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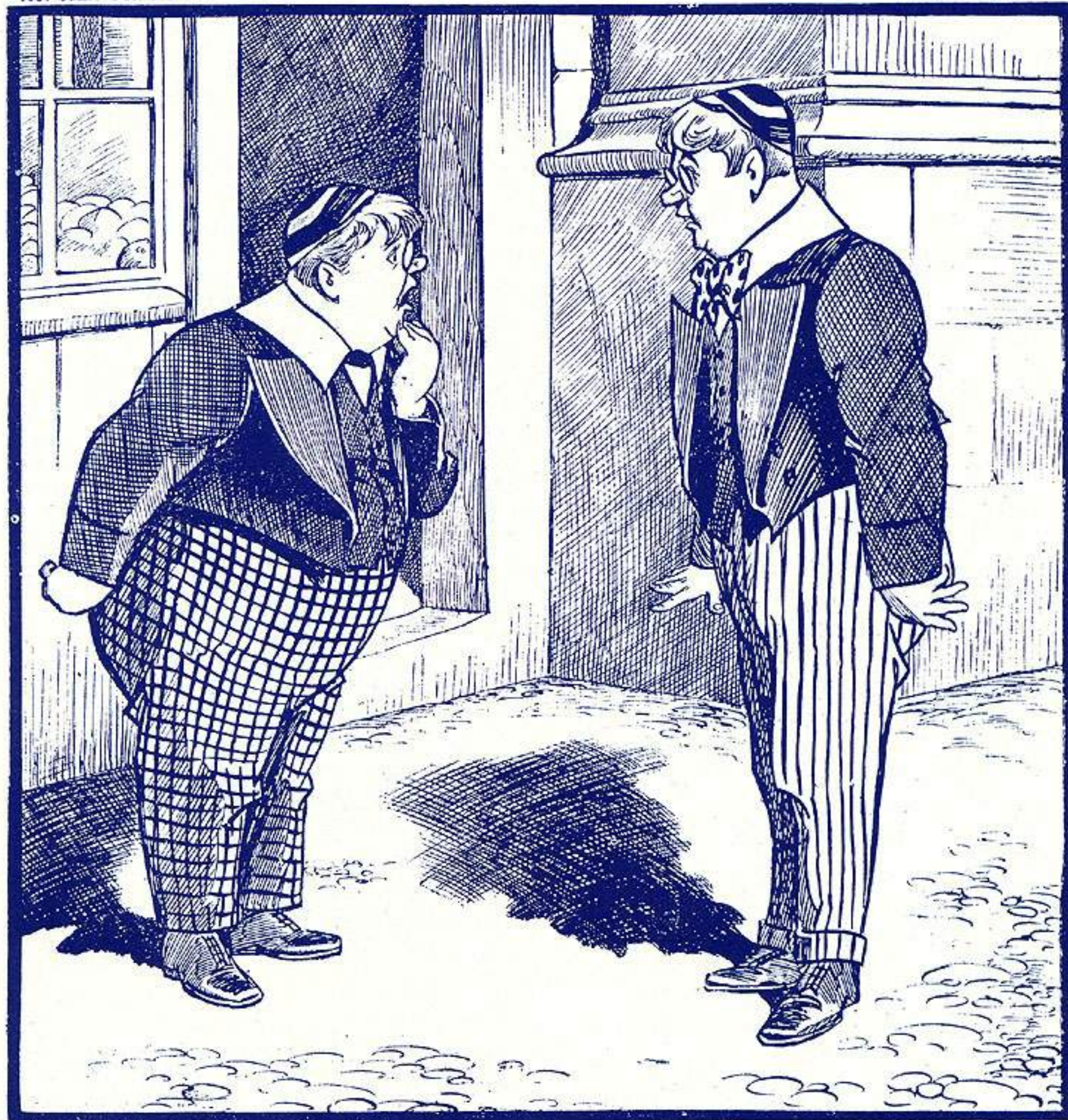
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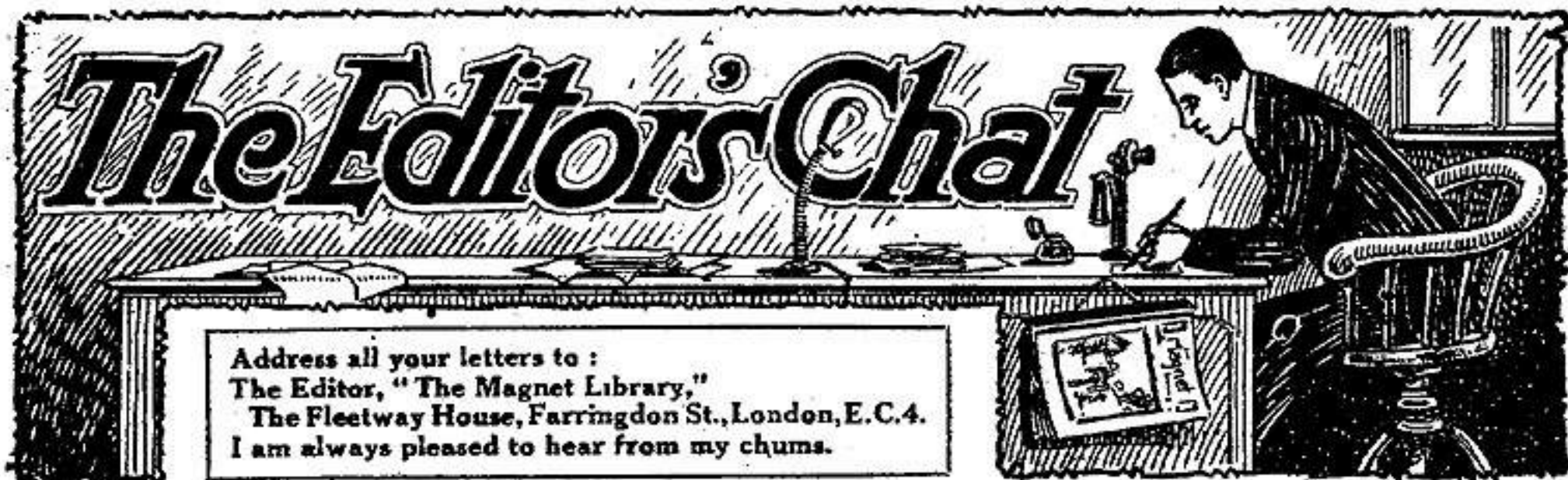
No. 682. Vol. XVIII.

March 5th, 1921.



"THIN BUNTER!"

A SCREAMINGLY FUNNY COMPLETE STORY IN THIS ISSUE!



Address all your letters to:
The Editor, "The Magnet Library,"
The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.
I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

FOR NEXT MONDAY.

We have another story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, entitled:

"THE SCHOOLBOY PROTECTORS!"

By Frank Richards.

The story deals with an adventure which befalls Blundell, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars. He is pestered by a cousin, who is under a delusion that Blundell has done him an injury. Harry Wharton & Co. hear of this, and form themselves into a kind of band of protectors. To tell you much of this story would be to spoil your interest, so I just ask you to make sure of your copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY next Monday by ordering one in advance.

One thing I can tell you, that the story of

"THE SCHOOLBOY PROTECTORS!"

is full of exciting incidents, and one you cannot afford to miss.

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD SUPPLEMENT.

There will be another grand supplement in next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY, and I can assure my chums that it is funnier than ever. I cannot remember any time in which a feature has been so cordially accepted by my readers as the "Greyfriars Herald" Supplement in the MAGNET LIBRARY, and we are all doing our utmost to keep it to its present high standard.

Readers all over the world have written to me to say how much they like the MAGNET LIBRARY now that it is an all-complete story paper. And I must say I like receiving letters from my chums. I answer every one of them if a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed. Practically every reader has a good word to say for the supplement, and many helpful suggestions are sent in.

So all my chums may look forward to another budget of fun and fiction next Monday!

NOTICES.

Readers' Notices.

Will readers please note that as I sometimes find myself with a little space to spare in our companion paper, the "Popular" Library, notices sent to me might appear in that paper instead of in the MAGNET LIBRARY, as requested. I do this because I know that readers are anxious for their notices to go in as soon as possible.

Football.

H. Spero, 4, Redmans Road, Stepney, E. 1, wishes to join junior football club in London; right-half, or inside-right; 15½.

Your Editor

Don't Wear a Truss!



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Rudge it!—don't Trudge it



Thin Bunter!

A Screamingly Funny Long Complete Story dealing with the Chums of Greyfriars, and Billy Bunter the Owl of the Remove Form.

— BY —
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Matter of Life or Death!

GAMMON!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.

"Honest Injun!" said Billy Bunter, with great earnestness.

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove chuckled in chorus.

Billy Bunter's "Honest Injun" was not, as a matter of fact, celebrated for his honesty.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Bosh!" said Harry Wharton decidedly.

Billy Bunter turned his big spectacles on the chums of the Remove with a look that was like that of Hamlet's father—more of sorrow than of anger.

"If you're going to be unfeeling beasts—" he began.

"We are!" said Johnny Bull. "Now roll away, porpoise, and give us a rest!"

"But—"

"The pleasures of your conversation, old chap, pall in the long run," remarked Frank Nugent. "They've palled now. Buzz off!"

But William George Bunter did not buzz off.

"The meeting's in Study No. 7, at five," he said. "I hope you'll come. Squiff and Vernon-Smith and Redwing are coming. I've asked them, and they said they'd come. Toddy will be there. I asked that new chap, Drake, but the beast told me to go and eat coke—"

"A very sensible remark of Drake's!" observed Bob Cherry. "Why don't you go and do it?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Harry Wharton pointed to the doorway of Study No. 1. The Famous Five were discussing football when Bunter rolled in—and the discussion waited for Bunter's departure. Football was ever so much more interesting than W. G. Bunter.

"Wharton, old fellow, I'm sure you'll come," said Bunter, unheeding the gesture of the captain of the Remove. "It's to save a fellow's life—"

"Rats!"

"A life-saving committee, really!" said Bunter. "You ought to come. It's up to you. I assure you, I'm serious!"

The fat junior looked serious enough.

"What rot!" granted Johnny Bull. "It's only some more of your spoofo, Bunter. What fellow is it, then?"

"A Remove chap?" asked Nugent.

"Yes; and it's to save his life."

"Gammon!"

"Don't be later than five," said Bunter. And he rolled away at last, leaving Harry Wharton & Co. rather perplexed.

"It's all rot, of course," said Bob Cherry. "The fat bounder's pulling our leg again!"

"The rotfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh. "But if the esteemed Smithy is going—and Squiff—"

"It's some spoofo," said Wharton. "Still, we may as well drop in—it's just on five now. If Bunter's pulling our leg we'll bump him!"

"Yes; that's a good idea!" assented Bob.

And the Famous Five left the study, and proceeded along the Remove passage to No. 7. They were, in point of fact, a little interested as well as puzzled. Billy Bunter's announcement that he had called a meeting in his study, with a view to saving a fellow's life, was rather startling. Harry Wharton & Co. were quite willing to lend a hand in saving anybody's life, if anybody's life was in danger, certainly. But they knew their Bunter of old, and they were chiefly wondering what kind of spoofo the Owl of the Remove was planning in the recesses of his fat intellect.

There was only one fellow in Study No. 7 when they arrived there; that being Tom Dutton, one of Bunter's study-mates. Tom Dutton was deaf, and he did not hear them come in; and, having his back to the door, did not see them. So he remained in ignorance of the arrival of five visitors, until Bob Cherry playfully leaned over him, and tapped him on the nose from behind. Then Dutton gave a jump and a startled yell:

"Oh, you silly ass!"

"Only waking you up, old top!" said Bob Cherry affably.

"Eh?"

"Where's Peter Todd?" asked Wharton.

"I don't call it odd," answered Dutton.

"I call it fathheaded, to make a fellow jump like that!"

"Oh, my hat! Where's Peter?" shouted Bob.

"Sweeter? What's sweeter?"

"Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see what you fellows are cackling at," said Tom Dutton, rather crossly. "I never saw such a cackling lot as the Greyfriars Remove!"

"We've come to the meeting!" howled Johnny Bull. "We want to know what the meeting's about!"

"If you mean Bob Cherry—"

"What?"

"I shouldn't call him a lout," said Dutton, shaking his head. "That's rather rough. A silly ass, if you like!"

"Deafness," remarked Bob Cherry, "is said to be an infliction. It is—there's no mistake about that. But it isn't the deaf chap who gets the worst of it. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Toddy!"

Peter Todd came into the study with Billy Bunter. The latter had evidently rounded him up for the meeting.

"Well, what's it all about, Toddy?" asked Wharton.

"Don't ask me," answered Peter. "Bunter says there's a meeting, and he's got some silly asses to come to it. Are you some of them?"

"Why, you cheeky chump—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the giddy crowd!" said Bob Cherry, as Vernon-Smith, Redwing, and Squiff came in together. "Now we're all here. Bunter, get up on your hind legs and expound!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Life's short!" said Bob. "We'll give you exactly a minute and a half! If you don't come to the point by that time—"

"I say, you fellows, lend me your ears, you know," said Bunter, taking up a commanding position on the hearthrug to address the meeting.

"We'll lend you our ears," agreed Bob. "But we jolly well won't lend you anything else. So don't begin telling us that you're expecting a postal-order!"

"If he says the word 'postal-order,' we'll lend him a boot!" suggested Nugent.

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows, do stop jawing and give a chap a chance to speak! You're

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like a sheep's head, Cherry—nearly all jaw!"

"Why, I'll—"

"Is this a meeting to hear Bob Cherry gas, or to hear Bunter talk out of his neck?" inquired Peter Todd.

"Order!"

"Go it, Bunter, and get it over!"

"Gentlemen—"

"Buck up!"

"Gentlemen, this meeting has been called for a very important object," said Bunter, blinking round at the attentive juniors. "Nothing short of saving the life of a well-known member of the Remove. A distinguished inhabitant of these ancient walls, in fact!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Name!" hooted Toddy.

"W. G. Bunter!"

"What?"

"Which?"

"Why—"

"Bump him!"

"Yah! Keep off, you silly idiots!" yelled Bunter, abandoning his majestic attitude on the hearthrug suddenly and dodging round the study table. "Give a chap a chance to explain—"

"Give him a chance!" said Wharton, laughing. "If he doesn't hand out a jolly good explanation, he will need somebody to save his life. Go on, you fat spoofer!"

And William George Bunter, having recovered his breath, proceeded to explain, judiciously keeping the table between him and the meeting.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Reversing the Programme!

"LOOK at me!" began Bunter.

The juniors looked.

"Cut it short!" said Bob.

"It's rather a painful operation looking at you, Bunter! We've got our eyesight to consider."

"If you're going to be a funny idiot, Bob Cherry—"

"Get on with the washing!" rapped out Vernon-Smith. The Bouncer of Greyfriars seemed to be getting impatient. He had already picked up a cushion—apparently for use on Bunter.

"Well, look at me!" said Bunter. "I suppose you've noticed that I'm getting thin?"

"What!"

"Eh!"

"Thin!"

"You!"

"Ye gods!"

Amazed stares were fixed on Bunter. So far as the meeting could see, there was no sign of thinness about the Owl of the Remove.

His circumference, which was enormous, seemed as enormous as ever; his diameter, which was astonishing, did not appear to be less astonishing than usual.

"Thin!" said Bunter firmly. "Of course, I never was fat—"

"Never!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Well, hardly ever!" grinned Squiff.

"I've always had a good figure," said Bunter. "I never was skinny, like you fellows—never looked like a knife-blade seen edge-wise, like Toddy, for example."

"Why—" began Peter Todd warmly.

"Just healthily plump," said Bunter.

"But this term I've been suffering from a food shortage—it's really awful!" Bunter's voice trembled with emotion. "If you fellows knew how I've suffered—"

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now!" murmured Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I call this laughter heartless, in the presence of a fellow who's fading out of existence before your eyes," said Bunter.

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"The whole term I've been nearly starving. You've seen, yourselves, Mr. Quelch refuse me a fourth helping at dinner. He doesn't care how a fellow suffers. Bolsover major kicked me yesterday for borrowing a cake from his study, though he knew I was hungry. That new fellow, Drake, threw a dictionary at me when I was looking at his tarts—just looking at them. And Rodney—"

"Come to the point, if you've got one to come to," said Vernon-Smith. "I'm getting tired of holding this cushion ready."

