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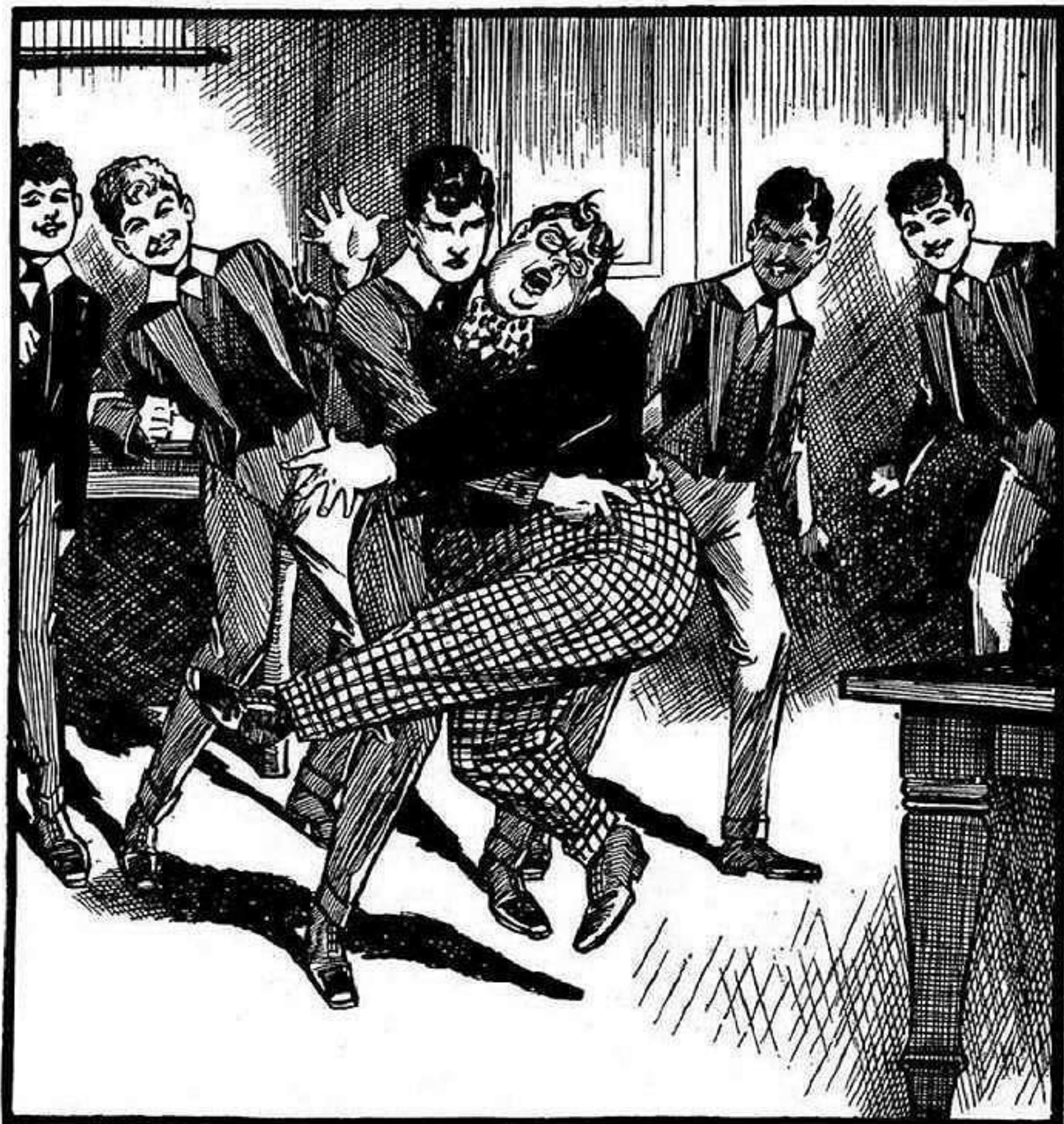
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WALLY BUNTER'S LUCK!



BUNTER BAULKED!

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WALLY BUNTER'S LUCK!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

An Awkward Position!

"IT'S dashed awkward!" Billy Bunter was reading a letter in the junior Common-room at Greyfriars, and he shook his head over it as he made that remark.

"Dashed awkward!" he repeated. "I say, you fellows, what would you advise a fellow to do?"

Bunter addressed that question to Harry Wharton & Co., who were chatting round the fireplace.

The Co. were discussing the St. Jim's footer match, which was coming off on Wednesday, and was just then the one matter of supreme importance to the Greyfriars Remove.

Bunter's question passed unheeded. "Hazeldene in goal!" Harry Wharton was saying. "He put up a good game to-day, and he will be all right. You and Mark Linley at back, Johnny."

Johnny Bull nodded. That selection seemed to him eminently satisfactory. In fact, he did not see how it could be improved upon.

"Then Tom Brown, Tockly, and you, Bob—"

"First-rate!" said Bob Cherry heartily. "You're a skipper in a thousand, Wharton."

"I say, you fellows—"
"Inky at outside-right—" went on Harry Wharton.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh, the dusky member of the Co., nodded with a beaming smile, which showed all his gleaming teeth.

"The outside-rightfulness will be terrific," he remarked.

"Nugent inside-right—"

"Hear, hear!" said Frank Nugent. "I must say, Harry, old scout, you're showing a lot of judgment in selecting this team."

"I was thinking of Redwing—"

"Then it's lucky you thought again, old man. Don't do any more thinking on the subject!" implored Nugent.

"I say, you fellows—" bawled Bunter.

"Little me at centre," continued the captain of the Remove. "Then Squiff and Smithy."

"Good!" said the Co., in chorus.

"I'd like to put Redwing in, but we can't very well play twelve men."

"Ha, ha! No!"

"And there's Bunter left out, too," remarked Bob Cherry. "I've no doubt Bunter would offer to play centre-forward, if you asked him. Wouldn't you, William?"

Bunter sniffed.

"I wouldn't mind, and if you really wanted to beat St. Jim's you couldn't do better," he answered. "I know there's too much jealousy about, though, for me to have a chance in the St. Jim's match."

"Too much something about, certainly," grinned Bob. "I call it common-sense, my fat tulip."

"The weather looks like being decent," Wharton remarked. "We can get some more practice together to-morrow. We shall have to pull up our socks to beat St. Jim's."

"I say, you fellows—"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter's still talking!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Have they wound you up, Bunt?"

"What would you advise a chap to do?" asked Bunter, having succeeded at last in gaining the attention of the Co.

"That depends," said Bob. "What's the row? Have you been punting on rades again? If so, I'd advise you to chuck it."

"Oh, really, Cherry! I've got a letter here—"

"Is it your postal-order at last?" queried Bob. "Don't tell us too suddenly, if it is. Break it gently."

"It's from my cousin Wally!" hooted Bunter.

"Oh!"

The Co. looked interested. They thought a good deal more of Bunter's cousin Wally than of William George Bunter himself. True, Wally Bunter was exactly like Billy Bunter to look at; but that, as Bob Cherry had charitably pointed out, was his misfortune, not his fault.

"I told you the chap had written to me that he was coming here to pay me a visit," said Bunter, blinking at the Co. through his glasses. "Well, he's fixed the date for to-morrow."

"We'll be glad to see him," said Harry Wharton. "He's always welcome."

"Is he still at the office in Canterbury?" asked Frank Nugent.

Bunter shook his head.

"No; he seems to have left. He's coming down from London. As it's such a jolly long way he's asked me if he can put up here for the night. I'm to let him know."

"That's easy enough. Mr Quelch will agree at once, if you ask him," said Wharton. "No difficulty about that."

"The fact is, I suggested it to him," said Bunter. "In his other letter he spoke of staying the night at Friardale, at some inn. I answered that that would be a reflection on Greyfriars hospitality, and they would stick him for ten shillings at least."

"Very thoughtful of you," said Harry Wharton, in some surprise. William George Bunter was not generally thoughtful for others.

"It will save him ten bob, if he puts up here," argued Bunter. "Under the circumstances, he couldn't very well refuse to lend me the ten bob, could he?"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I don't see how he could refuse. Do you, Wharton?"

"You blessed worn!" was Wharton's reply.

"If you're going to be personal, Wharton—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"But it's dashed awkward!" said Bunter, frowning. "You see, that will

land him here over Wednesday, when the St. Jim's match comes off. He's rather keen on seeing that; he's gone on footer, you know."

"Well, he can see it while he's here. We'll all be glad to have him around," said Bob Cherry. "He looks like you, Bunter, but otherwise he's quite a decent fellow."

"The otherwisefulness is terrific, my esteemed Bunter."

"Oh, don't gas!" growled Bunter. "I say, it's jolly awkward for me. Of course, I'm kind to Wally. I'm not the fellow to turn my back on a poor relation—"

"In fact, you're the fellow to borrow ten bob of him!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Ahem! You fellows can't say that I'm snobbish," continued Bunter, blinking at the Co. "I've had Wally here, and introduced him to the fellows, though he's only a kid quill-driver in an office. 'Tain't all lavender for a Greyfriars chap to have a relation polishing a stool in an office, but I've made it a point to be kind to Wally."

"Give us a rest, old chap!"

"But there's a limit," said Bunter. "You fellows see, of course, that there's a limit. A chap can't introduce his poor relations to everybody. Now, can he? The St. Jim's chaps will be here on Wednesday. I'm very friendly with Tom Morfy—"

"Does he know?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I am quite thick with Gussy—the fellow you call D'Arcy. I always call him Gussy, because I'm such—"

"Such a pushing bounder?"

"No!" roared Bunter. "Because I'm such a pal of his. I've got a lot in common with Arthur Augustus, my old pal at St. Jim's. Being a highly-connected fellow myself, I naturally get on with members of the nobility."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I think you're unfeeling, when I'm in this dashed awkward position. As I said, I'm kind to Wally—very kind; we have always patronised that branch of the family. But I simply can't introduce a poor relation to a fellow like D'Arcy. It would let me down. Now, wouldn't it?"

"Could anything let you down lower than you are already?" asked Johnny Bull with a snort.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"My dear porpoise, you needn't be alarmed," said Bob. "If D'Arcy sees your cousin, it will give you a log-up in his esteem. It will show him that all the Bunters are not rank outsiders and pushing cads."

"You cheeky ass!" roared Bunter.

"Besides, you've introduced your poor relations, as you call him, to us," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "It hasn't hurt us, and it's not likely to hurt the St. Jim's fellows."

"That's different."

"How is it different?" demanded Bob Cherry warmly.

"My old pal Gussy is rather particular, you see. He isn't at all a common fellow, like—"

"Like whom?"

"Like—like some fellows," said Bunter hastily. "It's dashed awkward for me, having a poor relation here when Gussy is present. I don't see how I can let him come. Do you, Wharton?"

"You silly chump—"

"Eh?"

"You needn't worry about D'Arcy. The last time he was here he spent half his time dodging you to keep away from your rotten familiarity. All you've got to do is to keep your distance."

"Look here—"

"As for Wally—if your cousin Wally is here, I shall show him to the St. Jim's chaps myself, because he's a decent fellow they'd like to meet," said Wharton. "And as for you, if I catch you bothering D'Arcy with your friendliness, I'll boot you off the scene so quick it will take your breath away! Savvy?"

Billy Bunter fixed a glare on the captain of the Remove that almost cracked his spectacles. The Co.'s liking for Wally—so different from their estimation of William George—was exasperating to Bunter in any case; but this was really too much.

"You—you—you—" spluttered Bunter. "I—I've a jolly good mind to give you a thumping good licking, Wharton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't!" implored the captain of the Remove. "Have mercy! Spare me!"

He backed hastily away from Bunter, with a look of great alarm. That was quite enough for Bunter. He pushed back his cuffs at once, and came on with a truculent air. Harry Wharton backed away and away, the Owl of the Remove following him up valiantly.

"Yah! You funk! Stop!" howled Bunter. "I'm jolly well going to lick you!"

Wharton stopped suddenly, and Bunter rolled fairly into his arms. Those arms closed round him like a vice, and Bunter gave a sudden gasp, like air escaping from old bellows.

"Grooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Burst him!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh! Ooooooh! Leggo! Yow-ow!"

"But you're going to lick me?" said Wharton.

"Nunno! I—I'll let you off! Yaroooooh! Leggo!"

"Certainly!"

Wharton let go so suddenly that Billy Bunter sat down on the floor with a sudden bump.

"Yooooop!"

"That all right?" asked Harry.

"Yaroooh! Beast! Oooooop!"

"Some people are never satisfied," remarked Bob Cherry. And the Co. strolled out of the Common-room, leaving Billy Bunter still sitting on the floor, gasping for breath, and not in the least inclined to proceed further with licking the captain of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Hospitality Required!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were rather interested in the forthcoming visit of Walter Bunter, and the next day they condescended to inquire of Billy Bunter when he was expecting his cousin.

Wally Bunter had been at Greyfriars twice or thrice, and the Co. liked him. He had proved himself a good sportsman, and was a good player of games, in spite

of a rotundity of figure that rivalled Billy's.

As Billy's chief object in receiving him seemed to be to borrow ten shillings of him, the Co. thought of looking after Wally a little during his visit, and making him welcome to Greyfriars.

It was pretty certain that William George would not over-exert himself for the sake of the visitor. In fact, the Co. rather wondered why Wally took the trouble to visit William George at all. He was not the kind of fellow to pay court to a better-off relation for what it was worth to him, and certainly Billy in himself was not a fascinating personality.

But it seemed, according to a letter Wally had written some time before, that he had had good luck of some kind, which he wanted to tell his cousin about. He had good news, and perhaps he thought Billy Bunter would be glad to hear it, and would help him to rejoice in it. If his good luck was in the form of cash, it was certain that Billy would help him spend it, at least.

"When's Wally coming?" asked Bob Cherry, tapping Bunter on a fat shoulder, as the Remove came out of their Form-room on Tuesday.

Bunter blinked at him. He never could understand why his poor relation was held in so much higher estimation than his worthy self, and it always had an irritating effect upon him.

But the Co.'s liking for Wally, though he could not understand it, was useful in its way; and Bunter always had an eye to the main chance. The Famous Five being incomprehensibly interested in Wally, Bunter of Greyfriars intended to make the most of it. If his cousin was sought after, it was his business to be stand-offish, and keep his cousin to himself, unless the Co. were extremely civil.

"Eh?" said Bunter carelessly.

"Wally? Oh, some time, you know!"

"Before tea?" asked Bob.

"I shouldn't wonder," said Bunter, still more distantly.

Bob stared at him. He was far from understanding that the Owl of the Remove considered this was a favourable moment for displaying stand-offishness.

"Well," said Bob, "I suppose if he comes before tea he will want some tea."

"Probably."

"If you'd care to bring him to Study No. 1 we'll be glad to see him," said Harry Wharton.

"Really, Wharton, I'm not going to allow you to bag my visitor in that way!" said Bunter loftily.

"What?"

"I shall take Wally to my own study."

"Oh, all right!" said Harry. "As you're generally hard up I thought there might be some difficulty. I don't want to bag your visitor, you crass ass! I was only thinking that it wouldn't look hospitable to stick him in Hall for tea, as he knows we generally feed in our studies. Do as you like!"

