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BUNTER THE BILLIONAIRE!



VERY AWKWARD FOR BUNTER'S IMPOSTOR GRANDPA!

(A Screamingly Funny Scene in the Splendid, Long, Complete School Tale in this Issue). 89-3-11

BUNTER THE BILLIONAIRE!

A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete
School Story of Tom Merry & Co.
at St. Jim's.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



CHAPTER I.

The Letter from Grandma.

"I SAY, you fellows!"

The fat figure of Bunter of the Fourth was framed in the doorway of Study No. 10 in the Shell.

He blinked in surprise at the intruder. The Terrible Three were rather oddly occupied. Tom Merry was trying on a long white beard below the glass, and Monty Lowther was leaning wrinkles on his youthful brow, with an asthmatic hand. Manners, with a needle and thread, was taking in a few reefs in an enormous pair of check trousers.

"I say—"

"Buzz off, Bunter," said Tom Merry, without looking round. "Busy, you know."

"What's this game?" asked Bunter. "It isn't a game, my fat pippin," answered Monty Lowther. "We're getting ready for another giddy rehearsal of the School House Junior Dramatic Society. And we haven't any time to waste on porpoises. Out!"

"But I say—"

"Scout!" said Manners.

Billy Bunter did not scout, however. He rolled into the study.

"I really think we shall take the cake," remarked Monty Lowther, blinking at his queer-looking visage in the glass. "It's sheer cheek of those New House boasters to think they can equal us in this line. I don't deny that Kex is pretty good. But we're better."

"How, boss?" said Manners.

"I say, you fellows—"

"You still shove, Bunter? Do buzz off, there's a good porpoise!"

"Yes, but I say—"

"My dear man, there's nothing to buzz in the study," said Tom Merry. "Try D'Arcy."

"Yes, really, Merry—"

"Try the New House," said Lowther.

"I've found that Figgins has had a conviction."

Bunter gasped.

"I haven't come here to borrow the Lawther."

"You haven't?" ejaculated Lowther.

"No."

"My hat! Are you ill?"

"No, you are!"

"Wandering in your mind?" asked Lowther.

"No, you silly chump!" howled Bunter.

"He come to tea, then," said Manners. "Too late, Bunter—we've had tea, and there's nothing left, and nothing doing. Good-bye!"

"I haven't come to tea!" shrieked Bunter.

"Then what the dickens have you come for? It's not supper-time yet."

"I say, you fellows, don't be hoarse!" urged Bunter. "Considering how jolly friendly you were when we met at Greyfriars, before I came here—"

"We didn't know you then, you know," said Tom Merry, with a smile. "We've found you out now."

"Bunter jumped.

"What found me out?" he stammered.

"Yes, what?"

"Oh, excuse! I—I say, you fellows, keep it dark!" gasped Bunter.

There was such consternation in Bunter's fat face that the Terrible Three stared at him, forgetting for the moment even the important business of the School House Dramatic Society.

"Keep what dark?" asked Tom Merry, in wonder.

"What's at you've found out, you know," stammered Bunter. "It—it was only a lark, you know."

"Blessed if I know what you're driving at," said the captain of the Shell blandly. "How can we keep it dark that we've found out you're a fat boaster and a fat worm? Everybody else knows it as well as we do."

"Oh—"

"Yes—"

"Silly are! I—I thought you meant—"

"What?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"Hallo! Here's a giddy gully secret!" growled Monty Lowther.

"What is it, Bunter? Have you committed a murder?"

"Nonsense!"

"Bigness!"

"You silly are!"

"Then what is it?"

"N-a-n-nothing!" stammered Bunter.

The fat junior was greatly relieved. Tom Merry's words had slanted his mind. For the moment he had supposed that the Shell fellows had made the discovery that he was Billy Bunter of Greyfriars, and not Wally Bunter of St. Jim's, as he was supposed to be.

But evidently the St. Jim's fellows, as yet, had no suspicion of that change of identity.

Billy Bunter's secret was safe. But they were regarding him very curiously. Bunter, in his shame, had very nearly given his secret away.

He was not prepared to do that yet, to say means. Certainly, St. Jim's had not quite come up to his expectations. But upon the whole he liked it better than Greyfriars. And so long as his cousin Wally was willing to play his part at Greyfriars he was prepared to play Wally's part at St. Jim's.

Monty Lowther raised his forefinger,

and pointed it accusingly at the Owl of Greyfriars.

"Confess!" he said severely.

"I—I say, you know, you've been bowled out," said Lowther. "What have you been doing? If it isn't homicide or bigamy, what is it? Have you been stealing Fatty Wynn's tart?"

"Nonsense!"

"Confess, miscreant!" said Lowther, in the best manner of the Junior Dramatic Society. "Understand the golly, boss!"

"I say, you fellows, don't play the game!" said Bunter, who had quite forgotten his confidence man. "I say, I come here to see you a favour."

"What?" answered Tom Merry.

"That's that! I—I say, you know I'm awfully short-sighted," said Bunter pathetically.

"Well, we know it now," said Lowther. "You didn't seem so when we first met you, but now you've been here you seem to blind as your cousin Billy at Greyfriars. Well, what are you grinning at, boss?"

"N-nothing! I say, I only want you to send a letter for me," said Bunter.

"That isn't much, is it?"

"Do you mean to say you can't read a letter for yourself?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Bunter blinked at him, through his big glasses with a very pathetic expression. "My sight's rather worse than usual to-day," he said. "I'd really be very much obliged if one of you fellows would read this letter out to me."

"My dear kid, hand it over," said Tom good-naturedly. "Why didn't you say that at once, you duffer!"

Billy Bunter handed over the letter. Tom glanced at it in some surprise, as he took it.

The letter was written in a somewhat cramped hand, upon thin paper, such as is used for foreign correspondence.

It began: "My dearest grandson,"

"You want me to read this out?" asked Tom.

"Yes, please."

"There may be something private in it."

"Oh, never mind that!" said Bunter.

"It—it's only a letter from my great father in Australia."

"Your grandfather in Australia?"

"Yes—"

"Well, here goes!" said Tom Merry.

And the captain of the Shell read out the letter from Bunter's grandfather in Australia, Bunter listening to it with an expression of odd seriousness, and Manners and Lowther with growing wonder in their faces.

CHAPTER 2.

Great Expectations!

"GREAT pip!" murmured Monty Lowther.

And Manners blinked.

For the letter from Bunter's grandfather, after awaiting—not to say amazing and astounding. It ran:

"My dearest Grandson,—

"You will doubtless be surprised, and I am sure pleased, by the news I have for you. Long as I have been away from home, I have not forgotten my dear little grandson, and I am sure you have not forgotten me. I shall be returning in England shortly, and I shall be delighted to see you once again.

"My dear boy, I have had a great stroke of fortune. Gold has been discovered upon my sheep run, and it turns out to be the biggest strike ever made in this part of Australia. Instead of being merely a wealthy man, my dear boy, I am now the richest man in Australia. I am a millionaire several times over.

"I am sure this will be joyful news to you. As I have always intended, you will be my sole heir; but it is not my intention that you shall wait until my death to share my wealth. Immediately upon my return to England, I shall take steps to invest one million pounds in your name, to become your absolute property when you are twenty-one.

"You may expect to see me in a few weeks. I am writing to your father by the same post. I am sure that you will be glad to see me, my dear boy.

"Your very affectionate grandfather,

"JOHN BUNTER."

The Terrible Three looked at Bunter when Tom Merry had finished reading out that amazing letter.

They expected to see him beaming with joy.

But Bunter had a very thoughtful look on his fat face.

"I say, you fellows, does that mean that I'm going to be rich?" he asked.

Tom Merry laughed.

"I should jolly well say so!" he answered. "Rich as Croesus, I should think. A millionaire at twenty-one, and a billionaire in the long run. Congratulations, kid!"

"A billionaire!" repeated Bunter. "Oh, my hat! I say, though, he might have sent me a remittance in the letter, mightn't he?"

"Ho, ha, ha!"

"Well, even a few pounds would be nice in handy," said Bunter. "It's all very well to be a millionaire at twenty-one, but I ain't twenty-one. I'd rather have something in hand."

"Well, my hat!"

"F'rinstance, I'm hungry at the present moment," said Bunter, "and I'm actually stony."

"Perhaps your grandfather will hand you a tip when he comes home," suggested Manners.

"That's all very well, but he isn't home yet; he says a few weeks," said Bunter discontentedly. "That's just like uncle."

"Like whom?"

"Grandfather, I mean—that's just like grandfather, keeping a chap short of money and trying it up so that he can't touch it. He was always rather mean."

"Oh!"

The Terrible Three looked at one another.

Gratified, certainly, had never seemed a part of Bunter's charming nature; but incidentally to this extent was rather a "corker."

"I say, you fellows, I suppose I can raise money on my expectations, though?" said Bunter. "I can go to the

Jews, same as fellows do in novels, and raise the wind."

"I shouldn't begin that, Bunter," said Tom Merry. "If you get dealing with any moneylenders the stead will soon drop on you."

"Blow the Head! I could buy up the Head, and the school, too, when I come into my money," said Bunter, independently.

"Dear old Bunter!" said Monty Lowther affectionately. "What a charming chap you will be when you're a billionaire!"

"I shall certainly raise the wind somehow," said Bunter. "I'm not going short of money simply because my grandfather's mean!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Game on, letter!"

Bunter of the Fourth rolled out of the study with the letter in his fat hand.

The Terrible Three resumed the business interrupted by the fat junior's visit.

They were still busy when an eye-glass beamed in at the doorway, and Arthur Augustus, of the Fourth Form, glanced in.

"Bai Jove! You fellows are lookin' v'atsh queesh!" remarked the swell of the Fourth. "Are you twyin' to make yourself look old enough to be your own granddathah, Tom Mewwy?"

Tom Merry grinned over the white beard.

"We're at practice," he explained.

"F'rinstance of the New House says that the N.H.J.A.D.S. can beat us hollow in this line. We're going to show them that they can't."

"The New House Junior Amateur Dramatic Society is all rubbish," remarked Arthur Augustus. "I could beat them on my head—except Kerr peewags. Kerr is v'atsh clobber. Is it a competeh?"

"Well," said Tom, laughing, "Figgins and Co. have undertaken to put up a man from the N.H.J.A.D.S. who will make Kerr and take us in. I suppose that means that Kerr will make himself up as Mr. Latham, as he did before. We're going to beat them, on the same lines. We haven't settled yet. Lowther thinks he could make-up as any old thing, but—"

"So I could," said Monty Lowther.

"And Manners thinks—"

"I don't think, I know!" interjected Manners.

"And I think that I'm really the goods," said Tom good-humouredly. "What do you think, D'Arcy?"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus.

"I really think, dear boy, that you cannot do bettah than leave it in my hands."

"Eh!"

"I will undertake to beat the New House bounds hollow," said Arthur Augustus, confidently. "F'rinstance, I think I could get myself up as the Head—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Or peewags as Mr. Walton—"

"Or, ha, ha!"

"Well, a dear boy, I am v'atsh a dab at thes'twicals, you know. I see no reason for this laugh!"

"Well, there's some things Gussy could do better than we could," Monty Lowther remarked thoughtfully.

"You're allad you are able to see that, Lowthah!"

"Certainly, old fellow. You could make up as a silly ass—"

"Eh!"

"You wouldn't need to alter your appearance in any way—"

"Well, Lowthah—"

"Or as a tame lunatic," said Lowther.

"That part would suit you down to the

ground, old chap. You were born for it!"

"I refuse to listen to these wild jokes, Lowthah. I looked in to speak to you fellows about Bunter. Have you heard the news? He has had a lettah from his granddathah in Australah, and—"

"Oh, you're seen it!" said Tom.

"Yas, v'atsh! I see, Bunter has signed me to weed him the lettah, as his granddathah had to-day."

"What?"

"Notlin' surprislin' in that, is there, Tom Mewwy?"

"Well, a little. He asked me exactly the same thing, for the same reason," answered Tom.

"Bai Jove! Did he? Peewags he wanted the lettah weed evah twice, then, to make sure of his wippin' luck. It appahs that Bunter is goin' to be twemdenously wish."

"Rolling in it," agreed Tom.

"I am afraid that the young boundah will be v'atsh weckless," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "I was v'atsh friendly with him when I met him at Gwey's, and you know, though I have v'atsh taken a dislike to him since he has turned out so much like his cousin, Billy Buntah. I was thinking, however, that peewags it is a fellow's duty to keep an eye on him, and see that he does not play the goat. Peewags it is up to me, as a fellow of tact and judgment, you know. What do you think, Tom Mewwy?"

"I think Bunter will think you are after his billions," answered Tom, laughing.

Arthur Augustus jumped.

"Bai Jove! Impos."

"That's the kind of nice, dear boy he is," remarked Lowther.

The swell of St. Jim's shook his head.

"I hardly think that any fellow could v'atsh suspect me of unwholesome motives," he said decidedly. "You see, however v'atsh like Wooks and Crookes and Claspie will certainly try to lead Bunter astray, when they know he is fightfully wick. He's a howlin' yonder ass! He may lead himself in trouble. I cannot forget that on one occasion he sved me from havin' my clobber damaged. I shall look after him, I think."

The Terrible Three grinned.

Arthur Augustus had looked in to ask their opinion upon that important point; but it was evident that his mind was already made up.

Indeed, if a fellow like Bunter of the Fourth found himself in possession of unlimited wealth, it was pretty certain that his friends, if he had any, would have reason to be alarmed for him.

And Bunter was certain to have plenty of friends when his grandfather's letter became generally known.

Arthur Augustus was inspired, as usual, by the nobles of moor; but Tom Merry & Co. did not think Bunter was likely to give him credit for noble mires.

