

THE
MAGNET

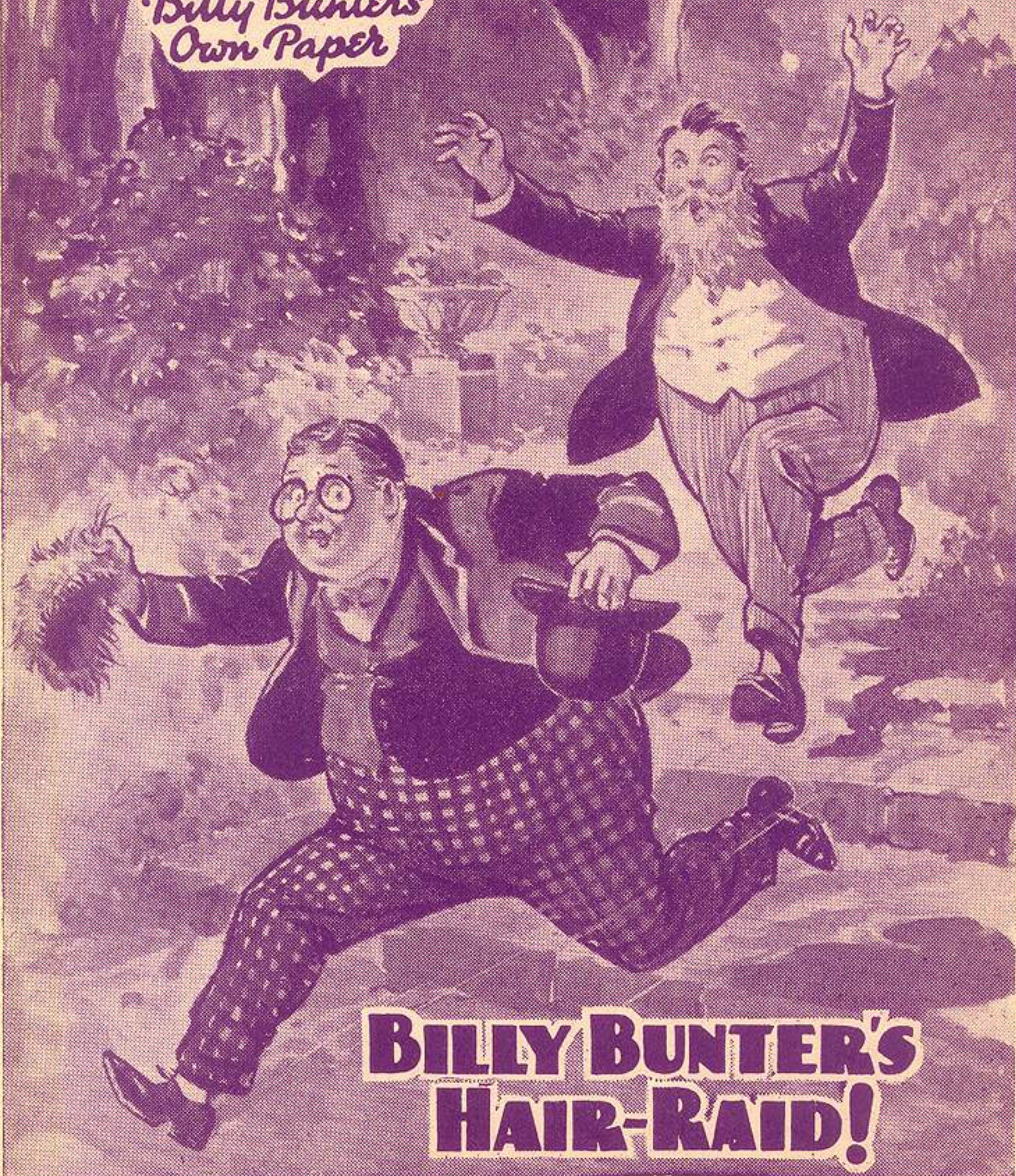
Schoolboy Impersonator In A Fix!

Great Greyfriars
Yarn Inside.

The Magnet

2^D

Billy Bunter's
Own Paper



**BILLY BUNTER'S
HAIR-RAID!**



The GREYFRIARS HERALD



EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON

THE MONEY MARKET.

BOB-BORROWING!

BY OUR FINANCIAL EDITOR

HOW to get money is a great problem these days. Some people are stupid enough to work for it, but that should be kept as a last resource. The usual way is either to beg or borrow. We shall examine both these ways with the help of experts. We hope to induce Mr. Frank Nugent, secretary of the sports clubs, to tell us how to beg money. Collecting subscriptions has made him a pastmaster of the art.

At present, we will deal with the question of borrowing—with the assistance of the most deadly expert in history.

"Oh, really, Squiff!" said this expert, when I asked for his help. "I'm not the fellow to borrow money, I hope. Though, if you really want my help—well, I mean one good turn deserves another. You see, my postal order will be in the next post; but as it happens, I'm actually rather hard-up until it arrives."

"Impossible!" I murmured.

"It's a fact, old fellow. I lent my last pound note to Toddy, never thinking I should need the money; but now I find myself short of tin. Of course, I shall return the five bob immediately I change my postal order."

"What five bob?"

"The five bob you're going to lend me, old fellow."

"But I'm not going to lend you five bob."

I was quite determined on that. Bunter tried hard, but he didn't get five bob out of me. He only got half-a-crown. It was all I had.

Then he condescended to give me a few tips on borrowing.

"Any youngster who aspires to make his living by borrowing," said Bunter (but not in those exact words), "should start at the bottom and work up. He should begin with Mauly. I advise all beginners to start with Mauly. He is the easiest subject, and they can practise the various methods of borrowing on Mauly until they are expert enough to have a shot at Wharton, who is next on the list."

"As a matter of fact," continued Bunter, "if a fellow went to work in the right way, he could practically make his living out of Mauly, without troubling anyone else. I myself work Mauly pretty often, and I hope in time to leave him a comparatively poor man. But I have a pride in my profession, and I like to make a

success of the most difficult problems, such as Fishy and Smithy.

"Fishy is far too difficult for the beginner to tackle. I have managed to borrow two-and-tenpence from him at odd times, but it has taken many weary months, and I am now kicked every time Fishy thinks of it. However, if the young amateur really wants to have a shot at Fishy, he might bring it off once, if he has a fairly good reputation. He should borrow a large sum at any interest Fishy likes to ask, and sign the paper. There is no need to worry about repaying either the interest or the loan—Fishy can't complain to Quelch, and he's no fighting man. But it can only be done once."

"Smithy is much too difficult for the amateur, but the best way to work him is to go for a large amount. It's absolutely useless to ask for bobs or half-crowns. If a fellow has the nerve to ask for a quid, he might be lucky. Smithy loves flashing his money about, so it's best to choose a spot where dozens of fellows are gathered, and then ask him openly. I only got away with a quid by that method."

"Most other fellows can be worked with a little soft soap, or else a touch of misery. After all, most fellows are kind-hearted, and if they see a chap in the depths of woe, they usually stump up. Like everything else, practice makes perfect. That's the secret of success. Now excuse me, old fellow."

With this, he shot away to the tuckshop. My half-crown went with him.

SKINNER'S LITTLE SECRET—

BY THE CAD HIMSELF!

WONDERS will never cease! Just before the hols I backed a winner! So did Stott, Snoop, Smithy, Angel, Pon, Gaddy, and— Well, anyway, a dozen of us went in together and made up a tenner to put on the brute, and it won. Joey Banks looks as white as a sheet. So does Bill Lodgey. We put a fiver on with each of them.

And this was how we did it. It was Smithy's idea. We were all quite tired of handing all our spare money to Joey Banks each week, so we got together and picked out a race a few days ahead, and then dropped in one by one to see Joey Banks. Smithy went first. He thought about having a quid on Wanderer.

"Yes, sir, and a good 'oss it is!" said Joey promptly. "You got an eye

for a good 'oss, sir—I know that. That 'oss is a stone cert!"

"Well, I haven't quite made up my mind, but I'll let you know," said Smithy, and he went away.

Next went Stott, who fancied Bonny Boy.

"Ah!" said Mr. Banks significantly. "You've 'eard something, sir. There ain't many people know about that 'oss, 'cause he's being kep' dark. You got on to it, eh? Well, as a favour to you, I'll take the money, though I 'appen to know Bonny Boy is pretty sure to romp 'ome. 'Ow much, sir?"

"I'll think it over and let you know," said Stott.

Then Pon dropped in to back Faversham.

"Trust you to pick out the certs," said Mr. Banks, with a wink. "Yes, you're right, sir—there ain't a gee in that race to touch 'im. They won't see which way he goes!"

"Well, I haven't quite made up my mind," said Pon, "but I'll let you know."

Snoop and Angel and Monson and Gaddy each went along to suggest a different horse, and Mr. Banks told each of them that it was a cert. Then I popped in to have a quid on Snow White.

Mr. Banks looked very doubtful.

"Shouldn't do that, if I was you, sir," he said. "It's throwin' money away. I know something about that 'oss, and you can take it from me it hasn't an earthly. It ain't in my interest to say so, mind yer, but I wouldn't like to swindle you."

So we made up a tenner and put it on Snow White, and the horse won at 6 to 1. Thanks to Joey Banks, we've found an expert tipster at last.

For when he says a horse will lose, it's almost certain to win!

Shorts!

Mr. William Bunter senior says he has three claims to fame: (1) As a member of the largest stockbrokers firm in London; (2) As the owner of the biggest overcoat in Britain; and (3) As the father of the biggest fool in the world. Hear, hear!

Those persons who have complained that the fountain in the quad is getting muddy will be glad to hear that the Remove recently cleaned it out, using Coker of the Fifth for that purpose.

Mr. Hacker of the Shell has been recommended by his doctor to take more exercise, with the exception of his right arm, which should take less. That will even him up a bit.

PLAYING THE PART OF A BARONET IS NOT ALL HONEY! BUT WIBLEY, THE SCHOOLBOY IMPERSONATOR, HAS TAKEN THE JOB ON—AND NOW HE'S GOT TO PUT UP WITH THE CONSEQUENCES!

BILLY BUNTER'S HAIR-RAID!



LOST BALL!

"SAVE!" yelled Bob Cherry.
 "Bunter, you ass—"
 "Stop that footer!"
 "Eh?"

Billy Bunter blinked round through his big spectacles.

On that sunny April afternoon Billy Bunter was enjoying life. Seated in soft sand, with his plump shoulders resting against a chalk boulder, and a large packet of butter-scotch on a podgy knee, the fat Owl of Greyfriars was happy and sticky.

Farther up the beach, Harry Wharton & Co. were punting an old footer on the wide stretch of sand between the sea and the gully that led up through the cliffs to Eastcliff Lodge.

Billy Bunter was not disposed to join in the punt-about. Bunter preferred to sit it out, with the butter-scotch for company. But the Famous Five of Greyfriars were a little more strenuous.

The chums of the Remove were a good way up the beach. The tide was on the ebb, and they did not want to land the ball in the water and see it sail away for the Continent.

But Bob, in the excitement of the moment, had delivered a tremendous kick, and the ball sailed through the air and plumped down on the sand only a yard from Bunter. It landed on a slope, and rolled—and, like Iser in the poem, it rolled rapidly.

Instead of clutching the slouched hat, Wibley's clawing fingers clutched a nose. "Oh!" gasped the owner thereof.

Five fellows yelled to Billy Bunter. They were too far off to have a chance of getting that footer before it rolled into the water. Bunter had only to shift his fat person a yard to save it in time.

Bunter was fat, Bunter was lazy. Bunter was not eager to heave up his weight from the sand and shift it a yard—or even a foot—not an inch, in fact.

Bunter contented himself with blinking at the rolling ball. While he blinked at it, it rolled into the water and danced on the ebbing tide, out from the shore.

Five fellows came pelting down the beach. Five voices addressed Billy Bunter in unison as they came.

"You fat ass!" roared Bob Cherry.
 "You lazy porpoise!" howled Johnny Bull.

"You terrific idiot!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"You blithering barrel!" hooted Frank Nugent.

A Yarn of HARRY WHARTON & Co., of GREYFRIARS, that will make you wish it was twice as long.

"Why didn't you stop that ball, you howling ass?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Bunter blinked at them in surprise. "I'm sitting down!" he explained.

That, to Billy Bunter, seemed a full and sufficient explanation. But if it satisfied Bunter, it did not seem to satisfy the Famous Five. They glared at the Owl of the Remove as if they could have eaten him.

"You—you—you—" hissed Bob. "You—you fat, fozzling, frabjous, frumptious fathead—"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Can't you see I'm sitting down?"

"Might get it yet!" exclaimed Bob. "If I do, I'll bang it on that fat fozzler's head."

Bob jumped to the water's edge. The footer was dancing just out of reach. A swirl of the tide brought it a little nearer, and Bob leaned over and grabbed at it.

His finger-tips touched it, and just missed. Then a returning surge of the receding tide caught him, and washed up round his knees.

"Oooooogh!" gasped Bob. "He, he, he!" Billy Bunter chuckled. "I say, old chap, you're getting wet! He, he, he!"

Bob looked round at him. It was quite an expressive look.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

"Might as well wade in for it," suggested Johnny Bull, "now you're wet up to the knees—"

"Um!" grunted Bob.

"May as well be hung sheepfully as lambfully!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, all right!" said Bob.

And he waded in, up to the knees, and grabbed at the footer again. This time he got it—at the cost of wetting his arms up to his shoulders.

However, he had it, and he stood up, with the ball in his hands, and turned back towards the shelving beach, dripping!

"He, he, he!" from Billy Bunter. "Feeling damp, old chap? He, he, he!"

Bob did not answer in words. He was dripping with salt water because the fat Owl had been too lazy to shift and stop that ball. Bunter's fat giggle was the last straw.

He lifted the ball in both hands over his head, and pitched it ashore. But he did not pitch it on the sand. He landed it on a fat little nose.

Plop!

"Oh!" roared Bunter.

It was not a hard knock. Bob, exasperated as he was, had not put much beef into that throw-in. It was really only a tap! But it took the fat Owl of the Remove quite by surprise—and he backed his head as the wet ball plumped on his nose, and banged the back of it on the chalk boulder against which he was sitting.

"Wow!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—wow! Oh! Ow!" gasped Bunter. He rubbed his fat little nose with one hand, and the back of his fat head with the other. "I say—Ooogh! Why, you silly idiot, wharrer you chucking that ball at me for? I'll jolly well chuck it back, you beast!"

The wet ball reposed on Bunter's fat knees. He grabbed it up in two podgy paws and aimed it at Bob as he waded ashore.

Whiz!

That whizzing ball was intended to tap on Bob's nose in turn, and cause him to sit down in the surging water, which, in Billy Bunter's opinion, would serve him jolly well right.

But Bunter was no marksman! The footer whizzed by a yard from Bob's head, shot out over the water, and plopped into the sea—once more the sport of the tide. All Bob received from it was a splash.

"There, you beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! There goes the ball again!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Bob Cherry scrambled ashore. His arms and legs were streaming—and the ball was dancing on the tide, farther out of reach than ever. Bob tramped up the sand towards Bunter.

Bunter did not need to ask him what he was coming for! He could read that in Bob's speaking countenance.

Bunter had been too lazy to shift a yard to save the footer! But even Bunter could display a spot of energy at times. He was not too lazy to shift a good many yards now. He bounded to his feet and dodged round the boulder in hot haste.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

"Look here, you beast, you keep off!" roared Bunter.

"You fat villain!" roared Bob. "We've lost that ball. I'm going to boot you all over the beach! Come on, you fellows—we'll punt Bunter instead of the footer!"

"Good egg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stand still, Bunter!"

"Go it!"

Billy Bunter did not stand still! Bunter flew! A Spitfire whizzing out to meet a Messerschmitt had nothing on Bunter, as he headed for the gully in the cliffs.

Bunter did not want to be used as a footer in a punt-about. So far as shape went, he was fairly suitable. But he did not like the idea at all. His little fat legs flashed across the sand.

"After him!" roared Bob, without, however, stirring from the spot.

"Chase him!" bawled Johnny Bull.

"Boot him!"

"Get him!"

"Quick!"

Bunter did not look back as he flew! Had he done so, he would have seen the Famous Five standing in a group, grinning as they shouted.

But he didn't! In the full belief that they were close behind, and that boots were about to bang, the fat Owl fled into the gully and clambered and scrambled up steep chalk steps to the road above.

Puffing and panting, gasping and spluttering, the Owl of the Remove fled for his fat life—leaving Harry Wharton & Co. grinning on the beach.

"Now we'll see if we can field that ball!" remarked Bob Cherry, as the fat Owl vanished over the horizon.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And as Billy Bunter careered onward and upward, like the young man in "Excelsior," the Famous Five, chuckling, went fishing for the footer.

WIBLEY IS NOT TAKING ANY!

"MASTER GERALD, sir," said Blump.

"What?"

"On the telephone, Sir William!"

"Oh! My only summer straw!" ejaculated Wibley of the Remove.

Blump blinked.

The portly butler of Eastcliff Lodge was about twice as large as Sir William Bird, the lord of that establishment. Blump was not tall, but he had to look down at his master.

He looked down at him now in mild surprise.

Blump was accustomed to his master, Sir William. He had been butler of Eastcliff Lodge for years and years. But of late, Sir William was always giving him little surprises.

Sir William was a serious, sedate, slightly pompous old gentleman. Yet, during the last week or two—in fact, ever since Greyfriars School had broken up for the Easter holidays—Sir William had been letting slip, continually, all sorts of queer school-boy expressions, which did not seem to Blump suitable for his venerable years.

Often and often, when Blump would have expected Sir William to say "Good gad!" Sir William would ejaculate "My hat!" or even "Oh crikey!" Which naturally surprised Blump.

"Great pip!" went on Sir William. "Gerald? I suppose you mean Loder? What the thump does he want?"

"Your nephew at Greyfriars School, sir!" said Blump. "He desires to speak to you on the telephone, with reference to a visit here."

"Blow him!" said Sir William.

Blump almost staggered.

"Eh?" he ejaculated. "What-what-what did you say, Sir William?"

"Oh! I—I—I mean, go and tell Loder—I mean Gerald—that I'm too busy to come to the phone—tell him to write."

"Very good, sir!"

The library door closed after Blump.

"Oh crumbs!" said Wibley blankly.

Though Blump, during the Easter holidays, had been surprised again and again by his master, in whom he seemed to detect a subtle change, Blump did not dream how very extensive that change was.

The staff at Eastcliff Lodge knew that Sir William was connected with the Secret Service. But they did not know that Sir William was now abroad, on a secret and perilous mission. Still less did they guess that his place at the Lodge had been taken by William Wibley, the school-boy actor of Greyfriars.