"I say, you fellows—"

The Co. went out into the quadrangle without hoarding Bunter further.

Billy Bunter looked rather dismayed. Stand-offishness was not, after all, quite in place just then, he realised. He had missed a chance of planting himself on Study No. 1 for tea.

He rolled away to his own quarters, No. 7, where he found Peter Todd. Peter had settled down there to work at mathematics, and he waved an impatient hand at Bunter without looking up.

"I say, Peter—"

"Scat!"

"My cousin's coming to tea—"

"Bother your cousin, and you, too! Dry up!"

"I want to have a bit of a decent spread for him," urged Bunter.

"I'm not stopping you."

"I happen to be stony," explained Bunter.

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I suppose you're going to stand something decent for once?"

Peter looked up with a glare.

"Can't you see I'm wrestling with maths?" he roared. "Shut up! I'm going down to Hall to tea. Money's tight! Scat!"

"Oh, really, Peter—"

Peter Todd clutched at the inkpot, and Bunter jumped out of the study. He looked for his other study-mate, Tom Dutton, and found him in the Remove passage. Tom Dutton was deaf, not wholly a misfortune in a study-mate of Bunter's. The fat junior gave him a poke in the ribs.

"I say, Dutton—"

"Eh?"

"My cousin's coming to tea."

"Is he?" said Dutton, with interest.

"Jolly plucky of him, I must say, considering the submarines, and all that."

"Wha-a-at?" stammered Bunter.

"When was he at sea?" asked Dutton.

"Oh, my hat! Not sea—tea!" roared Bunter. "Tea—tea in the study!"

"What utter rot! He may get wet at sea, but I don't see at all how he could be muddy. You're talking rot, Bunter!"

"Oh, dear! My cousin Wally's coming to tea!" shrieked Bunter. "I want to stand him something decent. See?"

"Yes, I see. I know it must be recent, as he was in an office at Canterbury when I last heard of him. What about it?"

"Will you stand something decent for tea?" raved Bunter.

"No fear! I'm going to be an engineer!" said Dutton. "Of course, I may go to sea as an engineer. Not for years, though. What's put it into your head that I'm going to see, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter gasped.

He put his mouth close to Tom Dutton's ear, and bawled:

"Cousin—Wally—coming—tea! Will you stand something?"

Dutton jerked his head back.

"I wish you wouldn't breathe over me like a blessed walrus, Bunter! You needn't shout, either; I'm not deaf! I can hear you all right when you don't mumble. If your cousin's coming to tea, I'm sorry I sha'n't see him; I'm going to tea with Ogilvy and Russell."

And Tom Dutton walked off, leaving Bunter gasping with his vocal exertions, and several other fellows in the passage chuckling.

It was evident that there was nothing doing in Study No. 7, so far as tea was concerned, and Bunter wished he had not been so stand-offish with the Co. It was rather humiliating for Wally's rich relation to have to take him to tea in Hall, considering how extremely frugal tea in Hall was just then. The Owl of the Remove decided to look for the Famous Five, and put his stand-offishness in his pocket for the present.

The Famous Five, however, had no time for Billy Bunter just then. The early dusk was falling, and the Remove fellows were making the most of what light remained for footer practice. Billy Bunter arrived on Little Side, and bawled to Wharton, who appeared to be as deaf as Tom Dutton just then. It was not till the light failed, and the players came off, that Bunter found an opportunity.

Then he joined the chums of the Remove as they threw on their coats and walked back to the House.

"I say, you fellows, my cousin Wally will be here soon," said Bunter.

"Well?"

"As you seem rather keen to have him to tea in Study No. 1—"

"Not at all, see!"

"Well, I don't mind bringing him, Wharton—"

"Sending him, do you mean?" asked Nugent.

"I mean bringing him!" howled Bunter. "You're jolly well not going to have my cousin without me!"

"Oh, buzz off!"

"I—I mean, I'd be glad to bring him, you fellows," said Bunter, almost pleadingly. "There's no tea in my study, and he's bound to be hungry after a long journey, and—and I'm stony, owing to a disappointment over a postal-order, and—and—"

"Well, bring him, and cut it short," said Wharton.

"You'll have something decent, I suppose?" said Bunter.

"What do you say to a high tea?" asked Bob Cherry.

"First-rate!"

"Right-ho, then! There's some sardines in my study that are a bit waxy, so I'll bring them along and make it a high tea—a very high tea!"

"You—you silly ass!" said Bunter.

"Look here, if you're not going to give my cousin something decent I sha'n't bring him."

"Don't, then!" said Wharton cheerfully. "We'll try to survive it."

"I—I mean, I—I'll bring him, of course, as you're so pressing. Anyway, he'd be rather late for tea in Hall. I say, he will be jolly tired after a long journey, and I'm thinking of hiring the hack to bring him here. Think that's a good idea, Wharton?"

"Quite!"

"The man charges three-and-six now."

"Oh!"

"I suppose you could lend me three-and-six till my postal-order comes?" said Bunter.

"To save you walking from the station!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"To save Wally walking, after a tremendous long journey," said Bunter.

"Besides, if you're going to wait tea for him, you'll have to wait a jolly long time if he walks from the station."

Harry Wharton slid his hand into his pocket.

"There's half-a-crown," he said. "The man will do it for that, without any surplus for you, you fat spoofer!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Oh, seat!"

Billy Bunter took the half-crown, and "scatted." He rolled away at once to the gates, calculating that he had time to call in at Uncle Clegg's, in the village, and expend the half-crown on tuck before he went to the station to meet Wally. It seemed very probable that if the Co. waited tea till the guest arrived they would have to wait while Wally walked from the station, after all.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Price of Punting!

"MASTER BUNTER!"

Billy Bunter was close on the village, in the thickening dusk, when a man stopped in his path, and the fat junior halted.

Bunter's round eyes grew rounder behind his big glasses as he recognised the man before him.

It was Mr. Jerry Hawke, the billiard-sharper, who was usually to be found at the Cross Keys public-house.

Bunter breathed hard as he eyed that dingy and unsavoury gentleman, who evidently had business with him.

"Good-evening, Master Bunter!" said

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Mr. Hawke genially, removing the strong-smelling, black cigar from his mouth.

"G-g-g-good-evening!" stammered Bunter.

"I been expectin' a call from you, sir."

"H-h-h-have you?"

"I have!" said Mr. Hawke, with emphasis. "You owe me a little bill, Master Bunter."

"D-d-d-do I?"

"I suppose that you are aware, Master Bunter, that the 'orse you backed last week didn't win?"

"D-d-didn't he?"

"He did not, Master Bunter."

"Oh!"

"Convenient to you to settle up now, sir?"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Only a matter of ten quid!" said Mr. Hawke. "A worry small sum to a rich young gent like you, Master Bunter, I dessay."

Billy Bunter groaned aloud. His essay as an amateur blackguard had been a dismal failure; and his dead certs were coming home to roost, as it were. He had hoped to win Mr. Hawke's money; he had none of his own to lose. It had looked like quite a paying speculation to Bunter at the time. But there was an hour of reckoning.

"I—I say," he gasped, "I—I can't settle at present, Mr. Hawke! Not at all convenient just now. I—I want you to wait a little."

"Till when?"

"Next year—"

"Wot?"

"I—I mean next term," stuttered Bunter.

"You mean to-morrow, I dessay?" said Mr. Hawke genially.

"I—I've been disappointed about—about a remittance," said Bunter.

"I'm sorry to 'ear that, sir," said Mr. Hawke, in significant tones. "Werry sorry, because I've got to 'ave my money."

"Oh, dear!"

"Not that I'm a 'ard man. 'And over 'arf the amount, and I'll let the rest stand over for a week. That's fair an' liberal."

"I—I can't! Look here, Mr. Hawke," said Bunter desperately. "Gambling debts can't be collected from minors. I'm a minor. You can't ask me for the money. You know it ain't legal!"

Mr. Hawke frowned.

"You put it on that footin'?" he said. "Well, I ain't going to county-court you, that's a cert, Master Bunter."

"You can't, you know, as I'm under age," said Bunter, with more confidence.

"Course I can't! I shall simply call on your 'eadmaster and ask 'im wot's to be done. I'm goin' that way now," added Mr. Hawke carelessly. "So I may as well drop in."

He made a movement forward, and Bunter caught at his sleeve in blank terror.

"You—you—you're not going to see Dr. Locke?" he howled.

"Why not?"

"I—I—I should be—be flogged!" howled Bunter. "Expelled, very likely!"

"That ain't my business."

"Dr. Locke wouldn't believe you, either!" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Hawke grinned.

"Gammon!" he said. "I've got a bit of writing to show him, Master Bunter. You don't squirm out of it like that. Good-evening to you!"

Mr. Hawke walked on.

Billy Bunter stood frozen with terror for some moments. Then he raced desperately after the sharper.

"Stop!" he gasped.

"Don't ketch 'old of my sleeve, Master Bunter. I ain't got nothing to say to you," said Mr. Hawke. "You ain't honourable, Master Bunter."

"I—I—I say, I'm going to pay you, you know," stuttered Bunter. "I—I am really! I—I've got a half-crown now—"

"A 'arf-crown!" said Mr. Hawke, with utter contempt. "Wot's that?"

"It's all I've got!" groaned Bunter.

The sharper's shifty eyes scanned him, and he could easily see that the unhappy Owl was speaking the truth. Bunter was too terrified to do anything else.

"Well, it's precious little," said Mr. Hawke. "But I ain't a 'ard man. 'And it over!"

Harry Wharton's half-crown disappeared into Mr. Hawke's waistcoat-pocket.

"And now wot's goin' to be done?" said Jerry Hawke. "I ain't the man to serve a young gent an ill turn if I can 'elp it. 'Ow much can you 'and over to-morrow, if I wait till then?"

"I—I can't—"

"Wot!" growled Mr. Hawke, with a terrifying growl.

"Ten shillings!" spluttered Bunter.

"Make it a pound, and I'm your man."

"I—I can't!" Bunter groaned. "I—I've got to get it out of my cousin, and I'm not sure he will lend it to me, anyway. Oh dear!"

"Better make sure of it," said Mr. Hawke. "I'll take the ten, though I'm a fool to do it. Let me 'ave the ten to-morrow, and I'll wait till Saturday for the rest. That's generous; but I always was a good-natured cove."

"I—I say—"

"That's all. Good-night, Master Bunter!"

"You—you—you're not going to Greyfriars?" gasped Bunter.

"Not till Saturday; and not then if you do the square thing."

"Oh dear!"

Mr. Jerry Hawke walked on, and disappeared into the shadows, grinning over his cigar. Bunter was not a very rich prize for the unscrupulous sharper, but he was at least an easy victim, and it was pretty clear that, though his financial resources might be small, Mr. Hawke would have complete command of them, such as they were.

Bunter was gasping as he rolled on to Friardale in a state of utter dismay. He did not call in at Uncle Clegg's. There was nothing to call in for now. He rolled on dismally to the station, where he was in time to meet his cousin Wally coming out.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Is Not Pleased!

"MY heye!"

The old porter at Friardale made that remark as he blinked at the two youths who met at the station entrance.

The likeness between the two Bunters was astonishing.

Separately, anyone would have taken them for one another; and even when they were together it needed a close scrutiny to discover which was which.

The chief difference was that Bunter of Greyfriars wore glasses, and Wally Bunter did not.

They were clad differently, too—Bunter in Etons, and Wally in tweeds.

But, apart from those superficial differences, they were the same fellow to look at; and Wally in Bunter's clothes and glasses would have been taken for Billy by Billy's own father.

On close examination it could be seen,

however, that Wally, fat as he was, was not quite so podgy as Billy, and was certainly in much better condition, and more alert and active. He walked with a springy step in spite of the weight he had to carry, instead of rolling tubbily like William George.

As he was not short-sighted, he saw Billy long before Billy saw him, and he greeted Bunter with a slap on the shoulder that made him splutter.

"Yab! You beast! Hallo, is that you, Wally?"

"Little me, old top!" answered Wally cheerily.

"Don't punch me, you ass!"

"That was a friendly, cousinly greeting, old bird!" answered Wally reproachfully.

"Well, don't do it!" snapped Billy.

Bunter's temper had not been improved by the meeting with Mr. Hawke and the loss of the half-crown.

Wally only smiled, however. He knew William George too well to expect Chesterfieldian manners from him.

"How are you going on, Billy?" he inquired.

"Rotten!"

"Too bad! Feel the rations?" asked Wally sympathetically.

"Awful!"

"Well, they do hit a fellow hard!" agreed Wally. "Still, it's beaten the Huns."

"Blow the Huns!"

"Blow 'em as hard as you like! They've had it in the neck, anyhow, and that serves 'em right for shoving us on rations. Hallo, my son John, what interests you?" asked Wally, looking at the porter, who was blinking at the two in great surprise.

The porter trundled off with a trolley without answering, but he looked back twice or thrice at the two cousins who resembled one another so amazingly.

More than one or two glances were cast at the two juniors as they left the station together, Wally carrying a bag in his hand.

"Good boy to meet me at the station!" said Wally. "I suppose you're rolling in money, Billy?"

"No."

"Then it's my treat."

"Eh!"

"There used to be a tuckshop in this street. I don't know what you've got for tea at Greyfriars, but I could do with a snack. Could you, Billy?"

"Could I!" said Billy, with deep feeling.

"Come on, then!"

Billy Bunter led the way to Uncle Clegg's with great alacrity. The effect of his meeting with Mr. Hawke was wearing off now. Bunter was not a fellow to meet troubles half-way; indeed, he generally put them off till the last possible moment, and then contrived somehow to land them on somebody else. At the present moment his thoughts were all given to the tuck in Mr. Clegg's little shop.

He blinked at his cousin, however, several times with surprised inquiry. Wally had never been over-blessed with money, and what money he had he had to work for, and was consequently very careful with it. It seemed as if Wally was better off than heretofore.

"You've had good luck, you told me in your letter, Wally," Bunter remarked.

"Yes, my pippin!"

"I suppose your pater hasn't come into a fortune?" said Billy Bunter, not quite pleased at the idea.

He had always looked on Wally as a poor relation, and it was not gratifying to think of him as being on an equal footing.

"Not exactly," said Wally

"You've had some luck on the Turf?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Ha, ha! No. Mug's game!"

"Well, I've had some jolly bad luck that way," said Bunter. "I've been going in for punting lately, and I've got left."

"Serve you right, old chap! You ought to have had more sense."

"Look here—"

"Here we are again!" said Wally. And he walked into Uncle Clegg's shop, and Billy forgot everything but eatables.

Uncle Clegg gave Billy Bunter a rather suspicious look, perhaps suspecting that the fat junior had come to try once more to obtain a little tick. Then he stared at Wally, and put on his spectacles, and stared at the two of them.

"My heye!" said Uncle Clegg, just like the porter at the station.

Bunter grunted. He was not at all flattered by the resemblance between himself and his poor relation, and he considered that people exaggerated that resemblance. As a matter of fact, Wally held exactly the same view. He had

shop, and William George had to follow him.

"I feel better now," Bunter remarked.

"We've got to walk, Wally."

"I don't mind walking."

