



BILLY BUNTER'S TREASURE



A PLAY IN VERSE, FOR AMATEUR ACTORS

INTRODUCING
 HARRY WHARTON & CO., OF GREYFRIARS,
 AND
 THE GIRLS OF CLIFF HOUSE SCHOOL.

[NOTE.—This play may be performed by readers of THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL, without fee or licence, on condition that the words, "By permission of the Editor of THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL," appear on each programme.]

HINTS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF PERFORMERS

- (1) The part of Billy Bunter (which is an extensive one) should be allotted to a plump performer, and one who can memorise well.
- (2) If no lady performers are available, the parts of the Cliff House girls may be taken by boys.
- (3) Act III. should be rendered with the stage in semi-darkness. The packing-case containing the "treasure" can, if necessary, be hauled into view from one of the wings.
- (4) No elaborate attire will be needed, save in Act II., when Billy Bunter visits Cliff House.
- (5) The services of an efficient stage-manager should be obtained, so that there is as little delay as possible between each Act.
- (6) Don't "rush" the performance—and don't gabble. Speak slowly and distinctly, so that the audience finds it easy to follow what is being said.
- (7) If your performance is reported in the local Press, don't forget to send a cutting to the Editor of THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL.

Characters :

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|---|
| HARRY WHARTON | .. | .. | .. | .. | } The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove. |
| BOB CHERRY | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| FRANK NUGENT | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| JOHNNY BULL | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| HURREE SINGH | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| BILLY BUNTER | .. | .. | .. | .. | |
| PETER TODD | .. | .. | .. | .. | } The plump and greedy Owl of the Remove. The leader of No. 7 Study, and a lover of practical jokes. |
| TOM DUTTON | .. | .. | .. | .. | A deaf junior, and an occupant of No. 7 Study. |
| BESSIE BUNTER | .. | .. | .. | .. | Billy Bunter's sister, at Cliff House. |
| BARBARA REDFERN | .. | .. | .. | .. | Captain of the Fourth Form at Cliff House. |
| MABEL LYNN | .. | .. | .. | .. | Barbara's friend and study companion. |

ACT I.

SCENE.—No. 1 *Study in the Remove Passage.*

(THE FAMOUS FIVE are within, busily engaged in preparing tea.)

CHERRY (*taking a pie from the cupboard and placing it on the table*):

I'm jolly glad this rabbit-pie
Escaped the greedy Bunter's eye!

NUGENT:

I'm glad no study-raider's been
And sneaked our very last sardine!

BULL:

This extra-special currant cake
Looks jolly nice, and no mistake!

HURREE SINGH:

Say, Wharton, you're in luckfulness!
Your pater acted brickfully;
Through him we've got the tuckfulness:
We smack our chops right lickfully!

WHARTON:

The pater's fiver came in handy:
I'll drink his health in ginger brandy!

(*The table having been laid, THE FAMOUS FIVE seat themselves around it. Enter BILLY BUNTER, flourishing a document in his hand, and blinking excitedly at the juniors.*)

BUNTER:

I say, you fellows——

ALL:

Get outside!

BUNTER (*stopping his ears*):

Can't stand such bellows!

ALL:

Go and hide!

BUNTER:

I've had a most delightful shock,
I'll tell you all about it.

CHERRY:

You've heard great news from Dr. Locke?
Well, we can do without it!

BUNTER:

I've just picked up this document——

WHARTON:

So *that's* the sort of shock you meant?

BUNTER:

I say, you fellows! Peter Todd,
Whose ways are jolly quaint and odd,
Was strolling in the Close just now,

A thoughtful look upon his brow,
I promptly trotted up behind
To ask old Toddy if he'd mind
Advancing me a bob or two
(My postal-order's nearly due).
I was about to speak, then stopped:
I saw that Peter Todd had dropped
A sheet of paper on the ground;
I stooped to pick it up, and found
The most amazing thing I've met——

NUGENT:

It was a five-pound note, you bet!