Harry Wharton & Co., putting in the Easter holidays there, little dreamed that they were the guests of a fellow they knew in the Remove at Greyfriars School.

To them, as to Blump & Co., the little silver-haired old baronet was Sir William Bird. Only Billy Bunter—who had his own peculiar way of acquiring information—knew that the face of Wibley was concealed under the pink complexion and silvery beard and bushy eyebrows of Sir William.

Had Sir William himself been at home, no doubt he would have been hospitably pleased to hear that his nephew, Gerald Loder of the Sixth Form at Greyfriars, was blowing in during the Easter hols.

But Wibley was not pleased.

Sir William rather liked his nephew—not, perhaps, knowing him quite so well as the Greyfriars juniors did. Wibley did not like him.

No Remove fellow of Greyfriars could be expected to like the bully of the Sixth. Wibley had had to bend over under Loder's ashplant too many times for him to have any kind regard for Gerald.

"Blow him!" grunted Wibley. "The sweep ain't coming here! Dash it all, while I play Sir William, I am Sir William—and boss of the show! Loder can go and eat coke!"

Sir William laid down the "Times." He had been apparently reading the "Times" when Blump came in.

Inside the "Times," however, was the current number of the "School-boys' Own Library"—lighter literature which Wibley preferred! He had to keep up appearances while he was

impersonating the absent baronet at Eastcliff Lodge. Sir William had regularly perused the "Times," so Wibley had to peruse the "Times"—or, at least, appear to do so. Still, endurance had its limits. Wibley solved the difficulty by parking the "Schoolboys' Own Library" inside the "Times."

There was a tap at the library door, and it reopened.

Blump's portly figure reappeared.

"Cut him off?" asked Wibley.

"Hem! No, sir! Master Gerald insists upon speaking to you, sir! He is speaking from Eastcliff Station."

"Oh jiminy!" said Wibley.

Evidently, Loder of the Sixth had got well on his way to the Lodge before he took the trouble to apprise his venerable uncle that he was coming.

"Master Gerald is holding the line, sir."

"Go and tell him to take the next train home!" yapped Wibley.

Blump gazed at him in such astonishment that the schoolboy actor of Greyfriars realised that he was putting his foot in it.

"Oh! I—I—I mean, I—I'll speak to him, Blump!" stammered Sir William. "O.K.! You can cut!"

Blump waddled away, almost gasping. What had come over the pompous little lord of Eastcliff Lodge, he could not imagine. Blump had never expected to live to hear Sir William Bird tell him to cut. However, he did cut!

Wibley, with an angry grunt, went out into the hall, where the telephone stood on a table. He picked up the receiver.

"Hallo! Is that you, Loder?" he asked, in the deep, rather throaty voice he assumed in his character of the old Bird.

"That you, nunky?" came the voice of Loder of the Sixth, in tones of surprise. Wibley realised that he had made another mistake in calling him by his surname.

"Oh! Yes, Gerald!" he answered. "Carry on!"

"Eh?"

"I mean, proceed, my boy!" amended Wibley.

"We're at Eastcliff Station, now, uncle—my pal Price is with me!" came the voice of Loder of the Sixth.

"Oh gum!" ejaculated Wibley. "Mean to say you've got Price of the Fifth with you? My only hat!"

"Wha-a-t? What did you say, uncle?"

"I—I mean—hem—I mean—"

Wibley stammered.

He liked Price of the Fifth, if anything, less than he liked Loder of the Sixth. Moreover, Stephen Price, of the Greyfriars Fifth Form, was as sharp as a needle—one of the sharpest fellows ever! Wibley was confident in his powers of impersonation—he would have backed himself, as an actor, against any other inhabitant of the universe. Still, he did not like the idea of meeting Price's sharp, penetrating eyes in the guise of Sir William Bird. He was not, in fact, taking any—if he could help it!

"You've met Price, uncle!" went

on Loder, from the other end. "You saw him when you came to Greyfriars at the end of the term, you remember—he tea'd with us, in my study."

"Oh! Yes, I know Price!" grunted Wibley.

"I'm glad that you've not gone away after all, uncle!" went on Loder. "You told me you would be leaving England, you remember—"

"Oh, yes! But—"

"We're at Eastcliff Station now. We can't get a taxi for love or money," said Loder. "Will you send the car?"

"Oh, no!"

"What?"

"I—I mean— The fact is, Loder—I mean, Gerald—why the dickens didn't you let me know before you started?"

"Eh? You did know!" came back Loder's voice. "Didn't you tell me, when you saw me at the school, to come along for the hols. any time I liked, whether you were at home or not?"

"Oh," gasped Wibley, "did I?" He realised that the genuine Sir William Bird must have done so.

"Certainly you did!" exclaimed Loder warmly. "I was very glad to hear from Blump that you were at home—I'd thought that you were away. I don't quite make this out, Uncle William. Don't you want me?"

"Eh? Oh! Yes! No end!" gasped Wibley. "But perhaps a little later—you see, I've got some Greyfriars boys staying here now—juniors, you know—I hardly think you would mix. You being a Sixth Form prefect, you know."

"Is that young cad Wharton there, after all, with his gang?" asked Loder, in a very unpleasant tone.

"My young friend Wharton is here! Certainly! His friends Bull, Cherry, Nugent, Hurree Singh, and— and Bunter are here also! I fear, Loder—I mean, Gerald—that you would not pull with them! What?"

"I say, this is pretty thick!" Loder's voice was angry now. "Here I am as far as Eastcliff Station, and a pal with me—"

"Lots of trains back!"

"What?"

"Good-bye, Gerald!"

"Look here—" howled Loder from the other end.

But Sir William did not look there. He jammed back the receiver, and if Gerald Loder went on talking, he had to waste his sweetness on the desert air.

Wibley rose from the telephone.

"That's that!" he remarked.

And, happy and relieved at having got rid of Gerald Loder and his pal Price of the Fifth, the schoolboy actor jammed his hat on his silver locks and walked out into the April sunshine.

Sir William was tired of his own company, and was going to seek that of the Famous Five on the beach—and probably surprise them by revealing, for the umpteenth time, how very young Sir William Bird was for his age!

WIBLEY GETS HIS HAIR OFF!

"I SAY, Wibley—"
"Shut up, fathead!"
"Look here, Wib, you beast—"

"Do you want me to boot you?"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter was rolling up the broad, leafy avenue of Eastcliff Lodge as Sir William Bird, alias William Wibley, walked down it towards the cliff.

Bunter was not looking good-tempered.

He had dropped his pursuers—as they did not happen to be pursuing. And he had dropped into a walk. But he was tired and breathless, and considerably peeved. He had had a run—and he did not like running. He had left the remains of his packet of butterscotch on the beach—and he liked butterscotch. Altogether, Bunter was annoyed.

So was Wibley—when the fat Owl addressed him as Wibley!

Certainly, there was no one at hand to hear, unless anyone happened to be among the trees that lined the avenue. But a fellow playing a part like Wibley's could not be too careful. Except when he surprised Blump by some inadvertent remark, Wibley was careful enough. Bunter was not.

Bunter was aware of the great secret by the expedient of eaves-dropping. For that alone Wibley wanted to kick him.

On the strength of the discovery, Bunter had butted in for Easter—but to that, Wibley did not object, as he preferred to keep the chatter-box of the Remove under his eyes, considering how much he knew.

But at least ten times a day Bunter was on the point of letting that secret out—though, so far, he had refrained from addressing Wib as Wibley in the presence of the other fellows. But he was liable to let it slip any day or any minute.

"Haven't you sense enough, you fat chump, not to mention that name at all?" hissed Wibley. "Can't you call me Sir William, like the other fellows? Haven't you as much sense as a bunny rabbit?"

"Oh, really, Wibley—"

"There you go again!" howled Wibley. "Suppose somebody heard you parroting Wibley? Say Wibley again, and I'll boot you!"

"Beast!" hooted Bunter. "Look here, I'm not standing it, see? That beast Cherry banged me on the boko with a football!"

"Did he bang hard?"

"Yes!"

"Good!" said Wibley.

"Why, you beast!" roared Bunter. "They chased me off the beach, kicking me all the way—at least, they would have, if I hadn't cleared. Think that's the sort of holiday I want?"

"No; it's the sort you need!" grinned Wibley. "Fellows don't always want what they need."

"Look here, Wibley—"

"If you say Wibley again, I'll boot you across the avenue!"

"Wibley!" roared Bunter. "See!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

Yah! Wibley! Wibley! If you don't like it, you cheeky beast, you can jolly well lump it! Sec? Wibley!"

Billy Bunter did not exactly mean to give the secret away. But certainly it would have been given away at that moment to anyone who happened to be anywhere near the spot.

Bunter only meant to make it clear that he could do as he jolly well liked! It was a declaration of independence, as it were!

But that declaration of independence was suddenly cut short as the exasperated Wibley grabbed him by the collar, twirled him round, and planted a foot on the tightest trousers in the British Empire.

Thud!

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"Now say Wibley again, and have another!" hooted Sir William, glaring at him.

Billy Bunter did not say Wibley again! He jumped out of reach of the schoolboy actor's boot, spluttering.

Wibley gave him a glare. Then he glanced quickly in the direction of the house. Fortunately, a bend of the avenue hid the spot from the windows of Eastcliff Lodge. Had any eye from those windows beheld Sir William kicking one of his guests, it would certainly have caused great surprise.

Wibley walked on down the avenue after Wibley as he went, with glaring after him with a glare that might have cracked his spectacles.

Bunter was boiling!

Considering what Bunter knew, and what he could have revealed had he liked, it was up to Wibley to be very civil—and jolly tactful, with Bunter! Instead of which he had booted him!

The exasperated Owl was not standing this! He rushed down the avenue after Wibley as he went with the full intention of booting him in his turn!

But he paused! Booting that beast Wibley was, in itself, a satisfactory proceeding. Bunter yearned to boot him! On the other hand, the outcome was certain that Wibley would then get in a dozen or so!

Bunter paused—but only for a moment! Quite a bright idea flashed into his wrathful, fat brain.

Bunter knew how to make the beast sit up! The thick, silvery mop that Wibley wore in imitation of the old Bird was, of course, semi-detached. One grab at that mop—

The fat Owl rushed on!

Wibley, at the footsteps behind him, turned! As he turned, a fat paw grabbed his hat. Another fat paw grabbed his hair.

Before Wibley knew what was happening, his hat was off in Bunter's right, and his hair was off in Bunter's left.

Wibley's own close-cut crop of tallow-coloured hair was revealed in the place of the silvery mop!

Bunter revolved rapidly on his

axis, and fled up the avenue—hat in one hand, hair in the other!

Wibley, with a yell of rage and consternation, shot after him. He wanted his hat and his hair! The hat did not matter so much as the hair—he simply had to have the hair! Bunter flew!

In less than a minute, Wibley would have run him down! But the fleeing fat Owl tore round the curve of the avenue. There he was in full sight of the many-windowed front of Eastcliff Lodge.

Wibley stopped.

He stopped in time! His pink face was still adorned by silvery beard, moustache, and eyebrows. In contrast, his own tallow-coloured close crop looked quite remarkable. He dared not be seen thus! It would have been giving away the whole game.

"Bunter!" shrieked Wibley, keeping back behind the tree at the curve of the avenue. "Bunter! You mad ass! Bring that back! Come back! Do you hear?"

If Bunter heard, he did not heed! Bunter was jolly well going to give that cheeky beast a lesson!

Wibley stood panting with rage and dismay. He could not go in sight of the windows; and he realised that he could not remain on the avenue, where anyone might pass and spot him—a single glance would reveal, now, that he was not Sir William Bird.

He darted, panting, into the trees that lined the avenue, hunting cover. There in cover he waited for Bunter to come back. It seemed to Wibley that even the egregious Owl of the Remove must realise that he could not carry on with this. He promised himself the satisfaction of booting Bunter all over the shop as soon as he had his hair on again!

Perhaps Bunter guessed that Wibley was looking forward to that satisfaction. Anyhow, he did not come back!

Grinning, the fat Owl blinked back—from a distance. Wibley was not to be seen. He tucked the wig into the hat and deposited the hat behind a tree at the side of the avenue. Grinning all over his fat face, he rolled on and entered the house by the french windows of the library.

There he plumped down in an armchair to rest after his exertions.

A few minutes later, Blump, in the hall, heard a sound that seemed to him like the drone of approaching aircraft. That sound proceeded from the library, and Blump opened the door and looked in to ascertain what it was.

It was a snore!

Billy Bunter was asleep in the armchair. Blump gazed at him expressively!

Blump, after an expressive gaze, withdrew and closed the door.

Bunter was left to repose, while Wibley, in a state of inexpressible rage and consternation, waited for him to come back. His fury grew as he waited in vain. In a double sense, Wibley had his hair off!

UP A TREE!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "See that?"

"What?"

"Which?"

"Somebody skulking in the trees!" exclaimed Bob.

He came to a halt on the avenue, staring. His comrades halted also, looking in the same direction.

The Famous Five were coming up from the beach. They had not succeeded in recapturing that footer, and they were all rather splashed from their efforts so to do—and there was a general feeling that matters would be considerably improved by booting Bunter!

But they forgot Bunter now. If somebody was lurking in the trees by the avenue, it was a matter that required attention. But they could see nobody as they looked.

"Sure you saw—" began Johnny Bull.

"I saw a leg whisk out of sight behind a tree," answered Bob. "Whoever it was, saw us coming, and dodged in time. He's there."

"Then we'll jolly well root him out!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "It may be Soames—"

"Or Brown," said Frank Nugent.

"Must be one or the other, I should think," said Bob. "Nobody belonging to the place would dodge out of sight like that."

"Hardly! Come on!" said the captain of the Remove; and the five juniors ran towards the spot where Bob had seen that leg disappear.

It was several days since the Greyfriars fellows had seen anything of their old enemy, Soames. But they did not feel at all sure that Soames had cleared off from the vicinity of Eastcliff Lodge.

The discovery that Sir William's valet, Jermyn, was, in reality, their old foe under a new name had put paid to Soames' game in Eastcliff Lodge—whatever that mysterious game was. But though he had left the lodge, they did not believe that he had left the neighbourhood.

If Soames was hanging about within the precincts of Eastcliff Lodge, the Famous Five were prepared to make it drastically clear to Soames that his room was preferred to his company.

But it was more probably, perhaps, that the unseen lurker in the trees was the man with the blond eyebrows, who called himself Brown. Mr. Brown, they knew, was keeping watch on Eastcliff Lodge and its master—for what reason the juniors did not know except that it had some connection with Secret Service work in which Sir William Bird was engaged.

Whether that lurker in the trees by the avenue was Soames, or whether he was Brown, the juniors were keen to deal with him.

So they ran rapidly towards the spot. Big beeches lined the avenue, and there was plenty of cover. But once they got past the beeches, they could see at a glance anyone who was screened by them

"Oh!" yelled Johnny Bull, as they came through the trees. "Look!"

He pointed upward.

A leg was disappearing into foliage above. It vanished the next moment; but Johnny had spotted it.

"There he is!" exclaimed Bob.

"We've jolly well got him now!"

"Tree'd!" grinned Nugent.

They stood under the beech, staring up.

Evidently, the lurker had clambered into the tree as the only way of escaping observation. But they had spotted him there. A rustling in the branches showed that he was climbing higher.

"And we jolly well will!" said Bob.

"But if it's Brown—" said Nugent.

"If it's Brown, we bag him," said the captain of the Remove decidedly. "We know he's a spy—I believe he's a Hun—but we know he's a spy, anyhow. If it's Brown, he's not to get away!"

The rustling in the tree had ceased. Whoever the man was, he was out of sight, and doubtless listening to the voices below.

That it was either Soames or Brown seemed certain to the juniors. Certainly they did not dream of suspecting that it was Sir William

the police station, and you can tell them whether you spell your name B-r-a-u-n when you're at home."

Still no answer.

"Like us to come up for you?" roared Bob.

Silence from the beech.

"Well, if the mountain won't come to Mahomet, Mahomet has to hike off to the jolly old mountain," said Bob. "Two of us can climb up and root him out, and the other three watch for him if he drops—what?"

"Good egg!"

A gasp was audible from above. The man in the tree evidently heard, and was alarmed by the prospect of



Loder caught up a jug of milk and whizzed the contents at the Famous Five. The jug followed the milk. "Master Gerald—" stuttered the butler.

The branches were thick with the green of spring, and their view into the interior of the tree was shut off. But they knew the man was there, and they could hear him moving, and hear his panting breath.

"That settles it!" said Harry Wharton. "It's either Soames or Brown—and whichever it is, we've got him!"

"The gotfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"If it's Soames," went on Harry. "we can't collar him. From what Sir William said the other day, Soames, when he called himself Jermyn, was let into some secret, as the old Bird trusted him. Goodness knows what it was, but he had to be let run because of what he knew. But though we can't collar him, we can jolly well rag him bald-headed for butting in here again."

Bird—still less, that it was Wibley of the Remove!

Wibley, so far as they knew, was at his aunt's in Derbyshire for the Easter holidays. Probably, they would have forgotten the existence of the schoolboy actor, but for the circumstance that Billy Bunter was continually mentioning his name.

Certainly they did not think of him now.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "You can come down, Soames—if you're Soames! We're going to bump you, Soames, and then walk you down to the beach and duck you. Don't keep us waiting."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

No answer came from the branches above.

"If you're Brown, come down just the same!" roared Bob. "If you're Brown, we're going to walk you to

being rooted out by Greyfriars climbers.

Wibley, in fact, was in a state of great alarm.

On his own account, he would willnigly have admitted the Famous Five to the secret of the impersonation, especially as Billy Bunter had already nosed out that secret. But he had pledged his word to the old Bird to reveal it to nobody; and he had had to keep his word—if he could. Just now it rather looked as if he couldn't.

Bob Cherry stepped to the gnarled old trunk to clamber up. Harry Wharton did the same. Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh spread out under the branches to grab the hidden man if he dropped.

There was no escape for him.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

Bob Cherry took a grip on the trunk.

"Coming down, Soames?" he shouted.

No answer.

"Coming down, Brown?"

Still no answer.

"All right—I'm coming up, then!" bawled Bob. "I don't know which you are, old bean, but I'll sort you out in a minute or two!"

And Bob started to climb.

"Stop, please!" came a voice at last from the unseen lurker hidden in the branches above. "Don't come up, my young friends."

Bob dropped back in sheer amazement. All the juniors knew the rather throaty voice of Sir William Bird—quite unlike the voice of Wibley of the Remove. It was Sir William in the tree!

Simply flabbergasted by that astonishing discovery, the Famous Five stood and stared up at the thick branches, wondering whether they had heard aright.

"Sir William!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"The old bean!" murmured Nugent.

"The old Bird!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Is—is—is that you, Sir William?" called out Harry, in utter wonder.