"The fellows will be waiting tea for us," remarked Billy, as they started for Greyfriars. "Never mind; let 'em wait."

"Oh!" said Wally, rather dismayed. "I wouldn't have stopped if you'd told me that. We ought to have gone straight on."

"Rot! It's all right. Let 'em wait."

"Your study-mates?" asked Wally.

"No; Wharton and that lot in Study No. 1. I've promised to bring you with me," explained Billy. "They wanted me, of course. I'm a good deal sought after at Greyfriars. But I told 'em I couldn't come unless I brought you."

Wally knitted his brows a little.

"Those chaps were friendly enough when I was at the school last time," he said. "I'd like to see them again. But I don't want to be planted on them for tea, Billy. I suppose there's tea going in Hall?"



Bunter bawls! (See Chapter 2.)

been roused to wrath on more than one occasion by being mistaken for his cousin Billy.

Uncle Clegg became more civil and obliging, however, when he saw a red ten-shilling note in Wally Bunter's fat hand.

"Go it, Billy!" said Wally invitingly. "Anything that isn't rationed, you know. Must play the game."

Snort from Bunter. He was not so very keen on playing the game, so far as the rations were concerned. But there were various agreeable and indigestible articles in Mr. Clegg's stock upon which the eagle eye of the Food Controller had not yet fallen, and upon these the two cousins began a gorgeous feast. At ten shillings Wally called a halt. But it was evident that he was in unusual funds to be able to expend such a sum upon a snack.

Billy Bunter had travelled through two-thirds of the good things, and he was prepared to continue till further orders; but Wally paid up and left the

"Too late for that now."

"Well, I don't want any tea. I've had enough, if you come to that."

"I haven't! Look here, Wally, I've promised my friends to bring you."

"Oh! If they really want me—"

"Naturally they want a relation of mine. It's a case of love me, love my dog!" explained Bunter.

Wally seemed about to say something, but he refrained, and they walked on in silence for some time. But Billy's curiosity was aroused, and he soon started questioning his cousin.

"You've got a lot more tin than you used to have, Wally."

"Yes, rather!"

"What's happened?"

"A jolly stroke of luck!" said Wally, with great satisfaction. "I'm not in the office any longer."

"Sacked?"

"No; getting on in the world," grinned Wally.

"Well, I'm glad to hear it!" said Billy

Bunter. "It was a bit rotten for me, having a relation working in an office!"

"Oh, was it?" said Wally.

"Of course it was! I should have thought you understood that!"

"Oh!"

Another silence. Wally Bunter did not seem to be enjoying his cousin's society, somehow.

"But what are you going to do now, if you've left the office?" asked Billy Bunter. "Looking for a job?"

"No."

"What's the game, then?"

"I'm going to school."

Bunter jumped.

"You've been to school," he answered. "Yes; but I only went to a small school, and had to leave early and work." said Wally. "I didn't have your luck. I'm no older than you."

"But it's jolly queer for you to go to school again!" said Bunter, puzzled.

"What sort of a school?"

"Public school."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Surprises you—what?" asked Wally cheerily. "I thought it would surprise you, old chap, and I knew you'd be pleased."

Billy Bunter did not look pleased, somehow.

"Gammon!" he grunted.

"Honest Injun!" answered Wally.

"What school are you going to, then?" asked Bunter. "Eton or Harrow?" he added sarcastically.

"Better!" answered Wally coolly.

"I'm going to St. Jim's!"

"Gammon!"

"Honour bright, old fellow! I told you I'd had good luck."

Wally's fat face was beaming, and he evidently expected his cousin Billy to rejoice in his good luck. But his cousin Billy did not look joyful. He was frowning.

Wally had so long been a poor relation, loftily patronised by the egregious Owl, that the news was very disconcerting. Evidently there would be no room in the future for patronage. That circumstance was not gratifying to William George Bunter.

"Congratulate me, old chap!" beamed Wally.

Grunt!

Wally's bright face fell as he looked at his cousin, and Billy's feelings on the subject dawned upon him.

"I—I say, Billy, you're glad, ain't you?" he said reproachfully. "It's a big stroke of luck for me! I thought you'd be no end pleased."

"I don't see it!" answered Bunter stiffly. "If you want my candid opinion, I think it's like your cheek!"

"What?"

"Your people ain't well enough off to send you to a public school!" said Bunter, with growing indignation. "I call it dashed cheek! Why, you'll be putting on airs of equality with me next!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I believe in people remaining in their own stations," said the Owl scornfully. "Cheek, that's it—pure cheek! That's my opinion!"

Wally halted.

"I'm sorry you look at it like that, Billy," he said quietly. "I thought you'd be pleased. I've never thought for a moment that you'd take it like this! I—I'd have liked to come to Greyfriars, but—"

"Well, of all the nerve!" exclaimed Bunter, quite exasperated. "You at Greyfriars! I never heard of such cheek! What could I say to the fellows, I'd like to know? I think it's pretty good for you to come to Greyfriars as a visitor! But to think of being a Greyfriars chap—"

well, I must say, Wally, that I'm surprised at you!"

"Well, I can't come, so you needn't worry," said Wally, very quietly. "It's settled that I go to St. Jim's. I'm sorry you take it like this, Billy!"

"I don't know how you expected me to take it, I'm sure!" said Bunter, with a sniff.

"Well, perhaps I might have expected it, but I didn't! I'm sorry! I—I don't think I'll come any farther, Billy, if you don't mind."

"Eh? You're stopping at Greyfriars for the night. I've asked Mr. Quelch."

"I think it would be better for me to get home, on the whole."

"What utter rot!" exclaimed Bunter, in astonishment. He did not seem aware that he had uttered anything calculated to wound his cousin's feelings. "The fellows are expecting you."

"You can make my excuses, then. I don't suppose they'll miss me much."

"No reason why they should; that I can see," answered Bunter.

"I agree with you," said Wally, in a low voice. "I'll be off, then."

"There's no train back to-night. I suppose you know that?"

"Oh!"

Wally paused.

"Come along, and don't play the goat!" said Bunter. "The gates will be locked pretty soon."

"I intended to stay the night at the Friardale Arms if you hadn't asked me to put up at Greyfriars," said Wally. "I'll go there, anyway."

"Look here—"

"Good-bye, Billy!"

With that Wally swung round, and walked away quickly towards the village. Billy Bunter blinked after him in great surprise and annoyance.

"Wally!" he called out.

Walter Bunter did not answer, and in a few minutes he disappeared into the shadows. Bunter stood nonplussed for a minute or two. Then, with a grunt of disdain, he rolled on to Greyfriars, where he arrived just in time to escape being locked out by Gosling.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton Takes a Hand!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Where's Wally?"

The Famous Five were waiting in the big doorway for Bunter to come in. They were surprised to see him roll in alone, without his cousin.

Impelled by considerations of hospitality and politeness, the chums of the Remove were waiting tea in Study No. 1.

After footer practice in keen weather their appetites were naturally good; and waiting tea was not a pleasant process. And tea that evening was unusually good, in honour of the guest. There was no fatted calf to kill; but the chums had done their best to supply a good spread for the visitor.

"Hasn't Wally come?" asked Wharton.

"Oh, he's come!" grunted Bunter.

"Where is he, then?"

"He's staying in Friardale, after all."

"Well, you fat duffer!" exclaimed Johnny Bull indignantly. "Here we've been waiting tea, all of us as hungry as hunters, and your blessed cousin isn't coming, after all!"

"Tain't my fault!" growled Bunter. "He got his back up over something—blessed if I know what—and just marched off. I'm ready for tea."

"You needn't tell us that!" growled Nugent.

"I say, you fellows, if it's ready we

may as well set to," said Bunter. "I'm pretty sharp set."

"Never mind tea just now," said Wharton quietly. "You asked Mr. Quelch for permission for Wally to stay here to-night. Why hasn't he come?"

"He preferred not to, I suppose."

"Does that mean that you've been springing some of your snobby caddishness on the chap?" growled Johnny Bull. Bunter blinked at him.

"Oh, really, Bull! I suppose it's my own business how I treat my own relations?" he said.

"Well, I suppose it is!" said Johnny. "That's so! All the same, you're a fat worm, and your cousin is worth fifty of you!"

"Fifty thousand!" grunted Bob Cherry.

"The fifty-thousandfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh. "If the esteemed Wally is not coming, I see no reason for endurefully bearing the excellent society of the disgusting Bunter!"

"Hear, hear!" from Nugent.

Billy Bunter glowered at the Famous Five. Apparently tea in No. 1 for Billy depended upon his bringing Wally with him. On his own, William George was not persona grata.

"Wally wouldn't have turned back like that for nothing," said Wharton, his brows knitted. "Bunter must have done something. It's a reflection on our hospitality for the chap to stay at Friardale. Isn't he coming along to-morrow, Bunter?"

"I suppose not. What does it matter?"

"Then he won't see the St. Jim's match."

"What the dickens does it matter whether he does or not?" snapped Bunter. "Let's go and have tea. I've only had a snack, and I'm hungry."

"Have you quarrelled with Wally?" asked Wharton, really concerned about a visitor who was so hapless as to depend on the hospitality of Billy Bunter. Bunter sniffed.

"I should hardly be likely to demean myself by quarrelling with a poor relation, Wharton! I simply told him what I thought of his cheek."

"His cheek?" repeated Wharton.

"I call it cheek!" said Bunter warmly. "That chap going to a public school! As I told him, he'll be putting on airs of equality with me next!"

"Is Wally going to a public school?" asked Harry, in astonishment.

"So he says! I don't wonder you're surprised at his nerve—a poor relation who works in an office!" sneered Bunter.

"You fat Hun!" growled Wharton. "Why shouldn't he go to a public school, if he has the chance, as much as anybody else? He would do it more credit than his cousin Billy, anyhow!"

"Look here—"

"So that's the good luck he spoke of in his letter?" said Bob. "And I suppose he expected you to congratulate him?"

"I dare say he did!" sniffed Bunter.

"Instead of which you worked off some caddish snobbishness on him!" exclaimed Johnny Bull angrily. "Nice idea you've given him of Greyfriars manners, you toad!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"By Jove! I'd like him to come to Greyfriars!" exclaimed Nugent. "What school is he going to, Bunter?"

"St. Jim's."

"My hat! And the St. Jim's crowd will be here to-morrow for the footer match!" exclaimed Wharton. "It's a chance for Wally to meet them and make their acquaintance before he goes to their school."

"Look here, Wharton. I'm not keen

on introducing my poor relations to my friends at St. Jim's—especially D'Arcy!"

"Oh, dry up, you fat ass! Look here, Wally's got to come," said Wharton. "He's got to come if only to let him see that we're not all snobby toads here. He may think that we look at it the same as you do."

"He wouldn't think we look at anything like Bunter if he's got any sense!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Well, he doesn't know us well enough to be sure of that. In justice to ourselves we've got to have him here, and show him that Bunter's the only sneaking cad in the Remove!" argued Wharton.

"You—you—you—" spluttered Bunter in great wrath.

"But we can't fetch him," said Nugent. "Gates are closed now. We can see him to-morrow, though."

"No need to see him!" howled Bunter. "He's not coming; and I don't want him, for one."

"Have you borrowed his ten bob already?" snorted Johnny Bull.

Billy Bunter started. He had forgotten the ten shillings he had intended to extract from his cousin; and at the same moment he remembered Mr. Hawke and his demands.

"Oh!" he ejaculated. "On second thoughts, I—I'd rather he came! Of course, a chap wants to be hospitable. Besides, there's a bed rigged up in the Remove dorm for him. But I tell you what, Wharton," added Bunter, struck by a bright thought, "I can tell you how to arrange it nicely."

"Well?" snapped Wharton.

"You lend me that ten bob—"

"What?"

"And you can bike down to-morrow and see Wally, and get it from him. It will come to the same thing, won't it?"

"My hat!"

"That will save trouble for all parties," said Bunter, blinking at the astonished juniors. "I think that's satisfactory. What do you think, Wharton?"

"What do I think?" gasped Wharton. "I think you're a messy worm, and I think I'll jolly well kick you along the passage!"

"Yarocoph!"

Bunter just eluded the boot of the indignant captain of the Remove.

"We've got to get Wally here," said Harry, more quietly. "The poor chap must be feeling wounded over the way that fat beast has treated him. He may be thinking Bunter's a fair specimen of the lot of us. I'll ask Wingate for a pass out of gates, and we'll go down to Friardale and see him, and simply make him come."

"Good egg!" said Johnny Bull. "But will Wingate—"

"I think so, the way I shall put it," said Harry. "Wait for me here, while I put it to old Wingate."

Harry Wharton hurried away to the Sixth Form passage, where he found George Wingate in his study. The captain of Greyfriars was talking footer with Gwynne of the Sixth. He looked round as Harry appeared in the doorway.

"Well?" he said laconically.

"Can I have a pass for two down to Friardale, Wingate?" asked the junior meekly. "It's rather important."

"Generally is important, isn't it?" grinned Wingate. "I'm afraid you'll have to explain the importance first."

"Bunter's cousin is there," explained Harry. "Mr. Quelch has given permission for him to stay the night here, but he's put up at the Friardale Arms owing to Bunter having been an ill-bred little beast. We—we want to be hospitable."

"Oh!" said the captain of Greyfriars.

"You see, we don't want a chap to think we're all tarred with Bunter's

brush," explained Wharton. "It's for the honour of Greyfriars, you know."

Wingate laughed.

"You say Mr. Quelch has given permission for him to stay the night?"

"Yes; there's a bed for him in our dorm."

"You can go, then."

Wingate scribbled a pass for two, and Wharton thanked him and left the study with great satisfaction. He rejoined his chums in the doorway, flourishing the pass.

"Two!" he said. "I thought it better not to ask for five—more likely to get a pass for two, you know. Who's coming with me?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Seat!"

"But I say," persisted Bunter, keeping a wary eye on the captain of the Remove.

"I'm ready for tea—"

"There's no tea for you, you Owl! Go and eat coke!"

"I—I say, you know!" said the dismayed Owl. "I'll come to Friardale with you, if you like, Wharton—"

"I don't like! You come, Franky!"

"Right you are," said Nugent.

"And you fellows see that that fat slug doesn't crawl into the study and scoff the grub while we're gone," added Wharton.

"You bet!"

Wharton and Nugent started at once, and Bob Cherry, Johnny, and Inky went to Study No. 1, where, on three or four occasions during the next half hour, they hurled things at a fat face that looked in at the doorway with a hungry look.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

All Serene!

WALLY BUNTER was not looking happy as he strolled slowly along the old High Street of Friardale. He was killing time;

the evening yet was early, and he did not want to take up his quarters at the inn yet. There was little to be seen in the quiet village street, and Wally sauntered the length of it, and sauntered back again with a thoughtful and clouded face.

He had come down to Friardale in great spirits, fully expecting that his cousin Billy would rejoice in his good luck, and being eager, naturally, to tell Billy all about it, and receive his congratulations.

Even the fact that Billy had never allowed him to forget that he was a poor relation made it seem likely that the Owl would be glad to see him on a more prosperous footing. The petty jealousy of the miserable Owl had given him a painful shock; and, worse than that, it had rubbed the gilt off his golden anticipations.

