inflection of sarcasm in his voice. He seemed to have doubts.

"Oh—yes—a few minutes——"

"I've heard that one before," said the taximan, with unpleasant emphasis.

"I'll wait as long as you like, sir, but you'll be kind enough to pay my fare first! It'll be a pound—this time of night."

"That's all right!" snapped Bunter.

"I'm going to see that it is!" agreed the taximan.

Bunter fumbled in his pocket. He had two pound notes left. He handed one to the doubting taximan.

"Oh!" said that gentleman. "Right, sir! Wait as long as you like!"

And, leaving him waiting, Billy Bunter plunged through a gap in the hedge, and headed across the dark meadow for the cowshed where he had left Mr. Jarvish.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

BLACK as the inside of a hat, the little open shed revealed nothing, as Billy Bunter blinked into it.

All was silent.

A dread smote Bunter that the man in hiding might, after all, have cleared off, without waiting for the car. It was quite possible that, as Bunter had left it so late, he had given up hope.

That was an awful possibility!

Not that Bunter was fearfully concerned about the mysterious Jarvish. But if the man was gone, his promised reward was gone also, and he had had all his risk and trouble for nothing.

But as he peered in, and listened intently, a sound of breathing, which he had not noticed at first, came from the interior gloom.

"I say, are you there?" breathed Bunter.

No reply.

But there was a faint stirring, as of someone moving in straw. And the breathing seemed louder.

"The silly ass!" muttered Bunter. "Gone to sleep!"

As it was nearly one o'clock, it would not have been surprising if Mr. Jarvish had fallen asleep. There was no doubt that he had had a tiring day. But Bunter was irritated. The least the

man could do, Bunter thought, was to keep awake, watching for him!

"I say, wake up!" he grunted.

He did not venture to call loudly. It was improbable that the gangster was anywhere near at hand, but Bunter was taking no chances.

There was no answer. The steady breathing went on.

Bunter gave an angry snort, and groped into the shed. Either he had to shout to the man, or to shake him into wakefulness, and he decided to shake him. The breathing was a guide, in the dark. Bunter fumbled over a heap of rather smelly straw, and his grasp closed on something soft and hairy.

There was a sudden movement.

The sleeper spoke at last.

And what the sleeper said was:

"Moooooooooh!"

A huge figure heaved up from the straw, mooing! It lurched against Bunter, and barged him backwards, and he sat down with a terrified howl.

The sleeper in the cowshed was not Mr. Jarvish! It was one of Mr. Giles' cows!

"Moooooooooh!" said the cow, sleepily.

Really, there was nothing astonishing in finding a cow asleep in a cowshed! It was the natural place for a cow in the small hours.

But Bunter was taken quite by surprise! He had not been thinking of cows. And even now he did not think of cows—he thought of bulls! He gave a wild howl, and tumbled frantically away over the earthen floor of the cowshed.

"Whooh-hoop! Keep off! Oh crikey! Wow!"

"Moo-oooh!" remarked the cow.

"Oh crumbs! Yaroooh!"

Something touched Bunter as he sprawled and wriggled. It was a large, soft, damp nose.

The cow, perhaps, was curious to know what had caused the disturbance. Probably she meant no harm. But the touch electrified Bunter.

He bounded up and leaped for the open side of the shed. In that fearful moment he felt himself gored by a ferocious bull! He went out into the open air like a bullet from a rifle.

"Moooooh!" said the cow as he went.

Bunter forgot Jarvish! He forgot the fifty pounds reward! He forgot everything except the fearful possibility that that cow was a bull! He bolted.

A hand caught at his fat shoulder and jerked at him, and Bunter's momentum carried him completely round Mr. Jarvish in a circle before he came to a stop.

It was the sleek man who had grasped him.

He had not, apparently, been in the shed! He came round from behind it as Bunter bolted, just in time to clutch him.

"Ow! Leggo!" spluttered Bunter. "Help! Whoop!"

Even Bunter did not fancy that it was a bull that had grasped him by the shoulder. But he was so startled and terrified that he had quite lost his fat wits for the moment.

"Quiet! Oh, quiet!" panted Jarvish.

"It is I, sir—it is only I. Pray be quiet—please be quiet, sir!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "You?"

He recovered himself. A blink round him showed that the quadruped, whether cow or bull, had not emerged from the shed. There was no danger.

"Oh, you!" repeated Bunter. "Why weren't you in the shed? Afraid of cows?" he added, with a sneer.

"No! No! But I heard your footsteps when you came, and hid behind



"I say, wake up!" grunted Bunter. He fumbled over the heap of straw, and his grasp closed on something soft and hairy. There was a sudden movement, and a huge figure heaved up from the straw, mooing. "Mooooooooooh!" said the cow sleepily, as it lurched against Bunter and barged him backwards. "Oh crikey!" yelled the fat junior. "Whooh-hoop! Keep off! Wow!"

the shed!" whispered Jarvis. "I could not be sure it was you, sir."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

He grinned.

Evidently the terrified man had not been asleep. He had heard Bunter coming, and dreaded that it might be the gangster rooting after him. It was Bunter's dulcet voice howling in the shed that had apprised him of the fat Owl's identity.

As before, Bunter felt his courage rise in the presence of a man more funky than himself. He was pleased, too, by the respect, almost obsequiousness, in Jarvis's manner.

The man was, apparently, a millionaire, if not a billionaire, yet he spoke to Bunter as a manservant might have spoken to his master. It was fairly plain that, whatever Mr. Jarvis was now, he had not always been the possessor of millions—or billions! Billy Bunter jerked his fat shoulder free and gave the sleek man an encouraging smack on the back.

"You're all right now, Jarvis!" he said, patronizingly. "Did you begin to think I wasn't coming?"

"You've left it so very late, sir—" mumbled Jarvis.

"Had to!" said Bunter. "Not so jolly easy to get out of school after lights out, I can tell you! I've run fearful risks."

"It is very kind of you, sir!" murmured Jarvis. "I am very grateful!"

"Well, so you ought to be!" agreed Bunter. "I say, that man is still about—I passed him twice going to Courtfield to fetch the taxi."

Jarvis shivered from head to foot.

"You—you have seen him?" he stammered.

"Twice!" said Bunter calmly. "But

it's all right—rely on me! I'm not the fellow to let you down! I'm jolly well not afraid of that lanky American either—I've knocked him down once, and I'd do it again! You're all right! Come on—I've got the taxi waiting in the lane."

Mr. Jarvis took hold of his fat arm, and Bunter started across the meadow for the lane. Now that Bunter had come, the hapless man seemed fearful of losing him. Even Bunter could realise, a little, how terrible those long hours of waiting must have been to the man.

The gleam of the taxi's lights caught their eyes in the lane. Bunter led his companion through the gap in the hedge.

"It would have been safer to shut off the lights!" mumbled Jarvis.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Bunter, carelessly. "Hop in! If that lanky sportsman shows up again, I'll—I'll cat him!"

The taximan blinked curiously at Bunter as he came up with the sleek man, whose expensive clothes were showing many signs of his sojourn in the cowshed. The taximan was surprised, and perhaps a little inquisitive. These were certainly the most extraordinary fares he had ever driven in his cab.

"Have you seen any car on the road, driver?" asked Mr. Jarvis in a quavering voice.

"No, sir; not many about this time of night. But"—the taximan jerked his thumb in the direction of Friardale—"there's one coming now."

Jarvis gave a gasp.

Bunter gave a squeak.

Through the gloom, from the direction of the village, came the headlights of a car.

As the taximan had not turned after halting, his lights faced those of the car coming up from the village. The unseen motorist saw them and slowed.

Was it the brown Austin that was coming?

That terrifying thought was in the minds of both Bunter and Jarvis. Neither felt disposed to wait and ascertain.

Bunter bolted up the road towards the school. Jarvis bolted by his side. The taximan stared after them, dumb with astonishment.

Out of sight, Jarvis dragged Bunter close to the hedge. They halted, panting, hidden in the darkness.

"If it is he!" breathed Jarvis.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter. "If it's that beast—"

"He has stopped!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Listen!" hissed Jarvis.

The lights of the approaching car had stopped a few yards from the halted taxi. A clear, sharp, snapping voice, with a nasal twang, came to the ears of the terrified pair crouching by the hedge.

"Say, you, you're waiting about late, I guess! You seen anything of a smooth-faced guy?"

Billy Bunter and his companion did not wait for more. It was the voice of Tiger Bronx! Before the gangster had finished the sentence, Billy Bunter and Mr. Jarvis were running up the lane in the dark, turning their backs on the taxi—running for their lives!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Any Port in a Storm!

LEGGO!" panted Bunter. Jarvis did not let go. They had raced up the lane, leaving the gangster in talk with the Courtfield taximan, doubtless deriving information from him. Expecting every moment to hear the hum of the little Austin behind, they fairly flew. Bunter, as a rule, was no athlete, and Jarvis looked like anything but an athlete. But they covered the ground in a style that might have made a Derby winner sit up and take notice. Fear lent them wings.

They had not far to go to reach the school gates. They pounded past the shut gates of Greyfriars.

Then Bunter slacked as, passing along the school wall, he reached the end of the little lane that ran between the ancient Cloisters and a spinney. That was Bunter's way in!