BUNTER:

Not so, my friend; it was a screed
On faded parchment, hard to read.
But I've deciphered it at last,
And now my heart beats loud and fast!

BULL:

Is that the parchment in your hand?

BUNTER:

It is, and, oh, it's simply grand!
I'll soon be rich beyond all measure,
When I have found the hidden treasure!

WHARTON:

What hidden treasure? Speak, you
chump!

HURREE SINGH:

Our worthy friend gives me the hump!

BUNTER:

Within the smuggler's cave, you chaps,
A weighty treasure lies, you know!

CHERRY:

And here——though not for long, perhaps——
A weighty porpoise "lies"—just so!

ALL:

Ha, ha, ha!

BUNTER:

I'm sorry you should doubt my word——

NUGENT:

A wilder yarn we never heard!

BUNTER:

Oh, really, this is not a fable!
I'll lay this parchment on the table,
That you may read, and mark, and learn
The words thereon, which makes me yearn
To find this treasure right away,
And roll in quids for many a day!

(*The Famous Five gather round and examine the parchment. Wharton reads it aloud to the others.*)

WHARTON :

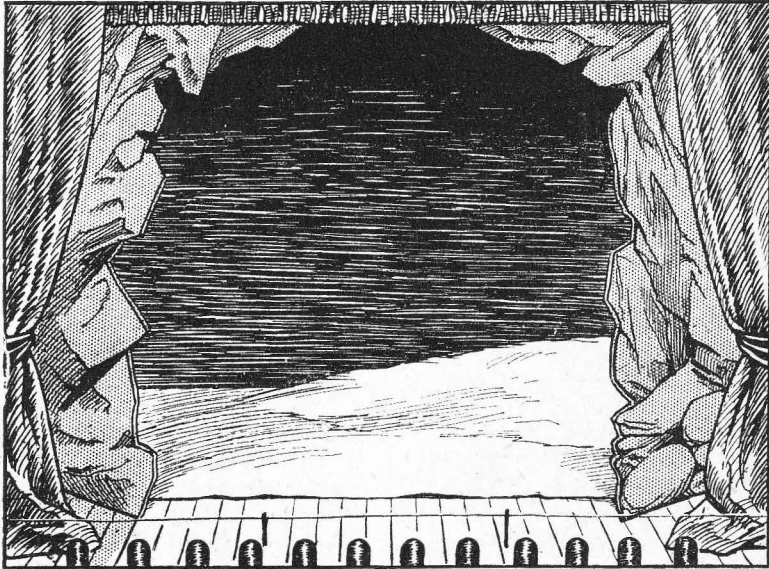
“ He who craves a fortune grand
First of all must understand
That ye man who pens these rhymes
Smuggler was in olden tymes.
Leader of ye band was he,
And he sailed upon ye sea,
Seeking treasure, wealth, and spoil,
He for many moons did toil.

If he delveth deep enough
He shall fynde ye hoarded stuff,
And throughout his days shall be
Blessed with wealth abundantly.

“ (Signed) ROGER COMPTON,

“ Chief of Ye Smugglers.

“ Ye Year of Grace, 1792.”



How the scene should be set for Act III of the play. The “wings” are of cardboard, cut out and painted to represent the rocky entrance to the cave. The back-cloth should be of dark green material. The heap of sand on the right conceals the packing-case which Billy Bunter digs up.

Then he brought to England's shore
Golden pieces by ye score ;
Stored them in ye old oak chest
Which in Compton's Cave doth rest.
This same cave is near to Pegg,
Seek, and ye shall fynde, I beg.
He who goes at set of sun
(When ye tyde doth backward run)
With a spade wherewith to dig,
Shall locate ye treasure big.

BUNTER :

There, you chaps ! I'll go to-night !

CHERRY :

It's a jape, you silly kite !

BUNTER :

What ! How *can* it be a jape ?

WHARTON :

It was planned by Todd, you ape !

