

“FUN BY THE SEA!”

THE Magnet ^{1d} 2

No. 22.

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Vol. 1.

A Tale of
GREYFRIARS COLLEGE.

By
FRANK
RICHARDS

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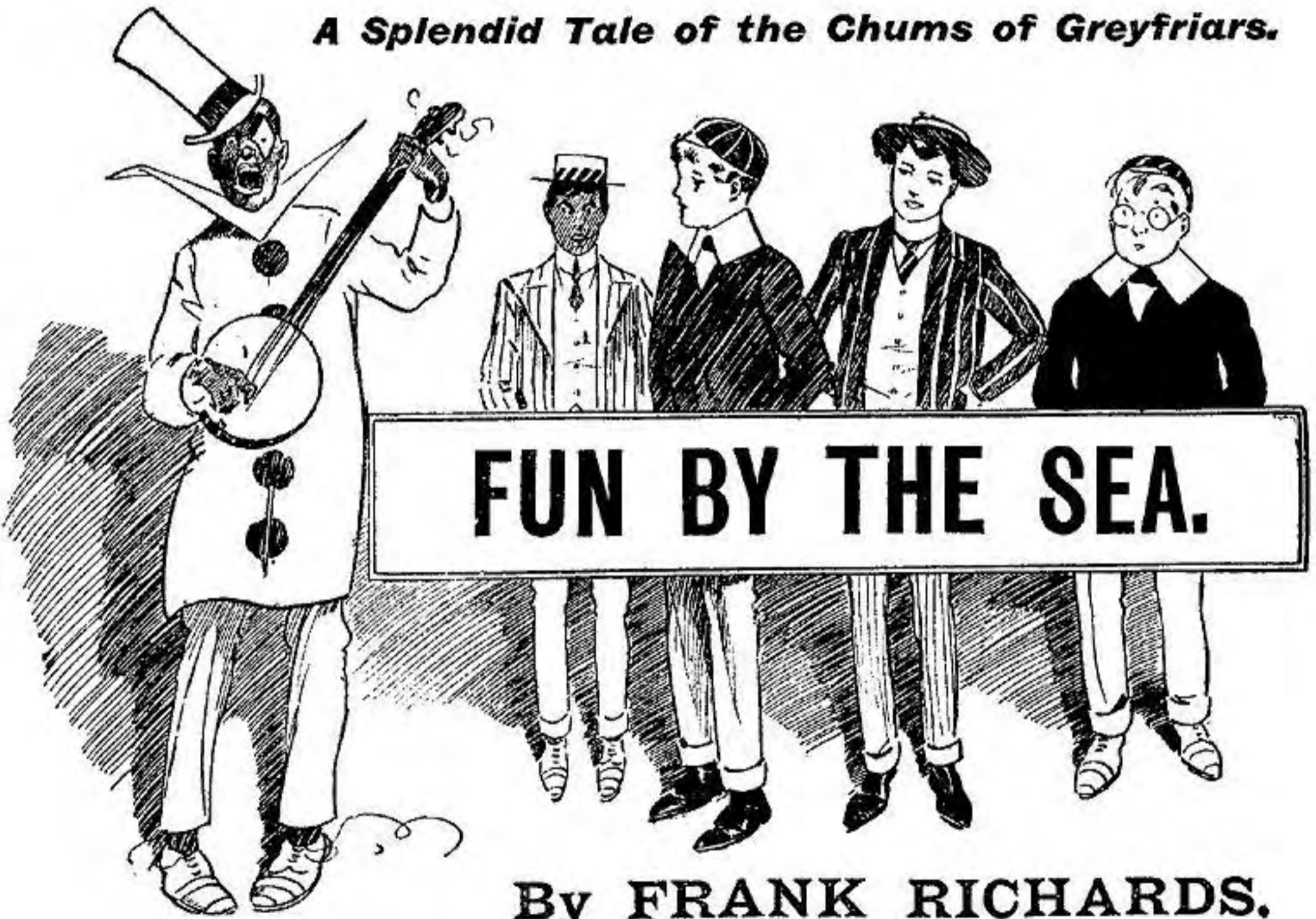
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ONE HALFPENNY



A Splendid Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.



By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Tenner.

"A TENNER!"
"Yes, a tenner!"
"My hat!"
There was a chorus of surprise and congratulation in No. 1 Study at Greyfriars. Harry Wharton stood with an open registered envelope in one hand, and a crisp, rustling ten-pound note in the other, and a smile of satisfaction upon his face.
Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the chums of the Remove, stood round him, looking at the bank-note with varying expressions of admiration and delight.
"A tenner!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, again. "My hat! A real live tenner!"
"Not a common or garden five," said Nugent gleefully. "A ripping tenner! I say, Wharton, that uncle of yours deserves to be encouraged."
"Rather!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.
"The ratherfulness is terrible," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh, in the English he had learned under the best native

masters in Bengal. "The fivefulness would have been great but the tennerfulness is superbful. The unclesful relative is a noble old sport."
The ten-pound note rustled in Harry Wharton's fingers with a pleasant sound. He glanced at the letter in his other hand, and smiled.
"I say, listen to this, you chaps."
"Certainly," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "We would listen respectfully to the communications of any sahib who sends banknotes tennerfully."
"Go ahead, Harry!"
Harry Wharton read out the letter from his uncle. It was very brief and to the point, in the soldierly style of Colonel Wharton.
"My dear Boy,—As Thursday is Founder's Day at Greyfriars, and a whole holiday, I have no doubt you will be getting up some little excursion among your friends. You will find the enclosed useful for that purpose.
"Your affectionate uncle,
"J. WHARTON."
"Short and sweet," commented Bob Cherry. "If you ever feel inclined to swap, Harry, I've got half a dozen old aunts you

can have for your uncle. The man who can send a tenner, and only half a dozen lines with it, ought to have a medal."

"He is a jolly good sort, and no mistake," said Harry Wharton, his brow slightly clouding. He was thinking for a moment of the time when he had disliked and distrusted his uncle, and looked upon all his words and actions with sullen suspicion. That time was past now.

"Some little excursion," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully. "Of course, your uncle is an old Greyfriars lad, and he remembers Founder's Day, and he has timed his letter to get here on the very morning. That was thoughtful of him."

"Well, we'll have the excursion," said Harry. "I had been thinking of a picnic up the river; but with a tenner to spend, we can have something a bit more extensive than that now."

"Ratherfully."

"What price a trip to the seaside?" suggested Bob Cherry. "You can get there from the county town for six bob return, and there's an early train from Friardale to the town."

Nugent whistled, and Harry Wharton looked thoughtful. Bob Cherry's suggestion was certainly a bold one, and on that account attractive to the juniors. On Founder's Day there was always a whole holiday at Greyfriars, and the boys were allowed to spend it as they pleased. But going so far afield as the seaside would hardly have met with the approval of the Head. Still, as the juniors immediately reflected, it was not necessary to tell the Head, at least until after their return.

"I think it's a good wheeze," said Bob Cherry eagerly. "It will be a bit out of the common, and will be one in the eye for those rotters in the Upper Fourth. Temple, Dabney & Co. are going on a brake, and they're putting on a lot of side because they've raised a couple of pounds for the expenses. This tenner will knock them into a cocked hat, and a trip to the seaside—"

"It is a wheezy good idea," said Hurree Singh, nodding his head. "It is enjoyable to spend a holiday seasidefully."

"Good egg!" said Nugent.

Harry Wharton nodded assent.

"Right-ho!" he exclaimed. "We shall have to get off pretty quick, that's all."

"There's a train from Friardale to Mountford at nine," said Bob Cherry. "Then we catch the excursion train for Winklegate-on-Sea, and arrive there in an hour and a half. We shall get practically all the day there."

"Good! Then we—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"We had better pack a couple of bags for the lot, bolt some breakfast, and buzz off."

"That's the idea. I—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Were you speaking, Billy?"

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, blinked through his enormous glasses at the Remove chums.

"Yes, I was speaking Cherry. I—"

"Run away and play, Billy; we're busy now."

"If you're going out—"

"My dear kid, Wharton's uncle has sent him a tenner, for an excursion to the seaside, and we're in a fearful hurry!"

"Good!" exclaimed Billy Bunter immediately. "I shall be awfully glad to come. I shall be able to look after you fellows."

"Right you are!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "I am afraid I had forgotten you for a moment, Billy; but of course you're coming."

"Of course, Wharton. I shall be very pleased to do so, as you're so pressing," said Bunter. "Did I mention to you that I was expecting a postal order?"

"Yes, I believe you have mentioned it," grinned Wharton.

"Well, I was thinking of treating you fellows to a picnic in the Friar's Wood with my postal order; but as you want me to come to the seaside instead, I don't mind. I'd do anything to oblige you, Wharton."

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "You can cash the postal order as we go through the village, and if we run short of money—"

"Well, as a matter of fact, the postal order hasn't arrived yet, Cherry. I was expecting it by the first post this morning, but there has been some delay."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We may as well put off the picnic till it comes," said Bunter. "We shall enjoy it next week. It was ripping of Wharton's uncle to send him a tenner. How many of us are going, Wharton?"

"Well, we are five," said Harry. "I was thinking of asking Hazeldene, too. Desmond has gone out for a long spin with Russell. I don't know whether Hazeldene has made any arrangements. Will you pack the bags while I go and speak to him?"

"Ratherfully," said the nabob.

"Don't forget to put in some sandwiches," said Billy Bunter anxiously. "We are bound to get hungry in the train, and you know what railway refreshments are like. Besides, we don't

want to spend money carelessly. I can get some sandwiches from the housekeeper for nothing, and that will be economical."

Harry Wharton left No. 1 Study and went down the passage to the room which Hazeldene shared with Bulstrode. Hazeldene was on very excellent terms now with the chums of the Remove, mainly through the influence of his sister Marjorie, a sweet girl who was very popular with the Removites. Harry Wharton looked into the study, but Hazeldene was not there. Bulstrode was there, cleaning his bicycle lantern, and he looked up with a far from pleasant expression.

"Hallo, what do you want?"

"Where's Hazeldene?"

"Find out!"

"Thank you," said Harry politely, and he withdrew. A minute later he spotted Hazeldene in the hall, and hurried down to join him. The junior was looking somewhat disconsolate.

"Anything amiss?" asked Harry, tapping him on the shoulder. Hazeldene looked round.

"Yes, a little," he said. "I've had a letter from my sister."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Nothing worrying in that, is there?"

"Oh, no; only Marjorie is going to Winklegate-on-Sea to-day."

"By Jove, is she really?" exclaimed Wharton, with great interest.

"Yes, and I wish I could go, too. My Aunt Caroline is taking her, you see; and Marjorie has written to ask me if I can manage to get across, as it's a whole holiday here. But—h'm!"—Hazeldene broke off and coloured slightly—"I'm going for a long walk to-day."

Harry Wharton understood. There had been a time when Hazeldene would have borrowed the money he needed of anyone who would lend, with ever so uncertain a prospect of being able to repay it. But the cad of the Remove was not what he had been. Wharton tapped him on the arm as he was turning away.

"I want to speak to you, Hazeldene."

"Yes?"

"We're making up a party to spend the day at Winklegate-on-Sea."

"By Jupiter! Are you really?"

"Yes; and we want you to come."

Hazeldene flushed.

"Look here, Wharton, if you are putting it like that because you know I am stony—"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Nothing of the kind. I came down specially to look for you and ask you. I've had a tenner from my uncle, and we're going to blue it at the seaside."

Hazeldene's eyes sparkled.

"Ripping! I shall be jolly glad to come. I dare say we shall meet Marjorie, though it's too late now to let her know we're going."

"Good! We catch the nine a.m. train at Friardale."

"I'll be ready."

"Good!" said Wharton again, and he hurried off to rejoin his chums. Fritz Hoffmann, the German junior in the Remove, met him in the passage, with a broad grin on his fat face.

"Stop vun moment, Wharton!" he exclaimed.

"Well, what is it?" said Harry, stopping.

"I hear tat you haf had te tenner."

"That's right."

"And tat you are going to a drip."

"A what?"

"A drip to te seaside, ain't it?"

"Oh, a trip!" said Harry, laughing. "That's so."

"Vell, if you likes, I comes mit you," said the German junior, beaming. "I have eightpence in mein bocket, and I vant to spend him all to-day."

"Oh, come by all means!" said Harry. "The party wouldn't be complete without you."

"Tank you ver' mooch."

"We start by the nine a.m. train from Friardale."

"Goot! I vill polt some preakfast quick."

"You'd better."

"Wharton, mon ami," broke in a somewhat high-pitched voice, as the German junior hurried off, "vill you stop a moment?"

It was Adolphe Meunier, the French Removite.

"Go ahead," said Harry.

"Zey say zat you trips to ze seaside to-day," said Meunier. "I have never seen ze seaside place in zis country. I comes viz you if you care."

"Oh, certainly."

"I pays my own expenses, of course. I have four shilling."

"That's all right. I have a tenner from my uncle, and I am standing treat to-day," said Harry, laughing. "Be ready to start to catch the nine a.m. train."

"I will be ready."

Harry rejoined his chums. Bob Cherry and Nugent had already packed a couple of handy little bags, and Bob was strapping them.

"Hazeldene is coming," announced Harry, "as are Hoffmann and Meunier. That will make eight of us."