Of Greyfriars, Jarvis knew nothing, except that Bunter had told him he belonged there. So the dim buildings they had passed meant nothing to the sleek man. But to Bunter they were home and safety. Bunter had had enough of midnight adventures. He had had rather more than enough!

With the gangster behind, he ceased even to think of the promised fifty pounds. All Bunter wanted was to dive into the school like a frightened, fat rabbit into a burrow and hunt cover.

That, undoubtedly, Bunter would have done, leaving the sleek man to his own devices. But Jarvis was not to be thus left. As Bunter swerved round a corner into the lane by the Cloisters, Jarvis clutched his arm with the grasp of a drowning man on a plank.

It was in vain that Bunter admonished him to "Leggo." Jarvis, instead of letting go, compressed his grasp till the fat junior squeaked with pain.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo!" wailed Bunter. "I say, you beast, you leggo—see? I've got to get in! Oh lor'!"

"Do not leave me!" panted Jarvis.

"Oh, help me to escape! Save me! Show me where to escape from that man!"

"Look here——"

"Oh, he is coming!" Jarvis stammered the words through his chattering teeth.

Up the road came the gleaming lights of a rushing car.

Evidently it was the Austin, with Tiger Bronx at the wheel. He had learned what he needed from the taximan, and he was in hot pursuit.

"Ow! Leggo!" gasped Bunter. "I say, if you won't leggo, come on! Oh dear! Oh lor'! Come on, then, blow you!"

He bolted by the Cloister wall, Jarvis, still holding his fat arm, running with him.

Less than a minute later the gleaming lights flashed past the end of the lane, and the Austin ran on towards Courtfield.

"He's gone!" gasped Bunter. "Now leggo!"

Jarvis held on like a limpet to a rock.

"He will see that we are not on the road! He will not go far!" he gasped.

"He will come back to look!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He had not thought of that; but it was only too probable, if not certain. It would not take the gangster long to ascertain that they were no longer on the high-road.

If he came back and rooted along that little lane between the Cloisters and the spinney——

Bunter shuddered.

"Oh, do leggo!" he wailed. "I've got to get in! No good me waiting here till he comes, is it? Gimme a bunk up!"

"Where are you going?" panted Jarvis, staring round him. "Do you know of a place to hide?"

"I'm jolly well going back to my dorm!" gasped Bunter. "Oh dear! I wish I'd never got out of it! Oh dear! Ow!"

"Oh!" Jarvis understood. "Is this your school?"

"Eh? Yes! Of course! Gimme a bunk up this wall!"

To Bunter's relief, and rather to his surprise, Jarvis released his arm and gave him the required "bunk" up the cloister wall.

Bunter clambered wildly over.

On top of the old wall he blinked round, and had a glimpse of the high-road and two flashing headlights on it.

The fact that he could see the headlights showed that the car had turned. Already Bronx had found the road clear, and was turning back, knowing that he must have passed them.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Bunter.

He swung himself over the wall and dropped.

Once safe inside, he leaned on a stone pillar and spluttered for breath. He was safe now. The gangster might root along the little lane; he might root through the spinney. But he was unlikely to clamber over walls and explore the precincts of a school. If he did, he would never find Bunter. In great relief, the Owl of the Remove pumped in breath.

There was a scrambling, brushing sound, a rustling of ivy, and the sound of someone dropping near him.

Bunter fairly bounded.

He knew now why Jarvis had let him go and bunked him up. The sleek man had followed him in.

Bunter glared at him, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles in his astonishment and dismay.

"I—I—I say," he gasped, "you—you can't come in here! You get out—see? You can't come into the school!"

"Quiet—quiet!"

"But, look here——" stuttered the dismayed Owl.

"Oh, quiet—quiet!" breathed Jarvis. "Listen!"

A sound on the road told that the car had stopped. No doubt the gangster had spotted that little by-lane and intended to look into it. It was a likely spot for the fugitives to have dodged into.

"Oh crikey!" breathed Bunter.

He hurried away down the Cloisters and into the quadrangle. Light, rapid footfalls followed him. Jarvis was not to be shaken off. The school walls meant safety for Bunter, and they meant safety for Jarvis also. Utterly dismayed by being accompanied in this manner by a stranger who had no right within the precincts of Greyfriars, Bunter stopped in the quad and blinked at him.

"You can't stop in here!" he breathed.

"I must!" whispered Jarvis.

"But you—you—you can't, you know! This is Greyfriars!" Bunter babbled helplessly. "You can't hide in my school!"

From the bottom of his heart the Owl of the Remove repented of having got mixed up in this mysterious and alarming affair. But it was rather too late to think of that.

"Show me some place—a shed, an out-house, anything—where I can hide!" breathed Jarvis. "He is searching for me now! My life is at stake! I have promised you fifty pounds! I will give you a hundred—two hundred—if you save me! I will give you anything!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

It was utterly dismaying to have the man hanging on to him like this within the precincts of the school. What on earth would come of it if he was found there Bunter could not imagine.

Still, the mention of hundreds of pounds had a comforting sound. The man, rabbit as he was, was stacked with money. Bunter knew that. There were

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certain advantages to be derived from sticking to a millionaire.

"After all, you can dodge into the woodshed." Bunter began to think it out. "No; that beast Gosling keeps it locked. I wonder—"

"Can you get me into the House?"

"Oh crikey!"

"In a great place like this there must be some unoccupied room—"

"Oh jiminy!"

"You can trust me surely—"

"Oh, yes! But—"

"Save me, and I will make you rich."

"Oh scissors!"

Bunter thought it out. The man

obviously was rich; he was no thief or burglar; there would be no danger in admitting him to the House. And whether he was in peril of his life or not, it was certain that he was in peril of being seized by force by the hard-faced, ruthless gangster and kidnapped. The fact that he did not go to the police
(Continued on next page.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS.

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

AT the time of writing your Editor is sweltering in a "number one sized" heat wave! Phew! I'll bet the ice-cream vendors are doing a roaring trade this week-end. And that reminds me. Do you know that one of the most flourishing businesses in India just now is the running of ice-cream tricycles?

Naturally there has always been a great demand for coolers out there, but not many white people cared about buying ice-cream from the native makers, who were not very particular about the method of manufacture. So an enterprising firm decided to market ice-cream in the same manner as it is done at home, and one of my Indian readers tells me that the making of ice-cream looks like becoming one of the staple industries of India.

I wonder what the Hindustani is for "Stop me and buy one"?

Those of you who have read about "Devil's Island," the famous French penal settlement, may be interested to know that

AN AMERICAN DEVIL'S ISLAND

has recently been established. One of my readers who lives in San Francisco has sent me a letter telling me all about it. This new "Devil's Island" stands in San Francisco Bay, and was originally a Spanish fortification. The dungeons which were originally hewn out of the rock have been replaced by modern prison buildings, and the steepness of the cliffs of the island, together with the distance from the shore, and the rough weather which is experienced in the bay, has claimed to make it an "escape-proof" prison. When you remember how many prisoners escape from the usual American prisons, you'll see that some place like this is needed.

Four types of prisoners are to be kept on this island: men who have escaped from other prisons; men who cannot be reformed; "trouble-makers" and "killers." It looks to me as though the governor and the warders are going to have their work cut out!

A SCOTTISH reader, who lives in Peterhead, has set me a poser this week. He asks

HOW ARE THE NORTHERN LIGHTS FORMED?

The "Northern Lights," as you might know, are perhaps the most gorgeous of

all Nature's phenomena. They give a display which puts a "Brock's Benefit" completely in the shade. Bright lights, resembling curtains and draperies of greenish and reddish hues; crowns of blue rays, arches, and flickering fantastic effects follow each other with rapidity, and the display of colour is such as to make the most expert cinema "light effects" man go green with envy. Once seen they can never be forgotten.

To see the Northern Lights at their best you must go to the Arctic. But they are occasionally seen in Great Britain. How are they formed? No one knows. But scientists, who have studied them for ages, have formed a theory. They have discovered that the Northern Lights are related in some way to sunspots and magnetic disturbances. The theory is that electric particles are given off by sunspots, and these are attracted to the magnetic poles. As soon as they reach the upper layers of the earth's atmosphere they cause the gas molecules to shine.

The lights show at distances which range from forty to over 600 miles above the earth. So it is pretty certain that if you see the Northern Lights from this country they must be nearly 600 miles above the Arctic!

Many readers have asked me to give them a few more

THINGS YOU'D HARDLY BELIEVE,

so here goes:

Some People Don't Know How to Make Fire! Certain African pigmy tribes cannot make fire. Consequently they must keep their fires burning day and night, and if the fires go out, a long trek through the jungle must be made to "borrow" fire from another tribe!

Whales Kill their Enemies by Eating their Tongues! "Killer" whales, which are only from 16 to 30 feet in length, will attack giant whales and kill them. They attack in schools, force the giant whale's mouth open, and then eat its tongue. Incidentally, eight per cent of the oil in a whale is contained in its tongue!

Sixteen Million Thunderstorms Occur Each Year! Scientists have computed that about 44,000 thunderstorms occur on the earth each day. That is over sixteen millions in a year!

I THINK there is just time to describe A SIMPLE COIN TRICK

which my old friend "Mr. X" showed me the other day. The conjurer takes eight coins. He takes one from the top of the stack and puts it on the table. The second coin goes under the stack. The third goes on the table, the fourth under the stack, and so on until all the coins are laid out in a row on the table. But the amazing part of the trick is that the coins on the table are seen to be heads and tails alternately!