BUNTER :

Rats ! This parchment's jolly old,

And I'm certain that the gold
Will be found in Compton's cove,
Then you chaps will simply rave
When you see me roll in quids——

NUGENT :

Roll him through the doorway, kids!

(THE FAMOUS FIVE seize BILLY BUNTER
and overpower him. They roll him towards the
door.)

BUNTER :

Yaroooo! Hold on—I mean, leggo!
My constitution's weak, you know!

CHERRY :

I say, you chaps, it makes me grin
To see a human rolling-pin!

(Laughter.)

BUNTER :

You beasts! You rotters! I'll depart!

BULL :

He's got no option, bless his heart!
(Renewed laughter.)

BUNTER :

You cads will never get a share
Of all my treasure-trove, so there!
And when I own a private car,
I'll scorn you like the beasts you are!
Within my swiftly-gliding Ford,
I'll sit and swagger like a lord!
And when, on bended knees, you plead
That I should treat you to a feed,
I'll snap my fingers in your faces,
And put you in your proper places!

NUGENT :

Your proper place is in the passage!

CHERRY :

And then, methinks, he'll need a massage!
(Laughter.)

BUNTER :

No wealth of mine shall e'er come your
way!

WHARTON :

Let's roll him gently through the door-
way!

(Exit BILLY BUNTER, loudly protesting.)

CHERRY :

Farewell, my plump and podgy tub!

BULL :

He only came to cadge our grub!

BUNTER (from without) :

Oh, help! Fire! Murder! Yow-ow-ow,

I'll go along to Cliff House now,
And call upon my sister Bessie——

NUGENT :

Not in *those* togs, they're somewhat
messy!

CHERRY :

Yes, you must don your best apparel
Before you see the girls, old barrel!

BUNTER :

I go. I will return at leisure——

WHARTON :

And don't forget to bring the treasure!

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—No. 4 Study, Fourth Form passage,
Cliff House School.

(BARBARA REDFERN, MABEL LYNN, and
BESSIE BUNTER are within. The two first-
named—known as "BABS" and "MABS"
respectively—have just finished tea; but BESSIE
BUNTER is still devouring jam-tarts.)

BESSIE :

I say! These tarts are simply prime!

BABS :

You'll burst unless you stop in time!

BESSIE :

I'm still as hungry as a hunter——

MABS (aside) :

The favourite saying of a Bunter!

BESSIE :

My hunger's reached a dreadful pitch,
My appetite's enormous!

BABS :

A well-known fact, dear girl, of which
There's no need to inform us!

BESSIE :

I'd dearly love a plate of ham,
Some muffins, and some strawberry-jam;
A currant cake, some chocolate fingers
(The memory of them sweetly lingers!)
Some home-made toffee—twenty slabs——

MABS :

The girl's a perfect glutton, Babs!

BESSIE :

A glutton, am I? Don't be silly!
You ought to see my brother Billy!
They gaze upon his feats in Hall
And wonder where he stows it all!

BABS :

Your brother Billy is a fat
And good-for-nothing toad—that's flat !

(Enter BILLY BUNTER attired in his Sunday
best, with a shining silk "topper" perched on
his head. He removes the "topper" with a
flourish, and makes a sweeping bow.)

MABS :

Why, talk of angels minus wings !—

BUNTER :

What have you said of me—nice things ?

BABS :

Well—er—ahem !—that is to say—

BUNTER :

You've simply sung my praises, eh ?

Ah, well, I'm not surprised a bit,
For all the ladies say I'm "IT."

A handsome, dashing chap like me
Is always being asked to tea !

MABS :

You haven't been invited here—

BUNTER :

A grave omission, girls, I fear !

BESSIE :

Now, Billy, come and sit by me,
And help me shift these jam-tarts.

BUNTER (airing his French) :

Oui !

(BILLY BUNTER absent-mindedly sits on his
"topper," which he has placed on the chair. He
jumps up in alarm.)

Your topper looks as if it's been a
Bellows, or p'raps a concertina !

BUNTER :

I really am a clumsy fool—
This hat belongs to Johnny Bull !
(Laughter.)

