"Bob Cherry's Chase!"

Grand Long, Complete Tale of School Life.

POOR OLD BILLY BUNTER GETS LEFT BEHIND!

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Bob Cherry's Chase!

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of HARRY WHARTON & Co. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Bob Cherry's face was white, and his eyes were glinting, as he dashed out of the school gates. Harry Wharton & Co. put on a spurt and joined him.
(See Chapter 5.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Trouble for Bob Cherry.

"BOB!"

"Bob Cherry!"

"Stop, old fellow! What on earth's the matter?"

Bob Cherry did not stop. He was dashing along the passage at Greyfriars with his face white, his eyes gleaming, and a letter clutched tightly in his hand. He did not seem to hear his chums calling to him.

Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, and Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull stared blankly at Bob as he rushed by. He did not even turn his head as they called.

"What on earth's the matter with Bob?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, in alarm. "Where is he going?"

"Head's study, it looks like," said Nugent. "What the dickens——"

"Bob! Bob Cherry!"

The junior did not answer.

Harry Wharton dashed after him down the passage, and caught him by the shoulder just before he reached the door of the Head's study. Wharton swung his chum round by main force, and Bob gasped.

"Let me go, Harry!"

"What's the matter?"

"I've got to see the Head!"

Wharton tightened his grip upon his chum, as Bob struggled to free himself. The captain of the Remove was utterly amazed. He had never seen Bob Cherry in such a state of excitement before.

"Let me go!" panted Bob.

"But what——"

"I tell you I've got to see the Head!"

"Has he sent for you?"

"No, no; but——"

"Go easy!" said Harry, still holding his chum in a firm grip. "You can't rush into the Head's study like a giddy Red Indian on the warpath, Bob. Take it easy!"

"You don't understand! I must see him!"

"Well, he's always on view," said Wharton. "No hurry for a minute. Stop and take breath, anyway, old chap."

Bob Cherry made an effort to calm himself.

"You don't understand, Harry," he repeated.

"No: I'm blessed if I do!" said Harry, with a nod. "But if you explained I might understand, you know. I'd try."

"I've had this letter," said Bob, in a low, gasping voice. "You remember my cousin, Paul Tyrrell, the chap who came here under an assumed name as football coach, and tried to rob the Head—the scoundrel! He was let off on condition that he cleared out, and he was supposed to have taken a steamer at Southampton for somewhere abroad."

"Hasn't he gone?"

"If he did, he's come back. This letter is from him. He's in Courtfield now, and he's had the cheek to write to me to go and see him," said Bob, grinding his teeth. "I'm going to show the letter to the Head, and ask him to send

the police there and have the villain arrested. That's the only thing to do. The Head let him off for my sake, to save the disgrace for me, and now he's come back. He's going to prison—that's where he ought to have been long ago. It's the only thing to do. Now, let me go, Harry!"

Wharton shook his head.

"I'm jolly well not going to let you go," he said. "You're coming with us to the study now. We'll jaw over this before you show the letter to the Head. You don't want to do a thing like this in a hurry."

"Look here——"

"Come up to the study first, anyway. Five minutes more or less won't make any difference," urged Wharton.

"I'm going to get it settled. I'm going to have him taken up!" said Bob Cherry. "It was wrong of me to let the Head let him off. He's up to his tricks again, and now he's going to get it in the neck! Come up to the study, be blowed! Let me go, Harry!"

"Frank! Johnny! Collar him!"

"Look here," roared Bob Cherry, "I——"

"Bring him up to the study."

Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull caught hold of the struggling junior. Bob Cherry resisted, but among the three of them he was swept off his feet, and rushed back along the passage. He caught hold of the banisters at the stairs, and roared.

"Lemme go, you asses!"

"Up with him!"

"What's that blessed row about?" exclaimed Wingate of the Sixth, looking out of the doorway of the prefect's room. "If you fags don't make less noise——"

"It's all right," said Harry Wharton, "we're helping Bob upstairs, that's all. Now, come on, Bob, or we shall have to drag you."

"You silly asses!" roared Bob.

"This way to the study!"

"Look here——"

"Take his feet, Franky—or rather, take one each, you two, and they're such jolly big ones," said Harry. "I'll take his head. Now then!"

"Groo! Oh, you chumps—oh!"

In the grasp of his three chums, Bob Cherry was rushed up the stairs. He was swept along the landing and the passage, and the four juniors rolled breathlessly into No. 1 Study in the Remove. Bob Cherry was dumped down on the carpet, and Wharton slammed the study door, and put his back to it. Nugent sat on the table and gasped, and Johnny Bull picked up the poker, as a hint to Bob what he might expect if he gave further trouble. Bob Cherry struggled into a sitting posture.

"You silly asses!" he gasped.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Pile it on!" he said. "You can slang as much as you like; but we're going to help you out. You can show the letter to the Head, if you like, after we've held a council of war on the subject. Don't be a giddy goat, Bob! If your cousin is arrested, it will be a fearful disgrace, and you'll never hear the end of it. If there's some other way of getting rid of the cad it will be better!"

"Look at the letter," said Bob Cherry, staggering to his feet, and tossing the letter on the table. "I tell you there's no other way! He's asking for it, I tell you!"

"We'll see."

Wharton picked up the letter, and the three juniors read it together. Their brows knitted as they read it. It was quite in the style of the man who had imposed himself upon the Head of Greyfriars under a false name, and had repaid Dr. Locke's kindness with the basest ingratitude. Paul Tyrrell had acted a treacherous part at Greyfriars, careless of the disgrace he would bring upon his cousin when the truth came out. Bob Cherry, sorely against his inclinations, had kept the rascal's secret until he had discovered that the man was robbing the Head. And now Tyrrell had had the audacity to return to the neighbourhood of the school, evidently depending for his safety upon Bob Cherry's fear of disgrace in case he was arrested. The letter ran:

"Dear Bob,—I dare say it will surprise you to find that I am back again. The fact is I am hard up, but I have a plan for raising money, and, if you help me, I shall clear out for good. You needn't be alarmed; I am on to a good thing, and it is quite honest. I only require a little help, and then I shall be as well-off as I can want, and I shall be able to repay the money your father advanced at the time of my trouble at the bank, and to clear off all my old debts. I repeat that the thing is perfectly honest and above-board, and it's a chance for me to get my head above water. Under the circumstances, I think you ought to help me, for the honour of the family. Come and see me here, at the Courtfield Arms, as soon as you can. I shall expect you this evening.—Your affectionate cousin, PAUL TYRRELL."

"Well, what do you think of that?" demanded Bob Cherry. "He's up to his tricks again. He's got a scheme—I remember he always had some scheme. It's some new swindle, of course!"

"He says it's honest this time," remarked Nugent.

Bob Cherry snorted.

"He couldn't run straight if he tried, that rotter," he said, "and he never will try; I know that! When he got into trouble at the bank, as he calls it—robbed his employers, as other people called it—he stuck all his relations for money to pay it off and save him from prison. My poor old pater was done along with the rest. He promised to stay abroad, and instead of that, he came here and tried to rob the Head. The Head let him go, to save my name in the school; but he's not going to get off this time. What he wants is a few years in prison, and now he's going to get 'em!"

"Hold on!" said Harry quietly. "There's a sporting chance that he means business this time, Bob, and if he is going to try to be honest, he ought to have a chance. And if he's arrested, old chap, it will never be at an end—the disgrace will stick to you. Think what Vernon-Smith and Snoop will have to say about it."

"I don't care!"

"Well, we care for you," said Wharton. "There's more ways of killing a cat, and punishing a rotter. I've got an idea."

Bob grunted.

"Better have him arrested," he said. "He's my cousin, and I know him. It's bound to come sooner or later. Why not now?"

"I tell you I've got an idea. You shall keep this appointment."

"What?"

"And we'll come with you!"

"Eh?"

"We'll hear what he's got to say," resumed Harry Wharton, "and if it's a swindle, we'll give him a lesson ourselves, without bothering the police. We'll rag him in his room—bump him, drench him, and give him a good hiding, and make him understand that the further he keeps off from Greyfriars, the better it will be for his health. That will have the same effect as arresting him, and will save all the jaw and disgrace on the subject."

Bob Cherry burst into a chuckle.

"Well, that's not a bad wheeze!" he exclaimed. "I never thought of that! Come to think of it, I'd rather hammer him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then it's settled," said Harry. "You should always come to your uncle for advice, Bob. Burn that letter, and we'll ask Wingate for passes out this evening, and go and see your estimable cousin. We'll take Inky along with us, as he's in the secret already. Now, you're not going to the Head?"

"No," said Bob. "It's all right."

"Good!"

And so it was settled.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Nothing for Bunter.

"I SAY, you fellows——"

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, met the juniors as they came downstairs. Bob Cherry was looking calmer now. Now that he had had time to think calmly about the matter, he was glad that Wharton had stopped him on his way to the Head's study. There was no doubt that Paul Tyrrell was an incorrigible rascal, and that sooner or later he would find himself in the natural home for rascals—prison. But Bob realised that it was better for

Harry Wharton dragged some coins from his pocket and flung them at Bunter, and the fat junior blinked in astonishment. "Blessed if I can see what the hurry's about!" he murmured. "Seems to me that everybody's off their silly rockers!" (*See Chapter* 4.)

that to happen at some other time, and in some other place. The disgrace of such a thing would be more than he could bear if it happened at Greyfriars. He felt that he would not be able to remain at the school afterwards.

"I say——"

"No, Bunter!" said the chums of the Remove, together in one voice.

Bunter blinked at them through his big spectacles in astonishment.

"Eh?" he ejaculated.

"No!"

"Oh, I say, you fellows! You don't know what I was going to ask you yet!" said Billy Bunter.

"Yes, we do—you want a postal-order cashed in advance," grinned Frank Nugent, "and you're not going to get it. See?"

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"And we haven't any bobs to lend," said Johnny Bull, "so you needn't go on. And we don't want to come over to the tuckshop, thanks!"

"So you can buzz off," said Harry Wharton.

Bunter blinked at them indignantly.

"I wasn't going to ask you for a loan," he said.

"My hat! Are you ill?"

"Do it here, you rotters——"

"You must be ill, Bunty!" said Nugent anxiously. "You ought to see a doctor."

"Look here, I was going to ask you——"

"Yes, we know that; and we haven't any tin to lend."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you'd seen Mauleverer!" shouted Bunter. "I'm looking for Mauleverer. Have you seen him?"

"Oh," said Wharton, "is it Mauleverer this time? As a matter of fact, Mauly is stony for once; he's told me so, so you needn't trouble to look for him, either."

"There's a letter for him," said Bunter, with dignity. "I was going to oblige him by taking it to him, that's all. I'm always willing to oblige a fellow, and as I know Mauly is expecting a remittance from his guardian, I thought he might be anxious to get the letter. That's all, you rotters! Go and eat coke!"

"Have you got the letter there?" asked Nugent.

"Yes."

"Is there a remittance in it?"

"Oh, really, Nugent—you don't think I've opened it, do you?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As a matter of fact," said Bunter confidentially, "it happened to come open, as—as I was carrying it. You know how careless some people are in fastening their letters. And—and I was careful that nothing fell out of it—so careful that I couldn't help seeing there was a cheque in it. And so——"

"You spying rotter!" said Wharton, in disgust. "If I were Mauly, I'd give you a hiding for opening my letter."

"It was quite an accident. You see——"

"Oh, rats!"

The juniors walked on, leaving Billy Bunter to continue his quest of Lord Mauleverer unaided. The fat junior snorted, and ascended the stairs slowly and laboriously. Billy Bunter did not like stairs. He had a great deal of weight to carry about, and stairs tried his breath very much.

But Billy Bunter would have climbed all the stairs in Greyfriars twice over, for the sake of extracting a loan at the end of them. He plodded up the stairs, and gasped his way along the Remove passage, and reached the door of Lord Mauleverer's study. Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove, was the champion slacker of the Form. He was also the richest fellow in Greyfriars, and the amount of his pocket money made even Vernon-Smith, the son of a millionaire, open his eyes sometimes. Lord Mauleverer was a millionaire himself, and he had as much money as he wanted, and he was as careless with five-pound notes as other fellows were with sixpences.

In the opinion of Gosling, the porter, and Trotter, the page, Lord Mauleverer was a real nobleman of the first water. He never gave less than half-a-crown as a tip, and frequently half-a-sovereign, if that coin happened to be the first to hand. But the remittance Bunter was carrying to him was unusually large even for Lord Mauleverer. Billy Bunter, having opened the letter by accident, had looked at the cheque inside, and it had almost taken his breath away. The Owl of the Remove tapped at the door of the schoolboy millionaire, but there was no reply from within. Bunter tapped again, most respectfully, and then opened the door.

He blinked round the study through his big spectacles. It was dark in the study, but Bunter caught sight of a form reclining on the sofa by the window. Lord Mauleverer was at home. Bunter came into the study and coughed. There was no sound from the schoolboy earl, and Bunter coughed—and coughed again. But Lord Mauleverer did not speak. Bunter coughed more emphatically.

"I say, Mauly!" he said, at last.

There was the sound of a yawn.

"Hallo!" said Mauleverer. "Who's that?"

"It's me—Bunter!"

"Oh, it's you, Bunter, is it? Clear out, there's a good fellow. I'm tired."

"Why haven't you lit the gas, Mauly?"

"Can't reach it from here!" yawned his lordship.

"You could get up, I suppose?"

"Too much trouble."

"I say, Mauly, I'll light it for you, if you like," said Billy Bunter. "Got any matches?"

"I don't know, my dear fellow."

"Can't you feel in your pockets?"

"No."

"Why not?" demanded Bunter.

"Tired."

Billy Bunter grunted, and fumbled in his own pockets. He found a match, and struck it on his boot, and lighted the gas. Lord Mauleverer blinked sleepily in the light. His head reposed on a silken cushion, and he did not move it. Lord Mauleverer's study was more like the dwelling of a Sybarite than the study of a junior in the Lower Fourth Form. The fellows at Greyfriars furnished their studies themselves; and Lord Mauleverer had furnished his by the simple expedient of giving carte blanche to a firm in London. The result was most luxurious, and Mauleverer himself did not know how much it had cost. Billy Bunter blinked at the slacker of the Remove.

"I say, Mauly, there's a letter for you!"

"All serene!"

"I've brought it up for you, Mauly!"

"Thanks!"

"Here it is!" said Bunter, holding up the letter.

"Lay it on the table."

"Don't you want to see it?"

"Yaas, some other time."

"But there's a remittance in it," said Bunter. "The letter came open by accident as I was—ahem!—carrying it. A cheque fell out."

"Never mind."

"Don't you want to see the cheque?"

"No."

"It's for two hundred pounds."

"Yaas!"

"It's on the bank in Courtfield, Mauly."

"Yaas!"

"If you buck up, you can get down to the bank before it closes and get the tin. I'll come with you if you like."

"Thanks!"

"Are you coming?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Tired!"

Bunter snorted. He was a lazy person himself; but he would never have been too tired to cash a cheque for two hundred pounds.

"I say, Mauly, old man, if you like, I'll go down to the bank and cash the cheque for you," he said.

"Begad, that's very kind of you, Bunter."

"I'd do anything for a fellow I like," said Bunter generously. "Besides, the fact is, I'm expecting a postal-order myself, and—and I can cash it at the post-office at the same time, if—if it comes. If it doesn't come, you wouldn't mind lending me a pound out of this, I'm sure, till—till my postal-order comes."

"Pleased!" yawned his lordship.

"Good! Then endorse the cheque, and give me a note for the bank, and I'll buzz off at once."

"No good."

"Why not?"

"Bank's closed."

"Oh, crumbs!" said Bunter. In his eagerness he had overlooked that obvious fact. "Never mind; I'll go for you in the morning."

"I'm going to Courtfield to-morrow myself," yawned Lord Mauleverer. "I'm going to get a motor-cycle and some things with that money. I can cash the cheque at the same time. Much obliged, all the same."

Bunter snorted.

"I say, Mauly, have you got a pound about you?"

"No."

"Got five bob?"

"I don't know."

"Can't you look?" shrieked Bunter.

"No. Tired."

"You—you—you——"

"Going?" asked his lordship amiably.

"Yes, you ass!" snapped Bunter.

"Close the door after you, won't you?" said Lord Mauleverer, with undiminished good-humour.

Bunter slammed the door.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Rogue and Fool!

WINGATE of the Sixth looked up from tea and muffins as the Famous Five came into his study that evening. Wingate minor was toasting muffins for his major. Harry Wharton & Co. were smiling sweet and ingratiating smiles, and it was easy for the captain of Greyfriars to guess that they wanted something.

"Well, what is it?" asked Wingate good-humouredly.

Wingate was always good-humoured with the Famous Five. They had befriended his minor when Jack Wingate was having a very troublesome time in his first days at Greyfriars; and Wingate major had not forgotten it.

"Hope you're getting on nicely with your new fag, Wingate," said Bob Cherry.

"Yes; Jack seems to take to it," said Wingate.

"Well, in that case, I don't mind giving up fagging for you myself," said Bob Cherry. "Anything to oblige you, Wingate."

Wingate grinned.

"What do you want?" he asked. "You haven't come here to ask me how I'm getting on with my new fag. What is it, now?"

The juniors coughed.

"Well, there were some other things, too," said Bob Cherry. "We want a pass out of gates this evening, among others."

"To go down to Courtfield," explained Harry Wharton.

"Just a little walk," said Johnny Bull.

"The walkfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Only a pass out for five," added Nugent.

Wingate looked serious.

"That's a big order," he said. "What do you want to go to Courtfield for? Some larks with the Courtfield Council School boys, I suppose?"

"Not this time," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "The fact is, Bob's got a relation there, staying there, and he wants to take us to see him."

"Oh, that alters the case," said Wingate. "That's all right. Back before bedtime, you know."

"Yes; honour bright!"

"Here you are, then."

And Wingate wrote out the pass. Wharton took it, and the juniors thanked the captain and quitted the study in haste, glad to escape further explanations.

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "Now let's get out."

And the chums of the Remove "got out" promptly. In a few minutes they were tramping along the dusky road to Courtfield. Bob Cherry's face was very grim as he strode on. He was thinking of some of the things he would say to his cousin.

The juniors reached Courtfield, and in a few minutes more were at the Courtfield Arms.

A man was standing at the inn door, looking out, and the juniors recognised him at once. It was Bob Cherry's cousin, Paul Tyrrell—though that was not the name he had been known by when he imposed himself upon the Head of Greyfriars at a football coach. He nodded to Bob, and stared at the other fellows.

"I expected to see you alone, Bob," he said, holding out his hand.

"I dare say you did," replied Bob grimly, ignoring the outstretched hand; "but my friends have come with me, you see."

Tyrrell dropped his hand to his side, and gritted his teeth.

"I want to have a private talk with you," he said.

"Very likely; but you won't get it! All these chaps know about you, and they are going to be present, and give me their opinion on what you have to say."

"I refuse to say a word before a crowd of kids!" said Tyrrell angrily.

"All right; we'll get back, then."

"Look here, Bob——"

"Go and eat coke!"

Bob Cherry's manner was decidedly uncompromising. Tyrrell hesitated.

"Well, you can all come in," he said at last. "Come on. I'll show you the way to my room. We can talk there without being heard."

"I don't care if we are heard!"

"Follow me!" said Tyrrell sharply.

He led the way into the inn. The chums of Greyfriars followed him upstairs to a room overlooking the street, where Tyrrell turned up the gas. The adventurer closed the door, and indicated a chair to Bob. He took no notice of the other juniors.

"I'll stand, thanks!" said Bob. "I sha'n't be here long."

Tyrrell shrugged his shoulders.

"Just as you like. Will you have a cigarette?"

"No, you rotter!"

Tyrrell shrugged his shoulders again, and lighted a cigarette himself. Bob Cherry watched him grimly. Harry Wharton & Co. were silent. The more closely they saw Tyrrell, the more they were impressed by his shifty looks. It was extremely unlikely that the black sheep of the family had any scheme in his head which would bear the light of day. But, as Wharton had said, he was to be given a chance.

"Now, what's the wheeze you mentioned in your letter?" demanded Bob impatiently.

"It's a grand idea, Bob."

Bob sniffed.

"What do you think of a scheme for making thousands of pounds, with a capital of a hundred or a couple of hundred?" asked Tyrrell.

"I should think it was a swindle."

Tyrrell grinned.

"Same old Bob!" he grinned. "You never change. Always so direct, and so jolly polite."

"I haven't come here to be polite," growled Bob.

"Apparently not," agreed Tyrrell, with a grin. "However, to the point. I have worked out a scheme for raking in money ad lib—as much as I want. I require a small capital. I could do it on a hundred quid. And when the scheme's a success, I shall be simply rolling in money—all honestly got, mind. What I want you to do is to help me to get the hundred quid or so."

"Out of my pocket-money of four bob a week?" asked Bob Cherry sarcastically.

"No; your father would hand it out, if you told him you thought I had a good scheme on to get better off," said Tyrrell. "Besides, you have rich friends at Greyfriars. You could borrow of them, to be repaid later. The money would be quite safe."

"Yes; I'm likely to do that—I don't think!"

"It's a dead certain success!"

"Then why don't you ask my father himself?"

"No good; he wouldn't listen to me. As a matter of fact, I think he would probably grow violent if I visited his house at all."

"I think that's very likely. It may interest you to know that I was taking your letter to the Head, to ask him to have you arrested, when Wharton stopped me."

"That would have been a fool's trick, Bob. You don't want to have the disgrace at Greyfriars of having a convict

for a cousin. But to get on. Suppose I show you that I've got a certain system for getting money, quite honestly, would you do your best to help me raise the little capital I need?"

"Well, yes; but I shall want a lot of convincing. What's the scheme?"

"You've heard of Monte Carlo, I suppose?"

Bob Cherry stared.

"Monte Carlo?"

"Yes."

"What on earth have you got to do with Monte Carlo?"

"That's what I'm coming to," said Tyrrell. "You've heard of the place, of course?"

"Of course I have!" said Bob. "It's a place where they play some rotten gambling game, and silly asses go to lose their money."

"Not all of them," said Tyrrell. "I'll explain a little. They play a game at Monte Carlo called roulette. It's played with a ball on a wheel, marked with thirty-six numbers and zero. One number comes up every time the wheel is turned, and that's the winning number. Now, if you win on a number, you get thirty-five times the amount you stake."

"Well, if there's thirty-six numbers and zero, that's one chance in thirty-seven of your number coming up," said Bob. "Not very healthy, I think. The bankers have two extra chances against you."

"Yes; if you played by chance. But if you have a system——"

"A what?"