"Eight sixes are forty-eight," said Nugent. "Forty-eight shillings are two pounds eight, Harry. That is what it will come to for the fares."

"That will leave seven pounds twelve shillings out of the tenner," laughed Harry.

"I think we shall have a good time."

"Oh, rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

The juniors snatched a hurried breakfast. Then eight juniors, three of them carrying bags, streamed out of the gates of Greyfriars, and sprinted down the lane towards the village. They just caught the train at Friardale, and it bore them away to the county town, where the excursion tickets were purchased. Then an express tore off seaward with Harry Wharton and Co. Harry with eight return tickets, and seven pounds twelve shillings in his pockets.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Row En Route!

"THE warmfulness is terrific," remarked the nabob.

The express was tearing along through the green wooded country under a blazing July sun.

It was certainly warm in the carriage. The juniors had it to themselves, and they seemed quite enough to fill it, though as it was a third-class one, it was supposed to contain two more.

"Jolly hot," said Bob Cherry: "all the better. What's the good of a day at the seaside if it isn't hot?"

"Rather," assented Nugent. "Suppose it came on to rain!"

"Ugh!"

"Oh, don't croak," said Hazeldene, "it's not likely to rain, and we can stand the sun. I shouldn't think Inky would feel it either."

"The sunfulness is very pleasant, but the airfulness in the carriageful conveyance is limited," said the nabob, "I think I will look out of the windowful aperture."

And the Nabob of Bhanipur put his dusky head out of the window.

"It is hot," said Harry. "But it's a ripping day. There will be some splendid bathing. Winklegate-on-Sea is famous for its white sands and bathing. Curious that no one else at Greyfriars thought of this."

"Well, you require a brain to think of things out of the common," said Bob Cherry. "I remembered reading an advertisement about this excursion, and that's how it was it came into my head. The other fellows are all going on in the same old rut—cricket, or rowing, or bird's-nesting or fishing. You can do all those on an ordinary half-holiday. When you've got a whole day you ought to think it out and make a splash, you know."

"Yes, rather."

"Micky Desmond has gone for a spin, and Skinner is up the river. Bulstrode is going over to Benfield on his machine. Levison—"

"What about Levison?" said Nugent, "I know he was going off somewhere, but he was deuced secretive about it."

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Yes, I asked him, and he evaded answering. I suppose he has got some wheeze on, and doesn't want to take us into it. He can go and eat coke."

"I'm getting rather fed up with Levison," Harry Wharton remarked. "We yanked him out of the hands of the gipsies who had kidnapped him, and he seems to think it was our fault he got into the bother at all, instead of being decently grateful."

"That's his way! I—hallo, hallo, hallo! What's up, Inky?"

Hurree Janset Ram Singh had drawn in his head from the window. There was an expression of astonishment upon his dusky features.

"What is it?" asked Wharton.

"I have seen a face—the face of an esteemed rotter we know," said Hurree Singh.

"He is looking out of the window of the next carriage."

Harry Wharton put his head out of the window.

Then he uttered a slight ejaculation.

A boy of about his own age was looking out of the window of the next carriage, and Harry knew the keen, somewhat thin face at once.

"Levison!"

The boy in the next carriage heard the word, and looked round. He coloured slightly as he saw Harry, drew in his head and disappeared.

"What was that?" asked Bob Cherry, as Harry turned back into the carriage.

"Levison."

"Levison here!"

"In the next carriage! He is going to Winklegate-on-Sea, the same as we are. That is what he was so mysterious about, I suppose."

"Blessed if I should like to take the trip alone," said Bob

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Cherry. "There's not much fun in a day at the seaside by oneself."

"Oh, that's his style," said Nugent, contemptuously. "He's always mooching about alone."

"A chap like Levison won't find anybody to chum with easily," Harry Wharton remarked. "He's rather too secretive and suspicious. I say—"

He paused.

"Well, say on," grinned Bob Cherry. "It would be only decent to ask him to join our party. He's bound to feel rotten and lonely when he arrives at Winklegate."

"Shouldn't wonder!"

"Well, shall we ask him?"

"Just as you like, my son."

"I'll do it, then. Hallo, what's that row?"

"French peeg."

"Sherman rottair!"

"French pounder!"

"Sherman peast."

"Stop it, you two silly cuckoos," said Bob Cherry. "What do you mean by starting ragging now, on a holiday?"

Meunier and Hoffmann were glaring at each other across the carriage as they exchanged their uncomplimentary remarks. The two old rivals seldom came together without a row ensuing.

"Zis Sherman peeg insult me—"

"Tat French peastly pounder is—"

"Rottair!"

"Peast!"

Meunier flung himself forward at the German. Hoffmann, nothing loth, closed with him, and they rolled on to the floor of the carriage. There was a yell from Billy Bunter. Bunter was sampling the contents of a paper bag of tarts, and the combatants had bumped against him and the bag had fallen to the floor.

Billy dived after it, and his head came into violent contact with Meunier's, and he gave another roar.

"Ow! You ass! My spectacles! They have fallen off! If you break them, you silly cuckoos, I shall be done. I haven't a second pair, and I can't see without them. Where are my spectacles?"

"French peast!"

"Sherman rottair."

"If you break my spectacles you'll have to pay for them. They cost me sixteen and six. I say, you fellows—"

"Here you are, Billy," grinned Nugent, picking up the spectacles and planting them on Bunter's nose. "Is that right?"

"You have put them on upside down, Nugent—"

"Sorry! Does it make any difference?"

"You—you ignoramus! What do you know about spectacles?" sniffed Billy Bunter. "Where are my tarts! I declare that beast has bunged his head into them, and stuck my jam all over his hair."

"Ach! French pounder!"

"Sherman rottair."

"You idiots! You've spoiled my tarts," howled Billy Bunter. "You can have them now."

And the indignant Bunter seized the tarts and slammed them upon the glowing faces of the combatants, jamming them all over eyes and nose and mouth.

"Ow! oh! Gr-r-r-roo."

"Ach! g-g-r-r-roo."

"How do you like that, you asses! I—"

"Ach! I vas sticky all ofer pefore."

"Helas! I am jammy and sticky—I am filthy! Helas."

"Serve you jolly well right," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, we'd better kick them out when we stop at a station, or we shan't have any peace."

"Himmel! I vill vipe up te floor mit Punter—"

"Ciel! I vill give Buntair a licking viz ze fist—"

"No, you won't," said Harry Wharton, pushing the foreign juniors back into their seats. "You shouldn't make a row on an excursion."

"He have jammed mein face pefore—"

"I am sticky all ovar my face—"

"Serve you right."

"It vas all Hoffmann's fault—"

"It vas all Meunier's fault—"

"Ze Sherman peast not speak zo truth—"

"Te French pounder tell vun whopper—"

"Rottair!"

"Peast!"

"Here, collar them," exclaimed Wharton, as the two foreigners flew at one another again. "We can't have a Franco-German war on an excursion train. Shove them under the seats, that will keep them quiet."

"I vill—"

"I vas—"

"You will go under the seats. Under with them."

"Right-ho," exclaimed Bob Cherry, heartily, and he and

Nugent forcibly pushed Adolphe Meunier under one of the seats.

Wharton and Hazeldene rolled Fritz Hoffmann under the other. Hoffmann struggled furiously, and Hurree Singh and Bunter lent a hand. The two foreigners were safely stowed away, and the juniors sat down, very red and flustered.

"Ach! I suffocate! Led me gerrout."

"Ceil! I cannot breathe! Let me gerrup."

"Stamp on them if they try to get out," said Harry Wharton. "We're not going to have all this trouble for nothing."

"Yes, rather."

Hoffmann wriggled from under the seat. Six feet came down upon him none too gently, and he wriggled back again.

"Ach! I vas hurt."

"Curious," said Bob Cherry. "Come out again, and we'll see if we can stamp on you without hurting you."

"Ceil! I vill not remain here. I cannot breathe ze air."

And Adolphe Meunier rolled into view.

Six feet descended upon him promptly, and he rolled back under the seat, gasping.

"Ciel! Have mercy! I suffocate."

"Never mind," said Bob Cherry, cheerfully. "If you suffocate you'll die and be out of your misery, you know."

"Helas! I suffocate—I perish viz myself."

"Don't bother; there are lots of French kids, and one won't be missed."

"Helas! I cannot breathe."

"Ach! dere is no air under te seat, and it is hot. Hein!"

"Hallo, the train is slowing down," said Bob Cherry. "We can't be near Winklegate yet, though."

"It's the one stop," said Wharton. "We stop here for eight minutes; I saw it in the time-table at Mountford. Time to stretch our legs. I say, you silly rotters, you can come out if you promise to behave yourselves."

"I swear it honair bright."

"I swears it also mit meinself."

"Then come out, and we'll give you a chance."

Two extremely dusty and dishevelled foreigners crawled out gasping from under the seats. The train stopped, and the juniors swarmed out of the carriage.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape for Billy.

HARRY WHARTON walked quickly along the train, and stopped at the door of Levison's carriage. It was just opening, and Levison, looking out, saw him.

"Stand back!" he said.

Harry stepped back, and Levison jumped out.

"So you are going to Winklegate?" Harry asked cheerily.

Levison nodded.

He was dressed in white duck, with tan shoes and a panama hat, and was evidently bound for the seaside. His expression was not very cordial.

"That's where we are going," Harry remarked.

"I suppose you found out I was going there," said Levison.

Harry stared.

"No, I hadn't the faintest idea till Inky saw you from the carriage window. We didn't make up our minds to go until this morning, when I had a handsome tip from my uncle. Bob Cherry suggested it."

"Oh, did he?"

"Yes. You're alone, aren't you?"

Levison grinned rather sneeringly.

"Yes. None of that crowd belongs to me, you may be sure."

He jerked his head contemptuously towards the carriage he had quitted. It was pretty full, with people in their best clothes going down to Winklegate for the cheap excursion.

Harry's brow darkened a little at Levison's tone. The people in the carriage were honest, decent folk, candidly enjoying the outing, which came but seldom in their hardworking lives.

Levison's sneer was that of a cad, uppishly satisfied with himself and carelessly contemptuous of those less favoured by blind fortune.

"Well," said Harry, rather shortly, "we're a party—eight of us—and I came along to see if you would care to join us."

"Run short of cash?"

"Eh?"

"Or what is it then?" asked Levison.

Harry Wharton stared at him blankly for a moment; and then, resisting a strong impulse to fling him neck and crop back into the carriage, turned upon his heel and walked away.

Bob Cherry looked at him curiously.

"Is he coming with us?"

"No."

"All the better," said Billy Bunter. "Seven pounds twelve won't go very far among eight, you know, Wharton. I really don't see why you want to be wasting time over that chap for, when the train only stops just long enough for you to get a supply of ginger-pop and lemonade."

Harry Wharton laughed, and handed the fat boy of the Remove a handful of silver.

"There you are, Billy! Get it!"

"Certainly, Wharton. I'm always willing to save you trouble. I sha'n't be a few minutes."

And Bunter darted off towards the refreshment-room.

The juniors stretched their limbs on the platform.

Levison stood by the door of his carriage reading.

When the passengers began to crowd back into the train he stepped in again, and disappeared from view.

Harry looked round for Bunter.

"Where has that young ass got to?" he exclaimed. "The train starts in half a minute."

Bob Cherry burst into a laugh.

"He's stopped to have a feed in the refreshment-room!" he exclaimed. "He's forgotten about the train starting. Somebody had better go and fetch him."

"H'm! Is there time?" said Nugent.

The refreshment-room was a long way down the platform. The engine was getting up steam, and the guard was already slamming the doors of the long train.

Bob Cherry put his fingers to his lips, and emitted a shrill whistle which rivalled the scream of the engine itself.

It was a signal well known at Greyfriars.

"Hurry up there!"

The guard came up to close the door of the carriage. Most of the juniors were already in, but Harry and Bob remained standing outside.

"Wait a second," said Harry, "there's one of our chaps in the refreshment-room."

"Can't be helped, sir."

"Here, hold on a minute!"

Harry slipped a shilling into the guard's hand, and that worthy's brow relaxed. But he could not keep the train back long. He went along shutting the doors, and slammed them all, and then came back to the Remove carriage.

"Must get in, sir."

"Hold on! There he is!"

Bob Cherry's whistle had warned Billy Bunter in the midst of his surreptitious feast. The fat figure of the missing junior appeared from the door of the refreshment-room, and came racing along the platform.

Bob Cherry gave a chuckle.

Bunter had half a dozen bottles of lemonade and ginger-beer under his arms, and three or four more sticking out of his pockets.

"Hurry up!" roared the guard.

"Come on, Billy!"

"Buck up, Remove!"

"I'm coming!" panted Billy Bunter breathlessly. "I say, you fellows, don't go on without me! Hold on!"

Harry and Bob entered the carriage. The guard stood with his hand on the door, and an impatient frown on his face. The engine screamed.

"Can't wait, sir! Sorry, but——"

"Hold on!" shrieked Billy Bunter.

He put on a spurt that did him real credit.

Bottles of lemonade and ginger-beer went to the right and left, smashing on the platform, as the frantic Billy tore on to the carriage.

He reached the door gasping, with his arms empty, and was shoved into the carriage by the guard like a sack of potatoes.

"Ow!"

The gasping Billy sprawled across the legs of the Removites, and there was a fresh crashing of the bottles from his pockets on the floor of the carriage.