"I'm coming to it. This food shortage is killing me," said Bunter impressively. "I could make up for it at the tuckshop, but I've been disappointed about a postal-order—"

"Only one?" chuckled Bob.

"I've had a whole series of disappointments about postal-orders that I was expecting," said Bunter sadly. "That leaves me short of tin."

"Quite a new experience for you!" said Johnny Bull, with sarcasm.

"And t'is long and the short of it is," resumed Bunter, "that this meeting is called to see what's to be done. My suggestion is that you fellows pass the hat round—"

"What!"

"And raise a fund, to be called Bunter's Fund!" said the Owl of the Remove firmly. "That, I think, is the only way of saving my life. Otherwise, you must prepare for a very heavy loss."

"What loss?"

"My early death," said Bunter sorrowfully.

"But that wouldn't be a loss."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows! How you can laugh in the presence of death—nearly death—I really can't imagine. It's worse than heartless. If you think you couldn't raise a fund, my next suggestion is that you should have me to tea in turn, one every day in the week, and stand me a really substantial spread each time. That might stave it off."

"Is that all?" asked Harry Wharton.

"That's all. I expect you to consider the matter seriously, and decide what had better be done. Remember, there's a life at stake."

"And you've brought us here to listen to this rot?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Bump him!"

"Scrag him!"

Whiz! went the cushion. Bunter dodged just in time, and the cushion landed on the bookcase.

There was a glass door to the bookcase—at least, there had been before Smithy hurled the cushion. Afterwards there wasn't!

Crash! Clink! Tinkle!

"You silly ass!" roared Peter Todd.

"Bunter's fault—he shouldn't have dodged!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—" howled Bunter.

"Shut up, Bunter! It's my turn now," said Bob Cherry. "Gentlemen, lend me your ears—the same ears that you lent Bunter will do. We've come here to have our legs pulled, just as we suspected. Whether that fat idiot really thought he would screw anything out of us with a yarn like this, I don't know; but he's quite idiot enough. Gentlemen, Bunter has called us together to consider the subject of his health, and I vote that we consider it."

"Why, you ass—"

"I'm glad to hear you take this line, Cherry," said Bunter. "You're talking sense for once."

"Thanks! Gentlemen," said Bob

Cherry, "Bunter thinks it is up to us to look after his health—"

"Certainly!" said Bunter. "How'd you feel if you lost me?"

"Jolly glad!" granted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull, you beast—"

"So I vote that we look after his health," said Bob. "Now, in the first place, the chief thing wrong with Bunter is that he's too jolly fat."

"Hear, hear!"

"Second, he eats too much."

"Right!"

"Third, he's always cadging bobs and tamers, and spending them with Mrs. Mumble for tuck."

"He is—he are!"

"Fourthly, he never takes exercise enough."

"True!"

"As a committee in charge of Bunter's health," continued Bob, "I suggest we take the following programme. Nobody is to stand Bunter a feed of any kind for a whole week."

"Good!"

"Nobody is to lend him any money."

"Bravo!"

"And everybody is to see that he takes plenty of exercise."

"Hear, hear!"

"And I suggest that we begin by taking him for a trot round the quadrangle at top speed, and keep behind him to touch him up if he slacks."

"Hurrah!"

"Come on, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the meeting in horrified dismay. This was not at all the programme he had marked out; in fact, it was quite the reverse of that programme.

Undoubtedly, it was a programme that was likely to be good for his health. But it was not attractive to W. G. Bunter.

"You—you—you silly asses," spluttered Bunter. "I won't come! You silly rotters, I'm expiring already from—from famishment—"

"Come and expire in the quad," said Bob Cherry. "Kick him over this way, somebody, and give me a hold on his ear!"

"Yaroooh! Help! Fire! Murder!" yelled Bunter, as the juniors closed round him.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This way, my fat tulip!"

"Yow-ow-wooop!"

In the midst of a chuckling crowd of juniors, William George Bunter was whirled out of Study No. 7.

He howled with alarm and anguish as he was whirled along the Remove passage to the stairs.

On the staircase he was incapable of further yelling; all the breath was gone from his fat body.

He only gasped stertorously as the chuckling Removites marched him downstairs and out into the quadrangle.

"Ow!" moaned Bunter feebly. "I—I—I say, you fellows—"

"Kin on!"

"Wow!"

"Start him, Bob! You've got the biggest feet!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooooooh!"

Billy Bunter started. Harry Wharton & Co. kept pace, which was not difficult, William George's sprinting performances being a great deal like those of an elephant.

Bob Cherry trotted behind him, and every now and then, when Bunter slacked, he let out a reminding boot.

Billy Bunter trotted on desperately.

In spite of the fact that he was fading away, expiring, and expecting a very



The two Bunters advanced upon Rodney. That youth did not seem very much alarmed. The prospect of being "put through it" by Bunter major and minor did not terrify him. "Mind, I'm going to smash you—you will not feel like walking when I've finished with you!" roared Bunter, pushing back his cuffs. (See Chapter 7.)

early demise, he managed to keep up pretty well, and he went right round the quad with the yelling Removites.

As he came opposite the School House doorway again he bolted into the house like a rabbit into its burrow.

The Removites crowded in merrily. The question of Bunter's health had been satisfactorily settled—from their point of view, at least. When Peter Todd came into his study he found the Owl of the Remove extended in the armchair, gasping feebly. Billy Bunter turned on him a look that might have melted the heart of a Hun. But it did not melt Peter Todd. He only chortled.

"Beast!" moaned Bunter feebly.

"Still suffering?" asked Peter.

"Dying!" said Bunter, with a moan.

"My dear old porpoise, you're like merry old Charles the Second, who was an unconscious time dying," said Peter. "But you beat Charlie the Second—you're more unconscious than he was. Can't you buck up?"

Groan!

"Get a move on, you know!" urged Peter.

Groan!

"Still bad?"

"Ow! Awful!"

"All right, I'll call in the fellows, and we'll give you another run round the quad!" said Peter, stepping to the door.

Bunter sat up suddenly.

"Yow! Stop, you beast!"

"But if you're still suffering—"

"Yah! I'm better!"

Peter Todd chuckled.

"You'd better remain better, then; it will be better for you," he remarked. "There's only one cure to be found for you in the Remove—plenty of exercise. Every time you groan you're going to get some more."

Groan!

"Hallo! At it again? Come on!"

"Yarook! Leggo! I—I wasn't groaning. I—I was coughing!" stuttered Bunter.

"It sounded like a groan."

"It—it was a cough, you beast!"

"Well, you can cough, you beast, as much as you like," said Peter considerably. "But the next time you groan you go on another little run."

And Bunter did not groan again. His sufferings, whatever they were, he bore in heroic silence.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Still Dying!

THE next day William George Bunter wore a sad and sorrowful look.

It was the look of a fellow who was painfully misunderstood, but who tried to forgive his misunderstanders, so to speak. He told Peter Todd that he had lost a stone. Peter told him in return that there were plenty of stones on the road, if he wanted any. And when Bunter tried to explain that he was alluding to his weight, the heartless and unfeeling Peter walked away, whistling, without waiting for him to finish.

Undoubtedly there was a plentiful lack of sympathy for William George Bunter in the Greyfriars Remove.

Indeed, he was rather doubtful now about appealing for sympathy. The methods adopted by the Removites to improve his health were most disconcerting.

Billy Bunter did not want to sprint round the quad again with a helpful boot behind him.

He decided on a sad and reproachful countenance, which he hoped would penetrate the hearts of the unfeeling Removites with remorse.

But it didn't. Remorse seemed to be at a discount in the Remove. Bunter's pining looks were hardly noticed for some time; but at last Johnny Bull inquired—not politely, not sympathetically at all—why he was looking like a dying duck in a thunderstorm. And Johnny Bull did not even wait for an answer to the question.

Bunter felt bitterly that he might fade away to a shadow, and these fellows would not care. Certainly, he did not look shadowy yet.

Peter Todd found him that day anxiously scanning his reflection in the looking-glass in Study No. 7.

"Don't break that glass!" commanded Peter.

"Who's breaking it, you ass?" hooted Bunter.

"You're looking into it! It's not safe! Look at something stronger!"

"Beast! Look at the hollows in my face!" said Bunter pathetically.

"There's only one hollow I can see, but that is a jolly big one," said Peter. "I saw you fill it at dinner time, though."

"You're like Cleopatra fiddling when the Needle was burning!" said Bunter bitterly. Bunter's classical allusions were sometimes mixed.

"Like which?" stuttered Peter. "Do you mean Nero when Rome was burning, you fat duffer?"

"I don't care who it was, you're like him! You'll be sorry when you see me expire at your feet. When you see me stretched in pallid death in the study you'll—"

"There'll be a row if you start dying in this study, Bunter. It's bad enough to have you living in it. Can't you go and die in a box-room?"

Evidently there was no evoking emo-

tion in Peter's hard heart. Bunter gave it up.

At tea-time he looked into Study No. 1, and found Wharton and Nugent there. There was a cake on the table, and Bunter cast an affectionate blink at the cake.

"Hand me the poker, Nugent!" said Harry.

"Eh? What for?"

"For Bunter!"

"Oh, all right!"

"I—I haven't come to tea," said Bunter sorrowfully. "I thought you fellows might like to know that I've lost weight."

"How many hundredweight?" asked Wharton. "Dash it all, you wouldn't miss it up to half a ton or so!"

"I've lost nearly a stone."

"Advertise for it!" suggested Nugent.

"Eh?"

"Those cheap small advertisements in the 'Daily Mail,' you know——"

"Yah!"

Bunter rolled away. He paused in the Remove passage, considering whither to bend his expiring steps. There was no sympathy for him in his own study. He thought of the Bounder, but the Bounder was a beast; of Squiff, but Squiff was another beast; of Drake, but Drake was a beast, too. Rodney, Ogilvy, Russell, Linley; no, unfortunately they were all beasts. He decided finally on Lord Mauleverer, who was, perhaps, a beast, but not quite so beastly as the other beasts. He rolled along the Remove passage and put a dolorous fat face into No. 12. Lord Mauleverer was extended on a sofa, waiting for his study-mates to come in to tea.

He looked startled as Billy Bunter rolled into the study and sank down in a chair, with a groan.

"Begad! What's up, Bunter?" exclaimed his lordship.

Groan!

"I—I say, don't make that fearful row in a fellow's study!" urged Mauleverer. "Dash it all, this isn't kind, Bunter! If you've got somethin' wrong with the works, you might go into your own study."

Groan.

"Too much to eat, is it?" asked Mauly.

"I—I'm sorry!" said Bunter faintly.

"I—I've come here to die, Mauly."

"Eh?"

"I don't want you to lend me five bob, old chap, though it might save my life. You don't mind me dying in your study, do you?"

"Yaas, I jolly well do, though!" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer. "I've got a very strong objection!"

Jimmy Vivian came into the study. Sir Jimmy stared at Bunter.

"Hallo! What's Bunter here for?" demanded Vivian.

"Begad! He says he's come here to die, you know. Beastly bad form, I call it, to die in another fellow's study!"

Groan!

"Dying, is he?" said Vivian, without any signs of grief. "Well, I'll help him peg out, and put him out of his misery!"

Thump!

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter bounded out of the chair as if he were made of indiarubber.

"Hallo! You're jolly lively for a chap at the last gasp!" exclaimed Vivian. "I'll give you another, and——"

But Bunter did not wait for another. He dodged out of Study No. 12 with a speed that was really creditable in a fellow at death's door.

In the Remove dormitory that night, after Wingate had put out the light, and

gone, a deep and hair-raising groan resounded through the darkness.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's Bunter—dying again!" said Bob Cherry. "Bunter, will you oblige the Form by dying quietly?"

Groan!

"Otherwise I shall come over there with a holster!"

Groan!

There was a sound of scrambling out of bed. Then—

Whack!

"Yoop! Help!"

There were no more groans in the Remove dormitory that night. Bunter, apparently, had made up his mind to oblige the Remove by dying quietly. But in the morning he was still alive!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Doctor's Orders!

"BUNTER!"

Mr. Quelch's voice was not loud, but it penetrated into every corner of the Form-room.

All eyes turned on Billy Bunter.

Bunter was a youth with a fertile imagination. He would tell the most astounding "whoppers" with an air of believing them; and there was little doubt that he did partly believe them, at least, while he was telling them.

He was supposed to have a half-belief in the existence of Bunter Court, and the titled relations of the Bunter family—indeed, some of the Removites thought that he really believed he had a postal-order coming!

Now, there was little doubt that Bunter had started the invalid stunt with the intention of evoking sympathy, and raising the wind thereby; or, at least, a "feed." But the usual result had accrued.

Having repeated his "whopper" a number of times, Bunter began to believe it himself. Such cases are not really uncommon.

A House of Commons orator, after explaining several times how necessary it is to have a crowd of idle officials living at the public expense, really begins to believe it necessary, in the long run, and is quite pained when his sincerity is doubted. So it was with Bunter. Having been a sham invalid for two days, on the third day he was feeling really ill.

He was convinced that he was losing weight; undoubtedly he had a feeling of emptiness—he always had! Once alarm crept in, Bunter was really alarmed. He could not help thinking how sad it would be if he perished in the bloom of his youth, and the sadness of that thought brought tears to his eyes, and dimmed his big spectacles.

He was certain that his cheeks were becoming hollow—though to other eyes they looked like over-ripe apples. He was convinced that there was a quarter of an inch to spare under his waistcoat, and certainly that had never happened before. Being ill—at least, being convinced that he was—Bunter did not feel up to Form-work. He felt that it was utterly rotten for a fellow who was ill—perhaps, dying—to have to grind Latin in the Form-room.

What use was Latin, anyway, to a fellow who was going to peg out? Even if he had a Latin epitaph, he couldn't be expected to write it himself. So, instead of standing up to construe, when Mr. Quelch called upon him, Bunter only gave the Remove-master a look of anguish, and groaned.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" breathed Bob Cherry. "If that silly ass isn't beginning it here! Quelch will scalp him!"

"The scalpfulness will be——"

"Terrific!" grinned Bob.

"Silence in the class! Bunter!"

"Yes, sir?" came from Bunter, in a feeble squeak, like the last farewell of a frog under a motor-lorry.

"What is the matter with you this morning, Bunter?"

"I'm ill, sir!"

"Indeed! You look perfectly well, Bunter!"

"I—I think I'm dying, sir!"

"Kindly do not be absurd!" snapped Mr. Quelch. He seemed as heartless as his pupils. "Have you a pain anywhere?"

"Only a—a—a sort of sinking feeling, sir!" gasped Bunter. "General weakness and debility, and that tired feeling, sir, and——"

"If you recite a foolish patent medicine advertisement, from the newspaper, Bunter, I shall cane you!"

"Oh!"

"However, if you say you are ill, the school doctor shall see you," said Mr. Quelch. "I have had to reprove you, Bunter, for habits of gluttony, and it is possible that you are suffering from the effects of gluttonous habits."

There was a suppressed chortle in the Remove. William George Bunter blinked at his Form-master in speechless indignation.

"I shall not waste Dr. Pillbury's time by asking him to come here," continued Mr. Quelch, "as I do not, in point of fact, believe that you are ill at all. You will go immediately to Dr. Pillbury's house at Friardale, and see him, and request him to send me a written note stating what is the matter with you!"

"Yes, sir!" moaned Bunter.

He brightened a little. Getting out of morning lessons was something, if not much!

"I shall allow you one hour," said Mr. Quelch. "If you are not back in an hour, you will be caned, Bunter! Now go at once!"

Bunter went.

For an athlete like Bunter, it was nearly an hour's walk to the village and back, so his prospect of a happy "loaf" was cut off. Still, though Bunter was not fond of walking, walking was better than working, so he felt fairly cheerful as he started.

He was back in the hour. He knew that Mr. Quelch was a gentleman of his word. He came into the Form-room with a note in his hand.

Mr. Quelch glanced at him.

"From Dr. Pillbury, sir," said Bunter. "I've told him all my symptoms, sir—at least, I was telling him when he told me to be quiet, sir!"