"A system," said Tyrrell, heedless of Bob Cherry's glare of incredulous disgust. "If you have a system to beat the bank, you rake in the money instead of the croupiers. The numbers don't come up in regular order, of course. There are runs on a number sometimes. I've been there, you see, and watched the game."

"Did you win?"

"Well, no," admitted Tyrrell. "I lost. But I hadn't perfected the system then. You see——"

"You've perfected it now?"

"Yes."

"A system for breaking the bank at Monte Carlo?"

"That's it!"

"And that's the scheme?"

"That's the scheme," said Tyrrell.

Bob Cherry drew a deep breath.

"And that's the scheme you want me to help you raise capital for?"

"Exactly!"

"You silly idiot!" said Bob Cherry. "Bless me if I don't begin to think that you're more fool than rogue, after all! I can see the bankers allowing a chap to come in and take their money away—I don't think! You ass! If there was a system to beat the bank, would it have gone on all these years piling up money? Do you think you're the first silly chump to go there with a system? My only hat! The proper place for you is in a home for idiots!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The rathefulness is terrific."

"Listen to me!" urged Tyrrell.

"Rot!" roared Bob Cherry. "Besides, even if the system would work, and you could collar their dirty money, I wouldn't help you to do it. It's gambling!"

"It's honest!" said Tyrrell.

"Well, I suppose it wouldn't come under the head of stealing," said Bob; "but it's gambling, and that's next door to stealing, anyway."

"Oh, you're a silly fool!" said Tyrrell. "I suppose it's no worse to play roulette than to put money on horses, is it?"

"I dare say it isn't; but I don't do that myself. I should be jolly well sacked from Greyfriars if I did—and serve me right."

"I'm not asking you to do it. I simply want you to help me get the capital to make a start. Suppose I prove to you that the system is infallible——"

"You can't!"

"I can. I've got lists of numbers that I took down when I was there—genuine permanences, as they call them. I've got thousands of numbers, in the exact order as they occurred on the roulette-table, and I've tried my system over them. It wins all along the line—a win every ten rounds at the most. That means that you win thirty-five pieces every time you lose ten. If you play with five-franc pieces, as most of them do—that's the the minimum stake—you win twenty-five of them—five quid, that is—over each deal. If you play with quids——"

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry. "Of all the silly asses that ever gassed I think you take the cake. You've brought

me over here to hear you gabble about a system at roulette. I thought of a good many things, but I never thought of that. Do you know what I brought these fellows with me for? If you had proposed some swindle, we were going to rag you, and give you a jolly good lesson. But we won't rag you now. I think you're a bigger idiot than you are rascal. You can go and do your dirty gambling if you can raise the money; but I wouldn't hand out tuppence towards it, if you were certain of breaking the bank the first try. Understand that?"

"Look here, Bob——"

"Go and get a job, and do some honest work for once in your life," said Bob, with withering contempt. "There are better men than you digging in the fields and mending boots. Don't talk to me about Monte Carlo! I think the place ought to be blown up myself. Of all the silly idiots—— Oh, come on, you chaps, let's get out! He makes me tired."

Tyrrell rose to his feet. His face was white.

"Then you won't listen to me, Bob?"

"No, I won't!"

"With a capital of a hundred pounds I could make thousands——"

"Thousands of rats!" said Bob Cherry scornfully.

"It's the chance of a lifetime——"

"Rot! Come on, you fellows!"

"I'm a desperate man," said Tyrrell savagely. "If I lose this chance, I don't answer for what I may do. You can look out for disgrace at Greyfriars, Bob Cherry! If I'm going down, I'll drag you down with me!"

Bob Cherry swung back.

"So that's the talk, is it?" he demanded, his eyes blazing. "You want that ragging after all! Collar the cad, you chaps!"

"Hands off! I——"

"The collarfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Singh.

Bump!

The Greyfriars juniors all grasped the adventurer together. Tyrrell descended upon the floor with a violent concussion. The juniors were all angry now. It was not only the dishonesty of the man, but his threats to Bob Cherry "got their backs up" at once. They had no mercy for a blackmailer.

Bump, bump!

Swash! Sploosh!

"Yaroooh!" yelled the hapless adventurer, as the contents of the water-jug splashed him from head to foot. "Ow! Oh! I—I—I'll smash you! I—I——"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Ow—yow! Leggo! You young fiends—ow——"

Bump!

With a final terrific bump the juniors let him go, and he rolled on the floor yelling and spluttering. Bob Cherry & Co. quitted the room, leaving him there, and left the inn. Bob's face was dark as they set out for Greyfriars.

"The utter cad!" he said. "The utter idiot! System to beat the bank at Monte Carlo—and I'm to ask my old dad for money for a scheme like that! The utter chump!" Then he chuckled. "But I don't think he'll trouble me any more. He won't want to be ragged again! I fancy he'll clear out of Courtfield to-morrow!"

Bob Cherry was right there—but he little dreamed of the circumstances under which his rascally cousin would clear out of Courtfield on the morrow.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Mauleverer's Money.

BILLY BUNTER kept an eye on Lord Mauleverer when the Remove fellows came out of their Form-room on the following day. Billy Bunter had not forgotten that cheque, and he fully intended to be present when it was cashed. That Lord Mauleverer did not care for his company was nothing at all to the Owl of the Remove. The champion cadger of Greyfriars could not afford to be thin-skinned. Indeed, Bob Cherry had expressed the opinion that the Owl of the Remove had a hide that a hippopotamus might have envied.

"Here we are, Mauly!" said Bunter affectionately, trotting along beside the schoolboy millionaire, as the latter strolled out into the Close.

Lord Mauleverer glanced down at the fat junior.

"Yaas, here we are!" he agreed.

"You're going down to Courtfield to cash that cheque, I suppose? It will be too late after afternoon school," Bunter remarked.

"How good of you to remind me," said his lordship.

"You can always rely on an old pal like me," said Bunter. "I'm going to walk down to Courtfield with you, Mauly!"

Lord Mauleverer made a grimace. He did not like Bunter calling him by that affectionate abbreviation of his name; but he was too tolerant and good-natured to say so. Neither did he specially care for a walk with Bunter. But again he was too courteous to say so.

"I don't want to bother you to come, Bunter," he remarked.

"No trouble at all!" assured Bunter. "It will be a pleasure!"

"Yaas; but——"

"Besides, you might meet some of the Highcliffe chaps," said Bunter. "They'd rag you, you know, and then I shall be there to protect you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunter warmly.

"Excuse me," said his lordship; "pray come if you'd care to!"

"Right-ho! I'm ready."

And Billy Bunter trotted away with his lordship. They left the gates of Greyfriars, and walked down the long white road to Courtfield. Fortunately, they did not meet any of the Highcliffe fellows, and so Bunter was not called upon to show his powers as a warrior. He would have been more likely to display his abilities as a runner. Bunter waited outside the Courtfield branch of the London and Southern Bank while Lord Mauleverer went in and cashed his cheque. His lordship came out, and Bunter blinked at him eagerly.

"Got it?" he asked.

"Got what?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"The money."

"Yaas. One generally gets the money when one cashes a cheque," said Lord Mauleverer, in surprise.

"It's an awful lot of money for a kid like you!" said Bunter, with quite a fatherly air. "I'll tell you what, Mauly: I'll mind it for you, if you like, while you've not spent it—it will be safer with me."

"Thank you, dear boy!"

"Hand it over, then!"

"Oh, no! I'll mind it myself, thanks!"

"Look here, Mauly——"

"Must be getting back to dinner," said Lord Mauleverer, looking at his watch. "I shall have just time to see the motor-cycle man, and then—— Begad!"

The schoolboy earl broke off with an exclamation of surprise. A man was smoking a cigarette outside the bank, and he nodded carelessly to Lord Mauleverer. Bunter blinked at the man; he was too short-sighted to recognise him.

"Fellow you know, Mauly?" he asked.

"Yaas: it's the football coach, who was kicked out of Greyfriars—the fellow said he was mixed up in a robbery or something," said Lord Mauleverer. "Begad, I wonder he has the cheek to come back here!"

It was Tyrrell. He had been watching Bunter, utterly unknown to the Owl of the Remove, and waiting for Lord Mauleverer to emerge from the bank. He had heard the exchange of words between the two juniors after Mauleverer had emerged from the building, and a peculiar glitter had come into his eyes. He appeared to reflect for a moment, and then he came over towards the two boys, and raised his hat to the schoolboy earl.

Lord Mauleverer stared at him. He did not know about the man being Bob Cherry's cousin; and he did not know all the story of Tyrrell's doings at Greyfriars. But he knew that the man had been compelled to leave the school for dishonesty.

"I dare say you are surprised to see me here," said Tyrrell.

"Yaas, begad!"

"I shouldn't have spoken to you," said Tyrrell, "only Bob Cherry wants you."

"Bob Cherry! He's at Greyfriars!"

"He came here after you did," said Tyrrell. "He fell in with a crowd of Highcliffe fellows, and they have been handling him rather roughly."

"Begad!"

"He can't get back to Greyfriars," explained Tyrrell. "I should help him there, only I—I can't very well go to the school, after what's happened. He's in the Ayre Field. He's twisted his ankle rather badly. Will you help him?"

"Yaas, rather!" said Lord Mauleverer unsuspiciously. "Come on, Bunter! We can get the poor chap back to the school between us."

Bunter hesitated.

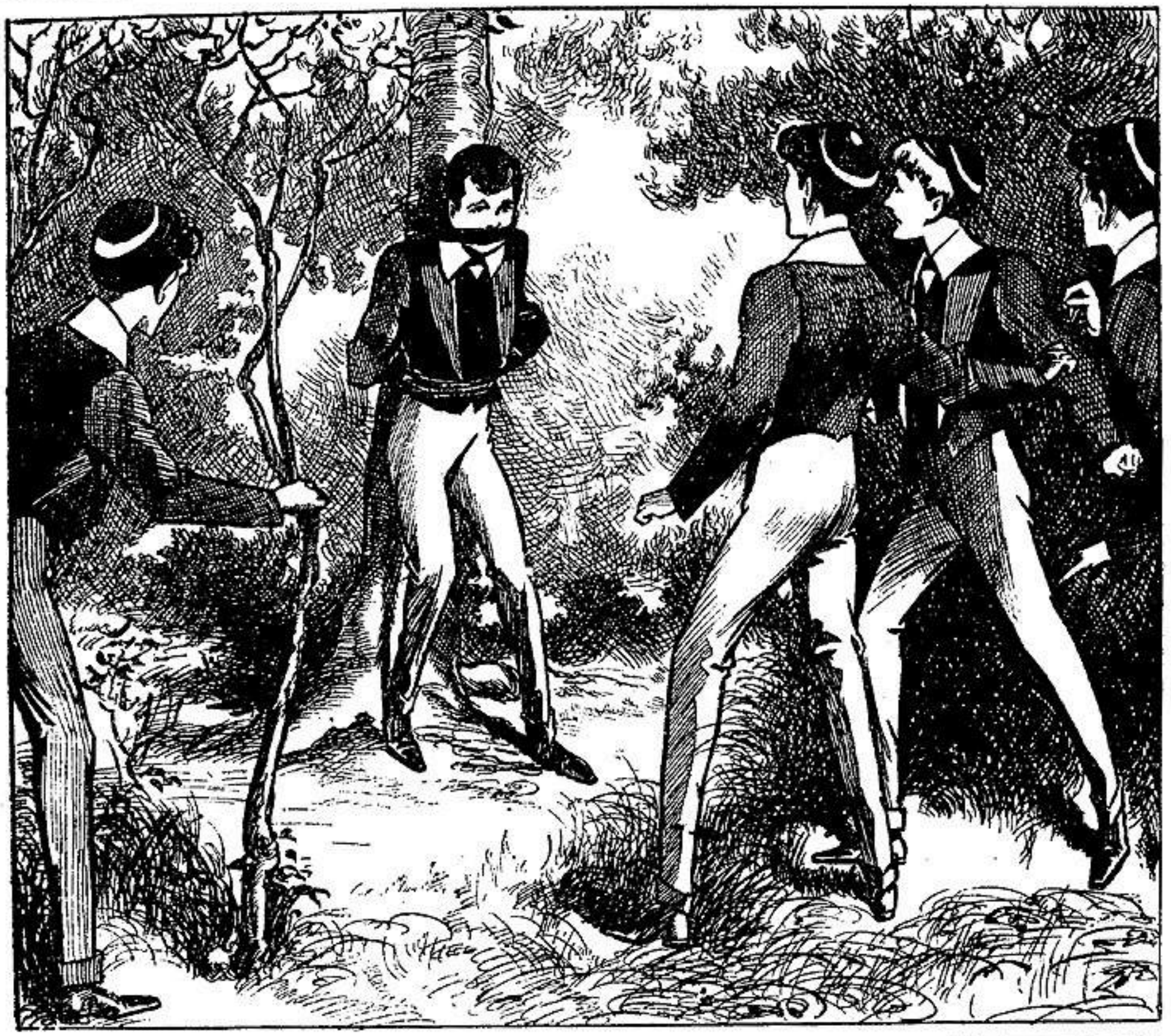
"Are any of the Highcliffe fellows still there?" he asked.

Tyrrell nodded.

"Yes, they're hanging about. I fancy there may be a row; but you fellows don't mind that. I'll help you to get Cherry clear."

"Come on!" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer. "You're not afraid of the Highcliffe cads, Bunter?"

"Certainly not!" said Bunter indignantly. "But you'd better not get into a scrape with all that money about you,



Harry Wharton & Co. tore their way through the bushes. A figure in Etons was cramped against the trunk of a sapling, and a cord round him fastened him securely to the tree. Another cord wound round his head secured a twisted handkerchief in his mouth. It was Lord Mauleverer! (*See Chapter* 5.)

Mauleverer. It would be better to go back and send some of the fellows——"

"Oh, rot! Come on!"

"Well, look here, I'll take the two hundred quid to Greyfriars, if you like, while you go and help Bob Cherry," said Bunter. "Then it will be quite safe."

"Go and eat coke!"

"Oh, really, Mauly——"

"If you're afraid of the Highcliffe cads, you can buzz off!" said Lord Mauleverer scornfully. "Lead the way, sir, please!"

"This way," said Tyrrell.

"Are you coming, Bunter?"

"I—I'd like to come, Mauly; but——"

"Come on, then."

"But I feel that I ought to get back to the school," said Bunter. "I disapprove of getting mixed up in these school rows, you know, and——"

"You beastly funk!" said Lord Mauleverer, in disgust.

"Oh, really, you know!"

"Poof!"

Lord Mauleverer hurried away with Tyrrell. Bunter blinked after them through his big spectacles, and then rolled away on the road to Greyfriars. He walked back to the school with unusual speed. Billy Bunter did not want to meet the Highcliffe fellows, especially if they were in force and out for mischief. Bunter was not a fighting-man, excepting in words. Like Hamlet, he could speak in daggers, but use none.

Billy Bunter rolled in at the gates of Greyfriars in a discontented temper. He had wanted to have his whack, as he called it, in Lord Mauleverer's big cheque; and he had not had his whack yet. He grunted with dissatisfaction as he came up the school-house steps.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's wrong with the prize porker?" asked a cheerful voice, as Bunter received a sounding slap on the back.

Billy Bunter swung round with a gasp.

Bob Cherry stood before him. Bunter blinked at him in utter astonishment.

"B-B-Bob Cherry!" he gasped.

"Well, what is there astonishing in that?" asked Bob, in surprise. "You've seen me before, I suppose! I'm not a giddy ghost!"

"How did you get back?"

"Eh?"

"How did you get here?" demanded Bunter. "I came straight back from Courtfield, and you didn't pass me on the road."

"Off his rocker," said Frank Nugent. "It can't be sunstroke, with this blessed weather we've been having. Must be over-eating. Poor old Bunter!"

"Look here," said Bunter, "I think it was rotten to jape poor old Mauly like that, anyway. And it's not safe for

him to wander about with two hundred pounds in his pockets, either!"

"Quite raving," said Harry Wharton compassionately.

"Oh, really, Wharton!"

"The ravingfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed and ludicrous Bunter requires an estimable strait-jacket."

"Well, I think it's rotten!" said Bunter.

"What's rotten, you fathead?"

"Japing Mauly like that," said Bunter indignantly.

"Who's been japing Mauly?" asked Bob Cherry.

"You have!"

"Eh? Have I?"

"You jolly well know you have!" grunted Bunter. "If you haven't been out, you can't have been handled by the Highcliffe fellows, and you haven't twisted your ankle."

"Who said I had?" demanded Bob Cherry, wondering whether the fat junior had really taken leave of his senses after all.

"Yorke did," said Bunter; "and I suppose you put him up to it, as he said he had come from you, and Mauly's gone with him to find you and help you home. I think it's rotten!"

Bob Cherry changed colour.

"Yorke! The man who used to be here as football coach?"

"Yes."

"Have you met him?"

"You can't stuff me," said Bunter. "You know jolly well you sent him with a spoof message to Mauly outside the bank in Courtfield, and——"

"Tell me what's happened, you fat fool!" said Bob Cherry, grasping the Owl of the Remove by the shoulder, and shaking him. "Tell me at once!"

"Ow!"

"Have you see my—I mean, Yorke?"

"Yow! If—if you shake me like that you'll make my glasses fall off!" roared Bunter; "and if they get broken —— Ow!"

"Will you tell me?"

"You'll have to pay for them! Ow!"

Bob Cherry gritted his teeth. Wharton laid a hand on his chum's arm.

"Easy does it, Bob! Let Bunter tell us in his own way; it's the quickest. Now, Billy, tell us what's happened. It may be serious."

Bunter smoothed out his ruffled collar, and set his glasses straight on his fat little nose, and blinked furiously at Bob Cherry.

"Look here, I'm not going to be shaken——"

"Now, Billy!"

"Like a sack of potatoes, and——"

"Tell us what's happened, Bunty, and I'll lend you a bob," said Wharton.

Bunter's angry countenance cleared.

"Well, that's all right," he said. "I admit I'm rather short of money just at present, owing to a disappointment about a postal-order."

"Will you tell us what has happened, you imbecile?" said Bob Cherry, in a tone of concentrated rage.

"Oh, really, Cherry. I thought it was a jape, of course, when I saw you here. That man Yorke—I think his name was Yorke, though I shouldn't wonder if he had an assumed name here, as he turned out to be a rotter."

"Yes, yes; go on."

"I went with Mauly to cash his cheque," explained Bunter. "Yorke met us outside the bank afterwards. He said you'd been hurt in a scrap with the Highcliffe fellows, and Mauly went with him to help you back to the school. I suppose it was a jape!"

"Did you say Mauleverer had much money with him?"

"Yes; two hundred quid. He got it at the bank, you see. He's cashed a big cheque: he's going to get a motor-bike, and I'm going to give him my advice."

"Did Tyrrell—did the man know he had the money?" asked Bob Cherry, his face like chalk.

"I dare say he heard us talking about it," said Bunter. "You see, I offered to mind it for Mauly, as he's so careless with money; and Yorke was standing there, and——"

"Where did they go?"

"I think he said the Acre Field; but——"

"Come on, you fellows!"

Bob Cherry dashed across the Close towards the gates. Wharton and Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh dashed after him; and after them dashed Billy Bunter, crimson with indignation.

"Wharton—Wharton! I say, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton paused for a moment. He thought that Billy Bunter wanted to give him some scrap of information he had forgotten.

"What is it?" he asked hastily.

"The bob!"

"What?"

"You were going to lend me a bob, and——"

"You idiot!" howled Wharton.

He dragged some coins from his pocket and flung them at Bunter, and the fat junior howled. Then Wharton dashed out of the Close after his comrades, who were already out of the gates. Bunter blinked after them in astonishment.

"Blessed if I can see what the hurry's about!" he murmured. "Seems to me that they're off their silly rockers. That fathead biffed me on the nose with his rotten money. The ass has chucked two bob—my hat—three!"

Billy Bunter gathered up the shillings, which had fallen on the ground round him, and made a bee-line for the tuck-shop. Billy Bunter's fat face was wreathed in smiles now. People could have thrown shillings at Billy Bunter all day long if they liked, so long as he was allowed to keep the shillings. Bunter rolled into the tuck-shop, and proceeded to give orders.

"Jam tarts, please, Mrs. Mimble, and some ginger-pop. Yes; I've got some money, and I'll thank you to serve me, please." Billy Bunter's capacious jaws closed upon a jam tart. "Well, this it prime; but all the same, if that chap Wharton isn't jolly civil, I won't let him have the money back out of my postal-order—when it comes!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
Lord Mauleverer Puts His Foot Down.

BOB CHERRY'S face was white, and his eyes were glinting, as he dashed out of the school gates. Wharton put on a spurt and joined him.

"Bob, old man——"

"Hurry up!"

"The hurryfulness is terrific."

"Bob, what do you think——"

Bob Cherry ground his teeth.

"You heard what Bunter said," he gasped out, as he ran. "Tyrrell was spying on Lord Mauleverer when he went into the bank—must have seen him come into the town, and when he went to the bank he'd guess that Mauly had gone there for more money. Then Bunter's silly chatter would tell him it was a big sum. And he invented that yarn about my being hurt—to get Mauly out somewhere by himself."

"To—to——"

"To rob him, of course," snapped Bob Cherry.

"You think he would?"

"I know he would."

"The awful rascal! But—but Mauly wouldn't take it quietly—he'd put up a fight."

Bob Cherry groaned.

"Then he'll be hurt. I tell you that man is capable of anything. Hurry up! Bunter said the Acre Field — you know what a lone place that is. Tyrrell learned all about this part when he was at Greyfriars, and he knew where to take him—where they wouldn't be likely to be interfered with. I wish you'd let me go to the Head after all yesterday, Harry!"

"I wish I had now!"

"Can't be helped," said Johnny Bull. "Buck up, that's all!"

The five juniors tore on. They had not the slightest doubt that Tyrrell had enticed Lord Mauleverer to that lonely field in order to rob him of the money he had drawn from the bank. And they were not likely to be in time to stop him. The rascal had had ample time to carry out his scheme and escape. They were anxious about Lord Mauleverer. In spite of his slackness, the schoolboy earl had plenty of pluck, and he was not likely to allow himself to be robbed easily. What had happened to Lord Mauleverer?

Bob Cherry was ahead of the others. He plunged through a hedge, and raced across a field, and then another, heedless of large notices which warned all comers that trespassers would be prosecuted, by order. He scrambled over a deep dry ditch, and came panting into the Acre Field. It was a lonely place, with big [illegible]s shadowing it on all sides, and on one side the deep shadows of Friardale Wood. The field seemed to be empty, save for a couple of cows grazing peace-

fully at the further end. The juniors looked round them quickly.