The Famous Five had noticed on many occasions that Sir William was remarkably young for his age. When Wibley occasionally forgot the part he was playing, he displayed an activity amazing in a venerable old bean. But tree-climbing, in a silver-haired baronet of sixty-five, was really the limit.

"Oh! Yes!" came the throaty voice from above. "Quite! Have I—hem!—surprised you, my young friends?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob. "Just a few, sir."

The chums of the Remove were more than surprised—they were astonished—they were astounded. They could not make it out.

Unless they were strangely mistaken, the hidden man in the tree had dodged up into the branches to elude them. Why Sir William Bird should desire to elude his guests, especially in such an extraordinary manner, was a deep mystery to them.

"Well, this beats it!" said Johnny Bull. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh murmured that the beatfulness was terrific.

"The—the fact is, I—I had a—a fancy for—for climbing a tree!" went on the old baronet's voice from the foliage. "A somewhat—hem—juvenile amusement for one of my—hem—years! Please do not talk about this, my—my young friends. It might seem a little—a little—hem—undignified! Hem!"

"Oh! Not at all!" gasped Wharton. "We thought it must be Soames or Brown, sir—and—and—"

"Sorry you've been troubled!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Like us to help you down, sir?"

"Oh! No! Thank you! No! But I shall be glad if you will look for Bunter—"

"Bunter?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

"Yes, Bunter—and tell him I wish very much to see him at the earliest possible moment. Probably he is in the house! Tell him to come out here at once! Do you understand?"

Harry Wharton & Co. did not understand in the very least. Why Sir William had taken to the tree was one mystery; why he wanted to see Bunter was another.

"Oh! All right, sir!" said Bob. "We'll go and tell Bunter at once! Come on, you fellows—race you up to the house!"

The juniors, though they did not understand, realised that the sooner they were off the scene, the better their host at Eastcliff Lodge would be pleased. Whatever Sir William's motives might be, it was plain that he did not want them witnessing his tree-climbing stunts.

So they left the spot at once, leaving Sir William still invisible high up the tree. They went up the avenue at a trot—exchanging amazed glances as they went.

"Can you beat it?" murmured Bob Cherry.

And his chums shook their heads. They felt that they couldn't.

INHOSPITABLE!

GERALD LODER, of the Sixth Form at Greyfriars School, came out of the little station at Eastcliff with a scowling face.

Price of the Fifth, lounging outside, was smoking a cigarette while he waited for his Sixth Form pal.

He gave Loder an inquiring look. Loder had been on the telephone, and his talk with his uncle at the Lodge did not seem to have improved his temper.

"Car comin'?" asked Price. "No! I can't make the old fool out!" said Loder, between his teeth. "The dashed old fossil must be off his nut, I think."

A grin dawned on Price's sallow, lean face. He was aware that Loder cultivated that rich uncle of his; and that, in Sir William's presence, butter would not have melted in Gerald's mouth. Loder's present observations showed exactly how affectionate a nephew he was.

"I thought the old ass was away," went on Loder. "You remember he came to the school just before break-up for Easter. Well, he came to say good-bye chiefly, as he was off on some foreign journey. He said that if I liked to run down to the Lodge, I was to do so, just the same, although he was away. You heard him—you were teasing with us—"

"Well, isn't he away, after all?" asked Price.

"No. I got the butler, and he told me Sir William was at home!" growled Loder.

Price whistled. "Not so jolly for us," he remarked. "We shall have to mind our p's and q's, with the old bean on the spot."

"Yes, it's rotten. But that ain't all! I tell you I can't make him out! I asked him to send the car, and he refused."

"Nice old hospitable nunky!" said Price, staring. "Doesn't he want

you, after all, as he's at home?"

"Looks not! He told me to catch a train back!"

Price blinked at him. A rather disagreeable expression came over his face. Price was glad to pick up a cheap holiday with the sportsman of the Sixth. But if this was how it was going to turn out, he wished that he had not wasted his money on railway fares. He had none too much to waste.

"I say, that's pretty thick!" he said. "The old goat seemed decent enough that day at Greyfriars! What the dooce has changed him like this?"

"I can't make it out—unless it's those fags being there!" said Loder. "I knew the old ass had asked Wharton and his gang—goodness knows why. I heard that they chipped in when some man tried to pinch a paper off him, near the school, the day he came. That may be it. Anyhow, he asked them—and it seems that they're still there."

"And quered our pitch!" said Price.

Loder set his lips. "It must be that," he said. "I can't see any reason why he should change like this. But if he thinks I'm going to take a train back, he's jolly well mistaken—I'm not! I'm going on." Loder's eyes gleamed.

"He says I shouldn't pull with that mob of fags! He's right there—I'll make the young cads sorry they've butted in."

"But—"

Price hesitated. "We can't get a taxi here, and the old goat isn't sending the car! We've got to walk it! Coming?" snapped Loder.

Price paused a moment. He was not thin-skinned, but in such circumstances, he felt a spot of diffidence about presenting himself at Eastcliff Lodge.

But his pause was brief. He had to go somewhere, and he did not want to go anywhere at his own expense. He was only with Loder at all, because his pal Hilton of the Fifth seemed to have forgotten his existence.

Besides, the old Bird had told Loder to run down to the lodge any time he liked, and to bring a friend with him if he wanted to. The old bean had to stand for it—he could hardly shut the door in their faces!

"Oh, all right!" said Price, at last. "It's jolly weird, but we'd better chance it, as we've come so far. What about the bags?"

"I'm carrying mine! If you can't carry yours, you can leave it on the pavement!" answered Loder—an answer which showed that Loder was too deeply annoyed to have any politeness left, even for his pal.

Price, without replying, picked up his suitcase. Loder swung away, with a scowling brow, and the bad hat of the Greyfriars Fifth followed him.

"Far?" asked Price, not pleasantly. Fagging along with a suitcase in the warm April sunshine was not what Price had expected; and he was rather a weedy specimen, and easily tired.

"Under a mile!" grunted Loder.

"A mile! Oh gad!"

"Tired?" jeered Loder.

"Yes!" grunted Price.

"Go down on your hands and knees, and crawl."

Again Price refrained from replying. When old Gerald was in this sort of temper, argument was injudicious. Price had come down for a holiday, not for a row.

They tramped down a dusty, sunny lane, both of them irritable and exasperated; annoyed with Sir William, annoyed with one another, and annoyed with things generally.

The lane led them to the road along the top of the cliffs, on which the gates of Eastcliff Lodge opened. Loder made little of a mile's walk with a suitcase; but Stephen Price was damp and perspiring by the time they reached their destination.

At a distance from the big gateway, where the tall bronze gates were closed, was a little white wicket-gate that gave on the road. Loder flung it open with a crash, and stamped in, the gate swinging back and nearly up-ending Price as he followed.

Price dodged it, kicked it open again, and followed Loder in. He gave the back of Loder's head a rather evil look as the Sixth Form man led the way up the avenue.

Loder's manners, certainly, were not good, considering that he was host, and Price guest. But Loder's manners were never good when he was in a bad temper—and he was in the worst of tempers now.

It was, as Price had said, pretty thick on Sir William's part, to let fellows down like this; and Loder, of course, had not the remotest idea of the change of identity on the part of the lord of Eastcliff Lodge.

He could simply not imagine why Sir William had changed like this—unless the change was due to Harry Wharton & Co. Their presence might account for it—otherwise, it seemed unaccountable. And the bully of the Sixth, who had always had a down on the cheery Co., was now feeling implacably bitter and hostile towards them. They were not going to enjoy their Easter holiday after his arrival, if Loder could help it.

He tramped up the avenue, Price almost tottering after him, his suitcase feeling as if it weighed a ton.

They arrived at length at the door of the mansion, on which Loder banged with the big brass knocker, almost as if he wished to knock the door in.

It was opened by Blump.

The portly butler's eyebrows lifted a trifle at the sight of Loder's scowling face.

He had gathered from Sir William that Master Gerald would not be coming. But here was Master Gerald—with knitted brows and glinting eyes—and a damp, perspiring, tired, weedy fellow at his heels.

"Master Gerald!" said Blump.

Loder had been at Eastcliff Lodge a good many times, and was well known there.

"Where's my uncle?" grunted Master Gerald, as he tramped in, and pitched down his suitcase.

"Sir William went out about an hour ago, sir!" said Blump. "He has not yet returned."

Loder's eyes gleamed, and Price sneered. Evidently Sir William was not expecting new arrivals!

"Are our rooms ready?" grunted Loder.

"The master has given no instructions, sir—"

"Well, see that they're got ready, Blump! Have the bags taken up!"

"Very good, Master Gerald."

"Are those fags about?" grunted Loder.

"Those what, sir?"

"That young rotter Wharton and his crew!" snarled Loder.

Blump coughed.

"Master Wharton and his friends came in a short time ago, sir!" he answered. "They are in the library at the moment, but tea is being prepared for them in the dining-room."

Loder made a step towards the library—apparently feeling an urge for a row with the Remove fellows without loss of time. But he paused. He wanted his tea; and the fags would keep.

"Let's have tea at once, Blump!" he said. "This way, Pricey!"

They went into the dining-room, where John was laying the tea for six.

Blump gazed after them. In his master's absence, Blump did not quite know what to do in these peculiar circumstances. Master Gerald, however, was a frequent guest at Eastcliff Lodge in the school holidays; and up to now, Sir William had always treated him like an affectionate and hospitable uncle. Blump decided that he had better give Master Gerald his head, so to speak, until Sir William came in. So Charles was called to carry up the suitcases; and Blump lent his own portly assistance in providing tea for the unexpected guests.

"Are we teeing with those fags, when they blow in, Loder?" asked Price, with a sneer.

Loder's eyes glinted.

"You'll see!" he answered briefly.

From which it appeared that trouble was scheduled to occur when the Remove fellows blew in.

LODER GETS GOING!

"SHAN'T!"

Billy Bunter's answer was short, if not sweet.

The Famous Five had found him in the library. They found him asleep in Sir William Bird's favourite arm-chair. His eyes were shut, his mouth was open; he slept, and he snored.

They woke him up!

Waking Bunter was not, as a rule, an easy task. But Bob Cherry effected it quite easily by pinching a little fat nose between a finger and thumb.

Bunter grunted, snorted, woke, and yelped. He blinked at the Famous Five through his big spectacles. They explained that Sir William Bird wanted him to go down the avenue. Whereupon Bunter made that short, if not sweet, reply!

"The old Bird told us to tell you, fathead!" said Harry Wharton.

"Shan't!" repeated Bunter.

"It's only half-way down the avenue!" said Bob. "Just round the curve—"

"Shan't!"

"The old bean wants you for some reason, you ass!" said Nugent.

"Shan't!"

Bunter's replies lacked variety. But they did not lack emphasis. It was clear that William George Bunter was not going to walk down the avenue—even half-way down—to oblige his host at Eastcliff Lodge.

"We left him there, waiting for you!" said Johnny Bull. Johnny did not add that they had left Sir William up a tree! The tree'd baronet had asked the juniors not to talk about that, and they did not.

"Let him wait!" said Bunter. "Blow him!"

"Are you always as polite and obliging as that when you're on a visit, old fat man?" asked Bob.

"Blow him!" repeated Bunter. "Let him wait, and be blowed! Kicking a chap—"

"Wha-a-at?"

The Famous Five ejaculated together!

It had often struck them during that Easter holiday that Sir William found it difficult to keep patience with the exasperating fat Owl! But certainly they had never expected to hear that the baronet had gone to the length of kicking Bunter, as a fellow might have done in the Remove passage at Greyfriars.

Bunter, certainly, often asked for it—still, booting a guest was a thing that was not done in the best circles!

"He kicked me!" said Bunter. "Well, I've made him sit up! Let him wait! But I say, you fellows," added Bunter, as a sudden thought struck him. "Have you seen him? Oh crikey! I thought he'd keep out of sight! I say, have you seen him?"

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter. They had not, as a matter of fact, seen Sir William. But Bunter's question was astonishing, all the same.

"Oh crikey!" repeated Bunter. "If you've seen him, I suppose you know now!"

"Know what, you burbling bloater?" asked Bob.

"Oh, nothing, if you haven't seen him," said Bunter hastily. "I'm not going to tell you! But if he gave you a message for me, didn't you see him? How could he speak to you without you seeing him?"

"As it happens, we didn't see him!" said Harry Wharton in wonder. "But what could it matter if we had? We've seen him often enough!"

"He, he, he!"

"What is that fat porpoise gurgling about?" asked Johnny Bull.

"He, he, he! I'm not going to tell you anything—I told Wibley I wouldn't, and I won't—"

"Wibley?" howled the Famous Five. Bunter's incessant and mysterious references to Wibley of the Remove were quite perplexing.

"Oh! I don't mean Wibley!"

stammered Bunter. "Not at all! Wibley ain't here, you know."

"We know he isn't, fathead!"

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter. "All the same, I ain't going! I may trot out after tea! I'll jolly well give him a lesson!"

"Who?" howled Bob.

"Wibley, of course—I mean, I don't mean Wibley—I mean—I—I—I mean—I say, you fellows, is tea ready?"

"Blump's getting it ready," answered Harry. "But you'd better cut out and see Sir William before tea. He seemed to want you specially."

"He, he, he! Bet he did!" grinned Bunter. "Bet he didn't tell you why, though! He, he, he! I say, you fellows, how did he keep out of sight while he was talking to you? He, he, he!"

The Famous Five looked at one another in wonder. It was true that Sir William had kept out of sight while he was talking to them. Bunter seemed to know that he had a motive for so doing. But what that motive was, and how Bunter knew, they could not begin to guess.

"What did he do—hide behind a tree?" grinned Bunter. "He, he, he! He couldn't let you see him like that—he, he, he!"

"Like what?" howled Johnny Bull.

"Oh! Nothing! I say, you fellows, let's go and have tea!" Bunter heaved himself out of the armchair. "After tea, I may give him a look in. No hurry, that I know of! Let him rip!"

"Well, if he wants the fat ass, he will find him here," said Bob. "I suppose we can't roll Bunter down the avenue like a barrel! The old Bird will come in to tea, I suppose."

"He'll watch it!" chuckled Bunter.

"Why shouldn't he?"

"Oh! No reason why he shouldn't, of course!" grinned the fat Owl. "I say, you fellows, let's go and scrounge some tea. That beast can come in, if he wants any—he, he, he!"

"He may come in any minute, fathead!" said Bob Cherry. "Come on, you men—we want a wash before tea!"

The Famous Five left the library, leaving Billy Bunter to his own devices. The fat Owl grinned after them as they went.

Wibley's predicament, when Bunter thought of it, seemed quite amusing to Bunter. Serve him jolly well right was Bunter's idea. Still, Bunter was going to let him have his wig back later.

In the meantime, Wibley could kick his heels on the avenue and be blowed to him. Did he not deserve it, for kicking Bunter? He did—at all events the fat Owl of the Remove had no doubt that he did.

Bunter rolled out of the library after the Famous Five. They had gone up to their rooms. Bunter headed for the dining-room, where the schoolboys were accustomed to having their tea.

He rolled cheerily into that apartment.

To his surprise, two fellows were seated there—at tea! The fat Owl blinked at them, astonished by the unexpected sight of Loder of the Sixth and Price of the Fifth.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter. Price gave his pal a look.

"Here's one of them!" he remarked.

Loder rose to his feet, with a most unpleasant expression on his face.

Had Sir William been present, no doubt Gerald Loder would have minded his p's and q's, as Price had remarked that they would have to do, with the old bean about. But Sir William was not present; he was absent; and Loder saw no reason for not acting as the spirit moved him to do.

The spirit moved him to grab the surprised Owl by his collar.

"Here, I say!" yelled Bunter. "I say, leggo, Loder! Wharrer you think you're up to? I say—Yaroooh!"

"Master Gerald!" exclaimed Blump. The butler was in the room, and he gazed at Loder in astonishment.

Loder heeded neither the butler, nor the fat Owl! With a swing of his arm, he propelled Billy Bunter to the door.

He landed him in the doorway, gasping, nicely placed for a kick! Then his foot shot out.

"Yooo-hoop!" roared Bunter.

He flew!

Bump!

There was a bump, and another roar, as Bunter landed in the hall. He rolled over, sat up, and blinked at Loder over the spectacles that had slid down his fat little nose.

"Ow! Wow!" howled Bunter.

"Why, you beast! Ow! Wow!"

Loder gave him a sour grin.

"Come in again and have another!" he said grimly. He went back into the room and slammed the door.

Bunter tottered to his feet. But he did not come in again. He did not want another!

LODER GOING STRONG!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Bunter fairly yelled. His fat face was crimson with indignation and wrath. He spluttered with rage.

Harry Wharton & Co. had come out of their room into the oak gallery above the hall. They stared in surprise at Bunter. The fat Owl, breathless from the staircase, met them in the gallery—boiling with fury.

"What on earth's up?" asked Harry. "Sir William kicked you again?"

"Ow! No! Loder!" howled Bunter.

"Loder!" exclaimed the Famous Five all together. They had not expected to hear of the bully of the Greyfriars Sixth in holiday-time.

"That beast Loder—he's here!" roared Bunter.

"Loder here!" Bob Cherry whistled. "Well, he's the old bean's nephew—no reason why he shouldn't blow in! What about him?"

"He's kicked me!" shrieked Bunter.

"Oh, my hat! Did you ask for it the minute Loder got here?" exclaimed Bob.

"Beast! I went in to tea, and he kicked me out!" raved Bunter. "Loder—and that cad Price grinning like a Cheshire cheese—I mean, cat! Think I'm going to be kicked all over the shop? Think I ain't going to have any tea? I say, you fellows, come down and pitch into Loder!"

"Phew!" said Bob.

"I just went in to tea, not knowing the cads were there! And he slung me to the door and kicked me out. I want my tea!" howled Bunter.

The Famous Five looked rather grim. The arrival of Sir William Bird's nephew, Loder of the Greyfriars Sixth, was far from welcome to them. They had plenty of trouble with Loder in term-time—and they did not want any in the holidays—especially under Sir William's hospitable roof.

"Dash it all, even that bully Loder can't be going to start on the war-path in his uncle's house!" said Nugent. "He's bound to keep the peace here."

"We're bound to, at any rate!" said Harry. "I remember Loder was shirty at Greyfriars, when he heard that Sir William had asked us here. The old bean doesn't know what a beastly bully Loder is, of course. We can't have a row here."

"I want my tea!" roared Bunter.

"Well, we all want our tea!" remarked Bob. "Loder can't be hooligan enough to kick up a shindy here! Let's go down, anyhow."

"Come on, Bunter!" said Harry.

The juniors moved off towards the stairs.

"I say, you fellows, there's enough of you to handle Loder!" said the fat Owl. "You collar him and I'll jolly well kick him—see? He can't come the prefect in the hols."