(BILLY BUNTER removes the "topper" to a
place of safety, and sits down. He reaches
towards the dish for a jam-tart, but to his dismay
he finds that BESSIE has eaten the lot !)

BUNTER :

The dish is empty ! What a sell !

BESSIE (with a groan) :

I've fed not wisely, but too well !

BUNTER :

Such gormandising makes me weep !

BESSIE :

Oh, shut up, Billy ! Go to sleep !

BABS (to BESSIE) :

Your brother Billy looks excited ;
Has he been raised to fame, or knighted ?

MABS :

Sir William Bunter, O.B.E.,
Sounds most attractive, you'll agree !

BESSIE :

Now, Billy, tell me what's the matter—
Why, yes, you certainly look fatter,
As if you're bursting with some story !
Of how you've won both fame and glory !

BUNTER (looking confused) :

I'm not excited, Bess, a scrap ;
I never was that sort of chap !
I've got no news of any sort,
There's really nothing to report.
I've never even heard of Roger,
The smuggler and the artful dodger,
Who collared treasure of the best,
And stored it in the old oak chest !

BESSIE (in great surprise) :

Billy ! Whatever are you saying ?

BUNTER :

Nun-nothing ! I was only playing !
I simply tried to pull your leg.
There is no treasure stored at Pegg.
Whoever searches with a spade
Will be unlucky, I'm afraid,
For Compton's Cave contains no chest
Of bright doubloons, and all the rest.
It's all a fairy-tale, I guess ;
And so let's change the subject, Bess !

BESSIE :

You've got a secret—that I know—
And it will be my pleasure
To take a spade to-night, and go
To dig for hidden treasure !

BUNTER :

No, no ! Don't venture near the coast
Or you may meet the smuggler's ghost !

BESSIE (firmly) :

I'll go to-night, with spade and pick :
I see a chance to get rich quick !

BABS :

What nonsense ! You are both insane !

MABS :

Billy's got water on the brain !

BABS :

I think that such a coon as he
Should suffer for his lunacy !

BUNTER :

I say, dear girls, I must be off !

MABS :

There's nothing here for you to scoff !

BUNTER (*extending his hand*) :

Good-night, Miss Redfern, and Miss Lynn !

Why, aren't you going to shake my fin ?

BABS :

That paw of yours is far too grubby—

MABS :

We dare not touch it. Good-night, tubby !

(*Exit BILLY BUNTER.*)

BESSIE (*aside*) :

He's fairly let the secret out !

That treasure will be mine !

I'll soon be rich, beyond a doubt :

Oh, won't it be divine ?

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

(*SCENE.—The smugglers' cave on the coast of Pegg.*)

(*The place is practically in darkness. Enter BILLY BUNTER, armed with spade and lantern. He sets the lantern down on the sanded floor, and peers around him.*)

BUNTER :

My hat ! It's jolly dark in here !

I hope no grisly spooks are near.

Hark ! What was that ? Was it a ghost,

Or breakers dashing on the coast ?

(*He gazes fearfully into the shadows, and shudders.*)

I'm not a coward—not a bit,

But this is most uncanny !

I seem to see before me flit

The ghost of my old Granny !

However, I must banish fear,

And seek the gold that's buried here !

(*He commences operations with the spade. Whilst he is digging in the sand, by the light of the lantern, he hears an exclamation without.*)

Oh, dear ! I'm sure this place is haunted !

But I'll continue, nothing daunted.

(*Enter BESSIE BUNTER, also with spade and lantern. She peers round the cave, and gives a start when she recognises BILLY.*)

BESSIE :

Hallo ! So you are here before me ?

BUNTER (*aside*) :

Oh, crumbs ! The outlook's jolly stormy !

BESSIE :

This is the right cave, is it not ?

BUNTER :

No, no ! the whole thing's tommy-rot !

You'll find no treasure here, you know,

So don't you think you'd better go ?

BESSIE :

Excuse me, I'm remaining here ;

You can't deceive me, Billy dear.