Show this to your pal, then hand him the eight coins, and ask him to deal them out in the same manner, making them come heads and tails alternately. He

won't do it—unless he knows how to arrange the coins in the stack beforehand. This is how it is done:

The top two coins in the pack must be head upward. The third coin tail upward. The fourth and fifth head up, and the last three tail up. Deal the first coin head up. The second goes under the stack. The third is dealt tail up, the fourth goes under the stack, and so on. Your pal may think it is simple—but wait until you see him tie himself up in knots when trying to do it!

Have you ever wondered when you see a cinema film how many actual pictures you are seeing? For, of course, the term "moving" pictures is not strictly accurate. The pictures do not move. They form a quick succession of "still" pictures, but these stills are shown so quickly one after another that the eye is deceived, and imagines them to be moving. When you view a film at your local cinema you really see twenty-four still pictures every second. Sounds a lot, doesn't it? But wait a minute! What about this

SUPER SLOW MOTION

camera which has just been invented? It is claimed that this new camera will actually take eighty thousand pictures per second! By means of it things which are quite invisible to the human eye can be photographed.

The camera works with revolving lenses, which spin round at high speed. In addition, each lens has a revolving shutter. The shutter allows eight pictures to be taken with each lens, and there are eight lenses. Thus a spin of the lens disc means that sixty-four pictures have been taken. And the lens disc spins at such a terrific speed that 80,000 separate pictures can be taken in one second.

Do you know how long it would take you to see these pictures if they were projected at ordinary speed? Not less than 53 minutes to witness a film which had only required a second to take! Needless to say, this super cine-camera is only used for intricate technical purposes—such as photographing the working of speedy electrical devices.

And now for

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS,

as they say in the picture palaces. Next week's special feature will be another cover-to-cover Frank Richards' yarn, entitled:

"A SNOB IN CLOVER!"

which will present Harry Wharton & Co. in further amusing and amazing school adventures, with William George Bunter, the "money-bags" of the Remove, taking the leading role.

Supporting this first-rate attraction will be another tip-top "Greyfriars Herald" supplement, a clever cartoon by Harold Skinner, "Umpire's" interesting cricket chat, while I shall be in the chair as usual.

YOUR EDITOR.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.

for protection seemed to hint that there was something "fishy" in the business. Still, it was hard to see where harm could come from admitting him to the shelter of the Remove box-room.

The fat Owl made up his mind.

Jarvis had grasped his fat shoulder with a convulsive grasp. It was clear that he did not mean to let Bunter go till he considered himself safe.

"Look here, if you'll stick in a box-room—" whispered Bunter.

"Yes, yes—anything—"

"This way, then!"

Bunter led the way. Five minutes later he had clambered on the leads of the outhouse under the box-room window. Jarvis clambered after him. The fat Owl plunged in at the window. Jarvis plunged in after him and promptly closed the window.

"Don't turn on a light!" he breathed.

"I'll watch it!" grunted Bunter.

He was not likely to turn on a light when he was getting in at one in the morning after an excursion out of bounds. But Mr. Jarvis probably knew little of schools and their ways.

Jarvis flattened his sleek face against the panes of the window, staring out. But he saw nothing to alarm him. He was safe enough now that he was inside the building, and he realised it and breathed more freely.

"You're all right now," said Bunter.

"Yes, yes!"

"Don't make a row here. If you're found—"

"No, no!"

"If you're found, don't mention me! I should get into a fearful row for this! Don't you say it was Bunter let you in! You can say it was Vernon-Smith if you like."

"I will say nothing!"

"That's right! You'll be taken for a burglar and run in if you're found. But nobody's likely to come here. Look here, I'll lock the door and take the key away, then nobody can get in if they do come. You can get away by the window again when the coast's clear. See?"

Jarvis made no reply to that.

"Now I'll get back to my dorm. I shan't see you again, as you'll be gone before morning. What about—"

Billy Bunter did not need to go further. A crisp and rustling banknote was pressed into his fat hand.

He blinked at it in the dim glimmer at the window.

It was a Bank of England note for £100.

"Oh scissors!" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at Jarvis. "Rabbit" as the man was, Bunter could not help feeling something like respect for a man who could give away banknotes to this tune. The amount of tuck represented by that crisp slip of paper was positively dazzling to think of. Bunter no longer regretted his wild night's adventure—now it was safely over. Indeed, he felt rather regretful that he was going to part with Mr. Jarvis.

He need not have worried about that, however, had he only known it. Jarvis had no intention of leaving his safe hiding-place and running the risk of a meeting with the man from Chicago.

"I say, I hope you'll get clear all right," said Bunter. "Good-night!"

Jarvis nodded.

The fat Owl left the box-room, locked the door on the outside, and put the key in his pocket; then on tiptoe he made his way back to the Remove dormitory.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Man in the Box-room!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" came a sleepy voice.

"Is that Bunter?" came another.

The Remove dormitory was buried in silence and slumber when Billy Bunter crept into it. It was only judicious to leave it so, and Bunter was very cautious in his movements. He was so extremely cautious that he dropped a boot, and two inquiring voices followed the thud on the floor.

Harry Wharton sat up.

"I—I say, you fellows, don't yell!" gasped Bunter.

"So you've got back, you frabjous ass!"

"Yes—I mean I haven't been out! Don't roar!"

"You blithering idiot!"

"Yah!"

Wharton and Bob Cherry settled down to sleep again. Bunter contrived to turn in without awakening any more of the Remove.

He closed his eyes and began to snore almost the moment that his head touched the pillow.

Clang, clang, clang!

It seemed to Billy Bunter that he had only just closed his eyes when the clang of the rising-bell rang out in the summer morning.

He opened them, blinked, and closed them again.

Clang, clang, clang!

"Turn out, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

Snore!

Bunter had gone to sleep again.

But he did not sleep long. The bed-clothes were jerked off him, and he started up with a howl.

"Beast!"

"Want Quelch to come up and root you out?" grinned Bob Cherry. "Turn out, you fat slacker!"

Bunter rubbed his sleepy eyes.

He had missed a good deal of sleep in the night. And Bunter wanted not less than other fellows, but more. Never had he been so powerfully disinclined to turn out of bed.

He yawned long and deep.

"Had a good time on the tiles last night, Bunter?" grinned the Bounder.

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw!" yawned Bunter.

"Been painting the jolly old town red?" asked Skinner.

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw!"

"Where have you been? And what have you been up to, you potty porpoise?" demanded Peter Todd.

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw! I say, you fellows, tell Quelch I'm not well this morning, will you?" yawned Bunter. "I can't get up yet—"

"Like some help?" asked Bob.

"No!" roared Bunter. "Keep off, you beast! Keep that sponge away from me, you rotter! Ow! Wow! Wooogh! Leave off, you beast! I'm getting up, ain't I?"

And Bunter got up.

He was yawning at prayers, and blinking sleepily at breakfast. But he was feeling enormously bucked. Every now and then he slipped his hand into his pocket to feel the crisp rustle of a banknote.

A hundred pounds!

It was a staggering sum! Naturally, Billy Bunter had never been in possession of such a sum in all his fat life before. He could hardly believe he was in possession of it now. Four or five times between brekker and class Bunter sneaked away into quiet corners where he could feast his eyes on that banknote unobserved.

He gloated over it.

He had told fellows that he was going to have fifty pounds. Nobody had believed it. What would they say when he showed a hundred-pound note? Few fellows in the Remove had ever seen such an article, let alone handled it or possessed it.

Bunter was still feeling sleepy in class, and Mr. Quelch gave him one or two sharp glances. But he was feeling very happy and satisfied. He was feeling, too, that he was rather sorry that he had seen the last of the munificent Mr. Jarvis. He had had a wild and exciting night on that sleek gentleman's account, but he felt that he would have been willing to have another at the same price.

But Jarvis, he supposed, was gone, and he was never likely to see him again. And then suddenly it came into his mind—was Jarvis gone?

That was a startling thought.

But it was quite possible! Suppose the man had lacked the nerve to leave again by the box-room window, with the gangster prowling round the roads for him? It was likely—it was more than likely!

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bunter.

Surely the man had had sense enough to go before daylight? If he was still in the box-room, what was to happen? He could not possibly leave in the daytime unseen? And fellows might go there for their boxes! The school was on the eve of breaking-up, and the boxes would be wanted! What would happen to Bunter if it came out that he had given a night's lodging in the school to a total stranger unknown to the Head?

"Bunter!"

Mr. Quelch's deep voice interrupted the fat Owl's troubled thoughts.

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Bunter, waking up, as it were.

"I have spoken to you twice, Bunter—"

"Oh, have you, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"I—I heard you, sir!"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "If you heard me, Bunter, then kindly answer the question I asked you!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He had been too deep in worried thought on the subject of a possible inhabitant of the box-room to hear the Form-master's question, whatever it was.

"You did not hear me, Bunter?"

"Oh! Yes, sir! I mean, no, sir!"

"If you do not give me your attention in class, Bunter—"

"Oh, yes, sir! Certainly, sir!"

"I asked you, Bunter, where did King Charles the Second hide from his enemies after the Battle of Worcester?"

"In the box-room, sir—"

"What?"

"I—I—I mean—" gasped Bunter.