"We can't handle him here, fathead. Do you think we can collar Sir William Bird's nephew under Sir William's roof, ass?"

"He kicked me!" howled Bunter.

"Well, he won't kick us!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "He will come up against bad trouble, if he tries it on!"

"Terrific trouble!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But let us exercise preposterous tactfulness, my esteemed chums. The soft answer turns away the stitch in time that saves a cracked pitcher from going longest to a bird in the bush, as the English proverb remarks."

"Good old English proverb!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Inky, old man, you ought to talk your proverbial wisdom on the Talkies! It would make 'em smile."

"I say, you fellows, are you going to collar Loder—?"

"No, ass!" answered Harry Wharton.

"Then I shan't come down!" snorted Bunter. "Tell Blump to send tea up to my room! I don't want much—half a dozen eggs, and a few muffins and scones, and a pot of jam and a cake or two—nothing much!"

"Bow-wow!"
 "Look here, you beasts, you tell Blump——"

But the Famous Five went down the stairs unheeding. Billy Bunter glared after them, over the balustrade of the gallery.

Bunter wanted his tea—but he was not disposed to venture within reach of Loder's boot again, unless Loder was in safe hands. A meal-time called—generally an irresistible call to Billy Bunter! But he remained where he was.

Harry Wharton & Co. crossed the hall to the dining-room. They walked into that apartment—where Blump and John were attending to the wants of Loder and his Fifth Form pal.

"Good-afternoon, Loder!" said the captain of the Remove politely.

The Co. put on genial smiles. They did not like Gerald Loder or his company—but obviously this was no time or place for a row.

That, however, did not seem to be Loder's view.

He left his tea, and rose to his feet, an extremely unpleasant expression on his face; and Price grinned an anticipative grin.

"So the whole gang of you are here?" said Loder.

"The herefulness is terrific, esteemed Loder."

"I think I told you, at the school, that I didn't want a crew of fags butting into my uncle's house!" said Loder.

"But we are guests of Sir William——"

"My uncle doesn't want a crowd of cheeky fags here!" said Loder between his teeth. "And neither do I——"

"Think we care a boiled bean what you want, or what you don't want?" growled Johnny Bull.

"Chuck it, old man!" said Harry. "Look here, Loder, we're here as guests of Sir William Bird! Sir William seems to be out—but he may come in any minute. I suppose you don't want him to hear a row going on?"

"Get out!" was Loder's reply.

"We've come in to tea!" explained Bob.

"I've told you to get out!"

"Really, Master Gerald!" Blump ventured to remonstrate.

"You can shut up, Blump!" said Loder. "I'm not having this crew of fags here! If they think they can sit down to tea with Sixth Form prefects, it only shows what a cheeky crew they are!"

"But they are the master's guests, sir!" murmured Blump.

"I've told you to shut up! Get out of this, you scrubby gang of young rotters!" said Loder. "I've kicked Bunter out, and I'm ready to do the same with the lot of you! Travel, while the going's good!"

"Try it on!" roared Johnny Bull.

"I'll try it on fast enough," said Gerald Loder, coming round the table. "Now, then, out you go!"

The Famous Five stood firm, just within the doorway. Eyes were gleaming now. The last thing they would have desired was a row under Sir William's hospitable roof. But certainly they were not going to

allow Loder to repeat his booting performances, with themselves as the bootees!

"Master Gerald!" gasped Blump.

John gazed on with wide-open eyes. Price chuckled.

"Go it!" he said.

"Going?" roared Loder, striding towards the group of juniors.

"For goodness' sake, Loder, don't be such a fool!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Can't you be decent under your uncle's roof?"

"Are you going?"

"No, you dummy!"

Wharton was interrupted by a rush.

The next moment Loder was in the grasp of the five.

At Greyfriars, as a Sixth Form prefect, Loder could not be handled by Remove fellows. No finger could be laid on the important person of a Sixth Form prefect. But in holiday-time Loder was nobody in particular—his official powers, of course, ceased when the school broke up. Loder did not seem to realise how that changed matters.

But it was borne in upon his mind, as he charged the Famous Five to drive them out into the hall. He did not seem to expect them to lay hands on him. But they did—hard!

Loder went over, and landed on the dining-room floor with a crash. He sprawled there, and roared.

"Oh!" gasped Blump.

"Oh, my eye!" murmured John.

Price of the Fifth half-rose, as if to go to the aid of his pal. On second thoughts, proverbially the best, Price sat down again. He did not want to land on the old oak floor like Loder.

Gerald Loder scrambled to his feet, with a face of fury. He jumped at the five, and then jumped back again. Loder did not want another bump on

the oak, and he could see that that was what he was going to get.

"Come on!" roared Johnny Bull, belligerently. "Come and have another!"

"Another ready, Loder!" grinned Bob.

Loder did not come on. He backed behind the table, caught up a jug of milk, and whizzed the contents at the Famous Five.

There was a general splutter as the juniors got the milk. The jug followed the milk, and they dodged it in time. It flew out into the hall, crashed on the floor, and scattered in a score of fragments.

"Master Gerald!" stuttered Blump.

Loder did not heed him. He grabbed up muffins from a dish and hurled them, one after another.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Look out!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Collar him!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Hold on!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Get out of this, you fellows, for goodness' sake!"

Loder, having used up the muffins, grabbed the teapot, apparently to send it after the jug.

The juniors backed quickly out of the room, Bob dragging Johnny by the arm.

They were angry enough, and eager to give the bully of the Sixth what he was asking for. But a battle royal in Sir William's dining-room was not to be thought of. Loder, evidently, had no regard for the fitness of things. But the juniors had. Loder had to be left victorious.

Blump followed the juniors into the hall. Blump, evidently, was greatly scandalised by Loder's extraordinary proceedings.

"If you young gentlemen will step into the music-room, I will have tea served there immediately," murmured Blump. "Perhaps it would be better—hem!—to keep a distance from Master Gerald—hem!—until Sir William returns—hem!"

There was a fat squeak over the balustrade above.

"Send my tea up here, Blump! I'm not coming down while that beast Loder is about! Do you hear?"

"Yes, sir! Certainly, sir."

"By gum!" murmured Bob, as the juniors went into the music-room. "This is a rum go! What the thump are we going to do—with Loder here—if that's how he's started?"

To which Bob's comrades could make no reply. It was a very difficult question to answer.

SAFETY FIRST!

Complaints are being received every day that readers of the MAGNET are sometimes unable to get a copy of the MAGNET. The reason for this is that they have failed to register with their newsagent. Readers can only be on the safe side by filling in the Order Form herewith and handing it to their newsagent at the earliest opportunity.—Ed.

ORDER FORM.

To (Newsagent).....

.....

Until further notice, please reserve for me every week a copy of the MAGNET.

Reader's Name and Address.....

.....

THE HAT-HUNTER!

"I'LL slaughter him!" hissed Wibley.

Wibley was breathing rage as he waited in vain for Bunter.

After the Famous Five had left him—tree'd—and were safe out of sight, the hapless Wib had descended from the tree.

He kept in cover behind the trunk and watched the avenue—for Bunter. But, like Sister Anne, he watched in vain.

Bunter did not come. He saw THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

nothing of Bunter. All he saw was Loder and Price tramping up the avenue with their suitcases. He gave them a glare from behind the tree, and watched them disappear round the curve of the avenue. Then he waited for Bunter—but no fat figure loomed into view!

"I'll spifficate him!" hissed Wibley.

Sir William Bird's double had lost his hat and his hair. He could have managed without the hat; but he could not possibly manage without the hair. He dared not let an eye fall on him in his present denuded state.

He was Sir William up to the crown of his head. But the crown of his head was obviously not Sir William's—a fact that would have leaped to the most casual eye!

"I'll burst him!" groaned Wibley. Slaughtering, spifficating, and bursting Bunter would have been a happy satisfaction; but still more, Wibley wanted his hair. He would have forgiven Bunter—indeed, welcomed him with open arms—had the fat Owl rolled back with that white wig—or even the hat. A hat would have hidden the loss of hair could Wibley have obtained one. Hatless, he was given away at the first glance.

He dared not be seen! He dared not be discovered. Although, to the schoolboy actor, his impersonation of Sir William was rather a lark, the affair had a very serious side.

Sir William was engaged upon an important and perilous mission. Wibley had an idea that he was actually within the enemy's frontiers—that he had ventured into Hitler's own dominions, on secret service.

Success, even safety, might depend on enemy spies never learning that he had left Eastcliff Lodge. That they suspected his mission was certain from the fact that Sir William's residence was watched. Everything might depend on keeping the facts from their knowledge.

The schoolboy actor of Greyfriars had been a windfall to the old Bird in these circumstances. To let him down was not to be thought of. Wibley had to keep up his part till the old Bird came back. And that ass—that fathead—that idiot—that fozzling frump—Bunter, had landed him like this and imperilled the whole thing.

In his present state, Wibley could not let himself be seen at the Lodge. He could not let himself be seen on the road—he could not go and buy a hat! He could only wait for the benighted ass, Bunter—and wait in vain! He came near foaming at the mouth as he waited.

Bunter, of course, did not understand how fearfully serious it all was. Bunter could not be expected to understand anything. As likely as not, he had forgotten Wibley. It would be like him. If Bunter was thinking of him at all, he was probably grinning over his predicament.

"I'll squash him!" hissed Wibley. "I'll spifficate him! I'll strew him in tiny pieces all over the shop!"

He waited—and waited! Even that

ass—that idiot—that fathead—that chump—would surely realise at length that he had to come back with the hair or the hat! But he did not come!

Wibley was getting desperate.

If Sir William did not return to the house, it was probable that he would be looked for. They would suppose that something must have happened to him if he did not turn up for dinner, which was at seven. And it was getting near seven now.

The thought of being searched for sent a cold chill down Wibley's back. If one of the servants at Eastcliff Lodge spotted him as he now was, the game was up.

Somehow, he had to get a hat to hide his loss of hair. How was he going to get a hat? Wibley, in his present state of mind, was prepared to take the most desperate measures to get a hat. But how?

Peering up the avenue from behind the tree, in a forlorn hope that Bunter might be coming, he sighted the portly figure of Blump.

Blump came as far as the curve of the drive and stood looking down the avenue towards the sea. He had a puzzled expression on his portly face.

Wibley could guess why he was there. He was perplexed by Sir William's prolonged absence. He had come half-way down the avenue to see whether Sir William was coming.

Blump had reasons to be anxious for Sir William to come in, of which Wibley knew nothing—being unaware of Loder's remarkable proceedings since his arrival in the mansion.

The schoolboy actor hugged cover behind the tree. Blump, at last, shook his head, turned, and rolled out of view towards the house.

Wibley was glad to see him go.

But what was Wibley going to do? That was the question.

He realised that it was useless to wait longer for Bunter. Either the fat Owl had forgotten all about him, or else something had turned up to keep Bunter away.

Anyhow, he wasn't coming—but it was likely that the Famous Five might come out to look for Sir William—very likely that Blump might send some of the servants to do so.

Wibley left the spot at last—keeping under all the cover he could as he went, in case anyone should appear on the avenue.

He reached the wall bordering the road on the cliffs. That wall was banked with thick ivy, affording ample cover if he should need it.

But it was not only a hide-out that the hapless impersonator was thinking of. He was thinking of the desperate chance of getting a hat.

The road was rather lonely—still, pedestrians did pass along it. Pedestrians generally wore hats. And Wibley was now in such a desperate state that he was prepared, in the most lawless manner, to snatch a hat from a passer-by, if that passer-by passed by within reach of a sudden clutch.

He clambered up the wall in a spot where it was thickly screened by trees growing within, and where the ivy lay in great masses, overflowing the wall. From that coign of vantage, he watched the road—in desperate hope.

Shadows were stealing over the sea and the beach. The April dusk was falling. Wibley watched for a pedes-



"Yow-ow-ow!" shrieked Bunter. "Leggo! fat ear, he whisked the

trian as vainly as he had watched for Billy Bunter on the avenue. Even if one came by, he was more likely to walk down the middle of the road than close by the ivied wall—out of reach of a clutch! But this was Wibley's only hope, and he clung to it!

A figure appeared on the road at last, and Wibley's eyes gleamed at a soft Homburg hat on its head.

If the walker came near enough for Wibley to grab that hat, Wibley was going to borrow that hat. An astonished, hatless man would be left on the road—but Wibley could not help that! Later on, he would manage somehow to return the stranger's headgear—but at the moment he had to have a hat, if a hat were to be had!

Half-buried in the thick ivy on the old wall, Wibley watched eagerly as the stranger drew nearer. Then, as he saw the face more clearly, he saw,

that this was no stranger—he knew that stubby nose and those thick blonde eyebrows!

It was the man who called himself Brown—the man Wibley knew to be a spy, watching Sir William Bird's home.

The fact that he was Brown, or Braun, banished any scruple Wibley might have had about grabbing his hat! He leaned over a little in the ivy, and suppressed his breathing.

A swift grab, a swift jump back, and he would escape with the hat unseen. If only Mr. Brown came within reach below the ivied wall.

But Mr. Brown did not. He walked past a good six feet out from



William did not let go. With a grip on a Owl along the gallery.

the wall. He did not look up—he did not know that a desperate hat-hunter was crouched in the ivy—he never knew what a narrow escape his hat had! But it did escape—Mr. Brown walked by hopelessly out of reach—and the unfortunate Wibley glared after him as he went, as if he could have bitten him.

"Oh, my only hat and umbrella!" moaned Wibley, when Mr. Brown was gone. "Oh, my suffering Aunt Sempronia! Oh scissors!"

Wibley came near giving up hope.

But hardly a minute later hope revived with a bound! Another figure appeared on the road—this time moving along close in to the wall—and so quietly that Wibley did not hear a sound.

There was something stealthy in the manner of the second man—and from that, and from the fact that he had appeared so soon after Mr. Brown

had passed, it came into Wibley's mind that he was shadowing Mr. Brown. Certainly he was very silent, and he kept close to the wall, as if desiring to avoid observation as much as possible.

That suited Wibley! It looked as if the spy was spied on—but what interested Wibley chiefly was the second man's hat!

It was a slouched hat that half hid the face of the wearer. Wibley did not care what sort of a hat it was—whether it was a top-hat or a trilby hat or an opera hat or a bowler or a straw hat—or any old hat—he would have been glad even of a cricket cap! He watched that hat like a tiger watching for its prey!

The shadower, if shadower he was, came on, softly and quietly, close to the wall, and passed under the spot where Wibley crouched hidden in ivy.

It was the chance of a life-time! Wibley grabbed!

No doubt there was a rustle of the ivy, careful as he was. No doubt the man below was wary as a fox! Even as Wibley grabbed, the man tilted back his head and looked up; and Wibley's grab just missed the brim of the hat! His clawing fingers, instead of clutching the hat, clutched a nose.

It was unexpected to Wibley—still more unexpected to the owner of the nose!

Wibley gave a gasp—the man below a startled howl.

Wibley, leaning from the ivy on top of the wall, was in full clear view of the astonished man whose hat he had nearly captured. Wibley stared at a smooth, sleek face that looked really remarkable, with silvery beard and eyebrows, and a close-cut tallow-coloured crop.

"Oh!" gasped Wibley.

"Jermyn!"

"Oh!" gasped Soames.

SOAMES TO THE RESCUE!

SOAMES stared up blankly at the schoolboy actor on the wall.

He rubbed his nose as he stared. Wibley's desperate grab seemed to have caused it a pain.

James Soames was not easily surprised. The man who had been a millionaire's valet when the Greyfriars fellows first met him, who had been a freebooter in the South Seas, who had been Sir William Bird's valet under the name of Jermyn, who had been many things in many places, was not easy to startle. But he seemed quite astounded now, and he blinked up at William Wibley in blank amazement.

"Are you mad?" he stuttered.

Wibley gasped.

He was glad that it was Soames—as the man had seen him. Soames was in the secret of the impersonation

—Sir William Bird, who knew him only as Jermyn, had trusted him.

Unscrupulous rascal as he was in many ways, Soames had kept the secret after he had been turned out of Eastcliff Lodge. In these circumstances, it did not matter if he saw Sir William in his present state—he was, in fact, the only man who did not matter.

"Give me your hat!" breathed Wibley.

"My hat?" repeated Soames.

He was out of Wibley's reach now—but he made a step farther away. He really seemed to think that the schoolboy actor of Greyfriars had taken leave of his senses.

"Can't you see!" hissed Wibley.

"I've lost my top-knot—"

"Oh!" ejaculated Soames.

"That mad idiot Bunter grabbed it and cut off with it!" breathed Wibley. "He left me like this! What are you grinning at, blow you?"

Soames' sleek face melted in a wide grin. He seemed to see something comic in this peculiar situation, which was quite imperceptible to the worried schoolboy actor.

"Oh," he said, "I see!"

"Nothing to grin at, you dummy! Look at me! Can I show up like this?"

Soames chuckled.

"If you did, sir, I fear that the secret would not remain a secret much longer," he said. "The worthy Blump, I think, would be very much astonished to behold his master with a new head of hair."

"Gimme your hat!" pleaded Wibley. "I can chance it with a hat on! Look here, you owe me something, Jermyn—I mean, Soames—you were allowed to cut when you were found out, instead of being handed over to the police—"

"I fear, sir, that I should not have been treated with so much leniency but for the circumstance that I was in the secret!" said Soames. "Was it not your chief object to secure my silence, sir?"

"Anyhow, lend me your hat! I can't go back to the house like this—and if I don't go back, they'll be looking for me! Laugh!" added Wibley, with concentrated ferocity, and Soames chuckled again.

"Pray excuse me, sir!" grinned Soames. "There is a certain comic element in this, though doubtless, at the moment, you are unable to appreciate it."

"You grinning idiot!" hissed Wibley. "Will you lend me your hat? Look here, Soames, you're a dashed rascal—"

"Thank you, sir!" said Soames in his most deferential manner.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" growled Wibley. "From what I've heard, you were valet to Smithy's father once, and did him to the wide—you were a mutineer and something of a pirate—and you must have taken the old Bird in like a thorough rogue, to get a job here as you did. But the old bean was decent to you, and trusted you—you owe him something, if you don't owe me anything. He may be in danger, if this comes out—you know

the place is watched—I believe you were shadowing one of the spies when I stopped you—”

“Quite so!” assented Soames. “I am extremely interested in the movements of Mr. Brown for reasons of my own! And I am carrying on under much greater difficulties, now that I have been turned out of Eastcliff Lodge, sir—it has disarranged my plans very seriously.”

He paused a moment.

“But I quite see your point,” he went on. “Sir William was a pompous old donkey, but I have the kindest recollections of him—especially of the agreeably innocent way in which he allowed me to pull his leg. Moreover, rascal as I am—as you have so tactfully pointed out—I am not without patriotism in my own way, and am ready to stand by any man who is serving his country.”