I'll dig until my hand's all blisters,

The treasure-trove shall be your sister's !

BUNTER :

I wish you'd run away and play !

No treasure-trove will come your way !

BESSIE :

Now that I've made this evening trip,

I'm coming into partnership.

So, Billy, let us dig together,

And then we'll soon discover whether

The old oak chest is in this cave.

BUNTER :

Your conduct, Bessie, makes me rave !

BESSIE :

Come ! let us burrow in the sand,

And soon the hoard will come to hand !

BUNTER :

I'd much prefer to see you scoot :

Still, you may stay and share the loot !

BESSIE :

Your kindness far exceeds your beauty !

I really think it is my duty

To check these greedy thoughts within you.

BUNTER :

Oh, dry up, Bessie ! Let's continue !

(*BILLY resumes his task, aided by his sister. They shovel up a quantity of sand between them, and presently BILLY stops short.*)

BUNTER :

My spade struck something hard—the treasure !

BESSIE :

Oh, Billy ! I am mad with pleasure !

(*They continue to dig, and a large packing-case is exposed to view.*)

BUNTER :

No old chest is in this place !

BESSIE (*excitedly*) :

The treasure's in this packing-case !

BUNTER :

But how are we to open it ?

BESSIE :

Ah, that's the question ! Wait a bit !

Have you a pickaxe, Billy dear ?

BUNTER :

Why should I bring such weapons here ?

BESSIE :

Then we must take this case between us

And guard it like the Epstein Venus !

To Greyfriars we'll convey it, Billy,

Then force the lid——

BUNTER :

Oh, don't be silly !

BESSIE :

We dare not leave it where it is.

Come, Billy ! Let us get to biz !

BUNTER (*stooping to lift the packing-case*) :

The weight of this thing is immense !

BESSIE :

No matter ; we must take it hence.

BUNTER :

But, Bessie, it will break our backs,

And give us chronic heart attacks !

BESSIE :

But think of all this treasure, Billy !

Why, soon we'll strut down Piccadilly

Monarchs of all that we survey.

"The wealthiest in the land !" they'll say.

I'll have a fur coat, you a Ford,

And we'll be worshipped and adored

By belted earls and dashing dukes——

BUNTER (*with a shudder*) :

Let's quit ! I have a dread of spooks !

This cave was once a smugglers' lair,

And now it's haunted I declare !

Heave-ho, then, Bess ! This packing-case

Will soon be in a safer place !

Then we'll enjoy the pleasant toil

Of counting up the merry spoil !

BESSIE :

We'll leave the spades and lanterns here.

BUNTER :

Yes. Come on, while the coast is clear !

(*Exit BILLY and BESSIE, gasping and grunting beneath the weight of the packing-case.*)

END OF ACT III.

SCENE.—No. 7 *Study in the Remove Passage.*

(PETER TODD and TOM DUTTON are within, doing their prep.)

TODD (*looking up from his work*) :

I wonder what's become of Bunter ?

DUTTON (*with his hand to his ear*) :

Eh ? What was that about a punter ?

TODD :

Bunter, not "punter !" Where's he got to ?

DUTTON :

Don't shout ! I've often told you not to !

TODD :

He went out just as dusk was falling——

DUTTON :

Yes, rather ! I object to bawling.

TODD :

You chump ! You'll drive me to despair !

DUTTON (*pointing to the door*) :

Clear out, Todd, if you want to swear !

TODD (*aside*) :

Oh, help ! His deafness makes me groan !

My kingdom for a megaphone !

DUTTON :

I say, I wish you wouldn't mutter !

I can't hear the remarks you utter.

Not that I'm really deaf, you know ;

I'm slightly hard of hearing, though !

TODD :

Have you seen Bunter ? Speak, you fool !

DUTTON :

Eh ? What is wrong with Johnny Bull ?

TODD :

You mix up every word I speak !

DUTTON (*jumping angrily to his feet*) :

How dare you say that I'm a freak ?