"Gussy, old chap—"

"All sewene, dear boy! I feel it is up to me to look after Bunter a little, and speak a word in season if he begins kickin' ovah the traces."

"You're a good little ass, Gussy!" remarked Lowther. "But—"

"I refuse to be characterized as a good little ass, Lowthah!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy disappeared from the doorway of Study 10, leaving the Terrible Three to continue the preparations that were to knock the New House Junior Amateur Dramatic Society sky-high.

CHAPTER 3.

Arthur Augustus Does His Duty!

"HERE comes the great man!" murmured Cardew of the Fourth.

His chums, Levison and Clive, grinned in the junior Common-room were turned upon Bunter of the Fourth as he rolled in that evening.

Bunter was, in fact, the cynosure of all eyes, and the centre of attraction. Bunter had attracted notice in many ways since he had come to St. Jim's. But Bunter, his cousin and double, had made a very favourable impression upon Tom Merry & Co., and the way Billy Bunter had failed to live up to it was rather surprising. The juniors were far from suspecting that Billy had taken Wally's place, as they were exactly alike to look at. Such an explanation of the mystery never entered their minds. In consequence they were puzzled and perplexed, and Bunter had more of their attention than any other new junior would have obtained.

But, since Grandfather Bunter's letter had become widely known in the school, Bunter of the Fourth was more interesting than ever.

A fellow who was going to have a million pounds when he was twenty-one, and was going to inherit more millions at a later date, was naturally an object of interest.

Bunter the dunce, Bunter the bouncer, and Bunter the raider of study cupboards, might be despised and rejected, but Bunter the billionaire was quite a different person.

The fat junior rolled in, with his little fat nose held high, casting a lofty blink round him through his big spectacles.

He looked as if he was billions were setting into his head already.

And, instead of rolling in unremarked, he was glanced at on all sides, and received welcoming nods and smiles from several fellows who had never previously shown him much friendliness.

Mellish and Trimble, his study-mates, followed him in, haunting him, as it were, like faithful shadows.

Time had been when Mellish and Trimble had "fired" Bunter out of Study No. 2 in the Fourth; but that time was no longer. Now they were prepared to worship the ground upon which Bunter trod.

Crooke and Scrope of the Shell were very attentive, and even Aubrey Rascke, the richest fellow at St. Jim's, was very attentive. The "blades" of the School House had always turned up disdainful noses at Bunter, but their noses were promptly turned down again now. The Australian billions made a tremendous difference to their estimation of Bunter.

Everybody knew of the glorious news, for Tom Merry & Co. were not the only fellows who had read the letter. At least five or six fellows had been asked to read that letter out to Bunter—on account of his defective sight that particular day.

Naturally, the contents of the letter were soon known in the whole of the Lower School in both houses.

Many fellows had congratulated Bunter, and he had received their congratulations in a very lofty manner.

"By gad, I believe the fat bouncer's an inch taller already!" murmured Cardew. "Look at Mellish hangin' on the pearls of wisdom that fall from his lips!" Trimble will be in his boots in a minute! By gad, we oughtn't to lose this chance of makin' friends with a billionaire!"

Levison smiled.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 551.

"Make sure of the billions first," he remarked.

"Well, there seems no doubt about the billions," said Sidney Clive. "Not that we want any of them. None of your larks, Cardew. That fat idiot will really think you are crawling up to him for his money if you are civil to him."

"You fellows will," said Levison. "Even Rascke has grown civil! Look at him!"

Bunter was surrounded now by a little admiring circle.

Rascke and Crooke, Scrope and Mellish and Trimble made the circle, and their answer to Bunter was most respectful.

The fat junior, as was natural in the circumstances, was "spreading" himself considerably. Indeed, he was swelling to such an extent that he seemed in danger of sharing the fate of the frog in the fable.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had been chatting with Blake when Bunter came in. Now his eyeglass was fixed on the fat junior.

He frowned as Rascke & Co. made a movement to the door, with Bunter in their midst.

"Just what I expected!" he murmured.

"What's the trouble?" yawned Blake. "Those boundlars are jawstentin' on to Buntah."

"Let them!" said Blake indifferently.

"It is wathah wosteh deah boy! I am perfectly sure that Wacke is takin' Buntah to his studay now to play bankah."

"Well, you can't help the chap being a silly ass," said Blake. "Let him rip! He hasn't anything to lose but his expectations, so far."

Arthur Augustus shook his head.

"Buntah looked so wathah," he murmured.

"What rot!"

"Wastly, Blake—"

"Boah!" chimed in Herrie; and Digby added, "Piffle!"

Arthur Augustus glanced at his chums, more in anger than in anger.

"I regard it as being 'up to me'!" he said.

"That uttah duflah is in need of a guidin' hand, you know!"

"Bats!"

"I regard that weply as simply wibald," said Arthur Augustus stiffly.

And he left his chums and followed Bunter.

The Owl of Greyfriars rolled into Rascke's expensively-furnished study in the Shell passage with a fat smile of gratification on his face. That expensive study had never been open to him before.

Now he was the "one of the boys!"

Rascke and Crooke fairly bowed him in. Scrope followed, with a civil grin on his ill-favoured face. Mellish and Trimble, much to their annoyance, were excluded.

"Make yourself comfy, Bunter, old top," said Aubrey Rascke. "What do you like to some toffee?"

"Certainly."

"Try these biscuits with it."

"Thanks."

"This toffee is rather good," said Crooke.

Bunter seemed to find the toffee good; for he finished it.

"What about a little game to pass the time?"

"Let Scrope, in a careless sort of way."

Bunter blinked at him.

"That's not a bad idea," he said.

"Just in my line, in fact. I used to be no end of a dog at Greyfriars. He, he, he!"

"At Greyfriars!" repeated Rascke. "Were you long at Greyfriars?"

"I—I mean when I was on a visit there," stammered Bunter. "I—I've got a cousin there, you know. I say, I'll

play you any game you like, I'm a dab at them all. I'm rather short of ready money—"

"My dear man, that's nothing," assured Rascke. "Your I O U is good enough for us."

Bunter's round eyes gleamed through his spectacles.

Grandfather Bunter's letter had made a tremendous change in his credit. The previous day no one would have lent him a shilling with any expectation of seeing it again. Now Rascke & Co. were willing to play with him "on tick."

It was a change, and a very agreeable one to William George Bunter.

"All serene!" he said carelessly. "Of course, I shall be rolling in it as soon as my uncle comes home!"

"Your uncle?"

"I—I mean, my grandfather, of course. He's bound to wink out a whopping allowance, and even if he doesn't I can raise money on my expectations, you know!" said Bunter importantly. "No need for me ever to be short of money again!"

"That's so!" agreed Crooke.

There was a tap at the door, and it opened to reveal the aristocratic countenance of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Rascke & Co. stared at him.

Their looks were not welcoming. The swell of St. Jim's was not "persona grata" in that study study.

"Pway excuse me!" said Arthur Augustus in his most stately manner. "I have looked in—"

"I look out again!" suggested Rascke.

"I have looked in to speak to Buntah."

"Oh, go ahead!" said Billy Bunter.

"I don't mind! Perhaps you'd like to take a hand, D'Arcy?"

"Bei Jove!"

"Bantker, you know!" said Bunter.

"I warn you that I'm going in rather sleep, though. I'm rather a rooky dog when I get going!"

"'Gwreat Scott!' ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

Evidently the fat Owl required looking after.

"Well, D'Arcy can take a hand if he likes!" said Aubrey Rascke, with a grin.

"What do you say, D'Arcy?"

"I regard the suggestion as insulting," Wacke!" answered the swell of St. Jim's warmly. "I have not come here to gamble. I have come here to wemonstrate with Buntah, and lead him out of the way of temptation."

"You silly ass!"

"Wastly, Wacke!"

Billy Bunter gave a snort.

"Check!" he remarked.

"What?"

Bunter raised a fat forefinger, and pointed to the door.

"Cut!" he said softly.

Rascke & Co. chuckled. The expression on D'Arcy's face as Bunter ordered him to "cut" was, as Crooke remarked, worth a guinea a box. Arthur Augustus did not speak for a moment or two; he was trying to recover his breath.

CHAPTER 4.

Gussy Gives It Up!

"BUNTAH!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus at last.

"Oh, travel off!" yawned Bunter.

"You dawpessful young wascal—"

"Cut short!"

"I have come here, Buntah—"

"Shut the door after you!" said Billy Bunter, blinking at him. "You'll excuse my mentioning it, D'Arcy, but I find you a bit of a bore! T'g—"

It cost the swell of St. Jim's a great effort to control his feelings at that

moment, Racke & Co. were grinning with great enjoyment.

"The fact is, D'Arcy," remarked Aubrey Racke, "this is a bit too palpsible, you know. You can't expect Bunter not to see that it's his money you're after!"

"Palpsible enough!" assented Crooke. Arthur Augustus became scarlet. "I wogudate the insinuation with uttish scorn!" he exclaimed hotly. "I hev come here to look afiah Bunter, and to keep him from laying the gidy on me. I appeal to you, Buntah, to leave this study at once, and not to be dwawn into wascally gamblin'!"

"Oh, you're a slow-chop!" said Bunter cheerfully. "These chaps ain't half as rofty as I am, really! In fact, I'm going to open the r' eyes! Got the card? Shut the door, D'Arcy!"

"I woguest you, Buntah—" "Oh, out, or he quiet!"

"Fed up, you know!" remarked Racke. "The fact is, you're not welcome in this study, D'Arcy. You'll oblige me by getting out of it!"

"I shall certainly not remain here a moment longer than is strictly necessary!" answered Arthur Augustus disdainfully. "Buntah—" "Outside!" rapped out Racke. "Haven't I told you we're fed up? Do you want to be dropped into the passage?"

The noble eye of Arthur Augustus glistened through his eyeglass.

"I should certainly not allow you to drop me into the passage, Wacke!" he retorted. "I defy you to attempt anything of the kind!"

Racke and Crooke and Scrope exchanged glances.

They were not fighting men, as a rule; but three of the Shell were certainly more than a match for one of the Fourth. "Chuck him out!" said Scrope.

"Good! Out you go, D'Arcy!" Arthur Augustus' eyes had dropped to the card as the three Shell fellows advanced upon him, and his fists came up.

"Keep your distance, you wottahs!" he exclaimed. "Outside!"

"Wats! Once more, Buntah, I woguest you—Yaxoooh!"

The three were upon him.

Their rush drove Arthur Augustus into the passage, staggering, and Racke & Co. blocked the study doorway, roaring with laughter, as D'Arcy bumped against the wall oppo to.

"Yoooop!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Racke.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from Billy Bunter in the study. "Give him gip! He, he, he!"

Which was decidedly ungrateful of William George Bunter considering the excellent intent one with which Gussy had come to the study.

But the merriment of Racke & Co. was cut short suddenly.

Arthur Augustus leaped gasping on the wall for a moment or two, and then he made a sudden rush back at his assailants, hitting out.

Racke caught Gussy's right with his eye; Crooke caught his left with his nose. Racke and Crooke went staggering into the study, and they collapsed together upon Aubrey's expensive carpet.

Scrope jumped back, and dodged round the table in great alarm. He did not want to join his comrades on the carpet, rich and expensive as it was.

"Now, you wottahs!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Oh my hat!"

"I say, you fellows, k'ck him out, you know!" said Billy Bunter, jumping up.

"I say, D'Arcy, you cheeky rotter—" "What!"

"You clear off, and mind your own bizness!" said Billy Bunter indignantly. "You're not going to have any of my money, so you needn't think it! I'm not going to lend you anything!"

"Wha-a-ah!"

"In fact," said Bunter, backing away round the table as he spoke—"in fact, I despise you, you know! It's simply horrid, making up to a fellow like this, simply because he's got a rich uncle—i mean, grandfather!"

"Buntah! You—you—you—"

"I'm not surprised at it," said Bunter, blinking at him. "Not at all! It's quite in the style of Study No. 6! But I must say I despise you a little! This kind of thing ain't up to my standard, you know!"

Arthur Augustus drew a deep breath. He made a movement towards Bunter, but paused.

"You uttiah wottah!" he said at last. "I wogard you, Buntah, with the utmost

"If Racke's going to insult me—" began Bunter, with all the loftiness of a prospective billionaire.

Racke made an effort, and controlled his temper.

"Sorry!" he gasped. "All serene, Bunter, old—old chap!"

"Right you are!" said Bunter graciously. "Now, what about a game of banker—when you've finished robbing your eye? He, he, he!"

Harmony was established in the study, and the four young rascals settled down to bunker and cigarettes: Billy Bunter "plunging" in the most reckless way with signed paper in the place of cash—quite a cheap method of plunging.

As the paper was to be redeemed when Bunter's wealth came home, so to speak, Racke & Co. did not mind, especially as they were winning all the time, and, though they played cash against paper, they did not lose any of the cash.



Billy Bunter was bent over in Julian's strong grasp, and the ruler came into play. Wacke! wack! wack! "Wot! Murder! Fire! Steppit! Oh!" yelled Bunter.

despasion—I mean, contempt! Go and eat cake!"

And Arthur Augustus turned on his heel and strode out of the study with his noble nose high in the air.

He had finished looking after Bunter, Scrope shut the door hastily, glad to see the last of the swell of St. Jim's.

Then Aubrey Racke and George Gerald Crooke quitted their reposeful attitudes on the carpet, which they had not cared to do while Arthur Augustus remained in the study.

Racke rubbed his eye, and Crooke his nose ruefully, scowling savagely the while.

Billy Bunter grinned at them cheerfully.

"I say, you fellows, you look rather dusty!" he remarked. "You went down like little! He, he, he!"

"You fat rotter!" snarled Racke.

"Oh, welly, Racke—" "Shush!" murmured Scrope. "The cad's gone now! Don't rag!"

Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had returned to the Common-room in rather a ruffled mood.

Several grinning glances were turned upon him as he entered there.

"Hallo! I thought you were looking after Bunter," remarked Jack Blake.

"Botha Buntah!" was Arthur Augustus' reply.

"But aren't you keeping an eye on him?" chuckled Monty Lowther.

"I'm not keepin' an eye on him, Lowthah."

"Isn't it up to you, as a fellow of tact and judgment?"

"Wats!"

Evidently the swell of St. Jim's had finished with his self-imposed task. Bunter of the Fourth was to be left to his own devices—and his own devices led him along the primrose path of delirium, so to speak; and when he left Racke's study he owed Racke & Co. no less than

fifteen pounds. Yet his fat face was quite merry and bright. Perhaps he did not mind losing imp-pot paper to the nominal value of fifteen pounds!

CHAPTER 5.

Going to the Jews!

BUNTER the billionaire was an object of great interest to the Lower School at St. Jim's during the next few days.

Grandfather Bunter's letter had been read far and wide. Even some of the seniors took an interest in Bunter now, though they had never deigned to take note of his existence before.

Cutis and St. Leger of the Fifth stopped him in the passages once or twice to speak an agreeable word or two. Bunter was heard afterwards referring in an airy way to "my pal Cutis of the Fifth."

And Knox, a prefect of the Sixth Form, went out of his way to be very gracious to Bunter.

Graciousness from a prefect of the Sixth was worth something.

Bunter's billions were still "in the air," so far; but he was the gainer to some extent on his expectations.

Racke & Co. were as friendly as ever; and there had been several little games in Aubrey's study.

On one or two occasions Bunter had been allowed to win a little ready cash, by way of encouraging him; sprats to catch whales, as it were.

Clampe and Chowle of the New House asked him over to their quarters, too, and gathered up a number of written promises to pay after some crazy rat and bank.

Indeed, in the way Bunter was going on it looked as if he would need a considerable part of his grandfather's billions to liquidate the liabilities he was piling up.

But, to the fat junior's surprise and wrath, quite a number of fellows did not seem to care whether he was a prospective billionaire or not.

The Terrible Three went on the even tenor of their way regardless of Bunter, evidently indifferent to his glorious prospects; and Study No. 6 did not conceal their opinion of him now any more than heretofore; and their opinion of him could not be called flattering.

It was, in fact, really surprising to see how little difference Bunter's billions made to the bulk of the fellows.

Bunter had expected to raise loans on all sides with the utmost ease; but he found that hope doomed to disappointment.

Even Racke's study was not a horn of plenty, though he found the most cordial friendship there, and a pack of cards always at his service.

A few quids came his way—and travelled at full speed to the tuckshop, and were gone. Even if Bunter had come into his fortune he would probably never have had money in his pocket for long—and as yet he had nothing more solid than expectations.

His study-mates, Mellish and Trimble, were as sweet and soapy as he could have wished; ready to gaze upon him with admiration, and to applaud every opinion he was pleased to pronounce on any subject, whatever; but they were short of money, so their great admiration was really not of much use to Bunter.

Hence it came about that a few days after the arrival of Grandfather Bunter's letter the fat junior dropped into Dick Julian's study in the Fourth Form passage.

Julian was doing lines for Knox of the Sixth; but he paused as the Owl of Greyfriars rolled in. Bunter sat down on a corner of the table, and blinked at Julian through his big glasses.

"Busy?" he asked.

"Yes, a little," answered Julian. "I've got a hundred lines to do for Knox. He caught me sliding down the banisters."

"My dear chap," said Bunter, "don't do them."

"Eh? I've got to do them!"

"Not at all. I'll get you left off."

Julian stared at him.

"You can't get me let off," he answered. "We're bound to do lines for a prefect."

Bunter smiled.

"Knox is a friend of mine!" he exclaimed. "I'm on rather pally terms with some of the Fifth and Sixth, and I'm quite chummy with old Knox. I'll speak to him if you like, and he won't ask you for the lines."

"Thanks!" he said. "I don't think I'll rely on that, though."

"It simply needs a word from me," said Bunter reassuringly. "I can use my influence, you know."

"Don't bother about using it for me, thanks all the same!" said Julian, smiling.

"My dear man, leave it to me," answered Bunter. "Don't do the lines. Now, to come to business—"

"Business!" repeated Julian.

"Yes, I dare say you've heard about my uncle—"

"Not that I remember."

"I mean my grandfather. He's coming home from America shortly, and then I'm going to roll in money."

"I've heard," said Julian, looking at the fat junior very curiously. "I thought it was Australia, not America."

"I mean Australia," said Bunter hastily. Did I say America?"

"You did!"

"Now, I wonder what made me say America! Of course, I meant South Africa—that—that is to say, Australia. Well, as the matter stands, old chap, I've got no end of money coming along, but I'm rather short of it at the present moment. A-ward, ain't it?"

"Quite."

"Now, you've got lots of money," went on Bunter. "I've heard that you have no end of an allowance from your Uncle Moses in Wayland."

Dick Julian nodded.

"All right, then," said Bunter. "Could you raise twenty pounds?"

"I dare say I could," assented Julian, with a grin.

His tone implied that whether he could or not, he wouldn't.

"I want that sum!"

"Not really?"

"Yes. You see, lots of fellows with great expectations go to the Jews to raise money," explained Bunter. "I dare say you've heard of such things."

"Often," assented Julian.

"Now, you're a Jew," went on Bunter.

"Yes, I'm a Jew!" assented Julian cheerfully.

"So these you are, you see," said Bunter, blinking at him. "You being a Jew, you know, I'm come to you to raise money of my expectations, same as they do in novels, you know."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm willing to sign a paper, if you like," went on Bunter. "Say, three months' term per cent. How does that strike you?"

"Wha-a-ah!"

"That makes forty per cent. per annum, you know—jolly stiff interest, even for a moneylender! Does that satisfy you?"

Dick Julian looked at the fat junior fixedly without replying. In fact, he could hardly believe his ears for the moment. But Billy Bunter rattled on cheerily, heedless of the gathering storm.

"If that ain't enough, name your figure. I was always a generous chap in money matters. Look here, I'll give you a two-months' bill, if you like, at fifteen per cent."

"Oh!" gasped Julian.

"Dash it all, twenty per cent. if you like, for two months!" said Bunter recklessly. "How do you like the idea?"

"Oh!"

"Is it a go?" asked Bunter, blinking at him.

Dick Julian rose to his feet. His hand strayed to a rule on the table.

"Do you agree?" asked Bunter.

"No," answered Julian quietly. "I don't agree, Bunter, you see."

The fat junior sniffed.

"Mean to say that you want more than twenty per cent. for two months?" he demanded. "That's a hundred and twenty per cent. per annum. Dash it all, Julian, don't be a Shylock!"

"You fat rotter!"

"Eh?"

"How dare you offer me interest on a loan!"

Bunter blinked at him.

"I've offered you a jolly good interest," he answered; "but if it ain't enough you've only got to say so. Name your figure. Look here, I'll tell you what I'll do, Julian. There's nothing mean about me. I'll give you fifty per cent. for two months. There! Got the twenty pounds about you?"

"You—you—to sign the paper," said Bunter in rage.

"In return, I'll sign anything you like, in fact. Now, what are you going to do, Julian?"

"I'll show you what I'm going to do," answered the incensed Julian.

He gripped Bunter by the collar and jerked him off the table.

The fat junior yelled.

"Here, I say! Yaroooh! Wharrrer you at! Yoooop!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Billy Bunter was bent over in Julian's strong grasp, and the ruler came into play.

It was laid on heartily.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yarooop! Help! Murder! Fire!" roared Bunter. "Oh, my hat! Stoppit!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! Help! Stoppit!" shrieked Bunter struggling wildly. "Oh, crumbs! You rotter! Yoop! I'll give you a hundred per cent! Yoow-ow-ow! Two hundred per cent. if you like! Yoop! Help!"

With a swing of his strong arm Dick Julian sent the Owl of Greyfriars rolling into the passage.

Bunter collapsed there, roaring.

Slam!

Dick Julian laid down the ruler, and returned to his lines. Those lines certainly had to be done now. Assuredly Bunter would not like to use his influence with Knox of the Sixth after his reception in Julian's study.

"Yoow-ow-ow-wooop!" came from the passage.

Bunter scrambled to his feet.

"Yah! Shenny!" he howled through the keyhole. "Yah! Shylock! Shonky! Sheny! Yah!"

And, with that Partisan volley, Bunter retired at top speed before Julian could get to the door.

CHAPTER 6.

A Deal in Stamps!

"DEAR BOY, come right in!" Cardew of the Fourth spoke in such an affectionate tone as Bunter appeared in the doorway of Study No. 8.

Levison and Clive, his study-mates, greeted. The Owl of Greyfriars was not a thing of beauty in their eyes. But it amused Cardew to pull Bunter's fat leg, and for that reason he greeted the Owl like a long-lost brother.

The dear boy came right in. Cardew politely offered him a chair, which Bunter scrutinized through his big glasses before he sat in it. He had not forgotten a certain occasion when a chair was used by Cardew to knock down a rash scoundrel, to the ruin of his nether elements.

"So kind of you to remember us, old top!" said Cardew. "A fellow sought after like you has to portion out his time, I dare say."

Bunter nodded, with a fat and fatuous smile.

"That's it," he assented. "You see, when a chap's popular he's never really left much time to himself. I do what I can, you know; but some of my friends get overlooked a little at times. In fact, with your time so much taken up I have to ration them, as it were."

"Exactly!" assented Cardew; while Clive snorted, and Levison grunted.

"It's our turn now, I suppose!" added Cardew.

"You've hit it!" "You've looked in at the right time," said Cardew gravely. "We're going to have tea in a few minutes. We don't have a Rothschild to tea every day."

"I'll stay to tea with pleasure, old fellow," said Bunter. "But I don't want a plain tea, but you won't mind that?"

"Not at all. So long as the grub's good, and there's plenty of it, you, won't find me complaining. I'm easily satisfied."

"There won't be any tea or sugar," remarked Cardew thoughtfully. "Lots of water, though. Care for water?"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Do you like it hot or cold?"

"Oh, really, you know—"

"And there's plenty of bread," continued Cardew. "It's good, and there's plenty of it, so you won't mind having nothing with it, will you?"

"I—I say, you fellows. I don't think I'll stay to tea. I've got several invitations, now I think of it. The fact is, I came in to see you about something else, Cardew."

"Go it!"

"It seems absurd to say so," said Bunter, blinking at him, "but I'm actually short of money."

"You don't say so!"

"But I do. That's how it is."

"Sorry, old top! It's a sad state to be in," said Cardew sympathetically. "I've been there myself. But you're going to roll in money shortly. I hear—Silly lings up to the chin. Your granduncle, or second cousin, or something, has found a gold-mine at the North Pole, or somewhere, hasn't he?"

Bunter gave him a sharp blink.

"I showed you my grandfather's letter, I think," he said.

"Yes, I read it out to you the day it came, owing to your optics being a bit more blinky than usual, you know. So did half a dozen other chaps, and so did Cardew himself. You ought to have it by heart by this time. Nearly every other chap has."

"Tain't everybody who's got a million pounds in prospect," said Bunter. "The trouble is, that at the present moment I'm short of tin. Could you lend me a

few fivers, Cardew, till my uncle comes home?"

"Your what?"

"Grandfather, I mean. He will be home in a week or two now. It's rotten to be short of tin, with so much coming along, isn't it?"

"Horrid! Why not send a wire to your granduncle to hurry up?"

"I expect he's started already."

"Then you won't have long to wait."

"But—the fact is—"

"I can tell you how to raise the wind, old top, if you're really stony," went on Cardew, with a sardonic grin. "I'm collecting foreign stamps."

Clive and Levison looked at him. It was the first they had heard of Cardew as a philatelist.

"He nodded at them calmly.

"I'm beginnin'," he explained. "It's no end of a hobby. I'm goin' to start my collection with an Australian stamp."

"They're easy enough to get," said Clive. "Kangaroo or the Rhell has them on his letters from home. He would give you them."

"I would Bunter; but I'm not goin' to take them for nothin'," said Cardew.

"Fair play's a jewel. I'm ready to give Bunter five bob for the stamp of his grandfather's letter."

"What utter rot! It's not worth a shilling, or sixpence."

"I'll write it to me, old scout. Is it a trade, Bunter?"

Bunter blinked at him.

Cardew's offer was certainly a generous one, for an ordinary Australian stamp could be had for the asking. Yet Bunter showed no sign of closing with that generous offer.

"The—the fact is—," he stammered.

"Let me have it, there's a good chap," said Cardew. "If five bob's any good to you, it's ready."

Levison and Clive looked at Bunter very curiously.

"The fat junior coloured.

"I—I'm sorry," he said. "I—I threw away the envelope with the stamp on it. I'm really sorry."

"Couldn't find it again?" asked Cardew regretfully.

"I'm afraid not."

"Then it's no go. My collection will have to wait, after all."

"If you would lend me a fiver, old chap, I'd be obliged, till my postal-order comes—I mean, till my grandfather comes."

"Nothin' doin', dear boy," said Cardew softly. "But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll lend you a fiver the day your grandfather comes."

"Oh, really, Cardew—"

"Or I'll give you five bob for the stamp on your grandpa's letter. That offer remains open," said Cardew blandly.

"I—I—I'll look for it," said Bunter.

"I—I may be able to find it."

"Do."

"Billy Bunter quitted the study. It was evident that nothing was to be raised there in the shape of a loan. Cardew winked at the ceiling.

"What on earth are you driving at, Cardew?" asked Levison. "You don't want an Australian stamp, and it wouldn't be worth five bob if you did."

"Bunter's stamp would be."