“Then you’ll help me out?” exclaimed Wibley eagerly. He did not care much what Soames’ motives might be, so long as he lent the required aid.

All Wibley’s wishes and desires at that moment were concentrated in getting possession of a hat!

“Certainly, sir!” said Soames smoothly. “My headgear is at your service in this emergency. Pray accept it, sir.”

“Oh, good!” gasped Wibley.

Soames, grinning, took off his hat and passed it up to Wibley on the wall. Wibley clutched it as eagerly as Billy Bunter might have clutched a cake!

He jammed it on his head. It descended below his ears, and an exasperated snort came from the interior.

There was a chuckle from the man below.

“A little on the large side, sir!” murmured Soames. “You, sir, like the little gentleman you impersonate, are a trifle on the small side! I think, sir, that you may excite remark in your mansion, with the brim of a hat resting on your shoulders. Do you not think so?”

“Blow!” hissed Wibley.

He grabbed the hat off again.

Soames’ hat, naturally, was a good deal too large for a Remove fellow. Sir William Bird was a very small gentleman—but for that circumstance, a junior schoolboy could not have been taking his place. Wibley certainly could not walk into Eastcliff Lodge with his face as well as his cranium inside the hat!

He glared at the hat! He glared at Soames’ grinning face!

“Pray hand it to me, sir!” grinned Soames.

“I’ve got to manage with the beastly goffer somehow!” snapped Wibley.

“A little padding under the lining, sir,” suggested Soames.

“Oh! All right!”

Wibley handed down the hat. Soames took out a pocket-book and tore out a few blank leaves and folded them. He turned down the inside lining of the hat and carefully arranged the padding under it. The former valet was expert in such matters as this.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

He handed the hat up again to Wibley. This time when the schoolboy actor put it on, it fitted more or less and, at least, remained above the level of his ears.

“Thanks!” gasped Wibley. “That’s better!”

“Much!” agreed Soames. “I am honoured, sir, to have been of assistance to you. I take my leave, Sir William.”

Soames, bareheaded, went on his way—on the trail of the mysterious Mr. Brown.

Why Soames was watching the spy, would have been a mystery to Wibley if he had thought about it. But he did not bother his head about that—he had plenty on his mind without bothering about James Soames or Mr. Brown. He dropped down on the inner side of the wall—hatted at last, with the tell-tale crown of his head concealed, and started up the avenue in the deepening dusk.

AT LAST!

“I SAY, you fellows—”

“Oh, shut up, Bunter!”

“Wharrer we going to do?” hooted Bunter.

“Nothing, till the old Bird comes in.”

“Oh, you idiot!” hissed Bunter.

Bunter knew, if the Famous Five did not, that there were difficulties about the old Bird coming in!

It was long past seven. Dinner was long overdue. But Blump did not announce dinner. Evidently he was waiting for his master to come in. Dinner was not to be served in Sir William’s absence. And that absence was inexplicably prolonged.

Why Sir William did not materialise was a mystery to everybody but Bunter.

Blump had sent a footman down to the beach to ascertain whether his venerable master had met with some mishap on the rocks. But the juniors, who had left Sir William up a tree, only half-way down the avenue, were more perplexed than the butler. Unless Sir William had gone cracked, he could not have stayed up a tree all this time! Where was he, and why?

The Greyfriars fellows were in the oak gallery over the hall. Gerald Loder and Stephen Price were in the hall below.

No doubt they were as puzzled as the juniors by the mysterious disappearance of the master of the mansion. But they did not seem to be worrying about it. Loder, perhaps, was glad of it.

So long as Sir William was absent, Loder could carry on as he liked. And Loder’s one object seemed to be to make himself as unpleasant as he possibly could to the juniors whom he regarded as having butted into his uncle’s mansion.

Loder was unpleasant enough at school. But he was ten times more unpleasant now. Sir William had somehow changed towards him—and Loder could think of no reason for the change except the presence of the juniors. Loder was on the warpath

—and was evidently going to continue on the warpath, unless and until Sir William came in and called him to order.

Harry Wharton & Co. kept out of his way.

They were not unwilling, indeed they were quite keen, to collar Loder and Price and mop up Eastcliff Lodge with the pair of them. But clearly they could not mop up Sir William’s mansion with Sir William’s nephew. So they suppressed their feelings and waited for the little old baronet to blow in.

And he did not blow in!

Billy Bunter knew why. And now that matters had come to this peculiar pass, the fat Owl would gladly have restored Wibley’s top-knot.

He had left it inside the hat parked behind one of the trees on the avenue. And when he realised that there would be no dinner till Sir William came in, the fat Owl would willingly have retrieved that top-knot. But Loder of the Sixth was like a lion in the path. One booting from Loder was enough for Bunter. He was not going near Loder again.

“What on earth can be keeping the old bean?” asked Bob Cherry. “We know nothing’s happened to him—we left him on the avenue. I suppose a tree’s a natural sort of place for a Bird; still, he can’t be sticking there all this time.”

“I say, you fellows—”

“Oh, do shut up, Bunter!” grunted Johnny Bull.

“Shan’t!” hissed Bunter. “Look here, you fellows, Wibley—”

“Wibley! Have you got Wibley on the brain again, you fat ass?”

“I—I mean—”

“Never mind what you mean! Shut up!”

“I want my dinner!” hissed Bunter.

“Blow your dinner! Blump won’t announce dinner till the old bean blows in. Anyhow, we can’t go down without a row with Loder! Shut up!”

“Are you funky of a row with Loder?” hooted Bunter.

“You silly chump!” exclaimed Harry Wharton. “We can’t scrap with Loder in his uncle’s house!”

“Think we want the old Bird to blow in and find us scragging his nephew?” growled Johnny Bull.

“He can’t come in, till I go out—”

“What?”

“I—I—I mean—”

“Well, what do you mean, owl?”

“Oh! Nothing! But—but at this rate he can’t come back at all!” mumbled Bunter. “You—you see—”

“Well, what?”

“Oh, nothing!”

Which was mysterious—if the Famous Five had given it any heed. But they were too worried about the strange and uncomfortable state of affairs to take heed of Bunter’s burblings.

“Shut up, for goodness’ sake!” said Nugent.

“Beast!”

Bunter rolled towards the stairs. Wibley, he realised, could not come in till he could come in as Sir

William Bird. Loder or no Loder, Bunter had to restore that topknot!

With a cautious and uneasy eye on the two seniors in the hall, Bunter trod down the stairs.

Price grinned at Loder, who picked up a hassock.

Whiz!

Bump!

There was a fearful yell as Bunter bumped on the stairs, half-way down. Loder was quite a good shot with a hassock.

"Oh crikey! Ow! Oh lor'! Wow!" roared Bunter.

He scrambled up. Loder was grabbing a cushion in an armchair. Bunter did not wait for the cushion. He flew up the stairs faster than he had descended them and rejoined the Famous Five in the gallery.

"Come down again!" called out Loder.

"Ow! Beast!"

"Stick where you are, you fat chump!" grunted Bob. "It will be all right when the old Bird blows in!"

"Idiot!" groaned Bunter. He did not expect the old Bird to blow in!

The dusk was deepening. Loder switched on lights in the hall. In the gallery the juniors waited with growing impatience and uneasiness.

Loder, they supposed, would behave like a civilised human being when Sir William was on the scene. Until then, they had the choice of keeping out of Loder's way, or scrapping with him. So they kept out of his way.

Blump came through the service doorway and went to the outer door and opened it and looked out into the thickening dusk. Blump was worried by his master's absence, and distressed by the state of warfare in the mansion.

"What's keeping Sir William all this time, Blump?" asked Loder.

Blump looked round at him.

"I cannot understand it, Master Gerald. I understood that Sir William was going down to the beach to join the young gentlemen there. But they came in without him. Charles has been down to the beach, and he's seen nothing of Sir William. It is really inexplicable, sir."

"Well, you'd better serve dinner!" grunted Loder. "It's an hour late now."

"But Sir William, sir—" murmured Blump. "I fear that something must have happened—"

He turned to the doorway again and looked out into the dusk. Then he gave a sudden, almost convulsive start.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

"See him?" asked Loder.

"I—I—I think, so, sir—but—but— Dear me!" stuttered Blump.

Blump was a well-trained butler. He seldom betrayed emotion. But he fairly gaped at the figure that came in at the open doorway.

Sir William had gone out that afternoon in a bowler hat. He came back in a slouched hat several sizes too large for him.

It was Sir William! The dapper figure, the silvery beard and

moustache and eyebrows, were Sir William's. But it was Sir William under a hat that fitted him as an extinguisher fits a candle.

In spite of Soames' skilful padding, that hat kept slipping down over Wibley's head. He had to keep on pushing it up to prevent it from engulfing him.

"Oh!" gasped Blump, gazing at him. "Sir William! I—I— Oh!"

Price grinned.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared down from the gallery.

Sir William had come in at last, which was a great relief. From above they could see little of him but the hat! Still, it was Sir William!

Loder blinked at him.

"Here I am, uncle!" he said. "I thought I'd come on, as I was at the station. And—and—"

"Oh, sheer off!" snapped Sir William.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Get out of it!"

Wibley circled round Loder, and made for the stairs. Blump, recovering himself, made a hasty step to his master.

"Your hat, sir!"

He stretched out a plump hand. Naturally, Blump could not imagine that Sir William was going upstairs with his hat on!

But Sir William was! He had the best of reasons for so doing!

Blump gave a squeak of amazement as his plump hand was knocked aside. He had nearly had the hat! Wibley saved it only just in time.

Leaving the butler transfixed, Sir William cut up the stairs. And he cut up those stairs at a rate of speed really remarkable in a silver-haired sportsman of venerable years.

SIR WILLIAM KEEPS HIS ROOM!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. blinked at Sir William.

Their eyes almost popped at him. That hurried run up the staircase had caused the hat to slip down again. Sir William arrived in the gallery in an extinguished state. Soames' hat slid over his ears, and nearly reached his shoulders.

The juniors gazed almost petrified at that unusual sight.

"Oh! Blow!" came from inside the hat.

Sir William clutched at it, and pushed it up again—not too far! He dared not reveal the close crop on his cranium. Not for untold gold would he have parted with that hat.

"Blow! Bother! Bless the thing!" gasped Sir William. "Oh! Ah! My—my young friends—hem! Where's that blithering idiot?"

"Eh?"

"I—I—I mean, where's Bunter? My—my young friend Bunter! Why didn't you send the howling ass—I—I mean, why— Oh, here he is!"

Billy Bunter was on the settee in the gallery, blinking at Sir William through his big spectacles. The lord of Eastcliff Lodge made a stride at him, and grabbed him by a fat ear.

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"Come!" hissed Wibley.

"Yow-ow-ow! Leggo!" shrieked Bunter.

Sir William did not let go. With a grip on that fat ear like a steel vice, he whisked the yelling Owl along the gallery. They disappeared round a corner into a passage, leaving Harry Wharton & Co. rooted.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" floated back from Bunter.

Sir William, with one hand, threw open the door of his room. With the other he propelled Billy Bunter into that apartment.

He slammed the door. From under the slouched brim of Soames' hat he glared at the fat Owl with a devastating glare.

"Quick!" he hissed. "Give it to me!"

"Beast! Leggo!" howled Bunter. "I haven't got it!"

"Where is it?"

"I left it out of doors!"

"What?" yelled Wibley.

The unhappy impersonator had supposed that he had only to get at Bunter to regain possession of the white wig. He had got at Bunter! But the wig was as far off as ever.

"I—I'd have got it for you, but for that beast Loder!" gasped Bunter. "I—I left it in the hat behind a tree."

"Oh, you mad porpoisc!" gasped Wibley. "Go and get it! Quick! Bring it to me here! Quick! Don't let anybody see it! Stick it under your jacket! Cut off and get it—quick!"

He released Bunter's fat ear. Bunter rubbed that ear.

"Quick!" breathed Wibley.

"It's dark now!" gasped Bunter. "I don't suppose I could find it in the dark—"

"If you don't," breathed Wibley, "I'll kick you all over the shop, and kick what's left of you as far as the railway station. Got that?"

"Beast!"

"Get going! If you don't bring me that wig, I'll spifficate you! I'll strew you all over Kent in small pieces! I'll—"

"Well, I couldn't find it in the dark, as you jolly well know! How could I—yarooooooop!"

Smack, smack!

Wibley was getting dangerous. His right hand came on a fat ear, with a smack that rang like a pistol-shot! His left followed it up on another fat ear, like another pistol-shot!

Bunter roared, and jumped for the door.

Wibley jumped after him. Two smacks did not satisfy Wibley! Two hundred would hardly have satisfied him.

Fortunately for Bunter, Soames' hat slipped down again as he jumped, and Wibley's head was engulfed in the hat. He grabbed frantically at the hat, while Bunter grabbed frantically at the door-handle.

By the time Wibley got out of the hat, Bunter got out of the doorway.

"Stop!" gasped Wibley.

Bunter did not stop! He flew! Two terrific smacks on his fat head were enough for Bunter, if not for

Wibley. Bunter streaked back to the gallery like a hunted hare.

Wibley shut the door. He hurled Soames' hat into a corner. Then he stood panting for breath.

He had, at least, gained the shelter of Sir William's room. He had left an amazed, astounded household behind him; that was so much to the good, at least. But what he was going to do without his silvery wig was a dreadful puzzle!

There was a sound of a tread in the corridor from the gallery.

Wibley hastily turned the key in the lock.

Tap!

Wibley tried to calm himself. He had to carry on, and with a locked door between him and his household, he was safe from being seen, at all events.

"Who's there?" he asked, in Sir William's throaty voice.

"Your butler, sir!" Blump turned the door-handle. The door did not open. He gave a cough and spoke through the door. "May I inquire, sir, whether dinner is to be served?"

"Oh! Yes! I shall not be coming down to dinner, Blump. A—a slight accident. I am—am somewhat disturbed. Let dinner be served at once for my guests."

"No doubt, sir, you would like something sent up to your apartment?"

"Oh, no! Nothing, thanks, Blump! Look after my pals—I—I mean, look after the young gentlemen—that's all right!"

"Very good, sir!"

Blump trundled away, the most surprised and perplexed butler in the county of Kent.

Wibley wiped the perspiration from his brow. A few minutes later there were footsteps in the corridor again, and another tap.

"Can I come in, uncle?" came Loder's voice.

"No!" roared Wibley.

"Look here, Uncle William, I don't understand this." Loder was trying to keep his temper now that Sir William was on the spot, but he found it hard. "This is not the sort of welcome I expected here!"

"Oh, rot!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Get out!"

"Wha-at? Did—did you say get out?" gasped Loder.

"Yes! Get out! Buzz off! Let me see the last of you! I'm fed-up with you! Get out yourself, and take that measly worm Price with you! Don't you understand plain English?"

Loder, in the corridor, blinked at the door of Sir William's room.

Uncle William had always been hospitable on previous occasions. Hospitality was now conspicuous by its absence.

"Look here!" roared Loder through the door. "You told me, at Greyfriars, to come down any time I liked!"

"Rubbish!"

"I want to know why you've changed like this! Is it because of those young cads, Wharton and his gang?"

"No! Just get out!"

Wibley was feeling that he had enough trouble on hand, without being bothered by the bully of the Greyfriars Sixth and his shady pal, Price. That was quite a natural feeling on Wibley's part. But Gerald Loder, who had always been used to a hospitable welcome at Eastcliff Lodge, was amazed and enraged.

"I want to know what this means!" he roared.

"Oh, shut up!"

"What?" howled Loder

"Shut up, and get out!"

"Will you open this door?"

"No! Get out!"

Loder, breathing rage, stamped

away down the corridor to the gallery. There, he glared at the Famous Five.

"What game have you young rotters been playing here?" he snarled. "What's made my uncle turn against me like this?"

"We've never mentioned you to your uncle," answered Harry Wharton, contemptuously—"never even thought of you."

"Forgot your existence entirely, old bean, till you blew in here and gave us an unpleasant reminder," said Bob.

Loder gave them a black look, and stamped away down the stairs.

Price, in the hall, was shrugging his shoulders, with a sneer on his face.

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at one another, as Loder stamped away.

"Has the old Bird gone cracked, do you think?" asked Bob, in a low voice.

"Blessed if it doesn't look like it," said Harry.

Really, it did look like it!

MARMALADE FOR TWO!

"NICE morning for travelling," said Bob Cherry, with a faint grin.

"Um!" said Harry Wharton.

A bright and sunny April morning dawned on Eastcliff Lodge, on the white chalk cliff and the rolling sea. On such a morning Harry Wharton & Co. would have turned out in great spirits—but for the extraordinary state of affairs that now obtained in the mansion.

The previous day the juniors had supposed that all would be well when Sir William came in. But Sir William had come in, gone to his room, and stayed there. Blump had told them that Sir William was keeping to his room, and they had seen nothing of him since.

That left Loder free to carry on as he liked, and Loder, in the very worst temper ever, since his talk through Sir William's door, was rather like a ferocious Hun.

Sir William, remaining in his apartment, refused to have even a meal sent up. Loder and Price had dined together—late, but amply. The Famous Five steered clear of the dining-room—and another row! Blump had sent supper upstairs for the schoolboy guests. Billy Bunter, having encircled an extensive supper, went to bed contentedly. So long as the grub was all right, everything, so far as Bunter could see, was all right.

But it seemed far from all right to the Famous Five. If Sir William was going to keep to his room, and leave Loder to carry on at his own sweet will, it was clear that their holiday at Eastcliff Lodge would have to come to an end—and without delay.

The chums of the Remove turned out early, hoping to steer clear of Loder by so doing. Billy Bunter was left snoring in his room when they went downstairs.

Early as it was, they found Blump in the hall.

JUST OUT! NEW WALT DISNEY CARD GAME
—And The Best Yet!

PINOCCHIO

The Doll That Came To Life

For over half a century the story of 'Pinocchio' has delighted the hearts of the children of Italy. Now the inimitable art of Walt Disney has brought to life all the wonderful characters of this beautiful fairy story for the benefit of children the world over. The game of 'Pinocchio' is a worthy successor to "Snow White" with all its simplicity, charm and family atmosphere. Any number of players can take part. 'Pinocchio' cards are superbly printed in FULL COLOURS, each card being a miniature masterpiece. Here you can meet Pinocchio, Jiminy Cricket, Monstro, Blue Fairy, The Fox and the Cat, Geppetto and Stromboli—all of them re-created by the magic of Walt Disney.

45 CARDS IN FULL COLOURS All Different



Everywhere

1'6
PER PACK

Every good Stationer and Store sells "Pinocchio."
Published by **Castell Bros. Ltd.**, London and Glasgow.
By permission of **Walt Disney—Mickey Mouse, Ltd.**

Pepys Series

Blump was looking worried. The state of affairs at Eastcliff Lodge probably worried the butler more than it did the juniors. He murmured a respectful good-morning, with a cloud on his plump brow.