In a corner of the field was a pond, and round it grew thick bushes. Bob Cherry dashed at once in that direction. A terrible picture was before his mind's eye—of Lord Mauleverer lying there under the brambles with upturned face, stunned—perhaps worse!

"Mauly! Mauly!"

Bob Cherry shouted the name of his friend.

A faint sound came from the midst of the bushes.

The juniors tore their way in.

A figure in Etons was cramped against the trunk of a sapling, and a cord round him fastened him securely to the tree. Another cord was wound round his head, securing a twisted handkerchief in his mouth.

It was Lord Mauleverer.

The schoolboy earl was red with the exertion of trying to get rid of his gag. He could make no sound but a low mumble. Bob Cherry ran to him, and unfastened the cord, and dragged the handkerchief from his mouth.

"Ow!" gasped Mauleverer. "Thanks, my dear fellow! Ow!"

"Are you hurt?"

"No—only rather rumpled," said the schoolboy earl. "Thank you for coming! I was wondering how long I should have to stay here, begad!"

"Have you been robbed?"

"Yaas."

Bob Cherry clenched his teeth.

"Was it Tyrrell?"

"No—chap named Yorke — chap who used to be footer coach at Greyfriars, and was turned out for something——"

"That's the man—my cousin!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Oh, if we could only have got here in time! How long has he been gone?"

"About a quarter of an hour! But he can't be your cousin," said Lord Mauleverer, in astonishment. "It was that man who——"

"Yes, yes, I know. You see, I didn't see——"

"He's got all your money?"

"Yaas."

"Much?"

"Not very much," said Lord Mauleverer innocently. "Only two hundred pounds. Lucky it wasn't a bigger cheque, what? You see, he told me you were hurt here, and brought me here, and then the beast suddenly turned on me. I tried to put up a fight, you know, but I hadn't an earthly. He tied me up like this, and I found it deuced uncomfortable, begad!"

"The villain! But we'll have him yet! He must have gone back to Courtfield to get away at the station——"

"More likely cut across country to Abbotsford or somewhere," said Nugent. "He would know that he'd be looked for in Courtfield."

"Come on, we must get to the police at once," said Bob desperately. "They'll telegraph his description all over the country, and they're bound to get him."

"I say——" began Lord Mauleverer.

"Was the money in notes, Mauly?"

"Yaas; fivers and tenners."

"Then he can't cash them in a hurry," said Bob. "The police will have him before he can get rid of them. You'll get the money back, Mauly. Come on: you must come with us to make the charge against him."

"Must I, begad?"

"Yes, yes! Come on—every minute gives the cad a chance to clear off."

Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"Hold on!" he said. "No need to hurry. More haste less speed, you know. Did you say that the man was your cousin?"

"Yes, yes. It'll all come out now," said Bob Cherry. "I don't care—so long as they catch him. That's the important thing."

"There are other important things, my dear fellow. If the man's your cousin, it'll be a frightful disgrace for you: it will all come out, and some of the fellows will have it up against you for ever and ever."

"I shall have to get out of Greyfriars," said Bob bitterly.

"You're not going to do that, for the sake of two hundred quid," said Lord Mauleverer calmly. "If the awful spoofer is your cousin, that alters matters. You see, I'm not going to have you disgraced because I was ass enough to walk into a trap. I ought to have had more sense, begad, knowing that he had been sacked from Greyfriars for some swindle or something. You're not going to suffer because I was an ass, Bob, old man."

"But he's robbed you."

"Yaas; never mind," said Lord Mauleverer easily. "I don't mind the money—it's rather a lot, but I'd rather lose it than have you bothered out of the school."

"You—you're a good old ass, Mauly," said Bob, with a choke in his throat: "but I'm not going to allow you to do

anything of the sort. You're not going to lose your money through my rotten cousin. He's going to be made to hand it back. And the sooner he's in prison the better. Come on!"

"What for?"

"You've got to make a charge."

"I'm not going to make any charge," said Lord Mauleverer, with calm determination.

"Look here——"

"That's settled."

"Then we'll go without you."

"No good if you do," said the schoolboy earl, with a chuckle. "You can't make a charge. If I don't charge him, he get off—what? I sha'n't make a charge, and I sha'n't give the numbers of the notes. Sorry to have to disappoint you, my dear fellow, but this is where I put my foot down."

"But if we say you've been robbed——"

"I don't want to have to tell any whoppers," said Lord Mauleverer, "but if you drive me to it, I shall have to say that I gave him the notes, begad."

The juniors stared at Lord Mauleverer.

There was no doubt that the matter was in the schoolboy earl's hands, to do as he liked. If he did not choose to make a charge against Tyrrell the charge could not be made. It was an unexpected obstacle.

"But look here," said Bob Cherry helplessly. "You—you can't do it, you know. This sort of thing would be compounding a felony, or something like that."

"Would it, begad?" said Lord Mauleverer, with an air of friendly interest. "You don't say so."

"You can't do it, you know."

"Well, I'm going to try."

"But—but—but——"

"Begad," said Lord Mauleverer, "it's past dinner-time, and I'm deuced hungry. You fellows coming back to Greyfriars?"

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh. He could not help it, serious as the matter was.

"You'll have to give in, Bob," he said. "It's in Mauly's hands. He's got to decide whether he'll prosecute or not. That's the giddy law."

Bob Cherry snorted.

"You're a silly ass, Mauly."

"I know I am, my dear fellow."

"And a thundering fathead."

"Yaas."

"And—and a frabjous duffer."

"Oh, good!"

"And—and the best fellow in the world," said Bob Cherry, his voice breaking. "I—I don't know what to do; but—but you sha'n't lose your money. I'll get it back somehow for you, I promise I will. And—and——"

Bob Cherry said no more; he could not. The tears were running down his cheeks. Lord Mauleverer looked at his watch. The thief had taken nothing but the money.

"Begad, we shall be late for dinner!" he said. "Come on!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Knows What to Do.

BOB CHERRY was in trouble in the Remove Form that afternoon several times. He could not fix his mind upon his lessons, and Mr. Quelch, the Remove-master, not understanding what was the matter with him, was very severe. Bob Cherry had two hundred lines to do by the time lessons were over. He hardly knew it. The afternoon had passed like a miserable dream to him. Shame and humiliation and impotent anger consumed him. His chums were kindness itself, and they thought no worse of him because his cousin was a rascal. But the shame of it lay heavy upon the junior's mind and heart.

In spite of his keen desire to see Paul Tyrrell punished for his villainy, he was glad of Lord Mauleverer's decision. All the fellows would not have acted like his chums in the matter. If they had known the circumstances, the sneers and jeers of Snoop, and Stott, and Vernon-Smith, and Bolsover major, and other fellows of a like sort would have been unendurable. Under such a disgrace Bob Cherry felt that he could not have remained at Greyfriars. And to leave the old school and his old chums would have been a terrible wrench to him. And yet to let the matter pass, and to allow Lord Mauleverer to lose his money, that was not to be thought of. The schoolboy millionaire had plenty of money, certainly, but two hundred pounds was a very large sum, and Bob Cherry felt that he owed it to Lord Mauleverer. The money must be recovered or paid back, if Lord Mauleverer did not make a charge against the thief. For Bob to find the money was, of course, out of the question. It

would have been difficult, if not impossible, for his father to find it. Major Cherry was by no means a rich man. But the money must be returned to Mauleverer; that thought hammered unceasingly in Bob Cherry's brain.

Tyrrell had fled with the banknotes, and Bob had no doubt that he would leave England immediately. He was rid of the man, so far as that went. Bob knew what his goal would be—the gambling palace on the shore of the blue Mediterranean, the goal of so many myriads of rogues and fools. Tyrrell would hesitate to pass the notes in England, for he would naturally suppose that the numbers had been made known to the police. But at Monte Carlo it would be quite simple. So long as a banknote was genuine it could be changed there, without leaving a trace as to who had changed it, either. When the Casino authorities discovered that they were stolen notes, they would not be able to prove that it was Tyrrell who passed them, for at Monte Carlo even the precaution of signing a note on the back is not demanded. Among the hundreds who change banknotes for all amounts daily at the great Casino, Tyrrell would not be noticed. It would simply be known, after some lapse of time, that someone had passed stolen notes there. That was all. Tyrrell would be quite safe.

The rascal was perhaps already crossing the Channel on his way South. With Lord Mauleverer's money he would test his precious "system," and the two hundred pounds would speedily pass into the capacious coffers of the bank.

What was to be done?

Bob Cherry came into No. 1 Study when Wharton and Nugent were getting tea. His face was pale and lined with trouble.

"Tea's ready!" said Wharton as cheerfully as he could. "Buck up, Bob! It can't be helped now, you know."

Bob Cherry groaned.

"That's the worst of it," he said. "I'm not going to let Mauly lose the money. It's impossible! I should feel like a thief myself."

"But——"

"It's got to be got back somehow," said Bob Cherry. "How?—that's the question."

Wharton shook his head.

"It can't be done, Bob. The rotter's off to Monte Carlo with the money already. It's too late to stop him now, even if the police were called in. I'll bet he's caught a boat across the Channel this afternoon."

"I feel pretty sure of that."

"Then it's too late, Bob. The money's gone."

Bob Cherry thrust his hands deep into his pockets.

"I've been thinking it over," he said.

"I thought you had, by the way you were doing your work this afternoon."

Bob Cherry grunted.

"Blow the work! I've got something more important than rotten Latin verbs to think of now. I'm going to get that money back!"

"How?" asked Harry Wharton and Nugent together.

"I'm going after that scoundrel!"

Wharton whistled.

"You are going to follow him?"

Bob Cherry nodded determinedly.

"Yes."

"But—but you can't! You wouldn't get permission to go!"

"Then I shall go without. If I come up with the rotter and ask him for the money, and call in the police if he doesn't hand it over, he'll hand it over fast enough. He doesn't want to go to prison, I suppose. And if he were once arrested, all the old charges against him would crop up, and he would get it fairly in the neck. It's only a matter of finding the villain."

"But that's a big order."

"I know where he's making for, that's something. I've got a photograph of him, too. I believe I could do it. I hope so, anyway. I'm going."

"But the Head——"

"My pater will make it right with the Head. I shall have to ask the pater for some tin for my exes."

"Your father won't let you go, Bob!"

"Yes, he will when I explain to him. The money will have to be paid back to Lord Mauleverer, and the pater can't pay it. He can't raise two hundred pounds in a hurry. We don't roll in quids at home, like Vernon-Smith."

Bob Cherry was evidently determined. Harry Wharton looked at him in perplexity.

"If you go, you sha'n't go alone," he said.

"I'd like some of you chaps to come with me," said Bob wistfully, "but you mightn't be able to get leave. And there's the expense."

"Well, it would be a holiday, if we could get permission to go," said Nugent. "My pater would stand my exes for a holiday; and Wharton's uncle always dubs up."

Harry Wharton smiled.

"That part of it would be easy, so far as we're concerned," he said. "After all, we've been abroad before, and we know our way about a bit. We can pitch it to them in French, too. I believe they talk French at Monte Carlo. But——"

"No buts for me," said Bob. "I'm going. I've sent a wire to my pater already to ask him to wire to me to come home. I'll show his wire to the Head, and that will make it all right with him. The pater will do it. He knows I wouldn't ask him unless it was something awfully important. I think——"

"Begad! Can I come in to tea?"

"Come in, Mauly!"

Lord Mauleverer entered the study.

"I'm awfully sorry you've been looking so cut-up this afternoon, Bob, my dear fellow," said the schoolboy earl with real concern. "I should forget all about it if I were you."

Bob shook his head.

"I don't mind the money," urged Lord Mauleverer. "Besides, I've got some more. I've just trotted down to the bank. They know me there, you know, and they've made me an advance till I get another cheque."

Bob Cherry grinned ruefully.

"That's all very well," he said. "But you're going to have your money back, Mauly. If you let my cousin off to save me from being disgraced, it's up to me to get the money back, and I'm going to do it."

"Begad! I don't see how."

"That rotter has bunked off to Monte Carlo, and I'm going after him."

"Begad!"

"And I'll get the tin back or take it out of his hide!" said Bob.

"You're going to Monte Carlo?"

"Yes."

"Begad! What a ripping wheeze!" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer in delight. "I'll come with you. I've got an uncle out there. Lives in a villa or something at Cap Martin, or somewhere. He'll be glad to see me. He'll recommend us an hotel where we can get something fit to eat, not their blessed foreign mucks. I know 'em! Begad, it's a jolly ripping idea, Bob, old man! I'll send a wire to my uncle at Cap Martin to-day."

"By Jove, that makes it easier!" said Bob. "We needn't bother Mauly's uncle; but if he's got one there we can be allowed to go, because he will be there to see we don't get into trouble. It makes it sound better."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Begad, I'll go and ask permission of the Head now!" said Lord Mauleverer. "A change would do me good, you know. I've been suffering from a tired feeling lately. You fellows come, too. I'd be delighted to stand the tickets for the sake of your company, and my uncle will make you all welcome."

"We'll come," said Harry, "but we'll stand our own exes. But we'll use your uncle's name to get round the Head. That's a good idea. He's not likely to refuse us permission to go on a visit to an affectionate relation."

"Good egg!"

"But—but can you swear for your uncle, Mauly?"

"Yaas. Matter of fact, he's asked me to come out next year, and bring some friends with me," said Lord Mauleverer. "This will only be hurrying it on a bit. Come on! Strike while the iron's hot! Let's go and see the Head."

The four juniors lost no time.

Two minutes later Harry Wharton was tapping at the door of the Head's study.

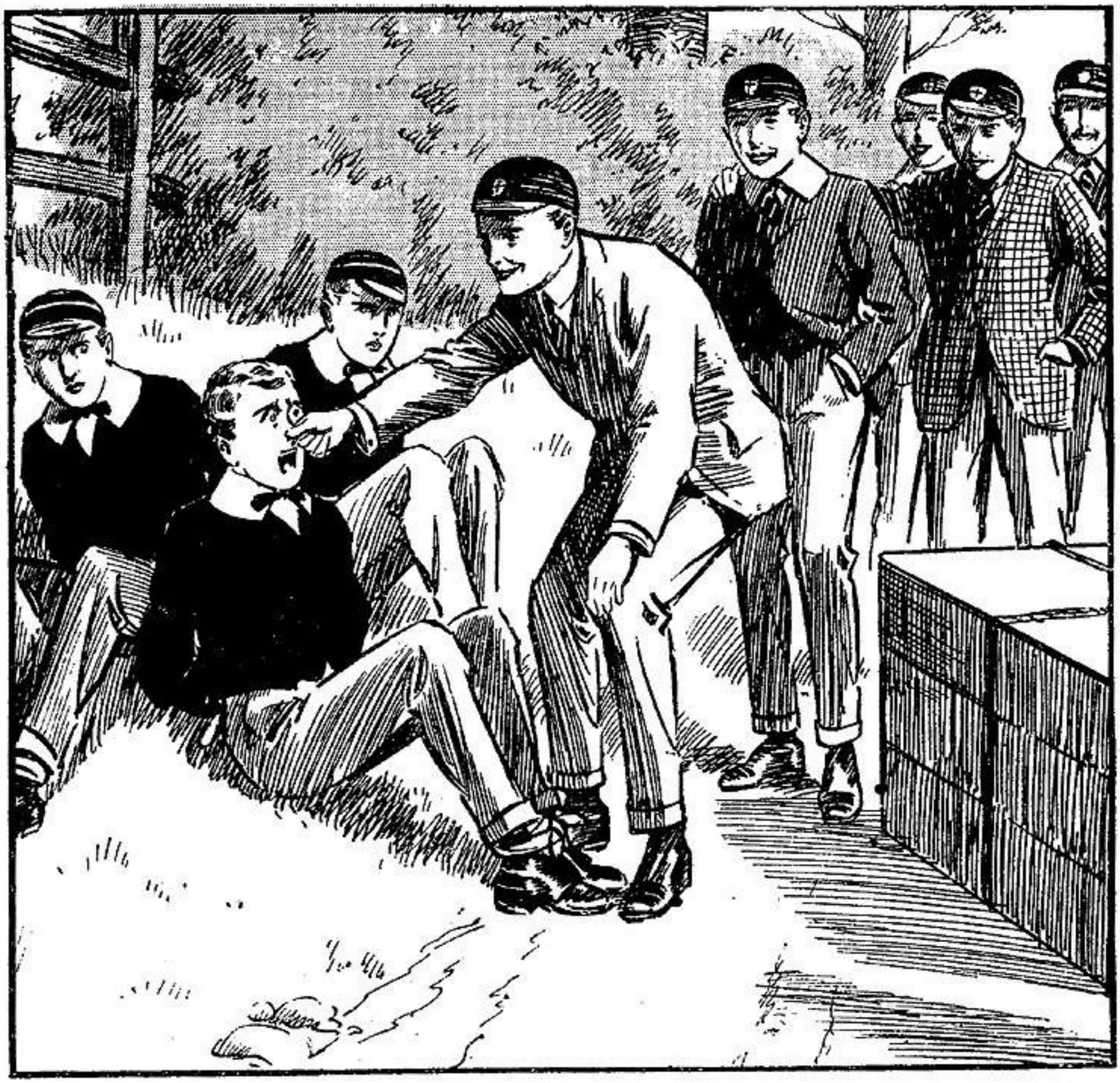
Dr. Locke's kindly voice bade them enter.

Lord Mauleverer took up the tale. He painted in glowing colours the unhappy position of an affectionate uncle, living in a villa on the Riviera, far from kith and kin, and his longing to see a devoted nephew—and his pals. The Head smiled; but he was not the man to stand in the way of a happy holiday for the boys, and he gave his consent, depending, of course, upon the consent of their parents. And with that the juniors were more than satisfied, and they thanked the Head warmly and retired from the study.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.
Bunter Does Not Go.

"I SAY, you fellows——"

Billy Bunter came into the Remove dormitory, where the Famous Five were very busy. The juniors had all wired home, demanding instant replies, and they were packing bags ready for departure in the early morning. The first train from Friardale was to take them away on their journey—if all went well. The permission given to Harry Wharton of course included the rest of the



"May we open the case?" chuckled Frank Monk, taking Tom Merry's nose between finger and thumb. "Grough! Nope! Grough!" groaned the unhappy St. Jim's leader. The Grammarian's finger and thumb closed like a vice. "May we?" he asked again. "Grough—yeb—you beast—yeb!" *(For this incident see the grand long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, entitled "The Schoolboy Fire-Fighters!" by Martin Clifford, which is contained in this week's issue of our popular companion paper, "The Gem" Library. Out on Wednesday. Price One Penny.)*

Co., and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were as busy as the others. Mark Linley and Tom Brown had come to help them pack, and a good many other fellows had come in to talk to them. Billy Bunter had learned what was going on, and he had come in to do more than talk. If the Famous Five were going abroad on a holiday, it seemed to Billy Bunter that he ought to be included in the party. It was true that he had no money; but then Lord Mauleverer had plenty, so it came to the same thing. And Johnny Bull had heaps of tin. So it was absurd for William George Bunter to be left behind for pecuniary reasons. For the rest, Bunter had not the slightest doubt that he would be a valuable addition to any party.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Good old Bunter, he's come to help us pack!" said Frank Nugent, deliberately misunderstanding the fat junior's intention. "Run downstairs and get my mac., Bunter!"

"And bring up my umbrella with you!" said Johnny Bull.

"And drop into my study for my pocketful set of chess!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "We shall needfully require them in the trainful journey."

"And you can bring up Mr. Quelch's 'Baedeker'!" said Wharton. "He's going to lend it to us."

Bunter blinked at them.

"I say, you fellows, they talk a foreign language in the place you're going to—German, I think——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, Spanish—I should have said Spanish——"

The juniors chuckled.

"I—I mean French," said Bunter. "That's it—French. You'll want a chap to interpret for you. I'm willing to come, without any fee."

"Go hon!"

"I am, really, Wharton! You know how I speak French!"

"Yes; you turn Monsieur Charpentier's hair grey with the way you speak it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! You remember when we went to Italy one vac., I was interpreter to the party——"

"I remember you were a frightful worry!" said Wharton.

"I don't know how you would have got on without me," said Bunter loftily. "Look here! I'll come with you to Monte Carlo, if you like!"

"Thanks! We don't like!"

"I'm sure Lord Mauleverer wouldn't mind paying my expenses——"

"Begad!"

"And Bull could contribute something——"

"I don't think!" said Johnny Bull.

"Then it would be all right," said Billy Bunter. "Is it settled?"

"Yes, it's settled."

"I'm coming?"

"No; you're not coming."

"Look here, you silly ass!" roared Bunter. "You can't get on without me! You'll be getting into all sorts of scrapes if you don't have a chap with you who can speak French like a native!"

"Like a native of Bow!" grinned Johnny Bull, who had read his Chaucer.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you mean to say that you don't want me to come?" demanded Billy Bunter, with an air of stately dignity.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Yes, Bunter. Extraordinary as it may seem, we don't! And we're jolly well not having any, either! Buzz off!"

Bunter shook his head.

"I can't let you fellows go getting into trouble abroad when I can prevent it," he said. "I'm coming!"

"Rats!"

"I mean it!" said Bunter.

"So do I—rats!"

Bunter grunted and rolled out of the dormitory. He was seen that evening packing his bag, so it really appeared that he intended to join the party, whether they liked it or not. Once before Bunter had joined in an expedition by calmly getting into the train, and when it was too late to get rid of him the fellows had had to make the best of him. But the Famous Five did not mean to let that happen again. In the chase after Paul Tyrrell they did not mean to be handicapped by the Owl of the Remove.

"Blessed favouritism, I call this!" said Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, with a sour look. "The Head oughtn't to let you fellows go off on a jaunt like this!"

"Better tell him so," said Johnny Bull.

The Bounder sniffed.

"I call it rotten!" he said. "This is what comes of you fellows currying favour with the masters! Bah!"

"Gentlemen," said Harry Wharton, glancing at his chums, "we shall be away some days, and I think we ought to give the Bounder a last bump before we go, to remember us by!"

"Hear, hear!"

The Bounder backed towards the door of the dormitory.

"Hands off, you rotters! Ow! Oh! Yah!"

Bump—bump!

"Ow—ow!"

Bump! The third bump landed Vernon-Smith in the passage outside, and the dormitory door was closed upon him. Then Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five finished their packing, without any more criticism from the Bounder of Greyfriars.

The chums of the Remove received their telegrams late that night, just before going to bed. The answers were favourable. Their people were not likely to raise any objection to their visiting Lord Mauleverer's uncle in his villa at Cap Martin. That little matter duly settled, the juniors went to bed cheerfully enough—with the exception of Bob Cherry.