The Remove-master took the note, and opened it. His brows knitted in a frown as he read.

"Bunter?"

"Yes, sir?" said Bunter quaking. "I—I hope he orders me plenty of—of nourishing food, sir, and—and lots of rest, and—and freedom from worry, sir, such as lessons——"

"Silence! Dr. Pillbury states that there is nothing whatever the matter with you——"

"Oh, sir!"

"Excepting that you are in a rather low condition——"

Bunter brightened again.

"I knew I was, sir! I——"

"Owing," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice—"owing to lack of sufficient exercise, and eating too much pastry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence in the class! Bunter's greedy and lazy habits are not a matter for laughter!"

Bunter spluttered with indignation.

"Why, sir, he's potty—simply potty if—"

"What!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Doctors don't know anything, sir! He's simply potty! Too much pastry! Why, he asked me, sir, how much pastry I ate yesterday, and I told him—only a cake and some tarts and a few doughnuts and a meringue or two and not more than half a pound of sweets, besides the pudding at dinner, and—"

"That will do, Bunter! Dr. Pillbury recommends a restricted diet—"

"Oh dear!"
"And a long walk every day—"
"Wow!"

"I fear, Bunter, that you are not to be trusted to take a long walk without supervision," said Mr. Quelch severely. "I shall request your Form-fellows to see to it. Cherry, may I ask you to see that Bunter walks three miles after lessons, to-day?"

"Certainly, sir!"
"Wharton, will you be kind enough to see to it to-morrow?"
"With pleasure, sir!"
"I will ask Drake and Rodney to see to it on Friday and Saturday."

"Certainly, sir!"
"That, Bunter, will do you great good, I hope! We shall see whether you have improved by Saturday. Now you may go to your place!"

Billy Bunter limped to his place. He sat in stony despair till lessons were over. After lessons Bob Cherry hooked an arm in Bunter's.

"Ready, old top?"
"Yow-ow-ow!"
Bunter had his first three-mile walk that afternoon.

At tea-time, anyone passing Study No. 7 in the Remove might have heard deep and anguished groans proceeding from that apartment.

It was Bunter—recovering from his three-mile walk, and anticipating the three-mile walk of the morrow!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Awful for Bunter!

"**R**EADY, Bunter?"
Harry Wharton asked that question after lessons the next day.

The captain of the Remove kept an eye upon William George as the juniors came out of the Form-room. He was quite anticipating that the fat junior would make an attempt to dodge. But Mr. Quelch's orders had to be carried out. The fiat had gone forth that William George Bunter was to have a three-mile walk after lessons, and Harry Wharton had undertaken to see to it. So he was seeing to it!

Billy Bunter blinked round him in alarm and anguish, and Wharton's cheery call made him jump.

"N-n-not quite, Wharton," he stut-tered.

"Hurry up, then!"
"The—the fact is, Wharton, I'd rather go after tea," said Bunter. "I—I shouldn't like to make you late for tea, old chap."

"We can do three miles before tea," said Harry. "But we shall have to get a move on. Where's your cap?"

"I—I've lost it."
"Come out without it, then. Get a move on—"

"I—I say, old chap—"
"Shall I start him?" asked Bob Cherry, swinging back a heavy boot in readiness.

Bunter backed away.
"Oh, really, Cherry—"
"I'll come along with you," said Bob.

"The pleasure of my company will make you forget the miles, Bunter. Besides, I shall be able to land you with my boot when you lag."

Bunter did not look grateful.
"I—I say, you fellows, I've got a pain—"

"Come and walk it off, then."
"I'm afraid walking would only make it worse," said Bunter pathetically. "I—I don't mind comin' three miles with you fellows if—if you'll telephone for a taxi."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I'll stand the taxi," said Bunter generously. "I'm expecting a postal-

"I'm ready, Bunter," said Wharton. "Come on! You coming, Bob?"

"Yes."
The chums of the Remove walked away with Bunter between them. As they came out into the quadrangle Bunter turned an imploring blink first to one side and then to the other.

"I say, you fellows—"
"Don't say anything, my fat old bean!" advised Bob Cherry. "You'll need all your breath for the third mile!"

"I—I say! Suppose we go as far as the stile and sit down?" suggested Bunter. "Quelchy won't know we haven't walked three miles."



Bunter tried on one of Peter Todd's waistcoats and found that it met easily. "Ow! I've become a horrid skeleton like you," he said almost tearfully. "Your waistcoat is too wide for me, and I hoped the buttons would burst off!" (See Chapter 11.)

order by the first post to-morrow. I'll square then. All you fellows will have to do is to pay the driver to-day."

"Is that all?" asked Bob sarcastically.
"That's all, old chap."

Mr. Quelch came out of the Form-room. His gimlet-eye fixed upon Billy Bunter, and the fat junior quaked.

"Bunter!"
"Ye-e-es, sir?"

"Did I not direct you to take a three-mile walk immediately after lessons?"
"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Why are you not gone, Bunter?"
"I—I—I was waiting for Wharton, sir," stammered Bunter. "I—I don't want to hurry Wharton, sir. I—I like to be considerate to my dear school-fellows, sir."

"You fat boulder, Quelchy trusts me to see that you get your walk!" growled the captain of the Remove.

"That makes it all the easier to take him in, old chap!" urged Bunter. "I only wish he'd trust me!"

"Give him your boot, Bob!"
"Certainly!"

"Yah! Keep off!" roared Bunter. "I'm walking, ain't I? Beasts!"

And Bunter walked. A chortle from the juniors in the quadrangle followed the three walkers as they turned out of the gates. "Doctor's orders" were being carried out, and William George Bunter was sincerely repentant by this time that he had pleaded illness in the
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Form-room the previous day. He was still dying, but he wished that he had decided to expire in secret.

Wharton and Cherry started briskly down the lane, with Billy Bunter lagging between them.

The hapless Owl of the Remove lagged more and more, until Bob Cherry dropped behind and gave him a gentle lift with a rather heavy boot.

Then Bunter bucked up wonderfully.

But he paused when the stile was reached.

"I—I say, you fellows! Hadn't we better sit down for a bit?" he inquired.

"What for?"

"I—I'm afraid you chaps are tired."

"Not a bit!" chuckled the captain of the Remove. "Quite fresh, in fact!"

"Fresh as a merry daisy!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Well, I'm tired, anyhow!" snorted Bunter. "Let's sit down for a little while—say half an hour or so—"

"Get over the stile, lazybones!"

"I—I can't! My strength isn't equal to it!" said Bunter. "I'm suffering from a serious illness. You wouldn't like to see me roll in agony at your feet, would you?"

"I'm sure I don't mind, old chap, if you feel that way."

"Beast!"

"Still, if you can't get over the stile, we'll lift you over," said Bob considerately. "Take hold of his other ear, Wharton!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Don't you want to be lifted over?" asked Bob innocently.

"Yah! Beast! Leggo!"

Evidently William George Bunter did not desire to be lifted over the stile by his fat ears. He contrived to scramble over unaided, and dropped breathlessly into the field.

His progress along the footpath was punctuated with groans.

"I—I say, you fellows, slack down a bit!" he mumbled. "I—I really can't keep it up! I'm suffering from my fearful exertions yesterday, you know!"

"Take it easy across this field, then," said Bob Cherry. "Is that bull yonder coming this way, Wharton?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'll get on, and leave Bunter to follow. Must be considerate—let him take this field easy."

Wharton and Bob broke into a run. There was a yell from Billy Bunter.

"Stop for me, you beasts! Yow-ow-ow! I shall be gored! You want me to be gored by that beastly bull! Beasts! Oh, my hat! Oh dear! Oo-ooooop!"

Bunter's fat little legs went like clock-work.

The chums of the Remove kept ahead, trotting on cheerily, and Billy Bunter laboured heavily in their wake. He was puffing and blowing stertorously when the end of the field was reached.

But he did not dare to slacken speed till he was over the next stile. Visions of a ferocious bull, with lowered head and bloodshot eyes, floated before his terrified mind. He rolled over the stile, and collapsed into the next field spluttering.

"Ow, ow, ow! Where's that bull now, you fellows?"

"What bull?" asked Bob.

"Eh? That bull in the field we've just crossed!" roared Bunter.

"My dear chap, there wasn't a bull in the field," said Bob, in surprise.

"The bull was in the next field to the left!"

"Why, you—you beast, you said he was coming towards us!" shrieked Bunter.

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"So he was. I forgot to mention that there was a fence between him and us, old nut!"

"Beast!"

"You're improving!" said Bob. "If you keep up that pace, Bunter, we shall soon see you doing terrific stunts on the cinder-path! Come on!"

"I—I can't move!"

"Oh, I'll move you, old chap!" said Bob, and he took hold of Bunter's fat ear.

The Owl of the Remove found that he could move then, and he moved very quickly.

"Mile and a half," said Bob, as they came in sight of the village of Pegg. "Now you've only got to walk home, Bunter, and you'll have done your three miles."

Groan!

"Come on, Wharton! We shall never get home for tea at this rate," said Bob.

"Shall I drop in at Friardale to order a coffin for you, Bunter?"

"Beast!"

Wharton and Bob Cherry started for home at a swinging pace. Billy Bunter could be trusted to do the other mile and a half, as he was precisely that distance from Greyfriars.

The chums of the Remove were back in good time for tea, but William George Bunter did not roll in till calling-over. He had evidently taken the return journey by very easy stages.

And that evening, as on the previous evening, anguished groans could be heard proceeding from Study No. 7.

After his second three-mile walk William George Bunter found life scarcely worth living.

And on the morrow there was to be a third!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Still Walking!

"DRAKE, old chap!"

Billy Bunter addressed the new junior at Greyfriars in friendly, indeed affectionate, tones as the Removites were going to their Form-room the following afternoon.

Drake grinned down at the fat junior.

After lessons it was up to Drake to take Bunter on his next long walk, and he had no objection to taking the trouble. It was William George Bunter who had the objection.

"Well, my fat tulip?" said Drake.

"You—you're coming out with me after lessons?"

"Yes."

"I—I say, you're a chap with a sense of humour, I know," said Billy Bunter, blinking anxiously at the new junior.

Jack Drake nodded.

"That's me!" he said. "Lots of it! Tons of it!"

"I—I'm thinking of a joke on old Quelch!" said Bunter, with a feeble giggle. "You—you'll help me, won't you?"

"Depends on the joke," said Drake.

"Expound!"

"I—I'm going to pull his leg, you know, if—if you'll help. He—he thinks we're going for a three-mile walk after lessons."

"So we are!"

"Well, my idea is to walk as far as—as the boathouse, and—and sit down there," said Bunter. "We—we'll have a nice rest, you know, and when we come in Quelch will think we've done the three miles. No end of a joke on him, what? He, he, he!"

Jack Drake's face remained perfectly grave. Bunter's feeble chortle died away miserably. Evidently Drake did not see the joke!

"Is that a joke?" asked Drake.

"Ye-es. Awfully good, you know! He, he, he!"

"Well, I'll take your word for it, Bunter. I dare say it would be no end funny, but—"

"You'll help me—"

"I'll help you to cover three miles."

"I—I mean—"

"Never mind what you mean, my fat tulip. That's what I mean." And Jack Drake went into the Form-room, leaving Bunter shaking a fat fist after him.

"Beast!" groaned Bunter.

"Hallo! Who's a beast now, old porpoise?" asked Peter Todd, coming along the passage. "Who has dared to blow in between the wind and your nobility?"

"I—I say, Peter, old chap—"

"Stony!" said Peter Todd.

"You silly ass! Do you think I'm trying to borrow anything of you?" howled Bunter.

"What did you call me an old chap for, then?" asked Peter, in surprise.

"I say, Peter, don't be a beast! I—I've often admired you, Peter, for the way you can put up your hands. I believe you could knock out Harry Wharton or Bob Cherry if you tried. You could make rings round that new chap Drake, couldn't you, old fellow?"

"Possibly!" said Peter Todd, eyeing his fat study-mate. "What are you driving at now?"

"I—I think you ought to lick him, Peter," said Bunter eagerly. "I'll hold your jacket. Tackle him immediately after lessons, you know, and give him an awful hiding, such a fearful hiding that he won't be able to walk—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd. He understood now.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter peevishly. "You ought to lick him, Peter, after the—the awful things he's said about you."

"Oh, he's said awful things about me, has he?" said Toddy grimly.

"Frightful!" said Bunter hopefully.

"He says your face is like a hatchet, Peter, and that you look like a walking telegraph-pole, and that you've got the manners of a bear, and the voice of a hyena! You ought to lick a chap for saying things like that about you, Peter."

"So I will!" said Peter Todd heartily.

Thump, thump, thump!

"Yaroooooh!" roared Billy Bunter.

"Wharrer you at, you silly ass! I was asking you to lick Drake—yaroooooh!—not me, you howling chump!"

Thump, thump!

"I'm licking the chap who made those complimentary remarks about me," explained Peter. "Have some more?"

"Yow-ow-wooop!"

Billy Bunter fled into the Form-room.

It was a dismal afternoon for Bunter.

As a matter of fact, if he could only have realised it his new walking exercises were doing him good. But Bunter did not want good done to him in that strenuous way. Instead of giving his whole attention to Mr. Quelch that afternoon, W. G. Bunter was desperately cudgolling his brains for some means of dodging the walk that was to follow lessons.

Peter Todd had failed him. Bunter felt that he was betrayed by his own familiar friend! Lessons drew to a close, and Bunter had not yet discovered a dodge. And when the juniors were dismissed by Mr. Quelch, Jack Drake joined Bunter at once in the passage.

"Come on, Bunter!"

"Hold on a minute, Drake!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, I believe you're rather attached to Rodney, ain't you, old fellow?"

"Rodney? Oh, yes!"

"I'm rather alarmed about him," said Bunter.

"Hold on a minute, Drake!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, I believe you're rather attached to Rodney, ain't you, old fellow?"

"Rodney? Oh, yes!"

"I'm rather alarmed about him," said Bunter.

"Hold on a minute, Drake!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, I believe you're rather attached to Rodney, ain't you, old fellow?"

"Rodney? Oh, yes!"

(Continued on page 9.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

Supplement No. 10.

March 5th, 1921.



GREAT PUBLIC AUCTION!

Roll Up! Roll Up! Roll Up!

THE FURNITURE AND EFFECTS
of
THE EDITORIAL SANCTUM
of
"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"

will be disposed of by public auction in the junior Common-room on Wednesday evening next, at 8.0 sharp. The owner of the property having filed a petition for bankruptcy, it has been found necessary to put all his goods and chattels under the hammer.

THERE WILL BE LOTS AND LOTS OF LOTS,
including

A MAGNIFICENT ROLL-TOP DESK, IN POLISHED OAK
(formerly the property of P. Todd, Esq.),

A SOLID DEAL TABLE
(three legs of which are still sound),
TWO WINDSOR CHAIRS

(one with a broken back, and the other with a fractured thigh),

SIX SQUARE YARDS OF LINOLEUM
(in topping condition),

A LARGE COAL-SCUTTLE
(which can be converted into a settee in the event of no chairs being available),

A MASSIVE IRON POKER
(suitable for ejecting unwelcome visitors),

A SPLENDID CRICKET BAT
(with which Billy Bunter's grandfather scored a century for Bunkumshire),

A NUMBER OF EXERCISE-BOOKS
(useful for padding your trousers in case of emergency),

AN ASSORTMENT OF WRITING AND COOKING UTENSILS,

A PAIR OF GOLD-RIMMED SPECTACLES,
and
A POSTAL-ORDER FOR SIXPENCE
(which has been returned dishonoured by the Post Office).

Catalogues and orders to view may be obtained from the Auctioneers,

MESSRS. FISH, FISH, FISH, & FISH,
at their offices, Study No. 14.

Don't Miss This Gilt-edged Opportunity of Getting Something for Nothing. It is possible that the Owner may be present at the Sale, and that he will raise objections, in which case he will go out on his neck!

ROLL UP IN YOUR BILLIONS!

GREYFRIARS GOSSIP.

By HURREE SINGH.

The great big world keeps turnfully going round, as the song says, but the wheels of Coker's motor-bike refuse to do likewise! The worthy Coker would be well advised to hand his esteemed and ludicrous machine to the next old-iron merchant he encounterfully comes across!