TODD (*backing away in alarm*) :

I didn't ! Let me put you wise——

DUTTON (*clenching his fists*) :

I'll punch your nose, and black your eyes !

(PETER TODD dodges round the table, hotly pursued by the infuriated DUTTON.)

TODD :

Stand back, you madman ! Keep your distance !

DUTTON (*grimly*) :

No, thanks ; I don't require assistance !

(Enter BILLY and BESSIE BUNTER, carrying a packing-case. They dump it on to the floor, and collapse over it, utterly exhausted.)

BUNTER :

Oh, dear! I'm jolly nearly dead!
I've shooting pains right through my head!
My back is broken and my legs
Will shortly snap like wooden pegs!

BESSIE :

I am exhausted past all measure,
But never mind; we've got the treasure!

TODD :

The treasure! Why, what *do* you mean?

BUNTER :

Now, then, you rotters, keep your distance!

CHERRY (*dropping pleadingly on one knee*):

Aren't we to share a portion, Fatty?

BUNTER :

Get up, you worm! You make me ratty!
When first I told you of the treasure
You sneered, but now I've got the pleasure
Of handling all the giddy loot!
Buzz off, you jealous cadgers! Scoot!

BESSIE :

The lid is coming off—how grand!

Key to the "Test Your Observation Picture" on page 110.

The scissors have no rivet. The umbrella has no ribs. The blade of the knife is too long for the handle, and there is no notch to open the blade with. The hat has no band and the stick no ferrule.

The shadows of the cup and jug are in the wrong place. The deck-chair has no cross bar or notches to hold it. Handles are missing from the garden-fork, bucket, and watering-can. Easel has no peg holes. Roses do not grow with oak leaves, and flower-pots should have an opening. The bag has neither catch or clasp or lock. The smoke is blowing in a contrary direction to the flag. The bell has no clapper.

The barrel should have hoops. The rain-pipe should be fastened to the wall. The lamp-post has no support for a ladder. No seams are shown on the football.

The screws could not be driven in by a screw-driver. There are no stud or button-holes on the collar. The window shows no catch. The clothes should be pegged on the line.

BESSIE :

Hand me the poker!

TODD :

All serene!

(*He picks up the poker and hands it to BESSIE, who begins to prise open the lid of the packing-case. Enter the FAMOUS FIVE.*)

WHARTON :

My hat! What's going on in here?

TODD :

They've found the treasure!

NUGENT :

Why, that's queer!
I didn't think 'twas in existence!

TODD (*aside*):

And so's the little jape I planned!

(*BESSIE BUNTER wrenches off the lid of the packing-case. She gazes within, and a stupefied expression comes over her face. BILLY rushes to her side.*)

BESSIE :

Of all the horrid, heartless tricks!

BUNTER :

This packing-case is full of bricks!

TODD :

You're spoofed and diddled, dished and done!

CHERRY :
This beats the band, and takes the bun !

BULL :
This hoax would tickle anybody !

WHARTON :
Were you the author of it, Toddy ?

TODD :
Yes, it was carried out by me,
And proved successful, as you see.
I hatched the plot—you know what
followed :

The bait was very neatly swallowed !
Armed with a lantern and a spade,
Bunter (and this misguided maid)
Went to the smugglers' cave at Pegg—

BUNTER :
You rotter, Todd ! You pulled my leg !

BESSIE :
If I'd a hatpin here, I guess
I'd stab you all with vigour !

BUNTER :
It fairly gets my back up, Bess,

To see them stand and snigger !

CHERRY :
Say, Bunter, can we share the treasure ?

BUNTER :
Yes—with the very greatest pleasure !

(He dives his hand into the packing-case for some bricks, and proceeds to hurl them at his schoolfellows, who scatter in all directions, and make their exit, holding their sides with merriment. BESSIE assists in the brick-throwing, but nobody is hit. Eventually, BILLY and BESSIE are the only two left in the study.)

BESSIE :
So the treasure consisted of—simply
bricks !