Bob Cherry's usually sunny spirits had deserted him. The rascality of his cousin, and the loss it had caused to Lord Mauleverer, weighed heavily upon Bob's mind. The other fellows were looking forward eagerly to a scamper across France to the shores of the blue Mediterranean, but the object of the journey was ever present to Bob Cherry's mind. Would he succeed in finding the man who had robbed Lord Mauleverer, and extracting the stolen notes from him? That was the question that was incessantly hammering in Bob Cherry's mind, and it kept him awake late that night.

The chums of the Remove were up early on the following morning.

There was a very early train at Friardale Station that they intended to catch, and they had to get up before rising-bell. Bunter was fast asleep in bed. He was a champion sleeper, and sometimes did not even awake when the rising-bell clanged out. The noise the juniors made in dressing did not disturb him in the least. He was still fast asleep when the six juniors, carrying their bags, left the dormitory, and they grinned as they remembered his determination to accompany them. They had a hasty breakfast, and set out to walk to the station through the keen morning air.

The rising-bell was ringing as they started.

In the Remove dormitory the fellows opened their eyes and yawned. Bunter went on sleeping.

"Hallo, they're gone!" remarked Russell, glancing at empty beds.

"Hope they'll have a good time!" said Tom Brown, New Zealand junior, heartily.

Vernon-Smith sniffed.

"I call it rotten!" he remarked.

Tom Brown chuckled.

"To the pure all things are pure, they say," he observed; "so I suppose that to rotters all things are rotten."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, and Bunter hasn't gone with them after all!" Micky Desmond remarked.

Bolsover major rolled out of bed, and jerked the bedclothes off Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove opened his sleepy eyes and blinked.

"Groo! 'Taint rising-bell yet! Lemme alone!"

"Rising-bell's gone," grinned Bolsover major, "and so have the party for Monte Carlo."

Bunter sat up. He was wide awake now.

"Gone!" he yelled.

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"The rotters!" gasped Bunter. "They've gone without me! It was quite arranged that I was to go with them! Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll have time yet if you buck up," suggested Bolsover major, with a grin. "They had to stop for brekker, you know, and they're walking to the station. The train doesn't go till a quarter to eight."

"Good!" gasped Bunter, rolling out of bed. "I'll show 'em!"

He bundled into his clothes at express speed, without stopping to wash. Washing was a little matter that did not trouble Billy Bunter very much at any time. The juniors watched him, chuckling.

"You're going after them?" asked Hazeldene.

"Yes, rather! The beasts!"

"They'll bump you if you do!"

"I'm going with them, you ass! Why, it was all arranged!" said Bunter indignantly. "I've got my bag packed ready!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter half-laced his boots, caught up his bag, and dashed out of the dormitory at a considerable speed for one so weighty. He left the juniors yelling with laughter. Billy Bunter had a hard run before him if he was to get to the station in time for the train.

Billy Bunter dashed out of the School House and across the Close. He went panting through the gateway, Gosling staring after him in astonishment. Down the road Bunter went at top speed, his little fat legs going like clockwork.

Under ordinary circumstances, Billy Bunter could certainly not have covered the distance to the station in twice the time it took him now. But the circumstances were extraordinary, and so were Bunter's efforts. He reached the village, and pounded on down the old High Street towards the station. His cap had blown off, but he did not stop for it, his necktie had come undone, and was blowing in the wind, and the laces of his boots were lashing loose round his ankles; but he did not mind. His glasses were awry upon his fat little nose, and the perspiration was pouring down his plump face. But he did not care. The shriek of an engine whistle was wafted to his ears as he came in sight of the station. He put on a desperate spurt, and pounded into the station. He shoved past a porter and gained the platform.

The train was there!

There was an exclamation from a crowded carriage

"My hat! Bunter!"

Bunter pounded down the platform. The train was moving out of the station; the window of the crowded carriage was jammed with the faces of the Famous Five. They were grinning. In a race with a moving train Billy Bunter was not likely to win.

"Stop, you beasts!" roared Bunter breathlessly. "Wait for me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop!"

"Good-bye, Bunter!"

The train rushed on out of the station. Billy Bunter halted on the platform, and gasped for breath. He mopped his fat, streaming face with his handkerchief. The train disappeared down the line.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Beasts! Ow!"

The train was gone, and the Famous Five had started on their journey—without Bunter. And the Owl of the Remove, like the ploughman in the poem, homeward plodded his weary way.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.
In France.

"CALAIS!"

The chums of Greyfriars stared towards the little old town, with its dingy buildings and dingy sky. It was a fine spring morning, and the Channel boat had made a good passage. All had gone like clockwork so far. The juniors had caught the boat at Dover, and they were on deck now, watching the French shore rising clearer and clearer to view. The keen sea breeze blew on their faces; the crowd and the animation on the Channel steamer cheered them, and even Bob Cherry seemed to forget his troubles, and became more like his happy old self.

The passage had been so smooth that none of the juniors had been troubled by the dreaded mal-de-mer. The juniors had their rugs on their arms, and their bags in their hands, ready to go ashore. They had travelled before, and knew better than to take trunks if it could be helped.

Lord Mauleverer, indeed, had not known how to pack a tithe of the things he wanted into a single bag. But the chums had helped him, by the simple expedient of throwing out nine-tenths of the things his lordship considered it necessary to take. Nine-tenths had been left on the floor of the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, and the remaining tenth had been crammed into the bag by the united efforts of the Famous Five. Lord Mauleverer had acquiesced, as he always did in everything. He had set his bag down now on the deck at his feet. It was a very heavy bag, of solid leather, with solid silver fittings inside, and it was certainly a weight to carry. His lordship did not even think of carrying it himself, however.

"Calais!" said Harry Wharton. "Here we are again!"

"The here-we-are-fulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "According to the timeful-table, we shall have time for lunch before the esteemed train starts for Paris."

"Jolly hungry, too!" said Nugent.

"Get your bags together, and we can get ashore first," remarked Johnny Bull. "Are you going to leave your bag there, Mauly?"

Lord Mauleverer nodded.

"Yaas," he said.

"Don't you want to take it to Monte Carlo, ass?"

"Yaas."

"Pick it up, then."

"Heavy!"

"Ass! It won't pick itself up!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Porter!"

"We're not going to wait for the porters."

"Not playing the game to do the porters out of a job," said Lord Mauleverer, with a shake of the head. "Besides, it's heavy. And there's lots of time, my dear fellow. The facteurs—they call 'em facteurs here—always come to the first-class part first. It will be all right. And I'm tired."

The steamer ranged up alongside the quay. Then the nimble facteurs swarmed aboard. There was a hubbub of voices:

"Porter! Porter!"

"Facteur!"

"Oui, m'sieu."

A facteur seized Lord Mauleverer's bag, and carried it off. His lordship followed. The Co., resisting the pressing invitations of a crowd of other eager facteurs, carried their own bags ashore, and to the office of the Douane. They followed the facteur with Lord Mauleverer's bag upon his shoulder into the dingy Customs building, where their bags were all plumped down on a vast counter, to be examined by the Customs officials.

But the Customs officials at Calais are very obliging. There has been a great change from the old days, when travellers had their baggage ransacked fore and aft in search of possible contraband goods. Even a Customs official learns, after years and years of experience, that the average traveller is not likely to have boxes of cigars concealed in his shirts, or consignments of wine and spirits and tobacco in his hatbox.

A polite Frenchman brandished a fragment of chalk over the bags, and asked the usual question without expecting an answer—as usual!

"Vous n'avez rien a declarer? Pas tabac—cigar—cigarette—hein? Bon! Allons!"

A dab with the chalk, and it was done!

The facteur shouldered Lord Mauleverer's bag again.

"Is that all the bizney?" asked Johnny Bull.

"C'est tout," said the official—who apparently understood—with a grin.

"That's all," said Harry Wharton. "Come on!"

"Begad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

The facteur led the way out by another door, where two soldiers blinked at the chalk-marks on the bags, and nodded, and allowed them to pass. The facteur turned his head towards the juniors.

"Premiere classe, messieurs?"

"Yaas."

"Oui," said Wharton.

The Calais facteurs are wise in their generation—they always ask the same question, "First-class, monsieur?" even when travellers are obviously not first-class in any way. It flatters inexperienced seconds and thirds to be taken for first-class travellers by experienced porters, and sometimes has an effect on the tip. The facteur shambled down the great, dingy platform with his load, bumping into people on the way, apparently considering that that did not matter at all so long as he mumbled, "Attention, s'il vous plait!" every time he bumped in.

It gratified the British feelings of the juniors to see a French porter staggering under a bag which an English porter would have carried in one hand. Johnny Bull opined that it was due to the "mess" they lived on, instead of good beef-steaks.

The facteur dumped the bag down in a carriage of the waiting train, and pulled himself together, and heaved it upon the rack. Then he gasped.

"How much do you give these chaps?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"You can give him a franc."

"Begad! I haven't any French money!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Never mind; the facteur can go and get some. Facteur!"

"M'sieu!"

"Go and change this, will you?"

"Comment!"

"Pitch it to him in French, Wharton."

"Changer, si'l vous plait," said Harry.

Lord Mauleverer handed four five-pound notes to the porter, and sat down. The man disappeared along the corridor of the train.

"What have you given him to change?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Twenty quid!"

"Oh, my hat! That's about as much as he earns in a year! How do you know he will bring it back?"

"Oh, he'll come back all right," said Lord Mauleverer easily. "Besides, I've got some more money if he doesn't."

"My word!"

"If he doesn't come back he won't get his franc, anyway," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Ha, ha, you ass! He won't want that if he gets twenty quid!" roared Bull.

"Well, I ought to have taken his number," admitted his lordship; "but it's all right. He'll come back."

"I've got his number," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "And he'll come back all right."

"We've got our seats now," said Nugent, dumping his bag down. "We'd better get along to the buffet and get a feed. I suppose we've time?"

"Nearly half an hour."

"Come on, then!"

The juniors stepped out of the carriage again, and made their way to the buffet. There they disposed of a square meal, and did not leave off till the bell rang. Then they hurried back to the train.

They found their carriage, and took their seats, and then Wharton remembered Lord Mauleverer's money.

"You haven't got your change, Mauly!" he exclaimed.

"Begad, no! I suppose the fellow missed us while we were gone to feed," said Lord Mauleverer. "But the train hasn't started yet."

Johnny Bull grunted.

"You won't see him again, or your quids, either," he said.

"Yaas; that's all right."

Wharton looked anxiously out of the window. The last passengers were taking their places, and the train was about to start.

"I don't see your blessed facteur!" said Wharton.

"Oh, he won't come!" said Johnny Bull, who was rather given to expressing positive opinions. "He's off with the twenty quidlets."

"My dear fellow——"

"Well, we're starting," said Nugent.

There was a rush of feet in the corridor, and the facteur dashed in breathless.

"Monsieur, monsieur! Me voici!"

"What did I tell you, my dear fellows?"

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

The facteur jammed banknotes and gold and silver into Lord Mauleverer's hands.

"Vingt livres, m'sieur—c'est cinq cent francs juste."

"Thank you, dear boy," said Lord Mauleverer. "Voila!"

The porter stared at the gold louis that the schoolboy earl dropped into his palm.

"It's all right, my boy!" said Mauleverer.

"Oh, monsieur! Merci, merci bien! Merci beaucoup, m'sieu!"

"You'd better buzz off if you're not coming to Paris!" grunted Johnny Bull.

The facteur grinned; he did not understand. He backed into the corridor, and then plunged in again to thank Lord Mauleverer once more for his munificent tip.

"M'sieur! Merci, encore merci, m'sieu!"

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"Begad! That's all right!"

"Bon voyage, monsieur! Merci, m'sieur!"

"Begad, how he keeps on!"

"Merci, m'sieur!"

And the facteur was gone at last. The train started. As the juniors glanced from the window, they saw the facteur again, trotting along beside the train. He took off his cap, and bowed as he ran, and bowed again, and shouted:

"Merci, monsieur! Bon voyage, monsieur! Merci!"

And as the train glided on, he was still standing on the platform, bowing over his cap.

"What on earth did you give him a louis for, Mauly, you ass?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Damages for defamation of character, my dear boy!" grinned his lordship. "I knew he'd come back, you know. You ought to to have given him a louis, too."

"Catch me!" said Bull.

"Besides, it was worth twenty francs to see his face when he got it!" grinned his lordship. "What?"

And Lord Mauleverer grinned several times on the way to Paris at the remembrance of the facteur's astonished and joyous countenance, while Johnny Bull grunted and murmured sotto voce that there was a great deal of truth in some old proverbs—especially that one about fools and their money.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.
A Long Run.

BOB CHERRY looked very thoughtful as the train was drawing in to the Gare du Nord of Paris.

"I suppose you fellows are feeling pretty fagged?" he asked suddenly.

"Well, I could do with a rest," said Nugent.

"Same here," said Johnny Bull: and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh said that the samefulness was terrific.

Bob wrinkled his brows.

"We're less than a day behind that rotter, if he went direct to Monte Carlo," he said. "I feel pretty sure that he'd stay the night in Paris. He can't possibly suspect that we're after him like this, you know; and it's no joke to straight from London to the Riviera in one stretch."

Wharton nodded.

"Most likely he slept at Paris, and started in the train this morning," he said. "But he's not much past Lyons yet."

"That's what I was thinking. I don't want to drag you fellows on at top speed, and wear you out—but I think I'd better keep on," said Bob. "I can get the evening train for the South, after getting a snack at the hotel at the station. You chaps can stay in Paris and get a sleep, and follow me on."

"No fear!"

"But you're not up to such a journey," said Bob, "and we're not taking sleeping-cars—it's too steep for any of us excepting Mauly."

"We'll come right on," said Wharton. "It doesn't matter if we get tired—we shall get over it, I suppose. We don't want to lose time in Paris. And we can go to sleep in the train."

"But——"

"Put it to the vote," said Harry. "We're not going to let Bob go on by himself, are we, you chaps?"

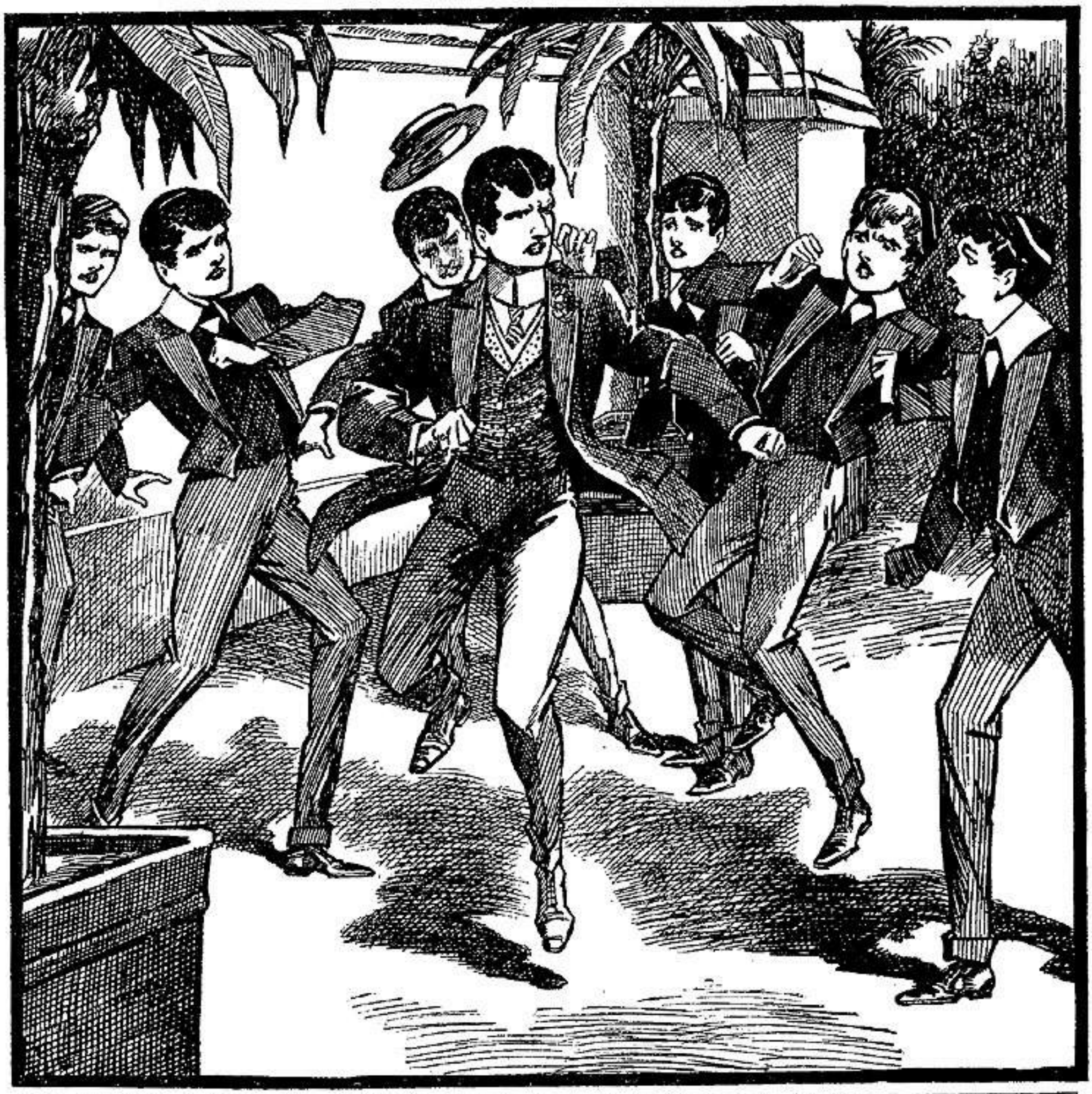
"No fear!"

"The no-fearfulness is terrific."

"Begad, no! Let me stand the sleeping-cars!" suggested Lord Mauleverer

Bob shook his head.

"We're not going to sponge on you, Mauly. You've been stuck badly enough as it is, if we don't get the two hundred quid back from that rotter. If we keep on all right, we shall



Tyrrell was feeling in his pocket, and Harry Wharton & Co. were not touching him. For the moment the juniors were off their guard. Suddenly—with startling suddenness—the man made a spring—and Bob Cherry went flying in one direction and Wharton in another. (*See Chapter* 12.)

have a chance of coming up with him before he's blued the tin at the Casino."

"We'll keep on all night," said Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is——"

"Terrific!" grinned Nugent. "That's settled, Bob. If you go on, we'll go on—and we can get a rest at the end, anyway."

So that was settled.

The train bumped into the Gare du Nord at last.

The juniors had time for dinner before they re-started after the interval, as Johnny Bull expressed it.

Then under deep darkness they steamed out of Paris for the South. They had a carriage to themselves, the six of them filling all the seats; and the space that was not taken up by themselves was taken up by their bags.

They chatted as the train rushed on through the darkness, through a country unknown to them, and hidden by the night.

It was a late hour when they disposed themselves to sleep. People passed up and down the corridor of the train with tired faces. Most of the carriages had the curtains drawn, concealing sleepers in all varieties of attitudes. The juniors dropped off to sleep one by one, with the bumping of the train in their ears.

Day came at last.

A bright sun shone upon green meadows and silvery streams, and glimmered upon distant mountains.

Wharton sat up and rubbed his eyes.

The other fellows were still sleeping in their seats.

"Rising-bell, you chaps!" said Harry.

Johnny Bull yawned.

"Where are we?" he asked.

"Somewhere in the South of France!" said Harry, laughing. "I feel pretty rotten. How do you feel?"

"Rotten!"

"And you, Inky?"

"The rottenfulness is terrific," said the nabob, rubbing his eyes. "But the betterfulness will be great when we have had an esteemed wash and some coffee."

Sleeping in a train was not like sleeping in comfortable beds at home in Greyfriars. The juniors felt tired and

"rotten," with the lassitude that comes of long railway journeys.

Only Bob Cherry did not seem to feel it.

He was thinking of the goal of his chase, and he seemed impervious to minor considerations.

The morning was bright and sunny, and the juniors noticed a great difference from the climate they had left behind them the previous day.

Sunny meadows and blue hills, old towns and villages flitted by the gliding windows; station after station, with the same eternity of glass roof and iron girder. Ever farther and farther southward.

Lyons—Marseilles!

Had they been on a less hurried journey, the juniors would gladly have explored those cities as they passed; but now they had only to think of reaching the Riviera as quickly as possible.

After Marseilles glorious scenery greeted them on the way. The coast of the Mediterranean was unfolding its beauties to their eyes. Nice at last!

The seemingly endless journey was approaching its end. A glimmer of electric lights in the night—a buzz of porters' voices and a trundling of baggage—that was all the juniors saw of Nice.

They were tired out now. It seemed to them that they had been on the rushing train for years; that the scent of the dining-car would never get out of their noses, that the bumping of the train would haunt them for ever.

"My hat! I'd like to stretch my legs a bit!" yawned Johnny Bull, as they bumped on through the tunnel after leaving Nice.

"It won't be long now," said Wharton.

"We haven't lost much time!" Nugent remarked. "Do you know, I shouldn't be surprised if we're ahead of Tyrrell, even if he came straight here. He didn't know he was being followed, and so there was no need for him to wear himself out. Most likely he stayed a night at Marseilles as well as Paris."

"Most likely," agreed Wharton.

Bob Cherry's eyes gleamed.

"That would be ripping!" he said. "If we get to Monte Carlo ahead of him——"

"I think it's very likely," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "He's almost certain to have slept at least two nights on the road."

"We've got to find him when we get to Monte Carlo!" Johnny Bull remarked.

"We'll find him all right," said Bob Cherry. "It's not a big place, and we've got his photograph. I shouldn't wonder if he puts up at the first hotel outside the station."

"I shouldn't wonder."

Monaco!

"It's the next station," said Harry Wharton. "Monaco is the capital of this place. We're not really in France now, you know. Monaco is independent: a giddy little principality as big as an English village. I've been reading it up in the train. There's a giddy Prince of Monaco, who gets a big income out of the Casino, and the Casino pays all the expenses of the State—police, and things—and there are no taxes."

"I dare say they can afford it," grunted Johnny Bull.

Wharton laughed.

"Yes, I suppose they can. They're supposed to make a regular profit of a million and a quarter pounds every year at the Casino, after paying expenses. Some people say it's much bigger than that, and they keep it dark."

"All made out of silly duffers," said Johnny Bull.

"Yes. Most of them with systems for beating the bank," said Wharton. "It's queer! I hope we shall be able to get into the Casino and see them at it."

"Why, of course we shall. Why not?"

"They've got a rule about not admitting minors," explained Wharton. "Nobody under the age of twenty-one is allowed to go in."