"What do you mean, Bunter?"

"Oh, nothing, sir!"

"You will take a hundred lines, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "And if you do not give me your attention I shall cane you!"

"Oh, y-yes sir! T-thank you, sir!" stammered Bunter.

The Remove master gave him a glare, and Bunter, from that moment, made an attempt to give Quelch his attention.

But really it was not easy, when he was haunted by the thought of a possible refugee still hiding in the Remove box-room. If the man had not gone—

Bunter hoped fervently that he had! But he could not help having a deep misgiving that he hadn't! The man who had hidden for long hours in a dismal cowshed in terror of the gangster was not likely to have left such a refuge



The lights of the approaching car stopped a few yards from the halted taxi, and a sharp, clear, snapping voice, with a nasal twang, came to the ears of the terrified Bunter and Jarvish, crouching in the darkness. "Say, you! You're waiting about late, I guess! You seen anything of a smooth-faced guy?" It was the voice of Tiger Bronx, the gangster.

as the box-room in a hurry! If he was still there—

It seemed to Billy Bunter that break would never come that morning! But it came at last, and the Remove were dismissed.

Bunter did not roll out into the quad with the rest of the Form. He was too anxious to discover whether the box-room still had a tenant.

He scuttled up the Remove staircase, scudded along the passage, and panted up the box-room stair. He jammed the key in the lock and opened the door.

He gasped with relief as he blinked round the box-room through his big spectacles! There was no sign of Mr. Jarvish!

"Thank goodness!" gasped Bunter. "He's gone!"

The next moment he jumped.

A plump, sleek figure rose into view from behind a big trunk in a corner. It was Mr. Jarvish.

Bunter glared at him. It was the episode of the cowshed over again. Evidently Jarvish had heard him coming, and had taken cover till he heard his dulcet voice. He was not gone! Only too evidently he was not gone! He was there, standing in the corner, blinking at Billy Bunter across the top of Lord Mauleverer's big trunk!

"Oh crikey!" said Bunter.

He closed the box-room door hastily.

"Oh crikey!" repeated Bunter.

It was all that he could say!

like most of the fellows in morning break. Harold Skinner was the happy possessor of a packet of cigarettes, surreptitiously smuggled into the school.

Skinner & Co. were going to "enjoy" a smoke! But enjoyments of that kind required a certain amount of caution at Greyfriars.

On such occasions it was Skinner's custom to sneak up to the Remove box-room, and there, secluded from the eyes of masters and prefects, to indulge in the enjoyment which gave a pasty hue to his complexion.

The three young rascals came up the box-room stair, and were about to cross the little landing to the door when they stopped—suddenly startled!

There was a sound of voices in the box-room.

Skinner, who was already taking the packet of cigarettes from his pocket, shoved it back hastily. It sounded like a man's voice in the box-room, and if by chance a master happened to be there Skinner did not want his "smokes" spotted! That would have meant six for Skinner.

"Hold on!" he whispered. "There's somebody—"

"That's not Quelch's toot!" whispered Snoop. "Old Prout, perhaps—"

"'Tain't Prout!" murmured Stott.

"Who the dickens—"

"It's somebody!" said Skinner, puzzled.

It was a man's voice, but quite unknown to the three juniors. It was a soft, sleek voice which reminded them rather of the voice of the Head's butler. But the Head's butler could hardly be in the Remove box-room. They were quite mystified.

"That's all very well—" came another voice.

Skinner & Co. stared.

They knew that fat voice! It was Billy Bunter's.

"What the jolly old thump!" murmured Skinner.

Bunter was in the box-room! He was talking there to some man whose voice was strange to their ears.

"In the circumstances, Master Bunter—"

They heard the sleek voice again. This time they made out the words.

"But you can't stay here, Jarvish!" squeaked the voice of the Owl of the Remove in exasperated tones.

"Jarvish!" breathed Skinner. "Who on earth's Jarvish?"

"He's got some stranger in there!" said Snoop, utterly amazed. "What the thump does it mean?"

Skinner grinned.

"We'll jolly well see who it is, anyhow!" he remarked.

And he walked across the landing to the box-room door and threw it open.

"Oh crikey!" came a startled exclamation within.

"Oh! Ah! Oh!" came another startled exclamation.

This time Mr. Jarvish had not dodged out of sight at the sound of someone approaching, because Skinner & Co. had made no sound, and he had not been aware of their approach until Skinner threw the door open.

He was fairly caught!

He stared in alarm and dismay at the three juniors, and they stared at him in inquisitive astonishment.

Bunter blinked round at them through his big spectacles. He was taken utterly aback. Not for a moment had he expected any Remove fellow to come up to the box-room in morning break. He

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,323.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Man!

SKINNER, Snoop, and Stott all stopped at the same moment in surprise.

Skinner & Co. were not enjoying the summer sunshine out of doors

had not been thinking of Skinner & Co. and their smoky manners and customs.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Oh lor! I say, you fellows— Oh crikey!"

Skinner chuckled. "Who's your jolly old visitor?" he asked.

"I—I—I—" stammered Bunter. "How on earth did the man get in here?" asked Snoop. "And what does he want?"

"You—you—you see—"

Bunter was quite at a loss. This discovery overwhelmed him with dismay. In his mind's eye, as it were, he saw the whole affair rattled all over Greyfriars. It would come out that he had admitted a stranger to the school for the night! What would the Head say? Worse still, what would he do?

He could not even explain, without admitting that he had been out of bounds after lights-out!

"I—I—I say, you fellows, you—you keep it dark!" gasped Bunter. "D-d-don't say anything about it, you know."

"Who is it?" demanded Skinner, staring at the sleek man, whose face was even more dismayed than Bunter's.

"It—it—it's a—a man—"

"I guessed that one!" grinned Skinner. "I can see it's a man, old fat bean. But what man?"

"You—you see—"

"I don't!" said Skinner.

"I—I mean—"

"My hat!" Skinner jumped. "You don't mean to say it's the man you

were telling us about yesterday—your man Jerningham—"

"Walsingham!" ejaculated Snoop.

"Partington!" gasped Stott.

"Oh! No! I—I mean, yes!" Billy Bunter's little round eyes gleamed behind his big round spectacles. "Yes—exactly!"

Bunter jumped to it at once. For once he had been at a loss for a fib! But Skinner's words suggested quite a useful one!

Only the day before Bunter had been swanking about his "man" coming down to the school with a supply of cash from Bunter Court.

Certainly, his man was not to show up at the school! He had been brought into existence merely to account for Bunter's possession of large sums of cash! Jerningham, alias Partington, alias Walsingham, could hardly have turned up at Greyfriars, as he was merely a figment of Billy Bunter's imagination!

But now—

Bunter caught at the suggestion like a drowning man at a plank!

"That's it!" he gasped. "My—my man, you know! My—my man from— from Bunter Court! Jerningham, you know."

"I just heard you call him Jarvish!" said Skinner.

"I—I mean, Jarvish! Jerningham was my last valet. I—I sacked him. Jarvish is my—my new man!"

Skinner & Co. looked at him. They looked at Jarvish! They had not believed for a moment in Jerningham,

or Partington, or Walsingham! But they really had to believe in Jarvish— for there he was!

"Well, my hat!" said Skinner blankly.

"My—my man Jarvish!" said Bunter. "Ain't you, Jarvish?"

He blinked at the sleek man. It was for him to play up in the character assigned him by Bunter, as the only way of explaining his presence there.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Jarvish smoothly. "Quite so, sir!"

He emerged from the corner and stood rubbing his hands.

His manner was obsequiously respectful.

So far as clothes went, he did not look the part. His clothes were expensive—and they were stained and untidy from his recent experiences. But in manner he certainly looked the part to the very life.

In point of fact, as Bunter was to discover later, Mr. Jarvish had spent most of his life as a "gentleman's gentleman"—and that part was easier for him to play than the part of a millionaire. It came more naturally to him. Lifelong habits came more easily than recently acquired ones.

"Well, my hat!" repeated Skinner. He had to believe in the man when he saw him. "But how the thump did he get here, Bunter?"

"I—I—I—you see—"

Again Bunter failed to have a fib ready! But this time Mr. Jarvish took up the tale with ready effrontery. Mr. Jarvish had plenty of nerve, though not of the kind that was required to face physical danger.

"I lost my train last night, young gentlemen!" he said smoothly. "Master Bunter was kind enough to allow me to take shelter in this room."

"Yes, that's it!" gasped Bunter in relief. "You—you see, I—I told you fellows Jerningham—I mean, Partington—that is, Jarvish—was coming down from Bunter Court to see me to-day. He came last night—"

"You went out of bounds to see him!" exclaimed Skinner. "That was why you got out of the dorm, was it?"

"Oh! Yes! That's it! You see, I—I wanted to tell him not to lose his train back; but he—he lost it, so—so I brought him in here—"

"I wonder what the Head would say if he knew!" grinned Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, don't you jaw—"

"I think your headmaster would probably excuse Master Bunter, in the circumstances," said Bunter's man, in his smooth voice. "My young master has done no harm, I am sure. It was very kind of him to give a night's shelter to an old and faithful servant."

"That's it," said Bunter fatuously. "I'm always kind to menials. But don't you fellows jaw about it, all the same. Keep it dark."

"Hallo, there's the bell!" exclaimed Stott.

The clang of the school bell, ringing for third lesson, was audible in the box-room.