"Why?"

"A rare specimen, you know."

"What rot!"

"Very rare indeed," persisted Cardew. "As I'm perfectly convinced that he hasn't a grandfather in Australia, it would be very interesting to have the stamp that came on the old gentleman's letter. Don't you think so?"

"Hasn't a grandfather in Australia!" repeated Sidney Clive. "But he's had a letter from the man."

"Perhaps."

"Why should he pretend he had if he hasn't?"

"Ah, why?" sighed Cardew. "As that pink-and-yellow microbe at Greyfriars would remark, the whyfulness is terrific. No doubt there is a why, and also a wherefore. It's a wicked world, you know."

"Hello! Here he comes!" said Levison.

The door opened, to admit the fat figure of Bunter of the Fourth. A stamp was held between his pudgy thumb and forefinger.

"Here you are, Cardew!" he said.

"I found it!"

"Yes, I happened to leave the envelope in my desk, after all," said Bunter carelessly. "Here's the stamp. I've cut it off."

Clive grinned. The producing of the Australian stamp, which was undoubtedly genuine, seemed a complete answer to Cardew's suspicions.

"And here's your five bob," said Cardew indifferently. "Thanks. I'll make it ten, if you can give me the envelope, too."

"Sorry—threw it away."

"But you've just got the stamp—"

"I mean, I—I just threw it away, after cutting the stamp off."

"Well, you can look where you threw it, and see."

"Into the fire, as it happens," said Bunter regretfully. "Of course, I couldn't guess it would be any use to you."

And he rolled out of No. 8 richer by five shillings. Cardew examined the Australian stamp and smiled.

"Well!" said Clive.

"Well!" smiled Cardew.

"You ought to own up that you've suspected Bunter for nothing," said the South African junior rather warmly.

"Yes, of course, he hadn't had a letter from Australia at all, and here he's brought you the stamp of it."

"Has he?"

"You've got it in your hand, now, fathead."

"Dear youth!" said Cardew. "Are they all as innocent as you, out on the merry world, or karoo, or whatever you call it? I'd own up that I've suspected Bunter for nothing—if you'll trot along to Noble's study in the Shell passage and ask him whether Bunter's still been there to beg an old stamp off one of his letters from home."

Clive nodded.

"You don't think—," he began.

"Go and ask Kangaroo, old son, and we'll see."

"I'll jolly soon do that."

Sidney Clive left the study hastily. If returned in a few minutes, with a rather pale face and frown.

"Well?" smiled Cardew.

Clive grunted.

"I've asked Kangaroo. Bunter's been there, and he asked Kangy for an old stamp, said he was starting a collection of Colonial stamps."

"He, ha, ha!"

"Kangy gave him a stamp?" asked Levison.

"Yes; the one the fat spoofer brought here, I suppose," growled Clive. "I never heard of such a spoofer. What's he playing this game for?"

"Might possibly be to raise loans on his merry expectations," jawned Cardew. "Easy enough to get somebody to write a letter for him, and sign it his affectionate grandpa. I had my suspicions about grandpa from the beginning—my certainties now. Are you goin' to have tea?"

"Lend a hand, lads!"

"Oh, all right! How lucky Bunter didn't know we had a cake, and three

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kinds of jam, and saveloys!" said Car-dew thoughtfully. "I really think he'd have stayed to tea if he'd known. Any-body seen the kettle?"

CHAPTER 7.

Kerr Has an Idea.

FIGGINS & CO. of the New House had finished tea. There was a discussion going on in Figgys' study.

As leading members of the N.H.J.D.S.; Figgins & Co. were keenly interested in the theatrical rivalry with the School House amateur actors. It was agreed that Kerr was to be the man to lower the colours of the School House Amateur Dramatic Society; but it was not yet decided what part George Francis Kerr was to play. Kerr was thinking it out; and Figgins and Fatty Wynn were lending him their aid—such as it was, Kerr's handsome face was very thoughtful as he listened to the suggestions of his chums and followed his own train of thought at the same time.

There was a tap at the door, and the discussion suddenly ceased as Bunter of the School House looked in. The glasses that were cast upon him were not welcoming, but Bunter did not seem to mind that—perhaps he was too short-sighted to notice it. He raised his hat, and bowed affably to the New House trio.

"I thought I'd give you chaps a look in," he remarked.

"Think again!" suggested Fatty Wynn.

Bunter seemed deaf.

"You chaps remember I was in the New House when I first came to St Jim's," he remarked.

"Don't remind us of that awful time!" implored Figgins.

"Ahem! I'm not the fellow to forget my old friends," said Bunter, "now I'm rich. I'm not likely to forget that I had some good feeds in this study. I'm going to return your hospitality."

"Oh!" ejaculated Figgins, rather taken aback.

Fatty Wynn's plump face became more genial.

Bunter was not a fellow he could like; but it really looked now as if even Bunter had his good points.

"My idea," continued Bunter, "is to stnd a tremendous feed—I can afford it now, you know—and I was thinking of asking Wynn to help me do the shopping. There won't be any need for economy."

Fatty Wynn beamed.

"I'm your man, old scoot," he said at once; "and I must say this is rather decent of you, Bunter."

"You'll find me decent, I hope!" said Bunter, with dignity. "I've been rather hard up occasionally, and couldn't do as I wished. Now I'm rolling in money, you won't find me mean."

"Rolling in it, then?" asked Kerr.

"Practically. My grandfather may be home any day now—and you know what he wrote in that letter."

"I know what was in the letter," assented Kerr.

"That's something like a grandfather!" said Fatty Wynn. "I've got two or three uncles I'd swap for him."

"The awkward part of the matter is, old fellow, that with all that money coming along I'm actually hard up at the present moment. Car-dew offered me a liver, and Tom Merry had been pressing me to borrow of him—but I thought I'd sneak to my old pals first."

"You should!" agreed Kerr. "Go and call on them at once."

"Eh? I mean you fellows. I suppose you could stand me—"

"We couldn't," said Kerr, shaking his

head. "I don't believe anybody but a Hun could really stand you, Bunter!"

"Stand me a quid—"

"Dash it all, Bunter's going to do the decent thing, Kerr!" murmured Fatty Wynn. "Besides, he can settle up easily enough when he gets his money."

"When?" assented Kerr.

"Oh, really, Kerr—"

"It's quite an entertaining story, about your grandfather, Bunter," remarked the Scottish junior. "Has he been in Australia long?"

"Oh, years and years!"

"Sheep farming—what?"

"That's it."

"And they've found a gold-mine on his sheep-run?"

"Yes," assented Bunter.

"Fond of you, of course," said Kerr musingly.

"I'm the apple of his eye."

"You would be!" assented Kerr.

"You're such a nice chap, Bunter. I've no doubt he writes to you pretty nearly every week."

"Regularly," agreed Bunter.

"Where does he live?"

"Eh? In America—I mean Australia."

"But what part, I mean? It's a big place, Brisbane?"

"N-n-o."

"Sydney, perhaps."

"Yes, that's it," assented Bunter.

"Sydney, it—it's on the postmark."

"Has he lived in Western Australia all the time?"

Figgins was about to remark that Sydney was not in Western Australia, but he refrained. He realized that Kerr

had an object in questioning Bunter, though he could not guess what it was.

"All the time," assented Bunter.

"And they've discovered gold on his sheep-run at Sydney in Western Australia!" murmured Kerr. "A very remarkable discovery, I should say. Very remarkable indeed!"

Bunter blinced at him, not comprehending the reason of his smile.

"Well, about that quid—"

"I suppose your grandfather will come to St. Jim's to see you when he returns to England!"

"Oh, sure to!"

"Will lend you a quid the day he comes," said Kerr. "Good-bye!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Good-bye, old top!"

"But look here—"

"Not unless you put on a mask, Bunter. You can't expect it."

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"That's Good-bye!"

Billy Bunter gave Figgins & Co. a blink that bade fair to crack his spectacles. There was an atmosphere of scepticism in the study; and no sign of a loan.

The Owl of Greyfriars retired from the study, and slammed the door after him. He had intended the passage to try his luck with Redfern.

"Blessed if I quite make that out!" said Figgins slowly.

"Easy enough," answered Kerr. "If he was in constant correspondence with a grandfather living at Sydney, he would know well enough that Sydney is not in Western Australia. He could go to know it, anyway; he's—he's a bowing duncie! Grandfather Bunter is spoof."

"Oh, I say!"

"We've had no end of his dodges for raising the wind," said Kerr. "This is one more of them."

"I don't quite see—"

"My dear chap, he had a letter—which he said came from his Australian grandfather. It's easy enough to write a letter."

"It wasn't in Bunter's fist."

"Well, even a fat owl like Bunter would know that word be no good. He made up the letter, and went to know to copy it out—that's easily done. I thought so from the beginning."

Figgins whistled.

"Phew!" ejaculated Fatty Wynn.

"But—but—I say, he's been borrowing money on his expectations, you know."

"That's the game, of course."

"Why, it's as good as a swindle, then."

"Or as bad as one," said Kerr, with a laugh.

"My hat!" said Figgins. "Clampe and Chowie and Racko, and that lot, have been taking Bunter up and winning no end of paper promises from him, so I hear. If his grandfather is spoof, his paper isn't worth anything."

"Only by weight," said Kerr.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Meanwhile, he feeds at Racko's expense, and smokes his cigarettes, and wins a quid or two from him to keep him going," grinned Kerr. "It's just one more of Bunter's little games."

"I say, if that's true, he ought to be scragged," said Fatty Wynn. "Talking about a big feed when his grandfather comes home—just to get a loan out of us, the fat bouncer!"

"Never mind," said Kerr. "Bunter's given me a new idea. I've decided on the character I'm going to play in our competition with the Biscot House chaps. The conditions are, that one of the N.H.J.A.D.S. is to make up and take them in—and they're to do the same on us, if they can."

"They can't!" said Figgins.

"Well, it's agreed that I stand up for the New House—and Bunter's put into

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my mind the part I'm going to play," said Kerr.

"Bunter has!"

"He has—he have!" grinned Kerr.

"And it's a ripping part!"

"And what is it?"

"Grandfather Bunter!"

"What!" yelled Figgins, in astonishment.

"Grandfather Bunter!" said Kerr coolly. "White hair and whiskers, and specs, all complete—a part that will suit me down to the ground. I could do it on my head."

"Oh, my hat!"

And then there was a roar in Figgins' study.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 8. A Real Corker!

"NOW, look here, Manners—" "Well, you look here, Lowther—"

"My dear chaps!" said Tom Merry, beseechingly.

"What I think is—"

"Rubbish!"

"Fathead!"

"The fact is," said Tom Merry, "you're a pair of fatheads! Hallo, Cardew! What are you grinning for?"

There was a rather warm altercation going on in No. 10 in the Shell passage when Ralph Reckness Cardew looked in.

The Terrible Three did not seem in agreement.

"Don't let me interrupt you," said Cardew gracefully. "This is rather entertaining. What have you fellows started to do" each other these painful trills for?"

"Oh, cut!" said Manners gruffly.

"The fact is—" began Lowther.

"Shush!" said Tom. "All family disputes must be kept in the family circle—shush!"

"You'd better lower your voice a little, then," grinned Cardew. "You can be heard a good way along the passage. But don't leave me out. Treat me as a member of the family."

"Am!"

"Thanks; so good of you!" said Cardew, apparently taking that epithet as a sign that he was being treated as one of the family. "You make me feel quite at home."

"Look here, you chumps—"

"That's right, let family affection continue," said Cardew, with a nod. "Now, why not tell me what the row is, and make me empire?"

"Hizz off, am!"

"You won't! Well, would you care to hear me expound the wheeze I've come along to report to you?"

"Oh, bother your wheezes!" said Monty Lowther. "Fourth Form wheezes don't amount to much. Take it home and bury it!"

"My dear chap, if you're always as nice as that you must be highly prized at home," remarked Cardew. "They must miss you while you're at school."

"Oh, let him run on!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "What's the wheeze, Cardew? Up against the New House?"

"Bless Bunter!"

"And remember! that this study is the home of genius, I came along—"

"Cut it out!" granted Manners. "To enlist you in the merry service. You fellows have a sort of amateur competition, or something, haven't you, with the New House fellows—"

"That's what we were discussing," said Tom Merry.

"When you butted in!" added Manners.

"Oh, was it a discussion that was going on here?" asked Cardew, in surprise. "I thought it was a dog-fight, as I came up the passage. My mistake! Well, in that little matter I can help you. One of you chaps is going to make up in a character of some kind, and take in the New House duffers—what?"

"That's it!"

"Thought of the character yet?"

"We haven't decided."

"Well, I'm going to suggest one. What about Bunter's grandfather?"

"Oh, crumbs!" said Manners, and Tom Merry stared. But Monty Lowther's eyes gleamed at once.

"Cardew, you're not half such an ass as you look!" he exclaimed. "Why, that's a corking idea!"

"But we've never seen Bunter's grandfather," said Tom.

"Neither has Bunter," remarked Cardew.

"Eh? I suppose the fellow's seen his own grandfather?"

is a bit suspicious. Still, I shouldn't have thought—"

"Of course you wouldn't," agreed Cardew. "You've got one of those nice, fresh, innocent minds that are a credit to anybody."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Tom gruffly.

"But you see what a corker's wheeze it is!" urged Cardew. "Nothin' easier than make 'em up as an old gent—whiskers, beard, goggles, and all that—it's the easiest thing in the world. You've got all the necessary stuff in your property-box. Think what a joyful surprise it will be to the merry Bunter-bird—to see his dear grandfather!"

"It's, ha, ha!"

"Especially as the dear old gentleman doesn't exist at all," continued Cardew. "That will make it still more surprising for him."