With misfortune we're anointed ;

BUNTER :
“ Blessed is he that expecteth nix.
He shall not be disappointed ! ”

CURTAIN

SPECIAL NOTE TO “HOLIDAY ANNUAL” READERS.

Readers who have read this volume through will, unless they are already familiar with the famous series of Companion Papers, naturally want to know how and where they can read more about such delightful schoolboy characters as Tom Merry & Co., and Talbot of St. Jim's ; Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter of Greyfriars ; Jimmy Silver & Co. and Mornington of Rookwood ; to say nothing of Jack Drake, Dick Rodney, and the world-famous Dorrington & Co. of the Bombay Castle. These characters have been, and still are, the delight of thousands upon thousands of regular readers of the aforementioned series of Companion Papers. This series consists of a number of bright and wholesome weekly papers, published at the price of three-halfpence each. The “ Boys' Friend ” records the doings of the Rookwood boys, and contains besides many interesting complete stories, serials and competitions. The “ Boys' Herald ” features Jack Drake and Dick Rodney, and, also, specialises in stories of sport and adventure. The “ Gem ” is the great St. Jim's paper, wherein Tom Merry & Co. have disported themselves for many years. The “ Magnet ” relates every week the adventures of the Greyfriars juniors, and each issue also contains as a supplement a copy of Harry Wharton's own paper, the “ Greyfriars Herald.” The “ Popular ” contains both Rookwood and Greyfriars stories, a strong serial, and each week a copy of “ Billy Bunter's Weekly,” the most amusing of schoolboy papers, edited by the famous fat boy of Greyfriars School.

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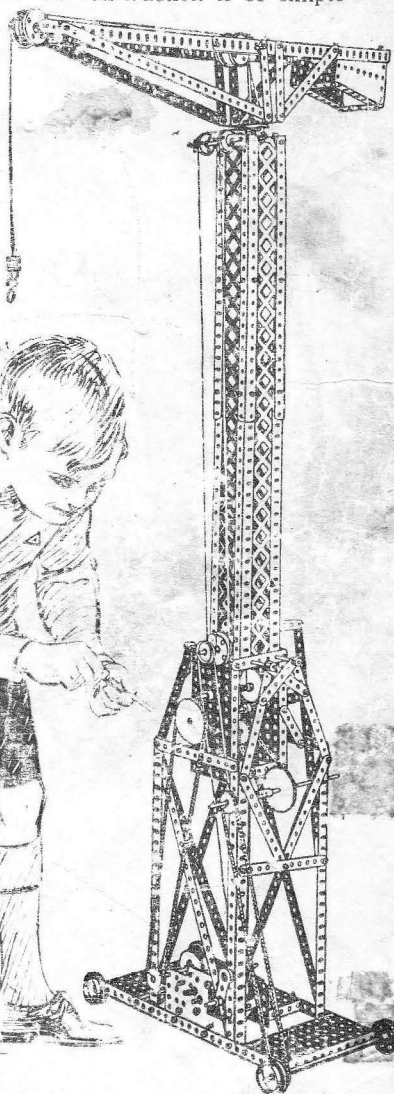
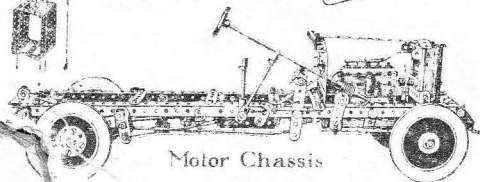
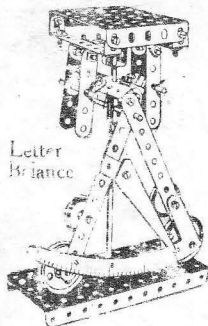
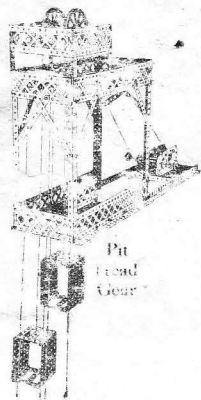
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