Skinner & Co. made a move to the door. They were deeply interested in Bunter's man, and keenly inquisitive on the subject. But they did not venture to be late for class with Mr. Quelch.

Neither would Bunter have ventured, if he could have helped it. But as he was about to follow Skinner & Co. out, Jarvish gestured to him to remain, and the fat Owl lingered.

100 PRIZES FOR POSTCARDS!

This week I am offering One Hundred Special Prizes, including Model Aeroplanes, Books, Penknives, Pocket Wallets, Fountain Pens, etc., for postcards on

"Why I Like the GEM!"

To qualify for this Competition, all that is necessary is to buy the GEM and read it carefully. A few lines, stating clearly and briefly *why* you like the GEM, should then be written on a postcard. Don't forget to put your name and address, clearly written on your postcard, and also **GIVE YOUR AGE**, as this will be taken into account in judging the postcards.

Send your postcards in to:

The Editor,
MAGNET, 100 Prizes Competition,
5, Carmelite Street,
London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

From time to time I shall select from them what I think are the best reasons, and despatch to the writers the Special Gifts, to the number of, at least, one hundred.

This Competition is open to all MAGNET readers, including Overseas Chums, and will remain open till further notice.

Names of winning readers will be published in the MAGNET.



"Jaw, wathah! Meet you in the 'Gem' next Wednesday, Ash boy!"

Skinner & Co. clattered hurriedly down the box-room stairs.

Bunter blinked impatiently at the sleek man.

"I've got to get in to class," he said.

"Wait a moment—"

"Look here—"

Jarvish stepped between him and the door. He listened till Skinner & Co.'s footsteps died in the distance down the Remove passage.

"Look here!" exclaimed Bunter. "I've got to go, see? Old Quelch will be down on me! You cut while all the fellows are in class—"

"I am not going, sir."

Bunter stared.

"You silly ass, you've got to go! You can't stay here! I've made those fellows believe you're my valet from Bunter Court—but if a beak sees you—"

"I am your valet from Bunter Court, sir!"

"Eh?"

"Nothing could have been more fortunate!" Jarvish rubbed his hands. "That will account for my presence here, and I can stay—"

"Stay!" gasped Bunter.

"Certainly, sir! If you pass me off as your valet from home, no doubt your headmaster will allow me to remain with the other servants for a day or two—"

"Oh crikey!"

"You will remember, sir, that I have instructions from your father—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"To supply you with any amount of money you may require—"

"Eh?"

"To an absolutely unlimited extent—"

"Oh!"

"Hundreds of pounds!" said Jarvish, watching Bunter's fat face.

"Phew!"

"Thousands—"

"Oh scissors!"

Bunter gasped.

"Stand by me, sir, and you may command my resources to the uttermost. They are practically unlimited."

"Oh!"

"I should be happy, sir, to act as your manservant. It is a position to which I have been accustomed."

"But—but—but—I—I—I've got to get into class!" stuttered the bewildered Bunter.

"You must miss it, sir, in the circumstances—"

"What? I shall get whopped!"

"It is worth while, sir! The bell has stopped. I gather that all the boys are in class now?"

"Yes—and I—"

"Plenty of time!" Jarvish rubbed his hands. "I cannot venture out, but you, sir—you can go to the town and make certain purchases, necessary for me to play my part here. I will draw up a list for you. Money is no object. Pay anything that is asked, and come back in a quick car. Bring the things to me here—"

"B-b-b-but—"

Mr. Jarvish jerked out his note-case. He thrust a wad of five ten-pound notes into Bunter's fat hand.

"Lose no time, sir!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter blinked at the banknotes. He blinked at Jarvish. Jarvish made up a rapid list on a page from a pocket-book, while Bunter blinked at him in helpless bewilderment.

But in the midst of his bewilderment one fact was clear to Bunter. This man wanted to act as his valet, and while so acting was prepared to supply him with unlimited cash! It was worth

while risking a whopping from Quelch for that! It was worth a dozen whoppings!

Jarvish put the written list in his hand.

"Lose no time, sir!"

Bunter lost no time! Still bewildered, hardly knowing whether he was on his head or his heels, the fat junior tottered out of the box-room. Mr. Jarvish shut the door after him and stood rubbing his smooth palms—washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Astonishes the Natives!

MR. QUELCH frowned. One member of his Form was missing, in third school. Bunter was late!

At the end of the term, things

LONDON READER SCORES!
S. Pollock, of 65, Cary Road, Leytonstone, London, E. 11, wins one of this week's MAGNET pocket knives with the following humorous joke:—



Foreman: "Allo! Why aren't you working?"
New Hand: "Broke me spade."
Foreman: "Digging?"
New Hand: "No, leanin' on it!"

Jokes are still wanted, chums. Send yours along without delay. It may win for you a useful penknife.

generally slowed down a little. But in the Remove, at least, fellows were not allowed to be late for class. Hence the frown of Henry Samuel Quelch.

But Bunter was not merely unpunctual! He did not come! Ten minutes passed, and still the Owl of the Remove did not put in an appearance.

"Wharton!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir?" answered his head boy.

"Do you know where Bunter is?"

"No, sir. I haven't seen him since second lesson!" answered Harry.

"Apparently he is missing the lesson!" said Mr. Quelch; and the grim compression of his lips hinted that Bunter would have reason to be sorry for it, if he did miss third school.

And he did!

The Remove fellows wondered what had become of him. Bunter was often late—it was one of his little ways to be unpunctual. But cutting a class was a serious matter.

Skinner and Snoop and Stott exchanged glances. They had left Bunter in the Remove box-room with his man. They wondered whether he was still there with Jerningham-Walsingham-Partington-Jarvish! It was quite unlike Bunter to take the risk of cutting a class! But he did not come; and third school ended without him.

"Wharton!" rapped Mr. Quelch, as the Remove went out, "you will send Bunter to my study as soon as you see him."

"Yes, sir!"

The Remove marched out of the Form-room.

Skinner & Co., intensely curious, scudded off for the Remove box-room at once. But they drew that apartment blank.

The box-room was untenanted.

"He's gone!" said Skinner, staring round the room.

"But where on earth's Bunter?" asked Snoop.

"If he's sent his man away, he can't have gone with him!" said Stott. "What is he up to?"

"Goodness knows! Blessed if I can make it all out!" said Skinner. "It looks as if the fat Owl has been telling the truth all the time, and he's really got a valet at home—and there's really such a place as Bunter Court! I never believed a word of it, for one!"

"Same here!" agreed Snoop. "But it looks—now—"

"Well, we saw the man!" said Stott. "Seeing is believing, isn't it? Perhaps Bunter's people have come into money."

"Shouldn't wonder!" assented Skinner. "They're the sort to chuck it right and left, if they did. Look here, from what that frabjous frump was saying yesterday, his man was going to bring him fifty pounds! Might as well be civil to the chap!"

"Civility costs nothing!" said Snoop. "Let's look for him."

They went down to the quad to look for Bunter. They did not have far to look! There, strutting, was Bunter!

He was looking immensely pleased with himself and things generally. A dozen Remove fellows were gathered round him. The captain of the Remove had just informed him that he was wanted in Quelch's study.

"Oh, blow Quelch!" said Bunter carelessly. "Can't bother about Quelch!"

"You blithering idiot!" said Bob Cherry. "You've cut class—"

"Who cares?"

"I fancy you'll care when Quelch gets going with the cane!" grinned Bob.

"The carefulness will be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"What on earth did you cut class for?" asked Peter Todd.

"You see, my man came down from Bunter Court!" explained the Owl of the Remove airily.

"Are you going to tell Quelch that?" yelled Peter.

"Certainly," said Bunter calmly.

"Better put some exercise books in your bags, before you try to pull his leg to that extent!" suggested Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Cut off to Quelch, old fat man," said Harry, laughing, "and don't try telling him whoppers."

"I tell you my man Jerningham—I mean Jarvish—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "That's a new one! Your man's had only three names, so far! Has he got four?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" hooted Bunter.

"Thanks—we will! Ha, ha, ha!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,383.

"You'll believe in the man when you see him!" sneered Bunter.

"When!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"The whenfulness is terrific."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, he's here now!" roared Bunter.

"Here!" yelled Bob.

"Yes, here! In my study this very minute," declared Bunter. "That's why I cut third school. I took him to my study to change his clothes—"

"Change his clothes!" repeated Bob Cherry dazedly. "What the thump did he want to change his clothes for?"

"I—I—I mean, he didn't—he wasn't—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That is to say, he did—"

"Lucid at least!" grinned Nugent.

"What I mean is, he had rather an accident—tumbled over in the mud, or—or something, so I had to get him a new outfit!" explained Bunter. "I cut down to Chunkley's in Courtfield—"

"You—you walked to Courtfield in third school—"

"Luckily, I picked up a taxi on the road. I came back in it with the things for Jerningham—I mean Jarvish—"

"Great pip!"

"My only sainted aunt!"

"Bunter's been rolling about in taxis, buying new outfits for his menservants!" chortled Vernon-Smith.

"Yesterday he was trying to borrow half-a-crown! Looks as if he must have borrowed a good many!"

"The borrowfulness must have been terrific."

"Terrific and preposterous!" chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows don't believe me—"

roared Bunter.

"Believe you!" gasped Wharton.