Slam!

The door shut, the guard waved his flag, and the train thundered out of the station. Bunter scrambled to his feet, and set his spectacles straight.

"My hat, that was a close shave!" he gasped.

"You utter ass!"

"You howling lunatic!"

"You shrieking idiot!"

"It's no good calling me names. Some of you fellows ought to have warned me that the train wasn't staying so long as it said in the time-table."

"Ass! It has overstayed its time!"

"Nonsense! I only stopped to have a mouthful of grub in the refreshment-room——"

"Well, it would take some time to get your mouth full, Billy," Bob Cherry remarked, with a glance at Bunter's mouth, which certainly did not err on the side of being too small. "That accounts for it."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"How many bottles are left unbroken?" asked Harry. "You scattered most of them on the platform, you ass!"

"Well, you didn't want me to lose the train, did you?"

"We shouldn't have minded," said Nugent. "My hat! Only one bottle left out of all that lot, and I'm as thirsty as a fish."

"Only one bottle? I say, you fellows, that's too bad. There won't be any for you now."

"Won't there!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, seizing the only bottle that remained intact. "There won't be any for you, you mean, you young ass."

"Really, Cherry, as I had the trouble of fetching the lemonade that bottle belongs to me," expostulated Bunter.

"Rats! You shouldn't have busted the rest!"

Bob Cherry opened the bottle.

"Where's the mug?" he asked. "You can keep your head away, Billy. It's not your mug I'm alluding to."

"Really, Cherry——"

"It will be a sip each, that's all!" said Bob. "Bunter comes last——"

"I say, you fellows——"

"There you are, Billy, you can finish the bottle."

"Thank you, Cherry! Why, you rotter!"

Bunter inverted the bottle over his mouth, but there was hardly a trickle on his tongue. He gave Bob Cherry a reproachful look.

"It's too bad!" he exclaimed. "And I had a dozen sandwiches in the refreshment-room, with pepper and mustard."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's no laughing matter, Cherry. I'm awfully thirsty. I'm sincerely sorry the other bottles were broken, but I really think you ought to have let me have this one. The worst of it is that the train doesn't stop again till we get to Winklegate."

"It will be a lesson to you not to be too greedy, Billy."

"I don't see how you can call me greedy, Cherry. I have a small appetite, but I don't like to go hungry. I say, you fellows——"

Harry Wharton opened his bag, and produced a large bottle of home-made lemonade.

Billy's eyes glistened.

"I say, that looks nice!" he exclaimed. "And there's enough to go round, too; but, if you don't mind, I'll start first this time."

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

On the Sands.

"WINKLEGATE-ON-SEA!"

The porters chanted the words in sing-song voices, and the excursion train emptied buzzing crowds upon the platform. There was a glorious sun overhead, and a sniff of salt breezes in the air.

"Ripping!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he jumped out of the carriage. "Hand out those bags. This is going to be a glorious day. Where are you going, Bunter?"

"I'm going to get some chocolate out of this machine."

"Always on the trail of grub, of course."

"Really, Cherry——"

"Oh, buzz off, you young cormorant! We're not going to wait for you!"

"I sha'n't be a minute."

Billy jammed a penny into the automatic machine, and pulled at the little drawer. The drawer refused to budge. There was something wrong with the machine, or with Bunter's way of dealing with it.

Bunter tugged and tugged, but the drawer did not move.

The chums took their bags in hand and walked down the platform.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Come along, Billy!"

"I say, come and help me, will you? I can't get the drawer open."

But there was no reply.

Bunter gazed after the retreating forms of the Removites, and then looked at the machine again. He gave a last desperato tug at the drawer, but it did not open. Then, fearful of being left behind and lost in the crowd, he darted after the party. He ran right into a youth clad in white duck, and trod on his shining tan boots.

The youth reeled, and bumped against a post, and his panama hat fell off, and was trodden on by hurrying feet.

"I say, I'm sincerely sorry!" gasped Billy Bunter. "My word, it's Levison!"

Levison gave a howl.

"You clumsy young villain!"

"It's not my fault, really, Levison. You shouldn't have got in the way. And you know I'm short-sighted, too. If you don't get hold of your hat you'll have it trampled out of shape."

Levison looked more inclined to get hold of Billy Bunter, but his hat was in danger of becoming a wreck.

He stooped to grope for it among the feet of the crowd, and Bunter ran on and joined the Removites.

"I wish you'd wait for a fellow," he panted. "I've had to waste a penny, leaving it stuck in the automatic machine."

"It's just like you, Billy."

"If you had waited——"

"Rats! We haven't come down here to have a day out with an automatic machine. Let's get out of the station."

The chums of the Remove made their way to the crowded exit. Harry Wharton gave up the halves of the tickets, putting the return halves very carefully away in his pocket-book.

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It was very probable that the excursionists would "blue" all their ready cash and find it impossible to get away from Winklegate-on-Sea if the return tickets were lost.

They left the station in a body, and stepped out into a glare of sunshine. At the end of the street a mass of shining blue could be seen, with white clouds floating over it, and white sails skimming to and fro.

"The sea!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Where?" exclaimed Billy Bunter, adjusting his spectacles, and staring straight towards a goods yard attached to the station. "I can't see it, Cherry."

Bob Cherry took him by the back of the neck and turned him round.

"Perhaps you can now, ass!"

"Yes, so I can. You needn't pinch my neck like that, Cherry. I say, you fellows, can you see any place for refreshments?"

"Ha, ha! Refreshments are off now, Billy. Come on."

"I say, it's no good going down on the sands hungry."

"Then you can go and forage for grub," said Bob Cherry.

"We'll meet you at dark round the bandstand," he added facetiously.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Come on!" exclaimed Nugent. "This way to the sea. It looks jolly for a sail across the bay, doesn't it?"

The juniors made their way down the crowded street. They came out upon the seashore in a few minutes. There was an extensive "front" at Winklegate-on-Sea, and outside the railings vast stretches of glorious sand. The tide was low, and the sands were covered with coloured hats and dresses and parasols. Artless trippers sat on the sand with their arms about one another's necks for support, and children were busily digging with spade and pail.

"Jolly!" said Harry Wharton.

"Rather!"

"The ratherfulness is great. Some of the tripful persons might with advantage bestow a little more carefulness upon their garments, and a little more soapfulness upon their faces; but it is pleasant to see them so jollyful," remarked the nabob.

"Sail, sir! Sail!"

"Sail, sir! Sail!"

"Sail, sir! Sail!"

"By Jove, there are lots of sails going, it seems," Bob Cherry remarked.

"Are there?" blinked Billy Bunter. "If there's anything we like we might pick it up cheap. I've heard my aunt say you always get things cheaper at sales——"

"Ass! S-A-I-L."

"Oh, I see! Yes, it's a good idea to go for a sail if you take a lunch basket in the boat. Wharton will pay."

"How much for the lot, Captain Kidd?" asked Bob Cherry, addressing a huge booted and whiskered mariner who sat smoking on the edge of a boat.

"Shillin' each round the bay, sir."

"No reduction for quantities?"

The ancient mariner grinned, and took his pipe out of his mouth.

"Shillin' each, sir."

"We can't do better," said Harry. "A sail round the bay will give us an appetite for lunch, and we can have a big feed."

"I've got an appetite already, Wharton. I say, you fellows, don't be in such a hurry, you know. Let's get a lunch-basket——"

"Rats!"

"We shall get fearfully hungry——"

"Bosh! Come on. Get your boat into the water, uncle."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

The juniors lent a hand while the boatman shoved his craft into the water. From a group of nigger minstrels close at hand came a raucous voice and the pong-pong of a banjo, and the clacking of bones. Bob Cherry looked round.

"My hat! I wonder where that chap dug up that voice?" he remarked.

There was a crowd round the minstrels, and the singer was warmly applauded. The song was a well-known one, and better than the singing.

"Come and kiss me, honey; come and kiss me, do!"

Honey, dear, I lub but you.

Of all de coons dere'll be none as true

As I will be to you, Lulu.

So kiss me, honey, honey—do, do, do!

Oh, kiss me, honey, honey—do!"

"Fancy anybody kissing him," said Billy Bunter. "No, my good fellow, you need not bring the hat here. I'm sincerely sorry, but I left my last penny in an automatic machine."

Harry Wharton tossed a sixpence into the hat.

"Thank you, sir. You're a gentleman," said the collector.

"The testimony as to the worthfulness of the worthy Wharton is valuable," said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, in his purring

voice, as he tossed a shilling into the hat. "What am I, my esteemed friend?"

"You're a prince, sir."

"Goodful. It is cheapful at the price."

"Ready, sir!" called out the boatman.

"We are not ready," said Bunter. "Before embarking it is necessary for us to get a lunch-basket, and——"

Bob Cherry seized him by the collar and jerked him into the boat. Billy collapsed on one of the seats with a gasp.

"Really, Cherry, I——"

"Cheese it!"

The juniors crowded in. A lad in white, with a crumpled panama on the back of his head, came along the sands and glanced at them.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "Coming along, Levison?"

Levison shook his head.

"Thanks, no. I don't care for a crowd."

"Stay where you are, then, pig."

"The pigfulness of the esteemed rotter is terrific."

Levison strolled on, and the boat was shoved off. The boatman handled the sail, and Wharton slipped the rudder into its place.

"Is this ancient mariner coming along?" asked Bob Cherry. "I really think we're old enough to manage the boat ourselves."

"Not safe, sir."

"Stuff! We'll make it an extra bob."

"Not safe, sir."

"More stuff! Shall we chuck him overboard, chaps?"

"Certainly," said Nugent.

"The chuckfulness is a wheezy good idea."

"It's all right, uncle," said Harry Wharton. "I've sailed boats bigger than this, and it will be safe enough."

"Not safe, sir."

"We'll pay in advance in case we get drowned," said Bob Cherry. "What could be fairer than that?"

"Nothing."

"The fairfulness is great."

"Ve sails tat boat ferry safe after," said Fritz Hoffmann.

"Zo danger is nozzing," said Adolphe Meunier. "If ve vas get carry out to sea, ve have a Sherman peeg ve could eat viz ourselves."

"French peast!"

"Rottair!"

"I tink I trashes you——"

"I zink I——"

Harry Wharton picked up a boat-hook.

"Another word and you get this on the napper!" he exclaimed. "Shut up, both of you! Now, uncle, we're going to manage this boat by ourselves. You can jump into the one that's moored there as we pass it."

"No, sir, I——"

"Either that or the sea," said Harry, laughing. "We'll make it an even half-sovereign for the boat. Now, lend him a hand."

The boat was gliding slowly past an anchored craft. The boatman looked hesitatingly at the juniors. Harry looked as if he could manage a boat, but the rest were decidedly "larky" in expression.

"Over with him!" shouted Bob Cherry, making a sudden spring at the boatman.

"Hold on!" gasped the latter, and he jumped into the next boat. "Look here——"

Harry Wharton laughed gaily. The boat glided on swiftly as the wind caught the sail, and the rest of the boatman's words were lost in the distance.

"There will be a row over this," grinned Hazeldene.

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "The chap jumped into the other boat of his own accord. If he chooses to go in for gymnastic exercises like that at his time of life it's his own look-out, isn't it?"

"Ha, ha! Of course."

Harry Wharton took the sheet. He had managed a sailing craft before, and he knew almost as much about it as the boatman did. The craft danced away merrily over the blue waters under the bright July sunshine.

"Look out!" shouted Bob Cherry suddenly.

A boat shot across the bows of the Daisy, as the Removites' craft was named. Bob Cherry was steering, but at the sight of someone who sat in the other boat he let go the rudder-lines and waved his cap frantically.

There was a bearded boatman in the other craft, an old lady, and a girl—a girl the Removites of Greyfriars knew well.

"Marjorie!" exclaimed Hazeldene.

It was Hazeldene's sister!

"Look out!" roared Harry Wharton.

The boat swept round. Fortunately Harry handled the sheet well, and Bob's recklessness had no ill-result. But the Daisy swept very close to the other boat, and the boatman growled. Marjorie laughed and waved her hand.

"Take the lines, Nugent," exclaimed Harry, "and put a chain on that champion ass!"

"I quite forgot——"

"Ass!"

Harry brought the boat close to the other, and ran as near alongside as was safe. Hazeldene waved his hand to his sister.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Sail on the Ocean Wave.

"MARJORIE!"

"So you are here after all," said the girl, with a bright smile. "You did not let me know."

"I didn't know myself till this morning," said Hazeldene. "We're here blueing a tenner Wharton's uncle sent him. Will you come into our boat? We're going to have a grand sail. Aunt Caroline, will you——"

"Please do!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "The Daisy is a clipper, and we're going right round the bay."

"Do come, Aunt Caroline!" urged Hazeldene.

The old lady shook her head.

"Thank you," she said. "I think we will remain here."

"Then let Marjorie come."

"Not at all!" exclaimed Marjorie quickly. "Thank you, Peter, but I will remain with aunt."

"I wish you'd both come," said Nugent.

But Aunt Caroline shook her head again.

Perhaps the sample she had seen of Bob Cherry's steering did not encourage her. She may have thought her life was safer in her own craft.

"Thank you, I think we will remain where we are," said Aunt Caroline. "I hope you will have an enjoyable sail, but please don't come so near. It is dangerous."