If Billy Bunter looked at the matter in such a way, probably other Greyfriars fellows would do the same; and the St. Jim's fellows might be tarred with the same brush. Was he going to be looked on as a pushing outsider, as the Owl evidently considered him? Wally was sensitive—a quality that Billy did not share with him in the least; their resemblance, in fact, was only skin-deep. His happy anticipations of his new life seemed to crumble away within him, and his cheery spirits were gone.

Just then, indeed, he was almost wishing that good fortune had not come his way, and that he was still on the office stool in Canterbury.

A sudden clap on his shoulder made him jump.

He turned quickly, to see Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent smiling at him in the dusky street.

"Couldn't mistake you!" said Wharton, holding out his hand. "We were coming to the inn for you, when we spotted you, old scout."

Wally coloured.

"Give us your fist, old chap!"

Wally mechanically gave the captain of the Remove his hand. Nugent bagged it next, and shook heartily.

"You—you were coming to see me?" stammered Wally.

"Exactly! No need to go to the inn now, though—you haven't engaged your room yet, have you?"

"N-n-no!"

"Then come on!"

"Eh? Where?"

"Greyfriars, of course!"

"I—I'm not going to Greyfriars!" stammered Wally, his colour deepening.

"I—I—you see—"

"Exactly! Come on!"

"But—but I told you I wasn't coming to Greyfriars!"

"Yes, I know; but we told you that you are!" chuckled Nugent. "This way, my son! We've waited tea for you. Better call it supper now."

"But—but—but—"

"My dear man, we're hungry," said Nugent. "Get a move on!"

"I—I—"

"Take his other arm, Franky!"

"What ho!"

Wally, like a fellow in a dream, found both his arms taken, and he was walked away down the street by Wharton and Nugent. He was so astonished that he went without resistance, and they walked him out into the lane. There Wally demurred.

"But—but I'm not coming!" he stammered. "I—I don't want to see Billy, as—as it happens—"

"There we sympathise with you," said Wharton. "We don't want to see him, either, but we have to see him every day. You can put up with him for once."

Wally laughed.

"But—but you don't understand!" he said.

"We do—perfectly. I don't want to run down your cousin, old top. You'll admit yourself that he's rather a pig, but he can't help it," said Harry. "But, you see, we've been expecting you in our study, and we've killed the fatted calf—at least, the fatted haddock—and we're not letting you off. You're staying at Greyfriars to-night."

"But—"

"Billy is dying to see you!"

"Is he?" exclaimed Wally, in amazement.

"Yes; he forgot to borrow anything of you, it seems."

Wally laughed again. His good spirits were returning. Indeed, it would have been difficult for even a misanthrope to feel down under the kindly influence of the Greyfriars fellows' hearty cordiality.

"Besides, we're not going to let him come to tea unless you come," added Frank Nugent. "So, you see, you must come, for Billy's sake."

"But—I say—"

"Billy's told us your good news, too," added Wharton. "Congratulations, old chap! I wish you were going to Greyfriars instead of St. Jim's, though."

"Do you really?" stammered Wally.

"Yes, rather!" said Nugent, with emphasis. "I say, couldn't you work it with your people to send Billy to St. Jim's instead? Then you could come to Greyfriars instead of Billy. The whole school would pass a vote of thanks."

Wally chuckled.

"I jolly well wish I could!" he said. "Of course, I'd rather come to Greyfriars. I don't know anybody at St. Jim's. You—you fellows would really like me to come?"

"Of course!"

"It's jolly decent of you. Billy said—ahem!—After all, what does it matter what Billy said?"

"Nothing at all!" said Wharton. "Billy has an unfortunate habit of talking out of the back of his neck. But you'll meet some St. Jim's fellows tomorrow, my son—Tom Merry and his crowd will be over here for a footer match. We can introduce you to eleven of the best."

"I—I say, you're awfully good!" stammered Wally.

"What rot!"

"I—I suppose I was an ass to take any notice of Billy's rot," said Wally Bunter happily. "I—I was feeling a bit down, the way he put it—"

"Well, I don't want to call you names, old scout, but I must say you were an ass if you took any notice of Billy's gas. It would have been wiser to kick him. He would have understood that."

Wally Bunter chuckled, and his fat face was very bright as the cheery juniors marched him on to Greyfriars. They arrived at the school, and Wally came in with his companions, a smile on his face, to receive a cordial greeting from the



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Remove fellows who happened to be about; and a still more cordial greeting from Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and the nabob when he was taken up to Study No. 1.

There was no doubt lingering in his mind now. His good fortune was a matter of congratulation in Study No. 1; evidently they did not take the same views of the egregious Owl of the Remove.

Tea—or, rather, supper—was ready; and Wally's face was merry and bright as he sat down at the table with the chums of the Remove. Another fat face blinked in at the doorway, with eyes wary for a flying cushion.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Hand me the tongs, Inky!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I've come, you know. Here we are again, Wally, old kid!" said Bunter hastily. "S-s-so jolly

glad to see you at Greyfriars! So good of you to come, old chap!"

"My hat!" was all Wally could say.

"I suppose I'm going to have tea with my guest, you fellows?" said Bunter, with dignity.

Bob Cherry relinquished the tongs.

It was a very cheery tea in Study No. 1; and Billy Bunter made it a point to be very civil to his cousin—in fact, quite affectionate. For it was borne in upon his podgy mind that at the first sign of the cloven hoof he would depart from Study No. 1 on his neck; and with a powerful motive like that for good behaviour William George Bunter succeeded in the difficult task of behaving himself.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wally's Luck!

WALTER BUNTER'S plump face beamed over the festive board. The good fellowship in Study No. 1 made him very happy. And the Co. were so genuinely interested in his good fortune that Wally was soon relating to them the particulars he had intended to relate to his cousin Billy. Billy certainly heard them now; but he heeded not; his thoughts were upon the feed.

"I jolly well wish I were coming to Greyfriars instead of St. Jim's," Wally said. "I'd have liked to suggest it, only it would have seemed ungrateful. Of course, I'm glad to go to St. Jim's—I shall like it no end. But I feel quite at home here, you know, as you fellows have treated me so awfully decently. I'd give a good bit to play in your cloven, Wharton."

"You would play in it if you were a Greyfriars chap," said Wharton. "I jolly well wish you were!"

"Couldn't it be fixed?" asked Bob Cherry. "Are your people specially set on sending you to St. Jim's?"

"You might tactfully mention to them that Greyfriars is really it," remarked Johnny Bull.

"Assure them that the itfulness is terrific, my esteemed Wally!" suggested the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Wally smiled.

"It isn't exactly my people," he said. "My people can't afford to send me to an expensive school. It's Mr. Penman."

Billy Bunter looked up.

"That's your governor at Canterbury, isn't it?" he asked. "I believe you call him your governor."

"My employer, anyway," said Wally; "and a jolly good sort. He's an old St. Jim's man, and he thinks no end of his old school."

"Your employer is sending you to his old school?" said Bob, rather puzzled by that curious information.

"That's it! I've been distinguishing myself," grinned Wally. "There was a burglary at the office. I was staying late, getting through some work with the chief clerk—we were in the back office, and the rest of the place all in the dark, and the rotters thought it was empty and shut up for the night. They opened the door of the back office, and you should have seen them jump when they saw us there at the desks. They'd got in without our hearing a sound."

"My hat! A bit exciting!" said Bob Cherry, with keen interest. "What did you do?"

"It wasn't what I did—it was what they did. There were two of them—hulking fellows. They were simply flabbergasted at the sight of us—and so were we. They ran at us, and the chief clerk got a rap on the head, and was stunned. I dodged."

Sniff from Billy Bunter.

"Pity I wasn't there!" he remarked. "I'd have knocked them down, Wally!"

"You would—I don't think!" said Wally. "You'd have squirmed up the chimney, or under the table, and howled for mercy."

"Look here—"

"Shut up, Bunter! Go on, Wally, old gun; this is jolly interesting!" said Bob Cherry.

"Well, I dodged, and they dodged after me," said Wally. "It was nip and tuck. I nipped and they tucked, you know. I got a rap on the shoulder from a club that was meant for my napper. But I dodged into old Penman's private office, slammed the door, and turned the key."

Wally paused, to dispose of a cup of coffee.

The juniors listened with keen interest when he resumed. It was odd to think of the fat, good-humoured Wally in such perilous straits.

"I was thinking of the governor's telephone, of course," he went on. "I fairly jumped at it when I'd locked the door. They heard me, through the door, giving a number, and, of course, they guessed I was ringing up the police. They started on the lock, and got it busted just as I got through to the inspector at the station."

"Phew!"

"Well, I heard them coming on behind me as I stood at the 'phone, and you can bet the Kaiser's whiskers that I wanted to drop the receiver and hop it," said Wally. "I expected every second to feel a crash on the head. But I wasn't going to let them rob the office; there were thousands of quids in Bonds and things in the safe. I just jawed at the inspector, and told him what was happening. Penman's office, burglars—help. That was all I got out, when I got it on the napper."

Wally ran his fingers through his hair, and made a grimace.

"It was a cosh!" he added. "Like a blessed earthquake!"

"My hat!"

"And what next?" asked Bob breathlessly.

"Next, I was waking up in bed," grinned Wally. "You see, I'd got a terrific cosh on the crummet, and I was stunned. The police found me there. The burglars had bolted, knowing I'd got through to the station, without waiting to do more than bag some petty cash. They hadn't time to tackle the safe. I had a bump on my head as big as an egg, and an ache that would have made a hippopotamus feel ill. And old Penman was almost weeping with sympathy and gratitude. He said it was no end plucky of me to stick at the telephone and get help, with those rascals just behind me. And so it was," added Wally.

"I must have been a bit excited at the time; it made me shiver afterwards to think of it. In fact, I don't like thinking of it now; it's creepy. I was jolly proud of myself, you can bet! As swanky as Billy here, almost!"

"Oh, really, Wally—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And the long and the short of it was that old Penman told me I'd saved him six thousand pounds, as well as heaps of trouble," said Wally; "and he was bursting to do something for me. Blessed if I don't think he'd have made me a junior partner if I'd been fifteen years older! He thought it out for some days, and then sprang it on me what he meant to do. He's marked out a big job for me in the firm later on when I'm older; and as a preparation for that job he's sending me to his old school. It will be a good berth, and it needs a tip-top man—a chap about my size—"

"Ha, ha!"

"Especially a man with a public school education," said Wally. "Well, being an old St. Jim's man, naturally he settled on St. Jim's, and decided to send me there. He arranged it with my father, who was no end pleased, of course. I'd have liked to suggest Greyfriars, but it would have seemed rather like looking a gift-horse in the mouth, wouldn't it?"

"Well, it would, a bit," assented Wharton.

"Not that Mr. Penman would have cared either way, of course, but it would have been ungracious, I thought. So I accepted his offer, and, of course, I'm jolly glad to go to St. Jim's. And I've got a holiday till I go—next week," said Wally. "So you can bet I am feeling very chippy!"

"Congratulations, old fellow!" said Wharton heartily.

"The congratulativeness is terrific!"

"You'll see Greyfriars sometimes, anyway," remarked Nugent. "With your form, you'll get into Tom Merry's team and play in the matches."

"I hope so," said Wally. "Perhaps I'll be with them next time they come over to play you. Of—of course, I don't know how they'll take to an office chap."

Wharton smiled.

"We've met a lot of St. Jim's chaps," he said. "There's no Billy Bunter among them, so far as I know."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You'll meet a lot of them to-morrow—eleven of the best," went on Wharton. "You'll like them, I'm sure."

Billy Bunter blinked up, and blinked down again. Bob Cherry had an eye on him, and Bunter's intended remark, whatever it was, remained unuttered.

But Walter Bunter was not observing his egregious cousin. He was too happy to worry about William George just then.

"I'll be jolly glad to see them!" said Wally. "Now, I suppose you chaps have your—what d'ye call it?—to do—"

"Prep!" said Wharton, with a smile.

"That's it! Don't let me hinder you."

"I'll find you a book," said Wharton, as he rose from the table. Prep was indispensable, and could not be put off even for an honoured guest.

"I'll sit here and watch you, if you don't mind," said Wally. "I've been mugging up with a tutor the last two or three weeks, to get ready for St. Jim's; and I'd like to see you chaps at work, to get into the way of it, if it won't worry you."

"Not at all!"

And Walter Bunter sat and watched, with keen observation, while Wharton and Nugent did their prep in Study No. 1; the other fellows going to their own quarters.

After prep Wally went downstairs with Wharton to pay his respects to Mr. Quelch—rather late, as a matter of fact; but the Remove-master received him very kindly.

When the Remove went to their dormitory Wally Bunter went with them, and he was already feeling as if he were one of them.

A good many fellows in the Remove greeted him in a friendly way; and, in fact, Wally received so much kindness in the Remove that Billy Bunter could only blink on in astonishment and disgust.

Here was his poor relation received on all hands with friendly cordiality, while he—Billy—received more kicks than halfpence, so to speak, in his own Form. It was really very astonishing—to Billy Bunter!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Tom Merry's Recruit!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were thinking chiefly of the St. Jim's match the following morning. Even in the Form-room, at lessons, that important matter did not quite leave their minds. With Mr. Quelch's permission, Walter Bunter sat at a desk in the Form-room during morning lessons. He was keen to pick up all he could of the school's manners and customs in preparation for his new life at St. Jim's; and Harry Wharton & Co. were ready to help him in every way possible. Wally did not join in the Form work, but he sat with eyes and ears open; and it was evident that as a pupil he would have done the Form more credit than his cousin Billy.

Billy Bunter glanced at him once or twice, and grunted. He couldn't understand a fellow sitting out lessons when he could have been slacking about if he had chosen. But that was another point in which the cousins were dissimilar; Wally was anything but a slacker.

you're going to have an allowance," said Billy, blinking at him. "You couldn't be there without any money."

"Yes."

"So you're in funds now, I suppose?"

"Pretty fair."

"Lend me ten bob, will you?"

Wally paused.

"The fact is, Billy, I'm in funds, but I haven't any tin to waste," he said. "I've got to be careful not to put my people to any expense while I'm at school."

"If you're going to be mean, Wally, I— Besides, I only mean it as a loan," explained Bunter. "I'm expecting a postal-order this afternoon. I'll settle up before you leave Greyfriars."

"Oh!"

"Look here, Wally, you were going to pay to put up at the inn at Friardale!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "I've saved you that, haven't I?"

Walter looked at him, and silently took out a little leather purse, and extracted therefrom a ten-shilling note, upon which Billy's fat fingers closed greedily.



Marching orders for Bunter! (See Chapter 9.)

Indeed, taken all in all, his resemblance to Billy Bunter was really a libel on him, as Peter Todd remarked.

But that resemblance was so extraordinary that, but for his clothes and Billy's glasses, it would scarcely have been possible to distinguish one from the other, and it attracted attention and surprised glances everywhere.

After morning lessons Billy Bunter joined his cousin at once; though Walter did not really seem eager for his company. He submitted to it, however, with fat cheerfulness.

"I say, Wally"—Bunter was very civil—"I really congratulate you, old chap!"

"Thanks!" said Wally.

"It's a rise in life for you, ain't it?"

"Exactly!"