"Do you expect anybody to swallow that, you frabjous ass?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Cut off to Quelch, you howling ass! And for goodness' sake don't spin him a yarn like that!"

"I suppose I'd better see Quelch! You can come and hear what I tell him, if you like," jeered Bunter.

He rolled away to the House. Quite an army of fellows followed him. In fact, nearly all the Remove invaded the Masters' Passage at the heels of William George Bunter. That Bunter would have the incredible nerve to spin such a yarn to so formidable a person as Henry Samuel Quelch seemed incredible. If he did, they were quite keen to hear him. Obviously, the whacking of Quelch's cane would follow. Only Skinner & Co. did not share that general expectation. Skinner & Co., having actually seen Bunter's man with their own eyes, had to believe that there was something in it.

Bunter certainly showed no nervousness, as he tapped at his Form-master's door.

"Come in!" said Mr. Quelch's deep voice.

Bunter marched in, leaving the door open. A crowd of fellows listened, breathless, in the passage.

"Oh! It is you, Bunter!" Mr. Quelch reached for his cane. "You were not in class for third school, Bunter—"

"No, sir! I hope you'll excuse me, sir!" said Bunter. "You see, sir, my man came down rather suddenly from Bunter Court—"

There was a gasp in the passage!

"He's going to do it!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"My man, Jarvish, sir—"

"Bunter!"

"He came down with a special message from my pater, sir, about—about the holidays, sir!" said Bunter.

"He—he tumbled over in getting out of the way of a car, sir, and—I thought I ought to look after him a bit—"

"Bunter!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"He was—was smothered with mud, sir, and—and I had to get him a change of clothes, sir."

Mr. Quelch looked fixedly at Bunter.

"If that explanation is the truth, Bunter, I shall excuse you for missing third school!" he said.

"Thank you, sir!" said Bunter breezily.

Mr. Quelch breathed hard.

"Is the man you speak of now in the school, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir; I told him he could change in my study."

"You will send him to me, Bunter."

The juniors in the passage listened breathlessly. That, they supposed, was a knock-out for Bunter. He could hardly send a non-existent valet to Quelch. To their amazement the Owl of the Remove answered with perfect calmness.

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

"Very well, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "If the man comes to me and bears out your statement, you are excused. Otherwise, you will receive an exceedingly severe caning."

"Yes, sir," said Bunter. "I'll go and tell him, sir."

He rolled out of the study.

The crowd of fellows gazed at him in the passage, fairly stupefied.

"You—you—you howling ass!" gasped Bob Cherry. "You've done it now. You'll get the licking of your life!"

"And serve you jolly well right!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Eh!" Bunter blinked at them. "It will be all right when I send Jarvish to explain to Quelch, won't it?"

"Yes; if there is any Jarvish," chuckled Nugent.

Sniff from Bunter.

"You can come and see him in my study, if you like. Skinner's seen him already—haven't you, Skinner?"

"I've seen him," said Skinner.

"What?" gasped the Bounder.

"You can all see him, if you like," jeered Bunter. "Blessed if I see anything to make a fuss about! I've told you often enough that I keep a valet at home at Bunter Court. The pater's sent him down here with some money for me. I mentioned that I should want a few hundred pounds—"

"A few hundred whatter?" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"Pounds!"

Bunter rolled away. He headed for the Remove passage. After him went the Remove as one man. Amazing as it was, incredible as it was, it began to look as if it was true. And the astonished Removites marched after Billy Bunter to Study No. 7 in the Remove passage, to behold Bunter's man with their own eyes.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Getting Away With It!

JARVISH!"

"Yes, Master William."

Billy Bunter, opening the door of Study No. 7, rolled in. And the Remove fellows in the passage heard.

The voice that answered Bunter was a smooth, sleek, respectful voice—the voice obviously of a deferential manservant.

To five fellows in the crowd there was a sort of familiar note in it. Harry Wharton & Co. fancied they had heard it before, though speaking in much less calm tones.

"Who?" gasped Wharton.

"What?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

Bunter threw the door of the study wide open. He was only too pleased to display his man to the astonished eyes of the Greyfriars fellows.

A sea of eyes fixed on the man.

Five fellows recognised Jarvish at once as the man who had fled from the wrecked Daimler in Pegg Lane, and had been pursued by the lean gangster into Friardale Wood.

They had wondered a good deal what had happened to the sleek man since, and debated whether they had better report the strange affair to Mr. Quelch.

Certainly they had never dreamed of seeing the man at Greyfriars School, much less in the character of Billy Bunter's valet.

But it was the same man. They knew him at a glance. His sleek face was calm now, clear and clean-shaven. His clothes had been changed; he was dressed in a quiet dark suit, suitable for a respectable manservant. There was no trace about him of the frightened excitement of the previous day. But it was the man of the Daimler.

To the other fellows he was a complete stranger. He stood twining his sleek, strong hands with a deprecating expression on his face—a quiet and respectable manservant to the very life.

"Oh, you've finished, Jarvish!" drawled Bunter.

"Yes, Master William."

"My Form-master, Quelch, wants to see you, Jarvish."

"Very good, sir," said Jarvish.

"I'll take you to his study," said Bunter airily. "You'll have to see the Head about staying till we break up. But I fancy it will be all right. Let a fellow pass, you fellows!"

"He—he—he's real!" gasped Peter Todd.

"My only summer bonnet!" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Bunter's told the truth," said Bob Cherry. "What ass said the age of miracles was passed?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here! It's some sort of spoof," said Bolsover major, shoving forward. "Here, my man! What's your name?"

"Jarvish, sir."

"You're Bunter's valet?" demanded Bolsover major.

"Yes, sir."

"Come down from Bunter Court?"

"Quite so, sir."

"And how long have you been Bunter's valet?" demanded Bolsover.

"Three months, sir," said Jarvish smoothly. "I was recommended to Master William, sir, by his late valet, Jerningham."

"Fan me!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows, I told you—"

squeaked Bunter.

"This has got me beat," said Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say it's the bee's knee. It's the cat's whiskers, and then some."

"Jarvish will be staying here till we break up," said Bunter breezily. "At least, he's going to ask the Head to let him."

"What on earth for?" asked Peter Todd.



"My—my man, you know!" said Bunter. "My—my man from—from Bunter Court. Jerningham, you know—I—I mean Jarvish!" Skinner & Co. looked at Jarvish, hardly able to believe their eyes. "Ain't you Jarvish?" asked Bunter. "Yes, sir!" said Mr. Jarvish, respectfully, rubbing his hands. "Quite so, sir!"

"You see, the—the——"

"Mr. Bunter is going abroad, sir," said Jarvish smoothly. "The house is closed for some time. As I am to accompany Master William on his holidays, his respected father, sir, suggested that his headmaster might allow me to be accommodated here with the servants for the remaining few days of the term."

"Oh!" gasped Peter.

It all sounded plausible enough. Yet quite a number of the fellows could not help thinking that there was a catch in it somewhere.

"I say, you fellows, let us pass!" said Bunter. "My valet's got to see Quelch, and then I'm taking him to the Head."

"So you got away all right yesterday, Mr. Jarvish—if that is your name?" said Harry Wharton, very quietly.

In spite of his nerve and impudence the sleek man gave a start as he fixed his eyes on the captain of the Remove.

Probably it had not occurred to him that the schoolboys he had met in Pegg Lane, when his car was wrecked, belonged to the same school as Bunter.

He had not specially observed them among the crowd of juniors; but now he recognised them, and he breathed quickly.

"Met you before, you know," grinned Johnny Bull.

"The metfulness was terrific, my esteemed Jarvish."

Billy Bunter blinked at them in astonishment.

"I say, you fellows, wharrer you mean?" he demanded. "You haven't met my—my valet before, I suppose?"

"We've had that pleasure," grinned Nugent. "But we jolly well never knew he was your jolly old valet, Bunter, and he never let on."

Jarvish recovered himself.

"I remember you young gentlemen now," he said smoothly. "Had I been aware that you were friends of Master William's, I should certainly have mentioned that I was Master William's valet."

Harry Wharton looked at him. The man's manner was respectful, deferential—all that it should have been, in fact. But there was a certain cunning slyness in his shifty eyes that was not convincing.

And it was extraordinary, to say the least, that Bunter's valet should have been travelling in an expensive car, which he had abandoned without a second thought when it was wrecked.

It was still more extraordinary that Bunter's valet should have been pursued by a man who looked like an American gangster, and who carried a revolver.

That there was something behind all this, the captain of the Remove felt fairly certain. But he could not begin to guess what it was.

Still, it was no particular business of his. He was amazed, and more than a little distrustful, but he had to leave the matter where it was.

"I say, you fellows, Quelch is waiting to see Jerningham—I mean Partington—that is, Jarvish! Let a fellow pass!"

The juniors made room, and Bunter left the study, respectfully followed by his man. They gazed after him as he went.

"Well, my on'y hat!" said the Bounder blankly.

"The only-hatfulness is terrific!"

"It's some sort of a spoof," grunted Bolsover major.

"What rot!" said Skinner. "I suppose the man knows whether he's Bunter's valet or not."

"Well, he ought to know, that's certain!" said Bob Cherry dubiously. "But it's all jolly queer!"

"The queerfulness is preposterous!"

"The man looks all right," remarked the Bounder slowly. "Anybody can see that he's a manservant—and he looks a well-trained one. But——"

He shook his head, quite puzzled.