The chessful tournament of the Remove will take place on Wednesday evening, in the Ragfulness. Modesty preventfully forbids my mentioning the winner's namefulness, but his initials are H. J. R. S. (Huge Joke, Really, Singh!—Ed.)

That heathen Chinese, Wun Lung, is bemoaning the loss of his esteemed pigtail—or, at least, a portion thereof. That's nothing. Why, only the other day, when I was whizzfully speeding down hill on Tom Brown's bikefulness, I lost my head!

The fat and podgy Bunter declares that he has been selectfully chosen to play footer for Aston Villa. Well, we always did say that he was a fat Villan!

The worthy Mauly has at last been rousefully awakened to a sense of duty, and he is contributing an article to this issue. His unusual exertions will probably give him the brainful fever, says Bob Cherry. But that's quite impossible. Where there is no brainfulness, there can be no brainful fever!

OUR WEEKLY CARTOON.



EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

I should like to kick off this week by expressing my thanks to the many hundreds of my chums, of both sexes, who have sent me letters of approval and criticism in connection with the good old "Herald."

Among my correspondents are some very queer quists whom it would be next-door to impossible to answer. A fellow at Balham who signs himself "A Twelve Years' Reader of the 'Herald'"—I presume he means that he is twelve years old, for he can't possibly have read the "Herald" for that length of time—wants to know the names, ages, height, weight, colour of eyes and hair, of every fellow at Greyfriars. He also wants the whole of the Removites ranged in order of ability as boxers. He will find the latter query answered in the "Holiday Annual," on sale everywhere. The reply to the first question would entail about a week's research—and I'm a jolly sight too busy to wander round the school examining every fellow's optics and hair to see what colour they are!

Another reader—a young lady this time—is very curious to know my pedigree, and she wants me to send her a sort of family tree dating back from the days of the Ancient Britons. I must reluctantly inform her that there is nothing doing. Billy Bunter, I believe, has already drawn up his family tree—the accuracy of which is open to question—but I'm afraid I can't do likewise. My pater is a Colonel, my grandfather was a General, and it is said that certain of my ancestors drew swords for the Royalists in the days of the Civil War. But that's about all that I'm in a position to say concerning my pedigree.

Yet another reader insists upon knowing why Bob Cherry doesn't edit the "Greyfriars Herald," instead of me. I showed the letter to Bob, and he said: "He doesn't seem to realise that I'm far happier as a Fighting Editor than I should be in the capacity of head cook and bottle washer."

Well, every fellow to his job, and I'm sure Bob does his thoroughly, while I endeavour to do ditto. And so long as an editor's heart is in his work—so long as he is sincere and enthusiastic—he need not fear for the future of his paper. And I firmly believe that, backed up by my large army of chums all the world over, the "Herald" will go from strength to strength, and ever hold a high place in the affections of British boys and girls.

Harry Wharton.

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MY FOOTBOWL KOLLUM.

By Billy Bunter.

"My sopremo moment has come!" I eggsclaimed. "At larst sumbody has woke up to the fackt that I am the finest footbawler, for my sighs, in the country!"

I was feeling orfully bucked with life, deer readers, bekwase the folloing letter had just reeched me:

"The directors of the Aston Villa Football Club are desirous to obtain the services of W. G. Bunter, of Greyfriars School.

"If Master Bunter will be good enough to call at the club's headquarters in Birmingham on Saturday next, the directors will be pleased to give him a trial."

I showed the letter to Harry Wharton & Co., and they larfed till the teers rolled down there cheeks.

"What's the joak?" I inkwired. "You are, porpuss!" said Bob Cherry. "Karnt you reelize that sumbody is having you on a peace of string?"

"Har, har, har!" "All rite, you kackling beasts!" I said. "Just you wait till Satterday! I'm going to keep gole for the Villa!"

"The mad duffer thinks he's going to do Sam Hardy out of a job!" said Wharton. "You're torking abbsolewz rott, Bunter!"

To wich I retorted: "Weight and sea!"

Well, deer readers, Satterday came—and I went. I borroed enuff from Mauly to pay my raleway-fair, and booked to Birmingham. By two o'clock I arived at Villa Park.

"What do you want hear?" asked one of the offishuls, as I rolled into the dressing-room.

"I have reseaved a rekwest from yore direkctors," I said loftily, "to tern out for the Villa."

"Nonsense!" "It isn't nonsense! Hear is the letter!"

I handed over the missiff, and the offishul went into rores of larfter. I thort he was going to choke.

"This—this is a pracktikle joak!" he spluttered.

"What? Do you meen to say that you don't rekwire my servises?"

"Of corse not! Vannish away, Tabby!"

With feelings too deep for wurdz, I started on the long, long traile to Greyfriars.

It was Sunday mourning when I got back, and the Head met me in the Close.

"Where have you been, Bunter?" he arsked sturnly.

"To Birmingham, sir," I replide.

"Why did you leave the skool without permishun?"

"Oh crumms! The—the fackt is, sir, I was so eggsited that I forgott to arsk!"

I then showed the Head the letter I had reseaved, and he said:

"You are an utterly stupid boy, Bunter! You have been the vicktim of what is known as a 'jape.' Under the serkumstances, I shall not punnish you. But in fewcher you will be well advised to ignaw kommunikashuns of this sort."

So I didn't play for Aston Villa, after all, deer readers. And they lost there match last Satterday.

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MY DIARY FOR THE WEEK!



By "ROVER"
(The Office Mastiff).

MONDAY.—Lots of people would say that dogs can't write diaries, but I shall make no bones about it. Had a fierce scrap this morning with Adolphus, the kitchen cat. The argument concerned a tin of stale sardines which Bob Cherry threw out of his study window. I bagged the sardines all right at the finish, but, not wishing to be selfish, I left Adolphus the tin. Billy Bunter would have envied Adolphus had he seen him. He's always bemoaning the fact that he has no tin!

TUESDAY.—Felt ravenous all day, but the Editor gave me a fine feed this evening. I devoured an "Ode to a Heaving Billow," by Alonzo Todd, and an article called "FELLOES WHO KARN'T SPEL KORREKTELY," by Horace Coker. After which I masticated an ode from the leaky pen of Nugent minor. Being a dog, I simply love dog-gerell.

WEDNESDAY.—Accompanied Mr. Prout on a shooting expedition this afternoon. Got a bullet through my coat, thanks to Prout's erratic aim, and on his way back to Greyfriars he had to leave me at the Courtfield Nursing Home for Canines. I was very carefully nursed, and the vet. says that I shall be fit to return to my native kennel to-morrow.

THURSDAY.—Back again at Greyfriars. I had my revenge on Prout this afternoon. He was taking a constitutional in the Close, when I sprang at him, and came away with a large portion of trousering. I thought Prout was going to have an apoplectic fit. He chased me all over the place, and I led him a rare dance, much to the delight of the members of the editorial staff, who were looking on.

FRIDAY.—Press day. I had quite a busy time ejecting would-be contributors. I must have made ventilation holes in at least two dozen pairs of trousers, and Bob Cherry patted me on the back, and told me that I made a jolly fine assistant Fighting Editor. The Editor was awfully pleased with me, too. He took me down to the kitchen, and told Mrs. Kebble to get me some nice juicy bones. I had quite an orgy on the mat, and went to sleep, feeling very happy and contented.

SATURDAY.—Ejected a lot more unwelcome visitors this morning. Frank Nugent says I'm a very conscientious ejector! But I exceeded my duty when I swallowed a lot of readers' letters which the Editor hadn't yet replied to. He was very angry with me, and made me lie down in the corner. This afternoon I played footer on Little Side. The players didn't seem to like it when I chased after the ball. They called me an interfering mongrel, and eventually I had to be taken away on a lead. Had another row with Adolphus this evening over some sausages which were being fried in Study No. 1. We fought over the frying-pan, and managed to clear it between us; and when the Editor came in he called me a gluttonous beast, and licked me. I gave him a jolly good licking in return—with my tongue! Trottled down to the Cross Keys with Loder of the Sixth this evening. You won't think me a gay dog, will you?

NOT TOO OLD AT SEVENTY!

By WILLIAM GOSLING
(Our hoary and venerable gate-porter.)

Wot I says is thjs here—it's all stuff an' nonsense to say as 'ow a man is too old at seventy!

Now look at me. I was seventy larst berthday, but I'm as hail an' as harty, as any yung feller I know.

The other day I had wurdz with Joseph Mimble, the gardener. I'm allways havin' wurdz with Joseph Mimble. Which he's a most obf-streperus person as ever was! Says he to me, says he, "Yah!" says he. "You ain't fit for nuthin' except hobblin' down to the post-orfis to dror yer Old Age Penschun! You're in yer 2nd childhood," says he, sarcastick-like.

"Bo careful, Joseph Mimble," says I, waggin' a warnin' finger at him, "or it'll be my painful dooty to flatten out that ugly nose o' yours!"

He gave a mockin' larf.

"Jest 'ark at William Beckett Charponteay Gosling!" he says. "Why, man, you're too feeble to strike a blow! You're in what they calls yer dot-age!"

"An' therefore I'm going to dot you one!" says I, bizznesslike.

An' I landed him such a terrifick blow on the nose that he went down for the count.

"Don't you give me no more o' yer cheek!" says I. "I don't allow yung fellers of sixty-eight to start insultin' me! Get outer the way," I adds, furrishing my broom.

"William Gosling," says he, dabbin' at his nose, "I takes back all that I said about yer. I never see such a nimble an' active man in me life. Which you must 'ave 'ad some o' that there monkey-gland injected into yer spine!"

Ever sinse then Joseph Mimble has been very sivvil to me. He touches his forelock whenever he sees me, an' he calls me "sir." Which is only right an' propper.

Mr. Quelch prides hissself on havin' been a great atherlote in his yewth, but he ain't in the same street with me now. I had a race with him the other day, an' beat him all ends up.

I'll tell you 'ow it come about. I was standin' near the fountain in the Close, when up rushes Mr. Quelch, pail with pannfek.

"Gosling!" says he.

"Sir?" says I.

"Mr. Prout 'as run amuck!" says he.

"Wot!" says I.

"He's rushin' around with that danjerus gun of his!" says he.

"Then I'm off!" says I.

Mr. Prout's rifle went off at that minnit—an' so did we! We ran fool-pelt for my lodge, an' I beat Mr. Quelch with about a duzzen yards to spare. When I drew his attenshun to the fackt, he larfed, and said:

"Feer lent you wings, Gosling."

"Bo that as it may, sir," says I, "I'll undertake to run you off yer feet at any old time. To-morro' mornin' I'll race you akross the Head's garden."

"No, Gosling," he says. "It would be in-for-a-dig to do that."

Which only proves that he was afraid of getting beeten.

Too old at seventy, hindeed! I think I have said enuff to show that there's life in the old dog yet. I said as much to Master Wharton, an' he replide. "Bow-wow!" But then, Master Wharton never did know how to treet a yung feller like me with respect!



A Sensashunal, Hare-Raising Story of Skool-Life, Told by that Ever-Poplar yung orther, DICKY NUGENT.

I SAY, you felloes," eride Dick Devildare, the hansom, dashing leeder of the 3rd Form at St. Ted's, "let's rig up a boobby-trapp on the door of the studdy!"

"Belug a boobby, you're sure to suggest something of that sort, Dick!" chuckelled Tubby Tubbs, the False Staff of the 3rd.

"Har, har, har!" rored Bill Bluks and Joe Johnson, the other two members of that brilliyunt trio known as the Famus Four.

"Swishem of the Sixth will be along in a few minuits, to see if I've done my impott," said Dick Devildare. "And he will reseve a rood serprize!"

So sayng, Dick set to wurk to rig up his boobby-trapp. He filled a large paper bagg with treecle, soot, red ink, glew, blacking, bad eggs, and other foodstuffs, and ballanced it on the top of the door.

"Now look out for skwalls and kattaracts!" muttered Tubby Tubbs, sotto vocey.

The trio of four chums stood with halted breth, awaiting developments.

Prezently their was a tramping of hevvy footmarks in the passidge.

"Hear comes Swishem!" said Bill Bluks, in a horse wisper.

The neckst minnit the door opened, and—

Swish!

Swoosh!

The paper bagg dessended upon the vicktim's head with a sounding konkussion.

Their was a choking gasp, and the respicient of the delooge jumped about like a cat on hot brix.

"Yaroooh!" he rored, in toans of thunder. "Sum missguided yewth has had the temmerity to preppare a boobby-trapp for my beysfit. Who done it? Who doue it, I repeat?"

Dick Devildare klutched Tubby Tubbs by the arm. His face was livvid with paller.

"It—it ain't Swishem at all!" he garsped. "It—it's a master!"

"Oh crumms!" groned Tubby Tubbs.

The newcommar removed the treecle, the soot, the red ink, the glew, the blacking, and the bad eggs from his feechers. Then he glared at the Famus Four. The trio glared back at him in tern. They had the wind up badly, but they were not going to let the stranjer see it.

"I will now reveel my eye-dentity!" thundered the vicktim.

"Ear, 'ear!" mermered Dick Devildare. "Ho may be the Prinse of Walls?" wispered Bill Bluks. "Who nose?"

"Their's no 'arm in what we've done, anyway!" muttered Joe Johnson.

"I have been appoynted master of the 3rd Form at St. Ted's," said the stranjer. "Hear is my card!"

Dick Devildare & Co. glanced at the card, on wich appeared the inskripshun:

"MR. CHAS. TYSER."

The jewnlars trembelled, and terned pail. Three neese were shaking with frite. But they showed no sine of raunck.

"I take it that this boobby-trapp was planned with a view to my discomficher," said Mr. Tys-r. "That it was eggspressly ment for me, in short?"

"Not at all, sir!" replide Dick Devildare. "It was ment for Swishem of the Sixth."

"Ratts!" said Mr. Tys-r, with a frown. "You are not speaking the trooth!"

Dick, looking like a fritened rabbitt, eullered to the roots of his hare.

"I never tell a lie, sir," he said. "What is yore name?"

"Dick Devildare."

"Oh! I thort you were going to say orge Washington. Well, Devildare, as soon

as I have vissited the bath-room, and kompletely got rid of the treecle, the soot, the red ink, the glew, the blacking, the bad eggs, and the shock, you and yore frends will wait uppon me in my studdy."

So sayng, the new master strode away. With sinking harts, Dick Devildare & Co. went along to Mr. Tys-r's studdy.

"I've padded myself out with an eggserise-book, in case of axidents," said Dick Devildare.

"Same hear," said Tubby Tubbs. "Mr. Chas. Tys-r may prove to be a very severe chastiser!"

The Famus Four foolly eggspeted to be ordered to tuch there toes. Instedd of wich, Mr. Tys-r told them to hold out there hands. So the eggserise-book stunt kwite failed to serve its purrpuss.

The new master resembled Jack Hobbs at that moment, for he put plenty of vlgger into his strokes.

Swish!

"Ow!"

Swish!



They saw the new master kneeling down by the open safe.

"Yow!"

Swish!

"Yarooooh!"

The crool blows dessended like summer hale upon the palms of the vicktime. The cane sang as it swept threw the air—and so did the jewnlars!

"Their!" panted Mr. Tys-r, at length. "Let that be a lesson to you!"

One by one the jewnlars limped away from the seen of the execushun. There grones of augwish were paineful to here.

"The beest! The orful tierant!" grouled Dick Devildare. "I'll get even with him, at any odds!"

"We'll show him that we've no use for Bolshys!" said Tubby Tubbs.

"Yes, rather!"

And the trio staggerd away into the kwad, to bathe there tingling palms in the fountain.

II.

Boom!

The sollum hour of midnite rang out feerely over the silent playing-feelds of St. Ted's.

Dick Devildare & Co. had gone to bed in there trowsals. They stayed awake untill midnite, keeping there branes active by kounting the flies on the seeling.

When the sollum chimes rang out, Dick Devildare bounced out of bed.

"Buck up, you felloes," he said. "We must put a jerk in it!"

A minnit later the Famus Four were steeking down the stares.

Where were they going, deer reeders? Were they mearly going out to see what sort of a nite it was?

No jolly fear! They were on the track of Mr. Tys-r, who they suspeketed of being a very uorty man.