"Well, that's sensible, anyway. But it will hit us. We've got to go in."

"We shall have to manage it somehow."

The train slacked down.

A bell was ringing, and a sing-song voice was heard:

"Ascenseur—ascenseur!"

"That's the giddy lift," said Wharton. "The Casino is on the hillside, and there's a lift up for those who don't want to walk. We can walk."

The juniors tumbled out of the train. They were too tired to give even a look at the gorgeous scenery by which they were surrounded. They made a straight line for the hotel Wharton had selected from Baedeker, engaged rooms like fellows in a dream, and tumbled into bed, and slept so soundly that a cannonade would probably not have awakened them.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.
At Monte Carlo.

A BLAZE of sunshine greeted Harry Wharton's eyes as he looked out of the window.

He was dazzled for the moment.

He hardly knew how long he had slept, but it was now well on in the afternoon.

The scene before his eyes was amazing.

The juniors had left England in keen weather of early spring. It might have been June where they found themselves now.

From the hotel windows the blue Mediterranean could be seen, rolling smooth and shining in the sun.

Great palm-trees rose majestically in the gardens below.

The shore was dazzlingly beautiful.

White villas dotted the green slopes of the hills, sloping down towards the curling blue waves. Out on the blue waters yachts and boats glided. From somewhere came the soft strains of a band.

The juniors seemed to have awakened in fairyland.

Nugent joined Wharton at the window. He drew a deep breath.

"Well, that's ripping!" he exclaimed.

"Gorgeous, isn't it?"

"Where's the Casino?" asked Johnny Bull, looking out.

"Can't see it from here. Let's get downstairs."

The juniors rang, and demanded "l'eau chaude"—always the first demand of English travellers, and which sometimes amuses the garcons and femmes-de-chambre in Continental hotels. The mania which the English have for washing themselves every day, and sometimes more than once in a day, is regarded by many foreigners as "une chose pour rire." Smiling maids brought hot water, and the juniors had the pleasure of a thorough scrub all over to remove the dust and fatigue of the railway journey. It made them feel worlds better, added to a complete change of raiment.

Then they went down.

The maitre-d'hotel received them below with great empressement. Perhaps he was a little surprised at six lads travelling without an elder. But one of them was a prince, though only an Indian prince, and another was a lord—a real English milord. And the maitre-d'hotel was all smiles and bows. Innumerable garcons—the hotel seemed chiefly inhabited by waiters—were also all smiles and bows. Johnny Bull grunted inaudibly that they seemed to have got into a dancing-school. But Johnny Bull's face became serene and contented when he sat down to a beautiful repast.

It was too late for lunch and too early for dinner; but Wharton ordered a feed a la carte, and everything that he wanted seemed to be obtainable—excepting, of course, what Johnny Bull would have called good butcher's meat. Beefsteak—or, as the waiters called it "biftek"—was brought, as all English people are generally supposed on the Continent to subsist wholly upon beefsteak. But the "biftek" of France bore not the most distant resemblance to the roast beef of Old England, and the juniors wisely did not test the powers of their jaws upon it.

But the fowls were excellent, and the eggs—cooked in all sorts of ways—were, as Nugent said, ripping. The juniors made a most excellent meal, and it made them very cheerful.

"Well, I must say one can feed here, in a way," Johnny Bull admitted, as he finished his meal with luscious grapes. "But I fancy they charge you pretty steep."

"That's the best of feeding a la carte," said Harry. "We can pay as we go, and not have any blessed bills piling up. You can take what they call pension here, if you like—that's everything included—for, I think, it's eighteen francs a day for each chap. Then there would be extras—heaps of them. We don't want that, anyway, as we're going to call on Mauly's uncle when we've found Tyrrell and settled with him. We may only be here one day. And we won't have any bills piling up."

"Good idea!" said Nugent.

"I shouldn't wonder if this little lot comes to a couple of quid," said Bull.

Wharton grinned.

"I fancy they couldn't run this hotel on those lines, Johnny. It will be twice that, at least, I expect."

"My hat!"

"Lucky we've got a giddy millionaire with us," said Nugent.

"The luckyfulness is terrific."

"If you chaps have finished, we'll get on to bizney," said Bob Cherry.

"Right-ho!"

"Get the bill, Wharton! You're master of the ceremonies."

"Right-ho!" said Harry. And Wharton, who had travelled before, made a sign to the waiter, and said:

"L'addition, s'il vous plait."

There were sixty tables at least in the huge salle-a-manger,

and each one or two had its own waiter or waiters The juniors were looked after by the head-waiter, a gentleman of most imposing appearance, whose privilege it was to choose what guests he liked for himself. From long experience Monsieur Louis could tell at a glance what was the tipping capacity of a new arrival. And six young English travellers, evidently not short of money, were gathered carefully into Monsieur Louis's net, while the other waiters looked on enviously.

"Monsieur remains at the hotel?" asked Monsieur Louis.

"I don't know," said Harry. "We may stay a few days, or not; it depends. Let me have the bill now."

"As monsieur pleases."

The head-waiter had a manner which implied that it was with great difficulty that he brought his great soul down to considerations of mere money. Perhaps it was for that reason that he disdained to deal in small sums. He swam majestically to the caisse, and returned with the "addition" upon a salver.

Wharton glanced at it.

The junior had expected to find first-class hotels on the Riviera expensive. But he could not help opening his eyes when he found that the total of the bill for that little lunch was three hundred francs—twelve pounds in English.

Monsieur Louis stood with the bill on the salver, and seemed interested in the view of the sea from the dining-room windows.

"How much?" asked Wharton

The head-waiter glanced carelessly at the bill.

"Trois cent francs, m'sieu."

"My only hat!" murmured Johnny Bull.

Monsieur Louis had the grand manner much cultivated by French garcons, which causes inexperienced travellers to pay whatever is asked, for fear of looking as if they cannot afford it.

But Wharton was a practical boy, and he did not care twopence whether a French waiter thought he couldn't afford it.

"Three hundred francs?" he said.

"Oui, m'sieu."

There was a long list of items, written in French in the indecipherable writing which makes hapless travellers give up the task of trying to make out what they are being charged for.

But Harry Wharton, with perfect calmness, read them through.

"Poulet, quatre, quatre-vingt francs."

"Twenty francs each for the chickens!" said Nugent, with a subdued whistle. "And not big ones, either."

Monsieur Louis smiled in a pained way.

"We have other chickens at fifteen francs, if monsieur had said," he remarked.

"Trois poires, trente francs."

Johnny Bull, who had demolished the three pears all by himself, almost jumped. Thirty francs—that was ten francs each! It was the first time Johnny Bull had eaten pears at seven-and-sixpence each.

"Six mandarins, quinze francs."

"Oh, great Scott!"

Harry Wharton laughed. As he had ordered the things without asking the price, there was nothing to do but to pay for them. If he had asked the price in advance, Monsieur Louis would have stated it with an air of pained patience which would have been hard for a young traveller to face. Wharton had not thought of it, as a matter of fact On the Riviera he was prepared to be "done," though he had not anticipated that the "doing" would be on so extensive a scale.

The rest of the items were in proportion, and Wharton gave it up. Each of the juniors sorted out fifty francs, and the bill was settled. Monsieur Louis still waited, and it was quite clear what he was waiting for. After settling three hundred francs for a single meal, it was evidently useless to give the head-waiter a couple of francs as a tip. Whether he expected a golden louis for himself Wharton did not know; but he knew that if he did he would be disappointed. He laid a five-franc piece beside the three hundred francs on the salver. Monsieur Louis looked at it with some curiosity, as if it were a rare kind of coin laid there for his friendly inspection. But as Wharton did not add another one to it, he carried it off.

"If we stay here we shall have to look out for some cheaper digs, I think," Nugent remarked, when the waiter was gone.

"My hat! I should say so!"

"Still, we've had a jolly good feed," said Bob Cherry, "and we shall find Tyrrell to-day and get out."

"Suppose you show his photograph to the waiter?" suggested Nugent. "He might be staying here, you know."

Bob grinned.

"Not likely! He wanted the money to play at the Casino, not to pay for half a dozen meals. Two hundred quid wouldn't last him long here. He's gone into some cheap hotel and saved his money for the roulette-tables."

Wharton nodded.

"That's most likely," he agreed.

"But are there any cheap hotels here?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"Not in Monte Carlo itself, but just outside," said Wharton. "Monaco is only a little distance off, up the tram-line, and lots of people stay there who can't afford Monte Carlo prices. And there's a suburb here called Beausoleil, which I believe is pretty cheap. Anyway, it wouldn't be much good looking for Tyrrell in a giddy palace like this. Let's have a look round first, and then go to the Casino."

"Good!"

"Might run on the rotter in the street," added Wharton. "It's not a big place."

And the juniors strolled out of the hotel.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.
Face to Face.

MONTE CARLO was crowded.

There was, as the papers said, "beaucoup de monde" at the famous resort on the shore of the blue Mediterranean.

The juniors found themselves on the grand terrace before the Casino, and they drew in their breath as they looked at the scene.

All that Nature and art could do had been done to make Monte Carlo the most beautiful spot in the world.

If a man lost all his possessions there, he could at least do it in the midst of the most pleasing surroundings. If he retired to the gardens afterwards to blow his brains out, he had the pleasure of doing it in a most expensive garden, surrounded by plants and graceful palm-trees.

Crowds passed and repassed upon the terrace, to and from Ciro's and the Cafe de Paris.

Toilettes the most chic were sported by the promenaders, and there was an air of wealth and luxury about the whole place that impressed the juniors strangely.

But what interested them most was the gigantic Casino.

It seemed extraordinary that so imposing a building had been reared for the sole purpose of playing a game with a ball on a wheel.

The juniors scanned the crowds as they passed, but they did not recognise Paul Tyrrell among the throng.

It was certain that Tyrrell was by this time in Monte Carlo, though it was possible that he had already lost his money and gone.

That his "system" would succeed in beating the bank the juniors did not, of course, believe for a moment.

It was only a question of how long it would take for his little capital to be raked in by the croupiers.

Some of the big "plungers" at the Casino think nothing of putting two hundred pounds on the table for a single turn of the wheel. If Tyrrell played heavily his little sum was not likely to last him long. It would form only a small part of the sum that was raked in daily by the croupiers on the green tables.

"Let's have some coffee at the Cafe de Paris, and then go in," said Bob Cherry.

"We'll try," said Harry. "They don't admit boys, you know. They're jolly careful about that. But they may let us in if we don't play."

"They don't let people in not to play, I should imagine," said Johnny Bull. "They're out for profits, I suppose?"

"Yes; but they're very polite, so I've heard, and they might make an exception—especially as we've got a giddy prince and a giddy lord with us."

"Begad, yaas!" said Lord Mauleverer.

The juniors stopped at one of the little tables outside the Cafe de Paris, opposite the grand entrance of the Casino.

They sat down, and a garcon brought them coffee, and they sipped it and watched the vast, well-dressed throng passing and repassing.

Bob Cherry gave a sudden start.

He caught Wharton's arm.

"Look!" he whispered. "Don't move! Look!"

He nodded towards a table some distance away.

A man sat there, with a glass of liqueur before him. He had his back to the juniors, and they could not see his face. But Bob Cherry had recognised the turn of the shoulders. Something familiar in the figure struck all the juniors as they looked.

"Tyrrell!" muttered Wharton.

"Begad!"

"We've found him!"

"What giddy luck!"

It was Tyrrell!

He moved a little, glancing towards the Casino, without seeing the juniors at the neighbouring table, and they caught his profile.

It was Paul Tyrrell, and he was looking well and eager. It was easy to see from his expression that he had not yet lost his money. He had come to the Casino to play, evidently, and was fortifying himself with a benedictine before entering the portals, over which might have been written—as over the portals of Dante's Inferno—the bitter inscription, "Lasciat' ogni speranza, ognun' ch'entrate!"—"Abandon every hope, all ye who enter!"

But Tyrrell's face was full of hope and determination. It was evident that he had not yet entered.

"Found him! And he looks as if he's still got the money on him!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Yaas, begad!"

"And we'll have it off him!" said Johnny Bull. "We'll get round him so that he can't bolt, and give him the choice of handing it over, or being handed over himself to the police!"

"Good!"

"Hold on!" said Lord Mauleverer. "We don't want to have the rotter arrested, you know. It wasn't worth while letting him off in England, to have him arrested here!"

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "His arrest here won't hurt so much. It won't get into the English papers at all, very likely. It's different from having it happen close to Greyfriars."

"Yaas, that's so."

"Besides, he'll hand it over, and be glad to," said Harry. "The Casino authorities here are well known to be very careful to avoid anything like a scandal, if they can help it. If he's charged, they'll close the doors to him. They wouldn't risk having stolen notes palmed off on them."

"True!"

"They get enough scandals they can't help, with people blowing out their brains after losing their tin, or jumping under railway-trains," said Harry. "Now, if you fellows are ready——"

"Quite ready."

"Mind, he's not to get away!"

"No fear!"

The juniors rose quietly from the table.

But as it happened, Tyrrell rose at the same moment, and his eyes fell upon them.

For a moment the man stood stupefied.

His astonishment must have been overwhelming at seeing there, outside the Cafe de Paris in Monte Carlo, his cousin, whom he had believed to be at Greyfriars.

His jaw dropped, and he stared at Bob Cherry blankly.

"He's seen us!"

"Collar him!"

The juniors were round the rascal in a moment.

"Don't try to bolt!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "We don't want to make a scene if you don't, but you're not going to get away!"

Tyrrell was white to the lips. He did not attempt to bolt. The juniors were on the watch for an attempt, and he could see that they were in deadly earnest. He did not want to be collared by main force and dragged down among the tables of the cafe.

"You—you here!" he muttered thickly.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Nugent.

"Bob—I—I——"

"I don't want to talk to you!" said Bob Cherry, his lips very tight. "I've come after you for the money you robbed Mauleverer of."

"The—the money!"

"The two hundred quid."

"Begad, yaas!"

"Look here——"

"Willy on hand it over?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Hush!" said Tyrrell, with a sharp glance round.

"Will you hand it over?" asked Bob Cherry.

voice.

Two or three people sitting at the cafe tables glanced round. The colour came into Tyrrell's cheeks, and he ground his teeth.

"Do you want to have a row here?" he hissed.

"I don't care whether we have a row or not! I know you're not going to take Lord Mauleverer's money into the Casino!"

"Hush!"

"The matter's soon settled, Tyrrell," said Harry Wharton quietly. "You robbed Lord Mauleverer of two hundred pounds. Mauleverer hasn't made a charge against you, for Bob Cherry's sake. But the money has got to be returned."

"I—I——"

"Yaas; I'll overlook what you did, you rotter, though it was doocid uncomfortable being tied up to a tree," said Lord Mauleverer.

"I—I've spent some of the money," muttered Tyrrell. "I couldn't get here for nothing."

"Then you can hand over what's left," said Bob.

"I—I——"

"Will you hand it over or not?" demanded Bob.

Tyrrell gritted his teeth.

"Yes," he said. "I don't want a row here, hang you! Let's get out of this—people are staring at us already."

"I'm not going to give you a chance to dodge away," said Bob grimly.

"You can take me where you like," said Tyrrell. "Hold on to my arms if you like. Let's get out of this crowd."

The bitter disappointment and humiliation of the man touched Harry Wharton a little, rascal as Tyrrell undoubtedly was.

"Come on, Bob," he said. "He can't get away, so long as we keep round him."

"Mind he doesn't, then," growled Bob. "I know him, you see."

He put his arm through his cousin's as a precaution, and the rest of the juniors kept round Tyrrell, as they sought a secluded spot in the Casino gardens. There, amid the palm-trees, Bob faced his cousin again.

"The money!" he said.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

There's Many a Slip.

PAUL TYRRELL looked round at the juniors.

He saw only inflexible faces round him. It was evident that there was no escape for him, excepting upon one condition—that he handed back the stolen money.

His face had gone white again.

"Listen to me——" he began.

Bob Cherry interrupted him without ceremony.

"I don't want to listen to you," he said. "I want the money you stole from Lord Mauleverer—and I want it quick."

"The wantfulness is terrific, my esteemed friend."

"Buck up, Tyrrell," said Harry Wharton. "You've got to hand it over, and you may as well do it at once."

"Suppose I refuse?" said Tyrrell between his teeth.

"Then we shall collar you, and call the nearest gendarme, and charge you with having stolen the notes. Mauleverer has the numbers of all of them."

"And the disgrace—you've forgotten that, Bob."

"I haven't forgotten it," said Bob Cherry quietly; "but I'm going to face that. You will be arrested here, anyway, not in England. You've drawn your own teeth by coming so far away from home, as a matter of fact."

"Look here, Bob——"

"The money—quick!"

"I've got it on me," said Tyrrell sullenly. "I sha'n't eat it, and it won't fly away. There's no hurry for a minute. Look here, what difference does it make to you whether I pay the money back now, or in a few hours' time?"

"You wouldn't do it."

"I swear——"

"Rats!"

"I swear that this evening I'll hand over the two hundred pounds, and as much more as you like," said Tyrrell.

"If you're going to hand it over this evening, why can't you hand it over now, without bother?" asked Nugent.

"I shall have made more of it by then."

"At the roulette, do you mean?"

"Yes."

Bob Cherry snorted. He was very angry, but he was inclined to laugh, too, at the strange infatuation of the gambler.

"Do you think we're idiots enough to let you take the money into the Casino, and play there with it?" he asked. "You'd lose every cent."

"On my system——"

"Blow your system! You'd lose it all—as you'd deserve to, playing with stolen money. Are you going to hand it over, for the last time?"

Tyrrell looked like a cornered animal.

"I must, if you insist upon it," he said; "but you can take my curse with it! You have ruined my only chance of making a fortune."

"Fortune be blowed! You'd lose the lot this evening, if we were fools enough to let you take it into the Casino—which we're not."

"Not by long chalks," said Johnny Bull.

"Look here, let's sit down somewhere, and I'll explain

my system to you," said Tyrrell eagerly. "I'll prove to you, over a list of permanences, that——"

"Cheese it!"

"It's the chance of a lifetime," said Tyrrell. "I require just two hundred pounds to test the system, and it's simply infallible! In two hours' time I shall have turned this two hundred pounds into two thousand at least, and then you can have this money back, and interest, if you like."

"Begad!" said Lord Mauleverer. "It's no good talking to you. You're potty, my dear fellow—simply potty!"

"The pottyfulness is terrific."

Tyrrell's face was haggard.

His dreams of unlimited wealth had suddenly vanished, at the prospect of having to hand back the capital he had so unscrupulously provided himself with.

"Then you won't give me a chance?" he said.

"A chance to gamble away stolen money? No fear!"

"Take it, then; and may you——"

"Oh, ring off!"

Tyrrell felt in his inside pocket. His attitude was one of utterly crushed depression, and it did not occur to the juniors at the moment that he was playing a part. He was cornered, and he had to part with the money, and they did not know the desperate thoughts that were working in his brain. Safer to come between a tigress and her young than between a desperate gambler and his wild dreams of gain!

Tyrrell was feeling in his pocket, and the juniors were not touching him. For the moment they were off their guard.

With startling suddenness, the man made a spring, and Bob Cherry went flying in one direction, and Wharton in another.

The next instant Tyrrell was running like a deer down the path.

Bob Cherry leaped up.

"After him!" he yelled.

"The cad—he was taking us in!" gasped Nugent.

"After him!"

The juniors dashed in pursuit.

Tyrrell had turned from the path, and a mass of shrubbery hid him from view. The juniors, tearing round the corner, failed to see him. He had fled into some side path among the palm-trees, and vanished. There were many paths intersecting in the spacious gardens, and they knew now why Tyrrell had led them there.

Wharton gritted his teeth.

It was bitter to be deceived and baffled at the very last moment by the cunning rascal.

"Separate!" he exclaimed hastily. "If you sight him, hang on to him and yell for help. Don't give him another chance."

"What-ho!"

The half-dozen juniors parted, taking different paths, and they sought for the fugitive in every direction.

But the night was falling, and the gardens were already dusky and deserted.

Up and down the paths, through the bushy recesses, the juniors ran, calling to one another. But they did not catch sight again of Paul Tyrrell.

He had vanished as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up.

The juniors met at last, breathless and angry and disappointed, by the exit from the gardens close by the Casino.

Bob Cherry was grinding his teeth.

"Fool that I was to let my hands off him!" he muttered bitterly. "I might have known that he'd try to give us the slip."

"He's gone!" said Johnny Bull.

"The gonefulness is terrific!"

Wharton knitted his brows.

"He's dodged us," he said. "We don't know where his hotel is, and I don't suppose he'd go back there, anyway. But we'll have him yet. He's sure to make for the Casino sooner or later—that's what he's here for——"

"If we watch for him outside the Casino——" Nugent suggested.

"Begad, that's a good idea!"

Wharton shook his head.

"He'll guess that we shall do that," he said. "If he's got his ticket of entry—and I dare say he has—he can get in by another way. Or he may go in with a crowd and dodge us. The only place to look for him is inside."

"Can we get in?"

"We shall have to try."

"We could explain to them that we're looking for a chap who has stolen banknotes on him," Nugent said. "After all, if the notes are stopped at the bank, they won't want to take them here, even if they're not over-particular as a rule."

"They mightn't believe us—it sounds a queer story, you know. And if he's given his name there, you can bet it's an assumed name. One thing's pretty certain, I think—he'll get into the Casino as quickly as he can, to put his precious system to the test before we have time to get the police to work, and so we haven't a moment to lose. It's no good finding him after he's lost the money."

"We'll go into the place, and see if we can get in, anyway," said Harry. "If they won't let us in, we shall have to consider what to do. But we can try."

"Right-ho!"

And the chums of Greyfriars crossed to the Casino, and mounted the steps.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.
The Casino.

A TRAIN had just come in from Nice, and a crowd of people poured towards the Casino. They came up the steps through the gardens, and up the lift, and converged towards the Casino. Harry Wharton & Co. ascended the broad stone steps of the entrance amid a throng. The uniformed attendants at the doors glanced at the boys, but did not stop them, and the six juniors entered the vestibule.

Before them was a great hall—the atrium, as it is called—and on the right, the vestiaire—the cloak-room—on the left the bureau, where the tickets of entrance are obtained. At Monte Carlo there is no charge for entrance, unlike the Nice casinos, where the visitors pay for the privilege of losing their money. At Monte Carlo all is in the grand style. You show your visiting-card to a polite official, who asks a few polite questions, and then your card of admission is handed over, and you are free to enter the roulette-rooms and lose as much money as you like—and afterwards, the kindly Casino authorities will perhaps pay your fare home, if you have been thoughtless enough to come without a return ticket.