"They've come into money," said Skinner.

"Must have been jolly sudden, then," said Smithy. "Only yesterday Bunter was trying to borrow half-a-crown up and down the Remove!"

"He's got lots now, anyhow," said Skinner. "And I don't see that you fellows need run Bunter down. Bunter's not a bad sort."

"A jolly good sort, if you ask me!" said Snoop.

"I'll say he's got his good points!" agreed Fisher T. Fish.

Evidently the fact that Bunter now had "lots of money" made a difference in Skinner & Co.'s estimation of the fat Owl.

The crowd of fellows broke up, most of them discussing Bunter and his man. It was a nine days' wonder, and the most wondrous part of it was that Bunter, apparently, had been telling the truth. Nobody, knowing Bunter, could possibly have expected that!

Some of the fellows who had lingering doubts wondered what would be the result of Jarvish's interview with Mr. Quelch.

But that interview seemed to pass off quite satisfactorily.

Whether there was any "spoof" in the affair or not, that quiet, respectable, deferential manservant successfully

passed the test of an interview with the gimlet-eyed Remove master.

Later, it was learned that he had seen the headmaster, and received permission to remain at the school until it broke up for the holidays.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Billions For Bunter!

MASTER WILLIAM!
Billy Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles.

He was extended in the armchair in Study No. 7 after tea.

It had been an ample tea—too ample, perhaps. Since the arrival of his valet at Greyfriars, Billy Bunter's study had been like unto a land flowing with milk and honey. Even the Bunter's lavish spreads were as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine, compared with Bunter's.

Mrs. Mumble, who had been wont to eye Bunter with icy frigidities when he rolled into the tuckshop, now awarded him her sweetest smiles.

Rolling in money, Bunter certainly displayed an open-handed side of his fat nature. He liked to feed, and he liked to see other fellows enjoying a feed. No doubt he overdid it a little. On the present occasion, as his man Jarvish looked in at the doorway, with a deferential cough, Bunter was resting in the armchair after his exertions, feeling that he could not have got out of it had the house been on fire. He was loaded far beyond the Plimsoll line. His tea-party had gone down, leaving him to recover slowly.

He gave his man a gracious nod.

"You can come in, Jarvish!" he said.

"Thank you, sir!" said Jarvish.

He came in.

So well did Jarvish play his part that Bunter almost wondered at times whether the man really was his valet. It was quite easy for Bunter to slip into the role of the young master. Bunter liked giving orders.

There was only one fly in the ointment, so to speak.

It could not last.

Bunter wished that the term had not been so near its end. But with the end of the term had to come the end of Bunter's glory. Jarvish, in his terror of the gangster, was going to remain in hiding at the school as long as he could. But he could not remain after the school broke up. He had to go when Bunter went. All Bunter could do was to make hay while the sun shone.

"Break up to-morrow, Jarvish!" he said.

"So I understand, sir," said Jarvish smoothly.

His sly, watchful eyes were on Bunter's fat face. Jarvish, too, had

been thinking of that fly in the ointment—probably to more purpose than Bunter!

"You'll have to clear then!" said Bunter regretfully.

"Oh, quite, sir!"

"I'm sorry, Jarvish!"

Jarvish smiled faintly.

"It is very kind of you to say so, sir!"

"The fact is, I like you, Jarvish!" said Bunter patronisingly.

"I am honoured, sir! If I have succeeded in giving you satisfaction, sir—"

"You have!" said Bunter generously.

"I've never had a servant I liked better, Jarvish!"

Jarvish coughed respectfully.

"Then, sir," he said deferentially, but with his sly eyes watching Bunter like a cat—"then, sir, perhaps you would consider a proposition I am about to make, sir!"

"Fire away!" said Bunter. "Hand me those tarts first, though. I think I could manage another tart! Thanks, Jarvish. Now go ahead."

"It is such a pleasure, sir, and such an honour, to serve a young gentleman like you, sir, that I am very unwilling to give up the place."

Bunter smiled over the jam-tart! He wished Peter Todd could have heard this!

"I have always been a gentleman's valet, sir, though I have never hitherto served a young gentleman of such distinction as yourself, if I may say so, sir—"

Bunter purred!

He liked flattery, and he liked it, like pineapple, in chunks! Jarvish was giving it to him in quite extensive chunks.

"As it happens, sir, I have come into the possession of great wealth—immense wealth! You are aware of that, sir! I have not merely thousands of pounds, but millions, at my disposal. Would you, sir, care to be a millionaire?"

"Eh?"

"I may say, a billionaire!"

"Wha-a-t?"

Bunter, heavy laden, had felt that he could not move! Now he moved! He sat bolt upright, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles at Jarvish.

That mysterious gentleman—or gentleman's gentleman—stood before him, deferentially winding his smooth hands together.

"I am in earnest, sir," said Jarvish smoothly. "I should vastly prefer, sir, to be your valet, if you will honour me by retaining my services. You will find me, sir, a most devoted and faithful servant. My fortune, sir, shall be transferred to you for the term of your natural life. Legal documents, sir, shall be drawn up to that effect!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"You will be a billionaire, sir—"

"Ooooooh!"

"The world will be at your feet!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Your school holidays, sir, may be spent in any part of the world that you prefer—"

"Fine!" gasped Bunter.

"You will have command of unlimited wealth—"

"Oh, good!"

"All I ask, sir, is that you will retain my services as valet, and allow me the honour of attending you personally as your faithful servant."

Bunter blinked at him.

The man was in earnest! That was clear! He was anxious that Billy Bunter should accept that amazing offer! Why, was an utter mystery!

Bunter might believe that the sly-eyed, sleek man found it an unending honour and pleasure to serve him as valet! Nobody else certainly would have been likely to believe it! Obviously, the man had some deep, hidden motive, some utterly mysterious and undiscoverable reason for making that amazing offer. Even Bunter vaguely realised that. But there was the offer! That was real, and the money was real! And that was enough for Bunter! Probably it would have been enough for a good many fellows! Anyhow, it was enough for Billy Bunter!

"Done!" he gasped.

"You consent, sir?" asked Jarvish.

"What-ho!" said Bunter breathlessly.

"Thank you, sir!"

Soft-footed, deferential, Jarvish left the study as noiselessly as he had entered it. There was a strange and curious smile on his sleek features as he went down the passage. Perhaps it was as well for Billy Bunter's fat satisfaction that he did not see that smile! It might have alarmed him! Certainly he would have been alarmed could he have been aware of the thoughts hidden behind the sleek, smooth face of his man. But Bunter remained happily unaware of Mr. Jarvish's thoughts!

"Millions!" murmured Bunter.

He grinned.

"Billions!"

He chuckled.

"Millions! My hat! Billions! Oh crikey!"

He chortled.

There were great times ahead for Bunter the Billionaire! There were gorgeous times ahead! There were tremendous times! And what else was ahead; Billy Bunter, fortunately, did not yet know!

THE END.

(Well, chums, I hope you enjoyed this cover-to-cover yarn of the chums of Greyfriars as well as I did! Real top-notch, isn't it? And there's plenty more like it to come! Watch out next week for: "A SNOB IN CLOVER!" by Frank Richards. It's grand, great, spiffing—and EXTRA LONG!—Ed.)

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No. 98 (New Series.)

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

August 18th, 1934.

RIFLE REQUIRED

For the period of my holiday with Cousin Peter. Regret unable to state what kind of rifle, but it may help you to know that we're going to North Wales—and Peter has promised to teach me to SHOOT THE RAPIDS.—ALONZO TODD, c/o GREYFRIARS HERALD.

IF THEY SPOKE THEIR THOUGHTS

Brickbats in Brackets

(This is an actual conversation between Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout. We have taken the liberty of adding what they were really thinking in brackets. For goodness' sake don't let either of them see this number!—Ed.)

PROUT: Ah, good morning, Quelch! Lovely day, is it not? (Pity it hasn't taken that scowl off your face!)

QUELCH: You're right, Prout. Busy? (Hope to goodness he says 'yes'; I shall be bored to tears if he starts talking!)

P: No, not very busy. The work in my Form goes on so smoothly that it never intrudes on my leisure. (More than you can say, I'll bet!)

Q: You are indeed lucky to possess such a model Form. (A good model for a mental home, if only you knew it!)

P: Well, you know, I believe in co-operating with my boys to get the best out of them. (One in the eye for you, you old martinet!)

Q: An excellent idea, Prout. I am sure they look on you as a friend. (Matter of fact I happen to know they look on you as a freak!)

P: I am quite sure that the same may be said of your boys, my dear sir. (I'm quite sure it can't!)

Q: I wish I could think so, Prout. But junior boys are not so easily controlled as seniors. (Yours are like a flock of sheep, anyway!)

P: Yes, you're certainly right there. (The fact is, you're talking out of the back of your neck!)

Q: Well, Prout, I'm afraid I must be going now, however much I should enjoy continuing this charming little chat. (What a relief it will be to get away!)

P: It's always a pleasure to talk to you, my dear Quelch. (About as pleasant as talking to a lemon!)

Q: Well, good-bye, then. See you later! (The later the better!)

P: Good-bye, my dear sir. We must certainly meet again soon. Mind how you go! (Hope you trip up on the step!)

"My opinion of the Remove?" said William Gosling, in reply to the question of our Special Representative.