As they prosceeded along the dark passidge, the door of the Form-master's studdy opened, and Mr. Tys-r, with a slouch hat pooled down over his eyes, and a tool-bagg in his hand, came into view.

Before you could say "Ow!" Dick Devildare & Co. had dodged into a doorway. Hear they waited, with there harts thumping against there ribbs, untill Mr. Tys-r had passed.

"Follow him!" muttered Dick Devildare. "Don't make a noyse like a nellyfant. Tubby! We don't want the rotter to no he is being folloed."

Softly, slowly, swiftly, silently, the Famus Four folloed in the wake of Mr. Tys-r.

"I think I no where he's going!" mermered Dick Devildare. "I guest all along that he was a krook. He's got dessines on the Head's safe!"

"My hatt!"

"My only aunt!"

"We shall hole him out," said Dick, "after wich, summboddy will have to hale him out!"

"Har, har, har!" rored the others softly, for fear Mr. Tys-r should here them.

In dew corse, the chums recched the door of the Head's studdy. They peeped threw a mousehole in the woodwork, and a drammatick seen met there gaze.

Neeling on the floor, in front of the safe, was the new master. The strong rays from his brite red nose were fokussed upon the contents of the safe.

"This is ripping!" the jewnlars saw him eggscclaim. "Their is a fifteen-and-sixpenny War Savings Sustifficate, and twopennywurth of tuppenny stamps. I did not eggspet such a rich hawl!"

Dick Devildare terned to his chums. "Follo yore leeder!" he eride horsey.

And the Famus Four dashed into the studdy.

Mr. Tys-r sprang to his feet with a terrilal oath.

"Dash it!" he rored. "What do you mean by spyng on me like this?"

Dick Devildare darted foreword. Grippng the villau's throte with ouo hand, he picked up the tellyfone resever with the other.

"Put me on to the perlice!" he showted. "I have kort a krook! Hallo! Is that the inspekter? Come round to St. Ted's at wunce! I have maid a startling kapcher!"

Mr. Tys-r's face grew perple—partly with rage, and partly bekwase he was being sufferkated.

"Hang you!" he hist threw his klenched lipps.

"Strikes me the boot's on the other foot!" said Dick Devildare cheerfully. "It's you they'll hang!"

"I never done nuthing!" protested Mr. Tys-r.

"Well, you're going to do sumthing now," said Tubby Tubbs. "You're going to do time!"

"Har, har, har!"

Mr. Tys-r struggelled had riggled and rored and skreamed and showted and eggspostulated and groned and garsped and pleeded and cotrected and threttened, but all in vane.

A minnit later, the perlice-inspekter herst into the room, flurridding the loud-ku's above his head.

THE END.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 652.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE TUCK-HAMPER!

A Peep into the Private Correspondence of
TUBBY MUFFIN, The Fat Junior of Rookwood.

I. Rookwood.

To the Editor,
"THE BRITISH SCHOOLBOY."

Dear Sir,—I notiss that you are offering tuck-hampers to the readers who send in the best Storyettes, konundrums, and so 4th.

I have thort out a relly clevver konundrum, as folloes:

WHY DOES A CHICKEN CROSS THE RODE?

The anser to this brilliyunt and witty queschnun is:

TO REACH THE OTHER SIGHED!

For this smart effort I think you will agree that I desserve a hamper krammed with delishus tuck. Please put it on raf and konsign it to Coombe Station, where it will be kollected by—Yore konstant reeder,

REGINALD MUFFIN.

II. The "British Schoolboy,"
Fleet Street, E.C.

To Master R. Muffin,
Classical Side,
Rookwood School.

Dear Master Muffin,—I am in receipt of your letter, with konundrum enclosed.

I have not yet stopped laughing, and my sub-editors are in hysterics. We consider it quite the funniest thing we have ever read.

Your konundrum will be printed in due course. Meanwhile, a magnificent tuck-hamper is being put on rail, in accordance with your instructions.

With heartiest congratulations on your success,—Yours faithfully,

A. BOURNE-JAPER
(Editor).

III. Rookwood.

To the Editor,
THE "BRITISH SCHOOLBOY."

Sir,—You are a snave and a deloosion, and a beestly frawd! Yah!

This mourning I went to Coombe Station to collect my tuck-hamper, and with grate diffikulty I mannidged to karry it up to Rookwood. The desperation stood out in beads on my forrid, and I felt like nuthing on earth by the time I got to my studdy. Then I opened the hamper, in the presents of Jimmy Silver & Co., and I found that it was fool of brix!

I could have cride allowed with rage and vexashun. To think that I had dragged a ton of brix all the way from the station!

If I had any munney, I would take legal proseedings against you, and have you persecuted!

You have maid me a larfing-stock at Rookwood; and unless you send me a reel tuck-hamper by return, I will go to the Head and show you up in yore trew cullers!—Yores savvidgely,

REGINALD MUFFIN.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 682.

IV. "The British Schoolboy,"
Fleet Street, E.C.

To Master R. Muffin,
Classical Side,
Rookwood School.

Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter; and can only conclude that you have been the victim of a practical joke.

I should never dream of awarding a tuck-hamper to the sender of such a stale chestnut as that which you submitted! The konundrum about the chicken dates back to the time of the Flood.

When submitting storyettes, etc., to this paper, you should always bear in mind that they must be original.

By the way, it might interest you to know that this week's tuck-hamper has been won by Master James Silver, of your school.—Yours faithfully,

JOHN BROWN
(Editor).

V. Rookwood.

To the Editor,
THE "BRITISH SCHOOLBOY."

Dear Sir,—Yes, you are kwite rite. I have been the victim of a fowl jape. That beest, Teddy Grace, faked a letter, saying that I had won a tuck-hamper, and he left a hamper of brix at the station for me to kollect.

However, I am sending you a fether konundrum, and trussed my effort will be rewarded by a tuck-hamper.

Here is the konundrum:

WHY DOES THE SERKULASHUN OF THE "BRITISH SCHOOLBOY" resemble the EDITOR OF "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"?

Answer:

BEKAWSE IT GETS FATTER AND FATTER EVVERY WEEK!

Yours eggspectantly,
REGINALD MUFFIN.

VI.

To Master R. Muffin,
Classical Side,
Rookwood School.

Dear Sir,—I enclose a length of rope, with the request that you go into some quiet corner and strangle yourself!

Yours, etc.,
JOHN BROWN
(Editor).

OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK.
No. 10.

A master named Algernon Capper
Once strolled through the Close, neat
and dapper.
Came a voice from above him,
"I'm sure I don't love him!"
A brickbat then fell on his napper!

**SUMMER FASHIONS—
AND SOME ARE NOT!**

By Lord Mauleverer.
(OUR FASHIONS EDITOR.)

It may seem a strange time of the year, dear readers, to talk about summer fashions, but I will do so for two reasons. Firstly, because I should probably forget all about this article if I left it till the summer; and secondly, because recent summers have been so cold and wet that you can't tell 'em from winters. There is really very little difference between the two seasons—climatically, that is. If anything, one should wrap up more in the summer.

Oh, dear! It's a fearful fag, begad, to have to write this column, and I'm having to drink black coffee to keep myself awake.

Let me see—where was I? Oh, I know! I was saying that one should wrap up more in the summer. Never wear cricket flannels, unless you want to come home looking like a drowned rat, and feeling like an Arctic explorer! Cricket flannels should be reserved for Christmas-time, when the weather is warm and sunny.

Heavy overcoats, thickly lined with fur, should be worn in July, this being the month which registers more inches of snow than any other. During July you should have at least sixteen blankets on your bed, besides two hot-water bottles at your feet, and two at your head. You should also have a woollen sleeping-bag. Then it won't hurt so much when Bob Cherry pitches you on to the floor in the morning!

Ninety-nine fellows out of a hundred wear straw hats in summer. Straw hats, forsooth! Woollen tam-o'-shanters are the ideal headgear—you know, the sort of things you pull down over your ears. Knitted mufflers and fur gloves should also be worn.

Don't think I am an alarmist, dear boys, but really it's asking for trouble to go out in the summer clad in a thin suit of flannels. I know a poor beggar who did so last season, and he came home with double pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis, lumbago, muscular rheumatism, and frost-bite. His temperature was umpteen degrees Fahrenheit, whatever that may mean. His epitaph, if I remember rightly, ran as follows:

"Here lie the bones of Joseph Jones,
What prospect could be glummer?
He was a brick,—but couldn't stick
The wintry blasts of summer!"

Next summer I'm going to wear an electrical heating apparatus next to my skin, and my readers will be well advised to do likewise. I shall also carry about with me a remedy for chaps and chilblains. I shall thus be able to cure my own chaps, and other chaps' chaps as well.

A good many fellows have begged me to give them a cure for red noses, but I know nothing short of amputation that will do the trick. And the amputation of one's nasal organ is, I believe, an expensive business. Besides, it's rather awkward when you want to sneeze.

Well, dear boys, I think I have said enough to convince you of the folly of not wrapping up well in summer.

"THIN BUNTER!"

(Continued from page 8.)

"Alarmed about Rodney?" ejaculated Drake.

"Yes. He's looking pale."

"Pale?"

"Awfully pale! I'm afraid he's going to be ill," said Bunter. "D-d-do you think you ought to go out and leave him? D-d-don't you think you ought to—to—to stay in and look after the poor chap a bit?"

Drake chuckled.

"Can't be done! I've got to walk out with you," he said. "I told Quelch I would."

"I'll let you off!" said Bunter generously. "Of—of course, I should enjoy your company. But I'll go alone, old chap. You just go and look after poor old Rodney—"

"Poor old Rodney can look after himself for a bit!" grinned Drake. "Come on, you fat spoofer!"

"I—I say, Drake, old fellow—"

"Kim on!"

"Look here, I won't!" roared Bunter. "I'll—I'll—"

"Bunter!" It was Mr. Quelch's voice.

"Oh dear! Yes, sir?"

"Did I hear you refusing to walk with Drake?" demanded Mr. Quelch, looking out of the Form-room doorway with a severe frown.

"Oh, nummo, sir! I—I was just urging Drake to come on, sir! I—I—I was bucking him up, sir. He—he's rather lazy!" gasped Bunter. "Come on, Drake! D-d-don't keep me waiting any longer!"

And Bunter scuttled away from Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye, followed by the grinning Drake.

William George Bunter tramped wearily down the lane by the side of the active new junior. At the stile he sat down to rest, and refused positively to budge. Jack Drake drew a pin from his jacket, with a thoughtful air.

Bunter eyed the pin uneasily.

"Wha-a-at are you going to with that p-p-pin?" he stammered.

"Stick it into you, old chap," answered Drake genially.

"Oh, really, Drake—"

"Where will you have it?" asked Drake.

"Yah! Beast! Keep off!" howled Bunter.

He did not want the pin at all. He rolled off the stile, and took up his weary tramp again. Jack Drake grinned and followed him. Whenever the hapless Owl of the Remove halted Drake drew the pin from his jacket, and Billy Bunter started again. At a mile and a half from Greyfriars Jack Drake allowed him to stop.

"Crawl home when you like, old top!" he said. "Ta-ta! This is doing you a lot of good, Bunter."

"If I don't come in," moaned Bunter, "you'll know that I've died on the way home, Drake."

"Right-ho! I'll try to bear it!" said Drake. "There'll be no end of dry eyes in the Remove, old chap."

Bunter was not home for calling-over that evening. He limped in half an hour after the roll had been called, and had to report himself in Mr. Quelch's study.

The Remove-master reached for a cane as he came in.

"You are late, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir," said Bunter, "I fainted several times on the way home, sir."

"What?"

"I'm not strong enough for these fearful exertions, sir! They're telling on

me!" said Bunter pathetically. "I fainted on the road, sir, and had a narrow escape of being run over by a motor-lorry, which came by while I was unconscious, sir."

Mr. Quelch's eyes glittered.

"How do you know a motor-lorry came by, Bunter, if you were unconscious?" he inquired very quietly.

Bunter started.

"I—I mean, it came by while I was conscious, sir! That's what I really meant to say."

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

"I—I say, sir, I—I fainted a second time, and—and dropped right down in the mud!" said Bunter, with a pathos that ought to have touched a heart of stone. "I—I thought you'd be sympathetic, sir."

"Undoubtedly I should be sympathetic, Bunter, if you were stating the facts," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice.

"Oh, sir! I—I hope you can take my word!"

"You fell down in the mud, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir. An awful crash!"

"Then how comes it that there is no mud on your garments?"

"Eh? I—I mean, I—I fell into—into a—" babbled Bunter, unable to think for a moment, what it was most judicious to have fallen into. Mr. Quelch gave him no time to think it out.

"You are a most untruthful boy, Bunter! I shall cane you twice, instead of once, for telling me falsehoods."

"Oh dear!"

Swish, swish!

"Wooooop!"

"You may go, Bunter! I am glad to see," added Mr. Quelch, "that your walking exercises appear to be doing you good. Shut the door!"

Billy Bunter shut the door, and limped away, with feelings in his fat breast that could not have been expressed in words. And there was still Saturday to come, with another three miles!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Putting Rodney Through It!

DICK RODNEY was ready for Bunter after dinner on Saturday. He was not specially keen on a walk with Bunter, whose fascinating company he was far from enjoying; but he was willing to oblige Mr. Quelch. After dinner that day he tapped Bunter on the arm, as the Remove came out of the dining-room.

"Ready?" he asked.

Bunter gave him a deadly look through his big spectacles. If looks could have slain, Rodney's life would have been in peril. But looks couldn't, and Rodney didn't turn a hair.

"Let's go out, and sit down," said Bunter. "I don't want to walk three miles."

Rodney shook his head.

"Can't spoof Mr. Quelch," he answered. "He trusts me, you know. Get a move on, and get it over! It's doing you good, too."

"You won't mind your own business?" asked Bunter savagely.

"But this is my business," said Rodney, with a smile. "Shall I ask Bob Cherry to start you?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, who wants me?" asked Bob Cherry, coming along.

"Bunter wants—"

"No, I don't!" roared Bunter. "Keep off, you beast! I'm going!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter rolled out into the quad with Rodney. His minor, Sammy of the Second, was loafing near the steps, apparently waiting for Billy. The Owl of the Remove beckoned to him.

Sammy Bunter followed the two Removites down to the gates.

"Sammy coming?" asked Rodney.

"You'll see!" answered Bunter morosely.

"Well, come on!"

They started along the lane, Sammy Bunter following in their track. As soon as they were out of sight of the school gates, Bunter stopped. He turned his spectacles upon Rodney with a ferocious glare.

"Now, I'm going to give you a chance!" he said.

"Eh?"

"I'm not coming for a three-mile walk," said Bunter. "I'm fed up with it! Will you hang around, and let Quelch think—"

"Can't be done!"

"Then you're going to have such a thundering biding that you won't feel up to a walk, you rotter!" said Bunter.

Rodney stared at him, and then burst into a laugh.

"My dear, fat idiot—" he began.

"Come on, Sammy!" shouted Bunter. Bunter minor came up with a run.

"Oh!" ejaculated Rodney. "Two to one—what?"

"That's it," said Bunter. "Of course, I could lick you easily enough—precious few fellows in the Greyfriars Remove that I couldn't lick—but I disdain to take the trouble. Sammy's going to help me, and we're going to put you through it!"

"He, he, he!" came from Sammy.

"Don't forget the toffee, Billy!"

"I'll give you the toffee afterwards," said Bunter.

Sammy shook his head. He knew his major.

"You'll jolly well give me the toffee first!" he answered. "If you don't, it's all off!"

"Look here, Sammy—"

"Look here, Billy—"

Billy Bunter, with a grunt, drew a packet of toffee from his pocket, and passed it to his business-like minor.

Then he pushed back his cuffs.

"Come on!" he said.

The two Bunters advanced upon Rodney. That youth did not seem very much alarmed. The prospect of being "put through it" by Bunter major and minor did not terrify him.

Bunter paused before he reached close quarters.

"Look here, Rodney—"

"Come on, old top!"

"I—I'll let you off if you'll help me pull Quelch's leg—"

"Bow-wow!"

"Mind, I'm going to smash you!" roared Bunter. "You won't feel up to much walking when I've done with you!"

"Go ahead!"

"I—I'll give you another chance," stuttered Bunter. Somehow, even with the odds on his side, he did not seem very anxious to begin.