"Of course, you'd better not put on any airs," added Billy warningly.

"Thanks for the tip; I won't!"

"Keep your place, you know," added Billy.

"Anything else?" asked Walter, showing signs of restiveness.

"I suppose if you're going to St. Jim's

"You've got some currency notes there," said Bunter. "Come to think of it, you may as well make this a quid, Wally."

"Sorry!"

"I mean, then I'll hand you the whole of my postal-order when it comes this afternoon," explained the Owl.

"Oh, bother!" said Wally.

"The fact is, I've got to pay a debt with this ten," said Bunter. "Now, look here, Wally—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry joined them. "We're going to punt a footer about before tiffin, Wally. Like to come along?"

"Yes, rather!"

"I say, Wally, look here— Beast!"

Walter Bunter walked away with Bob Cherry, probably very pleased to be rid of his Greyfriars cousin. Billy Bunter grunted discontentedly. He dared not omit to send that ten shillings to Mr. Hawke to keep him quiet, and so he had to remain as stony as before, which he considered very hard lines.

The Owl of the Remove frowned very

majestically at Wally when they met at dinner. He wished to impress his lofty displeasure on his poor relation.

But Walter did not even notice that he was displeased. He was thoroughly enjoying his visit to Greyfriars; the hospitality he did not receive from Billy was more than made up in other quarters, and, naturally, he was not thinking very much about William George.

After dinner the St. Jim's match was the one topic.

Tom Merry & Co. were expected early. Owing to war conditions, it was not possible to have a brake to meet them at the station, as on former occasions; but several of the fellows were going down to Friardale to meet them, and walk to the school with them.

Billy Bunter, who was very keen to meet his "old pal" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, decided that he was going to be one of the party, and when the Famous Five started from the school gates Billy Bunter rolled after them. Wally Bunter was with the chums of the Remove, Wharton thinking this a good opportunity for making him known to his future schoolfellows; but Billy was not desired, though Billy was quite indifferent to that. But in Wally's presence the chums did not feel disposed to shift the Owl as they would have done otherwise, so Billy Bunter rolled along to Friardale with them.

They were at the station before the train was due, and were waiting on the platform when it came in at last.

An eye-glass gleaming from the window of a first-class carriage revealed the presence of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the ornament of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, and Billy Bunter waved a fat hand in greeting. Apparently Arthur Augustus did not observe him, however, for he did not wave back.

The train stopped, and the passengers alighted, the St. Jim's crowd among them.

Harry Wharton glanced over them, and was surprised to see only ten of the St. Jim's fellows—Tom Merry, Lowther, Blake, D'Arcy, Figgins, Kerr, Wynn, Noble, Talbot, and Levison. Tom Merry's handsome face was a little clouded, though he smiled as he greeted the Greyfriars fellows.

"All here?" asked Wharton, as he shook hands with the St. Jim's junior captain.

"Man lost en route," answered Tom Merry. "Of all the asses, I think Man—"

"Yaas, wathah!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, before Tom could finish. "You will admit, Tom Mewvy, that I reminded you that Mannahs was wathah an ass, and suggested your play-in' Dig instead."

"Fathad!" remarked Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Manners and Roylance were with us," Tom Merry explained. "Roylance was a reserve. They got out at Lexham, and the train started without them. They had the time wrong, the silly duffers. So instead of bringing along an extra man we've come a man short."

"Too bad!" said Wharton. "When's the next train?"

Tom Merry made a grimace.

"It's a case of war trains. Next from Lexham to Courtfield is two hours."

"Oh, my hat!"

"We've got to play a man short or ask you to lend us a man," said Tom Merry. "It's annoying, of course!"

"Yaas, wathah! If you had played Dig instead of Mannahs, I am suah Dig would not have got left behind at Lexham."

"Well, I must say I agree with Gussy

there," remarked Blake. "Still, it can't be helped now."

"We'll lend you a man with pleasure," said Wharton. "Lots to spare. Any chap not in our eleven will be delighted to play for you."

"I say, you fellows, I'll be only too pleased!" chimed in Billy Bunter. "Rely on me, Tom Merry!"

"Bai Jove!"

"How do you do, Gussy, old chap?" said Bunter affectionately. "You remember me—what?"

"I believe I have seen you befoah, dear boy," answered Arthur Augustus, as distantly as politeness allowed.

"I haven't given you a look-in at St. Jim's for a long time, Gussy," said Bunter affably. "But I'll make it a point to do so soon. You can rely on that."

"Bai Jove!"

"This way, you fellows!" said Wharton, with a glare at Bunter. "By the way, here's a chap who's coming to your show this term. He's staying at Greyfriars to-day."

"Gweat Scott!" murmured Arthur Augustus, as Wally Bunter was presented.

The swell of St. Jim's turned his eye-glass alternately upon the two Bunters in great interest.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"Can't you tell t'other from which?" he asked.

"Bai Jove! They are weally rowy much alike," remarked D'Arcy. "Wela-tions, I pwesume?"

"Cousins," said Bob. "Very like to look at—not otherwise. Walter Bunter is one of the best!"

Tom Merry shook hands with Wally Bunter, politely expressing pleasure that he was going to be a St. Jim's fellow. But the St. Jim's skipper walked with Wharton when they started for Greyfriars.

Tom Merry was evidently a little worried at having arrived a man short at Greyfriars for a match which was one of the most important in the junior list of fixtures. It was impossible to put off the match till Manners could arrive, as that would not have left sufficient light to finish the game. And though there would be no lack of willing recruits to be found at Greyfriars, naturally that kind of makeshift was not pleasing to the St. Jim's skipper.

Wharton was thoughtful, too.

"I've got a suggestion to make, if you like, Merry," he remarked. "About your missing man, I mean."

"Go ahead!" said Tom. "Have you some extra-special good man you don't want yourself?"

Wharton laughed.

"No; but that chap Bunter—"

"My dear man, you're not offering me Billy Bunter!" exclaimed the Shell fellow of St. Jim's.

"Ha, ha! No! Wally Bunter, I mean!"

"They look much of a muchness."

"They look it, but they're not. Wally Bunter is a topping player," said Harry. "If he were a Greyfriars chap I should have him in my eleven."

"By Jove! Would you?" asked Tom, glancing round with surprise and interest at Wally Bunter.

"Yes, really! He looks heavy, but he's got speed that would surprise you. He's played while visiting Greyfriars before, you know. He plays half or forward, and either of them jolly well. As he's going to your school next week, you might like him better than a Greyfriars man in your team; and, seriously, he's as good a man as I could offer you."

Tom Merry looked at Wally Bunter again.

So far as appearances went, Wally did not look like a topping footballer; he was too much like William George for that. But Tom was aware that Harry Wharton was a good judge of a player's form, and he had seen Wally play. And undoubtedly it was better to play a prospective St. Jim's fellow in his team, if he could bag one, than a player borrowed from the enemy.

Tom Merry thought it over as they walked to Greyfriars, with several glances at Wally Bunter en route.

Wally observed his glances, and wondered why the St. Jim's fellow looked at him so often; but he understood when they reached Greyfriars. There Tom Merry came up to him.

"Wharton says you're a good man in the front line," he said. "We're a man short, and if you'd care to play for us, we'd be obliged. What do you say?"

"By gum!" ejaculated Wally.

His eyes danced.

"You feel up to the game?" asked Tom.

"You bet! I'll play with no end of pleasure. I shall have to borrow some clobber," said Wally. "Count me in! I'm your man!"

"Right you are, then!"

Tom Merry rejoined his comrades.

"Bunter's playing for us—" he began.

"Gweat Scott!"

"Gone potty?" asked Figgins pleasantly. "What's the good of that barrel?"

"He's fat—awfully fat!" remarked Fatty Wynn. A remark that made his companions grin. Fatty Wynn was not a sylph himself.

"I mean the other Bunter—the chap who's coming to St. Jim's," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Wharton says he's a good man."

"Well, I wespect Wharton's judgment," remarked D'Arcy. "But I must weally remark that I considah him off-side this time."

"I must say he doesn't look much of a ripper," said Tom. "But Wharton wouldn't plant a dud on us. As he's going to be a St. Jim's chap, I'd rather have him in the team than any other fellow."

"Yaas, but—"

"So he's playing," said Tom. "Now, we'd better get ready."

The St. Jim's fellows got ready, but there were a good many doubts as to how the new recruit would turn out. As Jack Blake remarked, if Wally Bunter was a topping footballer, it was another proof that appearances were deceptive—very deceptive indeed.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Wally's Chance!

BILLY, old chap!" exclaimed Wally Bunter breathlessly, catching his cousin by the shoulder.

"Yarook!"

"Billy—"

"What the thump are you grabbing at a chap for?" demanded Billy Bunter wrathfully. "You made me jump!"

"Sorry, but—"

"I may as well tell you plainly, Wally, that we don't want any of your office manners here!" said Bunter crushingly.

"Will you lend me—"

"No!"

"Lend me—"

"Certainly not. I'm surprised at your asking me, Wally, when you refused to lend me a quid only to-day. I—"

"Clobber!" yelled Wally.

"Eh?"

"I want some footer clobber, and

yours are the only ones at Greyfriars that would fit me!" gasped Wally.

Bunter sniffed.

"Mine wouldn't fit you," he answered. "You're fat, Wally!"

"Why, you ass—"

"I can't have a podgy chap like you bursting my clobber!" said Bunter, shaking his head.

Walter Bunter glared at him in almost speechless wrath. It was true that he was fat—fatter than he acknowledged to himself—but his cousin Billy could give him points in circumference. Bunter's clobber was certainly not likely to be too tight on Wally.

"Besides, what do you want footer clobber for?" said Bunter peevishly. "You're not playing. It's a match to-day, not practice."

"Merry's asked me to play for St. Jim's."

"Oh, don't be funny!"

"It's a fact, you ass!"

"Rot!" said Bunter emphatically.

"You're making a mistake. I offered my services to Tom Merry, and he's mistaken you for me. That's what it is. It's me he wants, of course!"

"You—you— Will you lend me your clobber?" gasped Wally.

"Certainly not! I shall want it myself if I'm playing for Tom Merry," answered the Owl.

"But you're not!" shrieked Wally.

"I am!"

"Don't be an ass, Wally!"

Billy Bunter rolled away in search of Tom Merry, leaving Wally staring. He poked the St. Jim's skipper in the ribs, when he found him, in the objectionable way he had.

"I say, Merry, old fellow—"

"Hallo! Ready?" asked Tom, supposing that it was Wally.

"Yes. You want me?"

"I told you so, didn't I?" answered Tom.

"You spoke to my cousin by mistake," explained Bunter. "He's rather like me in some ways—not really much if you look at him closely. I'll get changed, then."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Tom Merry, noticing the fat junior's glasses, and remembering that Wally Bunter did not wear glasses. "Are you Billy or Wally?"

"Billy, of course!"

"Well, it's Wally I want."

"Oh, really, Merry—"

"Oh, here you are, fatty!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, hurrying up. "We want your footer clobber, Bunter. Wally's playing this afternoon."

"Don't interrupt me, Wharton, please! I'm speaking to Merry. Let's have this clear, Merry," said the Owl, with crushing dignity. "Do you, or do you not, want me to play for your team?"

"Not!" said Tom, not at all pleased by Bunter's manner, and not disposed to waste many words on the egregious fat junior.

"Oh, very well!" said Bunter loftily.

And he walked away. Wharton ran after him, and caught him by the shoulder.

"Get out your clobber for Wally, Bunter—"

"I decline to do anything of the sort, Wharton!"

"What?"

"I've been treated with gross incivility," said Bunter. "I've offered my services, and they've been refused. I wash my hands of the whole matter. I decline absolutely to have anything to do with it."

"You silly ass!" roared Wharton.

"That's enough!"

Billy Bunter turned on his heel, and was stalking away loftily, when he was

suddenly spun back by a grasp on his fat ear. He halted, with a yell.

"Yooop! Leggo!"

"Your clobber's wanted, you fat owl!" said Wharton. "Wally would burst anything else at Greyfriars. Don't be a pig, Bunter. You hardly ever use the things yourself; and, anyway, they're wanted."

"Leggo!"

"Will you lend Wally your clobber, you fat rotter?" exclaimed Wharton angrily.

"No, I won't!"

"You—you worm!" said the captain of the Remove. "Well, if you won't lend them to him, I will!"

He started for the School House, calling to Walter Bunter to follow. Billy Bunter dashed after him in great wrath.

"Wharton, let my clobber alone! I tell you—Yah!"

Ogilvy and Russell were coming along, and they chipped in. They took Bunter by his fat arms.

"Come for a walk, old gun!" said Ogilvy.

"Yah! I won't!"

"I think you will!" grinned the Scottish junior.

And Bunter did. With Ogilvy and Russell holding his arms he had no choice.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton hurried the recruit indoors, and Billy Bunter's footer garb was routed out, and Wally changed into it. Bunter's consent had been asked, and, as it was not given, it had to be taken for granted. Certainly Wally couldn't play footer in a lounge jacket and trousers, and equally certain there was nothing but Bunter's things at Greyfriars that would be anything like a fit for him.

Plump as he was, Wally looked very fit in footer garb. Bunter's things, of course, were in the Greyfriars colours—blue and white—St. Jim's being red and white. But Wally's figure was a little too distinguished for him to be mistaken on the field.

He followed Wharton back to Little Side, and joined the footballers. Potter of the Fifth, who was referee, glanced at him.

"Bunter playing?" he ejaculated.

"Bunter's cousin," explained Wharton, with a smile.

"Oh, I see! This is an entertainment, I suppose?" remarked Potter.

"Wait and see!" said Harry.

Tom Merry looked Wally over critically. When the teams lined up Wally was put in the front line, at outside-right, Talbot falling back to the half-back line, where he was a good man—as he was anywhere. Wally being accustomed to forward play, the St. Jim's skipper wisely put him where he was likeliest to do his best, though perhaps he had some lingering doubts.

The whistle had gone when Billy Bunter arrived on the ground, Ogilvy having refused to let him escape till he heard the whistle. The Owl of the Remove blinked in great wrath at his cousin in the St. Jim's ranks.

"Check!" he gasped. "Check!"

"Hallo! What's biting you?" asked Skinner, who was lounging by the ropes with Snoop.

"He's got my clobber on!" snorted Bunter. "I refused to allow it, you know!"

"Well, you always were a pig!" was Skinner's comment.

"I offered my services—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I offered my services—"

"Oh, don't be so funny, Buntty!"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Hallo, there they go!" said Bolsover major. "St. Jim's are getting through!"

Why, that fat barrel rolls along like thunder! How the thump does he carry all that weight with him?"

"Yes, he is fat, isn't he?" said the Owl disparagingly.

"I should say so; jolly nearly as fat as you, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Bolsover—"

"Jolly nearly as fat, but not nearly such a clumsy ass!" continued Bolsover major. "He knows how to play footer."

Billy Bunter snorted.

He did not feel inclined to watch the match and the exploits of his cousin Wally; and he rolled away, remembering that he had not yet sent the ten-shilling note to Mr. Hawke. He rolled away with the intention of sending it at once; but he passed the school shop en route.

There he paused.