"No danger, ma'am," said Harry Wharton cheerfully.

"I am afraid there may be. Please get a little further away."

"Oh, certainly, if you like!"

The boats separated. Marjorie waved her hand, and the Daisy shot out into the bay. The juniors were looking disappointed, and they turned on Bob Cherry.

"Your fault, you ass!" grunted Nugent.

"How do you make that out?" demanded Bob.

"Your rotten steering frightened the old lady."

"Oh, rats!"

"That was it," said Hurree Singh. "In spite of the rattfulness of the worthy Cherry's reply, I think Nugent is correct."

"It wasn't my steering frightened her, more likely Hurree Singh's face——"

"My worthy chum——"

"I daresay they knew we hadn't any lunch in the boat," said Billy Bunter. "If they could have seen a lunch-basket here——"

"Well, the barn's done now," said Harry Wharton. "We shall meet Marjorie again ashore, I suppose. Let's have a jolly sail now."

"I vill steer if you likes, Wharton. It vill be safer mit me."

"Take the lines, then."

Hoffmann took the lines, and sat down in the stern-seat. Adolphe Meunier started up excitedly.

"Ciel! You vas not let zat Sherman ass steer, mon ami! He vill run us into ze ozzer boats or into ze ships——"

"You French ass, I steers petter as any French peast!" said Hoffmann disdainfully. "Ve could not trust you mit te lines."

"I zink zat it is not safe."

"I tink tat you are vun ass."

"Sherman rottair!"

"French peeg!"

"If you call me peeg I licks you viz my fist!"

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"Aeli! I punches you mit—"

"Rottair!"

"Peast!"

Meunier projected himself at the German like a stone from a catapult. Hoffmann let go the lines to grapple with his old foe. The boat rocked violently as the two aliens rolled in the stern struggling. Harry Wharton had to attend to the sail, and could not interfere, but he shouted to the others.

"Stop them! Quick, they'll have the boat over!"

"Throw them overboard," exclaimed Bob Cherry, "they want cooling!"

"The thoroughness is a wheezy good idea."

Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Hurree Singh grasped the combatants. Hazeldene took the rudder-lines. The two foreigners were dragged apart, still spitting defiance at one another like a couple of excited cats. The boat was rocking so violently that a splash of water came over the gunwale.

"Throw them overboard!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"French peeg!"

"Sherman rottair!"

"Over with them!"

Hoffmann was heaved over the side. Bob Cherry kept a firm grasp on his collar, so that he was in no danger. The German gasped and roared as he trailed in the water beside the rapidly gliding boat.

Meunier was trailing over the side in a similar manner the next minute. He yelled in startled affright as the water surged round him.

"Helas! I drown—I cannot swim! Helas!"

"Ach! I tink I drown!"

"Helas! Help!"

"Let 'em remain there," growled Bob Cherry: "they've endangered our lives by scrapping in a boat. Don't struggle like that, Hoffs. If you make me let go your collar you'll be left behind, and nobody's likely to pick you up."

"Ach! I gannot swim!"

"You'll go under if I let go, then," said Bob Cherry cheerfully, "and then you'll be fit for nothing but making into German sausages."

"Ha, ha ha!"

"Ach! I am vet—"

"Yes, I've noticed that the sea is wet," remarked Bob Cherry. "Do you find it wet, Meunier?"

"Ciel! I am choke viz vatair."

"You don't come into this boat again till you give your word to behave yourselves," said Harry Wharton grimly. "We've had enough of your rot."

"I giffs mein vord, Wharton."

"And I give mine," wailed Adolphe Meunier. "Helas! I am soak, I am vet! I zink zat I drown!"

"It wouldn't be much loss," said Bob Cherry. "Still, we don't want the bother of an inquest. Drag 'em in."

The two aliens were yanked into the boat, and plumped down in a pool of water. They sat up, looking like half-drowned rats, and with all the fight taken out of them.

"The lessonfulness is effectual," grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I think that we shall not be troubled by the fightfulness of the esteemed foreign rotters any more during this cruise."

"What-ho!" grinned Bob Cherry. "If they start again we'll trail 'em over the side till we get back to Winklegate."

But the foreigners did not start again. They had had a severe lesson, but not too severe considering that they had endangered the lives of all in the boat by their outbreak. They sat on the thwarts wringing the water out of their clothes. They soon began to dry in the blazing July sun; but they had had enough of disputing for the present, and they were very quiet.

It was an enjoyable cruise in the bright sunny bay. Once or twice the Daisy, as it flew over the waters, came within hailing distance of Aunt Caroline's boat. Harry handled the little craft with great skill, and did anything he pleased with it. The Daisy skimmed to and fro over the bay, sometimes flying before the wind, sometimes sailing almost in the teeth of it, as it seemed.

"I say, you fellows—"

"This is ripping!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "I never knew you could handle a boat like this before, Harry. It's splendid."

"I say, you fellows—"

"What's the matter with you, Billy?"

"Nothing; only I'm getting fearfully hungry."

"That's nothing new."

"I've eaten all the toffee I had, and now I'm famished."

"I'm getting a bit peckish myself," said Bob Cherry thoughtfully, "the salt breeze gives one an appetite. It's near lunch time, too."

"May as well run in," said Harry, "we've had an hour and a half on the water."

"Good! Turn again, Dick Whittington, and let's get to the grub-shop."

Harry Wharton ran the boat towards the landing-place. The owner of the Daisy was discerned on the shore as the boat came closer, staring towards the craft. Bob Cherry gave a chuckle.

"There will be a row with that old mariner," he remarked. "He didn't seem to be pleased when he had to jump out."

"Curious," said Hazeldene.

But Bob Cherry was mistaken. As Harry took in the sail, and the boat grounded, the old boatman came down and dragged it in, and there was a grin upon his weatherbeaten face.

"You're a good sailor, young gentleman," he said to Harry. "I wasn't afeared for my craft arter the way I saw you handle her. It's all right."

"Right-ho!" said Wharton, laughing, and he passed a half-sovereign into the hand of the old fellow. "That's all right."

"Ay, ay, sir; and thank you kindly." The juniors crowded up the sands. Billy Bunter blinked anxiously along the front through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, where is the grub shop?" he exclaimed. "I am afraid that I shall sink to the ground if I don't have something to eat soon. I'm beginning to understand now how it is that chaps in an open boat eat one another sometimes."

"My hat! Buck up before he starts on one of us," exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"This way," laughed Harry.

And the hero of the Remove led the way into an establishment fronting the sea, where they were soon discussing an extremely solid lunch.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Franco-German War.

THE Greyfriars juniors—especially Billy Bunter—did full justice to that lunch. The sea breeze had sharpened their appetites, always healthy enough. Billy Bunter came out very strong. He was inclined to criticise the cooking, which he declared was not so good as that done by himself in the study at Greyfriars.

"The prooffulness of the pudding is in the eatingfulness," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "and the esteemed Bunter is not neglecting the viands."

"I have to eat to keep up my strength," said Bunter. "Besides, it's a good feed, I don't deny that. It's not quite up to the mark of my cooking at Greyfriars, that's all. I think I ought to be a chef when I grow up."

"Or a prize porker," said Bob Cherry.

"Really, Cherry—"

"I tink tat te feed is sehr goot," said Fritz Hoffmann, with his mouth full. "I likes tat saveloy, aint it?"

"I zink zat it is ver' good," said Adolphe Meunier. "Zero is vun or two zing I should like, but—"

"Fried frogs, for instance?" suggested Nugent.

"Ze frog when you cook him is ver' good—"

"Please don't talk about eating frogs now," said Bunter. "You'll take my appetite away, and that would be a shame when we've got a really big, unlimited feed for once."

"Haven't you lost your appetite yet, Billy?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Certainly not."

"You must weigh a stone heavier than when you started."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Lunch was over at last, and even Billy Bunter was satisfied. A somewhat shiny look had come over the junior's fat face, and he seemed inclined to go to sleep. The Greyfriars crowd left the place, Bob Cherry linking his arm in Bunter's and marching that sleepy youth along.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob, shaking him. "You can't go to sleep here, you know."

"I don't really want to go to sleep, Cherry."

"Boa-constrictors always have a nap after a gorge," said Hazeldene. "Better prop him up against the railings and leave him."

"Really, Vaseline—"

"What are we going to do now?" said Bob Cherry. "What do you say to a race along the sands, Billy Bunter to start, and us to catch him?"

Bunter shuddered.

"I—I couldn't, Cherry. I couldn't run now."

"Nonsense! It will shake your lunch down."

"I—I'm afraid it wouldn't. I could have managed it, only that last half-dozen apple-tarts—no, really, Cherry, I couldn't run."

"Hallo, there's those niggers again," said Nugent. "Let's go and listen to the banjo for a bit. I like nigger minstrels."

"The entertainment is not elevated, but it is funniful," said the Nabob of Bhanipur, "and I know the songfulness they are singing. Come along!"

A goodly crowd was gathered round the minstrels. The Greyfriars juniors joined it, and looked on while the minstrels twanged and sang. The harvest of coppers and small silver was a good one. The same nigger was singing the same song.

"Come and kiss me, Honey; come and kiss me, do!"

Bob Cherry pushed Billy Bunter forward.

"Don't you hear him, Billy?"

"Wh-what do you mean, Cherry?"

"He wants you to kiss him."

"I sha'n't do anything of the sort. I don't believe he is speaking to me at all."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think I'll go and have a nap somewhere while you fellows are listening here," said Billy Bunter, blinking. "It's no good racing about after a meal. It's bad for the digestion, and I have to take care of my digestion."

"If you go to sleep in the sun you'll melt," warned Bob Cherry.

"Ask that old lady on the seat to let you have some of her umbrella," suggested Nugent.

Billy Bunter did not adopt the suggestion. He found a shady spot on the sands, and curled himself up with his straw hat over his face and went to sleep.

The Greyfriars chums listened to the minstrels for some time. A dance followed the song, and they were interested. Harry Wharton started as a man, making his way out of the crowd, ran violently against him.

The Greyfriars junior staggered for a moment.

"Sorry," muttered the stranger, and he would have run on, but Bob Cherry caught him by the shoulder and swung him back.

"Hold on," exclaimed Bob, "What do you mean by running into a chap like that?"

The man gave him a quick fierce look.

He was a slim fellow, with a keen sharp face, and swift little black eyes. He seemed about to spring at Bob Cherry, but restrained himself.

"I am sorry," he said, "I apologise."

"Shall I wipe up the sand with him, Harry?"

"No," laughed Harry, "he's apologised: let him go."

Bob Cherry released the stranger, who darted off, and disappeared in the crowd in a moment. The juniors, watching the antics of the black minstrels, soon forgot the incident. Getting tired of the minstrel performance, they threw coppers into the hat and strolled on.

There was much to see at Winklegate. To the healthy lads it was very pleasant on the shining sands in the blazing sun of July. The sea was dotted with bathers, and the juniors soon joined their ranks. They thoroughly enjoyed the dip in the sea, and when they came ashore and dressed, they felt greatly refreshed by it. Billy Bunter was still sleeping under his straw hat on the sand.

"What do you say to a drive round the place?" Bob Cherry suggested, after they had left the bathing machine, "there's a chap along here with a brake, and he——"

"Good!"

"Make terms with him first, though," said Bob. "They're awful sharks here, and we don't want to wind up with a row."

"Right you are."

The horsey man with the brake for hire wanted a half-sovereign for an hour's drive, and finally agreed to take seven-and-sixpence. The juniors piled into the rather ancient vehicle, and Bob Cherry ran across to Billy Bunter to wake him.

He gave the sleeping junior a violent shake, and Bunter started up and blinked as he adjusted his spectacles.

"Gerrou! 'taint rising-bell yet," he mumbled.

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Don't you know where you are, Billy?"

"My hat! Yes," said Bunter, blinking in the hot sun, "I forgot! I believe I must have dropped off to sleep."

"Yes, I believe you did—for a couple of hours. You've been missing all the fun."

"Well, you can't enjoy fun when you're sleepy," said Bunter, philosophically. "I never believe in amusing one's self too hard, you know. It's too much like work. I always wake up hungry, that's the unfortunate part of it."

"Yes, it's rather unfortunate," agreed Bob Cherry, "because there's no grub going now, and won't be for a good hour yet."

"I think I'll go and get a snack——"

"Then you won't be able to come for the drive," said Bob Cherry. "We're just starting, but I thought I'd come and wake you."

"Thank you, Cherry. Couldn't you wait half an hour while I get a little snack——"

"Not much."

Bob Cherry walked back towards the brake. Billy Bunter followed him, grunting. He was hungry again, but he didn't want to be left out of the drive. There was a dispute in progress behind the brake. The juniors were mostly in, but Meunier and Hoffmann had seized the occasion for another dispute. Hoffmann had put his foot on the step to mount, and Meunier had put his there, and the two aliens glared at one another.

"Ach! You stand aside, Meunier."

"R-r-r-rats," said Meunier. "I does not."

"I goes in pefore—French peeg after."

"I not make vay for any Sherman rottair."

"Peast!"

"Peeg!"

"I punches you on te nose if you not moves te foot."

"I like to see you do zat, Sherman peast."

Bob Cherry came up behind the disputants, caught them suddenly by their respective collars, and brought their heads together with a biff that made them yell.

"There, that settles it," said Bob Cherry.