"Wot I says is this 'ere: takin' 'em on the whole, they're gents."

"Which I 'aven't a very 'igh opinion of boys in the main. To be candid, I think they all oughter be drowned at birth."

"But as they've hescaped that fate, I'm willin' to look at 'em without malice or prejudice, an', on the whole, I'll admit that they're gents."

"If there's one I single hout as the hexception, it's Master Skinner. Master Skinner's no gent, an' I don't care who 'ears me say so."

"Wot I says is this 'ere: I've got the 'ighest respect for the young gents in the Remove. Which it's me dooty durin' the

"MASTER SKINNER'S NO GENT!"

School Porter's Reflections

'olidays to clean the winders an' tidy up the studies, an' I've got plenty of chance to pry into their desks an' cupboards if I feel like it. But I

don't. I've got too much respect for 'em. I shall never respect again."

"All bar Master Skinner. Master Skinner, 'Wot I says is this 'ere: when a young gent puts hexplosive cigars in 'is desk an' booby traps in 'is cupboard an' autymatis jumpin' snakes in 'is table drawer, then he can't be no gent, say wot you like!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere: I'm not the kind to poke 'is nose into young gents' private property. I'd scorn to do sich a thing. But why does Master Skinner go an' put those things there, just as if 'e thought I was goin' to do it, eh!?"

WHO WON THE WAGER?

Removite's Queer Problem

A problem requiring the wisdom of a Solomon to solve has arisen out of a little sporting wager made by Morgan of the Remove on the one hand and Wibley and Rake on the other.

Wib. and Rake were so staggered by the quantity of tuck stowed away by Morgan that they offered him two to one in doughnuts he wouldn't have a threepenny ride on a roundabout and five minutes on a swing-boat soon after dinner without being ill!

Morgan accepted with alacrity. Immediately after dinner that day the trio adjourned to the fair-ground near by, and Morgan went through his test.

He emerged from a threepenny ride on the roundabout, entirely successful. His eyes were bright and his cheeks glowing, and nobody looked less likely to be sick than he!

He then went up in a swing-boat, with Rake as partner, and had a most hectic five minutes in the air. Still no sign of approaching illness showed when he came down again!

It was as they were strolling off the fair-ground that he suddenly turned green and staggered away to the nearest secluded spot.

Rake and Wibley had a chuckle to themselves and prepared to pull their colleague's leg unmercifully when he returned.

But a surprise was in store for them. When Morgan came back he wasn't looking a bit crestfallen. He merely looked wild.

"Just my luck!" he said,

bitterly. "Something would happen soon after I'd won!"

"Won?" hooted Wib. "Why, you fathead, you lost! You went on a roundabout and a swing and it made you ill, didn't it?"

"Nothing of the kind!" was Morgan's answer. "The swing and the roundabout had nothing to do with it!"

"Then what the thump was it?"

"Something entirely different! I could have stood swings and roundabouts all the afternoon. What did it was something I saw as we were walking away!"

"And what was that?" demanded Rake.

Morgan's reply came as a bombshell.

"It was Loder! I just happened to catch sight of



Loder, you see, and the sight of Loder always does make me sick!"

So who won the wager? No prizes are offered for the solution, dear readers, so don't trouble to bombard us with suggestions.

Our own idea is that the three doughnuts should be presented to Loder with a full explanation.

We're sure he'd be awfully pleased!

Inky's Birthday Guide

This Week: BILLY BUNTER

Esteemed and idiotic readers! Stand up and take sitful notice of the horoscope of the august and impossible Bunter! Having knowingly learned his birth date, I have pryfully consulted the wise books of my esteemed native soothsayers. This is the result:—

Bunter is one with great ambitions. The greatest of these is to emulate the esteemed and respected pig in the quantity of food he eats gorgefully; but this ambition has been realised rarely because of his needful lack of the necessary oof.

Our esteemed Porpoise possesses great pride. He is proud of his graceful figure, his ancestral home, his titled relations, his postal-orders and many other things. There is only one ridiculous drawback to this—the things he is proud of do not exist outside his esteemed and ludicrous imagination!

The stars show that Bunter will certainly develop a commanding personality. We can easily guess where this is likely to happen—

(Continued below.)



SURF RIDING'S SURPRISING

Ask Squiff

spray whipping your flesh into a tingling ecstacy of life, you feel as though you've become transformed into a sea-god of pagan mythology!"

"Really? How much do they charge?" I asked.

"Three bob, including a man to drive the motor-boat," Squiff replied, eagerly. "It's dirt cheap at the price."

"I'd like to watch you have a go."

Squiff nodded.

"You'd be converted at once, I can tell you! There's only one drawback. I'm—hem!—a little short of cash at the moment. But for that—"

As it happened, I was flush, myself; so I naturally offered the needful.

Squiff fairly jumped at it!

A couple of minutes later he was being towed away

from the pier at a rapidly accelerating speed.

I waited, with some curiosity, to see him transformed into a sea-god of pagan mythology, with the salt spray whipping his flesh into a tingling ecstacy of life and all the rest of it.

Somehow it didn't quite happen that way. All that I saw was Squiff making frantic efforts to keep his balance for about five seconds and then suddenly hitting the water with a fearful wallop, leaving the motor-boat to leap away without him.

It turned out to be Squiff's first effort at surf-riding—and if he expected to come back looking like a sea-god, he must have been severely disappointed.

To me he looked more like a drowned rat!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

Penfold's Potted Poems

Most freakish of freaks is Alonzo. It boats us why he carries onzo!

A note about Herbert B. Trevor: He's shady and sharp—but not clever!

Tho' a writer of "bloods," Nugent minor's Better far than mere penny-a-liners!

A practical fellow is Hobson—Whatever variety of job's on!

Through ways that are wormy, Sid Snoop Lands less than he should in the soup.

Though maths. have no charm for Bill Wibley.

On Shakespeare he's never been quibloy (quibbly).



Urged by the school doctor to take a Turkish bath, Bunter was found wallowing in his study in a bath which Mr. Lazarus, the second-hand dealer, had assured Bunter came from Turkey! When "chipped," Bunter did not experience any Turkish "delight."



Donald Ogilvy suggests that the famous Scottish sport of tossing the caber should be introduced at Greyfriars. Ogilvy himself offered to show the Removites how it is done—but, unfortunately, he landed the heavy caber on Loder's foot—and there was trouble!



A finger-print camera is not necessary when Bunter raids a study at Greyfriars. He invariably leaves jammy smears which amply reveal his fat finger-marks to the Removite "sleuths!" Bunter usually finds himself caught in a "sticky" mess!



Bolsover major complains that though the Rufus Stone in the New Forest marks the spot where William II was slain by an arrow, there is nothing in the Greyfriars quadrangle to show where Bolsover once knocked off Loder's cap with a well-aimed turt.



Fisher T. Fish possesses unbounded "cheek," and his numerous money-making schemes are based on his belief that there is a mug born every minute! He even succeeded in selling Bunter a second-hand pen-knife—but Bunter's half-crown was a "bad 'un!"



Wun Lung gave an amazing exhibition of rope-climbing to the gymnasium—going up hand-over-hand without the aid of his feet, and performing weird evolutions at the top! He offered ample justification for Bolsover's description of him as "a little monkey!"

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

THE HOPE OF HIS SIDE

By TOM BROWN

A tense, breathless silence brooded over the Courtfield Common cricket pavilion. The hopes of the Remove team were absolutely centred on the whiteclad figure that was emerging from the inside of the pavilion. All eyes were turned on him.

Would Vernon-Smith let them down? From the bottom of their hearts they hoped not. They had been through many ups and downs together in the course of the season, and in more than one crisis Vernon-Smith had pulled them through.

Surely he would rise to the occasion this time? Little had they dreamed, when they set out to play Dick Trumper & Co., of Courtfield Council School, that afternoon of the excitement that would crown the game.

They had light-heartedly imagined that it would be the usual sort of afternoon—a jolly good game, with a fairly comfortable victory for the Remove,

and a jolly good spread afterwards at the Courtfield Common Tea House. Not for a moment had it occurred to them that they would end up with this thrilling drama!

Hearts almost stopped beating as the Bounder descended the steps of the pavilion. The players fixed their eyes on him, almost speechless with anxiety.

One man only, in the shape of Bob Cherry, was not too overwhelmed to speak to the man of the moment. "Smithy, old man—" he began, in a voice choked with emotion.

"Well, Bob?"

"We rely on you. We absolutely depend on you," cried Bob Cherry huskily. "Don't—whatever you do, don't—don't let us down!"

"I'll try not to," said Smithy, quietly. "What's the trouble?"

Bob Cherry gulped. "The Courtfield men are all stony and we've only one-and-tenpence between us. Old man, for goodness' sake don't say that YOU HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH CASH TO PAY FOR THE TEA!"

in any esteemed tuckshop! Financial genius is also indicated, and, having recently experienced ruefully his ability to "tap" one for the useful half-crown, I can assert statefully that this is a trueful fact!

The futuristic outlook of the esteemed Bunter is one of constant change. There will be a needful necessity for him to change his residence often—mostly on account of pressful creditors!

Finally, my esteemed and fooling readers, there is no need to tell Bunter wishfully "May your shadow never grow less!" Judging by the stars, the certainfulness that it never will is terrific!