"Don't worry," answered Rodney cheerily. "I'm waiting to be put through it. If you don't put me through it pretty soon, I shall begin on you, and put you through it."

"Go for him, Sammy!" gasped Bunter desperately.

And Bunter, screwing his courage to the sticking-point—aided by the horrid anticipation of another three-mile walk—rushed on Rodney. And Sammy rushed on with him.

What happened next neither Bunter quite knew.

But they found themselves sitting in the dusty road, gasping for breath, and blinking dazedly.

Rodney smiled down at them.

"Is that the first round?" he asked.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Grooogh!"

"Are you coming on again?" chuckled Rodney.

"Yow! I'm not going to touch you!" gasped Bunter. "I—I despise you too much! Oh dear!"

"Then I'll touch you, old top!"

Rodney bent over the two Bunters, and grasped each by the collar. There was a gentle crack as their heads came together, and a simultaneous yell.

"Yooooop!"

"Now, come on!" said Rodney cheerily. "I'll take you both for a walk—three miles! Move on!"

"I'm not coming!" yelled Sammy, in alarm.

"You are, old chap! Now, in two seconds I start with my boot."

One second was enough for Bunter major and minor to start in. And they started. Rodney walked behind, and with infuriated faces the two Bunters tramped on in advance of him, and the remarks Sammy made to his major were most decidedly not of the kind that a respectful fag ought to have addressed to his elder brother.

That evening two Bunters instead of one were groaning at Greyfriars. Two Bunters were feeling that life was far from worth living. And in the Second Form, as in the Remove, there was a complete lack of sympathy for the sufferer, and the groans of the Bunters—like the groans of the Britons of old—passed unheeded.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Vanishing Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER was losing weight! There was no mistake about it. For he had expended sixpence at an establishment in Friardale where they had a weighing-machine, and they had weighed him. He was losing weight—and six pounds had already gone!

Fellows to whom he told this tale of woe, almost with tears in his eyes, asked him whether the weighing-machine had broken down under the strain, and were surprised to learn that it hadn't.

They also told him not to be alarmed at the loss of six pounds avoirdupois, and not to worry till he had lost a couple of tons. That, they opined, might make a difference extensive enough to be noticeable.

This, evidently, was what came of the doctor's orders—fewer helpings at meals, and long walks! Every day that week Bunter had had a long walk till Saturday. Sunday was a day of rest in every sense of the word to Bunter, as Mr. Quelch's orders did not extend over the week-end. Bunter fairly luxuriated in slacking on Sunday, and felt a little better. But on Monday he had himself weighed. And after that a settled gloom appeared on Bunter's fat face. He was fading away—dying by inches—disappearing gradually from sight—very gradually, it was true—but if this process was continued long enough it was certain that he would fade into nothingness, like the Cheshire cat whom Alice found in Wonderland. Of that celebrated cat, only the grin was left; but of Billy Bunter there would not remain even a grin; he did not feel like grinning now. To grin and bear it was beyond his powers; he had to bear it, but the grin was conspicuous by its absence. The pathos of the situation appealed very much to Bunter. His emotions were very easily touched—on his own account. The thought of a handsome, athletic, popular youth, a credit to his school—and, indeed, to humanity at large—being cut off in the

bloom of youth, brought tears to Bunter's eyes.

And still the Remove fellows declined to take the matter seriously. They refused to believe that Bunter was dying at all. They declared that there was no such luck. When he said in the Common-room that he was dying by inches, Skinner actually advised him to go out to the stable and die by the yard!

"You'll miss me when I'm gone, Toddy!" Bunter told his study-mate sorrowfully.

Peter picked up a cushion.

"Possibly!" he assented. "But I sha'n't miss you while you're here! Watch that!"

The cushion whizzed, and Peter did not miss Bunter!

This was simply heartless treatment towards a youth who was dying by inches. Bunter really wondered how fellows could be so awfully unfeeling. They were not alarmed about his health at all, while the Owl was getting into a state of great alarm. Even Mr. Quelch added insult to injury, for on Tuesday morning he remarked to Bunter in class:

"I am glad to see that you are looking better, Bunter."

"Better!" gasped Bunter.

"Yes, your complexion looks more healthy," said the Remove master, surveying him. "You are undoubtedly benefitting by consuming smaller quantities of such things as pastry and sweets, Bunter. Your walking exercise is also doing you good. Keep it up."

Now, what was Bunter to say to that? Evidently he couldn't tell Mr. Quelch what he thought of him. Against that there was a powerful reason—in the shape of the Form-master's cane. So Bunter went to his place silently and bitterly, only hoping that Mr. Quelch would be stricken with deep remorse when the fatal hour came.

All the Remove, as well as the Remove master, were laying themselves open to the pangs of remorse at a later date. Bunter felt that, and it was a small solace. But not much.

So deep was his alarm that he exerted himself to walk down to Friardale and interview Dr. Pillbury on his own accord. He hoped that even a medical man would have sense enough to see in what a serious state he was.

But the school doctor displayed a total lack of sense—from Bunter's point of view. To the fat junior's intense exasperation, the doctor told him he was much better. Bunter pointed out that he had lost six pounds in weight, and the medical gentleman advised him to try hard to lose another six. And after that, six more!

Bunter rolled away in a state of utter disgust.

"What do they pay doctors for?" he asked Peter Todd. "I say, Peter, I believe old Pillbury is hand-in-glove with the Friardale undertaker. I do really! He is going to get a commission on the order for the coffin," said Bunter, with intense bitterness.

Peter grinned.

"Ought to be a jolly good commission on your size coffin," he said heartlessly. "Better try to hang on till timber comes down, Bunter; you'll bankrupt your pater at present prices."

"Beast!"

On Wednesday, when the Famous Five were going down to football, Billy Bunter stopped them.

"I want sixpence," he said.

"Telephone to one of your titled relations," suggested Bob Cherry. "I should think the duke would stand you a tanner!"

"Or the marquis and the viscount might put threepence each!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you lend me sixpence, Wharton?" said Bunter, in a feeble voice. "It may be the last time I shall ask you."

"Eh? Is your postal-order coming, then?"

"I mean, I do not expect to live long now—"

"Not long," said Bob Cherry. "You'll never live long, but you'll live wide. You take out your length in breadth, you know."

Bunter did not condescend to heed that frivolous remark.

"I want to be weighed again," he said, in an expiring voice. "On Monday I had lost six pounds. Since then I've—"

"Used no other?" asked Bob.

"Since then I've lost much more. I want to know exactly how much. I— I should like to make some little preparations before I die," said Bunter sadly. "I forgive all you fellows. I hope I sha'n't haunt you afterwards. I may—but I hope not!"

"You'll make a fairly substantial ghost," said Nugent. "I'll tell you what, Bunter. After the sad event, you might drop us a line through Mr. Vale Owen. He does the wireless telephone bizney with spooks, you know."

Bunter sighed.

"You'll be sorry for all this some day," he said. "I may live another week—"

"Quite probable!" said Wharton, laughing.

"Even a fortnight—"

"Do!" said Bob Cherry. "We'll stand it somehow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, here's a tanner," said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "Go and get weighed, old porpoise. Mind, you're responsible if anything happens to the machine—that's understood!"

"Yah!"

Bunter rolled away. He cast a longing glance at the tuckshop, but he did not enter it. The fact that he kept the sixpence in his fat paw, instead of expending it on tarts, showed how deep-seated was his alarm. He rolled off to Friardale, and was weighed again. The Famous Five, on the football-ground, actually forgot Bunter and the dark shadow that hung over him. They were reminded of his existence when they came in to tea. Bunter met them in the Remove passage.

"Four pounds!" he said.

"Ask somebody farther along the passage," said Nugent. "Nobody here is going to lend you four pounds, old top!"

"I mean, I've lost four pounds!"

"Rats! You've never had four pounds!"

"Weight!" shrieked Bunter.

"Oh, weight!" said Nugent. "Good! Keep on, and you'll get quite fit in the long run!"

Bunter went into his study, leaving the Famous Five chortling. Even yet their hearts were not touched.

When Peter Todd came in to tea, Billy Bunter was seated at the study table, with a sheaf of impot paper before him, and a pen in his hand.

"Working!" ejaculated Peter, in astonishment.

"Don't interrupt me, Peter," said the Owl of the Remove, in a far-away voice.

"What are you up to ass?"

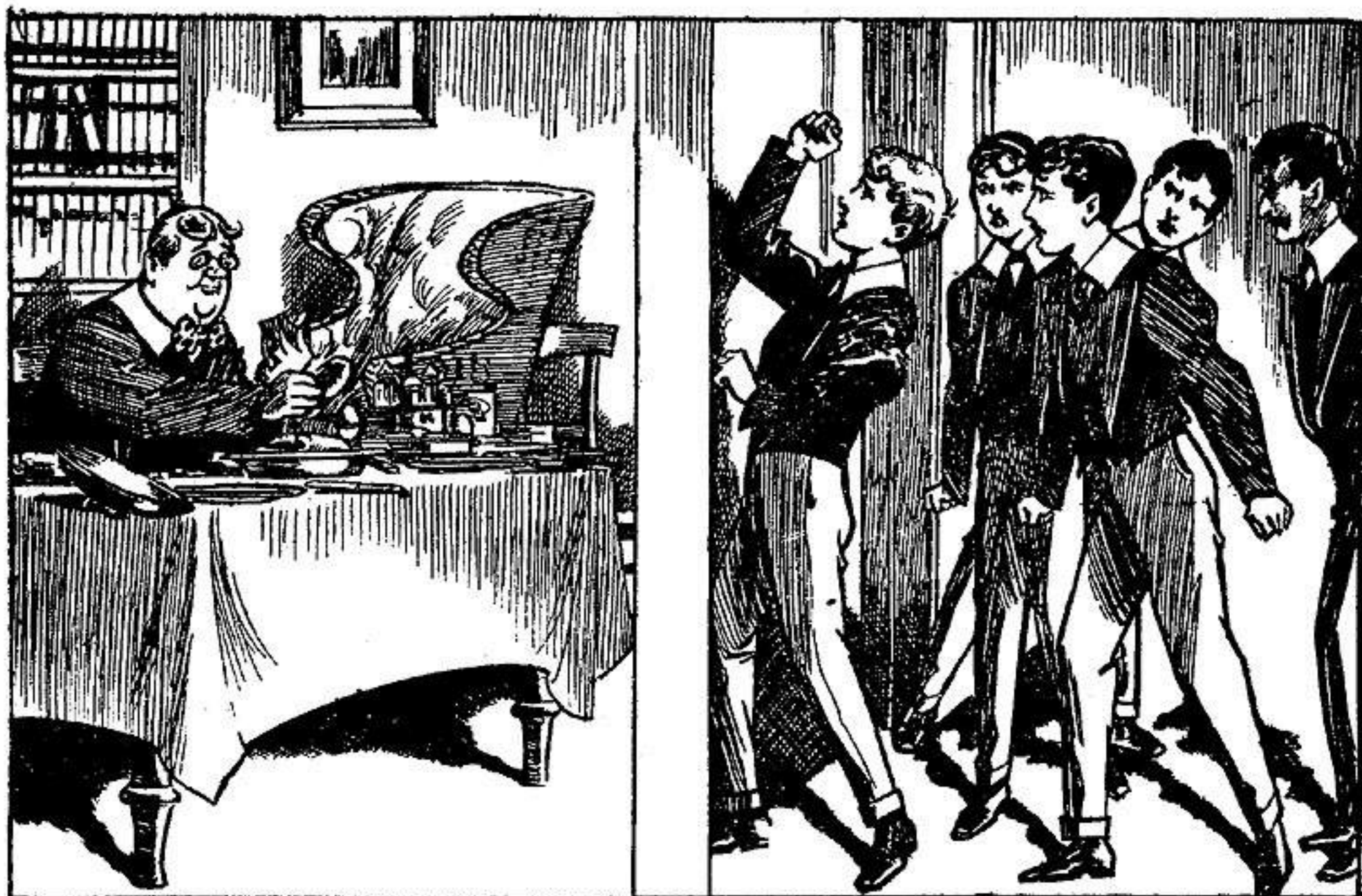
"You can look at it if you like."

Peter looked, and gave a howl of astonishment. Upon the paper was written in Bunter's sprawling hand:

"Last Will and Testament of W. G. Bunter.

"To my study-mate, Peter Todd, I leave my valuable gold watch, which cost twenty-five ginnis.

"To Tom Dutton I leave my byke, in good condishon, eksept that it needs new



"Open this door, you fat fraud!" shouted Wharton. Bunter did not speak. In fact, he couldn't. His mouth was full of ham and beef, and his powerful jaws were going like clockwork. He had no time to waste on words. Bang! Bang! The juniors outside were furious. (See Chapter 11.)

tires and saddle, and new peddles and front wheel.

"To my form-master, Mr. Quelch, I leave my forgiveness for being a Beast.

"To Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, Bull, and Inky I leave the Pangs of Reamorcee."

"My only hat!" said Peter. "Awfully good of you to leave me your twenty-five-guinea gold watch, Bunter! I dare say Mr. Lazarus will give me eighteenpence for it! To whom are you going to leave the seven-and-six you owe me?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Let's have tea now," said Peter unfeelingly, sweeping W. G. Bunter's last will and testament off the table to the floor. "You can make your will after tea, and peg out before supper—lots of time. But I think you ought to square up that seven-and-six before you peg out. Be just before you are generous, you know."

"Beast!" howled Bunter. "I jolly well won't leave you the twenty-five guinea watch now!"

"Bang goes eighteenpence!" said Peter.

"Yah!"

Peter Todd produced a tin of sardines and a cake for tea. Billy Bunter's eyes glistened when he saw them. The last will and testament remained neglected on the floor, while W. G. Bunter attended to the sardines and the cake. And he did not die before supper!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

"FLUMMOX'S Fattening Fluid!"

"What?"

"FlummoX's Fattening Fluid!" said Bunter.

Billy Bunter was reading from the advertisements of a newspaper. He had

seemed for some time intensely interested in that newspaper, and now he looked up and gave utterance to the deep thoughts that were within him.

"According to what it says here," said Bunter, addressing the juniors generally in the Common-room, "this wonderful fluid will make anybody grow fat, however thin he may be. You might try it, Toddy. It's rather horrid to have a walking herring-bone in the study!"

Bunter blinked round.

"Who'll lend me four shillings?" he asked.

There was an unanimous silence.

Nobody seemed keen on lending William George four shillings.

"Four shillings," said Bunter, "is the price of the medicine, post free. Listen to this testimonial."

"What the thump—" began Bob Cherry.

"Listen to this," said Bunter. "There's a photograph of the patient who used the fluid, and his name and address, so it seems all right." And Bunter read out:

"A year ago I was emaciated. My friends thought that I was fading away. Doctors could do nothing for me. I went to all the hospitals, and they gave me up as hopeless. Then my attention was called, by chance, to Dr. FlummoX's Fattening Fluid. I bought a bottle, without much hope that it would benefit me. I considered my case too far gone. I was amazed to find that in the first week of taking the fluid I put on six pounds' weight. In the second week I put on four pounds more. I am now healthy, plump, and I owe this to Dr. FlummoX's Fattening Fluid.—(Signed) H. Walker."

Bunter blinked round again.

"What do you fellows think of that?" he asked.

There was a general chuckle.

"Topping," said Bob Cherry. "Did it increase his memory to such an extent that he became manager of the bank?"

"Eh? It doesn't mention his memory," said Bunter. "You're mixing it up with the Thingummy System—"

"Dr. Coughdrop's Pink Potions for Muddling Memories," said Bob. "Send us a cheque, and your memory improves to such an extent that you use no other. Worth a guinea a billion. But it won't wash clothes. Still, it's the richest in cream!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When I started taking your Terra-cotta Tabloids," continued Bob, "I was doorkeeper at a pub. My memory improved to such an extent that I immediately became Prime Minister—"

"Look here, you silly ass!" howled Bunter. "This is a serious matter: FlummoX's Fattening Fluid is what I want. It may save my life!"

"Oh!"

"I'm fading away," said Bunter. "I've lost altogether ten pounds—"

"Leaving only a ton and half!"