There were two streams of people passing in and out of the bureau, and the officials there were very busy. Every afternoon and evening train from Nice brings a fresh crowd of eager punters to the doors of the Casino. They arrive by train and by tram and by motor-car, to depart afterwards sadder, if not wiser. The Greyfriars juniors stood for a few minutes in the vestibule, watching the crowds—the men mostly dressed in evening clothes, many of the women in the most expensive Parisian costumes—overdressed in one sense, but certainly not in another.

"This way," said Harry Wharton, after a good look round to get his bearings.

And the juniors joined the throng pouring into the bureau.

In that apartment there were two long counters, one on either side. Behind them sat the rows of officials who gave out the tickets, with gigantic ledgers before them. There were little heaps of lottery tickets there, to be sold at one franc each; all is grist that comes to the Casino mill. One of the clerks being momentarily disengaged, as the crowd thinned off, Harry Wharton applied to him. The Frenchman looked at him inquiringly.

"You speak English?" asked Harry.

The man smiled, and shook his head.

"Nous voulons entrer au casino!" Harry explained.

Another smile.

"Pas possible, m'sieu! Les garcons ne sont pas admis."

"Mais je veux——"

"Voila, monsieur—expliquez a lui," said the clerk politely, indicating an imposing gentleman in a frock-coat and mutton-chop whiskers, evidently a "chef" in the bureau des billets.

Wharton turned to the man indicated.

"What can I do for you, monsieur?" asked the official, in good English, and with a polite bow.

"We want to go in," Wharton explained.

"The wantfulness is terrific, honoured monsieur!" said Hurree Jam-set Ram Singh.

Monsieur looked puzzled for a moment. He understood English, but not Hurree Singh's English.

"It is against the rules," he said. "Persons under age are not admitted to the rooms. You are not twenty-one."

Wharton smiled. He certainly was not twenty-one, and he could not possibly have looked it.

"We don't want to play," he explained; "but we have come from England, and we want to see the famous Casino, monsieur. It would be a great disappointment after so long a journey not to see the famous rooms."

The gentleman in the mutton-chop whiskers looked courteously concerned.

"Quite so, parfaitement," he said; "but I fear——"

"Just a stroll round the rooms inside, monsieur," said Wharton. "We will promise not to play."

The Frenchman smiled.

"You would not be allowed to play," he said. "The

croupiers would not take your money upon the tables, as you are garcons."

"Then it would be all right. I hope, monsieur, that you will be kind enough to allow us to see the interior of the Casino."

"You have, perhaps, some elderly relative who will come with you, and conduct you to see the rooms," suggested the Frenchman, evidently wishing to do the best he could not to disappoint the juniors.

"Begad! There's my uncle at Cap Martin," remarked Lord Mauleverer.

"Mon ami ici, Lord Mauleverer, has an uncle at Cap Martin," said Wharton; "but he is not here now."

"Lord Mauleverer!" said the Frenchman.

Even at Monte Carlo, where titled punters most do congregate, English titles never fail to impress. Half the Italians who comes there are either counts or princes: but, as a wise man has observed, "where everybody is somebody, then nobody's nobody." Lord Mauleverer was a "milord Anglais," and that was very different.

The directeur du bureau seemed to consider.

"Perhaps, if you will come with this relative, tout s'arrangera," he said. "There shall be permission to view the rooms."

Wharton thought a moment. If they waited till Lord Mauleverer's uncle could come from Cap Martin, along the bay, certainly it would be too late to catch Paul Tyrrell before he lost the money. The juniors had to get into the Casino now, or not at all.

"But now, monsieur," he said. "We know someone who is now, I think, in the Casino. He has a ticket of entry, and he is my friend's cousin."

The directeur considered again.

"He is there now, you say?"

"I believe so. I have his photograph here, monsieur," said Bob Cherry. "Perhaps you will know his face, as he must have been here for his ticket."

"Montrez moi."

Bob Cherry showed the photograph of Paul Tyrrell. It was useless giving the man's name, as he had undoubtedly given a false one at the Casino.

The directeur glanced at the photograph, and nodded.

"C'est vrai! Je le connais," he said.

He turned to one of the clerks with the gigantic ledgers, and spoke rapidly to him in French.

The man looked through the ledger, and talked back in rapid French, unintelligible to the juniors. Then the directeur turned to them again.

"Your cousin has the billet pour un mois," he said, "what you say, the monthly ticket: it shall be three weeks that he has it. And you say that he is in the rooms."

"I am sure of it."

"Then——" The directeur considered again.

"Your names?" he said.

He pushed a sheet of paper towards the juniors, on the counter. The juniors wrote down their names in turn. Lord Mauleverer and Prince Hurree Jamset Ram Singh undoubtedly made an impression.

"And you do not wish to play?" said the directeur, with a smile.

"Not at all, monsieur."

"You wish to look round the rooms, n'est-ce-pas?"

"That is all."

"Soit!" said the Frenchman. "I will show you, and speak to the men at the door."

"Thank you very much, sir."

They followed the directeur out of the bureau into the great atrium, where a band was discoursing sweet music.

Three doors at one end of the atrium gave admission to the roulette rooms.

One of them was not exit: the other two respectively for the entrance of the holders of the daily tickets of entry, and the more privileged persons who had monthly tickets.

The directeur spoke in French to the doorkeepers, and the juniors were allowed to enter. They passed in.

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"Well, here we are," he said, in a low voice. "I wonder what Tyrrell would think if he knew that we had made use of his photograph to get in."

The juniors grinned. Tyrrell undoubtedly felt secure if he was in the Casino. He knew how strict the rule was against the admission of persons under age, and he would never dream of encountering the juniors within the walls.

"It's a case of diamond cut diamond," said Johnny Bull. "My hat! How do they manage to breathe in here, I wonder! It's as thick as pea-soup, or London fog!"

"Jolly warm," said Nugent.

"The warmfulness is terrific."

"There are two kinds of soup in this country," Nugent remarked, "thick and clear: but there's only one kind of atmosphere—thick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The air inside the Casino was heavy and oppressive. The juniors advanced into the vast apartment, looking about them curiously.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.
In the Roulette Rooms.

THE room in which they found themselves was vast in extent and in height. The walls were decorated with pictures: great chandeliers shed subdued light. The tables were at some little distance apart, and round each was clustered a group of players—like flies round a jampot, as Johnny Bull remarked. Further on, on the right, was the apartment devoted to trente-et-quarante, where you play only with gold, but for the present the juniors were interested in the roulette.

It was at that fascinating game that Paul Tyrrell intended to play—on his wonderful "system" that was to break the bank at Monte Carlo—a feat often talked of, but never performed; for the reports of great wins that frequently appear in the newspapers are looked upon with a cynical eye by people who know the place simply as skilful advertisements.

The juniors paused at the first table.

The table was surrounded by chairs, each of which was occupied. Behind the chairs stood a row of players "debout"—standing up to play, as there was not room to sit down. Behind them again was a third rank, stretching arms painfully through to place their stakes on the numbers on the green cloth. And there were still more players, who plunged through the best they could, every now and then, to jerk coins on the board, and call out to the croupiers where they were to be placed. A little fat German squeezed himself between two big Americans, his head on a level with their shoulders, and jerked a little fat arm towards the table, and landed a gold louis. It rolled across the board.

"Le cinq, s'il vous plait!" said the fat man.

And a croupier reached out his rake and pushed the coin to the number thirty-five.

Looking between the shoulders and heads of the players, Harry Wharton & Co. gazed on the green table with keen interest, for the moment quite forgetting their search for Tyrrell.

The table was marked off in thirty-six squares, each of which was numbered. There were the "chances plein"; if you won on a number, you received thirty-five times the amount of your stake—and you had one chance in thirty-seven of doing so—for there were thirty-six numbers and zero to be reckoned with. Along the sides of the table were spaces marked off for the "chances simples"—pair and impair, or even and odd; rouge and noire—red and black—and passe and manque, above eighteen and below eighteen.

Then at the end were more spaces, where you played on "dozens," and "columns." And one could play on combined chances, too; by putting your piece on the line between two numbers, "en cheval," you played on both numbers, and received seventeen times the amount of your stake if either number came up. You could play on three numbers in a row—tranversale en plein—and then you received eleven times the amount of your stake if any of the three came up. Four numbers—a carre—won eight times the amount of the stake, if any of the four came up a winner. Six numbers—a transversale simple—would win five times the amount of the stake. A "douzaine," or dozen, won twice the amount of the stake, if any number in the twelve came up; and this apparently greater chance tempts the timid players, and those whose capital is limited. But "zero" clears off all the stakes on the dozens, and the columns, and the numbers. Zero is the "pull" of the bank over the players. There is no concealment of the fact that the bank has calmly arranged to have thirty-seven chances against the thirty-five of the player.

Mathematicaly, of course, the bank is bound to win all along the line. Only a run of luck can stem the tide— and the run of luck, of course, when it happens, is just as likely to be in favour of the bank as in favour of a player. And yet every table was crowded with men and women staking huge sums on chances that were admittedly and openly against them. The desire to "get rich quick—to get something for nothing," to obtain money without the trouble of working for it, seemed to banish every consideration of prudence, and even common-sense.

And many of the players—most of them, in fact—were blessed with a "system"—a system which was to make thirty-five chances weigh more than thirty-seven—though that was not how they would have described it.

Most of the punters had the little cards provided by the Casino—in columns of red and black—and were keeping the numbers with religious care.

Some would play red after black had come up—on the ground that the laws of equilibrium demanded as many of one colour as the other. Others played the same colour that had come up last, on the ground that the run was more likely than not. And some players—victims of the system mania carried to excess—played on both red and black at the same time.

It is an extraordinary fact, hardly to be credited by those who have not watched the play at Monte Carlo, but it is undoubtedly the case, that punters will place their money sometimes upon both chances—knowing full well that if one wins the other must lose, and that "zero" may take away both. It is part of their "system," and if a good-natured croupier points out to the player what he supposes to be a mistake, the player will be far from showing any gratitude for his kindness. Such players, it is true, are rare—and yet outside the Casino they appear to be in the possession of their normal senses, and not fit subjects for a lunatic asylum. Upon habitual players the game exercises a fascination which seems to rob them of all common-sense.

"Faites vos jeux, messieurs."

"Make your game, gentlemen!"

"Les jeux sont faits!"

"Rien ne va plus!"

After the "Rien ne va plus!" no stakes can be put down or taken up. Then the eyes of the players near enough to see are fixed on the whizzing ivory ball, and the slowly rolling wheel of the roulette machine. On the wheel are thirty-seven compartments, for the numbers and zero. The wheel revolves in one direction, the ball is spun in the other. The wheel slows down—the ball clatters into it, and drops into one of the compartments.

"Trente-six, rouge, pair, et passe!"

Thirty-six, red, pair or even, and passe—above eighteen!

All the players on red have won, the players on "passe" have won, the players on pair have won. And one lucky punter, with a piece on thirty-six itself, has scored heavily. And the players on all the other numbers have lost—and the remorseless rake of the croupier takes in the stakes—little streams of silver and gold and a few banknotes.

While the juniors were looking on at that one coup some hundreds of pounds had changed ownership at that single table!

And the same was going on at all the other tables—each with its crowd of eager players trying to prove that thirty-five valued more than thirty-seven in the law of chances.

Now a dispute arises—there are two claimants for the coin placed on number thirty-six—the winning number. The who has placed it there waits cheerfully to receive his winnings; it is a gold piece, and the winnings are thirty-five louis—a large sum. But from a hard-faced woman, with a face painted so thickly that it is a wonder the colouring does not peel off, comes a snapping voice:

"C'est a moi, le numero en plein!"

Then the genuine owner of the stake grows excited. He raps out in shrill French to the croupier, to the chef de partie, to all the world that cares to listen.

"Moi, moi! C'est a moi! Monsieur, vous m'avez vu mettre la mise! Voyons! C'est a moi! Je demande ——"

Then the woman's hard voice:

"Je dis, monsieur, c'est a moi! Le numero en plein—payez, donc."

The croupier shrugs his shoulders, and glances up at the chef de partie. It is the business of the chef de partie to keep a supervising eye on the game, principally to see that the stakes are paid to the right persons. But a man cannot see everything, and so conflicting claims arise. It is not always dishonesty; excited players sometimes rain pieces on the board, playing fifteen or sixteen numbers at once, and cannot remember clearly where their pieces fell. And so they claim a winning number with the instant conviction that it is theirs. But there are many dishonest players, too—having lost all their money, and, being thirsty to go on, and win it back, they are ready to take anything they can get, careless of the ethics of the matter.

"C'est a moi, monsieur——"

The croupier nearest the excited Frenchman nods his head.

"C'est vrai—attendez—patience, monsieur—toit s'arrangera—c'est vrai!" He looks at the chef de partie. "C'est bien a monsieur—moi, je l'ai vu—madame se trompe."

Madame is mistaken, is the way the polite croupier puts it, knowing full well that the unscrupulous woman had deliberately intended to steal the excited man's winnings. The man is paid, and the game goes on. And the woman does not even blush—if she did it would not be seen through the thick coating of paint—she stands where she is, looking out for another chance—a convicted thief—and not in the slightest degree put out by being convicted. And none of the players appear shocked, either; they are all too busy with their play to think about the matter, excepting the man immediately concerned. He grins as he slides the winnings into his packets, and murmurs to a companion that it needs to keep "les yeux ouverts"—to keep the eyes open at the Casino.

But if he had been an inexperienced or timid player, not speaking the language, the probability is that the hard-faced woman would have received the winnings and pocketed them—and lost them all within the next ten minutes. It is a curious thing that a large proportion of the "snatchers" at the Casino are women, and that the victims are mostly men. A man robbed of his winnings will frequently dismiss the matter with a shrug of the shoulders if the amount be small—but a woman robbed will raise the roof of the Casino before she will be robbed of even a five-franc piece.

The games goes on, the juniors watching it fascinated. It is a sight well worth seeing—human nature displaying itself in unaccustomed ways.

"Faites vox jeux, messieurs!"

"Les jeux sont faits."

"Rien no va plus!"

"Le cinq, rouge, impair, et manque!"

Bob Cherry backed out of the crowd round the table.

"He's not here!" he said.

"Let's look at all the tables in turn," said Harry Wharton.

The juniors walked down the great room.

They paused at each of the roulette tables in turn—and canned the faces of the players—seated and standing.

But the face of Paul Tyrrell was not to be found among them. Was he not there after all?

It would not be easy for the juniors to obtain admittance to the Casino a second time if they failed to find Tyrrell there now. In fact, it would probably be impossible.

But was Tyrrell likely to stay away that night? It was quite unlikely. The slave of the gambling fever could no more resist the attraction of the tables than the moth could resist the flame of the candle. At the risk of his life, if necessary, Tyrrell would come; the juniors felt sure of that.

They made the tour of the great apartment, and looked into the tea-room without success. Then they went into the side room where trente-et-quarante is played, and where there are also roulette tables. Every year new tables are opened at the Casino; the business flourishes; every year brings greater and greater crowds to the doors of the great white building by the blue Mediterranean. Fools and their money are soon parted.

"Not here!" said Nugent.

They returned to the tea-room and had coffee there, to kill time. They were sure that Tyrrell would come, but he was not there yet.

From the gambling-rooms came the murmur of voices as they drank their coffee.

"Les jeux sont faits."

"Rien ne va plus!"

The game never ceases. From twelve in the morning till twelve at night, every day in the year, year in and year out, the ivory balls spins on the revolving wheels; and the voices of the croupiers are never at rest. And a steady, unending stream of gold pours into the capacious coffers of the Casino.

Bob Cherry was the first to rise. He was feverishly anxious.

"Come on!" he said.

And they returned to the roulette-rooms.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

"Rien Ne Va Plus!"

"BEGAD!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Bob Cherry started eagerly.

"Can you see him?"

"Look!"

"There he is!" said Wharton, under his breath.

They had found the man they sought at last.

Paul Tyrrell was seated at the table nearest the tea-room, and Lord Mauleverer's eyes had fallen upon him as he emerged.

The man had a card before him, and was keeping the numbers. Before him, too, was a pile of money—French bank-notes, and gold coins in little stacks. He had evidently changed the English notes for French money at the "caisse." On the tables of Monte Carlo only French money is taken, excepting the five and twenty franc pieces of the exactly same value as French coins. But there is a "caisse," where money is readily changed for the players.

Tyrrell had eyes only for the game.

He had apparently not played yet. He was keeping the numbers, in order to see how the game was going before he staked.

The juniors drew closer to the table, behind his chair.

He had a dozen numbers on his card already—16, 17, 9, 7, 5, 3, 0, 32, 25, 26, 36, 0. He was wrinkling his brows over them, evidently trying to fit in the run of the numbers with his system.

He took a gold piece from the little pile, and threw it along the cloth, and it fell upon 17.

Evidently his system led him to suppose that 17 would be the next number up.

The wheel revolved, the ball spun.

Tyrrell watched with eager eyes.

Then came the announcement:

"Dix-huit, rouge, pair, et manque."

Eighteen!

It was the next number on the board, though not on the wheel.

Tyrrell set his teeth.

The "system" was not in working order yet, evidently.

He took up another gold piece ready.

The juniors exchanged glances. The man had enough money to last him about half an hour at this rate. He was not even content to play with five-franc pieces in his eagerness to score off the invincible "banque."

"He's just beginning!" murmured Wharton.

"And he's going to be stopped!" said Bob Cherry, between his teeth.

He moved forward.

Tyrrell had pitched his coin—upon number 26 this time.

"Rien ne va plus!"

Tyrrell watched.

Then he started as a hand fell upon his shoulder and gripped him. He looked up, and his face blanched as he caught Bob Cherry's eyes looking down on him.

"You!"

He uttered the word thickly.

"Come away!" said Bob.

"Leave me alone!"

"Will you come?"

"No."

"Listen to me!" said Bob. "I don't want to make a row here. But you've stolen that money, and you're not going to play with it! Understand? You've changed the English notes for French money, I see. Do you want me to go to the caisse, and give them the numbers of the notes, and claim them back?"

"Hang you—hang you!"

"That's what I shall do, if you don't get up from the table at once, and give that money to Lord Mauleverer."

"Wait—wait! It may be my number this time!" muttered Tyrrell.

The ball had stopped.

"Le premier, rouge, impair, et manque."

It was 1—and Tyrrell's coin was on 26! The gambler gritted his teeth. Bob Cherry's grasp tightened upon his shoulder.

"Come!" he said.

"Give me one more chance!" muttered Tyrrell huskily. "Don't be a brute, Bob. Give me one more chance."

"What's the good?"

"I shall win next time; the third round is practically certain. And don't be too hard on me, Bob! Give me one chance—just one—only one!"

The man might have been pleading for his life. Some of the players glanced at him. They did not understand English, fortunately, but they were aware that something unusual was going on. Bob Cherry looked at the man's strained, white face, and for a moment he felt compassion even for the rascal. The man was as much fool as rascal, after all.

"All right!" said Bob, relenting in spite of himself. "But not with that money; that's Mauleverer's. Here's a louis."

He took the coin from his pocket, and handed it to Tyrrell.

Tyrell nodded, and consulted a little book of figures he had before him, and then looked at his card of numbers. Then he placed the piece upon number 8.

"Now, watch!" he murmured.

He waited in anguish for the voice of fate.

"Dix-sept, noire, impair, et manque."

Seventeen!

"You've lost!" said Bob.

"I—I was on 17 too early," muttered Tyrrell. "It was a slight error. But 8 must come up next time. I tell you I've got it all calculated. The next number up will be 8. Give me another louis!"

Bob Cherry hesitated, and then handed him another coin. Tyrrell put it on 8, and waited.

"Dix-sept, noire, impair, et manque."

It was 17 again.

"Oh, I was a fool!" muttered Tyrrell. "Seventeen often repeats. I should have had an extra chance on that. I overlooked it, through you worrying me. Give me another louis, Bob—or, rather, two louis, and I'll cover 17 as well as——"

"You jolly well won't!" said Bob Cherry. "That's nearly two quid you've lost in two minutes, and you can't pay it back."

"When I win——"

"That's enough!" said Bob, in disgust. "If the money were your own you could play the fool as long as you liked; but it's not your own. Get up!"

"Bob!"

"If you don't get up from the table, I'll drag you away by main force! You know what that will mean. We shall all get the boot, and you won't be allowed to come in again."

"Bob——"

"For the last time!"

Tyrrell ground his teeth and rose, and gathered up the money. The juniors surrounded him, though there was not much chance of his bolting in the crowded Casino.

"Here's the money," he said, "and take my curse with it! You've ruined me, if that's any satisfaction to you! Take your money!"

Bob Cherry took it quietly, and counted it. The whole two hundred pounds was there, with the exception of the few coins Tyrrell had lost. Bob Cherry took from his own pocket enough to make up the deficiency, and passed the money to Lord Mauleverer.

"There you are, Mauly—the whole lot."

The schoolboy earl looked dubious.

"Blessed if I like taking it away from the poor beast," he said. "The ass thinks that he could win."

"Put it in your pocket!" growled Bob.

"And now let's get out," said Harry Wharton.

But Lord Mauleverer's words had raised a new hope in Tyrrell's breast. He looked eager, and his face flushed.

"Lend me the money!" he said. "I'll pay it all back to you within the hour."

"Begad!"

"Come on, Mauly!"

"One louis!" muttered Tyrrell huskily. "Just one louis! You won't miss that. I can get four pieces for it and have a chance."

"Oh, don't be a giddy goat!" said Bob Cherry.

"Dash it all," said Lord Mauleverer, "I've got plenty of money! Let the poor beast have some. Look here, Tyrrell, you can have fifty quid, and then shut up!"

"Good—good! You shall have it all back."

"Oh, rot! Here's the quids."

"Well, you've had the money," said Bob Cherry resignedly. "You can do as you like with your own, I suppose, Mauly. But you're an ass!"

"The assfulness is terrific!"

"That's all right," said Lord Mauleverer. "I know he will lose it, but I can't stand seeing a man with a chivvy like that. Let's watch him."

Tyrrell had taken the money the schoolboy earl handed him, and, hardly stopping for a word of thanks, he returned to the table. His seat had already been taken by another eager player, but Tyrrell played over his shoulder.

The juniors watched him. They had not the least expectation that Tyrrell would win, and they knew that, with the gambling fever upon him, he would not leave off if he did win. He would keep on in the hope of greater winnings—keep on till he lost again, and lost all.

The man seemed to have forgotten their presence. He had forgotten everything but the "jeu," everything but the spinning ball, the rolling wheel, the yellow numbers on the green cloth!

"Rien ne va plus!"