The previous day Jerry Hawke had terrified him, but Bunter's mind never retained an impression for long. Out of sight was out of mind with William George Bunter. Mr. Hawke was not there, and the tuckshop was. After a struggle in his mind Billy Bunter resolved to risk it with Jerry Hawke, and he rolled into Mrs. Mimble's shop.

There he made a persistent raid on unrationed things, seated on a stool at the counter, and enjoying himself, recklessly putting off all consideration of the consequences, as he usually did.

The ten-shilling note was deposited in Mrs. Mimble's till, and ten shillings' worth of indigestible things were deposited inside William George Bunter, and he was looking very shiny and sticky when he rolled off the stool and waddled out of the tuckshop. It was, perhaps, fortunate for Bunter that Mrs. Mimble's goods were sold at war-prices, otherwise he would have consumed a quantity that might have had serious results for his overtaxed internal organs. As it was, he was feeling rather uncomfortable when he departed.

He heard, without heeding, a roar from the football-ground.

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Bunter!"

The Owl of the Remove rolled away, his inner Bunter satisfied for once; but, now that the money was gone, he was thinking of Mr. Jerry Hawke again. What would the sharper do? he wondered. It was not a happy afternoon for Bunter.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bravo, Bunter!

"GOAL!"

There was as much surprise as appreciation in the shout that rang round Little Side.

It was the first goal in the match, and it had fallen to Walter Bunter for St. Jim's.

Hazeldene, in goal, had grinned when the fat forward bore down on him; but he ceased to grin when he missed the ball by inches and it found a lodgement in the net.

"Goal!"

"Well kicked, porpoise!"

"Bravo, Bunter!"

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "That was weally a wipin' goal, deah boy. Was it a fluke?"

Wally looked at him.

"No," he said. "It wasn't a fluke."

"Then I congwatulate you, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus cordially. "It was weally wipin'. I could not have beaten that myself."

"Couldn't even have come near it!" remarked Figgins.

"Weally, Figgay—"

"Good man!" said Tom Merry, clapping Wally on the shoulder. "That was first-rate! You'll be playing a lot of

footer at St. Jim's, kid, if you keep on like this."

Wally smiled with satisfaction. All Tom Merry's doubts were gone now; he had a good man in the team, and he knew it. Wally was worth his weight in gold, and Tom no longer regretted the mishap which had landed Manners at Exham for the afternoon. For it was pretty plain that Wally Bunter was a better man in the forward line than Manners. And as Wally was, at all events, going to be a St. Jim's fellow in a short time, he had a right to play for the school. It was ever so much more satisfactory for that goal to have been taken by a St. Jim's fellow than by a recruit lent by Greyfriars.

The footballers lined up again, the Greyfriars players eyeing Wally a good deal. He was plainly a man to be marked. Wharton, in suggesting him to fill the vacancy in Tom Merry's team, had only been thinking of doing his best for the visiting skipper and for the game generally. It had not occurred to him that he was, in point of fact, putting a rod in pickle for the Remove. But it was very clear now that the Remove champions would have to look out for Wally.

As for Wally, he was enjoying himself thoroughly, and playing the game of his life.

The game went on, the next goal falling to Harry Wharton, which made the score level just on half-time.

Both teams were glad when the whistle went; the first half had been gruelling, and they were glad of a rest. Temple of the Fourth strolled on to the field while the footballers were resting.

"You chaps are catching a train back, I suppose?" he remarked to Tom Merry.

"Yes, naturally," answered Tom, surprised by the question.

Temple grinned.

"Then I'm afraid you'll get left!" he said.

"How do you mean?"

"I've just been to the station; no trains running since three o'clock," said Temple. "There's a railway strike on. No more trains to-day."

"Phew!"

"Bai Jove! That is wathah awkward!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"If that is correct, we are wathah stwanded."

"Correct enough," said Temple. "You were lucky to get here; yours was the last train through. Don't worry; we can put you up at Greyfriars."

The St. Jim's fellows looked rather serious, however. They were many long miles from home, and there was no means of return excepting the railway.

"Weally, I do not approve of these stwikes," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy thoughtfully. "The mattah becomes sewious when it lands a footah team fah fwhom home like this."

"All serene!" said Wharton cheerily.

"You can send a wire to St. Jim's, and we can put you up easily enough. We'll whack you out among the junior dorms. I'll speak to Mr. Quelch about it after the match."

"You'll get out of morning lessons to-morrow," remarked Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"Bai Jove! That is vovv twee. Aftah all, I dare say the stwikaahs have their gwivances, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes the hooter!"

The footballers lined up again, dismissing from their minds for the present the problem of the homeward journey.

That was a matter that could be considered afterwards, for the present the play was the thing.

The game was very fast in the second

half. There were narrow escapes on both sides, but no goals came along for some time; on either side the defence was sound.

Fatty Wynn, in the St. Jim's goal, was very hard to beat; and though Hazeldene in the Remove fortress was not so good a man as the St. Jim's goalie, there was a very powerful defence in Johnny Bull and Mark Linley at back.

The goal, when it came, came to Squiff for Greyfriars, and there was a loud cheer from the crowd round the ropes.

"Two to one!" shouted Bolsover major. "Our game!"

But Bolsover major was counting the chickens a little too early for Greyfriars, for within five minutes the ball was in the home net, put there by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who, with all his elegant manners and customs, was evidently a valuable man in the front line.

Blake slapped him on the back with a slap that made the swell of St. Jim's yell.

"Good man, Gusey!" said Blake heartily. "I'm jolly glad now that I didn't leave you chained up at home!"

"Gwoogh! You uttah ass!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Two all!" said Bolsover major, with an air of great wisdom. "Anybody's game."

"What a prophet you are, old scott!" said Ogilvy. "You'll get it right on the nail in the long run, if you keep on."

"Ten minutes to go!" said Russell. "There they go again! I say, that fat chap is as fresh as paint! How does he do it? He must weigh a ton, at least!"

"Not much like his cousin Billy, the way he moves!" grinned Wibley.

"Bravo, Bunter!"

Wally was going strong, but he was robbed of the ball, and Vernon-Smith bore it away towards the enemy's goal. But Lowther neatly tipped it away from the Bounder's foot and centred to Tom Merry, who rushed it on. Tom's run up the field left his comrades behind, and he looked like getting through, but he was well tackled in time. He gave a hasty glance, and found a fat figure ready to take a pass, and let Wally have it.

A Greyfriars forward was shouldered away, and Wally fairly wound round a half with the ball at his feet. He rushed for goal, and Hazeldene, between the posts, was all eyes and hands.

Whiz!

The ball came in before Johnny Bull or Mark Linley had a chance at the enterprising recruit of St. Jim's.

Out it came, fisted by Hazel, only to meet a plump head and to bound back into the net like a pip from an orange.

The next instant Wally was staggering away from Johnny Bull, but a roar was rising round the field.

"Goal!"

"Good man! Goal!"

Hazel had had no chance; before he knew the ball was coming back it was in the net.

He blinked at it.

"Goal!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Yass, wathah! Huwwah!"

"Well done, fatty!"

Wally Bunter sat up breathlessly. Johnny Bull, with a grin, gave him a hand to his feet.

"Not hurt, old scout?" asked Johnny genially.

"Ow! No!" gasped Wally.

"Goal!"

"Two minutes to go, deah boys!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy to his comrades. "I wathah think this is our game—what?"

"I rather think so, Gustavus!" grinned Blake.

And Hurree Jarnet Ram Singh, who heard the remark, murmured that the ratherfulness was terrific.

"Three to two!" said Bolsover major, in his role of expert commentator and prophet. "Their game!"

And Bolsover major was right at last. It was Tom Merry & Co.'s game; the last few minutes of play being without result.

Both teams were very nearly done when the final whistle went; it had been a hard and gruelling game. Wally Bunter looked as fresh as anyone, however. It was evident that he was as fit as he was fat.

"Awfully obliged to you, Wharton, for giving us that man!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "You've done us a good turn."

Harry Wharton smiled rather ruefully.

"Yass, wathah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It was a wod in pickle for yourself, deah boy. Buntah, old gun, I congwatulate you; you have done a gweat deal towards winnin' this game."

"Thanks!" said Wally.

"And you'll be playing for St. Jim's when you get there," said Tom Merry heartily. "I shall look you up as soon as you arrive, you can rely on that. You're a good man! Shoulder-high, you fellows!"

"Yass, wathah!"

"Oh—I say—" gasped Wally.

But in spite of his modest expostulations the new recruit was swung up on the shoulders of the footballers—not a very easy task, as they soon found—and marched shoulder-high off the field.

Billy Bunter arrived on the scene in time to witness that triumphal march of his cousin.

He blinked at the scene in astonishment.

"What the thump is that game, Skinner!" he asked.

"Fathead! He's won the match for St. Jim's!" said Skinner.

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Give him a cheer!" grinned Skinner. "He's helped to take Wharton's lot down a peg."

And the charitable Skinner cheered.

Billy Bunter swelled visibly. Wally having distinguished himself, Billy was not slow to spread himself, as it were, in the reflected glory of his cousin.

"Well, I expected as much!" he said calmly. "We're all tremendous footballers, we Bunters, you know—we're a footballing family—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter sniffed at Skinner, and rolled away to join the footballers.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! It's a pity Tom Merry didn't play you instead of your cousin," said Bob Cherry. "It would have made a better figure for us in our footer record if he had!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm not at all surprised—Wally's nearly as good a footballer as I am," said Bunter. "Not quite, of course—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wally Bunter found that he was quite as popular with the Co. after helping to inflict a defeat upon the Remove team; and he was popular, too, with the St. Jim's footballers. They knew a good man when they saw one; and Wally undoubtedly was one of the best.

After changing there was inquiry as to the accuracy of the information Cecil Temple had brought; and it turned out to be correct. It was rather a peculiar position for the St. Jim's team. They had come to Greyfriars to play an afternoon's match, and they found themselves stranded there—for the night, at least.

The Head was informed of the circumstances, and he at once extended the hospitality of Greyfriars to the stranded footballers. It was arranged for them to be whacked out among the junior dorms.

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stories—though the Head did not express it in those terms; and a telegram was despatched to St. Jim's in explanation.

There was quite a crowd in the junior Common-room that night, and all the St. Jim's fellows were made very comfortable—excepting, perhaps, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who was kept very busy in dodging his old pal Bunter.

Even Billy Bunter realised at last that, somehow or another, the fascination of his society was lost upon the noble Gussy; though he could not understand it.

And it was very irritating to him to observe that Gussy was, on the other hand, quite friendly and cordial to Wally—his poor relation!—a mere nobody, whose only importance was the fact that he was Bunter's cousin—at least, from the Owl's point of view. And the Remove fellows were equally cordial to him.

It was surprising, and it was irritating. "Pushing bounder!" said Bunter, to himself, in great disdain. "Blessed pushing bounder! I jolly well wish he was staying at Greyfriars instead of me! Even Toddy's civil to him, and he's never civil to me! Even Mauly takes notice of him, and he walks away when I speak to him! Blessed if I can understand it—a beastly, pushing, poor relation! Simply a nobody! If they like him so much, I jolly well wish they could have him, and I could go to St. Jim's instead!"

Bunter gave a fat sigh at the thought of that.

"How jolly nice it would be!" he murmured. "I'd like to go no end. I should be along with my pal Gussy, and—and I shouldn't see that awful beast Hawke again, and—and—Some fellows have all the luck! I—I wish—"

Bunter paused, and his little round

eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. A strange idea—a startling idea—had come into his fat brain—an idea so startling and so attractive that it made him jump.

"My hat! If it could be worked—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you mumbling about?" asked Bob Cherry genially.

"Rats!" said Bunter.

He rolled away without explaining what he had been mumbling about. But that strange and startling idea was still in his mind, and the more he thought over it the more he liked it; and consequences were to follow. But what that idea was, and what came of it, is another story.

(Don't miss "BILLY BUNTER'S GREAT WHEEZE!"—next Monday's grand complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., by Frank Richards.)

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

No. 100.—PHILIPPA and PHILIP DERWENT.

LADIES first, you know. Perhaps Flip matters rather more to the stories than Flap, but that is only because they are primarily boys' stories, and naturally the girls cannot play such big parts in them as the boys.

To the many readers who have made a favourite of Flip, I fancy Flap is equally dear. They are very much alike, the twins. Flap has a good deal of Flip's pluck, and he has a good deal of her kindness. Possibly she has more common-sense than her brother. Certainly she is less inclined to be cocksure. But they are very much alike. Flap would make a better boy than Flip would make a girl; but, when you come to

ought to have been in the picture which is inset. I don't know why the artist left him out, but I suppose it was really my fault for not saying that he was to be put in. And it was through Cocky that Flip quarrelled and fought with Gadaby, a quarrel out of which most of the story sprang. For while Ponsonby, attracted by the bright eyes of Flap, became in a sort Flip's friend, Gadaby was always at heart his bitter enemy.

The accidents of that day caused Flip to throw in his lot, more or less, with the nuts, though he was never really one of them in spirit. In an ordinary way he would naturally have taken his place among the supporters of Frank Courtenay. He was

the coming of Gogga to Highcliffe, and his discovery of Gadaby's plot, the end of the wanderings at St. Jim's; the pleading with the Head of Highcliffe that Flip should not be sacked, and his return after all in something very like triumph. If you remember these things you have the main outlines of the story, and that is all that is needed.

I must refer, however, to the strong bond of sympathy between the twins, which made Flap know when Flip was in danger or trouble. This is no wild invention, as a few of my readers were disposed to fancy. There have been many such instances, proven beyond all doubt. I don't pretend to explain the bond; physiology and psychology both come into that, and we have no use here for too much of those sciences.

Flip Derwent is not presented to you as a perfect character. Compare him with Frank Courtenay or Harry Wharton, and you will easily see defects in him. And, of course, neither Courtenay nor Wharton is absolute perfection; if he were, he would be less interesting.

There is more recklessness, less balance in Flip than in those two. He has a better conceit of himself, with smaller reason for it. But he is as straight and honourable as they, and every bit as plucky.

It may occur to some thoughtful readers that Flip at the end of "The Twins from Tasmania" is rather a different fellow from Flip at the beginning of the story. So he is. But it would be strange if he were not.

For he has been through the testing-fires, and has come out of them purged of much dross. Never before in his life had he had to face anything like the varied troubles of those journeyings of his with Hazeldene. He had shown before they had begun that he knew how to forgive an injury, for Hazel had plotted against him, had been an enemy without cause. But to forgive something done by a fellow you see only once in a way is one thing; to go on putting it behind you, to treat that fellow with unflinching patience and kindness, to set your strength to buttress his weakness, never to let the past rankle in you, this is another, a far bigger thing. There is some of the true stuff of greatness in him who can do it.

Perhaps Flap has changed a little also. She has had no such troubles of her own as Flip has had. But are not his troubles always hers? And there may have been something else to make her feel a trifle older. Boy and girl love affairs do not, as a rule, mean much. But the feeling between Philippa Derwent and that queer, plain, eminently capable genius, Johnny Gogga, is at once something less and something more than a love affair. It is not that, because he has never made love to her; it is more than that because he knows, and she knows, that there is no one else in the world that counts for him as she does, because there is nothing he would not do for her or for anyone dear to her.