"Ciel! I am hurt!"

"Peastly pounder! I vas stun!"

"Serve you jolly well right," said Nugent, "If you start rowing again you shan't come in the brake at all."

Bob Cherry climbed in, and Billy Bunter followed him. The driver mounted to his seat.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Sherman peeg——"

"French peast!"

"I say, you fellows, hadn't we better have tea before we start——"

"I goes in first——"

"I not make vay for Sherman peeg——"

"Drive on," said Harry Wharton.

The two aliens made a simultaneous jump for the brake, but it moved on too quickly, and they fell into the road. The brake dashed on, and the last the juniors saw of the two foreigners was that they were rolling in the dust, fighting.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"We'll find those silly asses when we come back," said Bob Cherry. "It's a bit more peaceful without them. There's not room to fight in the brake."

"I say, you fellows, I'm awfully hungry——"

"What ripping scenery! Shut up, Billy—we know you're hungry, and there's no need to keep on telling us!"

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Hard Cheese.

WINKLEGATE was a merry place, but it could not be called a beauty spot. But once outside the town the scenery was very fine. The road ran along the coast, following the cliffs, and there were rolling waves and shining sands on one side, and green hills and meadows on the other. The juniors enjoyed that drive thoroughly. Even Billy Bunter was made happy by the discovery of a packet of toffee in Nugent's pocket, which satisfied him for a time.

The juniors had kept a look-out for Marjorie during the afternoon, but had not seen her. There were a good many vehicles on the cliff road, but Marjorie was not in any of them. A pedestrian in a crumpled Panama hat came in sight, tramping along the road. He looked up as the brake passed him, and the juniors recognised Levison.

Levison looked tired. He had walked up the cliff road from Winklegate, and it was a hard and steep road to a pedestrian. He looked dry and thirsty, and there was not a pleasant expression on his face. It had dawned upon him that keeping to himself was rather a lonely way of spending a holiday, and probably he was already longing for the companionship he had rejected. He glanced at Harry, but did not speak—but Harry Wharton was quick to see what was sometimes not seen by others.

"Stop a minute," he said.

The brake halted.

"Whither bound, Levison?" called out Harry, cheerily.

"Going up to the ruins," said the new boy in the Remove.

"That's where we're going. Like a lift?"

Levison hesitated.

"How much does it come to each?" he asked.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Oh, that's all right. It's my treat this time."

"Thank you. I'll come. It's jolly hot walking in this blazing sun."

"I should think so."

Levison stepped into the brake. The juniors made room for him. Bob Cherry pulled out some bottles of ginger beer from under the seat. Levison's eyes glistened.

"Thirsty?" asked Bob.

"Dry as a lime-kiln," said Levison. "There's such a lot of confounded dust on this beastly road, and the sun's hot."

"I say, Cherry, I'll have one of those bottles—this toffee makes me thirsty——"

"There you are, Billy. Here's yours, Levison. Can you drink from the bottle?"

"Well, rather," said Levison. "I could drink from anything just now."

The ginger beer refreshed the dusty junior. He began to chat with the others more amiably than usual. The juniors were in high spirits, and willing to forget his previous curtness. The drive was a very pleasant one. The ruins were reached—two or three heaps of shattered masonry glistening in a blazing sun. The brake turned back after a very brief examination of those relics of the past. The time had to be paid for, as Bob Cherry remarked, and there were plenty of chunks of stone to be seen at Greyfriars.

"Wish I had brought my parasol," grinned Bob Cherry,



"How much for the lot, Captain Kid?" asked Bob Cherry. "Any reduction for a quantity?"

whose face was assuming the hue of his tan boots under the influence of the July sun. "I'm getting baked!"

"Jolly hot, and no mistake," agreed Hazeldene.

"Is there any more ginger beer, Cherry?" asked Bunter.

"No, Billy, there isn't."

"H'm! I wonder how long it will be before we get to Winklegate!"

"Still sighing for the fleshpots of Egypt," grinned Bob.

"Well, the sea air makes you hungry——"

"There's Winklegate," said Nugent, as the brake passed a bend in the road. "Here we are, and cheap for seven-and-six."

"Eight-and-six, sir," said the driver. "One extra."

"Very good," said Harry Wharton, quietly.

The brake halted near the starting-point, and Hoffmann and Meunier could be seen sitting on a bench, looking somewhat disconsolate. Hoffmann had a swollen nose, and Meunier's right eye was discoloured. The juniors crowded out of the brake, and Harry Wharton felt in his pockets for the money.

He had been paying little expenses during the afternoon from loose change he carried in his trousers' pocket. Only a few coppers remained now, however, and he felt for his pocket-book, to take out a fresh sovereign to change.

Then he gave an uneasy start.

He carried the book in an inner pocket of his jacket—but the

pocket was empty now. He felt in his other pockets, though he knew perfectly well that he had not placed the book in any of them. It was not there! Bob Cherry looked at him.

"What's the matter, Harry?"

"I've lost my pocket-book."

"Anything in it?"

"Well, yes—all my money, and our return tickets to Friar-dale."

"Phew!"

"I say, do you carry your money in your pocket-book?" said Billy Bunter. "That's rather careless, you know, Wharton?"

Harry made a somewhat impatient gesture.

"There is a compartment in it for gold," he said. "I had the silver in another pocket, and it's all spent now. I was going to change another sovereign. I had five left. I can't make out where the pocket-book is gone."

"Would you mind settling up, sir," said the brake driver, suspiciously. "I've got a chance of another fare."

"Wait a minute. I've lost my money."

"Yes, I've 'card that story afore," said the Winklegate Jehu, with a sneer. "You'll pay for your drive, or I'll call a policeman."

Harry Wharton flushed crimson. His fists clenched hard,

and the man was in danger of getting, at that moment, a knock-down drive that would have taken all the insolence out of him. But Harry restrained himself. It would be too ridiculous to quarrel with a seaside Jehu over a fare.

"You must wait a few minutes," he said quietly. "I think I have had my pocket picked. Your fare will be paid; you need have no fear of that."

The man sniffed, and waited.

Harry looked round at the dismayed faces of his chums. The money of the party had been in Harry's possession—they had had only a little silver in their pockets, and it had mostly gone in incidental expenses. Money burns holes in pockets at the seaside, especially boys' pockets.

"We want eight and six for this man," said Harry. "My pocket-book must have been stolen. I do not think I have lost it. Anyway, we must settle this first. See if you can make up eight and six."

Willingly enough the chums turned out their pockets. But the result was not satisfactory. Bob Cherry had fourpence, Bunter a penny, Nugent sixpence, Hazeldene eightpence, Hurree Janset Ram Singh two shillings. Hoffman and Meunier willingly joined in the "raise," but their contributions only brought the whole sum up to four shillings and odd pence.

The juniors glanced at Levison. He had stood by while the raise was going on, with a very peculiar expression on his face.

It was an expression, half-sneering, half-amused, wholly incredulous. It intensified as the looks of the Greyfriars fellows turned towards him.

"Can you lend me some money, Levison?" asked Harry Wharton. "I need not say that it will be repaid at the first possible opportunity—early next week. To-day, if I recover my pocket-book."

Levison's hands were in his pockets. He did not take them out.

"Well?" said Harry sharply.

"I can't lend you money. I don't believe in lending money."

"Neither do I, as a rule, and certainly not in borrowing," said Harry, with a flush in his cheeks, "but you can see, I suppose, that the circumstances are exceptional."

"I couldn't lend you enough to get back to Friardale, anyway."

"We may manage that somehow, later. What I want now is money to pay the man here."

"I have told you that I don't believe in lending money."

"You—you utter rotter!" broke out Bob Cherry. "Look at him, kids. He doesn't believe that the pocket-book has been lost at all."

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't say anything of the kind," he remarked.

"You look it, though."

"Well, as a matter of fact, it does sound rather steep, doesn't it? As your cabby remarked, 'I've heard the yarn before.'"

"Do you mean to say that you doubt my word, Levison?" said Harry, very quietly, but with a slight quiver in his voice that told of the angry passions he was suppressing.

"Oh, don't mount the high horse, for goodness' sake!" said Levison. "I thought it was deuced good-natured of you to ask me into the brake for nothing, and I was a fool not to expect this. There's a shilling, that's my share of the expenses, and it's all you can ask of me. I'm off."

He tossed a shilling towards Harry Wharton. Wharton caught it mechanically, and looked at it. Then a blaze leaped into his eyes. His hand went up, and the coin was flung with all the force of his arm in Levison's face.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Broke.

LEVISON staggered for a moment, and his face went white. Across the white skin a red mark showed—a sharp, red mark where the coin had struck him.

He looked at Harry Wharton for a moment with burning eyes. Then he broke into a short, hard laugh.

"Thank you," he said. "If you don't want the shilling, you need not take it. No need to be dramatic about it."

He stooped and picked up the coin, slipped it into his pocket, and walked away. Harry's chest was heaving.

"The rotten end!" said Bob Cherry. "We've done with him now, at all events. But how are we going to pay this chap?"

Harry Wharton calmed himself.

"I'm sorry I lost my temper," he said. "That chap gets my back up more than any other I've ever met. Let me see—we want another four and six."

"And we haven't it."

"I'm waiting, sir," said the driver, significantly.

Harry Wharton turned to him with a glint in his eyes. The man had had to deal with all kinds of people at the seaside, and had learned suspicion. When he was not paid he naturally suspected a "bilk." But it was bitter to the high-spirited lad to be suspected of a petty swindle.

"Look here," said Harry quietly; it was of no use to lose his

temper with the man—"Look here: I've lost my pocket-book, and my money's in it. We belong to Greyfriars school—"

"Never heard of it," said the driver. "Where's my money?"

"I will give you these three shillings now—"

"My fare is eight and six."

"And I will leave my watch with you as security for the rest, if you like," said Harry. "You can give me your address, and I will send the money from Greyfriars, and you can return me the watch."

The man looked at him doubtfully.

This looked honest enough, and if the watch was of any value the man did not stand to lose. But he still had his doubts.

"Let's see the ticker," he said.

Harry took out his watch and detached it from the chain. It was a gold watch, a present from his uncle, Colonel Wharton.

"Look at it."

The man examined the watch. He could see at a glance that it was worth, at least, eight or ten pounds. His manner changed at once.

"I'll take it, sir, and return it to you when you send the money," he said.

"Wait a bit," said Bob Cherry. "You're so jolly suspicious; it's our turn now. That watch is worth fifty times what we owe you. How do we know you'll return it?"

The man grinned.

"We're licenced by the corporation 'ere, sir. You can take my number."

"Oh, good! That's all right, then."

The watch changed hands. The man slipped it into his pocket and drove away. The chums were left standing with disconsolate looks. The money was all gone, and their return tickets to Friardale were gone. They had got out of the immediate difficulty, but the greater one still confronted them.

"I say, you fellows—"

"We're in rather a fix," Bob Cherry remarked. "We want about two pounds for the single fare to Greyfriars. Single fares are the ordinary prices, you know; the excursion is for the return as well. And we're broke."

"I say, you fellows—"

"The brokefulness is terrific," said Hurree Singh. "We are busted to the weary widefulness."

"Where can your pocket-book have gone, Harry?" said Nugent. "Do you think you might have left it in the bathing-machine?"

Wharton shook his head.

"No; I was too careful for that. I looked round to see if there was anything dropped, and there wasn't."

"Then where could you have lost it?"

"I didn't lose it; it was safe inside my pocket. It must have been taken."

"I say, you fellows—"

"My hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, "and I know who took it, too."

"You do! What do you mean?"

"You remember that foxy-faced chap who bumped against you in the crowd, when we were looking at the nigger minstrels," exclaimed Bob, excitedly.

Harry gave a start.

"Yes, by jove! Ten to one he had it," he exclaimed.

"I'm pretty sure of it. He looked startled out of his wits, and ready to scratch like a cat when I collared him, and he was willing to say or do anything to get away."

"A bit too late now to try to get on his track," said Hazeldene.

"I suppose so."

"We may come across him again," said Harry, knitting his brows, "and then he shall stump up, or we'll take it out of his hide."

"Right-ho! but at present—"

"We're broke."

"I say, you fellows—"

A WONDERFUL NEW STORY.

A WORLD AT WAR.

By ANDREW GRAY.

NOW STARTING IN

"The Boys' Herald."

"Well, have you got any suggestion to make, Billy?"

"I think we ought to go and have tea," said Billy Bunter. "I'm simply fearfully hungry, and I am afraid I shall faint if I don't have something to eat."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Then you're booked for a fainting-fit, Billy," he remarked. "We haven't any money, and people don't trust chance customers at the seaside."

"Really, Wharton—"

"We can go to the police-station about the pocket-book," said Hazeldene. "Not that it will do much good, though."

"They can only promise to help, if possible," said Bob Cherry. "We are not even certain the foxy chap was the thief. No good wasting time there."

"Then what's to be done?" said Billy Bunter, rather aggressively. "I'm hungry."

"You're at liberty to make any suggestion you choose, Billy."

"I haven't any suggestions to make. Wharton is leader of the party, and it's his business to think of something. Wharton insisted upon my joining the party, and I came because he was so pressing. I'm hungry."

"You young cormorant—"

"It's no use calling me names, Bob Cherry. When I came with you I trusted my health into your hands, really, and you've no right to ask me to starve. I'm hungry."