Tyrrell had placed five louis upon a number—the No. 6 again. And by a freak of fortune it was the No. 8 that won!

"Le huit, noire, pair, et manque!"

Tyrrell gave a queer little chirrup.

"Right! C'est a moi, le huit—c'est a moi, vous savez!" he muttered to the croupier next to him, and the man nodded and smiled.

"Bien, monsieur, c'est a vous!"

Tyrrell's win was large. He received a hundred and seventy-five gold louis in return for his stake—a hundred and sixty-pounds.

Bob Cherry tapped him on the arm. Tyrrell looked round impatiently.

"What is it—what is it?"

"You've won."

"I told you I should!"

"You can pay Mauly his fifty quid out of that."

Tyrrell made an impatient gesture.

"I'll pay that afterwards. I need the capital now. This gives me a total of two hundred pounds—what I needed for the "system." I'll pay Mauleverer presently, and as much as he likes! Let me alone!"

"It's all right, Bob," said Lord Mauleverer. "Don't worry."

Bob Cherry snifted.

Tyrrell had made a wholly unlooked-for win, and if he had had common-sense he would have kept the money and left the Casino. But Monte Carlo punters are not gifted with common-sense. His win only made him the more eager to go on—as it always does. Losers leave off, because they have to—winners seldom!

Tyrrell received his winnings, and asked for plaques—five louis pieces. He was going to win heavily while he was in the vein. He threw down six plaques on six different numbers, and one of them turned up. He had won a hundred and seventy-five louis again—by blind chance, though he chose to attribute it to his "system." He had a seat at the table now, another player having retired "broke" by the same coup that had enriched Tyrrell. He sat down, piles of gold pieces before him, and played on—on the wonderful "system"—with as much as thirty louis on the cloth at once. And now, as might have been expected, his brief spell of luck had run out. He lost, and lost again, and again, and again, and the gold before him melted away like fairy gold.

The little piles of gold vanished, till only the bare green cloth was before Tyrrell at the table. He stared at it blankly, as if by hard staring he could discover some piece of the money that had gone for ever.

He rose from the table at last. He did not speak to the juniors. They moved away, feeling some reflection of his despair and depression. They moved away towards the doors on the atrium. Tyrrell paused, and came towards them.

"I've had bad luck!" he said thickly. "I've got nothing to pay my hotel bill, Bob! I—I——Give me a couple of louis so that I shan't starve!"

Bob Cherry handed him two louis without a word. Tyrrell left them. But he did not go towards the doors. As they left the Casino, the juniors saw him hurrying back to try a last chance on the tables.

"Poor beast!" said Harry Wharton. "He won't leave the place while he's got a coin about him! Poor rotter!"

"Yaas, begad!"

And the juniors went out of the roulette-rooms, glad enough to get out after what they had seen. The clear, cool air of the terrace was very grateful to them after the suffocating atmosphere of the roulette-rooms.

They did not see Tyrrell again. They returned to their hotel for a very late dinner, saddened and silent from their visit to the Casino, and wondering what would become of the wretched gambler, stranded in a foreign country without a coin. They would have helped him willingly, in spite of his rascality; but they knew that if he received a single coin while he was in Monte Carlo he would go directly to the Casino with it—with the inevitable result.

But they did not see him again, and the same evening they left Monte Carlo for Cap Martin, where they were hospitably received by Lord Mauleverer's uncle.

. . . . . .

Greyfriars was bright and cheery in the spring weather when Harry Wharton & Co. arrived at the old school. The chums of the Remove had had a pleasant week on the sunny shores of the South, but they were glad to get back to the old school. They had not heard of Tyrrell since that parting in the Casino, and Bob Cherry hoped that he would never hear of him again.

Billy Bunter met them with reproachful looks.

"You left me behind, you rotters!" he said. "The least you can do now is to stand me a feed now you've come back."

And in their cheery good-humour at being once more in the old scenes, among their old friends, the juniors were kind to Bunter, and they stood him the feed—and Billy Bunter greatly distinguished himself. Harry Wharton & Co. were called upon by the Remove fellows for a full history of all that they had seen and done at Monte Carlo; but they did not mention Paul Tyrrell, and, excepting for the fellows already in the secret, no one knew the cause and the object of Bob Cherry's Chase.

THE END.

(Another splendid, long, complete Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars next Monday, entitled "The Impossible Four," by Frank Richards. Order your copy of "The Magnet" Library in advance. Price One Penny.

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THE STORY·OF·THE GREAT MAN-HUNT

BY **SIDNEY DREW**

Ferrers Lord, millionaire, and owner of the Lord of the Deep.

Prince Ching-Lung, adventurer, conjurer, and ventriloquist.

Nathan Gore, jewel collector and multi-millionaire, Ferrers Lord's terrible rival.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

"BY FOUL MEANS OR FAIR, I'LL WIN!"

While crossing the Atlantic on his way to England—where the costly diamond, "The World's Wonder," is to be put up for auction—Nathan Gore, the American millionaire and jewel-collector, receives a message from his agent in London to say that the diamond has been bought by his hated rival, Ferrers Lord, who is the owner and inventor of the wonderful submarine, the Lord of the Deep.

Nathan Gore swears he will obtain possession of the diamond, and on the night of his arrival in London, he goes to his rival's house, and taking the stone, leaves in its place the message: "To Ferrers Lord,—Knowing that you would not sell 'The World's Wonder,' I have taken it. Do your worst! I defy you! The stone is mine!—Nathan Gore." The millionaire accepts the challenge, and a few hours after the robbery the chase is started. For five months, accompanied by his two friends, Chung-Lung, a Chinese prince, and Rupert Thurston, he pursues Nathan Gore, travelling once round the world, but never being able to overtake him. At last Ferrers Lord wearies of the game, and the Lord of the Deep's bows are turned to England once more. Rupert Thurston is arrested at Calais for piracy, but Ferrers Lord and his crew on board the Lord of the Deep rescue him. In the meantime, Yard-of-Tape, the French cook on board the submarine, gets squirted with a hose in mistake for Ching-Lung by Prout, the steersman, and this puts him in a very bad humour. Groping round in the darkness, he "wipes the floor" with the first person he lays his hands on This happens to be the rescued Thurston, and when Ching-Lung turns up the lights and sees Rupert sitting in the middle of a pool of water he roars with laughter.

Prout looks over the top of the ladder in amazement. "By hokey, what are yer smolin' for?" he shouts. And then he returns to his post on deck.

(Now go on with the story.)

In the Soup.

Loneland again. The two trembling points of white that vanished and reappeared were the searchlights of the forts. Thomas Prout gave a hoarse chuckle as he showed them to the prince.

"By hokey!" he said. "I wouldn't care to pay old mouldy-face's bill for electric light."

"There's a loight in the winder for me!" said Barry O'Rooney.

"You'll have pains in your windows shortly, Barry," said Ching-Lung, "if you spring any more of that croaking on us. Tush-pish! Your voice wants scraping, oiling, and other attention."

"Ut's a good, meller, iviryday voice, begging yer pardon," said Barry; "and as Oi'm compilled to carry ut about wid me, Oi'm privileged to use ut now and thin. Will, will, that's Goretown's glims wance more. Dear, swate place! Oi wish a bloomin' airthquake wud bust ut to blithery!"

"Can you find that place 'blithery' on the map, Irish?"

Barry did not reply. He got a whiff of something just then.

"Pay-soup!" he muttered. "Oi'm away, to spake swately and koindly to the cook."

Barry was soon busy with a basin of the soup. He would have been busier had the soup been less hot. The first spoonful of it scalded him. He almost coughed the boots off his feet.

"A-r-r! Ze greediness of ze man, look at eet!" said Yard-of-Tape.

"What's he done? Swallered a bloomin' fork?" asked Maddock, whose nose had directed him to the galley.

"Non, non, Benjamin! He try to eat ze soup when she is red-hot, and zo he siffair ze pain of ze scald. A-r-r! Could you not vait one short minute for ze coolness of hairs to arrive? Eet is ze fathead zing to make—to do. Ten zousand dogs of ze blue colour, eet is ze fathead-chump ting to do!"

"By gum, it is!" agreed Maddock.

"Did Oi ever say it wasn't?" roared Barry savagely. "G-r-r-r! Ut was masthy. Niver moind. Niver say doie. It's niver too late to patch or to pawn. Have at yez agen, yez hissing-hot spalpeen!"

The soup was still too warm to be eaten. Seeing Maddock's eyes fixed wistfully on the basin, Yard-of-Tape dipped the ladle into the saucepan, and helped the bo'sun to something less than an imperial quart.

"Tape, you're a 'ighborn dook!" said Maddock gratefully.

"Ut's a woise proverb that says, 'Always kape in wid the cook,'" remarked Barry. "Ut's loikewoise woise to kape in wid the police and the bulldog nixt dure. Lit us help yiz, gintle Mary."

Maddock and Barry seized a couple of dish-towels, and began to wipe the plates as the chef washed them. A yellow face appeared and disappeared. Then a long syringe came out of the gloom mysteriously, and dipped its nozzle into one of the basins. The syringe departed, but only to return. It approached the second basin, and gently sucked up the soup until barely a drop remained. Then it vanished for good.

"Gon!"

"Yes, Chinay?"

Ching-Lung turned out the light. Gan had been taking a snooze in the swimming-bath. He blinked drowsily.

"Come out, you fat frog!" said Ching-Lung. "I've got something you love."

"Candles, Chingy?"

"Guess again."

"Butters, den, Chingy?"

"No, you mouldy mackerel!" said the prince, holding up a pudding-basin. "Pea-soup!"

Gan swam for the shore without delay. He had a weakness for pea-soup. He clutched the basin eagerly.

"Mind, silly! It's hot!"

"I let hims cools, den, Chingy!" grinned Gan. "Don'ts hims smells a treats? Oh, how I shalls tickles haire, Chingy! Where you getses him, Chingy?"

"Sweetheart, I borrowed it. Ask no questions, but devour it. Dost know the name of this contrivance?"

"Dat a squininger."

"It is a syringe, dearest Gan. That syringe is full of soup right up to the giddy neck! Thou smilest. Ah me! Oh us! Ahem! I must leave you now, and I must go and rock the cradle. Eat on, beloved, and remember there's a second helping in dat dear little squirt."

"I eats on till I eats alls off, Chingy!" chuckled the Eskimo. "Ho, ho, hoo!"

Ching-Lung did not feel so confident on that point. He stole along the corridor to the galley. Plates and dishes were clattering.

"How many more, by gum?" inquired Maddock.

"Four or foive only," said Barry. "It won't take a minute to clear up the lot."

It was done. Barry made for his soup. He looked, and stepped back. Then he stepped forward, and looked again. His mouth was working, but no words came.

Then it was Maddock's turn to receive a shock. He almost stood on his head.

"G-g-gone!"

"The soup!" howled Benjamin.

"Ivry blissid dhrop of at!" yelled Barry, finding his voice.

"Vat? Dogs of ze blue colour! Vat? A-r-r-r-r! Gone? Ze so lovely soup! Stolen- drunked- rob away! A-r-r-r-r!"

Barry picked up an empty saucepan.

"Come on!" he hissed.

"Where to?"

"A-r-r-r! Vere to--vere to?"

"To foind the sneak—thafe!" growled Barry. "To foind him, and to pulverise him!"

"A-r-r-r! To slay him—to beat ze vicked life of him out!" cried the cook. "I am r-ready! A-r-r-r! Murderous dog of ze blue colour! A-r-r-r! Villain, rogue, canaille, rat, vat head, chump! I am prepaire to give him many blows wis ze feet of me—to keek him, as you shall call it!"

The warlike Yard-of-Tape rushed out, brandishing a frying-pan. He shot along on his heels for some distance and sat down. He was badly jarred, but he did not seem to care, and he had hurt his left thumb. He put his thumb in his mouth.

"A-r-r-r!" he shrieked. "Eet is ze clue—eet is soup! A-r-r-r! I taste haire on ze thumb of me! Some matches—quick!"

"Troth, look at at!" said Barry, striking a vesta.

Yard-of-Tape had slipped into a pool of soup. A line of drops gave a clue that even a detective could have followed with a decent hope of success. The drops had fallen from the syringe. Ching-Lung, in fact, had laid a fatal trail.

"Faith, at's the clue of the sloppy soup-splashes!" said Barry. "The swimming-bath!"

"The swimming-bath!" repeated Maddock.

"Ze swimming-barf!" hissed Yard-of-Tape.

"Thry the dure!"

It was not locked, and the hinges were well oiled. The door opened with barely a creak. And there sat Gan-Waga on the edge of the bath, his face buried in a white bowl, which was slowly being tilted higher and higher.

Gan's free hand was pressed over his dump waistcoat. Gan was thoroughly enjoying himself. He was just then the happiest Eskimo alive.

But happiness, alas! like sparrows, blue-bottles, money, and other things has a habit of flying, especially when it is chased. Gan's was chased severely. The three avengers leapt into the room.

"Thafe!" roared Barry.

"Mean sneak!" shouted Maddock.

"Dog of ze miserable blue-colour, surrendaire!" yelled Yard-of-Tape. "Ze zou-and murdaires to ze stealaire of mine soup! A-r-r-r!"

Gan had emptied the basin. He was quick enough to discover that he was running risks. The three gentlemen had not brought the frying-pan and saucepan for nothing. They had brought them for the purpose of cooking Gan's hash. Gan did not care to have his hash cooked. He preferred to keep it in a raw state as long as possible. Gan, therefore,

got into the water promptly, not forgetting to take the syringe with him.

"A-r-r! Coward! A-r-r-r! Caitiff! A-r-r-r! Miserable chien!" howled the chef, as Gan's head rose. "Come out and face me! Vill you dive in ze vataire like ze dirty duck, r-reptile?"

"Whats you want?" asked Gan.

"Thafe, where's our soup? Where's our soup, I ax?" thundered Barry.

To use a very vulgar term, Gan was beginning to "tumble" to it. He grinned as he saw the angry three dancing about. Then he put his thumb to his snub nose, and spread out his fingers in a most insulting and tantalising manner. And he said:

"Goes homes, and saw offs yo' faces!"

"'Eave a brick at him!" bellowed Maddock.

There were no bricks at hand, so Barry threw a chair. Gan dived as he saw the piece of furniture, and rose some distance away, with his fingers still to his nose, and he said:

"Goes home and tars yo' whiskers, yo' ugly-faces, chumps heads jugginses!"

"Oi'll shoot him, bejabbers! I'll shoot him!" growled Barry. "Come out, or I'll foire!"

Barry dragged out his big revolver. At one time Gan would have been terrified out of his life, but that time had gone for ever. Gan was as familiar with firearms as he was with his meals. He was quite aware that there would be no shooting. He smiled, and said:

"Blows de tops off yo' own napper, ugly-mug, and if dere any brainses insides I'll lives on scrap-iron all de rests of my lifes! Ha, ha! Ho, hoo!"

"Take thar!" bellowed Joe.

It was another chair. Gan sank, and came up.

"Mices to you, Benjamoons!" he chuckled.

It was maddening to be dodged, flouted, and jeered at by a miserable Eskimo. They threw many things at Gan, but they never hit him once. Yard-of-Tape danced until he wore holes in his slippers. They tried to lasso Gan, but failed. And then Ching-Lung glided in, and asked what it was all about. They all told him together. Ching-Lung winked at Gan, and then scowled blackly.

"Blubberbiter," he said, "you are a miserable rascal, a low dog, a pitiful scoundrel! To steal is wicked. To steal soup is worse than murder. What made yo' do it?"

"Yo' goes homes and bary yo' old twisted faces!" said the polite and gentlemanly Gan.

"Wh—wha—what?" gasped Ching-Lung.

"Go homes and climbs up yo' pigtails, and dens slips off an' break yo' eyelashes!" said Gan.

"Wh—wha—wha-a-a—what?"

"Horsewhip him, sir!" said Maddock.

"Tear ze limbs of him asundaire!" said Yard-of-Tape.

"Flay at aloive, sir!" said Barry.

Ching-Lung swept his hand across his brow.

"Gan-Waga," he said, his voice trembling, "this is too much!"

"Chucks somes away, dens, dirty dial!" said Gan cheerfully.

"Silence! All is over! You are unmasked! I have nursed a viper! It has stunned and stung me! It has lunged and stunned—or—it has— Oh, my grief mix me naked—makes me mused! I—I— Ah, Gan-Waga, I loath you! You are a kiv—Big snur—I mean, a snivelling cur! Maddock, arrest him!"

But Maddock was wily. He was not going to be taken in, and he did not intend to go in, either.

"I've got a bit of a cold, sir," he said. "Rayther a bad 'un, sir."

"Barry, you must arrest him, then!"

"Oi've got a baste of a cowld, too, sir," pleaded Barry.

"A-r-r-r!" hissed Yard-of-Tape. "I vill not stand back ven ze duty shall call! Eet is rob, rob, rob from ze galley, but I nevaire shall vatch ze cur of ze blue colour till now! A-r-r! I shall arrest ze rascal. I am brave. I am ze swimmaire excellent. Ciel! Shall ze dog defy me? Nevaire! I am ze son of France. A-r-r-r! Ze vengeance she draw nigh. A-r-r! Bevaire, robbaire of soup! I shall arrive—oui, I shall arrive! And ven I shall arrive I shall bash you wiz ze blows so terrible zat you squeal for ze mercy which shall be given nevaire. A-r-r-r-r!"

Barry and Maddock were more interested than angry by this time. Yard-of-Tape began to pull off his clothes. He stopped several times to shake his fist at Gan and to call him names. Gan had floated quite close. He lay on his back, smiling happily.

"He shall squeal for ze mercy! A-r-r, how he shall squeal!" hissed the chef.

(An extra long instalment of this amusing and exciting serial story next Monday.)

My Readers' Page

WHOM TO WRITE TO: EDITOR, "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY, THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

OUR TWO COMPANION PAPERS "THE GEM" LIBRARY. EVERY WEDNESDAY AND "THE PENNY POPULAR" EVERY FRIDAY.

The Editor is always pleased to hear from his Chums, at home or abroad.

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"THE IMPOSSIBLE FOUR!"

By Frank Richards.

Next week's splendid, long complete tale of the juniors of Greyfriars is one which I know very many Magnetites will welcome with particular keenness, if only by reason of the fact that they will once more be able to renew their acquaintance with the famous Alonzo Todd and his remarkable Cousin Peter.

The two return to Greyfriars, and, together with Dutton, the deaf boy, and Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, form a new Co., which soon earns for itself—and, as I think you will agree when you have read the story, deservedly—the name of

"THE IMPOSSIBLE FOUR!"

The fun waxes fast and furious, as may be imagined, and the formation of the new and peculiar Co. adds considerably to the gaiety of Greyfriars.

THE "GEM" "WAISTCOAT" COMPETITION.

In this week's issue of our famous companion paper, my readers are offered the chance of earning a number of cash prizes in a most novel and interesting way.

The competition is, in short, to design a waistcoat for Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the famous swell of St. Jim's. The outline of the waistcoat is printed, together with a special message to my readers from Arthur Augustus himself, and all that is to be done is for every one of my readers with original and artistic ideas to fill in the bare outline of the garment with an attractive and tasteful design. Crayons, ink, coloured chalks, or paints may be used to carry out the designs. I know that my readers possess both originality and good taste, while not a few are blessed with really artistic inclinations, so that I am very much looking forward to the task of examining and judging a large number of most interesting and attractive efforts. I am sure all my readers will enjoy going in for this competition, full particulars of which will be found in the issue of "The Gem" Library which comes out this Wednesday.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

P. Cruickshank (North London).—Very many thanks. I will bear it in mind.

H. O. Hewitt (Bexhill).—A cure for chilblains? Well, here it is: Wash the affected parts with hot water, then plunge them into cold water, dry them, and rub them with lemon-juice.

T. Higgins (Ireland).—Your letter has not been received. Let me have another one at my new address, and I will do my best for you.

L. Carlton (Dublin).—Thank you for your letter. I will bear what you say in mind.

W. P. (Bristol).—My advice to you is to obtain a book on boxing. Any newsagent in Bristol will get you one.

H. R. (York).—I will consider what you suggest.

E. Kelly (Limehouse).—Thanks for your letter. I am considering your proposal.

P. I. G. (Sask).—If you can sleep through the noise made by an alarm-clock going off close to your ear, I'm afraid I know of nothing else likely to wake you up. If you concentrate your mind overnight upon the absolute necessity of getting up at a certain time, you ought to wake up at that time automatically. Try doing this, if you have not done so already. Getting up at the right time is merely a matter of will power, after all.

P. Gardiner (Liverpool).—A book on birds and animals and their care can be obtained at Messrs. Gamage & Co.'s, Holborn, London, E.C., at a low price.

W. Kelly (Australia).—Thank you for your letter and drawings. I am pleased to tell you that I hope to publish a portrait gallery in "The Gem" at a very early date. I am afraid I cannot oblige you by publishing the "Penny Popular" every day—at any rate, not just yet!

C. Neville (Cheshire).—See the "Chat" pages both of "Gem" and "Magnet."

"Roderick" (Glasgow).—I am afraid I cannot have an Irish and Scotch Exchange—anyway, not for the present. I will bear the idea in mind for future occasions.

BUYING A BICYCLE.

Now that the cycling season is commencing in earnest, many readers will be counting their hard-earned savings, with a view to purchasing that article which very few boys and girls do not long for—a bicycle.

Naturally, these savings in most cases do not run to a new machine. Well, then, you must content yourself with buying a second-hand one, which very often proves to be almost as good as new—that is, if you are lucky enough to strike a bargain. Of course, "bargains" are not always what they appear to be, so let me give you a few hints which should help you to tell the genuine article from the faked.

You will probably scan the advertisement columns for what you seek. When at last you hit upon something that seems likely to suit, see the machine offered.

First of all, make sure that the frame is suitable, and that it is the right height. This last can be ascertained by a very simple test. When on the saddle you should be able to place your toes, with the foot level, beneath the pedal when at its lowermost point. You cannot do it? Then the machine is too high, or your legs are too short—which you like.

This is a very important point, for the action of the leg muscles will be considerably impeded if the limbs have insufficient play with the pedals.

Perhaps the saddle can be lowered. If so, good. Then the gear must be taken into account. A gear of about sixty-five is most suitable for an ordinary lad, as a rule.

Now scrutinise the frame very carefully, for there is a possibility of a few kinks or dents being present—evidence of a collision or a spill at some time or other. If so, perhaps you will find the front forks slightly buckled or pushed back, which means that new forks will be wanted.

Satisfied on this point, turn to the tyres, and inspect them inch by inch for any cuts or gashes. Cracks along the side denote that the rubber is perished.