Flip and Flap are Australians. That does not matter a great deal. Australians are very like Britons—with a difference. I could tell you quite a lot about the lovely island they come from, had I but space. In ever so many ways Tasmania is one of the best spots on the earth. But there is not space.

No doubt we shall hear much more of these two in the future. Perhaps there may be a Cliff House or another Highcliffe serial before long.

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think of it, that would be true of many nice girls. It is not, as a rule, the really nice boy whom one could even imagine as a girl.

When this series was started the twins were unknown to readers of the MAGNET and the "Gem." As a matter of fact, people who only read this paper probably don't know very much about them even now. But I know that most MAGNET readers are keen on the "Gem" also, and followed the "Twins from Tasmania" during the twelve months in which it ran its course in that paper. And in several stories here the two have appeared—Flip, in fact, has played quite a big part in the last two.

"The Twins from Tasmania" began with the coming of Flap to Cliff House and of Flip to Highcliffe. On the journey they met with Johnny Gogga, who seems to have achieved immense popularity with some of the nuts of Highcliffe, and with some of the Greyfriars fellows. Cocky was with them. Cocky

never up against Courtenay, however, and his frank, genial nature made the fellows who detested Pon & Co. like him. His close friendship with Merton and Tunstall, too, prevented his having so much to do with the Ponsonby clique, for those two never stood very close to Pon.

I am not going to tell the whole of the story over again—the great Greyfriars v. Highcliffe fight on the seashore, the falling-out with Hazeldene, the kidnapping of Cocky, the pursuit of Flap by Pon, the fight between Pon and Merton, the departure for a time of Merton, threatened with blindness, and Tunstall, both feeling very sore with Flip; the shady devices of Gadaby and Vavasour to keep him at odds with them, the plot of the nuts to make Flip one of them in deed as well as in name, the base plot of Gadaby to get him into heavy trouble, his bolt, his meeting with Hazeldene, who had run away from Greyfriars at the same time, their wanderings together,

Extracts from "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" and "TOM MERRY'S WEEKLY."

TOWSER'S GUILT!

By ROBERT ARTHUR DIGBY.

I.
"HOW absolutely wippin'!" exclaimed D'Arcy, in a delighted voice, as he unfolded a superb handkerchief of Chinese silk.

"Where on earth did you get that awful-looking thing?" I asked, with a grin. But it's no use trying to pull Gussy's leg; he is always so dead serious about everything.

"It's weal Chinese silk, and it's come straight fwoon China!" Gussy replied, with some heat.

"What's it for?" Blake broke in. "Surely you're not going to use that thing for a hanky?"

"It's weally an ornament—an etcetewa," Arthur Augustus explained. "Just to give one a finishin' touch to the coat, don'tcher-know! My uncle, who is twavellin' in China, has sent it along."

"Oh, put it away! It'll make Towser bilious," said Herries irritably. "It's a pity your uncle couldn't find something a trifle less girlish to send you! You're bad enough already, goodness knows!"

"Weally, Hewwies, I considah you are most wude! You haven't looked at my pwesent pwopably, or you would appweciate its beauty!"

And D'Arcy folded up letter and handkerchief, and withdrew his noble person in stately ire from the room.

"Silly ass!" growled Herries, as Arthur Augustus departed.

"But Gussy's a very decent old ass, all the same," said Blake; "and if it suits him to look like a patchwork quilt we shall have to make the best of it!"

It can't be denied that Gussy's dress is a bit extreme at times, and some of his colour schemes rather get on our nerves. At the same time, we are all very fond of Gussy, and we go to quite a lot of trouble in trying to curb his tendency to brilliant colouring—troubles which Arthur Augustus doesn't always appreciate.

"Has anybody seen Gussy?" Blake asked the next day, as we were about to set off for a sharp walk into Rylcombe to get some special tuck for tea.

"He can't make up his mind which tie to wear, or his socks don't match his waistcoat, or some such rot!" said Herries sarcastically.

"Weally, Hewwies, deah boy, you do me an injustice!" exclaimed D'Arcy, coming into the study at that moment. "I have been looking for that handkerchief which my uncle sent me. Have any of you seen it about? I am afraid I must have dropped it somewhere."

"I shouldn't give it to you if I did find it!" Herries remarked bluntly. "I'm not at all keen on going about with a fellow dressed up like a Christmas rabbit!"

"You are extremely wude, Hewwies, and I would wathah not come with you to Wylcombe!"

"Oh, come along, and don't be a fathead!" said Blake, catching hold of his arm. "We shan't get back by tea-time. We'll all help you to look for your hanky when we get back."

Towser followed us out of the study.

"Going to bring him, too?" I asked.

"Well, why not? He isn't hurting you, is he?" snapped Herries.

"I don't care whether you bring him or not. I was only thinking that the roads are rather dangerous for a dog now that the evenings are so dark," I replied.

However, when we got to the gate, Herries altered his mind about taking Towser.

"Go back, old man!" he said, patting Towser's head and turning him into the gate. "We'll soon be back, and I'll bring you a special cake for tea."

Towser gave a low growl of disgust, but trotted obediently into the quad.

Shortly after Blake & Co. had left Study No. 6 Wally D'Arcy knocked at the door, and, getting no reply, turned the handle and went in, his miscellaneous hound Pongo trotting at his heels.

"It's a good thing for you, my son, that Towser isn't here," he remarked to the dog.

He struck a match, and borrowed the sugar for which he had come in search, leaving an I O U pinned on to the bag. Lady Eastwood had included them half a pound each in their Christmas parcel.

"Got the sugar? Good egg!" exclaimed Levison minor, when Wally returned from his expedition to the Fourth Form passage.

"Hallo! Where's Pongo?" he added.

"I thought he was with me," said Wally, looking round. "Don't bother about him. He'll be all right."

Before tea was over the dog's feet were heard pattering along the passage.

"What have you been up to?" D'Arcy minor exclaimed, as Pongo slunk in, and, with a furtive look at his master, crept under the desk.

Of course, Pongo hadn't any more right in the Third Form-room than Towser had in the Fourth studies, and if Mr. Selby had seen him there would have been ructions.

"Nothing particularly good, I should imagine, by his guilty look," laughed Frank Levison.

II.

"HALLO! Who's been in here and left the door open?" Blake exclaimed.

"Here's Towser back, too!"

"It looks like your minor, Gussy," Herries commented, as he opened the cupboard door and saw Wally's I O U pinned to the sugar-bag.

"The young wuffian!" said Arthur Augustus. "I shall be weally cwoos with him if he takes my sugah again. 'Bai Jove! What's that bwute got undah the table?"

"Who are you calling a brute?" Herries inquired angrily. "Just you be civil to Towser!"

"Look what he has got, you uttah ass!" said D'Arcy frenziedly.

"Why, it's your hanky!" Jack Blake said, stooping down to pick it up from where it was lying beside the bulldog.

And then the whole horrible truth burst upon us. The handkerchief had been torn into shreds, and the scrap which Blake held up for us to see was chewed and damp and worthless.

For a moment we thought Gussy would hurl himself upon Towser; and the dog growled ominously as Arthur Augustus glared at him through his monocle.

"The bwute ought to be kept in his pwopah place!" said Gussy angrily.

"Brrrrr! Keep cool!" returned Herries. "How do you know that Towser did it? And what does a rotten old rag like that matter, anyway?"

"You can get another at the Sixpenny-ha-penny Bazaar!" said Blake, with a laugh.

"Or a 'Peace' flag would be just as effective," I suggested, "or a nice new school duster—one of the pink ones!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah wottahs! I don't believe you are even sowwy!"

"Never mind, old bean!" Blake said, with a grin. "These little things are sent to try us."

"Thank you, Blake! But I pwefer to be without your condolences!" Arthur Augustus returned, with dignity.

"I warn you, Hewwies," he continued. "If I catch that bwute of yours touchin' anythin' else of mine I shall give him a feakful thrashin'!"

"Hard luck on Towser!" laughed Herries.

"Be careful that he doesn't hurt your 'twousahs'."

"I wefuse to talk to any of you! I am vewy disappointed in my fwiends!"

"Oh, buck up, Gussy!" said Blake cheerfully. "Come and help me to get tea."

"I do not wish for any tea, thank you, Blake!" D'Arcy replied jolly. "I shall do my pwepawation in Julian's studay."

"Brrrr! Don't be a fathead!" Herries called after him.

But Arthur Augustus had already entered Study No. 5, and closed the door gently but firmly behind him.

In spite of what Herries said about there being no evidence, circumstances looked very black against Towser.

"Julian, deah boy!"

The occupants of No. 5 were quite aware of the presence of their noble visitor, but they had not yet bothered to notice him officially.

"Buzz off, Gussy! We're busy now!" said Julian, without turning round.

"Kewwuish, deah boy, I would like to do my pwepawation in this studay."

"Would you?" Julian broke in. "Then the answer is in the negative. Anyway, why are we given this honour?"

"Julian, I am afraid you are twyin' to be wude!" said Gussy sorrowfully.

"I'm not trying to be rude; I'm trying to get the tea, if you must know! Why don't you go and have yours?" said Julian, a trifle impatiently.

"I would wathah net go into Studay No. 6. They have been tewwibly wude to me. Pwewwaps they did not mean to hurt my feelin's, but I would pwefer to stay here," D'Arcy explained.

"Oh, let 'im stay!" Hammond urged. "There's plenty to eat, and there are all those eggs the mater sent me. 'E may as well—"

"Weally! Pway don't twouble about tea for me, Hammond," Gussy interrupted. "I weally only want to do my pwepawation in this studay."

"Dry up, you silly old duffer!" said Kerruish. "Of course you'll have some tea, and afterwards we'll see if we can do anything to mend the rift in the lute."

"Who's been rude to you, Gussy?" Hammond asked, when tea had been cleared away, and the four chums had hospitably made room for their visitor.

"I would wathah not discuss the mattah," said D'Arcy solemnly. "I am tewwibly disappointed in my fwiends, but it is wathah bad form to discuss their fallin's when they are not pwesent, don't you think?"

And from this somewhat quixotic standpoint Gussy would not budge.

A little while later Julian made an opportunity of visiting the chums in No. 6.

"What have you done to Gussy?" he asked. "It must be something pretty bad. I should fancy, as he refuses to discuss the matter with anyone."

"It's nothing at all," said Blake. "The fact of the matter is that when we came back from Rylcombe Gussy found that new atrocity he calls a handkerchief, torn to ribbons, lying on the floor beside Towser."

"Had Towser been chewing it, then?" Julian asked.

"Well, that's the point," said Herries. "Judged by circumstantial evidence, the case looks dead against him. But on the other hand, Towser isn't a destructive dog at all, but—"

"Oh, isn't he?" interrupted Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!" we laughed feelingly. We had all suffered.

"Shut up, you fatheads! As I was saying, for one thing, he wouldn't do it; and, besides, nobody actually saw him do it."

"Another funny thing about it is that we can only find a part of the hanky," said Blake. "We have never noticed that Towser

had a taste for Chinese silk. But if he didn't eat it, where is it?"

"There is more in this than meets the eye," said Herries, with firm conviction. "And I don't believe old Towser had anything at all to do with it. Did you, old man?"—giving the dog's big, fierce-looking head an affectionate pat.

Towser plainly understood what was going on, and gave a little, whimpering, short growl, which Herries immediately interpreted as "No."

"There you are! What did I say?" he demanded. "He said 'No' as plainly as I could."

We laughed. Herries is rather apt to romance a bit where Towser is concerned; but certainly there was no positive proof that his bulldog was the culprit.

"Why don't you make it up with poor old Gussy?" Julian suggested. "He's in our study now doing his prep, and looking as miserable as his noble countenance and his monocle will allow him to look."

"We're quite willing to be friendly, but he isn't having any," I explained. "He has refused to come in here, so what are we to do?"

"If the mountain won't come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain," Julian remarked. "You come into No. 5 with me, Blake, and try and persuade old Gustavus to come back here."

Blake went willingly enough, but Gussy wouldn't listen to him.

"I appreciate your kind thought in coming, Blake," he said. "I am not angry, but I am very sorry and disappointed, and prefer to remain here. I really feel that I cannot talk to Hewwies as one gentleman should talk to another, and I would therefore wathah not come."

"Right-ho, old bean!" Blake said cheerily. "Only don't say we didn't ask you."

Arthur Augustus returned to Study No. 6 the next day, but the situation was very strained. He was, of course, studiously polite—it wouldn't have been D'Arcy if he had been otherwise—but apart from an occasional "Yes" or "No" he sat quietly by himself, and went about his business as

though there had been nobody else in the room.

We had just started tea on the following evening when, with a terrific bang at the door, Baggy Trimble burst in upon us, his fat face shining with excitement.

"I say, you fellows, you've got kippers! I say, I've something very important to tell you!"

"Brrrr! Get out! We don't want any second-hand news here," said Herries, seizing Baggy by the shoulders to throw him out.

"D'Arcy," he yelled, "it's about your handkerchief! Lemme go, Herries!"

"Pewwaps we had better hear what Twimble has to say, Hewwies," Arthur Augustus said sedately.

"Lemme go! I won't say anything until Herries let's me go! Lemme go, can't you!"

Herries jerked him violently round. "Now, let's have it! If your precious news is worth it, we'll give you the odd kipper and some tea; and if it isn't, you'll be jolly well bumped!"

"Just give me a cup of tea first, Herries!" Baggy gasped. "I've run all the way, and I can't talk until I've had some tea!"

"Oh, give the boulder some tea, for goodness' sake, and let's hear what he's got to say!" Herries said irritably.

After this slight refreshment Baggy got away with his story.

He had been passing when Taggles was cleaning out Pongo's kennel, and right at the back Taggles had found a piece of silk.

"I wonder where the tike got this?" Taggles had remarked.

Baggy had asked for and obtained the scrap of silk, and he now triumphantly exhibited it in our study.

"Gweap, Scott!" D'Arcy gasped. "It's the west of my Chinese handkerchief! Are you snah it was found in Pongo's kennel, Twimble?"

"Certain!" said Baggy, vastly pleased with the sensation he had caused. "I was standing there when Taggles found it."

Jack Blake turned to me with a solemn face.

"Would you mind fetching Wally D'Arcy, Dig, old man?" he said.

When I came back with Wally in tow, Baggy was happily engaged in finishing off

the kipper and generally clearing up things. As we had only just started tea, it was an opportunity in a thousand for Baggy.

"Wally," said D'Arcy major, in his most impressive tones, "Twimble has found the wemaindah of my Chinese handkerchief! Do you know anything about it?"

Wally looked at him in a perplexed sort of way.

"No! I don't know anything about it. I should have told you if I had known," he said.

"The fact of the matter is," explained Blake, "Baggy saw Taggles find this bit of Gussy's hanky in Pongo's kennel."

"Was Pongo with you when you came to borrow that sugar yesterday afternoon?" I asked, with a sudden inspiration.

Wally considered a minute.

"Y-e-s," he said slowly. "I remember now, he did come in with me, but when I got back I couldn't find the little beggar."