"My cheeks are hollow," said Bunter. "My waist is shrinking. My clothes hang loose about me—"

"Appearances are deceptive if they do," said Bob. "They looked to me as tight as a drum!"

"This fluid may restore me the flesh I'm losing, and save my life," said Bunter. "You fellows mayn't think it's worth four bob to save a fellow's life—"

"Depends on the fellow," said Johnny Bull. "Four bob to save your life would be reckless extravagance!"

"If I live till my postal-order comes, I shall get a bottle!"

"You won't!" said Bob.

"Ah, you realise that I was fading

away!" said Bunter, feeling that he had made an impression at last.

"Not at all! But you're not likely to live to be as old as Methuselah, anyhow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you lend me four bob, Wharton, and have it back out of my postal-order?" pleaded Bunter. "Then I will forgive you for all your ingratitude."

"My what!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Ingratitude?"

"Why, you cheeky chump—"

"Then I must wait till my allowance comes," said Bunter. "I only hope you fellows won't suffer too severely from remorse if I expire before it comes. Whatever happens, I'll try to forgive you. Did you say you would lend me four bob, Smithy?"

"No, I didn't!"

"Did you, Drake?"

"No!"

Billy Bunter relapsed into dignified silence. He found some comfort in reading down the testimonials to Flummox's Fattening Fluid, however. According to the statements in the advertisement, that wonderful fluid would put flesh on anything but a telegraph-pole; and Bunter felt that his life might be saved—indeed, would be saved—if only he could obtain the bottle he needed. Four shillings stood between him and an early grave; but his unfeeling schoolfellows did not think it worth that sum to save him. Billy Bunter nobly determined to survive, if he could, till his allowance came.

He did survive.

The successful way in which Bunter, at death's door, was battling with his fate was really deserving of admiration.

When the postal-order for four shillings was despatched, Bunter waited for the bottle of fluid to arrive in keen anxiety. He told Peter Todd that he only hoped it wouldn't come too late! Toddy replied that he didn't see how that would matter. Fortunately, it did not arrive too late. Billy Bunter was still alive when it came.

He took the first dose immediately. According to the statement on the bottle, doses might be taken every two hours; and every two hours, so far as the exigencies of lessons allowed, Bunter took his doses.

It was rather nasty to the taste, he confessed to Toddy; but he felt that it was doing him good.

The following day the medicine was all gone.

Bunter waited anxiously for the result to show. He scanned his fat face in the glass incessantly, and pinched his podgy cheeks to ascertain whether they were becoming plumper. He did not feel any plumper; in fact, he had a feeling of being lighter on his feet. He puffed and blew less in coming up and down stairs. Another day passed in suspense. Were those lost ten pounds of flesh coming back, after all?

"Toddy, old man," said Bunter, when Peter came into the study that evening, "look at me, old chap! Don't be a beast, for once! Look at me, and tell me whether there's any change."

Peter Todd looked at him.

He looked again.

A rather curious expression came over Toddy's face.

He came closer to Bunter, and examined him with attention. Bunter watched him anxiously through his big glasses. At last his study-mate was taking an interest in his painful case.

"My only Aunt Sempronia!" said Toddy at last.

"You—you notice a change?"

"Yes."

"The medicine's doing me good?"

"Looks like it!"

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"You—you think I'm putting on flesh?"

Peter shook his head.

"What——" ejaculated Bunter. "But you said there was a change——"

"So there is!"

"Wha-a-at is it, then?"

"You're growing thinner!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Thin Bunter!

THINNER!

It was true!

Peter Todd was the first fellow who noticed it.

Bunter was growing thinner!

That was the amazing result of twelve doses of Dr. Flummox's Fattening Fluid!

It was inexplicable; but there it was! The Removites debated the matter with interest—quite interested in the amazing case of W. G. Bunter.

Possibly it was because the stuff was intended to make thin people fat, Bob Cherry thought might be the explanation. Perhaps it hadn't any effect on fat people—or a reverse effect! Bunter—in spite of the loss of ten pounds weight—was still about twice as heavy as he ought to have been! That was it, perhaps!

Skinner was of opinion that the "muck" they put in patent medicines might have any effect—the most unlooked-for effect—on anybody. How did you know how those rotten chemicals were going to work on your inside, Skinner asked. Might be anything in it.

Whether there was an explanation of the phenomenon or not, undoubtedly Billy Bunter was growing thinner!

His fat cheeks, after a few days, no longer resembled over-ripe apples. No longer were his waistcoat-buttons in danger of coming off when he stooped. No longer did he have to unfasten a button here and there after a meal.

His Eton jacket no longer looked on the point of bursting. His trousers began to sag round his knees.

His minor, Sammy of the Second, stared at him when they met. Sammy seemed hardly able to believe his eyes.

"You're getting thin, Billy!" he gasped. "Actually thin! Why, you wouldn't break the bottom out of a cab now!"

Bunter groaned.

"It's that rotten stuff!" he said. "They call it a fattening fluid, and it's reduced me to a shadow!"

"Well, not quite a shadow yet," said Sammy. "You can lose another fifteen stone and not miss 'em. But you're thinner! How does it feel?"

"I—I don't feel exactly bad—but it's awful!" groaned Bunter. "Suppose—suppose this goes on!"

"You'll simply disappear from sight!" said Sammy, with a chuckle. "Funny, ain't it? I say, we ought to get some of that stuff for Bessie. If I were fat I'd take some."

"Why, you fat little beast, you're fatter than ever I was!" howled Bunter.

"He, he, he!" chuckled Sammy Bunter. "I say, Billy, if you disappear, you know, can I have your pocket-knife?"

Bunter's answer to that question was a brotherly drive of his boot, and Sammy fled.

Bunter extracted a sixpence as soon as he could from a charitable Removite, and was weighed again.

He had lost a stone!

He crawled back to Greyfriars in despair. Strange to relate, he had never felt better in his life, so far as mere feelings went. But in such a case you couldn't depend on your feelings, Bunter realised. He had been a healthily plump

fellow—not what you'd call fat! At least, that was his own fixed opinion. If he was losing his healthy plumpness, there was cause for alarm. Whether there was cause or not, Bunter was certainly alarmed.

Still, his Form-fellows did not share his alarm—his Form-master wasn't in the least alarmed. After returning from his weighing expedition, Bunter determined to see Mr. Quelch about it—he wasn't going to die from sheer neglect. And he marched into his Form-master's study, to beard the lion in his den, as it were.

"Please, sir——" began the Owl.

"Weil, Bunter?" said Mr. Quelch, fixing a pair of gimlet-like eyes upon the Owl of the Remove.

"Look at me, sir!"

"I am looking at you, Bunter. What do you mean?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"I've lost over a stone in weight, sir."

Mr. Quelch looked interested.

"Indeed! Are you sure?"

"I've had myself weighed, sir."

"That is quite a good idea, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch approvingly. "I congratulate you!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Dr. Pillbury's treatment is evidently proving successful," said Mr. Quelch. "He will be delighted to hear that you are losing flesh!"

"I—I——"

"You must see him to-morrow and tell him," said the Remove master. "If this successful treatment is continued, Bunter, you may become as healthy and normal as any other boy in the Remove."

Bunter gasped.

"But—but I'm dying, sir——"

"Nonsense!"

"I'm losing flesh, sir—fading away—vanishing by inches—I mean, by pounds!" wailed Bunter. "Soon there'll be nothing left of me, sir! Perhaps a course of rich and nourishing food, sir, might——"

"Nonsense! You are improving greatly!" said Mr. Quelch brusquely. "It may be that you are losing flesh too rapidly, beneficial as it must be in the long run. You may consult the doctor. I shall certainly congratulate him on his success."

"It wasn't the doctor, sir—it—it was the medicine——" groaned Bunter.

"Eh? What medicine?"

"Dr. Flummox's Fattening Fluid!" said Bunter dismally. "It—it's worked the wrong way about, sir!"

"Have you been buying and consuming patent medicines, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch angrily.

"One bottle, sir, of Dr. Flummox's Fat——"

"You utterly absurd boy! You may ruin your health by consuming the noxious compounds advertised in the newspapers! I shall cane you for this, Bunter, as a warning for the future."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Hold out your hand, Bunter!"

Swish!

"Go to the doctor to-morrow, Bunter! Now leave my study! And if you ever purchase any more patent medicines——" Mr. Quelch gave a terrific frown, and left the rest to Bunter's imagination.

The Owl of the Remove limped from the study. He groaned dismally as he went down the corridor! He had gone to his Form-master for help and sympathy; and he had been caned! And he had a foreboding that he would not get any sense out of the doctor when he saw him. He was right! Dr. Pillbury called at the school the following day, and saw Bunter. And the fatuous medical gentleman actually rubbed his hands with satisfaction when he saw him!

"Splendid!" he exclaimed.

"I'm feeling awful——" moaned Bunter.

"Nonsense! You've never looked so well in your life!"

"I've lost a stone——"

"Famous!" said Dr. Pillbury. "Keep on! You may lose another! We must hope so. And another! Let us hope for the best! Why, you may have quite a normal figure ultimately, Bunter, if this goes on! I am very satisfied with this case—very! I have never treated a patient so successfully! Mind you keep off pastry. Never touch sweets! Long walks—what, what! And football—undoubtedly football will help on the good work! Why, Bunter, at this rate we shall not know you soon!"

"But—but——"

"What an exceedingly pleasant surprise for your father when you go home for the holidays!" said the doctor, rubbing his hands. "You will mention to Mr. Bunter that I treated you? Remember that! Bless my soul! I am very pleased indeed with this case!"

And the medical gentleman dismissed Bunter with that. The Owl of the Remove rolled away with feelings too deep for words.

And the next day he was thinner still!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Desperate Measures!

BILLY BUNTER was the object of great interest at Greyfriars in these days. Generally, he was not considered a personage of very much importance. But now there was no doubt that he excited general attention. Great men in the Sixth Form would look at him in the quad, and even speak to him. Coker of the Fifth even took the trouble to measure his circumference, and was astounded to find that a yard-measure would meet round him! The Remove fellows every morning asked him how many stone he had lost. There was great excitement when it was learned one day that Mrs. Kebble, the housekeeper, had "taken in" a waistcoat for Bunter!

A week had made a wonderful change; another week made it still more wonderful. Fags in the Second Form urged Sammy Bunter to try Dr. Flummox's Fattening Fluid, which, it was hoped, would work in reverse order with Sammy, as with his major. Skinner advised Bunter to write to the Flummox Company, and suggest to them the idea of selling their fattening fluid as an infallible anti-fat remedy, and offer a testimonial for a guinea, which, Skinner said, was the usual rate for testimonials.

But Bunter's feelings towards Dr. Flummox were little short of Hunnish. He would willingly have dosed Dr. Flummox with his own mixture till he vanished into nothingness!

Bunter wished fervently that he had never seen that advertisement at all, or that he had spent the money on a memory system or on becoming a cinema actor through the post. Anything would have been better than the awful disaster that had befallen him.

That graceful figure of ample proportions which had often delighted his admiring eyes in the looking-glass—where was it now? Gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream! Lost to sight, though to memory dear!

Certainly, he did not feel unwell. He felt better, in fact. He was not so short-winded as of old. But from these considerations Bunter drew no comfort. He had always prided himself on being a fellow with a figure. Now where was the figure? Poets have told us eloquently of the feelings of a lioness robbed

of her cubs. But they were nothing to the feelings of W. G. Bunter, robbed of his circumference!

There were some consolations, however. Bunter found that other fellows' clothes would fit him.

There was some satisfaction in borrowing Maulverer's handsomest waistcoat, and never running out of shirts!

For it had come to that—any fellow's waistcoat would fit Bunter now! If it had stopped there! But it did not stop there! The strange and mysterious process was continuing! There came a time when even Peter Todd's waistcoat was too large for Bunter!

Bunter tried it, and found that it met easily—too easily! He told Peter the result in expiring tones:

"I'm as skinny as you now, Peter!"

"You mean you've got a healthy, slim figure like mine?" asked Toddy.

"Even Dr. Flummox couldn't reduce that!" grinned Peter Todd.

"If I had plenty of nourishing food, I think I might recover," said Bunter. "I never get enough! Peter, old chap, we've always been pals——"

"First I've heard of it!"

"I—I always admired you, Peter——"

"Then you're not totally lacking in judgment," said Toddy. "But you've never mentioned it before."

"I've always—always loved you, old chap! Don't you think you ought to make an effort, and—and have a jolly good spread in the study every day, so that——"

"So that you can rival the earth's circumference once more?" chuckled Peter Todd. "I don't!"

"When you see my coffin brought in, Toddy——"

"You'll save something on that coffin



There was a crash, and a bottle splintered in the study grate. The Owl of the Remove had disposed of Dr. Flummox's Fattening Fluid. (See Chapter 12.)

"I mean I've become a horrid skeleton like you!" said Bunter, almost tearfully. "Your waistcoat is too wide for me. I've tried on your best one. I hoped the buttons would burst off. But they didn't!"

"Rather lucky for you they didn't!" said Peter Todd grimly.

"What's going to be done, Peter?"

"Looks to me as if you're going to be done!" answered Toddy. "Perhaps you'll stop now you're the right width. After all, you didn't want to be double-width, did you?"

"I can count my ribs!" moaned Bunter.

"Have you got the right number?"

"Eh? Of course!"

"Then what does it matter? If there were any missing, of course——"

"I think you're an unfeeling beast, Peter! There's just one little bit of silver lining to the cloud," said Bunter. "My appetite's still splendid!"

now!" said Peter Todd thoughtfully. "At the present price of timber——"

"Yah!"

Thin Bunter wandered disconsolately out of the study. He did not roll, as of old. He was quite light upon his feet. His new, airy feeling needed getting used to. What worried him chiefly was the development of his appetite. When he had been fat, his appetite had been remarkable. Now that he was thin, it was more than remarkable. It was alarming. Bunter could always have consumed the rations of two or three fellows. Now he felt as if he could consume the whole Remove's allowance of provisions, and then look round for more!

His fears of an early and sad decease were quite swallowed up, as it were, in this new consideration. In these days Billy Bunter wandered up and down and to and fro, like a lion seeking
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what he could devour. "Tuck" in the study cupboards had never been quite safe from Bunter. Now it was more unsafe than of old.

Bunter haunted the school shop till Mrs. Mimble was quite cross and ratty at the mere sight of him. Had Bunter possessed a large supply of cash, Mrs. Mimble would have done a roaring trade. One single customer would have been enough to keep her little business in a most flourishing state. But Bunter's postal-orders had not come; he was impecunious as well as hungry. He exerted all his eloquence on Mrs. Mimble. He tried to make her understand that big modern businesses were built up on a system of credit. Mrs. Mimble declined to understand. Perhaps she did not want to build up a big modern business. At all events, she firmly refused to give Bunter credit.

Meanwhile, Mr. Quelch, faithfully acting on Dr. Pillbury's advice, was keeping an eye on Bunter at breakfast and dinner, and ruthlessly cutting down second and third helpings—not to mention fourth, fifth, and sixth, which the unhappy Owl could easily have negotiated.

Slim Bunter was conscious of an aching void inside him, and the graceful, slim figure he was developing brought him no comfort whatever. His decrease of weight, fortunately, added to his sprinting powers, which was all to the good, for Bunter was becoming a desperate cupboard-raider, and he had a great deal of dodging to do.

Often and often he would be seen fleeing for his life down the Remove passage, or bolting downstairs three steps at a time—even sliding down the banisters at breakneck speed—with some infuriated junior raging on his track. One afternoon he even bolted into Mr. Quelch, with a pie under his arm, and Bolsover major charging after him. Which led to a painful scene in Mr. Quonch's study, featuring the cane!

Bunter had tea in Hall that afternoon, and then tea in Study No. 7, and then dropped into No. 12 to see Lord Maulverer, and had tea with him. Then he wandered forth, looking for something to eat. He peered into Study No. 13 through his big spectacles, and his eyes glistened at the sight of a heap of parcels on the table. Little Wun Lung, the Chinese, was there, half-asleep in the armchair, and he blinked up suspiciously as Bunter stepped in.

"Fattee Bunttee goey away!" said Wun Lung.

"Feed on—what?" asked Bunter.

"Bob Cholly askee some fellee to tea," said Wun Lung. "No askee Bunttee. You loll off, fattee!"