"He'll make me hungry if he goes on like this," said Nugent. "You gave the cabby beast those three shillings along with the watch, didn't you, Harry?"

"Yes."

"You had some coppers—"

"Here they are—fourpence."

"We can get some winkles with that," said Billy Bunter eagerly. "Winkles will save a chap from actually dying of famine."

"I was thinking of toffee or chocolate," said Nugent.

"Winkles are ever so much more filling," said Bunter, "and you can get them cheap here. There was a chap selling them a little way off, an hour ago. Give me the fourpence, Wharton, will you? and I'll go and look for him."

Wharton handed over the coppers, and Bunter ran off in search of the winkle merchant. The other juniors were hungry, too, as a matter of fact, though they did not complain like the Falstaff of the Greyfriars Remove. And the prospect of missing tea, and getting no supper, made the pangs of hunger sharper.

"We're in a fix, and no mistake," said Nugent, sinking down on a wooden bench facing the sea. "There's nobody in Winklegate we can borrow of."

"Unless we met my sister," said Hazeldene. "I daresay my Aunt Caroline would stump up. But I don't know where they're staying."

"The pawfulness of the watches is a wheezy, good idea," said Hurree Singh.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"I don't like the idea."

"Is there anything else to be done?"

"Blessed if I know. I suppose you fellows blame me," said Harry, forcing a smile. "I suppose I ought to have been more on my guard."

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "It might have happened to any of us. You can't always be on your guard against a mean rotter of a thief. I'm beginning to think that our grandfathers were not so wrong after all, to hang rotters for stealing."

"The hangfulness is a certain way of causing the stopfulness of the thief," said the nabob.

"I wish we could get hold of him," said Nugent, regretfully. "If I could give him one right in the eye, I should feel more comfy."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! here's Billy."

Billy Bunter came up with a big bagful of winkles. The scent from the bag was not appetising. Hurree Singh turned away his head. But Billy was beaming.

"Anybody got a pin?" he asked.

Nobody had. The juniors had not expected to feast upon winkles, and they had come unprovided for such a contingency. Not a pin was to be had, and Billy Bunter grunted impatiently.

"Well, you are a set of asses," he exclaimed. "Fancy not having a pin among you."

"I've got a penknife," said Nugent.

"Hand it over, I'll try it, at any rate."

Billy Bunter took the knife and tried the smallest blade. But the coy winkle declined to show himself by such a method of persuasion.

"Come out, you beggar," growled Bunter.

But the winkle did not come out. Bunter handed the knife back to Nugent with a look that expressed his feelings.

"Talk about the tortures of Tantalus," he said. "Here are we starving to death, and here's the winkles, and we can't get one of them to eat."

"Couldn't you eat them shellfully, my worthy Bunterful chum?"

"No, I couldn't! I draw the line somewhere. I say, look

about the ground, will you, you fellows; people often drop pins about."

"Ask a policeman," suggested Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter brightened up.

"Well, that's a good idea. Policemen are paid to make themselves useful. I don't see why I shouldn't."

"Well, there's one, over the way."

"Good; I'll ask him."

Bunter laid down the bag of winkles, and crossed the front to speak to the policeman. The chums watched him curiously. They saw Bunter speak, and then they saw the guardian of the law stretch out a big red hand and nip his ear. Evidently the policeman regarded the junior's request as impertinence. Bunter came back rubbing his ear.

"Got the pin?" asked Hazeldene.

"No."

"He's got the needle," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think it's absolutely heartless of you fellows to laugh at the agonies of a starving chum," said Bunter. "When I am found dead in the street you will be sorry."

"Well, it will save the return fare to Friardale."

"Really, Cherry—"

"I say, something's got to be done," said Harry Wharton, restlessly. "We haven't any money, we have no friends here, and we can't find the thief. What are we to do to raise the wind?"

"I wish I could find a pin—"

"Hallo! there go those nigger chaps," said Bob Cherry, as the minstrels came along, evidently returning from their afternoon's busking. "That's an easy way of making money, eh?"

Harry Wharton started.

"By jove, Bob, you've got it!"

"Have you?" exclaimed Bunter eagerly. "Have you got a pin, Cherry?"

"Oh, shut up, Bunt. You've hit it, Bob—you've got the wheeze!" exclaimed Harry, excitedly. "We'll go busking."

"My hat!"

"And raise the cash to pay our expenses here and return to Friardale."

"Hurrah!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER,
Raising the Wind.

"HURRAH!"

The shout from Bob Cherry's powerful lungs startled many of the promenaders on the Winklegate Front, and curious glances were cast towards the group of juniors on the beach. But the Greyfriars lads did not heed.

"What a ripping wheeze," said Nugent, with sparkling eyes. "It will be great fun, too. We can sing better than those chaps, I should hope."

"Rather; aren't we the Wharton Operatic and Dramatic Society at Greyfriars?" grinned Bob Cherry. "We can knock them into a cocked hat."

"The knockfulness into the honourable cocked hat will be terrific."

"It's a good idea," said Hazeldene, "but—it wants money. You can't get even lampblack for nothing, and we shall want a banjo and some togs."

"We shall have to adopt Inky's suggestion," said Harry, "and take one of our watches to a pawnbroker's, if we can find one."

"That's in your line, Wharton," said Bunter. "You remember you pawned your watch once before, to pay Hazeldene's debt to that moneylender chap—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Harry.

"I'm sincerely sorry if I've said anything I shouldn't, but I was thinking—"

"Oh, cheese it. Let's get along and look for a pawnbroker's; it's a rotten way to raise money, I know, but we can't remain at Winklegate all night. If the minstrel idea is a success, we can redeem the watch before we go home; and get mine back from that cabby chap, too; I've got his address and number. I don't see why we should not make a harvest here. Those fellows did pretty well, and we can give a better entertainment."

"Yes, rather."

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Come along," said Harry, rising from the bench. "The sooner we get to work the quicker, you know. No need to waste time."

The juniors walked along the front. They did not like to inquire as to the whereabouts of a pawnbroker's shop, and there did not seem to be one on the front. They turned into a quiet street.

"If we had half-a-sovereign we could manage it without," said Nugent, regretfully.

Billy Bunter uttered a sudden exclamation.

"I've got it!"

"The Greyfriars chums stopped and gathered round him eagerly.

"You've got it?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Yes."

"Well, this is corn in Egypt, and no mistake," said Nugent. "Hand it over."

"Wait a minute——"

"No good waiting. Hand it over."

"But I want to use it myself first," said Bunter, in a tone of expostulation. "Hang it, that's only fair, Nugent."

Nugent stared at him blankly; so did the rest.

"You want to use it first, what do you mean?"

"I'm as hungry as you are, that's what I mean."

"But—but a half-sovereign——"

"A what?"

"A half-sovereign——"

"Who's talking about a half-sovereign?"

"I am," shouted Nugent, "and you are, you ass. I said we only wanted a half-sovereign, and you said that you had got one."

"I didn't! I was speaking of this pin. I've just found it sticking in the lining of my jacket."

"You—you—you——"

"I want to use it first," said Bunter, starting on the winkles. "That's only fair. You chaps can go and do your pawning if you like."

"You utter ass!"

"I'm sincerely sorry if you misunderstood me, Nugent, but it's no good calling me names. I'll join you as you come back, if you're in a hurry. These winkles are ripping."

The chums of the Greyfriars Remove walked on. Billy Bunter sat on a coping and feasted on winkles. It was an unpleasant task the boys had now to perform, but there was no help for it. The required establishment was found in a side street, and Harry Wharton stopped before it.

"Whose watch?" he asked laconically.

The Nabob of Bhanipur drew out a gold watch studded with brilliants. Harry laughed and shook his head.

"Your's won't do, Inky."

"It's worthfulness is great moneyfully," said the nabob.

"I know it's valuable, and that's the reason it won't do. A pawnbroker wouldn't take that from a boy—he might send for the police instead."

"Rather," said Bob Cherry. "Here's my ticker, Harry. It's a plain one, but it will fetch as much as we need. Get a sov., and we can have a feed before starting in life as nigger minstrels."

"Right-ho."

Harry disappeared into the side entrance of the shop, and his chums waited for him at the corner of the street. He joined them in five minutes, and showed a golden sovereign and some coppers and a sixpence in his palm.

"How much?"

"A guinea. I had to pay for the ticket."

"Good. Now let's make a bee-line for the grub-shop, or I shall rob Bunter of his winkles, if there are any left."

There were none left. The last one had disappeared when they rejoined Billy. He seemed a little more contented now, and he beamed at sight of the sovereign.

"That's good," he exclaimed, "we can have a really ripping feed now, you fellows——"

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry, "we're going to have a sparing tea, my son, and save the rest for the nigger outfit."

"Wouldn't it be best to——"

"No, it wouldn't. Come on, porpoise."

The juniors soon found a place which looked suitable to their means. They enjoyed the luxury of a wash and a brush up for twopence apiece, and then sat down to a solid if somewhat plain meal. Bunter cared more for quantity than quality, so he was satisfied, and he bolted cold beef and potatoes with great gusto. The meal made all the boys feel better; they had been getting very hungry.

Harry Wharton settled the bill; it came to eight shillings, so he still had more than twelve left. Then he inquired the way to a second-hand clothes' dealer's, and as the dusk of that eventful day settled over Winklegate-on-Sea, the chums of the Greyfriars Remove entered a musty little shop in the back streets of the town, and were welcomed by a bowing Israelite with greasy smiles.

THE TENTH CHAPTER. The Amateur Minstrels.

"WHAT can I do for the young shentlemans?"

Harry Wharton quickly explained. They wanted to borrow some clothes—the more they resembled comic nigger costume the better. They wanted some black for their faces, and a room to dress and make up in, and the loan of a banjo. The Israelite listened with astonishment at first, and then, at the sight of a piece of gold, grinned expansively.

"Ah, it is a lark of der young shentlemans," he said, "I

understand. I can do all dat you require, and I charge you ten shilling for der loan of all der tings—if you leave security for deir return."

"Hand over your watch, Inky. That will be first-rate."

"The handfulness is hearty."

And Hurree Janset Ram Singh willingly gave up his watch. The eyes of the old Hebrew dealer glistened at sight of the gold case with the monogram in brilliants. He made no demur now, and the wants of the Greyfriars juniors were soon supplied.

In a dimly-lighted room, before a cracked glass, with a stuffy smell of old clothes all about them, the chums of Greyfriars dressed for their new role.

The dressing occupied an hour; but when it was complete the result was extremely satisfactory. The chums looked at each other with broad grins, which had a very niggery effect upon the black faces.

"Ripping!" said Bob Cherry.

"I say you fellows——"

"Hoffmann and Meunier will have to keep quiet, as they can't talk English."

"I zink zat you are right about Hoffmann, but I——"

"I tink tat you vas right about Meunier, put I——"

"Cheese it and do as you're told. I think we're about finished now, kids. I'll try over the banjo. It looks a pretty ancient instrument."

"I say you fellows, I'd better have the banjo, I think. I shall be able to play it pretty well and not make a row, as Cherry is doing now."

"You young ass! I handled a banjo before you were born," said Bob Cherry indignantly. "How does this go, chaps?"

Pong, pong, pong!

"Way down upon de——" pong, pong!—"Swannee Ribber."

Pong, pong!

"Rotten!" said Billy Bunter.

"It's all right," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "I'll handle the bones."

"Good; now we're ready!"

"Come on then!"

The chums of Greyfriars quitted the shop. The old Hebrew stood looking after them with a grin. He had a valuable watch as security for his property, which was worth perhaps almost as much as he had charged for the loan of it. He may have had his doubts about the profits the youthful minstrels would make; but he was indemnified in any case.

"Better get down to the front," said Bob Cherry. "There's a row coming from there, and I fancy it's getting pretty lively."

"I say you fellows——"

"Shut up, Billy! You're silent in this act; you've only got to stand and grin and blink through your spectacles. Don't talk!"

"I tink tat——"

"You don't talk either, Huffy. Nor you, Meunier. Come on, and shut up!"

The minstrels came out upon the front. It was brilliantly lighted, and the stars were glimmering on the wide sea. Crowds of people were passing to and fro, and seaside girls and young men were there by the score. Some youngsters at once attached themselves to the Greyfriars party, and followed them, asking them the price of blacking and making other polite inquiries.

"We're attracting attention already," grinned Nugent. "We shall make a regular harvest when we get into the thick of it. Come on the giddy sands."

The crowds were pretty thick on the sands, too. The tide was going out again, and the electric lights from the esplanade flared over the stretches of white sand. The juniors halted in a spot where the crowd seemed thickest, and Bob Cherry strummed on the banjo.

Pong, pong, pong!

"Take that thing away and bury it!" came a growling voice from a man stretched on the sand with a beer-bottle protruding from one of his pockets.

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry. "If you don't like music clear off!" Pong, pong, pong! "Are you going to sing, Brudder Henry, or am I?"

"Just as you like," said Harry Wharton. "I'll go ahead and you can sing seconds if you like. Keep the banjo going."

"Right you are!"

Harry Wharton commenced to sing the same song he had heard on the sands that afternoon, and which, as he knew it by heart, he could sing without music. Bob Cherry twanged away industriously on the banjo.

Pong, pong, pong!

"Years ago by de Misaisip

Two little darkey coons were born."