"Sir William down yet, Blump?" asked Harry.

"No," said Blump, looking distressed. "I have tapped at Sir William's door, sir, and he has told me that he will not be coming down, and that he does not desire breakfast to be sent up. I am quite uneasy about Sir William."

"Loder down?"

"No, sir. Master Gerald and his friend were in the billiards-room to a somewhat late hour, and they will probably not rise early."

"Oh, good!" said Bob. "Then you can scrounge us some brekker, Blump, before they're about."

"Certainly, sir!" said Blump.

Over breakfast, the juniors discussed the extraordinary situation. Exactly what to do was a puzzle.

"The old bean isn't coming down," said Bob. "We're left to Loder. We can't stay here, scrapping with the old Bird's jolly old nephew."

"Blessed if I can see how we can clear, though," said Nugent. "We fixed it up for Easter here."

"I don't see letting that bully Loder push us out!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, no," said Harry Wharton slowly. "But—"

"But the butfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"I can't make the old bean out!" said Harry. "But if we're going, we can't go without a word to him. If that cad Loder would behave himself—"

"But he won't," said Bob.

"He wants a lesson in manners," said Johnny Bull. "We could collar him, and give him a jolly good hiding."

"Guests don't give their host's nephew a jolly good hiding, in the best circles," grinned Bob Cherry.

Grunt from Johnny.

The juniors had finished their breakfast when there were footsteps on the stairs.

Loder and Price appeared in the doorway of the breakfast-room. Blump hovered behind them with a distressed, plump countenance.

"I will have your breakfast served in the dining-room, Master Gerald," he was murmuring.

Loder, unheeding him, strode into the breakfast-room, followed by Price.

Price was grinning, Loder scowling.

"Get out of this!" snapped Loder.

"Rats!" retorted Johnny Bull.

"Master Gerald!" almost moaned Blump.

"Bring breakfast here, Blump! I'm turning these young cads out!" snapped Loder. "Cut off and see about it! Don't stand mooning there!"

Blump, breathing deep, rolled off. Loder surveyed the Famous Five with his most bullying expression on his face.

Four of them rose from the table. Johnny Bull, who was finishing with marmalade, went on with marmalade.

Nothing would have induced Johnny to stir an inch. Johnny was rather in the mood of a tyke of his native county, warranted to bite alive or dead.

"The old ass seems to be sticking in his room," said Loder. "Do any of you fags know why?"

"Is that how you speak of your uncle?" said Harry.

"The old goat!" said Loder. Evidently, Master Gerald was not feeling respectful towards Sir William that morning. "The old dummy! Asking a relation here, and then telling him to get out! You fags must have been pulling his leg somehow."

"Oh, don't be a fool!" said the captain of the Remove unceremoniously.

"Well, then, what's the matter with the old fossil?" demanded Loder. "Has he gone cracked?"

The juniors did not answer that question. In view of Sir William's amazing conduct, they could not help thinking it possible!

"I've told you to get out!" added Loder. "If you're waiting to be booted, you won't have to wait long. Now, then, sharp!"

"Come on, Johnny!" murmured Bob. "We don't want a shindy here."

"Rot!" said Johnny.

"We don't want a row, old chap," said Nugent.

"I'll go," said Johnny, deliberately, "when I'm ready to go! Not a tick before! I'm fed-up with Loder! If there's nobody else to keep him in order, we can do it!"

And Johnny went on with toast and marmalade.

His friends waited for him. They would gladly have avoided trouble under Sir William's roof; but tempers were not at their best. Johnny, anyhow, was determined. He was going to finish his toast and his marmalade, and he was going to take his time—and a little extra time, just to show Loder!

He was, however, interrupted. Loder made a stride at him and gripped him by the collar.

"Out you go!" said Loder. He swung Johnny away from the table.

The next moment Johnny was giving grasp for grasp, and they were struggling.

"Back up!" roared Johnny Bull.

A Remove junior had not much chance with a Sixth Form man. But the Co. rushed to the rescue at once.

Master Gerald went down in the midst of a heap of juniors. Price stood staring. Price fully approved of his pal's method of dealing with the Removites. But he did not seem keen on taking a hand.

Loder yelled to him frantically. Loder was getting a good deal of the worst of the mix-up on the floor.

"Pricey! Lend me a hand, Price, you rotten funk! Do you hear?" yelled Loder.

Price, not very willingly, joined in the fray.

But it booted not.

Loder, flattened on the floor on his back, was pinned down by Johnny Bull's knee on his waistcoat, and Nugent and Hurree Singh grasping

his arms. Wharton and Bob jumped up to deal with Price.

Price did not need a lot of dealing with. Price was no hero. In the grasp of two pairs of vigorous hands, Price went down, with a bump, and joined his pal on the floor. Bob Cherry sat on him.

"Oh gad!" gasped Loder. He struggled wildly under three. "I'll smash you! Will you let me gerrup?"

"Not just yet!" answered Johnny Bull coolly. "You wouldn't let me finish my marmalade! Now you can finish it! Hand me that marmalade, Inky!"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin, reached the marmalade dish from the table. There was quite a lot of marmalade in it. Johnny Bull up-ended it over Loder's crimson, furious face.

Loder made a frantic effort. But he made it in vain. He was safely pinned, and he had to have the marmalade. It streamed down over his furious face, almost obliterating his features.

"Gurrrrrggh!" gurgled Loder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have some more?" asked Johnny.

"Yurrrggh!"

"Had enough?"

"Urrrrggh!"

"Well, Price can have the rest!" said Johnny. "There's not much left, Pricey—Loder's had most of it—but you can have it."

Johnny handed the dish to Bob! Price gave a yell.

"Keep that away! Keep that—Gurrrrrggh! Oooooogh! Urrrrggh!"

There was, as Johnny had said; not much marmalade left. But there was as much as Price wanted—more, in fact. His face, when Bob had finished, was not so sticky as Loder's—but it was fearfully sticky.

Then Loder and Price were released. They sat up, spluttering and clawing at marmalade. The Famous Five, chuckling, walked out of the breakfast-room, leaving them to splutter and claw.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Whose hat?"

"The old Bird's!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were walking down the avenue in the April sunshine, when they spotted the hat.

Exactly what they had better do in the strange circumstances the chums of the Remove hardly knew. So they decided on a morning on the beach; which, at least, would keep them out of the enemy's way till lunch. By that time, perhaps, Sir William might take matters in hand. At some distance from the house they spotted the hat. It lay full in their view—rolling a little when the wind from the sea caught it.

Bunter had left that hat parked behind a tree, beside the avenue, the previous afternoon. But there had been a high wind in the night, and it had been blown about a good deal in the wind. Now it lay right out in the avenue, in view of anyone coming away from the house. As the juniors

were the earliest out, they were the first to spot it.

Bob ran to it, and picked it up.

That Sir William had lost his hat the previous day the juniors had guessed, from the remarkable head-gear in which he had returned to the Lodge. They did not, of course, guess what he had lost along with it. So far, they knew nothing of Billy Bunter's hair-raid!

Naturally, seeing the hat, they recaptured it, to be returned to the owner. But, as Bob picked it up, he gave a sudden jump.

He stared into the hat. His eyes popped at it.

"Oh gum!" he gasped.

"What—"

"Look!" gurgled Bob.

The other fellows looked. Their eyes widened as they looked.

That hat was not, as one would have naturally expected, empty! There was something in it. That something was a head of hair. It was a silvery mop—which, hitherto, the juniors had seen only on the head of Sir William, and had supposed it to grow there. They gazed at it.

Bunter had jammed the white wig right into the hat. It had remained jammed in, while the hat tumbled about in the wind during the night. And there it was—meeting the amazed eyes of the chums of Greyfriars.

"Oh!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Old Bird's!" breathed Nugent.

"His—his—his—his hair!" stammered Johnny Bull.

"The esteemed old bean's absurd top-knot!" said Hurree Singh.

Bob Cherry jerked the wig out of the hat. It was crumpled and dishevelled and untidy. But it was a well-made and rather expensive article; the silvery hair imperceptibly affixed to a close network that fitted over the crown of a head—secured there, when it was worn, by a spot or two of fixing-gum.

They gazed at it.

"Who'd have thought it?" said Bob, quite faintly. "The—the old bean must be bald, I suppose—this is a—a—a—wig!"

"It's the old bean's," said Harry. "It must be! We know that mop by sight! Besides, it's his hat—there's his monogram on the lining."

"It's his hat—and his hair!" said Nugent.

The juniors looked at one another—and grinned.

They could not help grinning. At the happy age when fellows never dreamed of hair thinning on the top, such things struck them as a little comic.

Mr. Prout, at Greyfriars, had an extensive bald spot, over which he combed a few remaining hairs with great care. Prout hated to be seen without his mortar-board on. Evidently—to the juniors—Sir William was in the same sad case. It seemed indubitable to them. Only baldness, so far as they knew, necessitated this kind of camouflage.

"Poor old bean!" grinned Bob. "No wonder he borrowed a hat—any size in hats—if he lost his hair when he lost his hat!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

"Rough luck!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"I—I suppose he must be as bald as a billiards-ball, really!" murmured Nugent. "I—I say, is that why he's keeping his room? I—I suppose he can't show up without—that!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

"That's it!" said Johnny Bull, with a nod. "He borrowed a hat somewhere to get in—and now he's keeping doggo. He's keeping that dark—bet you nobody knows."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"But how the dickens could he have lost it?" he asked. "If it blew off, he could have picked it up. Dropped it when he was climbing that tree, perhaps—"

"Climbed the tree, because he had lost it somehow," said Bob, "and that accounts for the jolly old milk in the jolly old cocoanut. He hasn't gone cracked—he's merely lost his top-knot, and doesn't want to show up without it."

The juniors chuckled.

It was all clear now. Obviously, that white wig was a secret. Somehow or other Sir William had lost it—that was why he had stayed out so long—until he could snaffle a hat from somewhere to conceal his loss. That was why he was keeping to his room. They saw it all now.

"But the poor old bean must be in a fearful stew!" said Bob, becoming serious again. "We must let him have this back! Then everything in the garden will be lovely. Only—"

"Only he won't like our knowing about it!" said Nugent. "Think Blump knows? If he does, we could send it back by him—"

"No fear! If anybody knew, Sir William would send him out to look for the wig!" said Harry. "Nobody knows—and we'd better not let anybody know."

"A still tongue saves a stitch in time, as the English proverb remarks!" assented the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The juniors realised that this matter, slightly comic to themselves, was a serious one to the proprietor of that silvery mop. Obviously it was a secret, and it was up to them to keep it so.

The juniors looked at one another rather perplexed. That hirsute adornment had to be got back to its owner—that was clear. Clearly the owner did not want to have it known—his tree-climbing exploit, which the juniors now understood, showed that much. But how they could get that silvery mop back to Sir William without letting him learn that they had found it was a problem.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bob suddenly. "Does Bunter know?"

"Bunter!" repeated Harry.

"Bet you he does!" said Bob, with conviction. "Bunter noses everything out, and he jolly well knows, and the old Bird knows he knows! Don't you remember—when he was in the tree—he wanted Bunter to come out—"

"Yes; we wondered why—"

"Well, if Bunter knew about the top-knot, the old bean could set him looking for it, see? And the minute

he got in yesterday, he bagged Bunter—"

"So he did!"

"And that fat chump knew he'd lost it, too!" exclaimed Wharton, a light breaking on his mind. "He knew why the old Bird couldn't come in—he said that Sir William couldn't come in till he went out—he jolly well knew the fix the old bean was in! Bunter knows!"

There was a general nodding of heads. Not one of the Famous Five had ever suspected for a moment that Sir William's mop was semi-detached. But they realised now that Bunter knew.

"That makes it O.K.," said Bob. "If that fat owl's in the secret, he can take the mop back to the old Bird, and no harm done. He needn't mention that we found it, see? I expect the old bean is fearfully touchy about it! Bunter can carry it home—and we keep mum!"

"Good egg!" agreed Wharton. "Come on! Keep that jolly old top-knot out of sight, though!"

Bob had a bag in his hand, containing a spot of refreshment for the beach. He opened the bag, placed the white wig inside, and snapped the bag shut again. There it was, quite safe from observation. Then, with smiling faces, the juniors walked back to the house.

THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG!

"BUNTER!"

Snore!

"Wake up, you grampus!"

Snore!

Billy Bunter was still asleep, and snoring, when the Famous Five crowded into his room. They had left the hat downstairs; but the more important article was in the bag in Bob's hand. Bunter had to be roused out, and they proceeded to rouse him out.

A wet sponge, pressed on a fat face, had the effect of awakening Billy Bunter! He came out of the land of dreams with a howl.

"Oooooooooogh!"

"Wake up, old fat man!"

"Ow! Beast! 'Tain't rising-bell! Lemme alone!" howled Bunter. "I ain't getting up yet!"

"Shove that sponge down his back!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Beast!"

Bunter sat up. He did not want to be disturbed at that early hour. But still less did he want a wet sponge down his podgy back.

"I say, you fellows, what's up?" he hooted. "Wharrer you waking me up for? What's the time?"

"Nearly nine!"

"Beast! Rotter! You can call me at ten, if you want me!" roared Bunter. "Think I'm getting up at nine in the hols?"

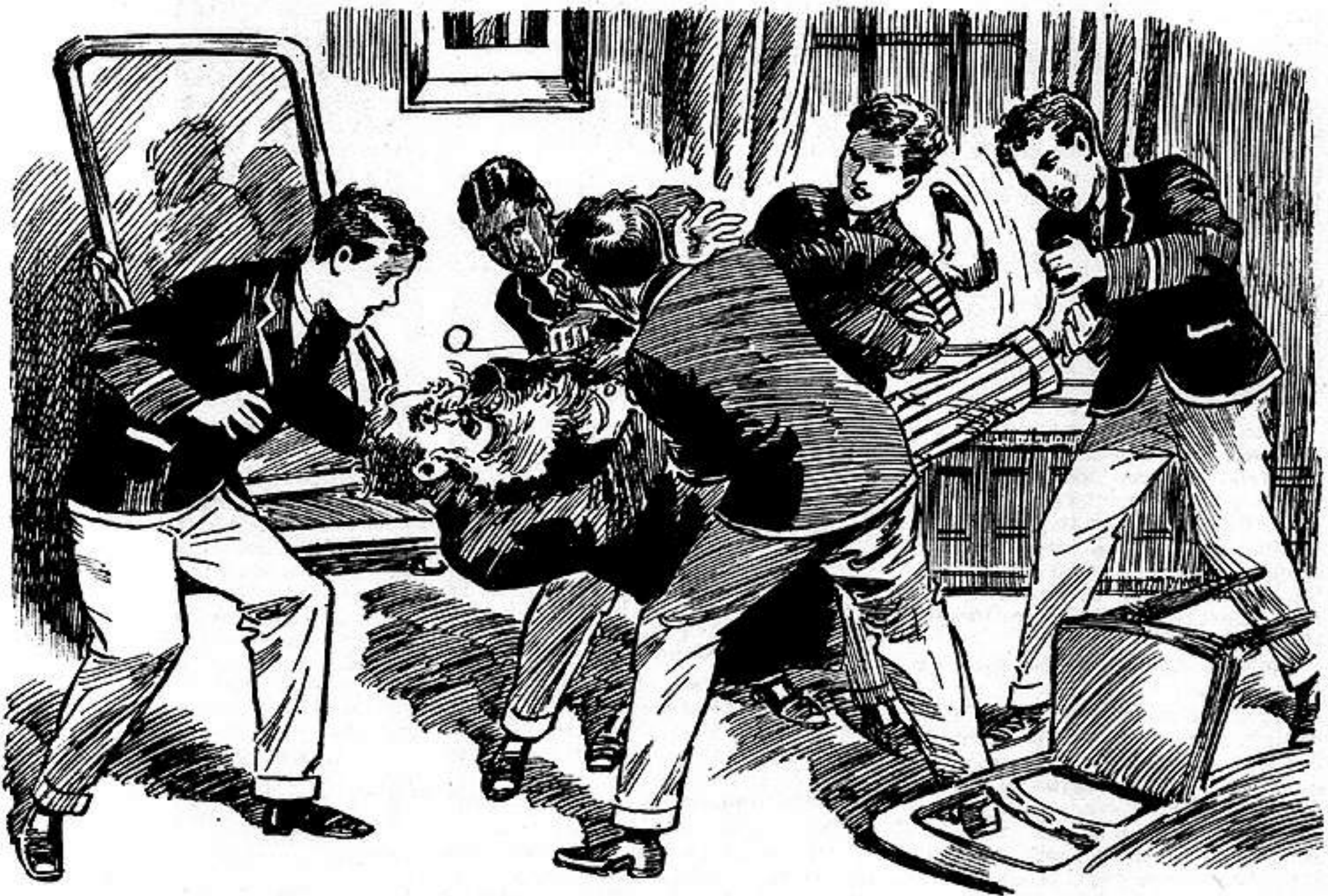
"Turn out, you fat slacker!" said Harry Wharton. "Look here, listen to me, Bunter!"

"Shan't!" roared Bunter.

"Give him that sponge again!"

"Keep off, you beast! What do you want, Wharton, you swab? I'm listening, ain't I?" howled Bunter.

"The old Bird is keeping to his



"Yaroo! Leggo!" shrieked Wibley. "Will you listen to a—Yoo-hoo-hoop!" His silvery beard came off, and his moustache twisted over his nose, as the Famous Five bumped him.

room," said Harry. "We think you know why! Do you?"

The juniors had little doubt on the subject. But they wanted to make quite sure before the silvery mop was revealed. If Bunter did not know about it, they were not going to let him know. If he did, he had to carry the goods home without delay, and without mentioning other names. That seemed to the Famous Five the most tactful way of proceeding, in the very peculiar circumstances.

The fat grin that overspread Billy Bunter's fat face was a sufficient indication that he knew.

"I ain't going to tell you!" said Bunter. "If you've woke me up to ask me that, you can leave a fellow to go to sleep. I ain't going to tell you."

"So you know?" said Harry.

"He, he, he! I may, and I may not!" grinned Bunter. "That's telling. It's all right—I'm going to get it for him when I get up."

"You're going to get—what?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter hastily. "I wish you fellows wouldn't ask a lot of questions! I'm not letting anything out, you know! I can keep a secret. Not that there's any secret to keep, you know—I don't mean that."

"He knows all right," said Bob. "I suppose the old Bird knows that you know, Bunter—that's why he wanted you yesterday."

"Eh? Of course he knows I know," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I suppose he sent you to call me, because he wants it. You can tell

him I'm not getting up yet. He can wait, I suppose?"

"We've found it!" said Bob.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "You—you've found it! How the thump did you find it, when I hid it behind a tree?"