Monty Lowther rubbed his hands. "It's a corker," he said—"a real corker! Even if grand-dad Bunter does



The fat gentleman rolled towards the petrified Owl of Greyfriars, and clasped him in his fat arms. "My dear, dear, grandpa!" he almost sobbed. "Yarough!" "My dear, da—" "Leggo!"

"I think not. Of course, he must have had a grandfather. I suppose—most chaps, I believe, start in life with a grandfather or two," conceded Cardew. "But Bunter's Australian grandfather is like unto the celebrated Mrs. Harris—there ain't no such person as Betsy Frig remarked. I've excellent reason for believing the whole yarn is spoof, and that the dear youth got that letter written to show around and raise loans."

"Pshaw!"

"I must say that's crossed my mind," said Lowther.

"I thought it was queer, the way he asked chap after chap to read his letter, making out that his sight was unusually blinky that day," remarked Manners. "But—but it's rather thick, you know."

"Lend me your ears, my dear kids," Cardew explained the incident of the stamp.

"That seems to settle it," remarked Tom Merry. "Of course, the whole story

exists, Bunter can't know him very well—he says the old gent went to Australia when he was a little kid. It's no end of an idea. We'll have him to tea—and ask Figgins & Co.—and then they simply can't make out that they weren't taken in."

"My hat!" said Tom. "It's good, and no mistake. I could do it—"

"Eh!"

"On my head—"

"Now, look here, Tom," said Monty Lowther. "You're no end of a Trojan at cricket and footer. You can row, and you can jump. You can beat me at the mile, and the quarter-mile, and at any number of miles. But I can play your head off in this line!"

"Monty, old chap—"

"Do dry up, the pair of you!" urged Manners. "I admit that Monty can play some parts—comic characters, Finstanco. But a part like this is a part for me. I appeal to your common-sense."

Cardew grinned. He understood now the cause of the warm argument that had been going on when he locked into the study.

The Terribles Three were agreed that the chairman of the School House Dramatic Society was to be selected from No. 10 in the Spell. But there were three opinions as to which it should be.

"Tom up for it!" suggested Cardew. "It's a part anybody could play—otherwise I shouldn't have brought my suggestion to this study, of course."

"You cheeky ass!" "It's not a bad idea, though," said Lowther. "We've got to decide on somebody. Let's vote a penny for it."

Manners and Tom Merry nodded assent. It really seemed the only way to decide the disputed point, as it were.

The penny was accordingly produced, and it fell to Manners.

Manners smiled cheerfully. "You fellows will be glad of this when you see how it works," he remarked.

"Well, it will be funny!" agreed Lowther.

"Look here—"
Ralph Herries Cardew strolled away. He was satisfied with having set the scheme in motion; he was a good deal too lazy to think of attempting to play the part himself, though probably he could have done it quite as well as any member of the Terrible Three.

In Tom Merry's study there was some discussion, and a rehearsal, with the door locked. Both of Manners' claims had lingering doubts as to the success of the scheme, but they were prepared loyally to support their claim, and lend him all the aid in their power.

And certainly, when Manners was "made up" in the character of a white-whiskered old gentleman, he looked the part very well.

"Not so jolly bad," admitted Monty Lowther. "You may pull it off, old chap."

"Jolly good, I think!" answered Manners, with emphasis, as he surveyed his reflection in the glass.

There was a tap at the door, and the handle turned.

"I say, you fellows—"
"Locked, thank goodness!" murmured Lowther.

"I say, you fellows, let a clap in. I—"

"Give me the ruler," said Lowther, in a stage whisper. "I'll open the door suddenly and land him fairly on the nose!"

There was a sound of hurried footsteps in the passage. Bunter of the Fourth had decided not to wait for the ruler.

CHAPTER 9.

Grandfather Bunter!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY wore a thoughtful look.

It was Wednesday afternoon, a half-holiday, and the rain was patterning down in the quadrangle of St. Jim's. Jack Blake & Co., of Study No. 6, were standing in a group by the passage window, looking out at the rain, and making remarks about the weather.

Arthur Augustus was silent and thoughtful.

"What about the cinema at Wayland?" asked Blake at last.

"It's wathah howwid," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully.

"Eh? What is there horrid about Wayland cinema?"

"I was not speakin' of the cinema, Blake. I was speakin' of Bunter."

"Well, Bunter's horrid enough," agreed Herries. "Have you been scowling about Bunter for the last ten minutes?"

"I was not scowlin', Herries. Poo-ways I was wearin' a thoughtful expression."

"You had your features tied up in a sailor's knot," remarked Digby. "What about Bunter? Has he bettered your feat on his giddy expectations?"

"I have refused to lend him anything on his expectations. What I regard as howwid is this, that I do not believe in Bunter's expectations. It is woolly howwid to suspect a fellow of tellin' whoppah, but I feah that Bunter is not truthful."

"Go hon!" murmured Blake. "Has it really done on your mighty brain at last that Bunter isn't truthful? You must have been oiling the works, Gussy. Or was it a brain-wave?"

"Wah!" "That bilkonnair bimey does sound a bit baby," remarked Herries. "I don't think I quite swallowed it, somehow. But Bunter had the letter."

"I feah, deah boys, that that lettah was concocted."

"You're getting suspicious in your old age, Gussy," said Jack Blake, in a choking tone.

"I trust, Blake, that I shall never grow suspicious. I would rather be taken in every day than be suspicious!" said Arthur Augustus warmly. "But in this case the facts woolly seem to speak for themselves. I woolly feah that Bunter got that lettah w'ritten by somebody to show around and take us in—probably for the purpose of waistin'—"

"Just one of his tricks," agreed Blake. "But I don't see what's put it into your head all of a sudden, Gussy."

"I will explain, Blake. I have—"

snatched a lettah from my aunt Adelaide who is at Cannes just now, and dropped it into the stationer's. W'atkin for some notepaper, the papah, you know, for foreign correspondence, I was given some, and, lookin' at it, I found it was exactly like the papah on which Gwandfather Bunter's lettah was w'ritten. The watah-nack was the same. Now, that papah was manufactured in England, and I could not help thinkin' it woolly probable that a man in Australia should w'ite on notepaper manufactured at Wayland."

"Just a little remarkable," grinned Blake.

"Just a few!" chuckled Dig.

"I trust, deah boys, that I was not unobly suspicious," continued Arthur Augustus. "But I certainly thought it woolly remarkable. So I asked the man if he had sold any of the paper lately to a St. Jim's chap. He replied that he sold a little of it to Bunter last week."

"Oh!" "Of course, Bunter may have w'quired the papah for foreign correspondence," said Arthur Augustus. "But it woolly looks as if the lettah from Australia is spoof. Don't you think so?"

"I do—I do!" grinned Blake. "Of course, the fat founder got that kind of paper to make it look as if it came from abroad. Then he made up the letter, and got somebody to write it out in a man's hand. Then he invented special short sight for the day, and asked fellows to read him the letter, to get it widely known. Plain enough, I should say."

"Yax, wathah!" "I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo! Talk of angels!" grinned Digby. "Here's Bunter!"

The fat junior rolled up, and joined Study No. 5 at the window. He blinked at them rather suspiciously, not quite understanding their looks.

"I say, you fellows, I'm expecting to hear from my grandfather shortly," he remarked. "We shall see him here."

"Oh, good! We'll be delighted to see him!" said Blake.

"Bai Jove!" "I want to stand him tea in the study, and make a bit of a fuss of him," said Bunter. "The difficulty is that I'm rather short of money. Of course, I shall be simply making it, when he comes. But I can't very well ask him for tin to stand him a tea, can I?"

"Well, it would seem rather hesty," said Blake gravely. "Better wait till he hands you a hundred-pound note of his own accord."

"Oh! Yes, exactly! I suppose you fellows could stand a chap a small loan for a few days—"

"And share in the billions afterwards!" asked Blake.

"Ahem! Ye-es. Of course, I shall treat all old friends very generously. I sha'n't forget fellows who stood by me, you know?"

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"That's right! By the way, whom did you get to write the letter for you?" asked Blake casually.

"Griggs." "Great Scott!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus. "That boundah Griggs! So he wrote the lettab!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. Bunter jumped.

Blake had asked the question suddenly, and the fat junior had answered without thinking; but the next moment he realized what he had done.

"I say, you fellows—" he stammered.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Buntah, you howwid spoonah—" "Did—did—did I say Griggs?" stammered Bunter. "I—I wonder what made you say Griggs? I don't know anybody named Griggs!"

"A whopper!" grinned Dig. "I saw you talking to him in the lane a week ago!"

"I—I may have been spoken to by a man of that name. He may have been asking me the way somewhere!" mumbled Bunter. "Now I think of it, he was asking me the way to—to Abbotshford. Certainly there was no mention of a letter. I didn't ask him to write a letter for me, and he never said that he would do it for two shillings. That's the solid truth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blissed if I can see anything to cackle at! Now, I was going to ask you to lend me ten bob, because my grandfather—" "Produce the merry grandfather!" grinned Blake.

"Yaa, watah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I shall be vavy pleased, Buntah, to lend you ten shillin's the day I see your grandfather!"

"Oh, really, D'Arcy—" "Anybody seen Bunter?" called out Durrance of the Fourth from the stairs.

"Here's the merry porpice!" "His grandfather's cousin." "What?"

Durrance came along to the window, looking surprised at the juniors' surprise.

"Bunter's grandfather's come," he said. "Tom Merry's just told me to let Bunter know, if I can find him. The old chap's in the visitors'-room."

"My only hat!"

Durrance tapped Bunter on the shoulder. Bunter seemed more astonished even than the chums of No. 6. In fact, he appeared to be rooted to the floor with astonishment, and his fat jaw had dropped.

"Come on, Bunter!" "D-d-d-did you say my g-grandfather?" spluttered Bunter.

"Yes; he's downstairs!" "You silly ass!" said Bunter, recovering himself a little.

"What?"

"You needn't try to pull my leg!" said Bunter peevishly. "I know jolly well my grandfather hasn't come!"

"I thought you were expecting him," said Durrance.

"But Oh, yes! So I waat! Ahem! But he hasn't come! Go and get coke!" Durrance stared at him.

"Well, suit yourself about going down," he said curtly. "I've told you he's there, and it doesn't matter to me!" And Durrance walked away.

"Bunter! Bunter!" Dick Julian's voice was heard. "Where's Bunter? Don't you want to see your grandfather, Bunter?"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"Bai Jove! Has Buntah weally got a grandfatah? And has he wally come?" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"He's coming upstairs now," answered Julian.

"Bai Jove!"

"He isn't!" roared Bunter. "Don't play the goat, you ass! Do you think you can take me in with a yarn like that?"

"Well, here he is!" answered Julian, with stare.

"Rats!"

"Bunter!" it was Tom Merry's voice now. "Here's your grandfather, Bunter!"

Bunter spun round.

A gentleman with white whiskers and white hair and a long white beard, with a pair of glasses perched on a rather red nose, had just come up the staircase, with Tom Merry and several other juniors. The old gentleman was portly—not to say corpulent. His circumference alone seemed to indicate a relationship with the Bunter family.

"Where is my dear grandson?" asked the fat gentleman in a wheezy voice.

"Where is my dear little boy?"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bunter.

"Here he is, sir!" said Kerruish.

"My boy!"

The fat gentleman rolled towards the petrified Owl of Greyfriars and clasped him in his fat arms.

"My dear, dear grandson!" he almost sobbed. "My dear, dear child!"

"Yarcooh!"

"My dear, dear—" "Leggo!"

"My dearest boy!"

And Grandfather Bunter, having embraced the fat junior, stood back, and puffed and blew, and regarded him affectionately—over his gold-rimmed glasses, while Billy Bunter blinked at him, and wondered whether it was a dream.

CHAPTER 10.

The Unexpected Guest!

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus blankly.

The swell of St. Jim's blinked at the fat junior and his newly-arrived grandfather. Only a few minutes before, he had decided, upon what seemed good evidence, that Bunter's Australian grandfather was "spoff," and here was the old gentleman in the flesh to confute his suspicions!

Arthur Augustus blushed.

He tapped Billy Bunter gently on the shoulder, and received a dazed blink from the Owl of Greyfriars.

"Buntah, dear boy, I am sorry," said D'Arcy. "I weally bog your pardon!"

"Eh!"

"I am verry pleased to see your grandfatah, Buntah! Pwax introduce me!"

"Oh!"

"Not the least little bit changed!" wheezed the old gentleman. "Just the same dear little plump fellow! My dear, dear grandson!"

"Plump as ever, certainly!" murmured Levison.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Look here, when—"

"You did not expect me so soon, my dear boy!" asked Grandfather Bunter.

"Yes, my ship made a very quick passage—"

"Your ship!" stammered Bunter dazedly.

"Yes; from Australia, you know."

"Australia! Oh, crumbs!"

"And I came to the school at once, my dear boy. I know how overjoyed you were to see me!"

"Look here—"

"Remind me, before I leave, to hand you the fifty-pound note, my boy. I may forget."

Bunter started, and picked up his fat little ears.

"The—fifty-pound note!" he stammered.

"Yes. Did you not get my letter this morning?"

"Nunno!"

"Bliss my soul! Then I am here before my letter," smiled Grandfather Bunter. "However, it does not matter. Of course, the banknote is only a little tip, my dear boy. It is nothing to what will shortly be yours."

"My hat!" gasped Bunter.

He really wondered, for a moment or two, whether he had a grandfather in Australia, after all, whom he had sometimes imagined.

The fifty-pound note did it!

If this kind old gentleman thought he was Billy Bunter's grandfather, and was going to give him fifty pounds, Bunter did not see any reason why he should not be left in that agreeable delusion.

In fact, the mention of that handsome tip made him feel quite like an affectionate grandson.

"Where is your study, my boy?" asked the portly gentleman. "I should like to see your study very much. Show me your quarters."