"Well, it's perfectly clear to me what happened," said Herries, anxious to clear Towser from blame. "Pongo evidently nosed around here, and found Gussy's handkerchief; spent a happy five minutes with it, and then, being disturbed or hearing Towser coming, holted with it to his kennel—in his hurry leaving half of it under the table, where we found it."

Herries described what actually had happened, and when young D'Arcy remembered Pongo's guilty air he was convinced that his dog was the culprit.

"Herries, I'm awfully sorry old Towser was blamed!" he said impulsively. "I'd clean forgotten that Pongo came in here with me."

"That's all right!" Herries said shortly. "Keep an eye on the beggar, and see that he doesn't get into any more mischief."

"I'm sorry I so misjudged my friends," Gussy said contritely; "and I'm very sorry I annoyed Hewwies about Towser. Pway forgive me!" Arthur Augustus ended appealingly.

"There's nothing to forgive," Blake laughed. "After all, we pulled your leg about the hanky, and even now we can't restore that."

"Oh, wats to the hanky!" Gustavus replied. "I ppropose we have some tea now!"

THE END.

THE KINDNESS OF THE OWL.

By HARRY WHARTON.

"CHEESE-CAKES!" muttered Billy Bunter. "Real cheese-cakes! Oh my!"

The porpoise stood with his fat face pressed against a pastrycook's window in Courtfield. He blinked longingly at the cheese-cakes. They looked very near to being the old original pre-war kind. The cheese-cakes seemed to taunt the hungry Owl.

He was roused by the sound of voices. Next door—it was a divided shop—was a plain, unadorned coal office, with samples of Walsend and kitchen cobbles on exhibition.

A lady's high-pitched treble came from within:

"I call it a shame, Mr. Smeaks! I ordered the coal a month ago, and I must have it!"

"Very sorry, Mrs. Tompkins, but I have had difficulties at the wharf. I'll try and let you have some by the middle of the week."

Mrs. Tompkins gave a squeak, and Bunter turned his head, to see a lady in a black dress, with a fur coat which was far too small for her ample dimensions. She carried a string bag, which bulged with many purchases, including a paper bag which had burst, revealing buns. Bunter's eyes gleamed at the sight.

"Middle of next week!" she cried indignantly. "I can't wait! I'd give ten shillings for a sack of coals now! I've got Mr. Partlett coming to supper to-night, and he hates to have things cold!"

The coal-office man smiled in an exasperating way, and rubbed his hands.

"I am exceedingly distressed, madam," he said. "But it's the transport difficulty. We can't do anything without transport."

Mrs. Tompkins gave a snort, and made outspoken remarks about the Coal Controller. She was as red as a peony, and so agitated that as she bundled out of the shop she pretty nearly knocked down Billy Bunter.

"Get out of my way, little boy!" she said. Bunter stared at her as if she were something in a museum.

"I—" he began. "I—" His ideas were

shaping themselves slowly. Their pivot was the ten shillings which he had heard Mrs. Tompkins offer for a sack of coal. Bunter could do quite nicely with that half-quad.

"You said you wanted some coal."

"But you can't get any coal!" cried the lady. "You haven't any transport!"

"Oh, yes, I have!" said the Owl eagerly. "I've got lots—no end!"

He had no very clear notion what transport was; but a chap must risk something.

Mrs. Tompkins beamed upon him.

"If you can bring me a sack of coals from Messrs. Wells & Smith—I have paid for two tons, but a sack would do to go on with—you can have this, my little man," she said, extracting a crisp Bradbury from her purse. "And you shall stay to tea, too—a real good tea!"

Bunter's hand closed on the cash. The ample female smiled on him affably, and waddled off down the street. To Bunter she seemed a walking gold-mine.

Mrs. Tompkins turned the corner, and Bunter at once turned into the confectioner's shop to change his note, thinking a little of coal and a great deal of the banquet which awaited him if he could carry out the job for which he had already taken payment.

"I'd soon get the old coal if—" He had got thus far in his meditations as he sat perched on a high stool by the well-filled counter when a cart drew up at the door.

It was a small cart, behind a brown, unclipped pony, and the man who was driving it seemed to be a seller of wood logs for firing purposes. It was not much of a cart, but still, it was a cart, and it would carry a sack of coal and a butter-tub at a pinch.

It has been said that it is wiser to be born lucky than rich. Bunter crammed the rest of the cheese-cakes he had bought—if he had bought them—into his pockets, and descended from his stool in perspiring haste.

The personage who was vending Yule logs had left the cart and crossed the road to transact business of an important nature in

a building with swing doors and a nice glass front, which displayed brewers' advertisements somewhat prominently.

Bunter gained the pavement. The pony looked as if he had ceased to take any special interest in life. The street was empty.

"If I just borrowed the cart and got the poor old lady her coals it wouldn't do any harm to anybody," said Bunter to Bunter. "A chap ought to do a kindness when he can!"

The porpoise clambered into the vehicle and grabbed the reins. It moved off. Bunter had been standing in the cart. He suddenly sat down. The pony stalked solemnly down the street, with Bunter tugging at the reins.

Now, what followed is not as clear as it might be; but one thing is pretty certain. Bunter asked his way to the coal-wharf, and by some means managed to wangle the handling over of a couple of sacks of coal. He had the address of Mrs. Tompkins all right, and he fancied he could get the load where it was wanted.

He was thinking so hard as he sat on the coal and let the pony go its own pace that he did not hear us shout to him.

We were Bob Cherry, Peter Todd, and myself.

"It is my one and only Bunter," said Peter Todd, as we pursued the cart. "Whither away, porpoise? This isn't the Lord Mayor's Show, you know."

"Laburnum Villa—two sacks," replied Bunter, taking a cheese-cake out of his right-hand pocket and cramming it into his mouth. "Go away!"

"Come out of that cart, you fat chump!" shouted Bob Cherry, seizing the Owl's arm. "You've stolen that cart, I know!"

"Also the coal!" said Peter Todd.

"Lemme go!" yelled Bunter, struggling in vain to keep his seat on the sack.

He rolled off into the bottom of the cart. The pony looked round to see what had happened, then stopped dead, apparently out of local kindness.

"I haven't stolen anything!" roared Bunter, as he rolled in the coal-dust. "Oh, really, Bob Cherry! Lemme gettrup!"

"You fat chump!" shouted Bob Cherry, climbing into the cart.

"I'm not!" shrieked Bunter. He tried to recover his footing, but slipped down once more, his head on one of the sacks. The cart had given a lurch owing to a side-step by the noble animal between the shafts. "I got the coal for a lady, and—"

"Stop, thief!" came from somewhere far behind.

"Bunter stole the cart!" cried Bob Cherry. "Look!"

He pointed to a man running down the street towards them, and yelling things as he ran.

"He isn't so fat as Bunter," said Toddy. "But Bunter can't come up to him in running or in language—and Bunter hadn't better try, either!"

"I only borrowed the cart, you fellows!" whimpered Bunter.

That explanation might have been good enough for some confiding people, but it did not appear likely it would satisfy the man who was racing after the cart, and getting even more picturesque in his language as he ran.

Bunter was desperate. A crowd had collected and a policeman loomed up like a thunder-cloud before it gets quite black.

Bunter scrambled up, his face as black as a sweep's, and grabbed at the reins. The pony backed all of a heap against the cart, and then shot forward.

Bunter was shot out of the cart, clutching wildly at everything as he went. He landed on the pony's back, and there he clung, his fat little legs embracing the quadruped and his hands grasping the harness.

"You young thieves!" screamed the fat man, as he came alongside.

"Oh, hang that yarn!" hooted Bob.

But Bob found it was no time for argument. He shook off the hand which had grabbed his collar, and tumbled into the cart, which was moving now as if it had been hitched on to a brisk locomotive.

The pony had fairly woke up. Enough to make it, with Bunter sticking to its back as if he had grown there.

Peter Todd and I jumped for safety, for there was a nasty look about the wood-merchant, and the crowd annoyed us.

"Help!" wailed Bunter, as the pony broke into a trot.

How could we help him? The cart was swaying from side to side; the stout chap with the purple face was dropping behind, and making up, for lost way in language; and the crowd cheered and howled.

And if it had not been that Bunter was really making his way to Laburnum Villa, there would have been lots more trouble.

Just as Peter Todd caught sight of an excited lady standing on the footpath waving an umbrella at us there was a mighty crack, and the cart stopped dead—that is to say, the hind part did. It could not have been a really strong cart, for the front of it went along with Bunter and the pony, and the rest, with the coal, stayed with us.

The lady with the gamp proved to be Mrs. Tompkins.

She rushed up, and began to be really enthusiastic about the brave boy who had brought her coal. She seemed to take Peter Todd for Bunter at first, and was going to kiss him, but Toddy dodged. Then she told the policeman to put away his notebook, for it was quite all right. She was looking at the sacks as she said this.

The fat man, who seemed to own the cart—now a sectional affair—softened a lot when he saw a pound note or two.

Somewhat, the pony soon got weary of Bunter's company. We sought poor Bunter, and found him groaning in a ditch, vowing he would never do any more kind actions. But the tea Mrs. Tompkins invited us all to pulled him round and bucked him up, and William was himself again!

He threw out hints that he really deserved a big reward for what he had done. But somehow, Mrs. Tompkins seemed disposed to transfer the credit to Toddy. I think she felt in love with Toddy's nose. It may have reminded her of Mr. Partlett's.

Anyway, I am jolly sure Partlett's supper wasn't any better than our tea. Mrs. T. may have her faults, but she isn't stingy!

THE END.

PLAYING THE MAN.

A Tale of the Cavaliers.

By DICK BROOKE.

Out of the house that was full of the foe young Gilbert stole into the night. Was he too young to serve the cause? They had held him too young to fight. But his chance had come now, and he clutched at his chance, and out of the house took flight.

The Cropears were there, in every room, with their psalms and their nasal twang. They had raided the cellars, their horse's hoofs on the flags of the great hall rang. They had captured Sir Hugh, and they vowed that by all the laws of war he must hang!

'Twas the foul red gullt of another they placed on the head of the good Sir Hugh. Guilt there was none in that generous soul, to his God and his King most true. As Captain Jonadab Smite-with-the-Sword, his old enemy, knew.

So out of the house young Gilbert stole, with naked steel in his hand, With his young heart hot, but his young head cool—no braver lad in the land— To ride for his father's life, to bring to the rescue Guy Vernon's command!

Full ten miles, and the roughest of miles, lay between them and him, Darksome woods and brooding heaths, and a river full to the brim.

What did he reek? His purpose was set, and he and his grey could swim.

Into the gloom of the stable-yard he passed, with ready sword.

"Who goes there?" snuffed the Roundhead guard. Quick came the answering word: "A foe!" In amazement stood the man; he could scarce believe what he heard.

Too astonished to shout, but not to fight, his blade and young Gilbert's clashed; And Hezekiah Full-of-Grace, with a thrust through the heart, down crashed. Young Gilbert had fished his maiden sword. Into the stable he dashed.

He saddled and bridled the gallant grey. His hands were steady and deft.

Softly he rode him out of the yard, and swung his head to the left.

Lest any might follow at once. To the right lay his path, through Clavering Cleft.

"Who goes there?" Again the challenge rang, and again he answered "A foe!" And a bulky form took his point in the gloom as he leaned from his saddle-bow; And another Roundhead lay dying there, for Gilbert's swift arm, too slow.

He turned the head of Grey Gaunt to the right. For the Clavering Cleft he made. Peril was there, as well he knew, but no peril could make him afraid. For his father's life on the issue hung, and how should he be dismayed?

Two horsemen there in the Clavering Cleft, where the Banks ran close and steep. Grey Gaunt's hoofs padded the springy turf as he neared them; then a leap. And rider and steed were between the two as they started like men from sleep.

The chase was hot over Ravening Moor; but Grey Gaunt travelled light. And now the noise of pursuing hoofs died away through the darkling night. And anon a ribbon of silver he saw as one moment the moon shone bright.

No spur the good grey needed; he plunged right over the brink.

To the boy's very attempts the water rose, ice-cold. It was swim or sink. For the gallant rider and gallant horse, with scarcely time to think.

A heave and a struggle—the grey's hoofs slipped on the bank—but strong was the hand

Of the boyish rider. He leapt from the saddle; he dragged Grey Gaunt to land. Then for one moment, with heaving flanks, the good steed he let stand.

Up again in the saddle, and on he rode through the woods so dark.

And at long last to Somerton town, where Guy Vernon's troopers stalk

Lifted him down, and patted his back, and brought wine for the brave young spark.

Welcome enough the wine and the praise to the lad; but well they knew—

Young Gilbert and gay Guy Vernon—there was yet to free Sir Hugh.

"Boot and saddle!" And into their ranks the war-worn troopers drew.

Hell for leather, through wood, o'er waste, they rode for Alliston Hall!

And young Gilbert rode by Guy Vernon's side at the head of the troopers tall, To his father's rescue—to play the part of a man—like a man to fall!

The pity of it? Nay; that night was worth years of a common life!

True, he might have lived on to love some fair maid, to cherish a darling wife, And rear brave sons of his own. But he passed in the heat of that stern, swift strife.

Passed with his boy's high heart aglow, not cold with age and dim.

They had thought the lad too young to fight. Never dream that death seemed grim.

He had played the man—he had saved his sire—what mattered death to him?

The Editor's Chat.

For Next Monday :

"BILLY BUNTER'S GREAT WHEEZE!"

By Frank Richards.

What is Billy Bunter's great wheeze?

I am not going to tell you that here. You must wait until next week—unless you are clever enough to guess something from various slight indications given in this week's fine yarn.

This series is, I do believe, the very finest Mr. Richards has ever written, and I am sure that it is going to be extraordinarily popular.

We have had the contrast between Billy and Wally Bunter before—the cousins so alike in face and figure, so unlike in their ways and their characters. But now we are going to have it in a new way, with—

Shush!

I came very near to letting it out then!

HURRAH!

I have good news for you this week—the very best of news!

THE "PENNY POPULAR" IS COMING OUT AGAIN SOON!

Very soon, indeed! The first number of the new series will be dated January 25th, and will, of course, be on sale before that day.

The price for the present will be three-half-pence, for we are not yet clear of war conditions, you know. But I don't think that will make much difference to any of you. The increase of price has not hurt any of the Companion Papers; they are too firmly established in the affections of their readers for that.

What a wail of despair there was when the "Penny Pop," as most of you call it—as we call it here—was closed down! Some letters almost threatening in tone were received. Some readers could not see at all why it should be the "Penny Pop" that was sacrificed that other papers might go on. But that was a matter of which they were naturally not the best judges.

And what a shout of joy there will be when it is known that the "Penny Pop" is coming out again, with all the features which made it so popular—the Greyfriars yarn, the St. Jim's one, and that of Rookwood! For it is still to be the "All School Story Paper" that readers have shown so conclusively is the paper they really want.

Other attractions, too—very special ones! But about them you will learn more next week.

NOTICES.

Football Matches Wanted by—

RYTHAL (GREEN)—16;—play at Victoria Park.—A. Lawson, 21, Cranbrook Street, Green Street, Bethnal Green, E.

WALTHAMSTOW AND LITTON CIDEES—15-18.—L. Cpl. Roberts, Drill Hall, Church Hill, Walthamstow, Essex.

YOUR EDITOR.

4-1-19