Take the chain from the front wheel. If it is stretched or badly worn you will soon find yourself faced with the necessity of buying a new chain.

Shake the wheels and head. They rattle? Then the bearings are worn, and may have to be renewed.

If the machine has a free wheel, two reliable brakes will be necessary, and make sure that they are reliable.

Lastly, see that the enamel and plating are in good condition, although this point is not exactly vital. See if any spokes are broken or missing.

Before you finally decide upon clinching the bargain, make arrangements to have a trial spin. Should anything be wrong it will probably show itself.

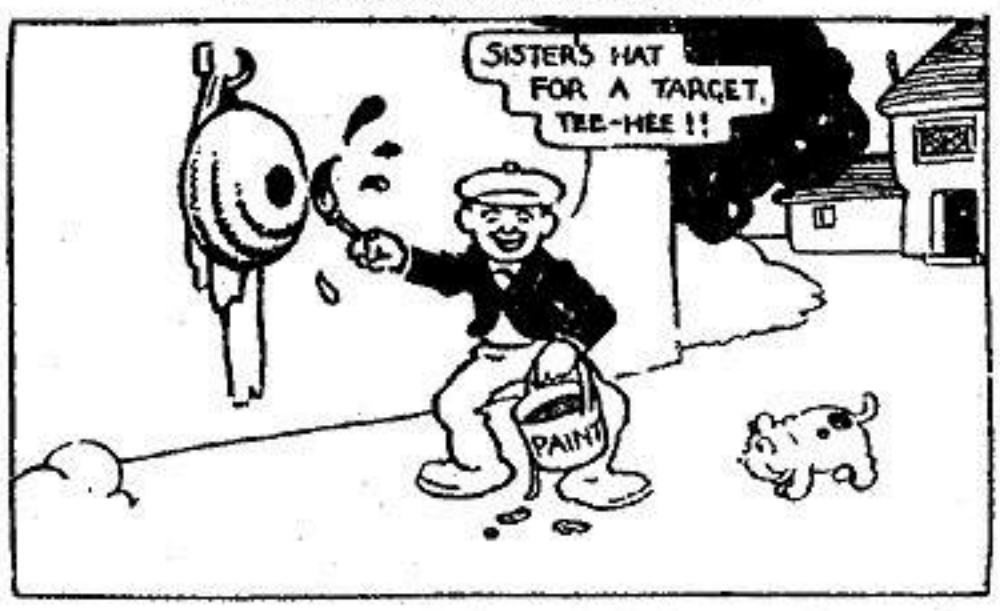
It may be worth your while, if only a few things require renewing or repairing, to expend a little extra on your own afterwards, but if much is needed you may as well have a new machine, and have done with it.

THE EDITOR.

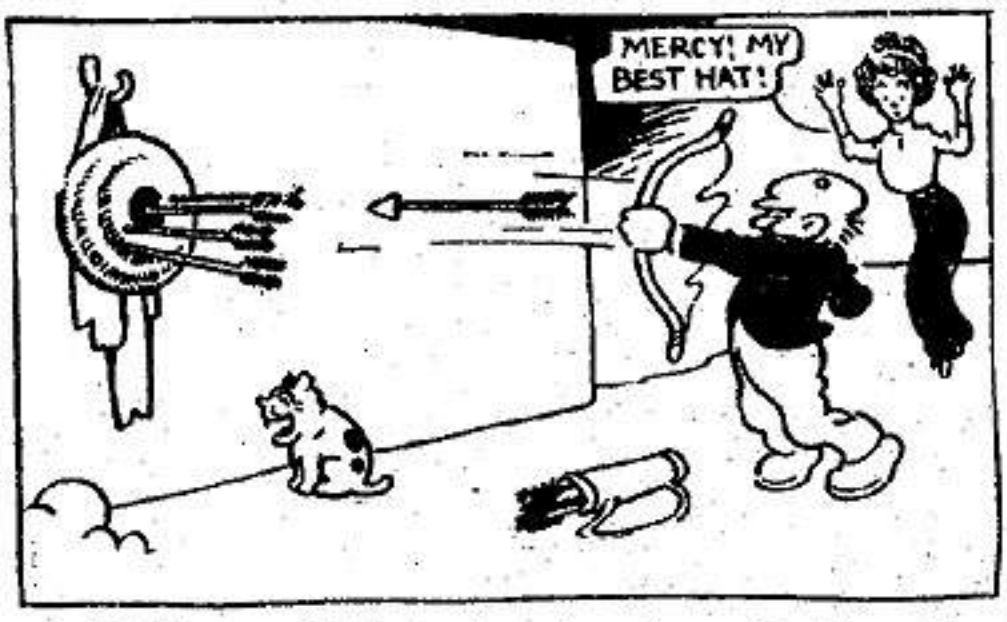
THE "MAGNET" LIBRARY

SPECIAL COMIC SUPPLEMENT.

A H-ARROW-ING MOMENT!



1. The mischievous boylet had quietly borrowed his sister's hat, and he hastened with it to a friendly wall where he hung it up, and with a little paint—



2. Swiftly turned it into a target, and proceeded to put in a little overtime with his bow and arrows. His sister dashed up just in time to see seven or five arrows—

3. Shot into her hat. She was fearfully scared at first, but there was nothing to worry about, for those arrows improved her hat so wonderfully that she set the fashion.

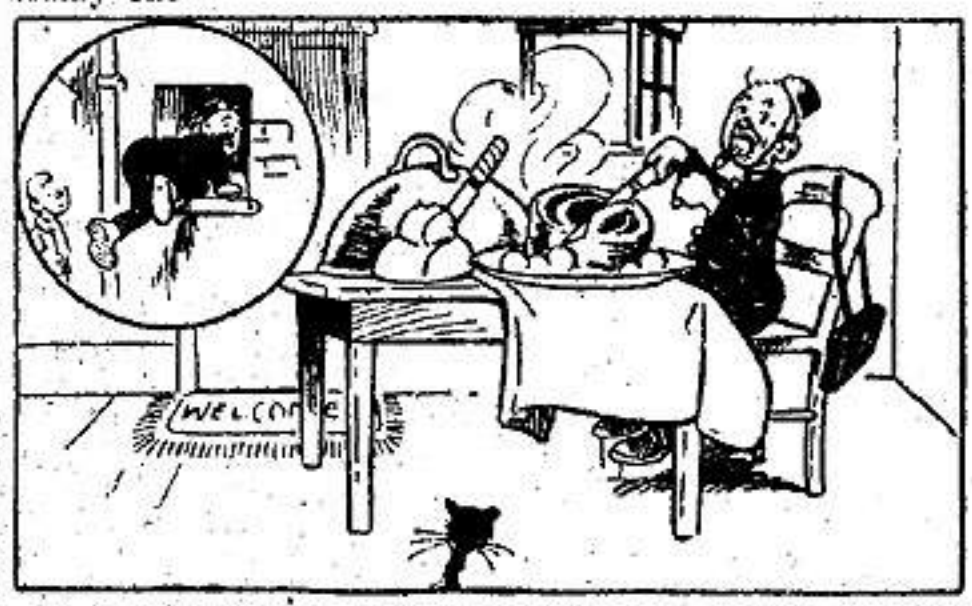
NO TIP!

Waiter (angling for a tip): "Er—it is usual, madame, to—er—remember the waiter here!"

Snappy Suffragette: "My trouble will be to try and forget you! Your face would disgrace a cab horse!"

A STRANGE DISH-COVER-Y!

1. "Now go," growled old Twister, as he gave the messenger boy with the writ the order of the boot. But that boy was a brainy one—



2. So climbing into the room he found a hearty luncheon on the table. "What-ho! I'll eat this little lot, and then get under the dish-cover and serve the writ to the old chap," said he.

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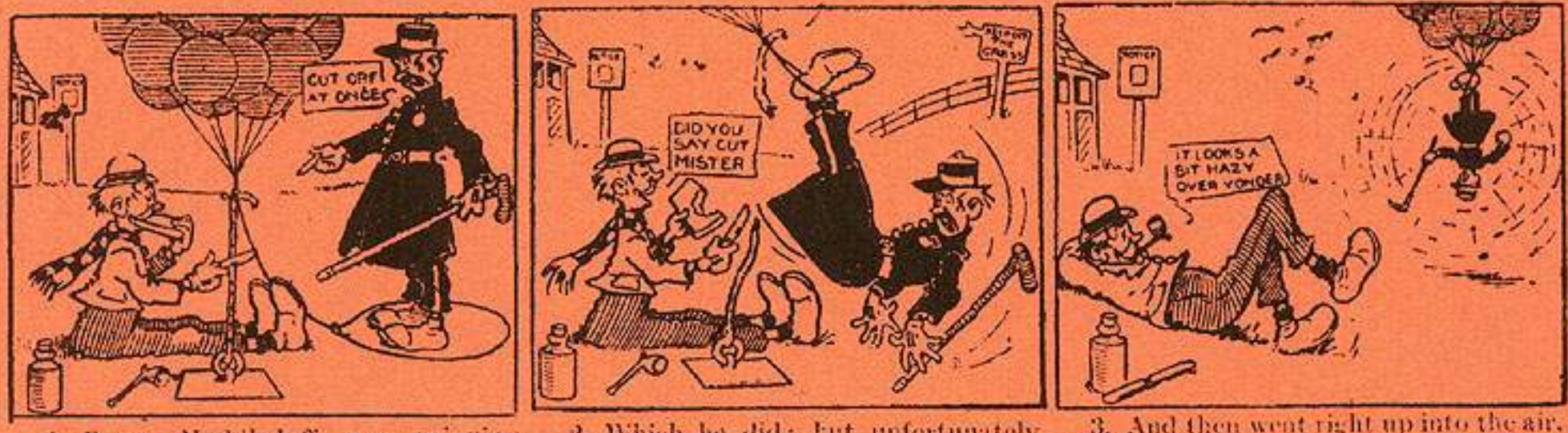
UP IN THE AIR, EVER SO HIGH.



1. Percy Muddleduff was enjoying cheese and pickles, when a p.-c. told him to cut. Well, Percy misunderstood him, and thought he meant cut his balloons off.

2. Which he did; but unfortunately the p.-c. happened to be standing in the loop, and the balloons took him off his feet.

3. And then went right up into the air. Hard lines on him, wasn't it? Percy enjoyed the sight, while the poor bobby felt it badly in the waistcoat.

AN ABJECT APOLOGY.

Miss Smythe: "So sorry I trod on your toe, Mr. Brown!"
Mr. Brown (exceedingly polite): "Not at all—not at all, I assure you. Pardon me for having a toe!"

PASS THE SALT, PLEASE.

Young Man: "You are a school teacher!"
Young Lady: "How can you tell?"
Young Man: "I can see the pupils in your eyes!"

EX-STRAW-DINARY.

"Say, mate, I should think that you find that drainpipe rather hard for a pillow, don't you?"
"Not a bit, old fellah. I've stuffed it with straw!"

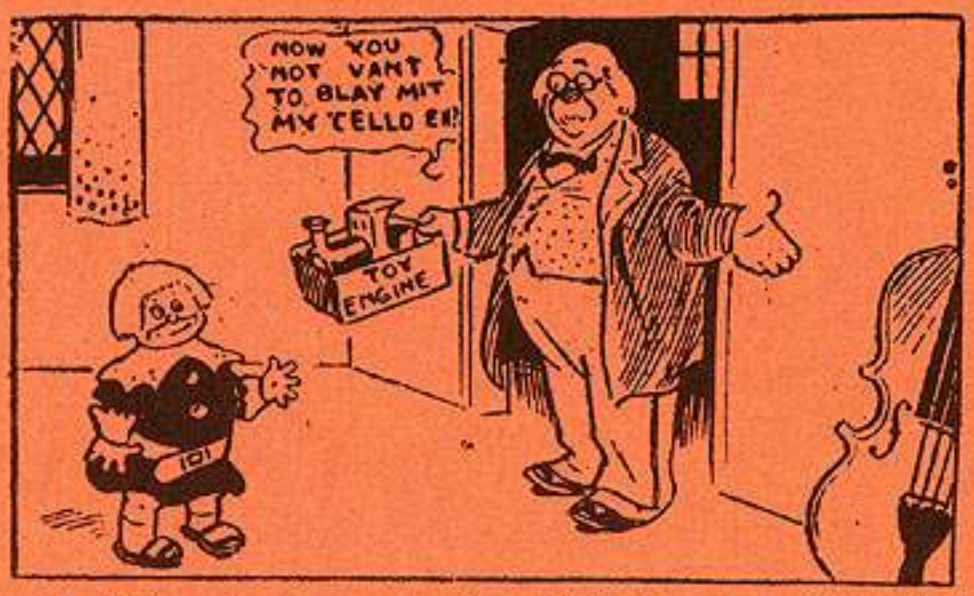
FROM THE LATEST NOVEL.

"As he gazed out of the window, a beautiful picture caught his eye."

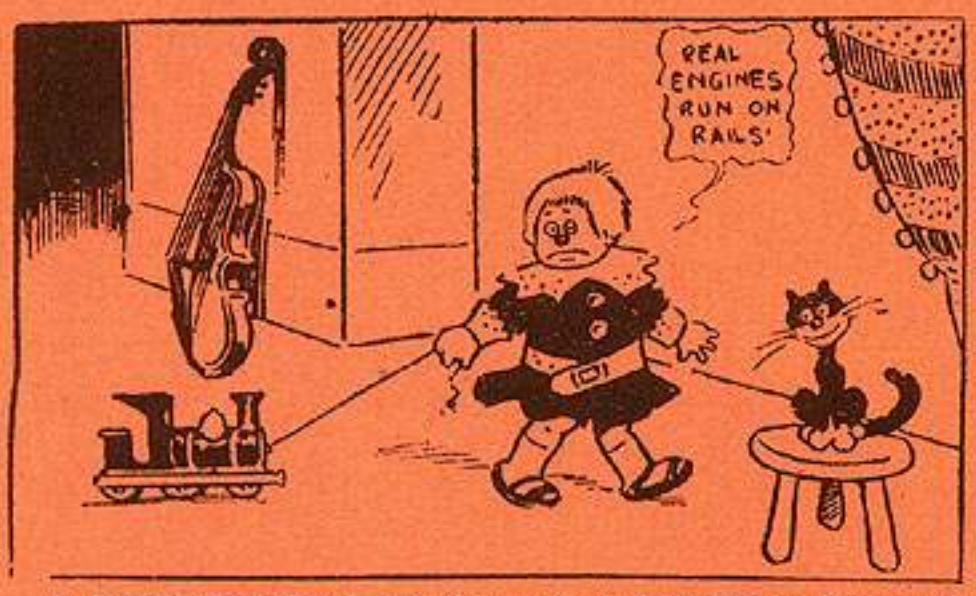
AND A FUNNY FELLOW, TOO.

"Now, Cleverdick, if you are so smart at problems, tell me how far off thunder is before you hear the first roll?"
"I can't do that, ma, I'm the lightning calculator!"

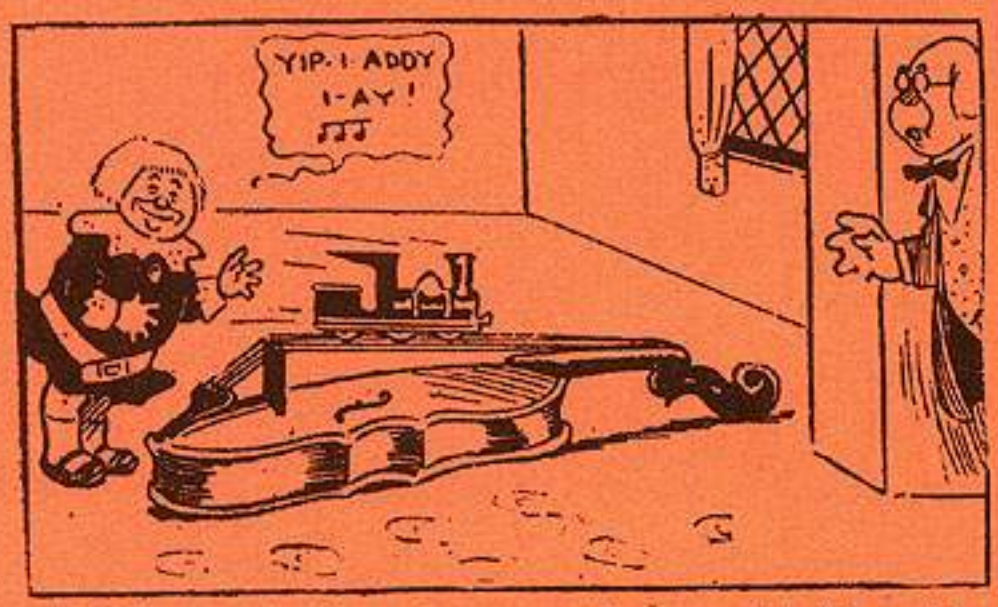
YIDDLE ON YOUR FIDDLE ANY RACTIME!



1. "Now then, my dear," said Uncle John. "Here's a toy engine. You can play mit it, but you mustn't touch my fiddle."



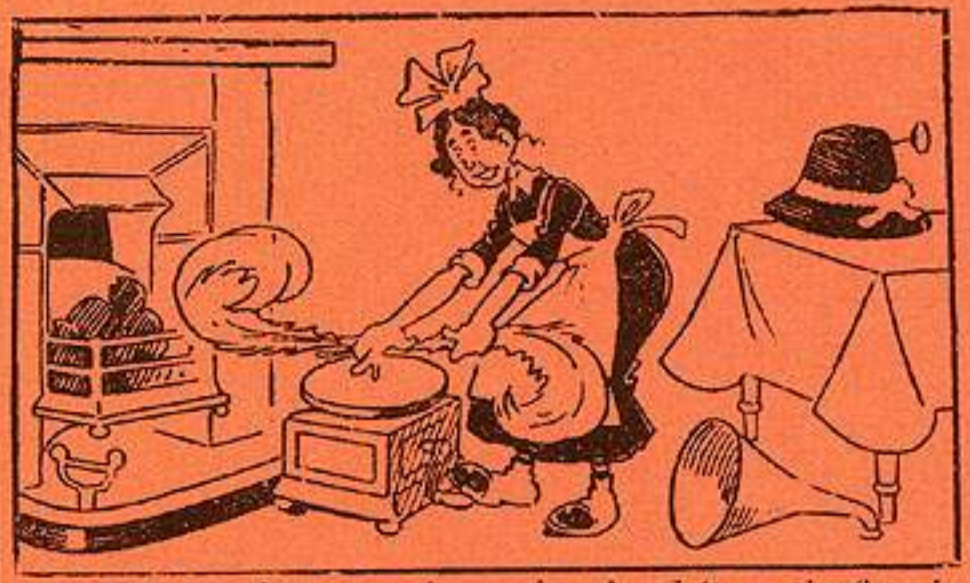
2. But little Willie knew that real engines ran on lines, and in less than no time—



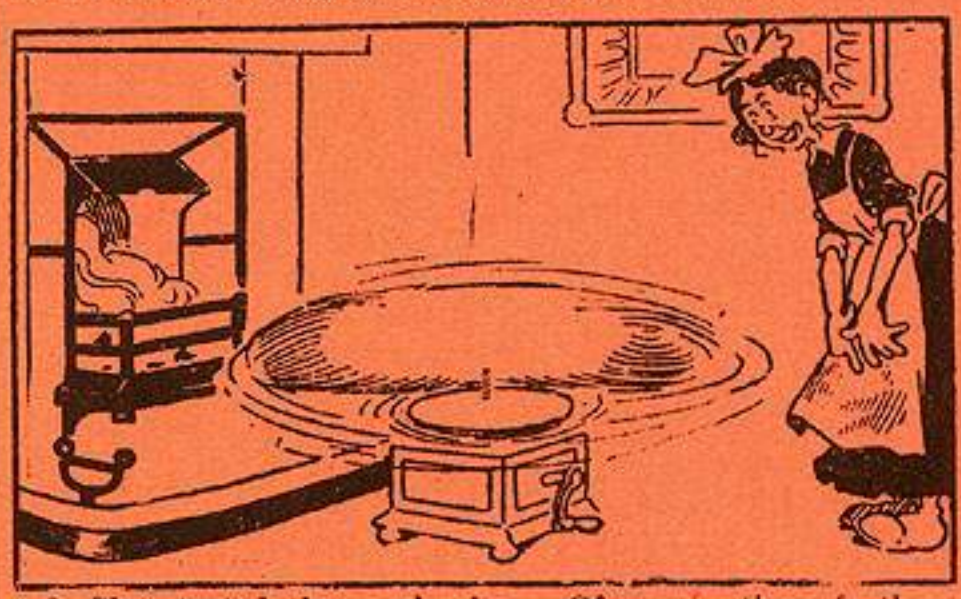
3. Was running his engine on new lines, much to his uncle's surprise and indignation.

A FEATHER IN HER CAP.

1. "Oh dear!" cried Sarah. "I can't get the wretched fire to burn anyhow," and a frown spread all over her pretty face. But Sarah has brains as well as beauty.



2. Noticing the gramophone, she placed it on the floor in front of the should-be fire, and then, fixing two of the feathers from her saucy headgear in the above clever manner—

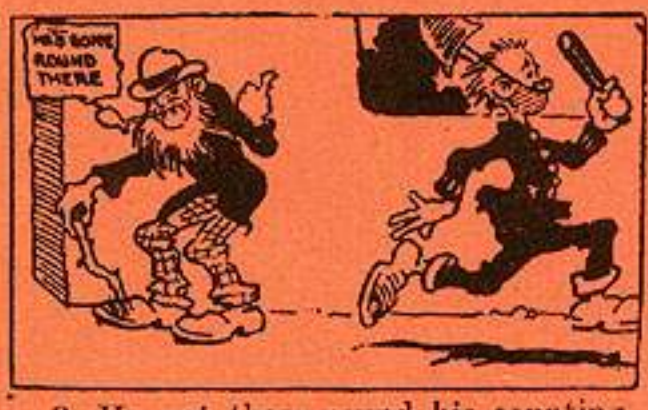


3. She started the mechanism. Of course, those feathers flew round 375¼ times to the minute, and made such a draught that the fire was soon blazing away right merrily. Smart Sarah!

A REGULAR "PLANT."

1. Ned Nicker had run off with a valuable plant, but the copper had seen him, and he raced after him for many miles. "It's no good!" gasped Ned, puffing. "I'm fairly knocked."

2. But Ned didn't want to be captured if he could help it, because skilly and a hard bed don't suit his delicate constitution. So, hurriedly pulling up the plant by the roots—



3. He put them round his counting-house, tucking the ends under his Bond Street tile. It made a splendid disguise, and the copper never gave a second glance at the old man.