"Has yous—yous—certainly!" stammered Bunter.

Like a fellow in a dream, he led the way to Study No. 2 in the Fourth.

Mellish and Trimble helped him to the old gentleman in, looking as if they could have worshipped the floor upon which the gilt-edged grandfather trod.

Cardew of the Fourth looked round in the passage. Tom Merry and Monty Lowther were there, but Manners was not visible. Cardew tapped Tom on the arm.

"It is—" he began.

Tom grinned.

"Yes," he answered.

"Manners?"

"Yes. We got him up in the woodshed, and he walked round to the School House," whispered Tom.

"Oh, gad! He's doing it well!"

"Ha, ha! Ripping!"

Bunter seems to have recognised him as a merry griggle.

"That's the fifty-pound note. We knew that would fetch him," said Monty Lowther. "Bunter would recognise Von Tirpitz as his long-lost brother for fifty quidets."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a chuckle among the fellows who were in the joke. But to most of the juniors the new arrival was Bunter's grandfather from Australia. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was feeling quite contrite.

"It's weally too bad, you fellows," he told his chums. "Buntah was tellin' the truth, aftah all!"

"Extraordinary!" murmured Blake.

"Yaa, watah! It is watah surprise, but there it is! It was simply a coincidence, aftah all, about the notepaper. I am sorry that I doubted Buntah."

"It's jolly odd, all the same. He is good as owned up that it was Griggs who wrote that letter," said Blake musingly.

"He did!" granted Herries.

"It must have been a misapprehension!" said Arthur Augustus. "Hallo, here he comes! Anything I can do for you, Buntah?"

The swell of St. Jim's was graciousness itself now.

Bunter had come out of Study No. 2, still looking dazed.

"I say, you fellows—yous, D'Arcy—you said you'd lend me ten bob as soon as you saw my grandfather," said Bunter.

"Well, you've seen him."

"Yaa, watah!"

Bunter held out a fat hand, and Arthur Augustus placed a ten-shilling note in it.

"Thanks. If you could make it a quid—"
"Undah the circs, Buntah, I shall be vevy pleased to make it a quid!"

Billy Bunter's face wore a fat grin as he went back into Study No. 2.

Whoever the fat old gentleman might be, his coming had been worth something to the Owl of Greyfriars.

Mr. Bunter was seated in the study armchair, and Mollish and Trimble were as attentive to him as if he had been their grandfather instead of Bunter's.

"My dear boy, you must not run away," said Mr. Bunter, in his fat, wheezy voice. "I have been looking forward to tea in the study. I am quite hungry after my—ahem!—journey."

"We'll get tea in a jiffy, sir," said Trimble at once.

"Oh, rather!" chirruped Mollish.

"Certainly, uncle—I mean grandfather—glamoured Bunter. I—I—I've been looking forward to this. I'll take the note and change it now, if you like."

"After tea, my boy—after tea!" said Mr. Bunter, with a wave of the hand. "I am pretty sharp set. Ask some of your friends in to tea. It will seem quite like say school-days over again—ahem!" That nice lad who brought me upstairs—Merry. I think is his name, and the other—Lowther. Let them bring their friends if they like."

"All right!" gasped Bunter.

He rolled out of the study again, and found Tom Merry and Lowther in the passage. They were talking to Blake & Co. in low voices, and Blake, Horrie, and Dig were grinning. And there was an extraordinary expression on the noble face of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Grinning glances were turned on Bunter as he came up.

"My uncle—I mean my father—that is to say, my grandfather wants you fellows to come to tea," gasped Bunter, "Merry said Lowther, and you can bring your friends. I say, you fellows, can you lend me some tin?"

"Buntah, you faithful fraud!" "Shush!"

"Wesley, Tom Mowwy—" "Geez, 'em will see you through, my tin pipper," said Jack Blake. "I woshty consid—"

"I'll square up out of my grandfather's tip presently," urged Bunter.

"You uttah you—Ow! Stop treadin' on my foot, Blake!"

"I'll go and ask Piggins, as we're to bring our friends," remarked Tom Merry, and he hurried away.

Billy Bunter rolled away to the tuck-shop for supplies. Apparently there were no more loaves to be raised, although his grandfather had come. Bunter was still in a state of amazement. But he was letting things slide, in his usual way. It was astounding that an old gentleman should have turned up at 81, as he was claiming to be his grandfather. But the fifty-pound note was not to be argued with. True, Bunter had not seen the fifty-pound note yet!

Tom Merry came back from the New House alone.

"Where's Figgins?" asked Lowther. "Tom shook his head."

"There's all out," he said. "Redfern says the three of them went out an hour or more ago, and Kerr was carrying a big bag. So they can't come."

"Retten!—We want them to see Grandfather Bunter—"

"Levison's keeping an eye open for them, but bring them over as soon as they come in," said Tom. "I hope they'll come in before Manners has to chuck it, or all our trouble's wasted."

"Yaak, watah! But I think—" "Don't you start thinking, old top!" THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 561.

said Lowther: "Let's go in to tea. Here's the porpoise with your quid's worth."

"I wogard that sovereign as havin' been extracted from me undah false pretences!"

"Bow-wow! Take it smiling."

Arthur Augustus frowned instead of smiling. However, he was silent as Bunter came up. Tom Merry and Lowther accompanied the Owl into his study, and Blake & Co. followed.

Arthur Augustus' "quid" was to come home again, to a certain extent, in the form of a feed in Study No. 2.

Grandfather Bunter greeted the juniors in whosy out cordial tones as they came in. He sat the table, looking quite a benevolent giant in his white beard and hair and gold-rimmed glasses. The juniors crowded round the tea-table in cheery spirits.

The only drawback, from their point of view, was that Figgins & Co. were not to be taken in by Bunter's grandfather. But Figgins & Co. were destined to arrive.

CHAPTER 11.

Two of Them!

BILLY BUNTER blinked at his grandfather incessantly during tea.

He had not recovered from his astonishment yet.

How on earth the old gentleman could suppose that he was his grandfather, when he certainly was, was a mystery to Bunter. But his good, though wide, was running on the expected "tip," and he was prepared to give the unexpected visitor his head, so to speak.

Amazed as he was, Bunter secured the lion's share of the feed, as usual. His astonishment did not affect his appetite.

Arthur Augustus' "quid" had been expended to the last penny, and the study table was well provided. There was enough for all and the tea-party quite enjoyed themselves.

Grandfather Bunter talked a good deal—telling stories about Australia and the gold-fields, which made Bunter blink.

The other fellows listened with respectful interest—especially Mollish and Trimble, who had not the faintest idea that they were entertaining an angel unaware, as it were.

Study No. 2 was going strong whether there came a tap at the door. It opened.

In the doorway appeared a fat figure, which seemed to be almost bursting through a fat frock-coat. A red face, half-hidden by grey beard and whiskers, looked in, over rimless glasses. The juniors blinked at that unexpected apparition.

"My grandson's study, I believe!" said the fat gentleman in a high-pitched, cracked voice.

Bunter's hand paused half-way to his mouth—and a large chunk of cake remained undevoured. His round eyes almost started through his spectacles.

The guests in Study No. 2 started to their feet.

"Your—your grandson!" stammered Tom Merry.

"Oh, my dear grandson! Oh, here you are! My dear boy, I am so glad to see you!"

"Wha-a-t?" spluttered Bunter. He looked dazed and helpless as the old gentleman wrung his fat hand.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tom Merry. Grandfather Bunter sat petrified. He was so—

he said, "I did not know you were at tea. I was so anxious to see my grandson that I came up at once."

"Many, many years since I have seen my dear grandson."

"Oh! Ah! Oh! Ow!" mumbled Bunter, wondering whether he was on his head or his heels.

It was amazing enough for one total stranger to turn up at the school as his grandfather! And here was another! Bunter pinched himself to make sure that he was awake.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Tom Mowwy, you have cut your foot in it this time."

"You—your—you are Bunter's grandfather, sir?" stammered Tom Merry.

"Oh dear!" groaned Lowther.

"But he can't be!" yelled Bunter. "Here's Bunter's grandfather—"

"What!" exclaimed the newcomer. "What does this mean, my boy?"

"That you claiming to be your grandfather!"

"Ow! Oh! Ah! Yes!" gasped Bunter, dizzily.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Manners, in utter dismay.

He would never have played that part if he had believed that Bunter had a grandfather at all! And now he was caught in the act by the grandfather himself! He staggered to his feet.

The new-comer pointed an accusing finger at him.

"Impostor!" he exclaimed. "Oh dear!"

"Impostor! What does this mean?" thundered the latest arrival. "Do you dare to have assumed my name, and pretended—"

"Ow! Only a joke, sir!" gasped the unfortunate Manners. "I—I—it was only a joke, sir! I assure you—"

"I do not see the joke," said the fat old gentleman sternly. "Who are you, sir! I demand to know your name at once."

"M-M-Manners, sir!" "Manners!" yelled Mollish.

"Oh dear!" "Bless my soul!" exclaimed the new Mr. Bunter. "I believe you are in disguise, sir! Take that beard off instantly!"

The unhappy Manners obeyed. Beard and whiskers and wig came off, and, excepting for patches of white hair, Manners of the Shell stood revealed. Trimble and Mollish stared at him blankly.

Billy Bunter felt as if his head were turning round.

"You uttah ass, Mannahs!" said Arthur Augustus. "Fwyy forgive us, Mr. Buntah. We did not believe that Bunter had a grandfather at all, and this silly ass was only joking."

"Oh, you rotten spoofer!" gasped Bunter. "I—I know it was you all the time, Manners!" Mr. Bunter's finger was still pointing accusingly. "Is this person?" he demanded. "It—it is all right, sir," gasped Tom Merry. "Only one of us, sir. It was a joke—private theatricals—" "The boy has used my name!" "Ye-es, sir; but—but—" Levison looked in at the door. "V-v-vy, Figgins' grandpa have come in, you fellows. And—and—" He broke off as he saw the new Mr. Bunter. Figgins and Fatty Wynn came along the passage. "Reddy told us you'd been over to ask us to tea, Merry," remarked Figgins to all the boys, "but we were not too late. He says Bunter's grandfather has come."

"Hallo! Is that Manners?" exclaimed

Fatty Wynn. "What on earth are you doing in that club, Manners?"

"The wretched boy has been playing a part!" thundered the second Mr. Bunter. "He has been using my name, and deceiving my grandson."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"It—it's all right, Mr. Bunter," gasped Tom Merry. "It was really done to take in these chaps. We've got a sort of theatrical competition on—"

"That is no excuse."

"Not! But—but—"

"Excuse them, sir," said Figgins. "It's a shame, of course; but the silly dunder-hoped to take us in. It's a competition in amateur theatricals."

"Yes, wretch!"

"I really beg your pardon, Mr. Bunter," groaned Manners. "If I'd said Bunter really had a grand old never have done it. I'll have a garden in the eye, the silly ass! It was his fault."

"Well, I excuse you," said Mr. Bunter at last. "I regard it as a most absurd trick. Grandson!"

"Ye-es!" stammered Bunter.

"You are expecting me, I suppose?"

"Ye-es—no—I—I—"

"I shall not be able to stay long," said Mr. Bunter. "I am glad I cannot in time to unmask that wretched impostor."

"Oh!" gasped Manners.

"It was a rotten trick, sir," said Trimble. Will you sit down, sir? I'll turn that rotter out of the study, sir."

"One moment," said Grandfather Bunter the Second. "What is this competition you were speaking of, my boy?"

He was looking at Tom Merry, and Tom answered.

"It's between the amateur theatrical societies in the two Houses, Mr. Bunter. Each side has to put up a man to play a part good enough to take in the other party. We—we were going to take these chaps in with Bunter's grandfather."

"Not in your lifetime!" chuckled Figgins.

"You have failed!" said Mr. Bunter.

"Ye-es, as it turns out."

"Then you have lost the competition!"

"Oh, no! They haven't taken us in yet," said Monty Lowther, "and I rather think they never will."

"Rate!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Booh! You are an ass, Monty Lowther!" said Grandfather Bunter, in quite a different voice. "Look here!"

"The juniors gazed at him dumfounded, as he jerked off beard and whiskers.

"Kerr!" stammered Tom Merry.

"Kerr!" howled Lowther.

"Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Figgins.

"What's taking us now?"

"Gweat Scott! You spoofin' boundah, Kerr!"

Kerr of the Fourth grinned cheerfully.

"I rather think New House wins this time," he remarked. "You've been done fairly in the eye."

"Oh, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" gasped Manners. "You—"

"you—you spoofing bounder, you—"

"you—you're not Bunter's grandfather at all!"

"No more than you are, old top!" grinned Kerr, while Figgins and Fatty Wynn yelled.

Arthur Augustus grasped the dazed Owl of Greyfriars by the shoulder and shook him.

"Buntah! You fat fwaud! Have you got a grandfathah at all!" he howled.

"Oh, crumbs! No—yes—lots—I mean—yes—no!" spluttered Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "It is perfectly clear that that fat boundah hasn't a grandfathah at all, and probably he never had one. That spoofin' lettah was a trick to waste leave. I suggest that that spoofin' boundah be thoroughly bumped as a warrin'."

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows— Yarooooh!"

Arthur Augustus' suggestion was approved with a shout, and, seated on a stool, Billy Bunter dodged for the door—too late!

"Bump!"

Every fellow in the study lent a hand—including Bunter's two grandfathers. And when Bunter rolled out into the passage, breathless and dishevelled, he was wishing, from the bottom of his heart, that he had never thought of that brilliant scheme of inventing an Australian grandfather, and passing—for a season—as Bunter the millionaire!

THE END.

(Don't miss next Wednesday's Great Story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's—"THE STONY STUDY!")