"Shut up that row!" roared the man on the sand, who had evidently been sampling the contents of his bottle, not wisely but too well.

"I say, my good fellow," said Bunter, "it's really a row, but you mustn't."

"Shut up, Billy!"

"Look here——"

"And under de burning Southern sun
Dey played in de golden corn!"

"Hold that row!" shouted the tripper, sitting up. "Blessed if I don't go for yer if yer don't move on; disturbin' of folk!"

"Better come a little further on," said Harry.

"I'd rather jam his head into the sand!"

"We don't want a row, we want coppers."

"Here's one coming," grinned Hazeldene. It was time, for the excursionist had jumped up and was squaring up to Bob Cherry. A policeman came quickly up.

"What's all this here?"

"Chap doesn't like music," said Bob Cherry. "It's all right."

"Music!" snorted the tripper. "Music! They was singing like a tom cat on the tiles, officer."

"Move on!" said the guardian of the law.

"But we're minstrels!"

"Move on!"

"We're giving an entertainment!"

"Move on!"

"That's right, officer; move 'em on! Disturbing of folk! I say, what the thunder are you shoving me for?"

"Move on!"

"I ain't going to move on. I was a-settin' on the sands."

"Move on!"

"I shan't! I was a-settin' on the sand!"

The policeman, his anger raised at this defiance of his authority hustled the half-intoxicated tripper along. The Greyfriars chums moved on, and left the sands for the esplanade. The result of their first attempt was rather discouraging; but as Bob Cherry remarked, the motto of the Remove was "Never say die!"

"Let's have another try here," said Harry Wharton. "I suppose as a matter of fact there's a knack in these things, and you have to know it to get a crowd—and a good-tempered one."

"We shall pick it up in time," said Bob Cherry, with irrepressible cheerfulness. "Come on, lets give them another chance, and start with the chorus this time. It's a bit more taking, you know."

"Right! All you fellows join in, and make it a rouser."

"Go ahead, then!"

"Come and kiss me, honey,
Come and kiss me do!
Oh, honey, dear I love but you!"

The chorus was roared out by the Greyfriars juniors with all the force of their lungs, and it was bound to attract attention. The volume of the voices almost drowned the twanging of the banjo, and the clacking of the bones. A crowd began to gather round the youthful minstrels. An old lady and a girl who was passing slowly along the promenade paused and glanced in the direction of the minstrels.

"My—my only hat!" gasped Hazeldene, breaking off in the midst of his singing. "It's—it's my sister Marjorie!"

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Marjorie Meets the Minstrels—Levison's Luck.

THE voices of the blacked juniors wavered. They had hoped to meet Miss Hazeldene again before leaving Winklegate-on-Sea; but they had not hoped to meet her in this guise. It was evident that something in their voices had struck familiarly on the girl's ear, for she was coming towards them.

"My dear Marjorie!" expostulated her aunt.

"Just a moment, dear auntie."

"She knows us!" whispered Bob Cherry. "Oh, what asses we shall look!"

"I say you fellows——"

"By Jove, there's Levison!" muttered Nugent, as a crumpled panama hat came into view near Marjorie as she came forward. "If he recognises us we shall never hear the end of this at Greyfriars."

Levison was looking curiously at the youthful minstrels.

Marjorie came nearer, and Harry Wharton, struck by a brilliant inspiration, took off his hat and went towards her, as if to collect. The girl looked at him as she dropped a piece of silver into the hat.

"I see you know me," whispered Harry.

Marjorie started violently.

"Don't say a word," whispered Wharton hurriedly. "Levison is there, and he'll spread it all over Greyfriars."

"What—what are you doing this for?" murmured Marjorie.

"We—we had to. I'll explain another time; but don't give us away."

Marjorie's face dimpled into smiles.

"You may trust me."

And she returned to Aunt Caroline. Levison came closer to Harry Wharton, as if struck by something in his look. Wharton turned his back on him, and rejoined his chums.

"Get on with the song," he murmured.

"Right-ho! Here goes!"

EVERY TUESDAY, The "Magnet." ONE HALFPENNY.

"Years ago by de Mississip,
Two little darky coons were born,
And under de burning Southern sun
Dey play-ay-ayed in de golden corn!"

The juniors, gaining courage as they advanced, shouted out the words in fine style, and when they came to the chorus they roared it, and many of the crowd joined in. They went right through the song, and there was a round of applause when they finished. Bob Cherry took round the hat, and there was a generous shower of coppers, and among the coppers here and there showed the gleam of silver.

"Getting on," murmured Bob Cherry. "We'll give them the last verse again, and then the dance, eh?"

"Good wheeze."

"The goodness is great."

The last verse was roared again, then the chorus twice, and then came the dance. It was rather well done by Harry and Bob, the others tramping time and buzzing the tune. The dance was almost finished when Bob Cherry suddenly stopped dead.

"Hallo, Bob! What is it?"

Bob Cherry made no reply. Like a stone from a catapult he suddenly hurled himself at a slim man on the edge of the crowd, a man with keen eyes and a foxy face, who had just pushed against a shouting tripper. The slim man went to the ground with Bob Cherry on top of him.

"Got him!"

"Got whom?"

"The man who picked your pocket."

"By Jove, so you have!" cried Harry.

The excursionist against whom the pickpocket had pushed uttered a cry.

"My watch is gone!"

"He's got a watch in his hand!" exclaimed Nugent, coming to Bob's aid. "Is this your watch, sir?"

"That's it, the thief!"

The minstrels piled on the pickpocket. He gasped under their weight. Harry cast an anxious glance round, and was relieved to see that Levison had disappeared.

"Got him!" gasped Cherry. "Where's the pocket-book?"

"Where's the tin?"

"Help! Mercy! I—I——"

"Where's my pocket-book?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Let me go! Let me go! I'll give it you!"

"Hold him fast! We're going to have the pocket-book first! My hat! But this is a stroke of luck."

The juniors were jubilant. It was a fortunate encounter for them, but it was natural enough in coming about. The thief found his best harvest in a crowd watching an open-air performance. He had robbed Harry at the nigger minstrel entertainment in the morning. He had come to the present show with the same intentions, little dreaming that his former victims were the niggers on this occasion.

"Hand over the pocket-book, you scoundrel!"

"Let the handfulness be immediate, or the thrashfulness will be terrific."

"Let go my hands then——"

"Let go one hand of the beast, and give him a chance."

With one hand released, the thief felt in his pocket. He was palpitating with dread of being held there till a policeman arrived. Wharton received his pocket-book and opened it. There was only one sovereign inside, but the return tickets to Friardale were safe in their place.

"Where is my money, you villain?"

"I—I've spent it. I——"

"Then you'll be handed over to the police——"

"Let me go—let me go—I—I——"

"Let him go," said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "I've got our tickets, and that's the chief thing. Let the cowardly brute go, and he can take his chance with the police."

The juniors somewhat reluctantly allowed the rascal to rise. He was torn, and dishevelled, and dusty, and looked a pitiable object. They had not handled him gently. But the crowd standing round, especially the man who had nearly been robbed of his watch, were not inclined to allow the thief to escape unpunished. He was hustled, and kicked, and punched, and followed along the road as he dashed away to escape. By the time he finally got out of the hands of the crowd he had received a punishment perhaps adequate to his crime.

The minstrels, in much better spirits, took their way towards the Hebrew dealer's shop. The return tickets to Friardale were what they wanted most, and the single sovereign that had been recovered was enough for their needs.

"How much have we got in the hat?" asked Nugent.

Bob Cherry was counting the gains as he went along. Bob chuckled.

"Guess."

"A pound!"

"Six shillings!" said Bob.

"Eh?"

"Six shillings—a little more than half enough to pay the old Hebrew for the togs. Ha, ha, ha!"

With the return tickets and the odd sovereign safe, the juniors could afford to laugh. And laugh they did, heartily.

"Well," said Harry Wharton, "we can pay Solomons, and get Inky's watch—and then we can hunt up that cabby man and settle with him, and get my ticker back. Then I think it will be time to catch the train back to Friardale."

"We shall be late for calling over, anyway."

"Oh, they always excuse that on this holiday," said Nugent.

* Founder's day covers a multitude of sins."

"Good."

The Greyfriars juniors settled with the Hebrew, and then with the driver, who was easily found on the front. Then they made their way to the station.

"We've had a jolly time," said Bob Cherry, as they came into the station. "We owe a vote of thanks to your uncle, Wharton. He's an old sport."

"And a jolly good fellow," said Hazeldene.

"I tink dat you are right," Fritz Hoffmann remarked, and for once Meunier was in accord with him.

"I zink so too," he said.

"I say, you fellows, is there time to get something to eat before the train starts?"

"There's time," said Harry, laughing. "But there's no tin. You'll have to wait till we get to Greyfriars. There's just five bob left, and—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Levison again, and he's looking jolly down in the mouth."

Levison was standing by the ticket office. He seemed to have been having an argument with the booking clerk, which had ended unsatisfactorily for him. He was looking gloomy and worried, and a little frightened. He deserved little at the hands of the chums of the Remove, but they never bore malice—and after all, he was a Grey Friar, and evidently in a fix. They moved towards him.

"Coming back?" asked Harry.

"I—I can't!"

"Can't! What do you mean?"

"I—I've had my pocket picked," said Levison, looking very white. "All my money and my return ticket are gone—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "We've heard that yarn before! I believe that's what you remarked to us under similar circumstances."

"Well, you've got your own back now—I shall have to stay here all night," said Levison bitterly.

"No, you won't," said Harry Wharton quietly. "You will come with us."

Levison's face brightened.

"Do you mean to say you will—"

"I've got my pocket-book back from the thief, and a sovereign in it, as well as our return halves. What is the single fare to Friardale?"

"Nearly five bob."

"I have five shillings left—"

"I say, you fellows, if there's time to have something to eat, it's rot to waste it on a chap like Levison—"

"Shut up, Billy. I was keeping it to pay for a hack at Friardale, but we shall have to hoof it to the school, that's all. Get your ticket, Levison."

Wharton handed him the money. Levison did not quite know what to say. He said nothing. In silence he bought his ticket to Friardale, and went on the platform with the chums of the Remove. A quarter of an hour later the express was bearing the Greyfriars lads homeward.

The chums of the Remove were late—very late—for calling over, but Founder's Day, as Nugent said, covered a multitude of sins. A few light impositions did not worry them, and they went to bed that night quite tired out, but perfectly satisfied with their day at the seaside.

THE END.

(Another splendid tale of Harry Wharton and his Chums next Tuesday. Please order your copy of the MAGNET Library in advance.)

GRAND TALE OF THE REDMINSTER CADET CORPS.



73 WORDS THAT WILL TELL YOU WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE.

The story opens with a review of the Redminster Cadet Corps, led by young Lieutenant Jack Dashwood. The proceedings are interrupted when the Headmaster receives a telegram asking him to send Jack home at once, as his father—Colonel Sir Harry Dashwood—is dangerously ill. Dick Vivian goes with his chum, and on their arrival at the house both take an instant dislike to Mr. Dominic and Leonard Dashwood—Jack's uncle and cousin. (Now go on with the story.)

Hogan's Suggestion.

But though over the whole mansion—and, indeed, over the whole of that spacious domain—there hung a dread shadow, Dick Vivian's appetite was very keen, and he did surreptitious justice to the food that was brought in by the liveried servant.

"Where is Hogan?" said Jack, to the man.

"Hogan has never left the colonel, sir, since he was taken ill. Did you wish to see him?"

"I shall see him presently, when my father awakes," said Jack. "Poor old Hogan, he will not live long after his old commander!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when the door opened, and a grey-headed man, with a bad limp in one

leg and a patch over his right eye, strode forward as stiff as a ramrod, and seized our hero by both hands.

"'Tis meself that grieves for yez, Master Jack," said the old soldier, as our hero rose from his chair. "I must not go away from the kurnel a moment; but I heard ye come, and I wanted to have a word with ye. There's something I don't like, Mister Jack"—and the old man lowered his voice. "I don't know what it is, but I'm thinking there's foul play somewhere."

"Foul play!" exclaimed both boys in a breath, with a note of incredulity.

"Yes, foul play. I know Mr. Dominic was never a friend of yours, sir, and he was never a friend of mine, and you must watch ut."

Through the open window that led on to the terrace, Uncle Dominic and his son came in on tiptoe, and the old man, relinquishing Jack's hand, saluted, turned on his heel, and strode away like a pair of compasses.

"Hogan is very much distressed," said Mr. Dominic Dashwood. "He's been with your father for thirty years, Jack, and this is a terrible wrench for him."

"Yes. He was a sergeant in my father's troop in the Mutiny," said Jack, thinking of all the stories that Hogan had told him. "But as long as I live, the old man shall never want. In fact, I doubt not that my father has left him well provided for."

Mr. Dominic Dashwood again cast a furtive glance at

his son, who was examining the bookcase; not that he had any liking for books, being one of the laziest boys in the school. And this time Dick Vivian intercepted the glance, and, coupled with what Hogan had just said, began to feel very uncomfortable in his inside.

The sound of wheels on the drive outside made them all turn to the window, and they saw the physician from London alighting from the dogcart, which had returned to the station to await the coming of the next train. Mr. Dominic Dashwood met him on the steps, and, without delay, led him upstairs to the sick man's room, where he held a consultation for some six minutes with the two local doctors who were in attendance.