"You hid it!" yelled Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I wish you wouldn't yell at a fellow like that!" exclaimed Bunter peevishly. "You make a fellow jump!"

"He—he—he hid it!" gasped Nugent. "You fat villain, you've been playing tricks on the old Bird."

"Serve him jolly well right! If a fellow kicks a fellow, a fellow can jolly well expect a fellow to make a fellow sit up! I wasn't going to leave him without it so long, though! That was Loder's fault, as you know!"

"You footling, frabjous freak, I—I—"

"Besides, he smacked my head!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Smacked it right and left! I told him I couldn't find his silly wig in the dark, and, of course, I couldn't have—and all he did was to smack my head! If Wibley thinks he can smack my head—"

"Wibley?"

"Oh! No! I—I don't mean Wibley!" stammered Bunter. "I mean—that is, I don't mean—I—I—I—"

"Well, what do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing! I—I wonder what made me say Wibley? Wibley ain't here, of course."

"We know he isn't, fathead!"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you cackling at, you image?"

"Oh, nothing! Wibley ain't here—he, he, he! I—I mean Sir William—he, he, he! Well, you can go to Wibley—"

"Wibley?" shrieked Bob.

"I—I mean Sir William! You can go to Sir Wibley—I mean, Sir William—and tell him that if he kicks me again I'll jolly well grab his wig off again, so there!"

"You grabbed it off?" gasped Bob.

"I'll jolly well do it again, too!" declared Bunter. "If Wibley thinks he can boot me—"

"Wibley?"

"I—I mean Sir William! Sir William ain't Wibley."

"Sir William ain't Wibley!" repeated Bob Cherry, like a fellow in a dream.

"I—I—I mean, Wibley ain't Sir William!" stammered Bunter.

"Mad!" said Johnny Bull.

"The madfulness is terrific."

"I—I say, you fellows! I—I mean—I mean Wibley ain't Wibley; I mean Sir William ain't Sir William." Bunter was getting a little confused. "I mean to say, he ain't anybody except himself—he's nobody else at all, really."

"Mad as a hatter!" said Nugent, staring blankly at the fat Owl.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton, very quietly. "We've got to screw out of that fat idiot what he really does mean. He's been gabbling about Wibley all through Easter—a fellow

might have thought that Wibley was on the spot—"

"But he isn't!" said Bob.

"I'm not so sure, now!" said the captain of the Remove. "Bunter's got some reason for calling Sir William by Wibley's name. It seems impossible that that howling ass, Wibley, could have pulled off such a stunt here!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"I say, you fellows, he ain't Wibley!" gasped Bunter. "You can take my word for that! I told him I'd keep it dark that he was Wibley, and I'm a fellow of my word! He ain't Wibley."

The juniors gazed at Bunter.

"You fellows remember," went on Wharton quietly, "what happened at Greyfriars a few days before we broke up for Easter. That ass Wibley made himself up to impersonate Sir William Bird—and the old bean copped him at it—and we couldn't tell t'other from which while they were together. Is it possible that that mad ass Wibley—"

"Wibley—here!" gasped Bob. "My dear chap—"

"It seems impossible," said Harry. "But that wig puts rather a different complexion on it. A wig may be a disguise—part of a make-up—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I say, you fellows!" exclaimed Bunter, in alarm. "Don't you get it into your heads that Wibley's here, made up as the old Bird!"

"Is he?" yelled Bob.

"Oh, no! Certainly not! If he is, I don't know anything about it—any more than you fellows do! Besides, I told Wibley I wouldn't give him away, and I'm jolly well not going

to! You can't expect it!" said Bunter firmly. "I'm not going to say a single word about it."

"But—but—but it can't be!" gasped Nugent. "I—I suppose Wibley could do it—he did it that day at the school, but—but—but—"

"The butfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Where is the esteemed old Bird, if Wibley—"

"Do you know where Sir William is, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Eh? How should I know?" asked Bunter. "He never told me where he was going—never spoke to me at all! I've never spoken to him in my life."

"You've never spoken to Sir William in your life—when you're staying in his house for Easter?" howled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, I—I mean, I—I've spoken to him every day, of course!" gasped Bunter. "When I said I'd never spoken to him in my life, I—I meant that I've spoken to him every day! Being his guest here, you know—"

"But—but—but he can't be Wibley!" stuttered Bob. "By gum, though, was that the secret Soames knew when the old bean let him off—"

"Did Soames know, Bunter?" asked Harry.

"Of course he did, as he was the old bean's valet! I—I mean, of course he didn't! Never knew a thing! I didn't, either. So far as I know," said Bunter, "Wibley's at his aunt's in Derbyshire, and he ain't here at all—and Sir Wibley—I mean, Sir William—is Sir William and nobody else, and never has been

anybody else! I'm not telling you fellows anything."

"I think you've told us enough, you fat fraud!" said the captain of the Remove. "Pick up that bag, Bob—we'll go and see Sir William ourselves, and we'll jolly well ask him what he means by it."

There was a howl of alarm from Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, don't you tell Wibley anything! I say, he will think I let it out! Besides, he ain't Wibley! I keep on telling you that he ain't Wibley! He didn't kick me yesterday because I called him Wibley—nothing of the kind! I say, you fellows—"

But the Famous Five did not heed the alarmed Owl. Innumerable times, Billy Bunter had been on the very edge of letting out that strange secret! Now he had fairly let it rip! The cat was out of the bag at last, and the Famous Five marched off in a body to Sir William's room—with grim faces—grimly resolved to make the schoolboy actor of Greyfriars sorry for himself!

BUMPS FOR WIBLEY!

"OH! My only silk socks and summer sunshade!" groaned Wibley.

Wibley was not enjoying life that fine morning in April! Never had he enjoyed a sunny spring morning less!

He was pacing his room—every now and then brandishing his fists.

Slaughtering Billy Bunter would have been a slight comfort to Wibley! But only slight! What he really wanted was to boil him in oil!

Wibley was hungry! He had not dined the previous evening—or supped! He had had, so far, no breakfast! It looked as if he wasn't going to have any!

He dared not let a servant come up to the room. He kept the door locked, and twice he answered Blump through the oak panels.

Soames' hat had seen him through—so far! He had amazed everybody. he knew that—still, he had landed safely in Sir William's room with his secret undiscovered! If that ass, that chump, that fathead, Bunter had had the wig at hand, all would have been well.

But he hadn't had it! He had left it out of doors—and no doubt, after dark, it would have been difficult for Bunter to find it again! But the very least the exasperating fat Owl should have done was to get up at the first gleam of dawn, and field that top-knot, and bring it back to Wibley!

The idea of getting up at the first gleam of dawn certainly never occurred to Billy Bunter! It was not the sort of idea that was likely to occur to him.

Wibley almost made up his mind to venture out and drag the fat Owl out of bed by his ears. At nine o'clock he was roving round Sir William's spacious apartment, breathing fury, horribly hungry, and waiting to hear from Bunter.



Money talks everywhere, but when a millionaire scholar turned up at school it fairly screamed! Even the Head toadied to the boy with the "brass." This story is full of thrills and laughter. Make sure of your copy.

THE SCHOOLBOY MILLIONAIRE

No. 716
of this
Library

KNOCK-OUT Library

On Sale at all Newsagents

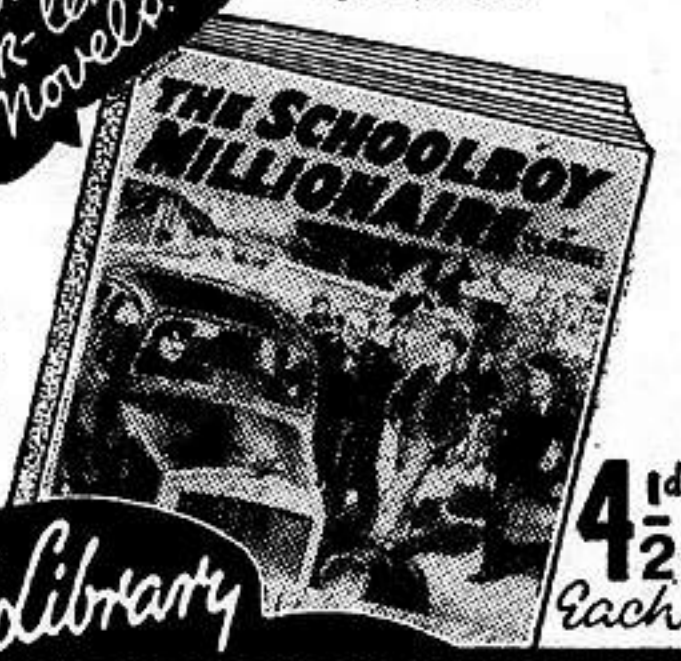
Willis Screever made his fortune in New York, but he went to the Wild West to spend it. How he applies the methods of big business to the problems of the ranch makes a rollicking, side-splitting yarn too good to miss.

SCREEVER'S WESTERN WONDERS!

No. 715 of this Library

If your Newsagent is sold out ask him to order copies for you.

2 Thrilling
Book-length
Novels.



4½
Each

And it would be like Bunter to stay in bed till ten, or even till eleven! Wibley almost howled with fury at the thought of it. He could not emerge from his room without his hair! Even if there had been an air-raid alarm, he could not! Hitler's air-raids, in fact, were very small beer compared with Bunter's hair-raid!

Tap!

Wibley came to a halt in his agitated pacing as there was a tap at the door. He swung round towards it with a hope that it might be Bunter.

"Who's there?" he rapped.

"Little us!" came Bob Cherry's voice.

"Oh, don't bother! I—I mean, good-morning, my young friends! Lovely morning, I am sorry I am unable to come down—a slight indisposition—hem! Is Bunter up yet?"

"Bunter? It's only nine o'clock! How could Bunter be up?"

"I—I think you had better call him! I—I take a—rather serious view of Bunter's lazy habits—it is terribly bad for the health to stay late in bed! Please go and get Bunter out."

"Let us in, please, Wibley!" came Harry Wharton's voice.

Wibley fairly bounded.

"What?" he gasped. "What did you say, Wharton?"

"I said let us in, Wibley."

"I—I fail to—to understand you, my boy! Who—who—who is Wibley? I am alone here, Wharton."

"Don't you know who Wibley is?" came Bob's voice through the door.

"I—I am afraid I am—am unacquainted with him, Cherry! Who—"

"I'll tell you about him, then! Wibley is a silly ass who's always playing theatrical stunts, and his favourite game is to put up impersonations of other people. He was nearly sacked once for making up as the French master! He's a howling ass who ought to be in a home for idiots."

"Look here—I—I mean—"

"A blithering fathead always playing mad japes!" said Bob. "He got himself up to imitate Sir William Bird just before the school broke up for Easter! 'Member him now?"

"Oh! Yes! Quite! A—a—a clever lad—"

"Not at all! An absolute idiot!" answered Bob. "And the most idiotic thing he ever did was to play his silly theatrical stunts here and make us believe that the old Bird had asked us here for Easter."

"Wha-a-t?" stuttered Wibley.

"Will you open this door, Wibley?" repeated Harry Wharton. His voice was grim.

"My—my dear boy, I—I am unable to open the door at the moment—" stammered Wibley. "But what—what—what—"

"I think you'd better," said the captain of the Remove. "You can't be ass enough to think that we shall keep this dark now that we've spotted it, Wibley."

"You—you—you seem to be labour-

ing under some—some strange misapprehension, Wharton! What—what do you suppose—"

"Let's call up Loder!" came Johnny Bull's voice. "Loder has a right to know that a spoofing play-actor has butted in here pretending to be his uncle—"

"Oh!" gasped Wibley. "Stop!"

He unlocked the door hastily! It was only too clear to the schoolboy actor now that the secret was a secret no longer, so far as the Famous Five were concerned. They knew—and he did not want the knowledge to spread further.

"Come in—quick!" he breathed, as he opened the door.

The Famous Five pushed in and Wibley hurriedly closed the door again and turned the key. They stood looking at him.

Wibley had dressed his part that morning as well as he was able! He was only waiting for the silvery mop to complete the outfit. He was Sir William Bird except for the top of his head! But the close crop of tallow-coloured hair contrasted strangely with the silvery beard and moustache and eyebrows.

"So you—you—you've found out?" he gasped. "I suppose that gabbling idiot Bunter has let it out at last! He's been on the point of it a hundred times. I say, you've got to keep this dark."

"You spoofing ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Catch us keeping it dark! You've had the nerve to make yourself up as Sir William Bird, as you did that day at Greyfriars—"

"Yes! You see—"

"You've butted in here—taken in the whole show—and landed us in it!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove wrathfully. "I suppose Sir William Bird is away all this time, and you knew it—"

"Yes! You—you see—"

"And where do we come in, if he came home and found you playing this mad trick, and us here?" roared Johnny Bull.

"We shouldn't come in at all—we should go out on the end of his boot, I expect," said Bob. "He would kick Wibley out, and us after him!"

"It's all right!" gasped Wibley. "You see—"

"I can't make out how you've worked it, you mad ass!" said Harry Wharton. "You've kept it up for weeks—and now it's come out by accident! Precious lot of asses we should look if the old Bird came home and found us here."

"He won't! You see—" gasped Wibley. "It's all right! Right as rain! You see—"

"Bump him!" said Bob Cherry.

"The bumpfulness is the proper caper!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Bump him terrifically!"

"I say, hold on—I mean, leggo!" howled Wibley. "I tell you—I mean—I'll explain. I was just going to say—whoooooop!"

Bump!

"Oh, scissors! I say—"

Bump!

"Yowwwwooop!"

Bump, bump!

The Famous Five bumped Wibley,

and they bumped him with vim! They were used, at Greyfriars, to the maddest japes from the schoolboy actor—but this time it was, it seemed to them, quite outside the limit! Impersonating an old bean in his own mansion, and landing them in it, was altogether too thick—and miles beyond the limit! They bumped William Wibley, and they bumped him hard!

"Oh! Ow! Oh! Ow!" roared Wibley. "You silly asses! Oh! You mad chumps! Ow! I was just going to say—wow! I was going to tell you—yooooop! Will you listen to a—yoo-hoo-hoop!"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Yaroo! Leggo! I tell you—" shrieked Wibley, struggling frantically. His silvery beard came off in his frantic struggle, and his moustache twisted over his nose, his eyebrows slanting over one eye. His pink face was crimson. He spluttered and roared and howled.

Bump!

"There!" gasped Bob Cherry. "That will do! Had enough, you mad ass?"

"Oh crikey! Oh crumbs! Ow!"

"Now, the sooner we travel, the better," said Harry Wharton. "But you've got to chuck this, Wibley! You've got to chuck it right up now! We're not standing for anything of the kind! Got that?"

"Ow! Idiot! Wow! Ass!"

"Do you think we're going to let you carry on with this?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Ow! Yes! Fathead! Ow!"

Wibley staggered to his feet. He was breathless, and he was wrathful.

"You—you—you dummies!" he gasped. "It ain't a jape, you fatheads! Think I could come here and run this show for a jape, you potty piffers?"

"That's what you're doing!"

"Ass! Fathead! Blitherer!" Wibley gurgled for breath. "If you'd let a fellow speak, I'd explain! I'm doing this to oblige the old Bird—he asked me to—and it was the old Bird asked you here—I asked him to ask you. Now do you understand, you dummies? I'm keeping it up that Sir William's at home, while he's away on Secret Service! Got that, you blitherers?"

"Oh!" gasped the Famous Five together.

It dawned on them that they had been a little too previous, as it were, with that bumping!

"Then—then Sir William knows?" gasped Bob.

"Of course he does, idiot! He fixed it up with me before the school broke up, maniac! Think I should be here if he didn't know, lunatic?"

"We thought—"

"You thought!" snorted Wibley. "Don't gammon! Catch you thinking! What have you got to do it with?"

"Blessed if I make this out!" said Harry Wharton. "Anyhow, you'd better explain the whole thing now, Wibley! Of course, we thought it was one of your potty japes—"

"Dummy!"

"Well, if it isn't, we'll keep it dark, of course, but—"

"Chump!"

Wibley stepped to the pier-glass, and proceeded to put himself to rights. The juniors watched him, and Bob Cherry opened the bag and took out the silvery mop, and in silence handed it to Wibley.

"Oh!" gasped Wibley. "You've got it!"

"Yes, idiot!" exclaimed Wharton. "We found it in your hat, which was blowing about in the wind!"

Wibley beamed.

In a few minutes William Wibley was Sir William again, from top to toe! Then he rang for the butler, and unlocked the door.

"Look here—" began Johnny Bull.

"I'll tell you over brekker, ass! Think I ain't famished, fathead, when I've had nothing since lunch yesterday?" hissed Wibley.

"Oh!"

Blump appeared in the doorway. He eyed his master. But Sir William was himself again now, and he met the portly butler's scrutiny with equanimity.

"Send up breakfast, Blump," said Sir William, "and be quick about it! Get a move on! Sharp!"