—by Martin Clifford.)

COKER'S BARGAIN! By Bob Cherry.

WELL—that is to say, the Famous Five of the Famous Five were putting a footer about in the Club when we saw Fisher T. Fish, the enterprising merchant from "over there," staggering in at the school gates with a big brown-paper parcel.

"Hello, Fishy!" said Johnny Bull. "What's the little game? Started taking in washing?"

"Clank-clankety-clank!"

A strange metallic sound came from the parcel Fishy was carrying.

"You've been robbing a bank, I bet!" said Nugent anxiously.

"Nope! I guess this yer is a typewriter," said Fish, dumping his burden on the ground and mopping his heated brow. "I've junked it all the way from Courtfield."

"A typewriter?" exclaimed Wharton. "What is thunder do you want a typewriter for?"

"I guess I've got no use for the gold-darned thing," said Fishy. "I'm going to sell it."

"Oh—"

"What offer?" said Fish, looking from one to the other of us. "This—his gave

the parcel a kick as he spoke—"is a brand-new machine, American make, stamped in every link, jewelled in every movement! Guaranteed to turn out letters and add up figures all on its own! A time-saver and a brain-saver combined! And it's going to give me a nice little profit!"

"If you're going to start kicking up a stink on that old 'box in the study you'll get a hot one!" he said darkly.

"Didn't I tell you I was going to sell it?" said Fish.

"How much did you give for it?" I asked.

"I guess that's no business of yours, Cherry. I ought to get about twenty-five dollars for it at a public auction."

"Twenty-five dollars? Why, that's five quid!" said Wharton.

"Yep! And jolly cheap at the price, too. Typewriters are fetching no end of spoofs these days. Why, even that broken-down old crack of Quackley's would realize thirty or forty dollars. Now, you stabled jays, state your figure! What offer?"

"Twenty-five!" said Johnny Bull.

"I will rise to the dizzy height of an

esteemed tanner," said Luky.

"Why, you—you chocolate-faced galoot—" "A bob!" said Wharton.

"I guess there's nothing doing," he said. "This tapper's worth its weight in butter!"

"Let's have a look at it," said Nugent.

"A typewriter would cost a jolly hands for knocking out 'Greyfriars Herald' stuff, you chaps. If it's a decent sort of machine, we might have a whip-round and give Fishy a fair price—four quid or so."

Fisher T. Fish brightened up. He rubbed his bony hands together with great satisfaction.

"Come along to the study," he said, "and I'll show you the goods."

We went along to the study which Johnny Bull has the misfortune to share with Fishy. The Yankee junior groaned and grunted beneath the weight of the typewriter.

"How many times have you dropped that parcel coming along the road?" asked Wharton suspiciously.

"Not more than twice, I guess."

"You—you chump! Then something's gone wrong with the works, you can bet, your life! Typewriters are delicate things, you am!"

Fishy said nothing. He staggered into the study, and dumped his burden upon the table.

We all crowded round as he unwrapped the brown paper.

"Oh, my only son!" gasped Nugent, when the typewriter stood revealed.

"Any old man?" asked Johnny Bull.

"No, no, but!"

We started at the typewriter in astonishment.

It was certainly a weird and wonderful sort of box. It was not like the one that came out of the Ark with Noah; but that was paying it a compliment. It was certainly invented long before the Flood.

I don't know a great deal about typewriters, but I can tell a decent machine from a dud. The thing which Fishy had dragged all the way from Connecticut was well beyond any respectable standard. It was thick with the dust of centuries, and it had a one-eyed appearance, as if it would offend anyone leaveth extra hard in that direction.

On closer inspection we noticed that the capital "I" was missing, and the small "a" seemed likely to share the same fate.

We looked at the typewriter, and we looked at Fishy. Johnny Bull was the first to find a trace.

"We've got the check to call that tinpot arrangement a typewriter!" he boomed.

"Why, it's a relic of the Great War—the Great War of ten thousand years ago, I should think you'd treasure it, if I think I was much too reckless. I'll offer you a tank car instead."

"No, no, but!"

Fishy backed away in alarm.

"I guess you're no judge of real, live, up-to-date machinery," he said. "When that typewriter's cleaned it'll be as good as new."

"It needs to be disinfected, too, if you ask me," said Wharton. "Who do you think it might have had, or what you'd clean it with?"

"I guess I'll find a purchaser!" said Fishy confidently. "I'll write to Mr. O. J. Jordan, Chicago!"

Johnny Bull acted the enterprising Yankee by the shoulders, and went him spinning out into the street.

Whether Fishy was ever likely to find a purchaser or not remained to be seen, but he certainly found the lineolium!

II.

FISHER TABLET FISHY didn't let the grass grow under his feet. He was anxious to get rid of that typewriter for two reasons—firstly, because he wanted to realize a supply of ready cash, or "greenbacks," as he called it; and secondly, because Johnny Bull vowed that if the machine wasn't cleared out of the study all

within twenty-four hours he'd pitch it out of his window.

Fishy advertised the typewriter far and wide next morning. He even put a big poster on the neighboring street, a magnificent, double-barreled, twin-cylinder, one-hundred-horse-power typewriter was on sale.

But there was no eager rush of would-be purchasers.

The fellows knew Fishy of old. A good many of them would have liked to possess a typewriter, but they had to use that old, battered old crock that was on its last legs.

Then afternoon lessons were over Fishy held public auction in the Rag.

He was again unlucky. Squiff offered the princely sum of two bob, and Bolsover major was prepared to sweep his cricket-bat—with the same broken bar of soap for the typewriter. Both these trouping offers left Fishy cold.

Fishy devoted the next hour to giving the machine a jolly good overhauling. He scraped all the dirt off with his putty-knife, and then polished all the parts with Johnny Bull's handkerchiefs. (Johnny didn't know it was his at the time.)

When Fishy had finished the old box actually began to bear some slight resemblance to a typewriter.

Coker of the Fifth happened to look in at that moment.

"I hear you've got a typewriter for sale, right?" he said in his kindly way.

"Yep," said Fishy. "I guess you'd better snap it up now, while you've got the chance. I've already had several offers for it."

Fishy wisely refrained from telling Coker the nature of the offer.

"The fact is," said Coker, "I've been on the lookout for a typewriter for a long time. It will come in jolly useful for writing letters, and all that sort of thing. Typo looks much neater than handwriting."

"Especially when the handwriting happens to be Coker's," said Nugent.

"No, no, but!"

Coker frowned. He bent down and examined the typewriter closely, although he hadn't the foggiest notion whether it was a workable machine or not.

Finally he spoke.

"How much do you want for it, Fish?"

"That's the old story!" said Fish. "That's five quid in your queer coinage."

"That sounds a lot of money for a typewriter," said Coker suspiciously.

"Sticks! Why, if you bought this in a shop I guess you'd want three times as much; typewriters are worth something these days. They're not given away with a pound of tea, you know."

Coker hesitated.

"How do I know you're not swindling me?" he said. "Supposing the thing doesn't work?"

"You can't do down and try it," said Fish. But Coker wasn't going to do that. He didn't want to display to the Remove his ignorance in the art of typewriting.

"Look here, I'm not at all length, 'I'll give you four quid for it.'"

"Nothing doing," said Fish.

"Do you think I'm a blessed millionaire?" shouted Coker.

Fishy made no reply. He gathered up the typewriter and started to walk out of the Rag.

"Come back!" called Coker in desperation. "I'll give you four pounds ten for it!"

Fishy walked on.

"Four pounds fifteen!" said Coker, now thoroughly alarmed.

There was no reply.

Coker caved in. He had fallen in love with that typewriter at first sight, and he speak, and as he had just received a remittance from his Aunt Judy he permitted to buy it outright.

"I'll make you a fiveer!" he said, and got to the door.

"Now you're talking!" said Fish, with the typewriter. "Hand over, Durcoka."

Coker counted out five currency notes and handed them to Fish.

We had heard several sorts of an act, but if he chose to buy the typewriter it was his own funeral. Ours not to reason why.

Coker marched out of the Rag with the typewriter, and he had a rattling good bargain.

As for Fishy, he strolled off up and down with his newly-acquired wealth, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

"He'd grin on the other side of his face when Coker's made a few experiments with that typewriter," said Johnny Bull.

And, however big an ass Johnny may be in some respects, he's a fine prophet.

III.

HOW many k's in "expert?" asked Coker.

He had been hammering away at the typewriter in his spare time—breaking it in, as he explained to his long-suffering step-mother. Potter and Grecco expressed the hope that he would jolly well be broad in a little while.

Coker lacked the light touch of the skilled typist. When he smote he smote hard. The din was deafening, and Potter and Grecco were obliged to accompany him.

"I asked you fellows a question!" said Coker irritably. "How many k's in 'expert'?"

"No, fathered!" said Potter.

Coker glared.

"It's about time you learnt how to spell, George! Fisher! he said. "Learn, or I believe you spell it 'a-a-p-e-r-t'."

(Continued on Column 1, Page 15.)

TEN LITTLE ROTTER BOYS.

Ten little rotter boys all went to dine;
Trimble overate himself, and then there were nine.

Nine little rotter boys looked bound quite late;
G-r-a-d Crooke was caught at it, and then there were eight.

Eight little rotter boys: Kain fell from heaven.
It wotted Billy Hunter, and then there were seven.

Seven little rotter boys playing caddish tricks;
Skinner fell in Quitchy's hands, and then there were six.

Six little rotter boys—oh, my, what a live!
Ferry McIlhail had too long, and then there were five.

Five little rotter boys—villains to the core—
Snopy cribbed, and Quitchy saw, and then there were four.

Four little rotter boys went on the spree;
Angel came home homey, and then there were three.

Three little rotter boys, sickly pale of hue;
Stott got off with smoking, and then there were two.

Two little rotter boys gamed till rize of sun;
Cutts lost all his cash at bridge, and then there was one.

One little rotter boy backed a horse for fun;
Ashby Bockie got sacked for it, and then there were none.

TEN LITTLE EMPIRE BOYS.

Ten little Empire boys for distant homes did pine;
One fell that he most farrer back, and then there were nine.

Nine little Empire boys of distant homes did prate;
One proved himself a Noble lad, and then there were eight.

Eight little Empire boys—like angels fresh from heaven—
Kouml Kao lost his 'rag,' and then there were seven.

Seven little Empire boys—seven little bricks—
One got a bit too squiffy, and then there were six.

Six little Empire boys—and one was Sidney Clev—
He missed the car due (Cardew) at the school, and then there were five.

Five little Empire boys—Colonials I address—
Delaney got Noodled a bit, and then there were four.

Four little Empire boys tried to climb a tree;
Dane, he memorized the birds, and then there were three.

Three little Empire boys—very staunch and true—
Roynance passed his 'century,' and then there were two.

Two little Empire boys walked out in the sun;
One of them got much too Brown, and then there was one.

One little Empire boy was always fond of fish;
The Hie he led was far too 'Gay,' and then there were none.

Contributed by MONTY LOWTHER of St. Jim's.

"Oh, my aunt!" gasped Greene. "You're certainly original! Horace, old man, if nothing else, what are you trying to type, by the way?"

"A letter," said Coker. "It's to Phyllis Howell."

Coker went ahead with his letter. It took him a long time to correct. Composition did not come easily to Coker. And he was not a swift operator, either.

"There's nothing the matter with that satisfaction," said Coker, with great satisfaction. "If that doesn't please Phyllis Howell I'm a Dutchman!"

Phyllis handed over the letter in Potter and Greene. This is what they read:

"Greetings School,

"Friarclad,

"Dear Phyllis,—I have now got a typewriter again. It is a really fine machine. I'm hoping that the kapital 'i' is mis-takenly compelled to use the small one. I expect to come over and see you soon. It is grate full having tea at Cliff Howell's."

"I write and let me no what you think of this letter. I have typed it off my own sheet."

"I remain,

"Yours sincerely,

"HORACE COKER."

Potter and Greene had all their work cut out to keep from laughing hysterically. But they discreetly refrained from criticizing Coker's maiden effort at letter-writing on the typewriter.

"Well, it wasn't Coker's fault that the capital 'I' was missing. Neither was it Coker's fault that the small 'e' seemed likely to share the same fate."

Coker posted the letter that evening. He expected a reply by return, but presumably Phyllis Howell was too overcome to send one.

"Anyway, no reply came."

"I'll write to her again," said Coker. "There's just a chance that my letter wasn't delivered at Cliff Howell."

Two days had elapsed when Coker made this remark. It was the morning the small "e" had retired from active service.

"How on earth are you going to type a letter without using the small 'e'?" asked Greene.

Coker smiled his superior smile.

"It's perfectly simple," he said. "In place of every 'e' I shall use an 'x'."

"Oh—"

"The result ought to be rather interesting," said Potter. "Hope Phyllis Howell won't think you're sending her lines when she sees another crosses in the letter."

"Rule!" said Coker.

And he sat down and thumped out his second epistle to Phyllis.

The result was more like a jigsaw puzzle than anything else.

What with Coker's spelling and the absence of the capital 'I' and the small 'e,' that letter certainly took the bun for novelty.

This is how it looked when Coker had finished:

"Greetings School,

"Friarclad,

"Dear Phyllis,—I am writing to you again, as my last letter must have gone astray."

"Nimes I last wrote, the small 'x' has gone what, so I am going to come to Cliff Howell for a faxd. LAL MX so when it will be konvaint for mx to come, and I will pop over on my hix."

"I think you will agrax that I am raxlly bot stuff at typewriting; but of couax it is an undaxstod thing that I have got more brains than all the faxd of this Chapax together."

"It will chaxk MX up XXVX so much to raxvix a lxttr from you, so buck up and writax to"

"Yours sincerely,

"HORACE COKER."

Potter and Greene couldn't resist that. They simply yelled.