"Poor fellow, poor fellow!" said the great man, coming forth again, attended by the lesser lights of the medical profession. "Nothing can save him. It's undoubtedly apoplexy, and my impression is that he will not live through the night. Thank you!" he said, taking a cheque for fifty guineas, which Mr. Dominic Dashwood had already prepared for him, and placing it in his waistcoat pocket. "No thanks, I will not take any refreshment; and I think, if your man drives as quickly as he did coming here, that I shall just catch the up train."

Jack, coming from the library door, where he had been waiting in a quiver of excitement, laid his hand on the great man's sleeve, and the specialist read his question in the lad's brimming eyes.

"Sir Harry's son?" he queried, looking at Mr. Dominic Dashwood.

The lawyer nodded.

"Poor boy, I'm afraid your father has made his last march," said the great man drawing out his watch and thinking about that next train up.

"Can you do nothing to save him?" pleaded Jack, finding his voice with a jerk.

"All the doctors in the world, my dear boy, could do nothing. He may live over to-morrow, but I very much doubt it. Good-bye, good-bye!"

And, swinging himself up into the dogcart, the specialist was whisked away down the avenue.

"Your father is awake now, Jack, and I think you had better see him," said his uncle.

And, holding his breath, our hero went up the magnificent staircase and so into the little room that looked out into the gardens, where his father was lying. Jack gazed at the handsome, kindly face, then sank on his knees, and took his father's hand. The dying man's eyes stared into vacancy, and already in the stiff outline of the figure beneath the coverlet there was warning of the approaching end.

"Pater—dear old pater," said Jack. "Don't you know me?"

The eyes came out of vacancy for a moment, and turned upon the boy; but the expression of the face did not change, though Jack felt a movement of the brown fingers, once so strong and now so helpless, which he construed into recognition. Behind the boy—tall and dark and forbidding—the figure of Dominic Dashwood looked like a shadow, and at the bed's foot, drawn up to attention, Sergeant Hogan turned his one eye alternately from his master's face to the face of his master's brother.

The doctors, having duly escorted the eminent specialist off the premises, now returned to the sick room, and Dominic Dashwood telegraphed a sign to them.

"He can do no good by remaining, and it's only painful," whispered the lawyer, indicating Jack by a jerk of his head.

"If it can do no good, at least it can do no harm," said one of the doctors, who had sons of his own.

"You're right, sir," said Sergeant Hogan from the foot of the bed. "The lad's place is by the kurnel's side. His own time will come some day, and 'twill do him no harm to see how a brave man dies. I have seen a good many in my lifetime, and so has the kurnel there"—and Hogan's eye glared very fiercely at Mr. Dominic Dashwood, who shrugged his shoulders and silently left the room.

When he had gone, the stricken soldier seemed to rally for a moment, and, to the evident surprise of the doctors, turned his head in the direction of his son. The mouth quivered for a moment, and he seemed about to speak. Something like a spasm of pain passed over the face for a moment, and this time there was no doubt about the tightening of the fingers on Jack's hand. But it was willed otherwise, and, with a weary sigh, the head fell back upon the pillow once more, and the eyes again stared out into vacancy.

"He wanted to say something," whispered the sergeant, rolling his eye hopelessly from one to another. And then his voice rose to an unusual pitch, as he pointed to his old leader:

"Holy mother, there it is!" he cried. "He's going, Master Jack—he's going!"

And as a grey colour passed like a shadow over the face, the jaw of Colonel Sir Harry Dashwood dropped slightly on to his chest, and he was dead.

The Disinheriting of Jack Dashwood.

It cannot be truly said that Dick Vivian had a good time. A house, even though it be as magnificent as Dashwood Hall, when all the blinds are lowered, and everybody speaks in a whisper and walks about on tiptoe, is not a cheerful place, and it was with something of relief that Dick turned to the stately mansion with his arm linked in that of the new baronet, when they had laid Sir Harry to rest among the tombs of his ancestors. A party from the local Yeomanry fired three volleys over the soldier's grave. Hogan had led Sir Harry's charger, with his boots reversed in due military fashion, and everything had been done decently and in order.

"Well, Dick, old boy," said the young baronet, smiling a little sadly, "I suppose I must bid you welcome now to my house and home, and I shall do so all the more gladly when I have got rid of some of the people that are here. Then you and I will have a quiet look round, and I must decide what I am going to do in the future."

"Of course, you will not come back to the school?" said Dick Vivian.

"I don't know. Time enough to decide all that," he said thoughtfully. "I know the poor old governor wanted to send me up to Oxford, and from there into the Service. Into the Service I shall go, as a matter of course, as all my folk have done before me. I only wish Uncle Dominic were a decent sort of chap that one could advise with. Oh, here he is!"

Turning round, they saw Mr. Dominic Dashwood enter the hall, with Leonard behind him. The sun threw his shadow before him, and a very black shadow it was, and Dick Vivian was conscious of a tightening at the heart, an undefinable dread of something that might happen, little knowing how soon that something was going to take place.

Luncheon was served in the dining-hall for the many mourners who had followed Sir Harry to his grave, and many were the congratulations showered upon the new baronet by his father's old friends and all the local magnates who had assembled to do honour to Sir Harry's memory.

Jack sat at the head of the table, with Dick Vivian beside him, while his Uncle Dominic took the other end, and several of the guests noticed that the lawyer did not open his mouth half a dozen times during the meal, and that his son, who sat beside him, was equally silent. The consumption of "funeral baked meats" is always a solemn sort of function, and when, after a glance at Mr. Dominic, our hero rose, there was a feeling of great relief among those present.

A grey-headed, rosy-faced gentleman, Squire Appleby, who was their next door neighbour, approached our hero, and, drawing him to the window, placed his hand on the lad's arm.

"Well, Jack, my boy, I've said all that I can. You know my sympathy for you in your trouble," said the squire. "Now, what are you going to do? I'm possibly one of your father's oldest friends, and if I can give you any assistance or help you have only got to say so, boy."

"You're very good, sir," said our hero. "I suppose the first thing is to hear the will read, and then if you would let me talk things over for an hour with you, I should be thankful."

"My time is entirely at your disposal, Jack," said the old squire, who had boys of his own.

"But my time," said Mr. Dominic—"my time is somewhat limited, and it would not be amiss, Jack, if the will were read without delay. It will possibly help you in deciding what your future plans may be." And there was something so strange in the lawyer's voice that Squire Appleby started back a pace, and looked at him.

"What do you mean, Mr. Dashwood?" said the old gentleman. "Your tone is almost one of foreboding. Surely Sir Harry's affairs were all in order?"

"You will find that they were all in order, Mr. Appleby," said Dominic Dashwood, with a slight sneer; "but perhaps their ordering will not be to the liking of everybody concerned. Shall we adjourn to the library, and get this business over? I am anxious to catch the three o'clock train, and there is little enough time if I am to do so."

The squire took Jack Dashwood by the arm, his grey whiskers showing a decided inclination to bristle.

"Come along, my boy! I don't know what that black-faced uncle of yours has in his mind, but I'm afraid there's something disagreeable. However, keep your heart up, and you can always rely on me as your friend."

They seated themselves about the table, and the servants to whom legacies had been left came in and stood in a respectful group near the door. Perhaps it was the sunlight falling through the stained glass in the window, and showing patches of dusky red upon the papers before him, that made Mr. Dominic Dashwood's face appear so unusually white. Perhaps there were other reasons—one would be inclined to think there were—and as he unfolded a paper

and laid it on the table, Dick Vivian noticed that the lawyer's hand closed on a heavy ebony ruler that lay beside him. If it had been a sword he could not have grasped it more tightly.

Dominic Dashwood cleared his throat huskily, and his son, who had seated himself beside his father, bent forward and clasped the lower part of his face in his hands. The same indefinable foreboding that had seized upon Dick Vivian earlier in the day now began to trouble the young baronet. It seemed as if the air in the room had suddenly grown hot and stifling; and when Mr. Dominic, placing his gold-rimmed glasses upon his hawk nose, paused, his eyes bent on the paper, Jack Dashwood tapped impatiently on the table.

"If you really have to catch the three o'clock train, Uncle Dominic," he said, "hadn't you better begin? I, for one, am anxious that this business should be concluded as soon as possible, for it is very trying."

"I am afraid, my dear John," said Dominic Dashwood, "you will find it more trying than you have any idea of."

And then, as all the people present looked at him, Mr. Dominic Dashwood began to speak.

"I have here two documents to read," said the lawyer. "The first is dated three years ago, and, with the exception of some legacies to old and faithful servants, leaves the whole of Sir Harry's property to my nephew John. But it is just that little word property that puts a different complexion upon the whole matter. Not long after this will was written and duly signed, the adjoining estate, Blackhampton Abbey, came into the market, and Sir Harry Dashwood conceived the idea of purchasing it, and adding to his own property. I did my best to dissuade my brother from taking this step; but, as you all know, when he had set his mind upon a thing, you might as well try to stem a mountain torrent with one hand as to turn him. The Blackhampton property now belongs to this estate, but to purchase it my brother had to effect a mortgage upon his own property, and I advanced him £20,000 for the purpose of the purchase. To cover me he executed another will entirely in my favour, and though in four years' time the mortgage would have been wiped off, my brother, unhappily, did not live so long, so that the first will being valueless, we have only the second one to deal with. I will read it, but you practically know its contents."

His hand tightened on the ruler as he uttered these words, and his eyes, which had been studiously avoiding those of his nephew at the other end of the table, were now fixed upon him by some irresistible attraction.

Jack Dashwood rose, and the gasp of astonishment that passed round the room was succeeded by a moment of dramatic silence.

"Will you be good enough, Uncle Dominic," said the young baronet, "to come to the point without all this circumlocution, and answer me one straightforward question?"

"I will answer you any question you ask, my dear John," said the lawyer, fidgeting nervously with the papers in his left hand.

"In a word, then, my father's property, the mortgage not being paid off, belongs to you?"

"Legally it does," was the reply.

"And I, his son, I get—I get nothing?"

The lawyer's lips moved, but he made no sound, simply nodding his head with a short jerk. Jack looked fixedly at his uncle, and then the colour returned to his own face, and a smile of supreme scorn and contempt curled his lip.

"Do you know what I think, Uncle Dominic?" said the lad, and into his voice came a ring of his father's sternness. "I think you have managed this business remarkably well for yourself. I suppose you will have no objection to these wills being examined by somebody else? I know nothing of these matters."

(Another long instalment of this splendid new serial next week. Please order your "Magnet" Library in advance. Price One Halfpenny.)



The Arrest.

"I been asleep, you chaps—oh? Sure, I must have!" And Lomax, stifling a large-sized and most natural yawn, passed one hand over his eyes.

"Yeth," Abrams said hurriedly, "you've been athleep—thound athleep. Hope we haven't dithturbed you."

"Sleep!" McDonald broke in. "Yes, ol' cock, yer been 'sleep all right, reg'lar dead-o. I'm going to get out."

"Where are we?" And Lomax attempted to rise.

"Ringwood's Court, New Cut," McDonald answered promptly. "No. 4's just 'ere. I'm going to get out an' see old woman Brewer. Nice name, ain't it? Makes me—makes me— Gimme drink!"

Lomax looked at the Hebrew, and he winked in the direction of the boxer.

"Got it bad!" he said. "Say, Mr.—Mr.—forget your name. Better see him home, hadn't you? I'll get out here. Tell me where, and I'll tell the cabby, an' pay him. Jolly evening, hasn't it been? Glad to meet you, sir. See you to-morrow—no, to-night, I mean. Call for me National Sporting Club. Will that do?"

"All right!" Abrams said, not sorry that Lomax was going now that he was awake, for there was no telling what dangerous utterances McDonald in his maudlin condition might make. "All right! No. 142, Houndsditch, I'll take him."

"Good-night, old man; see you later." And Lomax got out of the cab, paid the driver, and gave him his final directions, and stood waiting on the kerbstone until it had rolled away. Then he broke into silent laughter, and chuckling, hurried off.

A violent hammering at the door of the office awakened Frank Dennis, and he was a very surprised young man when, on rising and opening it, he beheld his chum and partner.

"What on earth—" he began.

"It's all right, old chap. Get on your clothes like wild-fire, and we'll be off!" Lomax cried, entering the room.

"Off where?" his bewildered friend demanded.

"To see the final act of the play. Hurry up!"

"But—"

"Get on, for Heaven's sake!" was the impatient adjuration. "I've been to the police-station; they'll be there before us if you don't hurry yourself. I'll tell you about it while you dress."

It was four in the morning, but Dennis was startled into perfect wideawakeness by his chum's entry, and the astounding news he had to give. As well as his divided attention would permit, he listened while Robert re-tailed his news.

"We'll go first to Houndsditch, and see these boggars nailed. By gum, I wouldn't miss seeing their faces for the world when they know who it was diddled them so finely!" rattled off Lomax. "And then we'll go and find Mrs. Brewer. I've got a search-warrant. Come on!"

With four policemen, Maxennis hurried down to 142, Houndsditch and there Bob Lomax had the pleasure he had looked forward to so eagerly. But what the Jew and Sandy McDonald said when they realised how skilfully they had been sold, and that punishment for their conspiracy, plus kidnapping, was about to fall on them, is not to be repeated.

(To be concluded next week.)

For Next Week

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THE EDITOR.





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