Bunter took a cautious blink along the passage. Near Study No. 1, almost the whole length of the passage away, he spotted the Famous Five, coming towards him. Fat Bunter of old would have hesitated; but thin Bunter didn't hesitate. He whipped round on Wun Lung, grasped him, and whirled him to the door. The little Chinese yelled, and resisted. The Bunter of old would have been thrown off quite easily by the little active Chinese. But thin Bunter was active and nimble—and desperate. He sent Wun Lung spinning into the passage, slammed the door, and locked it.

Then he started on the parcels, newly arrived from the tuckshop, and packed with good things.

Bang!

Bunter did not even turn his head at that emphatic summons at the door.

Bang, bang! Thump!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Who's in here? Open this door at once! Do you hear?"

"Fattee Bunttee in there!" gasped Wun Lung. "Eatee tuckee!"

Bang, bang!

"Bunter!"

"Open the door, you fat fraud!" shouted Harry Wharton.

Bunter did not speak. In fact, he couldn't. His mouth was full of ham and beef, and his powerful jaws were going like clockwork. He had no time to waste in words, either.

"Let us in, Bunter!"

Guzzle, guzzle! The juniors outside could hear the busy champing of a pair of hungry jaws. That was all they heard.

"The fat rotter!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"The thin rotter, you mean!" chuckled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, he's scoffing our spread!" roared Bob Cherry. "Why, I'll—I'll—I'll pulverise him! Bunter! You fat—I mean, you skinny rotter! Let us in at once, or we'll scalp you!"

Guzzle, guzzle!

Bang, bang, bang!

The ham and beef for five vanished. There were five eggs, and Bunter knew that raw eggs were nourishing. In two minutes they had helped to nourish Bunter. Then the cake went.

Thump, thump, thump!

A three-pound pot of jam was started on next, to an accompaniment of ferocious threats howled through the keyhole. Bunter did not heed.

He had found a tablespoon, and he was ladling out the jam into his capacious mouth. The three-pound jar was emptied in record time. Luckily, there was more tuck—and Bunter was still hungry. A jar of marmalade followed the jam, then a tin of dry ginger—all was grist that came to Bunter's mill. Bob Cherry had expended an unexpected "tip" from his pater on that spread for the Co. It was intended to be a very handsome spread for five or six. It made a fairly handsome spread for one.

Guzzle, guzzle, guzzle!

"My hat! I'll slaughter him!" breathed Bob Cherry sulphurously.

"I—I wish the beast hadn't thinned, if this is the result! Can you see what he's up to, Inky?"

Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh had put his eye to the keyhole.

"The esteemed villain is finishing the biscuits!" he said. "Everything else is gone, I think!"

"My word!" murmured Nugent. "If Bunter's negotiated that lot at one sitting, something will happen to him!"

Bob looked a little alarmed.

"If he bursts——" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The burstfulness will be terrific!"

"Bunter! You fat—skinny idiot, open the door!"

Guzzle, guzzle!

The last biscuit was gone. Billy Bunter leaned on the study table, breathing rather hard after his uncommon exertions.

He felt better—what he considered better. There was that delightful old feeling of fulness and strain under his waistcoat that he had not enjoyed for many a day. A feed like this twice or thrice a day would, he felt, restore him to his old proportions. Such good fortune was not to be hoped for; but at least he was going to make hay while the sun shone. Having cleared the table to the last crumb, and recovered a little, he turned to the cupboard, where he found a few more eatables. Standing at the open cupboard, he proceeded to demolish them.

In the Remove passage Bob Cherry was raging, and a crowd of Removites were roaring with laughter. There was a heavy sound in the study at last. Bunter had plumped down in the armchair to repose.

"Will you let us in, you villain?" Bob Cherry hissed through the keyhole.

Bunter answered at last, in a faint voice.

"It's no good, Cherry. There's nothing left."

"Have you scoffed the lot, you Hun?"

"The whole lot."

"I'll slaughter you! Let us in!"

"I—I c-c-can't!"

"Why can't you, you burglar?"

"I—I—I c-c-can't move!"

"You've made yourself ill, you awful beast!"

"Groooooogh!"

And then there was silence in Study No. 13, broken only by an occasional moan from a suffering youth inside.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.
Same Old Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. retired from the scene at last. The feed had evidently gone the way of all feeds; there was no hope of saving anything from the wreck. There was a frugal tea in Study No. 1, instead of the handsome spread that had been arranged in No. 13. Bob Cherry's face remained clouded with wrath. For once his good-humour failed him. While he contented himself with bread-and-marger and a sardine in Study No. 1 he was thinking of that stack of good things devoured by "Thin" Bunter, and thinking of vengeance. His determination was fixed—to slaughter William George Bunter at sight. This time the ruthless raider was not to escape the penalty of his iniquity. It was but seldom that Bob had a big remittance, and on this occasion he had expended nearly all of it on that feast for the Co.—and the feast had vanished into the



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interior regions of W. G. Bunter. It was an offence past forgiveness. Over tea Bob discussed what he would do to Bunter. Boiling him in oil was an adequate punishment, but there were certain objections to that. Skinning him alive would have been a well-deserved operation, but the same objections applied. Six dozen with a fives-bat did not meet the case, but was practicable. Bob Cherry decided on six dozen with a fives-bat.

After tea he returned to Study No. 13, with a fives-bat borrowed from Wharton. His chums went with him to lend a hand. Bob rapped on the door with the bat when he found it was still locked.

"Bunter!"
Groan!
"Open the door!"
Groan!
"I know you're shamming, you villain!" roared Bob Cherry. "I've got a fives-bat here for you!"

Groan!
"I'm going to smash you!"
Groan!
"Will you let me in?" shrieked Bob.

Groan!
"I—I—I'll make it twelve dozen!" gasped Bob. "Fancy shutting a fellow out of his own study after scoffing his spread! I—I'll make it twenty dozen! I'll break the bat on him! I'll—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Oh, don't cackle! I'll squash him! I'll spifficate him! I can't even get into the study to do my prep!" howled Bob.

"Better come to my study," said Wharton, laughing. "Bunter may be really ill this time. He ought to be, unless he's got the inside of a boa-constrictor!"

"Well, he has!"
Groan! came from the study again.
"What's the matter with you, Bunt?" called Harry Wharton, through the key-hole.

"Ow! I've got awful pains!"
"Open the door!"
"I can't move!"

"I'll move you presently!" growled Bob Cherry. "You can stay there till bed-time if you like—you'll have to come out for dorm. Then I'll pulverise you like a pancake!"

Groan!

There was a crowd in Study No. 1 at prep that evening—Bob Cherry, Hurreo Singh, Mark Linley, and Wun Lung being there instead of in No. 13. No. 13 remained tenanted only by William George Bunter. Whether the Owl of the Remove was really ill after his tremendous "gorge," or whether he was spoofing, as usual, the juniors could not tell. Certainly he ought to have been ill. He had had tea three times before scoffing a spread that was rather ample for five or six fellows. His stowage capacity was amazing—but surely there was a limit, even with Bunter? The probability was that he was ill. Bob Cherry hoped that a vigorous application of the fives-bat would do him good. He intended to try.

It was nine o'clock when prep. was over, and it wanted only half an hour to bed-time. The Famous Five repaired to Study No. 13. The door was still locked, and Harry Wharton tapped on it.

"Bunter!"
A feeble moan answered.
"Let us in, Bunter! If you're really ill we'll let you off!"
"We won't!" roared Bob Cherry.
"Yes, we will, old chap!"
"Well, if he's really seriously ill—"

said Bob, relenting.
"I—I can't move!" moaned Bunter.
"I—I feel giddy, and—and I've got fearful pains, and—and—and I think I'm dying!"

"Bow-wow!"
"Yah!"
"Oh, leave him to rip!" growled Bob.
"He'll have to come out for dorm."
At bed-time Bob Cherry thoughtfully took the fives-bat to the Remove dormitory with him. His idea was to hand it to Bunter after lights out. Bunter was not in the dormitory when the Remove arrived there, and Wingate of the Sixth asked where he was. But Bunter came in while the captain of Greyfriars was asking for him.

He tottered in.
Bob Cherry fixed a grim look upon him, but his expression changed. Billy Bunter did look really ill!

He tottered to his bed and sat down. Wingate stared at him.

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

Groan!
"Are you ill?"

"I'm dying, Wingate!"
"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" said Wingate crossly.

LOOK OUT FOR THIS COVER—



"Beaten at Last!" By FRANK RICHARDS.
ON SALE NEXT FRIDAY.

Groan!
"My hat! He does look pretty bad!" remarked Vernon-Smith. "But he's as thin as ever!"

"I—I think it was the ginger," said Bunter faintly. "It couldn't have been the jam. Three pounds of jam wouldn't hurt a chap! As for six pounds of ham and beef, that couldn't do a fellow any harm. It wasn't the sardines or the salmon or the cake! If it wasn't the ginger, perhaps it was the biscuits or the tinned fruits. The tinned fruits very likely. Couldn't have been the eggs, could it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Perhaps it was the lot together," said Squiff. "Blessed if I should like to have that little lot inside me!"

Groan!
"You horrid, greedy young rascal!" said Wingate. "You'd better go down to Mr. Quelch. You'll want looking after! Shouldn't wonder if you get colic or something."
"Ow!"

Bunter detached himself from the bed, and departed moaning. The Removites

turned in, and remained awake some time after lights out, waiting for Billy Bunter to return. But Billy Bunter did not return. His snore was not heard in the Remove dormitory that night at all. The juniors came down in the morning very curious on the subject of Bunter. Harry Wharton asked Mr. Quelch where he was.

"In the sanatorium!" the Remove-master answered briefly. "Bunter is ill."

"Really ill, sir?"

"Yes, Wharton. The doctor is in attendance."

"Oh! Not in danger, sir?" exclaimed Harry.

"No, no. He appears to have over-eaten himself in an unusually reckless manner, and it appears, too, that he has been taking patent medicines, which may have lingered in his system and caused him harm. He will probably rejoin the class in a few days."

For a week Bunter's place in the Remove Form was vacant. For a week not a fellow in the Remove was requested to cash an expected postal-order for Bunter, or to lend him a "tanner." Skinner said that it was a rest-cure for the Remove, and expressed a charitable hope that Bunter would be laid up permanently.

"Might be ordered away for his health," said Skinner brightly. "Might be away a whole term! Think of that!"

But the juniors agreed that it was no use thinking of such Elysian possibilities, which were not likely to be realised.

At last it was announced that Billy Bunter would emerge from "sanny," and appear at dinner. The Removites were at table when he came in, and every head was turned towards the doorway as a heavy tread was heard in the passage without. That heavy tread seemed much too heavy for Thin Bunter. But—

He appeared at the doorway!
There was a gasp!

It was not Thin Bunter who appeared. It was Fat Bunter! That week in the sanatorium had done the trick; or, rather, worked the miracle! No doubt the last traces of Dr. Plummock's Fattening Fluid had worked out of Bunter's system, and allowed Bunter's economy to take its normal course. Tucks which had been taken in Bunter's garments had had to be taken out again. Once more he was, as Skinner put it, as broad as he was long!

Bunter rolled into the dining-room, and grinned cheerfully at the Removites.

"I say, you fellows, I'm glad to be back," he said. "Have you missed me very much?"

"Not at all."

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"You may sit down, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch.

Bunter sat down.

His chair creaked under him as of old. After dinner he rolled out with his fat, self-satisfied expression, which had been absent for so long.

Bunter, like Richard in the play, was himself again!

"Fat as ever!" granted Peter Todd, in the study that day.

Bunter looked at himself in the glass with a satisfied smirk.

"A fellow with a good figure," he remarked, "is always envied by skinny bounders like you, Toddy! I'm accustomed to jealousy of my figure! I say, isn't it ripping to be well again, and for a chap to get his good looks back?"

"His what?" yelled Peter.

"His good looks. I'll tell you what, Peter," said Bunter impressively. "What

"THIN BUNTER!"

(Continued from page 15.)

I need now is feeding up! You wouldn't like to see me fade away again into a bony object like you, would you, old chap? One awful fright is enough for one study, isn't it?"

"Why, you—you—"

"So I'll tell you what," said Bunter. "There ought to be a celebration over my recovery. You might have lost me. Think of that! My suggestion, Toddy, is that you should call a meeting of the principal fellows in the Remove, and consult with them with a view to standing a big celebration, to be followed, perhaps, by a series of extensive feeds like—"

"My dear chap, I think we ought to stand you something," said Peter, after some reflection. "Turn up here to tea, and you'll see."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter.

And he grinned gleefully.

He felt that he was being done justice at last.

Peter Todd consulted with the Famous Five. The consultation was punctuated by many chuckles. When it ended the sum of four shillings had been raised among the juniors, and Peter Todd

cycled down to Friardale to visit the local chemist. He came back with a bottle in his pocket.

At tea-time Peter and the Famous Five were gathered in Study No. 7, and Billy Bunter rolled in with a fat smirk.

"I say, you fellows, I'm ready!"

"Good!" said Bob Cherry. "So's the celebration."

Bunter blinked round the study. He could see no signs of a feed.

"Where's the spread?" he asked.

"Hand it out, Toddy!" said Harry Wharton. "We've subscribed for this, Bunter, and the condition is that you scoff it all by yourself, without sharing out with anybody."

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Bunter. "In fact, that will suit me. Where is it?"

"Here you are!" said Toddy.

He laid a package on the table, and proceeded to untie it.

Bunter blinked at it.

It was quite a small package.

"I—I say, you fellows, what—what is—"

"Look!" said Peter Todd impressively.

The contents of the package were revealed—a bottle, and on the bottle was a well-known label:

"DR. FLUMMOX'S FATTENING FLUID!"

Bunter blinked at it.

"All for you!" said Peter Todd, with owl-like gravity. "We've subscribed for this; Bunter. We only hope it will have the same effect as the last bottle. Pile in!"

"Go it, Bunter!" said the Famous Five encouragingly.

Bunter blinked at the bottle, and blinked at the Removites. He did not touch the valuable Fattening Fluid of Dr. Flummox.

"You—you—you—" he stuttered. "You beasts!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked out of the study, chuckling, leaving William George Bunter to enjoy himself. A howl followed them from the study.

"Yah! Beasts!"

Then there was a crash, and a bottle splintered in the study grate. The Owl of the Remove had disposed of Dr. Flummox's Fattening Fluid—not internally. The Greyfriars Remove had seen the last of Thin Bunter!

THE END.

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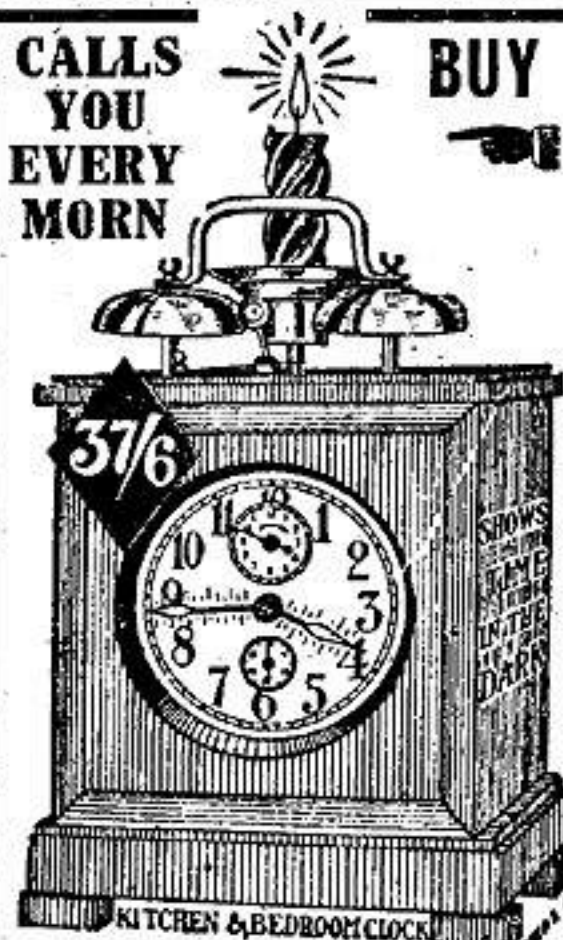
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