"Why, you cackling hyenas," roared Coker, what's tickling you? I'll jolly well—"

"He, he, he!"

Coker made a savage stride in the direction of his hysterical study-mates.

Potter and Greene were too helpless to defend themselves. They were almost nothing with laughter.

Coker smashed his big fists; and Potter and Greene would certainly have gone through their heads had not the study-door opened at that moment.

Coker spun round, and came face to face with Phyllis Howell. Phyllis had come over to have tea in Study No. 1.

(Continued in column 3.)

The Editor's Chat.

The Companion Papers are:

THE MAGNET. THE BOY'S FRIEND. THE GEM. THE PENNY POPULAR. SHUKLES. Every Monday. Every Monday. Every Wed. Every Friday. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

For Next Wednesday:

"THE STORY STORY!"

By Martin Clifford.

Next week's grand long complete story of St. Jim's relates how, not for the first time in their school career, the lot of the Terrible Three is cast in stone. Even the most novel efforts to raise the wind prove unavailing, and the impending visit of von Mazy's former governess, Miss Priscilla Howland, renders the juniors very desperate indeed. Miss Howland will naturally expect a certain amount of hospitality, and the Terrible Three are confronted with a very knotty problem, which even the obliging brains of Arthur Augustus IV may fail to solve. However, a solution occurs at the eleventh hour, and the occupants of

"THE STORY STORY," after a chapter of misadventure, find themselves once again in a hot boxing with milk and honey.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

"A Poem of the Lord."

I should be very glad if the author of these clever lines, and of "The A. B. C.," will communicate his name and address to the Editor.

My suggestions are that you send me contributions showing his full name and address of the stories I publish, so well as his admirable mastery of the English language, and I should very much like to hear from him.

MY LAST WORD TO "FALKIRK."

For some time past a reprehensible person who styles himself "A Falkirk Reader"—but who discreetly refrains from disclosing his real name or address—has been writing odious and objectionable letters to the Editor of the GEM Library. I have one of them before me as I write. It is five pages in length, and is a mass of extraordinary contradictions, might well quote Byron's lines on Lord Thurlow, substituting the name of "Falkirk" for that of the noble lord:

"When Falkirk's dashed nonsense sent,
(I hope I saw not violent)
Nor man nor gods knew what he meant!"

Not only has "Falkirk" made a sweeping tirade against the GEM and all its works, but he has swamped his letter with personal abuse.

In the opinion of "Falkirk," Knox of the Sixth is a paragon of virtue by comparison with the Editor of the GEM Library. Indeed, if "Falkirk's" description of me were in any way accurate, I should now be kept under restraint in Holloway Jail.

"Falkirk" wishes to intimidate me, here and now, that he is quite off-side. All further correspondence from this backing out will be promptly ignored—and as it should be heaped in altogether too libellous terms, in which case I shall have no alternative but to place the matter in the hands of the police. If "Falkirk" thinks my last word is good; and you will be well advised to sink back into the kennel from whence you came.

ANOTHER ONE!

A Wejrd Walk from Wales!

By the same old fellow brought "Falkirk's" letter the following quaint epistle arrived:

"Dear editor writing these few lines to let you so that the story in the GEM are getting worse instead of better there is a vast difference between the story of five or six years ago to those now you are so good; and you will be well advised to sink back into the kennel from whence you came."

"South Wales."

"Dear editor writing these few lines to let you so that the story in the GEM are getting worse instead of better there is a vast difference between the story of five or six years ago to those now you are so good; and you will be well advised to sink back into the kennel from whence you came."

When this extraordinary person has mastered in some measure the art of punctuation I shall be pleased to reply to any criticism he may care to offer.

A POCKET WAR MUSEUM.

A handy little illustrated album has been designed by Mr. Fred J. Melville, President of the Junior Philatelic Society, for arranging a collection of war stamps in convenient form. War stamps are historic scraps of paper, and arranged in order in this little album, they tell concisely the story of the war in stamps, illustrating the capture of the former German Colonies, the co-operation of the Allies in Togoland, the Cameroons, the Balkans, Palestine, the Hedjaz, and elsewhere. The special war issues of the British Colonies demonstrate the "coherence of Empire," most of our overseas Dominions being represented in the war stamp album, as they were represented in the fighting forces and in the finance and philanthropy of the war. The album is published in two editions at 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d. by the Philatelic Institute, 116, Strand, W.C.2, where the interesting Free Exhibition of War Stamps is now being held.

H. A. B. (YOUR EDITOR.)

COKER'S BARGAIN.

(Continued from column 1.)

At the sight of his visitor Coker flushed crimson.

"I excuse me, Miss Phyllis!" he stammered. "I was just having an—ahem—a sort of sparring-match with these fellows. Quite a friendly one, you know?"

"Phyllis smiled."

"I looked in to thank you for your letter," she said.

"You got it, then?"

"Yes, I didn't know you were such a humorist, Coker."

Coker jumped.

"If—what?" he exclaimed.

"Your letter was really too funny for words. I enjoyed it immensely."

Coker brightened up. He quite misunderstood that had meant.

"I've written you another one, Miss Phyllis," he said. "I'll give it to you now, to save delay."

And he handed over the mischievous.

Phyllis Howell smiled. The am'e developed into a giggle, and the giggle into a peal of laughter.

"Oh, dear! Coker, you funny boy, you'll be the death of me! This is priceless! It ought to go in a museum!"

Coker's face, however, paled, and Greene, who had been a staid, had expected to make an impression upon Phyllis Howell—and he had succeeded beyond his wildest dreams.

"It was quite a long time before Phyllis recovered from her merriment."

"Is that your own typewriting, Coker?" she asked.

"My very own," said Coker.

"Then I suggest that you take an early opportunity to pawn it."

"I'm sorry to hear that," uttered Coker.

"Certainly! You don't seriously mean to say that you will continue to use it? Why, it's going all to pieces! Half the letters will be missing in a few days!"

"Oh, erumble!"

"Take my advice, and give it to the next collector of old iron who comes along!" said Phyllis.

And with that she left the study.

A long pause followed. Coker strode over to the window and gazed at a cricket-stump, an Indian club, and a fencing foil.

"What's the little game?" asked Greene, in alarm.

Coker looked positively Hunslish.

"I'm going to have a few words with that!" he said.

And he went.

THE END.

THE ST. JIM'S GALLERY.

No. 41.—Herr Otto Schneider.

HERR SCHNEIDER was a very popular master either at Clarendon where Post Merry & Co. first ran against him, or later at St. Jim's. And if he was not popular before, the war has greatly benefited him, and he had grown popular during its course.

The feeling among the public generally was that German had become an educational subject not only for the French, to which so many practical-minded folk would like to relegate Latin and Greek. They are dead languages, and many felt that German had better be a dead language to us.

But there are other ways of looking at the question, and Dr. Holmes did not take the view that the same of his country tried to get him to take it. One day, however, went for the juniors asking that German should be given up. The only result of it was that the signatures of the transaction and a hundred times each from the Head. The bitterness of the opposition showed that he was some reason in their request, though he did not share their attitude towards the language of the enemy. But it was no use trying again; Dr. Holmes knew his own mind.

Now, one can hardly blame Herr Schneider for wishing that his own country should come out on top. Whatever the aims of the German—and they are many and black—the attitude of indignation is likely to flourish, and Herr Schneider loved his Fatherland. Monty Lottner was amazed when the Herr's pretty niece, Marie Krich, told him that during his last vacations in his own country, back again among the vineyards of the "castled Rhine," he "made up as gay and light-hearted as a schoolboy." It was an very difficult to picture the formidable Herr as such a light-hearted any where!

"But, allowing that Otto Schneider had no good right to love Germany as any Briton of us all has to love his own land, he really did show most astonishing lack of tact and judgment in his manner of conducting himself during the early days of the war. He exhibited openly when the Hun backed through Belgium and swarmed like locusts over the northern seas of fair France. Any German had now fresh and fresh standpoint disapproved him. He would sing at the top of his booming voice "The Watch on the Rhine."

There was a time when songs about the Rhine and the German's love for that great and picturesque river held high places in the esteem of people here. "The Watch on the Rhine" and "The Rhine" we all knew those. "The Watch on the Rhine," and Karl Körner's "Sword Song," two beautiful and most stirring German patriotic songs, found an echo in the hearts of all who, caring about their own country, recalled the obvious fact that another man has a right to be proud of his own.

But "The Watch on the Rhine" was no sort of song for a Hun, in England on an afternoon, to be raising 'em in an English school during a war between our country and his.

Es braust ein Ruf wie Donnerhall!
Wie Schwellkreisel und Wogenhall!
Zum Rhein! Zum Rhein! Zum Deutschen Rhein!

Wie soll die Stürme Hüter sein?
"Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein!
Feind steht und treu die Wacht, die Wacht an Rhein!"

Thus Herr Schneider shouted in his study; and George Gore put his mouth to the keyhole, and heard a "How do you do," which was two or three "Gore's," which was three.

The Herr rushed out, and grabbed Gore by the collar, and went for him savagely. Monty Lottner came up at the moment, and the Herr slammed the door in the face of the high-spirited French master. Later on the two language masters met. Gore had been at work to make use of the French, which was, already strong enough, and they fought. The German was too heavy for the Frenchman, and knocked him down in the end.



Then was the martial spirit of M. Moray stirred to its depths. He might be too old to go and help to defend his beloved France against the "tough" Hun; but he was not too old to deal with this particular Hun. He challenged Herr Schneider to a duel with swords. The Herr was not on; he said duelling was illegal in England, which is quite true, of course. M. Moray persisted. He took words to Herr Schneider's study, and insisted upon the German's fighting him. Tom Merry and Bernard Glyn chipped in, and there was no deal. But there was further trouble, and the upshot of it was that M. Moray was given marching orders by the Head. Then Gore owned up to what he had done to set the two at feud, and the little Frenchman stayed on.

On another occasion there was trouble between the two, and Herr Schneider would have had to go had it not been for the generosity of his enemy, who planned with the Head for him. The Herr was badly at fault that time; he behaved like a Hun.

But, of course, the man is a Hun, and he can only be expected to behave as such. He was very Humish when he swatted George Durrance—then called Paul Lottner, and supposed to be a German by birth—to say for him among his fellow-juniors. His school-boys take for that name as does a water; but Durrance was British to the backbone, even when he had to believe sadly that he had no claim to be British by birth. He went for the Herr, when there was some thing of a scrap, with a rebuke to Schneider in the voice of authority at the end of it.

Yet Herr Schneider is not the worst kind of Hun. At least he would not betray the country in which he earned his livelihood. And he was tempted to do the scoundrel who took the place of Mr. Carrington, when that good fellow was due at St. Jim's, and sattered among the juniors the nickname of "The Beat." pressed him hard. Franz Goetz was one of the most dangerous types of German spies. He had lived in Great Britain many years, had no German accent, and could pass anywhere for an Englishman. He tried to persuade Schneider that his old man did, in

the cause of their common Fatherland. But all that Schneider would do was to distance from giving him away, and he only half consented to that. Eventually Tom Merry & Co. laid Goetz by the heels; and the Herr was very pleased with their strategy.

"Mein pojal, Mein pojal!" he said. "I thank you for what you have done. You save me from something. You are a clever spy. He goes to his grave with a heavy man's name, and that other man he is a braver one however. But, mein teier pojal, you do not ask that I have anything to do with it, rascally—how you do not ask that your master is not an honest man?"

Tom Merry and Gussy both did their best to show him that they did not. This, that, "It is not my worry," said the Herr. "I have been cross in to temper with you, and you have gone to my rescue like fiery good boys after. I shall never forget this, I tell you. Never after!"

That was Herr Schneider at his best, moved by strong feeling. But, of course, he did more.

Francis Eyles, his niece, knew the softer side of the crusty old chap, and during her stay at St. Jim's he was somewhat less displeasable. Do you remember how "Monty Lottner" falling in love with the "Frankie," cultivated her uncle a better acquaintance, even going so far as to pretend a desire to be coaxed in German outside class, and simulating a passion for the classic literature of Germany—though he did mix up G. G. with Heine?—and how he made up his mind not to mind his girl's going to the tower with Gussy, as the great play upon Schneider; and how after all the actor's embryo-ism carried him away, and he gave Schneider in the first and last. Frankie said he would not speak to him again, but went without even a word of farewell!—But all that has been told before. It is only mentioned here to show that the Herr can display good nature a few times. He was quite friendly and genial with Lottner when he believed that Lottner had developed a taste for German literature.

But, of course, Gussy had that he is pleasant and genial. Only one other occasion can I recall—that on which some of 'the juniors made a barbedy poem of the "Herr's Gussy had been through his passion for the tolvocentist's daughter. Gussy positively had to see her, in order to see her, he had to buy her father's goods; and he was in possession of a meerschaum pipe and quite a quantity of tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes, good, bad, and indifferent. They were all given to Gussy, and he was very pleased with them, though he must have wondered why the juniors should remember his birth day.

Most of our other memories of Schneider are of trouble in one form or another. Trouble in the classroom—Glyn call a dawson, kopt, which means blackhead—Kangaroo combined for asking how long it would take sixty-five millions of Germans to conquer the hundred and forty millions of people in the British Empire, when it had taken them three months to disarm a hundred thousand Britons—Manners, receiving an unfair penalty awarded to the then innocent and guileless Tom Merry, and translating "The Irons" and "The Irons" into French, and committing a great blunder—a version so nearly correct that the Herr could not punish him—the whole shell walking out as a protest. He had been a very good method, and being sent back by Mr. Linton—and even so much more. There was the day of the dog-show, too, when all the dogs, Franco and French, and many of the "Yonks" escaped from the show and chased a cat; and the cat leaped through an open window and ended scratching and clawing furiously.

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