Blump got a move on. And over breakfast, in Sir William's room, Wibley explained to the amazed juniors, and, of course, received their solemn assurance that the secret should be kept a deep, dead secret.

~~~~~



You'll enjoy yourself with

## The PHYSOG FAMILY

Invite the  
Physog  
Family to  
your home.

Get them in your family  
circle—you'll like them! A  
variety of eyes, noses and  
mouths are supplied for you  
to place on the faces. There  
are thousands of possible  
expressions, and  
each one will  
make you roar  
with laughter!

A HUMOROUS  
GAME FOR THE  
GROWN-UPS  
A FASCINATING  
TOY FOR THE  
CHILDREN



Of all Toyshops, Stationers and Stores. Order  
from Harrods, Gamage's, Bentalls of Kingston,  
Boots' Stationery Departments, Timothy  
White's, W. H. Smith's, Wymans, or Burnside's.  
Post Free. 2/6, from Dept. H., Waddy  
Productions, 27A, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.

### BEGINNING ON BUNTER!

"ALL right for us!" said Loder.  
"Is it?" said Price doubt-  
fully.

Loder sat on the end of the table  
in the breakfast-room, smoking a  
cigarette.

Price had a cigarette in his fingers,  
but had not lighted it.

"You can put on a fag!" added  
Loder scornfully. "That old ass  
won't be butting in; and the servants  
don't matter."

Price lighted his cigarette.

"The old goat," went on Loder,  
thus alluding to his venerable  
avuncular relative, "is keeping to his  
room! My belief is that he's gone  
cracked—or something jolly like it!  
Anyhow, he's not interfering with us.  
We can do as we jolly well like."

"He won't keep to his room for  
ever, I suppose?" remarked Price.

"No; we've got to get through  
before he shows up," said Loder,  
blowing out a cloud of smoke. "This  
is a chance I'm not going to lose  
of getting shut of those young cads.  
By the time the old goat butts in,  
they're going to be gone. See?"

Master Gerald had thought it out  
over brekker. He realised that while  
Sir William remained confined to his  
room, he had a golden opportunity.  
Loder was not going to let his  
chances, like the sunbeams, pass him  
by.

"But—but we can't handle that  
crew, old man!" murmured Price.  
Price of the Fifth did not want any  
more marmalade, applied outside!

"We can—and we're going to,"  
answered Loder coolly. "They won't  
be sticking together in a bunch for  
ever—and we can get them one or  
two at a time—and give them such a  
thundering hot time that they'll be  
glad to go. So long as the old goat  
keeps off the scene, it's O.K."

"They're gone out now, I think,"  
said Price.

"I know they have, but one of the  
gang hasn't—that fat freak Bunter  
isn't down yet! We'll begin on  
Bunter."

"Good egg!" agreed Price.

He was quite ready to begin on  
Bunter. Little danger was to be  
apprehended in beginning on Bunter.

The two black sheep of Greyfriars  
were aware that Harry Wharton &  
Co. had gone out, after the shindy in  
the breakfast-room. They were not  
aware of a discovery on the avenue,  
which had caused the Famous Five to  
return.

The five, anxious to avoid further  
trouble, had come in quietly and gone  
upstairs, the two seniors in the  
breakfast-room quite unaware of it.

"When that gang come back from  
the beach," went on Loder, "they'll  
find Bunter gone, to begin with.  
After that, we'll get them one or two  
at a time, and hike them out. If  
that old ass keeps out of sight for a  
few hours, we shall get through all  
right! Nothing could have suited us  
better, really."

Loder threw away the stump of his  
cigarette after lighting another from  
it.

"Once they're gone, we can tell our  
own story to the old ass!" he went

on. "They started the trouble, of  
course—kicked up a shindy, and  
went!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Price.

"Finish that smoke and let's get  
going on Bunter!" said Loder.

"You think he'll go?" asked Price.

"I think he will be glad to when  
we're through! You'll see."

And—the smokes having been  
finished—Loder and his pal left the  
breakfast-room, to begin on Bunter.

Nobody was to be seen as they went  
up into the gallery over the hall.  
By that time, though they were un-  
aware of it, Blump had taken Sir  
William's breakfast up, and the  
Famous Five were in Sir William's  
room, sitting round Wibley while he  
ate and talked.

Loder and Price did not go any-  
where near Sir William's room. They  
headed for Billy Bunter's at the other  
end of the gallery.

A sound something like a foghorn,  
and something like an air-raid warn-  
ing, greeted them as they arrived.  
Billy Bunter had settled down to  
slumber again, and his snore was  
going strong.

Loder and Price grinned at the  
fat face on the pillow, with its eyes  
shut and its mouth open.

Bunter, unconscious of peril, snored  
on.

His snore, and his slumber, were  
suddenly interrupted as Loder and  
Price grasped him together.

Bump!

Bunter woke up at once! He  
landed on the floor in a tangle of bed-  
clothes, woke, and roared.

"Oh! Ow! Beasts! Bob Cherry,  
you rotter— Wharton, you beast,  
I—" Bunter broke off with a gasp,  
as he saw who his visitors were. "Oh!  
Oh crikey! I—I say, you gerrout of  
my room, Loder!"

"How long will it take you to  
dress?" asked Loder genially.

"I ain't going to dress! I ain't  
getting up yet!" gasped Bunter.

"Like to go to the station in your  
pyjamas?" asked Loder, still genial.

"I ain't going to the station!"

"I think you are!" smiled Loder.

"I may be mistaken—but that's what  
I think. I give you three minutes to  
get into your clobber! You don't  
seem quite awake yet! That may  
help liven you up."

Loder picked up a jug of water  
and up-ended it over the fat Owl,  
sprawling in sheets and blankets.

"Yarooop!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Price.

Bunter scrambled up frantically.  
He spluttered, drenched and dripp-  
ing. Loder put down the jug.

"Getting into your clobber?" he  
asked.

"Ooogh! Grooogh! No! I—I—  
Grooogh!" gurgled Bunter. "I—I—  
I ain't—"

Smack!

"Yoo-hooop!"

"What about that?" asked Loder.

"Have another?"

"Wow! Keep off, you beast! I—  
I—I'll dress, if you like!" howled  
Bunter. "I say, where's my  
trousers?"

Billy Bunter, as a rule, was not a  
quick worker. But he was dressed

inside three minutes! There was no time for washing! Still, Bunter was not very particular about that. Bunter could lose a wash without missing it! He often had!

He puffed, and panted, and gasped, and gurgled, but he got through in time. He blinked at Loder in rage and dismay.

Bunter did not want to catch a train that morning! He was getting on quite nicely at Eastcliff Lodge. Loder, however, seemed set on Bunter catching a train.

"We'll walk to the station with him, and see him off, Pricey!" said Loder. "Make sure of him, to begin with."

"But I ain't—" wailed Bunter. "I ain't going to the station, Loder. Why, I haven't had breakfast yet!"

"Can't manage without it?" asked Loder.

"Eh?" Bunter blinked at him in sheer astonishment. "Manage without my brekker! Wharrer you mean?"

"I'm afraid there's no time for brekker!" said Loder, shaking his head. "But if you object, Bunter, I—"

"I should think I jolly well do!" shrieked Bunter.

"All right—we'll argue it out with you!" said Loder, in the same tone of cheerful geniality. "Stick him over that chair, Pricey!"

Loder picked up a slipper. Price, grinning, grabbed the fat Owl and doubled him over the chair.

Bunter roared with apprehension.

His apprehensions were well-founded. Loder, at Greyfriars, had a heavy hand with an ashplant! He seemed to have an equally heavy hand with a slipper.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Oh crikey! Oh jiminy! Stop-pit!" yelled Bunter, wriggling frantically in Price's grasp.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Ow! Help! Stop-pit! I—I don't want any brekker. I—I say, I—I want to go to the station— Oh crikey, will you stop-pit?"

"Sure you don't want to stop for brekker?" smiled Loder.

"Ow! Yes! No! Wow!"

"Ready to start for the station?"

"No—I mean yes! Oh! Yes! Ow!"

"Give him a few more!" suggested Price. "He might think of coming back again. Give him a tip what to expect if he does!"

"Good!" agreed Loder.

The suggestion seemed to Loder a good one! He acted on it at once.

The slipper rose and fell, as if Loder fancied that he was beating a carpet. Every whack was followed by a fiendish yell.

Loder threw down the slipper at last. He was getting tired—though not so tired as Bunter.

"That will do for the present," he remarked. "I'll let you have some more of the same—lots more—if I see you again before next term at Greyfriars. Like to trot to the station now?"

"Ow! Wow! Beast! I—I mean yes! Yes! Oh! Yes!"

"Good! Come on!"

Grinning, Loder and Price walked out of the room, on either side of the fat Owl.

Bunter rolled between them, gasping and spluttering. And just as they reached the stair-head, five fellows in a cheery bunch came out of the corridor from Sir William's room and met them face to face.

### NO LUCK FOR LODER!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "What the dickens—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

## COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

I MUST begin my Chat this week with the great news I have in store for you. The MAGNET will present an entirely new Greyfriars Portrait Gallery, beginning next week. For months past I have had requests from readers for such a feature. I have published Portrait Galleries before now, and well they were liked. But an up-to-date series of brand new portraits is badly wanted. Therefore, you are going to have it!

Readers of Frank Richards' magnificent school yarns of Harry Wharton & Co. like to see the portraits of their favourites. Of course, everyone who figures at the school is not a prime favourite—there are black sheep among the number. But these will appear in our gallery as well. This new Portrait Gallery is going to be useful to old and new readers alike. Watch out for No. 1, which will appear in the next issue of the good old MAGNET.

Complaints are still coming in from readers, who say they cannot always get copies of the MAGNET and "Schoolboys' Own Library" from their newsagent. Whose fault is it, chums? Not your Editor's! I have repeatedly stated in these Chats of mine that, owing to the war, we are not allowed to print more copies of MAGNET and "Schoolboys' Own Library" than are ordered by the newsagents. This difficulty is easily overcome, chums, if you will only fill in the Order Form which appears on page 11 of this issue and hand it, without delay, to your newsagent.

Queer as the circumstances are, Harry Wharton & Co. are enjoying their holiday by the sea. With an enemy spy on the spot, Wibley realises only too well how much depends on his keeping up his impersonation at Eastcliff Lodge. But, careful as the schoolboy impersonator is, he very nearly gives away the whole bag of tricks in

### "THE MAN FROM GERMANY!"

By Frank Richards,

next Saturday's super story of excitement and thrills. Have you ordered your copy yet? If not, make a point of doing so—and be slippy about it—otherwise you might get left!

Chin, chin,

YOUR EDITOR.

Bunter yelled.

"I say, you fellows! Help! I say—rescue! I say—yaroooooh!"

Loder and Price glared at the Famous Five. They had supposed that the cheery party were on the beach. It was quite a surprise to see them suddenly appear on the scene of action—and not a pleasant surprise.

Harry Wharton & Co. had left Wibley in Sir William's room. The schoolboy actor was giving a few finishing touches to his outfit before he came down. For reasons quite unknown to Loder, Sir William was no longer keeping to his room!

"What the thump are you doing with our prize porpoise?" demanded Bob Cherry. "Hands off, Loder—sharp!"

"I say, you fellows, stop 'em!" yelled Bunter. "They're taking me to the station—and I ain't had brekker even—"

The Famous Five promptly pushed in between Loder and the stairs.

There would have been dry eyes in the Co. if Billy Bunter had departed for the station; but they certainly were not going to let Loder march him there! If Gerald Loder was yearning for more trouble, there was plenty ready.

"Let go Bunter at once!" rapped Harry Wharton.

Loder gave him a ferocious glare! Beginning on Bunter did not seem so easy a proposition, with the Famous Five on the scene. But Loder was going to carry on—if he could!

"Stand back, you cheeky young scoundrels!" snarled Loder. "I'll knock you right and left, if you butt in here."

"I say, you fellows—" howled Bunter.

"Last time of asking!" said Bob.

"Now, then—"

"Come on, Pricey!" breathed Loder. With a grip on Bunter's fat arm, he rushed him on, to an accompaniment of frantic howls from Bunter.

"Pile in!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Mop them up!"

"Mop them terrifically!"

The Famous Five piled in as one man!

Loder had to let go Bunter, and the fat Owl staggered away and sat down with a bump, roaring.

Loder was too busy to heed him further. Beginning on Bunter had led to finishing on the Famous Five, which Loder found hard and strenuous work.

There was a battle royal in the oak gallery over the hall. Two seniors and five juniors were wildly mixed up. The uproar rang and echoed all over Eastcliff Lodge.

Down below, in the hall, Blump appeared, staring up in horror. After Blump appeared John and Charles and Robert, all staring up, equally horrified. But the combatants in the gallery did not heed the audience below—they were much too busy.

Price was the first man down. Price, on his back, yelled wildly as Johnny Bull sat on his chest, grasping his ears, and tapping his head on the hard oak floor. Price of the Fifth had had enough—more than enough—

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,679.

but he was getting more and more. Price's voice echoed and re-echoed through Eastcliff Lodge on its top note.

Loder was a tougher handful than Price. He was giving quite a lot of trouble. But he was getting more trouble than he gave.

He staggered to and fro, with four juniors clinging to him like cats; and went down at last with a crash.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter tottered to his feet. "I say, hold him! I say, he whopped me with a slipper! I say, hold him while I get the slipper and give him a few."

"We've got him!"

"Carry on, old fat man!"

Billy Bunter shot back to his room for the slipper. He shot back to the scene of action with the slipper in a fat paw.

"Stoppit!" Price was yelling. "I give in! I give you best! Will you stop banging my head? Ow! Stoppit!"

Johnny Bull ceased at last to bang Price's head. He took a comfortable seat on Price's waistcoat, to watch Bunter getting busy with the slipper.

Four fellows held Loder by the arms and the legs, his nose grinding into the old oak floor.

Billy Bunter got busy!

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Loder had grinned while he handled the slipper in Bunter's room. He was not grinning now. Bunter was doing the grinning, and Loder was doing the yelling.

Whack, whack, whack!

"That's enough, Bunter!" gasped Bob at last.

Bunter dropped the slipper, and as he did so, Sir William arrived on the scene.

"Hem! My young friends!" said Sir William. "What—what—"

Loder and Price were allowed to rise to their feet. They stood dusty and dishevelled, and gasping for breath. Price leaned on the balustrade, gurgling. Loder glared at Sir William.

"Look here," he roared, "those young scoundrels—"

"Silence, Loder—that is, Gerald!" barked Sir William sternly. "How dare you apply such epithets to my guests—my honoured guests! I am perfectly aware, Gerald, that these chaps—I mean, these boys—would have been very glad to keep the peace.

I am shocked at you, Gerald! I am disgusted at you! You have taken advantage of my—my temporary indisposition to act like a hooligan—indeed, like a Hun!"

"Look here—" roared Loder.

"I will not allow my guests to be bullyragged—I—I mean, I will not permit them to be subjected to hooliganism under my roof! Nothing of the kind! Go!"

"I—I—" Loder choked with rage.

"I—" Sir William waved his hand to the stairs.

"Go!" he thundered.

"You old fool!" bawled Loder.

"Blump!" thundered Sir William.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped the butler, from below.

"Remove these—these persons from the house! Remove them at once! Send their baggage after them, Blump! Take them away! Blump—John—Charles—Robert—remove those two young ruffians! If they are permitted to enter this mansion again, Blump, it will cost you your place! Remove them!"

Blump, John, Charles, and Robert came up the staircase. They gathered round Loder and Price.

Loder and Price descended the stairs, in the midst of Blump, John, Charles, and Robert. With faces absolutely Hunnish in expression they tramped out at the door, still in the midst of Blump, John, Charles, and Robert.

Blump, John, Charles, and Robert came back without them.

Loder and Price had intended to walk to the station with Billy Bunter—now they walked to the station without him. And they walked in the worst tempers ever!

Loder's visit had been an exciting episode. But Loder had departed, and the Greyfriars Easter party were merry and bright. Harry Wharton & Co. were in Wibley's secret now—as a result of Billy Bunter's hair-raid! But that secret was safe in their keeping. And the time was at hand when the fact that they were in the secret was to prove very useful to the schoolboy actor who was playing so peculiar a part.

THE END.

(Next week's yarn: "THE MAN FROM GERMANY!" is better than ever. Don't miss it, whatever you do!)

## "MAGNET" PEN PALS

A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging views on matters of mutual interest. If you wish to reply to a notice published here you must write to the Pen Pal direct. Notices for publication should be accompanied by the coupon on this page, and posted to the MAGNET Pen Pals, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Would you care to join the MAGNET Exchange Club? For details write to: D. M. Webb, 81, Burtons Road, Hampton Hill, Middlesex.

Bryan K. Dykes, 5a, King George's Place, High Street, Maldon, Essex; pen pals interested in stamps and magazines; age 11-12.

G. Landau, 200, Kitchener Avenue, Kensington, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa; age 14-17; sport and general topics; anywhere except South Africa.

S. Owen, 12, Manor Place, Drove Lane, Sleaford, Lincs; age 14-16; interested in foreign stamps and general topics; anywhere, England preferred.

Miss Joyce MacShane, 47, Rosecraft Drive, Edwards Lane, Arnold, Nottingham; 17-21; England or abroad; interested in stamps, films, and sports.

R. Ward, 69, Norton Road, Grantham, Lincs; age 15-17; books, snaps, and topical events; anywhere.

P. Upham, 6, Sandhurst Road, Mile End Lane, Stockport, Cheshire; 14-16; stamps, aviation, films, and animals; anywhere.

K. R. Wilson, 32, Mitcham Road, Leyton, London, E.17; age 15; anywhere except the British Isles.

G. D. Curry, 47, Kinfauns Avenue, Romford, Essex; age 17; correspondents; anything; anywhere.

D. Herbert, 12, Barrington Court, Basford Park, Newcastle, Staffs; age 12-14; interested in sailing, aviation, and electricity; anywhere except the British Isles.

Una Stoneham, 39, Vernon Road, Seven Kings, Essex; age 17-19; hobbies include sports, tennis, hockey, also interested in cricket, cycling, stamps; preferably abroad.

R. Davies, 2a, Parkside Road, Bebington, Warr, Cheshire; age 13-15; interested in angling, animals, birds, and film stars.

K. Thomas, 3, Ala Road, Pwllheli, North Wales; age 16-18; interested in cricket, films, radio, and dance music; Great Britain, France, Australia, U.S.A.

M. E. Webster, 96, Hitcham Road, Walthamstow, E.17; age 14-15; any country except Great Britain and Ireland; any topic.

Miss B. Pope, Red Court Cottage, West Overcliff Drive, Bournemouth, Hants; 11-14; swimming, cigarette cards; anywhere.

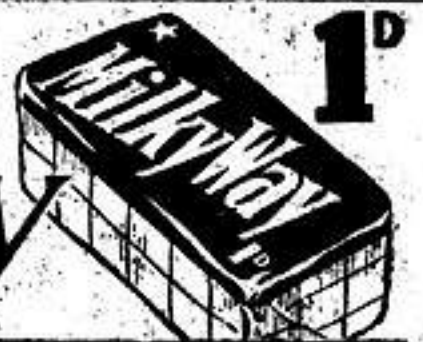
Miss M. Smith, 42, Muff Street, East Bowling, Bradford, Yorks; 12-14; stamps and films; preferably U.S.A. and Egypt.

MAGNET  
PEN PALS' COUPON  
20-4-40

ONE! TWO! THREE!  
FOUR FAR  
YOU'RE VERY THIN  
EGGS

—for this grand candy bar

# MilkyWay



**STAMPS** FREE. 35 CATALOGUED 13/- incl. ROYAL VISIT CANADA COMPLETE SET, COLONIALS, etc., to approval applicants sending 2d.—P. COCKRILL, 13, MONTELL ROAD, LONDON, S.W.2.

**HAVE YOU A RED NOSE?**

Send a stamp and you will learn how to rid yourself of such a terrible affliction free of charge.

Address in confidence: T. J. TEMPLE, Specialist, 32, "Commerce House," 72, Oxford Street, LONDON, W.1. (Est. 39 years.)

**FREE.** Collection 55 different Triangular, Airmail, Zoological, Pictorial, Commemorative, New Issue, etc. Postage 2d.—(Dept. M.), 40, WARREN STREET, SAVILETOWN, DEWSBURY.

**JUBILEE PACKET FREE.** Goliath Locomotive, Latvia, Estonia, Egypt, Old Turkey, Scarce Jubilee, pkt. 50 diff. Ask for 50% discount approvals and enclose 2d. postage.—ROBINSON BROS. (A), Moreton, Wirral.

All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.